

ECLIPSE

PHASE
SECOND EDITION

Quick-Start Rules
+ **ACRIMONY**



QUICK-START RULES + ACRIMONY ADVENTURE

Dive into *Eclipse Phase Second Edition* with these preview *Quick-Start Rules*, featuring the basics of the streamlined second edition rules, an introductory adventure, *Acrimony*, and four sample characters! Then move onto the complete *Eclipse Phase Second Edition*, from **Posthuman Studios!**



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Eclipse Phase Second Edition
Quick-Start Rules with Acrimony

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WHAT IS ECLIPSE PHASE?

In *Eclipse Phase*, you play a secret agent protecting the scattered remnants of transhumanity from threats that could wipe it out once and for all. You are transhuman. You are genetically modified, physically and mentally augmented, and functionally immortal. Your mind can be digitally backed up, like a save point. If you die, you can be brought back, your *ego*—both consciousness and memories—physically restored. You may also copy your mind and download into a body of your choice. This new body—your *morph*—can be biological, a synthetic robotic shell, or a digital infomorph. Your body is essentially gear that you customize according to your mission and requirements.

Eclipse Phase takes place in a future of exponentially accelerating technological progress. Developments in the key fields of artificial intelligence, neuroscience, genetic engineering, nanotechnology, and information science have converged into an impressive feedback loop. Bodies and minds are shaped and augmented. AIs and animals are uplifted to human levels of sapience. Everything and everyone is laden with sensors, networked, and online. Your mind can communicate with every electronic device around it. Almost anything can be 3D-printed from constituent atoms with a nanofabber and blueprints. Technology allows people to live happier, healthier lives, emancipated from need.

Such advances also have their downsides. The wonders of the future are not yet evenly distributed—the immortal rich continue to concentrate their wealth and power while others struggle to survive. Surveillance is omnipresent, and the means exist to hack people's minds and memories, copy them entirely, and/or commit them to virtual slavery. Many technological advances are super-empowering, putting the means for mass devastation in everyone's hands. Efforts to restrict such tools are doomed to fail; only our own maturity as a species can save us.

Exemplifying these dangers, *Eclipse Phase* takes place ten years after transhumanity has lost a war with a group of super-intelligent, self-improving AIs. 95% of the population was lost during this apocalyptic conflict, many of them forcibly uploaded by the TITAN machine gods before they disappeared. Thousands more were corrupted and transformed by an alien exsurgent virus. The Earth is ruined and off-limits, overrun by machines and monsters. The survivors evacuated the planet and spread throughout the solar system, expanding our off-world colonies out of desperation and necessity. Many escaped only as *infugees*, with nothing but their bodiless minds.

The nations and super-powers of the old world are gone, decapitated and dismantled. New political blocs and factions have formed, loosely divided between the inner and outer systems. The capitalist economies of the inner system—Luna, Mars, and Venus—continue to enforce scarcity and intellectual property. They are dominated by the Planetary Consortium, a hypercorp-led entity that prioritizes business interests and that has declared Mars the new homeworld of transhumanity. Their habitats are identified by the influence of media and memetic conflict on civil discourse, the legalities and security restrictions that keep their populations safe, a lingering distrust of AIs and uplifts, and sharp class divisions. While socialites and hyper-elites play and prosper, many infugees have resorted to selling their labor as indentured servants to afford cheap, mass-produced synthetic bodies—the *clanking masses*.

The outer system is the stronghold of the Autonomist Alliance, a mutual-aid network of anarchists and techno-socialists. In these communalist territories, currency is obsolete and unrestricted nanofabrication means that everyone has the necessities and tools they need. People create rather than consume. Reputation, not wealth, mediates the exchange of information and services. Many habitats operate without government, laws, or police, relying instead on voluntary and cooperative structures, real-time online referendums, and collective militias. The outer system is a patchwork of political, economic, and social experimentation.

Intersticed among these major factions, other transhuman clades build their own societies. Criminal cartels feed black markets, radical scientists work to democratize science, aesthete mercenaries offer their services, pirates prey on the unwary, and isolationists filter their communities from outside influences. Even bioconservatives—distrustful of transhuman technologies—thrive on, fearing for our species' future.

The war with the TITAN AIs scarred more than Earth. Zones on Luna, Mars, and Saturn's moon Iapetus remain under machine influence. Of greater impact, however, are the mysterious Pandora gates discovered around the system. These wormhole gates open to extrasolar systems—thousands of exoplanets and alien mysteries. Intrepid gatecrashers explore these new horizons, colonizing worlds and uncovering the remnants of extinct civilizations. While no living sapient species has been found beyond the gates, transhumanity has had its first encounters with alien life within our own solar system. A star-faring species known as the Factors visits regularly, though the true nature and intentions of these laconic ameboid merchants remains unknown.

Ultimately, *Eclipse Phase* is a game of transhuman survival. Aside from the threat that the TITANs will return, we face existential risks—*x-risks*—that endanger our future as a species. These include weapons of mass destruction, artifacts from beyond the Pandora gates, salvaged TITAN technology, exsurgent infection breakouts, alien threats, stellar phenomena, and the dangers we pose to ourselves. Our species is in a deteriorating orbit around the black hole of extinction. Will our conflicts steer us into the event horizon, or will we evolve and cooperate to escape the gravity well and reach new frontiers? Will we be recognizably human when we get there?

Eclipse Phase is an exploration of uncertain futures. This is more than a tabletop roleplaying game, it's a detailed science fiction setting that thoroughly investigates issues that affect our future as a species. The crux of *Eclipse Phase* emphasizes the nature of transhumanity as it transforms itself, mentally and physically, on the edge of becoming something posthuman. This is a setting that speaks to the immense dangers that technology offers us—but that balances this outlook by considering how science can be used to improve ourselves, enhance cooperation, counteract these risks, and prosper. There is danger—but also hope.

WHAT IS TRANSHUMANISM?

Transhumanism is an international cultural and intellectual movement that endorses the use of science and technology to enhance the human condition. Transhumanism embraces emerging technologies to eliminate the undesirable aspects of our biology such as aging, disabilities, diseases, and involuntary death. Transhumanists believe in the freedom to modify our minds and bodies to increase our quality of life.

In *Eclipse Phase*, the transhuman program has borne fruit in the form of enhanced humans, uplifted animals, and machine sapience. But counter to the hopes of many present-day transhumanists, eternal youth, enhanced anatomy, and heightened intelligence are not accessible to all—yet.

Transhumanism can also be considered the waypoint transitional period between our modern human state and a state of advanced capabilities and physiological changes that can only be called *posthuman*. While some intentionally seek out this enhanced state, others fear the impact on our species.

WELCOME TO FIREWALL

In *Eclipse Phase*'s default setting, every player character is a *sentinel*, an agent-on-call for *Firewall*, a shadowy network dedicated to protecting transhumanity and counteracting *x-risks*. Sentinels are grouped into ad-hoc special-ops teams appropriate to each mission. Firewall isn't content to simply handle these threats as they arise, of course, so sentinels may also be sent on information-gathering missions or to put in place pre-emptive or failsafe measures. Characters may be tasked to investigate seemingly innocuous people and places (that may turn out not to be), make deals with shady criminal networks, or travel through a Pandora gate wormhole to analyze the relics of some alien ruin (and see if the threat that killed them is still real). Sentinels are recruited from every faction of transhumanity; those who aren't ideologically loyal to the cause are hired as mercenaries. Firewall operations are managed by *proxies*, agents who maintain Firewall's decentralized infrastructure.

NEW TO ROLEPLAYING?

If you are new to roleplaying games, you will find everything you need to know about how to play them here:

<http://eclipsephase.com/roleplaying>

SECRETS

Starting on p. 12 of this booklet is *Acrimony*, an introductory scenario. If you're playing but not gamemastering, don't read p. 12 through p. 21!

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY, SEX, AND GENDER

Sexual biology is ephemeral in *Eclipse Phase*. Sex is elective and subject to change; almost everyone has the opportunity to switch bodies. A character's gender identity may not always match their physical sexual characteristics (or lack thereof). Gender identity itself is often fluid. To reflect this,

we apply the "singular they" rule, meaning that we use "they" as the default pronoun for individuals. When referring to specific characters with an established gender, however, we use the pronoun appropriate to their current gender identity, regardless of the sex of the morph they happen to be in.

HOW TO PLAY

Eclipse Phase is played as a collaborative story-telling project that takes place in your imagination. The gamemaster (GM) details the setting, portrays the Non-Player Characters (NPCs), adjudicates rules, and sets the stage for the adventure scenario. The players take on the role of their characters and describe their actions. Each character is defined by a set of characteristics—skills, traits, etc.—listed on their character sheet. When the characters encounter difficulties or engage in conflicts, dice are used to determine the outcome.

DICE BASICS

Eclipse Phase uses two ten-sided dice for skill tests and most other rolls. Rolled dice are read as percentiles (d100), with the first die serving as the tens digit and the second as the ones digit. Percentile rolls result in a number between 0 and 99 (00 is read as zero). A roll of 5 and 3, for example, is read as 53. Use different colored dice to note which to read first or use ten-siders made for percentile rolling.

For some other rolls (damage, stress, refreshing pools), *Eclipse Phase* uses both six-sided (d6) and ten-sided (d10) dice. These dice are added together, sometimes with a modifier, to get the result. A $2d10 + 3$ damage roll of 5 and a 3 would result in an 11.

WHEN TO ROLL THE DICE

Roll the dice when the results may influence the plot or have other consequences, when the situation is challenging, or when a character is opposed by another force. Don't make tests for mundane, everyday tasks. A skill of 40 or more assumes a professional level of competency. You don't need to roll every time your character pilots a ship, looks up something basic online, or talks to an NPC—assume characters breeze through the easy stuff. Save the dice rolling for situations with dramatic stakes.

MAKING TESTS

When the GM calls for a test, roll percentile dice and compare the result to the target number. The target number is based on the character's skill, aptitude check, or rep network score. If the result is equal to less than the target number, the test succeeds. If the result is higher, the test fails.

Though you want to roll equal to or under the target number, you also want to roll as high as possible in order to get a superior result (next column) or to beat your opponent in opposed tests (p. 5).

WHO ROLLS?

Players roll the dice when making tests for their characters; GMs roll for NPCs. Sometimes the GM makes tests for PCs in secret, so as not to alert players to something their characters wouldn't know, like whether or not they spot a clue. It's a good idea for GMs to keep a copy of the PC character sheets on hand.

Treat multiple characters engaging in the same activity—such as a group searching a room or someone attempting to calm an angry mob—as a single entity. In this case, simply roll once for the group, using the highest skill among them—or the lowest, if the group is an impediment. If the result may separately impact multiple characters, however, have them roll individually.

MODIFIERS

Difficulty	Situational Factor	Modifier
Very Easy	Major Bonus	+30
Easy	Moderate Benefit	+20
Slightly Easy	Minor Boost	+10
Average		+/-0
Slightly Hard	Minor Hindrance	-10
Hard	Moderate Impediment	-20
Very Hard	Major Drawback	-30

DIFFICULTY AND MODIFIERS

Degrees of difficulty are represented by *modifiers*—adjustments that raise or lower the target number. An easy test provides a positive modifier, increasing the target number. A hard test inflicts a negative modifier. Modifiers are assigned in multiples of ten, ranging from +10 to +30 and -10 to -30, as noted on the Modifiers table.

In addition to the test's inherent challenge level, various situational aspects may also influence the test, such as high-quality gear, poor environmental conditions, or the health of the character. These factors are also represented as modifiers based on their level of severity, as noted on the Modifiers table.

GMs assign modifiers appropriate to the situation. If multiple circumstances affect a test, assess the situation as a whole and apply a single modifier based on the overall net effect. No set of multiple modifiers should impact a test by more than +/-60.

SUPERIOR RESULTS: 33/66 RULE

Sometimes you will rock your test with flair, sometimes you will fumble it like a noob. On a roll of 33 or more that succeeds, you get a *superior success*. On a roll of 66 or more, you get two superior successes. On a roll of 66 or less that fails, you get a *superior fail*. On a roll of 33 or less, you get two superior fails.

For each superior result, choose one of the following. For two superior results, you may choose two of the following or one twice for double the effect:

- **Quality:** The work is more exact (success) or more sloppy (fail). This may affect subsequent tests by +/-10.
- **Quantity:** The test consumes fewer (success) or more (fail) materials or produces fewer or more results.
- **Detail:** You acquire information that is much more in-depth/nuanced (success) or false (failure).
- **Time (Task Actions only):** The action takes a shorter (success) or longer (fail) amount of time, by +/-25%.
- **Covertiness:** The action is less (success) or more (fail) obvious or draws less or more attention (+/-10 as appropriate).
- **Damage:** Successes inflict more (+1d6) damage (fails miss).

Use superior results for extra style and oomph factor when making tests. Superior results may not apply to every dice roll; a binary success/fail is often enough to move the story forward. This is especially true for tests that fail—the consequences may be severe enough without needing to know how badly the character screwed up. GMs make the final call on when/how to apply superior results.

CRITICALS

When you roll doubles on a test—00, 11, 22, etc—you score a *critical* result. If you roll a critical and succeed, you get a critical success. If you roll a critical and fail, you score a critical failure. A roll of 00 is always a critical success, a roll of 99 is always a critical failure, no matter the target number.

Criticals have more impact than superior results. They represent “Wow!” moments where you stun onlookers with your proficiency or ineptness. They provide extra bonus effects/penalties, as determined by the GM. Here are some examples:

- A critical hit either doubles the damage or reduces the target's armor by half (GM choice)
- Gain a +/-20 modifier to the next test you make
- Take an extra action (critical success) or lose your next action (critical failure)
- Break a weapon/tool (critical failure)
- Regain 1 expended Insight, Moxie, or Vigor point (crit success)

You are encouraged to devise creative critical results as appropriate to the situation. If a critical is also a superior result, only the critical applies.

TYPES OF TESTS

There are two types of tests: success tests and opposed tests.

SUCCESS TESTS

Use success tests whenever you act without direct opposition. Most skill tests, rep network tests, and aptitude checks are handled as success tests and require a quick or complex action (next column) to complete. Success tests are handled exactly as described under *Making Tests* (p. 4).

OPPOSED TESTS

Opposed tests are called for when you are directly opposed by an NPC or other force. Negotiating, arm-wrestling, pickpocketing, and combat are all examples of opposed tests. Opposed tests are more difficult, because you must not only succeed but also beat your opponent.

When making an opposed test, both sides make a test as described above. If any modifiers apply to the situation, they should be applied to whichever side gains an advantage only (i.e., a negotiation where one party has inside information) or to both sides if equally affected (i.e., two runners competing on a slippery surface).

- If one opponent succeeds and the other fails, the successful one wins the contest.
- If both sides succeed, whomever rolls highest wins.
- If both sides tie or fail, either the opponents remain deadlocked or the highest roll or skill wins (GM's choice).

Critical successes trump high rolls on opposed tests. If both sides succeed, but the lower roller gets a critical, they manage to pull an upset victory from the clutches of defeat. If both opponents roll critical successes, the higher roll (or skill) wins.

ACTIONS AND TIME

Most of your actions in game will be handled in a free-form manner, with the GM only loosely tracking time. When timing and the order of actions becomes important, however, *Eclipse Phase* uses action turns to measure time during important scenes.

ACTION TURNS

An action turn represents roughly 3 seconds. There are 20 action turns per minute. During each action turn you may undertake one of the following:

- 1 complex action, 1 quick action, and unlimited automatic actions
- 1 task action, 1 quick action, and unlimited automatic actions
- 3 quick actions and unlimited automatic actions

AUTOMATIC ACTIONS

Automatic actions are always “on,” reflexive, or otherwise require no effort from the character to initiate. Basic movement such as walking or running is also an automatic action (more complex movement may require quick, complex, or even task actions).

Examples: Base move, basic perception, breathing, defending against an attack, dropping prone, dropping something, full move, resisting damage, speaking a simple sentence or two.

QUICK ACTIONS

Quick actions are accomplished in a fraction of a second or require so little cognitive effort that you can do them while undertaking something else.

Examples: Activating or deactivating a device, conveying complex information, detailed perception, drawing a weapon, ducking behind cover, gesturing, jumping, opening a door, picking something up, pulling something from an accessible pocket, standing up, taking a drug.

COMPLEX ACTIONS

Complex actions require a few seconds of concentration and effort.

Examples: Aiming, attacking in melee, examining, finding something in a bag, full defense, non-standard movement, reloading a weapon, rushing, shooting a gun, using a complex device.

TASK ACTIONS

Task actions require more than a few seconds to complete. Each task action has a timeframe, the base amount of time required to finish the task. Timeframes may be measured in action turns, minutes, hours, days, or even months. The actual time you take to complete a task is equal to the timeframe adjusted by any superior results (p. 4) you score on the test. You may interrupt your work on a task and continue it later, unless the GM specifically rules the task requires uninterrupted effort.

If you fail a task action, you expend 25% of the timeframe, +25% per superior failure, before you realize you have failed.

Examples: Climbing, hacking, infiltration, medical examination, programming, repairing, scientific analysis, searching a room, swimming, thorough investigation, recharging.

CHARACTER STATS

Your character is defined by a number of abilities and scores, all recorded on your character sheet.

EGO vs. MORPH

The most important distinction in your stats is the distinction between ego and morph. Your ego represents your mind, personality, memories, inherent traits, and learned skills. It represents your mental state and true self and transfers with you from body to body. Your morph is your physical (or sometimes virtual) form, the body you currently inhabit. Your morph may change or die, and is sometimes considered expendable, but your ego lives on. Your consciousness's continuity may sometimes be interrupted by an unexpected death, however, or split off onto divergent paths by forking. Both ego and morph may be customized and modified, though mind hacks are a trickier and more dangerous affair.

Your aptitudes, skills, and some derived stats and traits all belong to your ego. They stay with you throughout your character's development. Your morph provides you with pools to enhance your skills, Durability to represent your health and constitution, implants or robotic enhancements, and some traits and derived stats of its own. These change when you switch to a new morph. It is important to keep your ego and morph stats distinct, especially when resleeving.

APTITUDES

Your aptitudes represent your natural, inherent abilities. They are the foundation for your skills. There are 6 aptitude scores:

- **Cognition (COG)** represents your intelligence, problem-solving talent, and capacity for logical analysis.
- **Intuition (INT)** is your gut instinct and ability to evaluate on the fly. It includes physical awareness, creativity, cleverness, and cunning.
- **Reflexes (REF)** is your coordination, manual dexterity, nimbleness, balance, and reaction speed.
- **Savvy (SAV)** represents your social awareness, adaptability, empathy, and ability to influence others.
- **Somatics (SOM)** is how well you can exploit your morph's capabilities, including strength, stamina, and sustained positioning and motion.
- **Willpower (WIL)** is your self-control, mental fortitude, and strength of personality.

APTITUDE CHECKS

You will sometimes rely on your aptitudes to make tests rather than learned skills. Aptitude Checks are a derived stat, based on your aptitude $\times 3$. Aptitude Checks come into play in situations where no skill applies, but your raw talent does. Some examples:

- **Cognition Check:** Recall a memory, memorize a number, or resist mental manipulation.
- **Intuition Check:** Evaluate a situation, see through an illusion, or grok alien intentions.
- **Reflexes Check:** Catch a thrown object, balance, avoid blinding glare, or stop yourself from falling.
- **Savvy Check:** Evaluate a social situation, express empathy, follow etiquette, or resist social manipulation.

- **Somatics Check:** Exercise brute strength, endure hardships, or break free from grapples.
- **Willpower Check:** Keep your composure, steel your resolve, or resist fear or emotional manipulation.

SKILLS

Skills represent abilities learned and honed through education and practice. This is a brief summary of each skill, along with its linked aptitude. Each *field skill* must be applied towards a specific focus area, such as Hardware: Electronics or Hardware: Armorer:

Athletics (SOM): Physical activity in gravity with a humanoid, uplift, or biomimicked morph, including climbing, running, swimming, gymnastics, throwing, and winged flight.

Deceive (SAV): Lying, bluffing, conning, fast talk, impersonation, acting, and other attempts to misrepresent or hide the truth with words and gestures.

Exotic Skill (Field): Catch-all category for less common skills such as animal handling, contortion, disguise, music, sleight of hand, or throwing knives.

Fray (REF): The ability to get out of the way of danger.

Free Fall (SOM): Physical activity in microgravity.

Guns (REF): Aiming and shooting. Used for beam, kinetic, seeker, and spray weapons.

Hardware (COG, Field): Building, repairing, disabling, upgrading, and physical hacking of technological systems.

Infiltrate (REF): Sneaking, hiding, and escaping detection.

Infosec (COG): Hacking or protecting electronic devices and networks.

Interface (COG): Using and understanding modern electronic devices, networks, weapons, and systems.

Kinesics (SAV): Perception of body language, tells, social cues, and nonverbal communication.

Know (COG, Field): Specialized knowledge in a hobby, scientific pursuit, or professional trade.

Medicine (COG, Field): Care and diagnosis of biological life, including emergency care, forensics, pharmacology, psychosurgery, and surgery.

Melee (SOM): Fighting, whether unarmed or using blades, clubs, or similar handheld weapons.

Perceive (INT): Awareness and use of your physical senses.

Persuade (SAV): Bargaining, convincing, etiquette, and social manipulation.

Pilot (REF, Field): Moving in a vehicle or non-humanoid or non-biomimicked morph.

Program (COG): Writing and modifying software code. Also used for nanofabrication or crafting VR environments or AR illusions.

Provoke (SAV): Intimidation, taunting, seduction, or any invocation of emotion to socially manipulate.

Research (INT): Finding and interpreting data on the mesh.

Survival (INT): Navigation, tracking, finding safe food and shelter, and defending oneself against hostile planetary environments.

MORPH

Your character's current biological, synthetic, or digital form. This may be the body you were born in or one you sleeved into. Morphs come pre-loaded with specific traits, implants, and pools.

POOLS

Pools reflect your character's transhuman capabilities: augmented intelligence, enhanced physical prowess, elevated charisma. They boost your inherent talent and enable you to face down challenges, overcome obstacles, and achieve impressive feats.

Each pool is linked to a different group of aptitudes and skills and may be used in unique ways to modify your rolls or provide other bonuses to your character.

Insight pool is linked to mental capabilities: Cognition, Intuition, and their linked skills.

Moxie pool is linked to social interactions: Savvy, Willpower, and their linked skills. It may also be used for Rep Tests.

Vigor pool is linked to physical efforts: Reflexes, Somatics, and their linked skills.

Flex pool is a wild-card pool. It can be used to affect dice rolls for any tests and for narrative control.

USING POOLS

You may spend points from your pools to affect the tests you make; choose one of the following options. Each pool may only be used for tests that use their linked skills or aptitudes (i.e., a Vigor point can be used on a skill test or aptitude check linked to REF or SOM). Flex may be used on *any* tests. Unless otherwise noted, only 1 pool point may be spent per test.

- **Before Roll:** Ignore all negative modifiers to the test.
- **Before Roll:** Add +20 to the test's target number.
- **After Roll:** Flip-flop a d100 roll. For example, 83 becomes 38.
- **After Roll:** Upgrade a success to a superior success (or one to two).
- **After Roll:** Downgrade a critical failure to a regular failure.
- **Ongoing (Insight/Moxie/Vigor Only):** Receive +5 (1 point) or +10 (2 points) to all skill tests linked to one aptitude for 24 hours or until your next recharge.

USING INSIGHT

Your mental pool may also be used for one of the following effects:



- Go first in an action turn if you are only taking mental or mesh actions and no physical movement. If multiple characters choose this option, they go in Initiative order before everyone else.
- Take an extra quick or complex mental or mesh action in an action turn. This action may only be taken after everyone else has gone. If multiple characters choose this option, they go in Initiative order *after* everyone else has taken their turn.
- Acquire a clue through investigation, research, or analysis of the facts at hand, without needing to make a test.

USING MOXIE

Your social pool may be used to affect Rep Tests and also for one of the following effects:

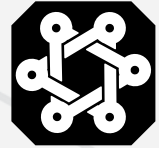


- Ignore the effects of 1 trauma for 24 hours.
- Refresh rep network favors at a cost of 1 point per favor level (refreshing Level 3 favors would cost 3 points).

- Acquire a clue by gathering information via social interactions without needing to make a test.
- Negate a player's social gaffe that the character wouldn't make.

USING VIGOR

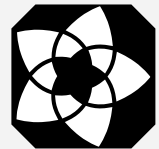
Your physical pool may also be used for one of the following effects:



- Go first in an action turn. If multiple characters choose this option, they go in Initiative order before everyone else.
- Take an extra quick or complex physical action in an action turn. This action may only be taken after everyone else has gone. If multiple characters choose this option, they go in Initiative order *after* everyone else has taken their turn.
- Ignore the effects of 1 wound for 24 hours.

USING FLEX

Your wild-card pool is used for narrative control:



- Introduce a new or existing NPC to a scene. Their presence must be plausible. You may define one aspect of this NPC: their morph, factional allegiance, a noteworthy skill, a specific trait, etc. The GM determines the other details.
- Introduce an item to a scene. Its presence must be plausible. The item cannot be offensive (no weapons) and it must be of Minor (not Rare or Restricted) Complexity. It can be a useful tool, a necessary piece of gear, or even a clue. The GM determines its placement within the scene and the nature of any clues.
- Introduce an environmental factor to a scene. Its presence must be plausible. It should provide a new detail that does not drastically alter the scene. Examples include hiding spots, cover, distractions, shelter, or exploitable elements such as a ladder or window.
- Introduce a new, plausible relationship between your character and an existing NPC. This connection should be more loose or minor than close or serious. For example, you may have a common friend, shared history, or old but minor rivalry. You may define the rough basics, but the GM determines the finer points and the NPC's attitude towards your character.

REFRESHING POOLS

You recover the points you have spent from pools by taking a *short* or *long recharge* action to rest and recalibrate. You can't increase a pool above its original rating; unspent points are lost.

- **Short Recharge (2/day):** Short recharges are a task action with a timeframe of 10 minutes. You may take two short recharges per 24-hour period. Each short recharge restores 1d6 pool points; you decide where to allocate them. Some gear or psi sleights may provide bonus refreshed points.
- **Long Recharge (1/day):** A long recharge is a task action with a timeframe of 4 hours (8 for flats and other biomorphs without biomods). You may only benefit from one long recharge per 24-hour period. A long recharge completely restores your pools to their full value.

INITIATIVE ORDER

The order of actions between characters within a turn is determined by *Initiative*. Your Initiative stat is your (Intuition + Reflexes) ÷ 5.

At the beginning of an action sequence, every character rolls for initiative. Roll 1d10 and add your Initiative stat. The highest total goes first, followed by the other characters in descending order. In the event of a tie, characters go simultaneously (or resolve by highest REF or roll-off). In Initiative order, declare and resolve the actions you will take that action turn. Once everyone has gone, a new action turn starts, using the same Initiative order. When it is no longer necessary to minutely keep track of who goes when, you can drop out of Initiative order and return to free-form game time.

TAKING THE INITIATIVE

You may spend Vigor (p. 7) to go first in Initiative. You return to your regular Initiative roll order the next round. If multiple characters spend Vigor, they go in Initiative order first, followed by everyone else.

DELAYING ACTIONS

You may choose to delay until later in the Initiative order. You can specify when you want to act (before or after another character, for example), a specific condition that will cause you to act (i.e., if someone attacks you), or simply go on standby. If you delay, you can interrupt another character acting later in the Initiative order once they have declared their action and go before them. You may interrupt another between their actions or before they take an extra action.

If you delay, you must act before the end of the turn; you may not save your action for the next turn. If multiple characters delay and choose to act at the same time or wait until the end of the turn, the one with the lowest Initiative roll must declare their action first, and the higher Initiative character can choose to interrupt or go after.

EXTRA ACTIONS

You may spend Vigor or Insight (p. 7) for an extra physical or mental action each turn. These extra actions take before the end of the turn, after everyone else has gone. If multiple characters take extra actions, they are handled in Initiative order. You may not take more than two extra actions in a single action turn.

RESOLVING COMBAT

Not every problem can be solved with words or wits. Whether you employ fists, knives, guns, or more creative options, all violence in *Eclipse Phase* is handled as an opposed test between the attacker and defender. Use the following steps to resolve combat situations.

STEP 1: DECLARE ATTACK

The attacker initiates by taking a complex action to attack on their turn in the Initiative order. The nature of the attack must be declared. The skill used depends on the method used to attack. Melee (close combat) and Guns (ranged weapons) are most commonly used, but some attacks may call for Athletics (thrown grenades), Hardware: Explosives (placed charges), Interface (electronic weapon systems), or an Exotic skill appropriate to the weapon.

STEP 2: DECLARE DEFENSE

Defense is an automatic action. Unless they are surprised or incapacitated, the defender always has the option to respond.

Melee Defense: Against a melee attack, the defender may choose to block and parry using their own Melee skill or dodge using Fray.

Ranged Defense: Ranged attacks are much harder to dodge; defenders use their Fray skill ÷ 2.

Full Defense: Characters that have declared they are engaging in full defense may defend as above, with a +30 modifier.

STEP 3: APPLY MODIFIERS

Apply any appropriate situational, wound/trauma, or other modifiers to the attacker's and defender's skills, as appropriate.

STEP 4: MAKE OPPOSED TEST

Both the attacker and defender roll d100 against their modified skill target numbers.

STEP 5: DETERMINE RESULT

If the attacker fails, the attack misses completely. If the attacker succeeds and the defender fails, the attack hits.

If both attacker and defender succeed in their tests, compare their dice rolls. If the attacker's dice roll is higher, the attack hits despite a spirited defense; otherwise, the attack fails to connect (see *Opposed Tests*, p. 5).

Attacker Superior Success: For each superior success the attacker scores, increase the DV inflicted by +1d6.

Attacker Critical Success: If the attacker hits with a critical, the defender's Armor Value is halved or damage is doubled.

Defender Superior/Critical Fail: Ignored. Getting hit is bad enough.

STEP 6: ROLL DAMAGE

Every attack has a Damage Value (DV). If the attack hits, roll the dice and total the results. Superior results may increase your damage dice.

Some attacks may have additional effects, as noted in the description and weapon/ammo traits. These may call for the defender to make additional tests.

STEP 7: APPLY ARMOR

If the defender is wearing armor, it will protect them. Determine which part of the defender's Armor Value (AV) applies—energy or kinetic armor (AVs are listed as energy/kinetic). Reduce the damage total by the appropriate value. If the damage is reduced to 0 or less, the armor is effective and the attack fails to injure the target.

Both critical hits and armor-piercing attacks will reduce the AV by half. A critical armor-piercing attack will reduce the AV to 0.

STEP 8: APPLY DAMAGE

Inflicted damage that exceeds armor is applied to the defender. Keep track of this total on the character sheet. If the accumulated damage equals or exceeds the defender's Durability, they are incapacitated and may die. If it equals or exceeds their Death Rating, they are killed/destroyed.

COMBAT MODIFIERS

Numerous factors can impact an attack's outcome. These modifiers apply to all types of attacks.

Situation	Modifiers
Superior position	+20
Wounded/traumatized	-10 per wound/trauma
Called shot	-10
Using off-hand	-20
Wielding two-handed weapon with one hand	-20
Very small target (mouse or insect)	-30
Small target (child-sized)	-10
Large target (car sized)	+10
Very large target (side of a barn)	+30
Visibility impaired (minor: glare, light smoke, dim light)	-10
Visibility impaired (major: heavy smoke, dark)	-20
Blind Attacks	-30/50% miss chance

STEP 9: DETERMINE WOUNDS

If the inflicted damage, less armor, from a single attack equals or exceeds the defender's Wound Threshold, they suffer a *wound*. Multiple wounds may be applied with a single attack if the modified DV is two or more factors beyond the Wound Threshold. Each wound applies a cumulative -10 modifier to actions and -1 to Initiative. A character with 3 wounds, for example, suffers -30 to all actions and -3 to Initiative. Some traits, wares, drugs, and pools allow you to ignore wound modifiers. These effects are cumulative, though a maximum of 3 wounds worth of modifiers may be negated (-30 to actions and -3 to Initiative).

RANGED COMBAT

Ranged weapons have one or more firing modes that determines their rate of fire:

Single Shot (SS): These weapons only fire one shot per action turn.

Semi-Automatic (SA): Semi-automatic weapons are capable of quick, repeated fire.

Burst Fire (BF): Burst-fire weapons release a burst of shots with a single trigger pull. You may shoot a burst against a single target (concentrated fire) or against two targets who are standing within one meter of each other. In the case of concentrated fire, you can choose either a +10 modifier to hit or increase the DV by +1d10. In the case of two adjacent targets, make a single attack test against both.

Full Automatic (FA): Full-auto weapons release a hail of shots with a single trigger pull. You may attack a single target with concentrated fire or up to three separate targets within one meter of each other. In the case of concentrated fire, choose either a +30 modifier to hit or increase the DV by +2d10. In the case of two adjacent targets, make a single attack test against all three.

RANGED MODIFIERS

These modifiers apply to ranged combat attacks.

Situation	Modifiers
Aim: Quick/Complex	+10/+30
Attacker Behind Cover	-10
Attacker In Melee	-30
Attacker Not Using Smartlink or Laser Sight	-10
Attacker Running	-20
Defender Behind Minor/Moderate/Major Cover	-10/-20/-30
Defender Hidden	-30 & 50% miss chance
Defender Prone and at Range (10+ m)	-10
Firing Mode	
Burst Fire (Concentrated)	+10 or +1d10 DV
Full Auto (Concentrated)	+30 or +2d10 DV
Indirect Fire	-30
Range	
Point-Blank (2 m)	+10
Range	-10
Beyond Range	-10 per Range increment -1d10 DV for kinetic weapons

RANGE

Every ranged weapon has a Range rating, indicating the distance to which it is optimally effective. Attacks are broken down into four categories, each with their own modifier:

Point-Blank: 2 meters or less. +10 to hit. Cone weapons +1d10 DV.

Close: 10 meters or less. No hit modifier. Cone weapons +1d10 DV.

Range: Up to the weapon's Range rating in meters. -10 to hit.

Beyond Range: An additional -10 modifier per Range multiple. For example, a target at 200 meters with a Range 50 weapon would be -40 to hit. Additionally, kinetic and cone weapons hit targets beyond range at -1d10 DV, unless in vacuum.

COMBAT SUMMARY

Combat is an opposed test:

- Attacker rolls attack skill +/- modifiers.
- Melee: Defender rolls Fray or Melee skill +/- modifiers.
- Ranged: Defender rolls (Fray skill ÷ 2) +/- modifiers.
- If attacker succeeds and rolls higher than the defender, the attack hits. Roll damage.
- Superior hits inflict +1d6 DV
- Critical hits reduce armor by half or double the DV.
- The weapon's damage is reduced by the target's energy or kinetic armor, as appropriate.
- If the damage equals or exceeds the target's Wound Threshold, a wound is scored. If the damage equals or exceeds double the target's Wound Threshold, two wounds are scored, and so on.
- If total damage reaches Durability, the target is incapacitated. If it reaches Death Rating, they are killed/destroyed.



USING THE MESH

The full rules for using the mesh and hacking are beyond the scope of the *Quick-Start Rules*, this is a quick-and-dirty summary.

Almost everything is computerized and wirelessly connected in *Eclipse Phase*. Through their mesh insert brain implants, characters can access the mesh, view augmented reality, communicate privately, and share real-time tactical data with each other.

ONLINE RESEARCH

While simple mesh searches do not require a test, looking up hard-to-find information or scanning a network requires a Research Test.

A few examples of how Research can be used:

- Maps, routes, climate, and local environmental conditions in a habitat.
- Accessing public sensor networks or archived footage and run facial/biometric recognition searches.
- Real-time language translation.
- Searching public databases, blogs, forums, archives, social networks.
- Searching a particular system for users or files.

HACKING

There are two ways to hack a target: brute-force or careful probing.

BRUTE-FORCE HACKING

Brute-force hacking is quick but messy. To brute-force a target, you trigger a library of software exploit tools to methodically launch attacks against known vulnerabilities. Brute-forcing takes a complex action and an Infosec Test at -30. The hacker or AI defending the system opposes with their Infosec. If successful, you gain access to the target system, but the system is automatically alerted to your presence.

CAREFUL PROBING

Careful probing takes time, but is more effective. You must take an hour to quietly probe the target's defenses, looking for an opening without triggering an alert. This also requires an opposed Infosec Test against the target's hacker or AI. If successful, you penetrate their system without drawing attention to your presence.

SYSTEM SUBVERSION AND DEFENSE

Once within a system, hackers can access files, disable security systems, monitor private sensor feeds, lock out other users, tamper with augmented reality inputs, and so on. Actions that would be allowed for any authorized user of the system do not require a test. Actions that would normally only be permitted for admins and network security require an opposed Infosec Test. Should the system defender win, they are alerted to the hacker's presence.

Hackers and AIs defending a system may attempt to trace an intruder's physical location, boot them from the system, or shut the system down; each requires a successful opposed Infosec Test.

MUSES

Muses are helper AIs that reside within your mesh inserts. They can perform online tasks for you while you are busy, such as monitor the public sensor mesh in real-time. They can also watch over your own personal network and devices to counter hacking attacks. Muses have Infosec, Interface, and Research skills at 30.

TERMINOLOGY

Every player character knows these words:

Backup: A copy of a person's mind.

Basilisk Hack: A TITAN method of reprogramming or short-circuiting minds via sensory input.

Beehive: A microgravity habitat made from a tunneled-out asteroid or moon.

Cortical Stack: An implanted memory cell used for ego backup.

Disassembler: A nanoswarm that takes things apart at the molecular level.

Ego: The memories, skills, and personality of a person that switches from body to body.

Fa Jing: A massive conglomerate.

Firewall: A secret cross-faction conspiracy dedicated to protecting transhumanity from "existential threats."

Fork: A full or partial copy of an ego. It may be activated as an independent copy of the original person.

Gnat: A tiny flying robot, usually for scouting or spying.

Mesh: The omnipresent wireless data network.

Morph: A body inhabited by an ego. Includes biological biomorphs, robotic synthmorphs, pods (biomorphs with cyberbrains), and virtual infomorphs.

Nanodetector: A handheld device that detects and categorizes nanomachines in the environment.

Nanoswarm: A mass of tiny nanobots.

Psychosurgery: Modification or repairs to the ego.

Resleeving: Switching an ego to a new morph (body).

Scratch Space: Hidden cache of Firewall gear; sometimes contains other surprises.

Taggant: A nanobot that marks a particular item or location.

TITAN: Super-advanced AIs that led to the Fall of Earth and near-extinction of transhumanity.

Triad: A criminal cartel.

Utility Fog: A nanoswarm capable of replicating physical structures.

MOVEMENT

Movement in *Eclipse Phase* is handled like other types of actions. The more complex the movement, the more effort it requires.

MOVEMENT RATE

It may be important to know not just how you're moving, but how far. Every morph, shell, and creature lists a Movement Rate; this applies to whatever inherent form of locomotion it is capable of: walking, slithering, crawling, rolling, hovering, gliding, flying, vectored thrust, etc. Movement Rates list two numbers: your *base move* and *full move*, respectively, in meters per action turn. Most humanoid morphs, for example, have a Movement Rate of 4/20.

MOVEMENT ACTIONS

Each action turn, you declare one type of movement action (with the exceptions of jumping and standing up, which may be combined with others) at the beginning of your initiative or choose to stay put. You may not act and then decide to move, for example, as you will have bypassed applicable modifiers. You may cover distance with your move before, during, and/or after any other actions you take during the turn. Extra actions in a turn do not allow you to cover more distance, but you may finish any incomplete movements with those actions.

BASE MOVE (AUTOMATIC)

Base moves represent leisurely, unhurried motions analogous to casual walking. This is the maximum distance you may move in a single action turn without incurring a modifier.

FULL MOVE (AUTOMATIC)

Full moves are akin to running or moving with effort and speed. This is the maximum distance you may move in meters in a single action turn. Full moves impede your aim and other physical tasks requiring coordination: apply a -20 modifier as appropriate.

REPUTATION

Every character in *Eclipse Phase* has a reputation score in various online social networks. There are 7 primary networks, each with its own focus:

- **@-rep:** The Circle-A List, for autonomists, anarchists, Titanians, scum, and Extropians.
- **c-rep:** CivicNet, used by the Planetary Consortium, Morningstar Constellation, Lunar-Lagrange Alliance, Jovian Republic, and other hypercorps and capitalists.
- **f-rep:** Fame, the media network used by metacelebrities, journalists, socialists, artists, and glitterati.
- **g-rep:** Guanxi, the social network for triads, cartels, gangs, and other criminal groups.
- **i-rep:** The Eye, Firewall's secret internal network.
- **r-rep:** Research Network Affiliates, used by argonauts, scientists, technologists, and researchers of all stripes.
- **x-rep:** ExploreNet, the network for gatecrashers and exoplanet colonists.

USING REP SCORES

You may use your rep scores to acquire information, gear, or favors from others in the social network. To do so requires time and an appropriate favor. Roll Rep score same as you would a skill. The type of favor you are asking for may impact the test. The GM decides whether the favor rates as Trivial (+30), Minor (+10), Moderate (+0), or Major (-30).

REP LIMITS

Using rep has its limits—there are only so many times you can call in a favor. These limits depend on the level of favor:

- **Trivial Favor:** Any time, no limits
- **Minor Favor:** 3 times a week
- **Moderate Favor:** 1 time a week
- **Major Favor:** Once a campaign

A Rep Test failure does not use a favor unless you roll a critical failure. Be sure to mark off favors used on your character sheet.



◀◀ The Hook: A Firewall sentinel went missing on an isolated asteroid habitat. Find them—and the secrets they took with them.

SYNOPSIS

While visiting the beehive habitat Kongyùn to pay off a triad mob boss, a Firewall sentinel named Chi discovered an active TITAN artifact buried in the center of the asteroid. A posse of locals committed to quarantining the artifact killed Chi and sequestered them in a regolith tomb to be forgotten.

Firewall sends a team of sentinels to investigate the disappearance, including Chi's resleeved backup. While expecting a conflict with Fa Jing or the triads, the characters will find the asteroid contains a forgotten TITAN artifact, preying on the minds of the locals. The characters will need to contain or destroy the artifact, while handling Kongyùn's territorial local population.

Acrimony casts the player characters in the roles of investigators tasked with defending the survival of transhumanity as part of Firewall, the system-spanning threat-containment group.

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

This scenario assumes the players are using the Firewall outer system sentinels—Amal, Chi, Njal, and Sváfa. Alternatively, the players may use the Firewall planetary ops team, replacing Chi with Jake Carter as the missing sentinel. If player-generated characters are used, replace all references to Chi with the character with the highest Persuade skill. Groups larger than four may use any combination of outer system, planetary ops, or player-generated characters, but it is recommended the group have a range of skillsets, especially in the fields of investigation, negotiations, and exploration. The scenario assumes they are members of Firewall. Additional character sheets are available online at <http://eclipsephase.com/qsr>

THE SETTING: KONGYÙN

Kongyùn is a glittering black gem of a basalt asteroid, settled by Fa Jing as it approached the perihelion of its highly elliptical orbit. Fa Jing bored the heart out of the asteroid, mining for aluminum, oxygen, and phosphorous. Fa Jing has since shut down the bulk of their operations and left the asteroid to any workers who care to try their luck as Kongyùn begins the next leg of its journey into the long night.

Kongyùn is roughly 9 kilometers in each dimension. The asteroid has three conjoined beehive habitats; Kongyùn Spaceport, which is being gradually scrapped; New City, with nearly 2,000 ex-Fa Jing employees surviving in a space that once held 8,000; and Fa Jing's secretive Lion installation. The asteroid is riddled with a warren of tunnels that may be public or private access, or abandoned altogether (and sometimes in vacuum). All three habitats, as well as many smaller locales, are connected by an intra-asteroid tram. Travelling by tram takes 40 minutes or less. Walking/pulling across the asteroid by a marked route (for example New City to Lion) takes 4 hours. Unmarked tunnels wind and dead-end; every kilometer travelled takes $1d6 \div 2$ hours. The entire asteroid is in microgravity, with limited power and mesh infrastructure. Any tests relying on the local mesh or power grid suffer a -10 modifier in public areas. Utilities and heat are completely absent in abandoned tunnels, may be lacking in private tunnels, and are spotty elsewhere.

The local economy is depressed. Fa Jing limitations on nanofabrication are still in place, so many goods are produced by hand. Visitors may purchase goods through the local company shop, though the selection is limited to basic, low-quality supplies, home goods, and industrial/mining equipment. The triads offer a limited amount of black-market goods, mostly drugs. Kongyùn has a private reputation network, but c-rep and g-rep can be used to acquire goods and favors from the locals and triads, respectively.

THE SITUATION ON KONGYÙN

Due to the time constraints imposed by Kongyùn's orbit, Fa Jing's mining operation was rushed and haphazard. Two months into the operation, a work crew went mad, brutalizing their own people and stockpiling scrap in the tunnels. Fa Jing brushed the matter aside, intent on restoring full operations. A handful of miners began their own investigation, however, and discovered a large chamber containing an unknown artifact, much like some of the TITAN machines left buried on Mars and Luna from the Fall.

The miners attempted to destroy the artifact but failed, so they resorted to sealing it off. But the artifact began reaching through the stone walls to influence individuals from afar, drawing them to the chamber where it would rewrite their minds entirely. The miners, now bound by their secret, took it upon themselves to protect the people of Kongyùn from the device, while keeping it out of the hands of Fa Jing and any outsiders who might seek to exploit it for profit. Led by a Fall veteran named Bves, the group modified maps, restricted access anywhere near the artifact, monitored other locals for signs of malicious influence, and regularly patrolled the tunnels and set traps, all while keeping the artifact itself a secret.

Fa Jing never discovered the artifact. Their activities on the asteroid are limited to last-minute shipping and preparing their Lion installation as part of an outer-system early-detection network for space-faring threats. Due to the sensitivity of the project, Fa Jing will capture anyone intruding physically or virtually in their areas, but otherwise are not involved in the conspiracy. The triads too have limited involvement; they provide some economic and administrative services to the residents, but have no knowledge of the artifact.

Over the years, due to the numerous disappearances and "accidents" caused by the artifact, the locals have come to view the tunnels as dangerous and haunted. Bves's circle is seen as a cultish but influential group; no one dares cross them. As Fa Jing's authority wanes, the now-retired Bves is widely regarded the unspoken yet undisputed leader of the remaining residents. Among themselves, Bves's people identify themselves as "Confessors."

Ten days ago, Chi was sent to Kongyùn to pay off a debt owed by Firewall and drop off a payment of illegal hardware to triad boss Mariposa Chen. Chi recognized something suspicious on Kongyùn and seduced local blogger Chang'e Jade as an information source. Three days after arrival, Chi saw Bves and his party, armed and grim, enter the mining tunnels. Sensing trouble, Chi followed them into sections of the tunnels not listed on the official maps. There Bves found and killed a wandering infected Kongyùn citizen and buried them in the stone. Once Bves left, Chi pressed deeper into the tunnels, finally stumbling on the artifact chamber itself, where they were infected. As Chi emerged, Bves confronted and killed them, then buried their corpse near the chamber.

The player characters (the Firewall team, including Chi's resleeved backup) arrive ten days after the disappearance. While only a few people know about the ultimate fate of Chi, their initial arrival on the station was common knowledge. Meanwhile, Mariposa is still awaiting her payment and Fa Jing is getting skittish about the arrival of mysterious outsiders to their asteroid.

MAJOR NPCS

Here is a quick summary of the key NPCs; see p. 21 for stats.

MARIPOSA CHEN, TRIAD BOSS [STATS • P. 21]

Mariposa is the head of Kongyùn's small triad presence (tolerated by both Bves and Fa Jing). She's awaiting a payout from Firewall, now a week late. While she doesn't know what happened to Chi, she is friendly with Firewall's mission, as long as their actions don't threaten her business. She is sleeved in a bald security pod morph.

JOSEF BVES, CONSPIRACY LEADER [STATS • P. 21]

During the Fall of Earth, Bves worked briefly on the front lines as a combat medic, an experience that left him mentally scarred and aimless. He eventually landed on Kongyùn as a work-team manager for Fa Jing. When people on the station went mad, he recognized it as an exsurgent infection and led the team to contain the artifact. His brutal psychosurgery operations were the only way to save those who were artifact-touched, and it enabled him to diagnose new infections through the use of embedded keywords the device left as artifacts of its mental reprogramming. Bves and his group of Confessors protect Kongyùn from a curse they cannot share and the population does not wish to know. He often uses multiple forks (copies of himself) to cover such a wide area.

Bves killed Chi and leads the effort to stop the current Firewall team, for fear of them mishandling the artifact. Bves (and all his forks) are sleeved in bearded bouncer morphs wearing gray work uniforms.

LUKE BEST, HACKER [STATS • P. 21]

Best may be the only hacker on the station, but he has lots of practice and a home ground advantage. Bves recruited Best early into the circle, and Best tracks the party as they investigate. As an infomorph, Best resides on his own private mesh servers or ghost rider modules on Bves or another character.

CHANG'E JADE, GOSSIP BLOGGER [STATS • P. 21]

Jade is as close as Kongyùn comes to having a reporter and has been tracking Fa Jing operations since they began. She's familiar with New City and its people, and knows of secret passages into the asteroid, but not of the artifact or the conspiracy to protect it. Chi seduced Jade for insight on station operations, and Jade has inflated the fling in her mind. Jade is sleeved in a dragonfly morph and has no combat skills.

DR. JU GUO, FA JING MANAGER [STATS • P. 21]

Dr. Guo is the transitional manager for the Fa Jing holdings on Kongyùn. As Fa Jing has already turned over the mining operation to local hands, her responsibility is limited to completing the secretive Lion tracking installation on the far end of the asteroid. Dr. Guo has no part in the conspiracy, but the arrival of the team is a security anomaly she will track. If she becomes aware of the artifact, she will seize it on behalf of the company. She is sleeved in a menton morph.

CONSTABLE YU [STATS • P. 21]

Yu is part of Fa Jing's small standing security force, one of a dozen officers assigned in New City. Most Fa Jing activity outside of the Lion installation is around the ports. Yu has been on Kongyùn for six months. He knows there's something odd about the people of New City, but he isn't paid enough to find out what. Yu is sleeved in a security pod.

FIT TO DEPART

The characters are contacted as a group via mesh by their Firewall proxy, Eludere. They are brought to a virtual conference room. A model of a black, carbonaceous rock hangs in the center of the room. Once all the characters are settled, read the following aloud:

MISSION BRIEFING

Alright all, this is an emergency investigation. Ten days ago, Chi was delivering a payoff to a contact, a triad boss by the name of Mariposa Chen. She was instrumental on Operation Earwig. Mariposa knows of Firewall, but is not a trusted asset. She currently resides on a mid-sized asteroid called Kongyùn. We know Chi arrived on the station, but then disappeared. For what it's worth, Mariposa reports they never made contact. Chi of course, is back here with us, resleeved from the backup they left before departing.

Kongyùn used to be a Fa Jing mine. It's mostly abandoned, except for a Fa Jing outpost called Lion at one end, and scavengers and miners pulling off old Fa Jing equipment at the other. The Lion project doesn't seem dangerous to Firewall, but it's well protected so probably best to give it space. It's possible Mariposa knows something she isn't revealing so you might want to start there. Whatever the cause, we need to determine what happened to our sentinel, while continuing to protect Firewall operations and secrecy. Firewall has no other assets or stakes in the habitat, so you are authorized to act as you see fit.

I have arranged transit on board the fast supply shuttle, the *Red Coronet*, leaving in two hours. At Kongyùn you'll be at the BestRest motel. Sorry, all the five-star rooms were booked. You'll notice on your maps, we've marked a hidden scratch space of gear you can access in an emergency. Kongyùn has tight security checks, so no weapons, fabbers, or combat morphs will be permitted past immigration. Pack appropriately. That also means we will not be smuggling in a new payment to Mariposa. If she never got it, we'll arrange something in a month. Don't let her distract you from your mission.

If the characters ask about the operation Mariposa is being paid for, Eludere will tell them the operation is out of scope for the current investigation, and they have not been cleared for that information. However, she can share the payment is a single-use nanoswarm. Eludere doesn't know anything about Fa Jing's project Lion, and pictures of the location show communications dishes.

WHAT THE CHARACTERS KNOW

The characters have been given a brief from Firewall. This info is known to all the characters as of the time they land on Kongyùn:

- Kongyùn was formerly a Fa Jing mining colony. It is still inhabited by a large civilian population.
- Chi was sent to Kongyùn to deliver a payment to a Firewall triad contact, Mariposa Chen.
- Chi disappeared soon after, and Mariposa reports she is still awaiting payment.
- The character named Chi in the party was restored from a copy of Chi's mind, and put in a new body.

ARRIVING ON KONGYÙN

Fa Jing controls the only legitimate farcasting facility, and Eludere wants to avoid the triad darkcasting services until Firewall can confirm Mariposa was not involved in Chi's disappearance. The party has been provided transit on the fast transport, the *Red Coronet*. Eludere also gives the team fake identities as scrap resellers. The sentinels are only passengers on the ship, but if they hack or acquire access to the ship sensors and perform a scan of the asteroid (using the Interface skill), they can identify the ports, a few minor surface installations, and eight small satellites. A superior success (33+ on the roll) provides asteroid density information. It is heavily mined and geologically unstable, and there are tunnels and pockets of vacuum not listed on the public maps. With two superior successes (66+) or a critical success, the scans determine the satellites are part of a radio or IR telescope.

The *Red Coronet* is scheduled to dock at New City. Once there, everyone disembarking will need to undergo a full scan for hazardous materials and weapons. Any lethal weapons, combat morphs, or unauthorized equipment (such as nanofabricators) must be left on the ship. Smuggling in equipment through the scanner requires an Infiltration test at a -30 modifier (no modifier for items with the Concealable trait). The characters' berths are reserved for the return trip in four days, so they are permitted to return to the *Red Coronet*, and can safely stow gear there. However, Fa Jing, the triads, or the Confessors may block them from departing if they appear to be investigating things they shouldn't.

Not far outside of the port, the characters are confronted by Constable Eli Yung, Fa Jing security. Yung interrogates the characters about their business on the station, where they are staying, and who they are meeting with. Though friendly, he emphasizes they should finish their business and leave. If Yung detects any resistance or belligerence, he will subject them to a second weapons search, and seize anything that looks appealing.

New City is neither new nor much of a city. The infrastructure is decrepit and spotty. The population has shrunk to a quarter of its original size and lives in material poverty. The majority of the residents are sleeved in dented, silica-flecked synthmorphs. The habitat is kept in low-light conditions, and basic things like power and heat come at a premium. The habitat does offer several markets, clinics, and other services, but they cater to miners and scrappers; a team of spunky investigators will immediately stand out.

LEADS AND CONTACTS

Once arrived and settled, the characters may begin pursuing leads:

- Checking in or investigating the motel (p. 15).
- Researching the mesh for security feeds or news stories. This may lead to contacting local bloggers for additional information (p. 15).
- Contacting Mariposa Chen (p. 15).
- Visiting or hacking Fa Jing to determine their involvement (p. 16).
- Exploring New City for leads (p. 16).
- Checking the Firewall scratch space (p. 16).
- Exploring the tunnels for signs of Chi (p. 17).

LOCAL CHARM

The people still on Kongyùn are a mix of hypercorp left-behinds and isolationist brinkers. Kongyùn is remote, highly insular, and gets few visitors, so the characters' arrival will provoke curiosity and fears of trouble. Social interactions will generally be hostile (at minimum a -10 penalty). Rumors are likely to follow the characters, painting them as Fa Jing suits, corporate spies, salvagers looking to pull a con, coyotes smelling desperation, or worse. The characters may find many stores are "not open for business," even as stock is on display, and strangers watch them with icy silence.

The local language is a pidgin of Cantonese, French, and English, with technical jargon and local references added liberally and a local accent that swallows words, making the results

of real-time mesh translation a bit interesting.

If the sentinels get too nosy with questions or reveal that Chi was on Kongyùn previously (locals that interacted with Chi on their previous visit may identify them on their own with a Kinesics test), the local response becomes more extreme—they refuse to talk, walk away, or bluntly tell the PCs to leave. Bves will make threats more transparent. If Chi's presence becomes known, Chang'e Jade will seek them out, chastising Chi (or whomever she guesses is Chi) for ignoring her, before attaching herself to their arm like an old girlfriend. Mariposa will also seek a word about the delivery.

BESTREST MOTEL AND INN

Each character has a 2 × 1 × 1 meter capsule room reserved for them at the BestRest Motel. The motel also offers limited charging and nutrition stations for guests. The motel is mostly vacant, storing more broken morphs awaiting refit than living people. It is managed by a stodgy manager named Lee who is happy to take the characters' money, but does not recall any details on anyone who stayed there previously. Eludere can confirm this is the same place Chi stayed.

The motel mesh is weak (-10 on all intrusion and interface actions). The network is actively monitored by a hostile hacker, Best. If characters access local public camera archives (see *Mesh Research*, below), they can confirm Chi checked in then left, still carrying Mariposa's payment in a steel case. If they get access to Chi's room, they will find it has been cleaned and sterilized.

Any items left in the BestRest are liable to be tampered with or stolen by Bves while the team is away.

MESH RESEARCH

It is easy to access public AR maps of the asteroid (no test needed). Maps showing all of the private and forgotten tunnels are harder to acquire (requiring a Research test) and still don't show everything. With a successful Research test, characters can find blog posts tracking Chi's last actions in the habitat (move to *Local Bloggers*, below).

Public camera feed archives (no test needed) show Chi taking a steel case from the motel to the Kongyùn tram, then from the tram stop to the Fa Jing Lion installation, where they hand the case to a guard, and return, by tram, to the ship. With a successful Interface Test, they spot artifacts on the video from editing. Examining the artifacts suggests most of the images of Chi were forged. Any original videos have been removed.

LOCAL BLOGGERS

Chi's disappearance is not the only mystery on Kongyùn. In fact, people have been disappearing or suffering psychological distress almost since mining began. Public accounts of the incident with the miners who first discovered the artifact have been suppressed (-30 to Research tests) but remain in the locals' consciousness. Most medical professionals write the incidents off as traumatic claustrophobia and unsafe tunnels, but a few conspiracy theories abound, most suggesting cover-ups attributed to secretive Fa Jing projects.

Several local bloggers document news and events, but only one addresses missing persons and conspiracies: Chang'e Jade, reporter and amateur historian. Her blog, "State of Mine," documents station history, unsolved mysteries, and sordid speculation. She has been blogging extensively about Chi, and has even led some limited efforts to find them. Unknown to Jade, Bves tolerates her activities only because she is being used as a honey pot—Best has thoroughly hacked her mesh inserts and accounts and monitors her closely.

Jade is eager to meet new arrivals, either online or in person. If the characters spend more than a few days on Kongyùn without visiting her or if it is discovered Chi is back on the station, Jade will seek them out. She is sleeved in a small dragonfly morph. Her speech, much like her behavior, is fast, fidgety, inquisitive, and prone to over-exaggeration. Jade already knows the characters' cover identities. She will answer their questions, but for each she answers, she gets to ask them one about their business, motivations, insights, and so on. Jade does her research, and if she suspects they are lying, she will stop sharing. The characters can convince Jade to help them track Chi with an Opposed Test, the characters' Persuasion against Jade's WIL Check of 45. In this case, she can lead the characters to where Chi was last reported seen (see *Circling the Fire*, p. 17).

Jade is looking for Chi specifically because of their brief fling—and Chi may have overstated their affection at the time. If Jade knows Chi is in the party, Jade will automatically ally with the characters, on the assumption that Chi is actually looking to bring Jade with them to continue their romantic commitment.

MARIPOSA CHEN

Mariposa operates out of New City's primary medical clinic, a repurposed two-story office complex. The triad has set up the clinic as a speakeasy for black-market goods, body modifications, and psychosurgery. While the triad makes a show of force with their hustlers, enforcers, and smugglers, the majority of the people working out of the space are private doctors and mechanics. Those with g-rep or credits to spend can access goods not otherwise available on the local market. Mariposa does most of her work out of a private back room stacked high with cables, batteries, and jugs of hydraulic fluid.

Mariposa is short, bulky, and bald, sleeved in a security pod morph and wearing a miner's vacsuit covered with stickers and graffiti. She has dozens of pockets and pouches on her person, where she stores everything from nutrition bars to cortical stacks.

Mariposa does not initially know the characters are from Firewall, and any requests for information will require a favor. If they choose to reveal their identities, Mariposa expects to be paid what she is owed immediately and will attempt to hold the characters until they confess where the payment is. The characters may attempt a Persuade test (opposed by her WIL Check 60) to leave without issue. If successful, Mariposa will give them 12 hours to recover her payment. With a superior success, she may provide some additional resources in finding what happened to Chi. With a superior failure, she will call in triad enforcers (see *Thugs*, p. 21) to emphasize the urgency of the situation, who will beat two members of the party with shock batons. Mariposa doesn't have the people for a decisive victory against an armed party. If fighting breaks out, she will seek to disengage from unfavorable odds.

Mariposa made her own inquiries when Chi disappeared, but found little. The two had been talking online, planning a clandestine meeting, but hadn't yet met directly. Mariposa searched Chi's room and found some extra smart clothes, tools, and a few other personal effects, which she resold. Mariposa can be convinced to lend an enforcer to help the characters navigate Kongyùn, at the cost of a moderate g-rep favor. This enforcer will have orders not to engage with the Confessors or Fa Jing security in any way.

Mariposa is aware that strange things go on in the asteroid. The locals believe Fa Jing has a transmitter that affects peoples' minds, causing strange dreams and erratic behavior. Mariposa knows that's ridiculous, but she's received enough clients with unusual mental trauma to know something is wrong. She is aware that Bves also helps locals with psychosurgery and has had some luck helping victims recover. Though she will not say so, she views Bves as a future rival and is reluctant to create tension with him. She can also direct the characters to Jade as a source of information and hearsay.

FA JING

Fa Jing holds a secure facility on the far side of the asteroid from New City, with a staff of 100 engineers and scientists and 20 security guards, augmented by drones (see *Fa Jing Security*, p. 17). The facility itself includes a cluster of super-cooled, wide-field telescopes to detect extrasolar ships, and narrow-beam communications to report home, all using cutting-edge technology that will need to survive, automated, for a century. They don't take calls, and their security forces will capture and interrogate any interlopers.

There are multiple ways of getting in touch with Fa Jing. The PCs can attempt to breach the facility and become captured, use c-rep to send a message, or use Research skill to acquire an executive email address from public mesh sources. In any case, curious interlopers will be referred to Dr. Ju Guo, facility administrator.

The facility itself is locked down. Once inside, most security is for safety, in the form of reinforced doors around radiation sources or temperature-controlled rooms. Dr. Guo's office is large, but spartan, with locally made art and holograms of star fields. The facility does have a medical clinic, which they may use if any of the characters are captured.

Dr. Guo (p. 13) is driven by her own curiosity and will pry into the sentinels' intentions, even sharing information of her own, though she will stay quiet about Project Lion. Depending on how the conversation goes, she may run searches for Chi on Fa Jing's private security feeds. This will provide the original footage of Chi following Bves and his armed crew into the tunnels (see *The Situation on Kongyùn*, p. 13),

but nothing more (Bves has removed Fa Jing sensors from areas near the artifact). She is aware of the asteroid's many disappearances, but believes poor safety is responsible. She is also aware of the local influence of Bves and Chen; though she communicates with neither, she will avoid antagonizing either unless necessary.

If the characters drop enough hints as to who they are or what they are doing, Dr. Guo will set assets to follow them (both plainclothes security and gnat bots). Dr. Guo avoids killing people needlessly, except saboteurs and spies.

NEW CITY

If the characters spend some time in New City, they are likely to come across the Confessors led by Bves. If Bves sees the characters, he will stare them down and tell them they are not welcome here. If Bves is not interrupted, his posse enters an XP store and seizes a stock boy by the arms. Bves addresses the stock boy in a loud voice, "shamsu heiroah yanaksha." The terrified boy responds, "iltubzuga, isthazuhma." Bves and his group then drag the boy into the tunnels. Onlookers cry or stare, but do not interrupt. In the tunnels Bves has a guarded psychosurgery lab, where they will amputate portions of the boy's personality in order to excise infection.

The characters may attempt to intervene. Bves does not want to fight, but he is attempting to rescue the boy from terminal infection. A wandering Fa Jing security guard may attempt to de-escalate, commanding Bves to release the boy and leave. Bves will comply.

If the characters choose to track Bves over several days, he will eventually return to the artifact as part of his normal patrol for stragglers (see *Circling the Fire*, p. 17).

FIREWALL SCRATCH SPACE

The map Eludere provided shows the Firewall scratch space is hidden inside a concealed crevasse in the basalt walls of an unlit tunnel, a kilometer from inhabited space. Inside, the characters find a small cache of gear (see below), Chi's missing steel case, and a note. The case is locked (Armor 6/4, DR 40), but Chi's backup can guess the password with a successful INT Check. Inside is an advanced, industrial disassembler swarm hive—Mariposa's payment.

The note says: "Someone is preying on the locals. I'm holding on to the triad payment until I know it's not them. I'll be watching and will report back as soon as I have something."

GEAR CACHE

The Firewall operatives find the following stashed gear:

- 2 doses of kick, a combat drug. It provides +1 Vigor pool to biomorphs for 2 hours. Users are jumpy; make a WIL check or react without thinking to unexpected noises.
- 2 nanobandages (for biomorphs) and 1 repair spray (for synthmorphs and equipment). Each is single use and repairs 1d10 damage (taking 1 hour) and 1 wound (taking 1 day).
- A cleaner nanoswarm that can sweep and polish a room, which is handy to remove forensic traces. The swarm can be re-used multiple times.
- The railgun pistol is DV 2d10, SA/BF/FA, Range 45, and armor-piercing (reduce armor by half).
- The disassembler swarm once deployed will take apart any object (including characters!) in a 10-meter diameter sphere area; it can be

FA JING SECURITY

INFILTRATION

Sensors monitor the perimeter tunnels and asteroid surface around the Lion facility. Sneaking past requires one or more opposed tests, pitting Infiltration skill against a Perceive skill of 60.

Exterior airlocks are equipped with automated sentry guns (Guns 40, DV 2d10+4, SA/BF, armor-piercing, Armor 6/12, DUR 40). These will warn away intruders once, then fire warning shots. If intruders persist or attack, they will raise an alarm (bringing 1d6 guards to investigate) and shoot to kill. The guns are securely wirelessly networked (-20 to hack, opposed with Infosec 40).

The airlocks themselves are locked. Gaining access requires a Hardware: Electronics test at -20 (timeframe 1 minute), hacking (resisted with Infosec 40), direct assault (Armor 25/15, DR 150, WT 15), or the biometric handprint of a Fa Jing employee.

programmed to target or ignore specific types of matter. It inflicts 2d6 damage per turn, destroying armor first. It is primarily intended to function as a precise industrial mining tool, but it can be used for other creative purposes. This hive can produce a new swarm or replenish an existing one once per day.

VACANT HALLWAYS, EMPTY SPACES

The characters may choose to explore Kongyùn hoping to uncover clues. The first time they leave the inhabited portions of Kongyùn, Bves and a group of his Confessors will emerge from the darkness and shout, "Shamsu heiroah yanaksha." Seeing the characters aren't infected, he continues, "You have no business here. This is our home, our ways. Leave now or stay forever."

Bves will not permit the characters to proceed down the tunnels, and will fight if attacked. If this is a stalemate, after a minute a Fa Jing security guard will arrive to deescalate, asking the characters to find a different route to their destination. If the characters leave, Bves's group will clear out after ten minutes.

If the characters explore without a set destination, make a secret d10 roll on the Tunnel Exploration table (p. 18). For every 12 hours they've spent in Kongyùn add a +1 to the roll. Each attempt takes three hours.

UNWANTED COMPANY

Once it is clear the characters are searching for Chi, Best will take the time to hack the characters' mesh inserts, to create backdoors for him to leverage later. Meanwhile, Bves will attempt to remove any Kongyùn natives from the characters' party. While they are wandering public spaces or get separated from the characters, two of Bves's people will pull the NPCs aside and convince them to disappear for a while. If the characters keep the NPCs within sight, Bves won't get an opportunity to confront them. However, he will send warnings over the mesh that they need to leave the characters.

If the characters attract the attention of Fa Jing, a pair of gnats will follow them at a distance if they stray outside of the public mesh.

HACKING

A character may attempt to hack the Fa Jing network to collect information on Fa Jing operations or Chi's activities *Using the Mesh* (p. 10). Infosec Tests are opposed by the facility's security AI with Infosec 40. If they fail, the network locks down, terminating all outside connections for six hours. On a superior fail, the hacker is directed towards a honeypot data node holding fake data. With two superior fails, they are also traced; Fa Jing dispatches a security crew that will arrive at the hacker's location in 5–20 minutes to subdue and interrogate them.

A hacker who successfully accesses Fa Jing's network can easily acquire background information on the purpose of the Lion installation (and proving Fa Jing is not responsible for the local anomalous events). They can also run facial recognition searches on Fa Jing's private security sensors to unveil what actually happened with Chi.

CIRCLING THE FIRE

By leads or luck, the characters should eventually find, deep in the unmapped sections of Kongyùn, a taggant nanobot set to respond to any Firewall character. This is the start of a bread crumb trail. The trail continues deeper into the asteroid, through an airlock into a privately-owned tunnel left in vacuum, where it disappears. Two hundred meters down, the characters can see a light bobbing in the tunnel. As they approach, it becomes clear it is a single woman, working. She addresses them, especially any Kongyùn citizens in the group, "you shouldn't be here. This space is closed off." She won't act to inhibit their progress and has nothing else to say.

The characters can continue nearly a kilometer further towards the center of the asteroid, following winding switchbacks and forgotten breadcrumbs. At points, tiny utility meshes left by miners can provide mesh access and information on the tunnel status ahead. Here Bves will execute his final ambush to try and drive the characters off.

SAVE STRANGERS; KILL STRANGERS

As the characters approach a particularly narrow switchback, Bves's team will remotely detonate three improvised explosive devices. They are positioned with one at the turn, and one on either side, to hit the entire party with DV 3d10 + 6. Additionally, the explosions fill the area with smoke (-20 penalty to actions requiring vision). The gamemaster may roll a secret Perceive Test at -20 for each character to notice the IEDs. Any characters in range who see the explosives may attempt a Fray Test to reduce the damage by half, but vision penalties will still apply.

Best will hack the party, using the backdoors he planted earlier. Ahead in the tunnel are six of Bves's best soldiers, led by Bves himself. They attempt to pin the characters down at the curve. Behind the characters by 140 meters are a group of three more of Bves's people, who will catch up in 7 turns. Both will attempt to pin down the characters where they can throw thermite at them, or until the

TUNNEL EXPLORATION

d10 Roll Result

- 1-2 Hours of exploring discover miles of abandoned tunnels, sealed off without power, mesh, or fresh air. The characters return with only rock dust. The characters discover a door not on the public maps. The door is clearly a new addition, and is firmly locked (requiring a Hardware: Industrial test at -10 to force open; Armor 15, DR 100). If breached, the Fa Jing station goes on high alert and responds with 2 Fa Jing guards (use *Thugs* for stats, p. 21) who will attempt to capture or drive away any interlopers. Captured characters are taken to Dr. Guo (see *Fa Jing*, 16).
- 3-4 The characters stumble into a privately owned (and defended) set of tunnels. The tunnels have air, but mesh and power is locked down (Interface at -10 to gain access). If the characters are detected, they are confronted by a pair of Kongyùn miners who will demand they leave. If the characters start trouble, the miners call the local militia for backup (use *Thugs* for stats, p. 21).
- 5-6 The characters find a section of forgotten tunnels, left without power, mesh, or atmosphere. Several hours from the populated areas, a band of five locals confront them, telling them they have no business on Kongyùn and threatening to hurt them. If the locals feel they have an advantage on the party, they will use non-deadly force to rough up and rob the characters (use *Thugs* for stats, p. 21). They will respond to force with force.
- 7-9 While exploring a series of tunnels not on the AR maps, the characters detect a taggant nanobot set to respond to Chi's mesh ID.
- 10+ Proceed on to the next section, *Circling the Fire* (p. 17).

characters surrender. If the tide of battle turns, Bves's people will fall back, detonating additional explosives behind them. During the battle, any triad members traveling with the party will attempt to disengage, rather than attack their neighbors on behalf of strangers. Jade has no combat skills, but will attempt to help in other ways.

Shortly past the combat zone, there is a radio taggant buried within the tunnel wall. If they dig, they will find Chi's hidden corpse. Chi's head has been brutally smashed, but the rest of the body has been preserved in the vacuum. Characters witnessing the corpse must make a WIL Check. Chi is at a -30 penalty. Those who fail are shaken and -10 to all actions for the next hour.

GLORY BE

The surviving characters reach the final airlock door, beyond which Chi met their fate. The door has a large biohazard symbol in rust-red marking chalk, but is not locked. None of Bves's people will enter the room, even to chase the characters.

Past the door, the tunnel opens into a large, mist-filled chamber. The fog hangs in microgravity, slowly churning under its own power, obscuring the walls, floor, and ceiling. The room is unlit and unpowered. A radio taggant mote is on the inside of the door. A message, encrypted with Chi's private signature, can be read by any Firewall

character: "Collect a sample, report back to Eludere to decide what to do with it."

Successful testing of the fog with a nanodetector tool reveals it is a nanoswarm utility fog beyond transhuman technology. It does not appear to be hostile, but it does block radio communications. The room itself is large and roughly, but and unremarkable.

Characters may kick off the wall to enter the fog, but only characters with thrust vector movement will be able to maneuver in open space. Once free from the wall, the fog will gently influence their movement, directing characters towards the artifact at the center of the chamber. At first, the artifact appears like a dark chasm in the fog. As they approach, the fog falls back, and the artifact can be seen; reflective as mercury, jagged as a cadmium crystal. The character can see their own reflection in the face of the artifact, but their flashlights are absent. Characters who view the artifact must make a WIL Check; those that fail are shaken and suffer -10 to all actions for the next hour.

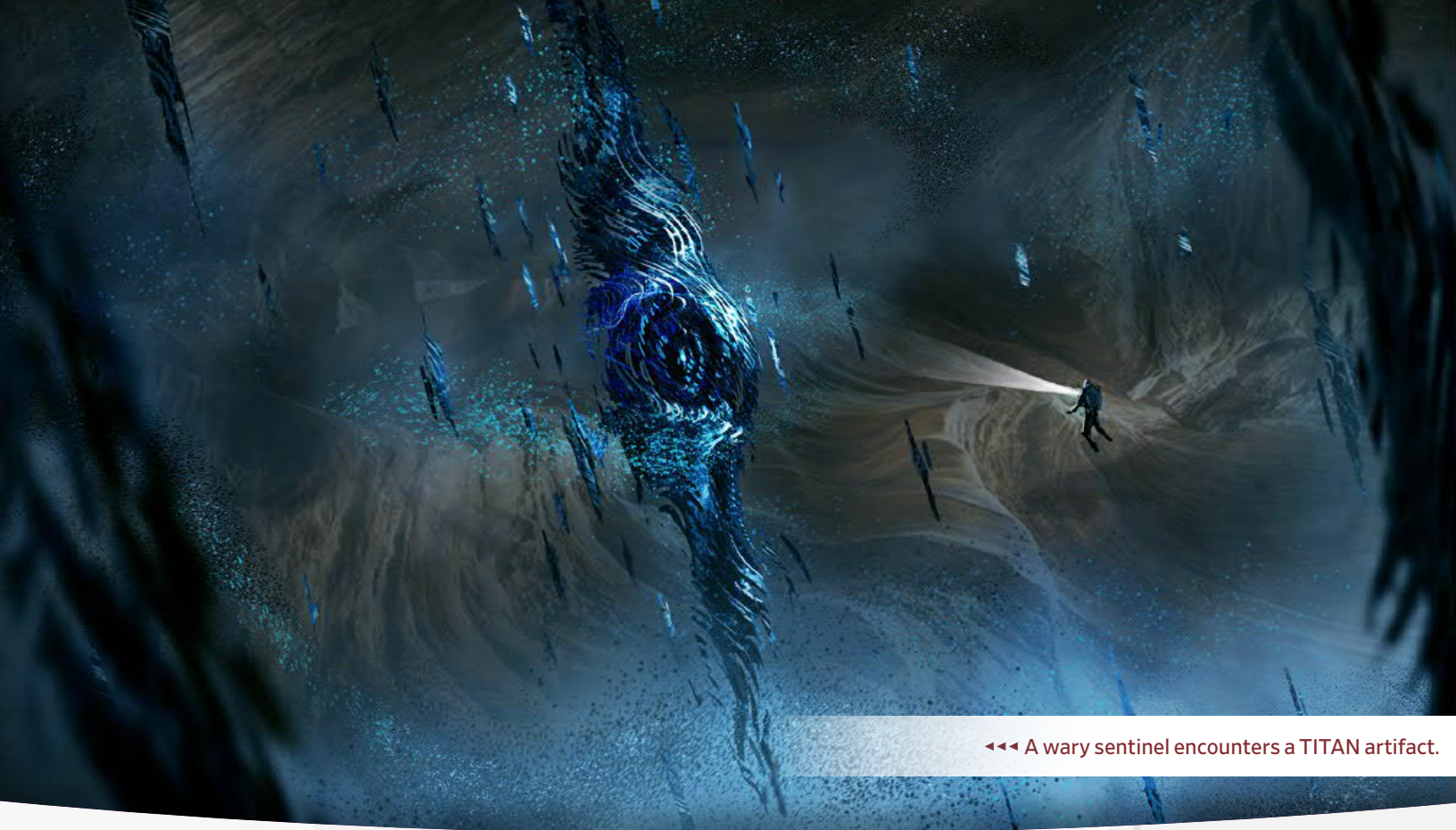
Once within ten meters, the artifact will emit coded bursts of light, attempting to implant a suggestion in the character's mind by hacking their visual sensory inputs (a "basilisk hack"). Characters viewing this must make an INT Check; if they fail, they suffer DV 1d6 (armor does not apply) and undergo a grand mal seizure for 1 minute. During this time, the fog will push the PC into contact with the artifact, which will attempt to infect them (*Infection*, p. 20).

HACKING

Best previously attempted to hack the characters' mesh inserts. If he was successful, he will use the backdoors he left to immediately interfere with the characters directly. Best has a few crafted audio cues to mimic commands from other members of the party, such as "fall back!" or "drop your weapons." Affected characters will hear it over their mesh as though another party-member said it, but with a successful Perceive test with a +20 modifier they will recognize it as false. Best may barrage the characters with augmented reality pop-ups and noises, inflicting a -20 penalty for distraction. Best may also attempt to brute force any synthmorphs in the party by rolling his Infosec of 70. The character's muse (or character, if they are foregoing combat actions to defend

their mesh) can roll an opposed Infosec Test to immediately lock out Best. If they are not successful, Best will gain access to the synthmorph. On his next action, he will make another opposed Infosec Test to shut it down. The character will be unable to act until they reboot, which takes 1d6 action turns.

Characters may choose to disable their mesh to evade Best, but they will not be able to hear anyone else (as they are in a vacuum) or share sensory data feeds. They also will not have access to the full capabilities of their weapons (-10 to attack) or tools. Some equipment, including swarms and Chi's taggants, may not be accessible at all.



◀◀◀ A wary sentinel encounters a TITAN artifact.

Characters who are aware of the basilisk hack threat may attempt to block out the visual input with a REF Check.

While the artifact attempts to infect a victim, the fog will create lights and ghostly shapes to distract others in the chamber. The utility fog serves as the artifact's manipulators and will defend it from attacks. It is able to construct and use any physical objects and tools it needs in a matter of action turns or minutes, depending on complexity. To protect the artifact and victims undergoing infection, it will create floating barriers (Armor 10, DR 20) or even solidify cages around targets (REF Check to avoid capture). The fog will not leave the chamber, unless the artifact itself is somehow moved.

UTILITY FOG

Statistics are for a single 1 × 1 × 1 meter "unit" of utility fog. The fog can move objects at a rate of 2 meters per turn or negate movement of objects up to 15 meters per turn. The fog can create most transhuman-equivalent tools and weapons. It can also attack by penetrating inside clothing/armor and disintegrating the victim; it targets eyes/sensors first.

Durability/Death Rating: 50/100

Movement Rate: 8/-, 0/1 through solid material

Skills: Exotic Skill: Swarm Attack 70, all other necessary skills at 40

Swarm Attack:

70, DV 1d10 + 1d6, opposed by half Fray, armor does not apply.

Victims that are wounded must make a REF Check or be blinded.

Notes: As a TITAN nanoswarm, the fog is immune to wounds; non-area attacks inflict 1 DV; area-effect weapons inflict half damage; adhesive attacks (freezers) inflict DV 3d10 and a -10 modifier to all actions)

RESOLUTION

The characters have several options for dealing with the artifact, with potential major repercussions for the inhabitants of the asteroid and the solar system at large.

INFECTED CHARACTERS

Once the infection process is complete, the character becomes an NPC. Any characters who return to Firewall (via egocasting or suspended animation to slow infection) can be quarantined and treated. Bves can also use his psychosurgery skills to reverse the infection, but this will destroy memories and skills in the process. Firewall can repair this later using the character's backup.

THE ARTIFACT

The characters have a number of options in addressing the artifact itself. The utility fog that protects it can move through solid objects and will work to prevent the artifact from being moved or sequestered. The artifact itself is robust and resistant to most damage, and the fog will impede any work in the chamber to destroy it.

The characters may attempt to destroy the artifact with a considerable quantity of explosives (which are available in bulk on the station) or similar destructive force. These explosives may require rep tests or skill rolls to acquire. Bves, the triads, and Fa Jing will object to any plan involving major detonations. If an appropriate amount of explosives (GM's call) are planted and detonated, the artifact is destroyed, but roll 1d10. On a 1 or a 2, Kongyùn itself fractures, splitting straight through the old port.

INFECTION

The artifact attempts to infect anyone it comes into physical contact with (even through vacsuits). Flashes of silver lightning will ripple across their skin/frame, creating a tingling sensation inside of the body and head, like tiny hands crawling under the skin. The artifact can attempt to infect multiple characters with one action, but can only attempt infection once every five turns. Victims must make an immediate INT Check at -30. If they fail, they are put asleep/knocked offline for 10 minutes. They may only be awoken through medical intervention, interrupting the infection and reducing its effects. As soon as the character is infected, language triggers are implanted. Bves uses these to stimulate an involuntary response for diagnosis. Characters may make a WIL Check to suppress the response, with a penalty of -10 per 30 minutes of infection.

After ten minutes, the character awakens feeling euphoric. Any wounds are ignored, and the character may believe themselves stronger and healthier than before. Over the next 4 hours the infection continues, causing the character to occasionally experience traumatic flashbacks,

This results in hundreds of people dead or missing. Less than the necessary amount of explosives will damage (but not destroy) the artifact. Large explosions will draw attention, ruining Bves's attempts at quarantine and alerting Fa Jing to the artifact.

The characters can call on Eludere and Firewall for aid, in which case they will need to secure the artifact for four days until a second team can be dispatched. This new team will take over the operation and destroy the artifact in whatever way the GM sees fit.

If Fa Jing, the triads, or Jade find out about the artifact, there will be a race to secure the artifact or any remains, as well as samples of the utility fog, regardless of the human risk.

GMs should keep in mind the artifact's potential. It may decide to more proactively infect the residents, use infected characters for other purposes, launch itself into space, or simply disappear.

BVES

Bves's group will seek to contain any infected. Bves (or his fork, if killed) confronts characters with "shamsu heiroah yanaksha," expecting the infected to respond "iltubzuga, isthazuhma." If the characters do not appear to be infected, Bves will explain why the artifact must be sealed in the asteroid, at least for the next few years, until the asteroid is too far on its orbit to be accessible. Bves sees no way the characters can adjust to living permanently in Kongyùn, so they must die to protect the secret. Bves expects the characters to understand the logic of this, and will offer them the opportunity to kill themselves.

The characters may be able to convince Bves to agree to another plan, if they have a better way to handle the artifact that won't harm any people. If Bves is not convinced, he will agree and offer to take them back to New City (an opposed test pitting Kinesics against his Deceive skill will detect his ill intentions). Once they are a safe

distance from the artifact room, he will detonate a cache of explosives hidden in a tunnel wall as they pass, killing himself and potentially the characters (DV 6d10, Fray Test to reduce this by half) in order to protect the artifact's secret.

Bves may be convinced to join Firewall and coordinate a more sophisticated quarantine method. If the characters can prove their capabilities, Bves will agree to a meeting with Eludere.

Characters in the early stages of infection may be cured through extreme psychosurgery. This involves cutting away infected memories and skills. A skilled psychosurgeon can circumvent this damage by grafting them with portions from a backup.

The artifact sometimes deploys small batches of invisible utility fog beyond the chamber to make physical contact with people and implant suggestions at a distance. This requires twenty minutes. If the victim fails an INT Check, the artifact may implant a single, posthypnotic suggestion. The character will believe the idea is their own and carry it out to the best of their ability. This limited infection also causes the verbal tic, above.

distance from the artifact room, he will detonate a cache of explosives hidden in a tunnel wall as they pass, killing himself and potentially the characters (DV 6d10, Fray Test to reduce this by half) in order to protect the artifact's secret.

Bves may be convinced to join Firewall and coordinate a more sophisticated quarantine method. If the characters can prove their capabilities, Bves will agree to a meeting with Eludere.

FA JING

If Fa Jing has been following the characters, they will immediately scramble teams to secure the artifact. This probably involves killing any surviving members of Bves's ambush and offering a finder's fee to the characters. If the characters decline the offer, Fa Jing will attempt to kill or delay the characters and protect the artifact long enough for a corporate security shuttle to arrive in two days. At that point, the Fa Jing forces will most likely be so strong that the characters will need to call on Firewall's nuclear arsenal to destroy the artifact.

TRIADS AND OTHER ALLIES

The triads are more pragmatic. If they become aware of the artifact, Mariposa can agree to most methods of handling it, as long as the people of Kongyùn are safe and she gets handsomely rewarded.

Jade is a liability. Her chatty nature means she will eventually divulge Firewall's secrets. If the characters did not keep her contained during the adventure, Fa Jing will eventually begin researching the artifact. This may be a potential hook for a future adventure.

At the end of 12 hours, Mariposa will gather a mob and seek out the characters for her payment. If they do not have it, she may hold the characters hostage until Eludere can arrange payment.

NPC STATS

Each NPC has a single Threat Pool (TP). These pool points may be used as Flex, Insight, Moxie, or Vigor (p. 7), as the GM deems best.

JOSEF BVES

[P. 13]

Conspiracy Leader

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
20	15	15	15	15	20
INIT	DUR	WT	DR	TP	Armor
6	35	7	53	6	5/4

Morph (Movement Rate): Bouncer (Walker 4/16)

Skills: Deceive 50, Fray 40, Free Fall 65, Guns 60, Hardware:

Industrial 50, Infiltrate 40, Interface 60, Kinesics 40, Medicine: Psychosurgery 60, Melee 50, Perceive 60, Persuade 50, Provoke 60, Know: Fa Jing Projects 40, Know: TITAN Artifacts 30

Ware: Biomods, Cold Tolerance, Cortical Stack, Grip Pads, Mesh Inserts, Oxygen Reserve, Prehensile Feet

Weapon: Medium Pistol (DV 2d10, SA/BF/FA)

LUKE BEST

[P. 13]

Confessor Hacker

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
20	10	10	15	10	20
INIT	DUR	WT	DR	TP	Armor
4	—	—	—	4	—

Morph: Agent Infomorph

Skills: Free Fall 40, Hardware: Electronics 40, Interface 70, Infosec 70, Perceive 50, Program 45, Research 60

MARIPOSA CHEN

[P. 13]

Triad Boss

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
15	20	15	15	15	20
INIT	DUR	WT	DR	TP	Armor
7	35	7	53	5	7/7

Morph (Movement Rate): Security Pod (Walker 4/20)

Skills: Deceive 60, Fray 50, Free Fall 50, Guns 55, Infiltrate 40, Interface 40, Kinesics 65, Medicine: Psychosurgery 45, Melee 50, Perceive 60, Persuade 70, Provoke 60, Know: Triad Ops 55

Ware: Access Jacks, Biomods, Bioweave Armor, Claws (DV 2d6), Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Eelware, Enhanced Vision, Mesh Inserts, Mnemonics, Puppet Sock

Weapon: Shredder pistol (DV 2d10 + 6, SA/BF/FA)

DR. JU GUO

[P. 13]

Fa Jing Branch Manager

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
20	15	15	20	10	15
INIT	DUR	WT	DR	TP	Armor
6	35	7	53	6	0/0

Morph (Movement Rate): Menton Pod (Walker 4/20)

Skills: Deceive 40, Fray 25, Free Fall 40, Interface 60, Kinesics 50, Perceive 60, Persuade 60, Provoke 50, Know: Fa Jing Projects 55

Ware: Biomods, Cortical Stack, Mesh Inserts, Mnemonics

CHANG'E JADE

[P. 13]

Gossip Blogger

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
15	15	15	20	15	15
INIT	DUR	WT	DR	TP	Armor
6	25	5	50	3	6/4

Morph (Movement Rate): Dragonfly (Walker 2/10, Winged 8/32)

Skills: Athletics 50, Deceive 40, Fray 45, Free Fall 50, Infiltrate 40, Interface 60, Kinesics 55, Perceive 60, Persuade 50, Know: History 60, Know: Mining Ops 45, Know: Mysteries 60

Ware: Access Jacks, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Mesh Inserts, Mnemonics, Puppet Sock, Prehensile Tail, Wings

CONSTABLE YU

[P. 13]

Fa Jing Security Officer

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
15	15	15	15	15	15
INIT	DUR	WT	DR	TP	Armor
6	35	7	53	4	6/13

Morph (Movement Rate): Security Pod (Walker 4/20)

Skills: Fray 50, Free Fall 50, Guns 45, Interface 40, Kinesics 50, Medicine: Paramedic 50, Melee 50, Perceive 50, Persuade 40

Ware: Access Jacks, Biomods, Bioweave Armor, Claws (DV 2d6), Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Eelware, Enhanced Vision, Mesh Inserts, Mnemonics, Puppet Sock

Weapon: Medium Pistol (DV 2d10, SA/BF/FA)

THUGS (BIOMORPHS)

Bves's Confessors, Fa Jing Security, or Triad Enforcers

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
15	15	15	15	15	15
INIT	DUR	WT	DR	TP	Armor
6	35	7	53	2	4/10

Morph (Movement Rate): Bouncer (Walker 4/20)

Skills: Athletics 50, Fray 40, Free Fall 50, Guns 40, Hardware: Demolitions 50, Infiltrate 30, Interface 40, Kinesics 30, Melee 40, Perceive 40

Ware: Biomods, Cold Tolerance, Cortical Stack, Grip Pads, Mesh Inserts, Oxygen Reserve, Prehensile Feet

Weapons: Assault rifle (DV 2d10 + 2, SA/BF/FA), freezer (sprays a fast-hardening foam; REF Check or frozen for 1 hour), thermite molotov cocktail (DV 3d10 + 5, catch fire for 1d6/turn on superior success), stun baton (DV 1d10, +10 Reach, shock: SOM Check or stunned for 3 turns)

THUGS (SYNTHMORPHS)

Same as the thugs above, with the following changes:

Armor: 6/4

Morph (Movement Rate): Synthmorph (Walker 4/20)

Ware: Access Jacks, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Mesh Inserts, Mnemonics, Puppet Sock

GNAT AND SAUCER DRONES

Movement Rate: Winged/Ionic 8/40

Skills: Athletics 30, Fray 30, Guns 30, Infiltrate 30, Perceive 30

Armor: 6/4

Weapon (Saucers Only): Medium Pistol (DV 2d10, SA/BF/FA)

Characters

The four-member Firewall team that you'll take into *Acrimony!*

AMAL

BRINKER SECURITY SPECIALIST



APTITUDES & DERIVED STATS

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
15	20	20	15	15	15

Aptitude Checks (Aptitude x 3)

45	60	60	45	45	45
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Initiative: 8 Lucidity: 30
Trauma Threshold: 6 Insanity Rating: 60

REPUTATION

@-Rep 50	c-Rep 40	i-Rep 10
∞ □□□□□	∞ □□□□□	∞ □□□□□

SKILLS

Skill	Apt	Total
Athletics	☼ SOM	40
Fray	☼ REF ^{x2}	80
Fray vs. Ranged Attacks		40
Free Fall	☼ SOM	70
Guns	☼ REF	70
Hardware: Aerospace	👁 COG	55
Infiltrate	☼ REF	60
Interface	👁 COG	40
Medicine: Paramedic	👁 COG	55
Melee	☼ SOM	55
Perceive	👁 INT ^{x2}	65
Pilot: Aerospace	☼ REF	50
Survival	👁 INT	60
Know: Comet Miner	👁 COG	55
Know: Martian Nomad Pop	👁 COG	35
Know: Mercenary Groups	👁 COG	55
Know: Neo-Sufi Philosophy	👁 COG	70
Know: Security	👁 COG	80

Assault Rifle Railgun	2d10+12	SA/BF/FA	200	2-handed
RANGED WEAPON	DAMAGE VALUE	FIRING MODE	RANGE	NOTES
Unarmed	Melee	3d6 [†]		
MELEE WEAPON	SKILL	DAMAGE VALUE		
Medium Synth Frame	8/6			
ARMOR	ENERGY/KINETIC			

Gear

Anonymous Account, Backup, Cuffband, Ecto, Encryption App, Fake Ego ID, Insurance, Maker, Smart Clothing, Standard Muse

Motivations: +Asceticism, +Protect Transhumanity, +Brinker Faction

Languages: Arabic, Skandinaviska

Faction: Brinker

Full Name: Ahmir Sektioui

I'm a seeker. I've given myself 1,001 days to practice turning inner excellence into righteous deeds. Firewall seems a good place to study.

Your family took work as indentured labor in space before the Fall to escape poverty on Earth. When one of the asteroids they'd mined was exhausted, the company, trying to cut costs, offered to let indentures remain on the dug-out rock. Many chose freedom with an uncertain future over indenture. Survival was difficult, and young people like you were sent out to freelance. You've specialized in security work. You were recruited by the Eye on what turned out to be a Firewall-sponsored assault on an exhuman Kuiper Belt outpost. You're a bit of an ascetic and prefer asexual morphs.

MORPH ARACHNOID

Movement Rate:

Hopper 4/16,
Thrust Vector 8/40,
Walker 4/24,
Wheeled 8/40

Ware: Access Jacks, Anti-Glare, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Extra Limbs (10), Hardened Skeleton († +5 DUR, factored in), Lidar, Magnetic System, Mesh Inserts, Mnemonics, Neurachemm (* +1 Vigor, factored in), Pneumatic Limbs (‡ DV +1d6 melee, factored in), Puppet Sock, Retractable Limbs

SYNTHMORPH

Damage Taken

Wounds Taken

POOLS

(SPENT)

1 👁

INSIGHT
[COG, INT]

0 🏎

MOXIE
[SAV, WIL, REP]

4* ☼

VIGOR
[REF, SOM]

2 🎯

FLEX

55[†]
DURability

11
Wound Threshold

110
Death Rating

RECHARGE
Per 24 hrs

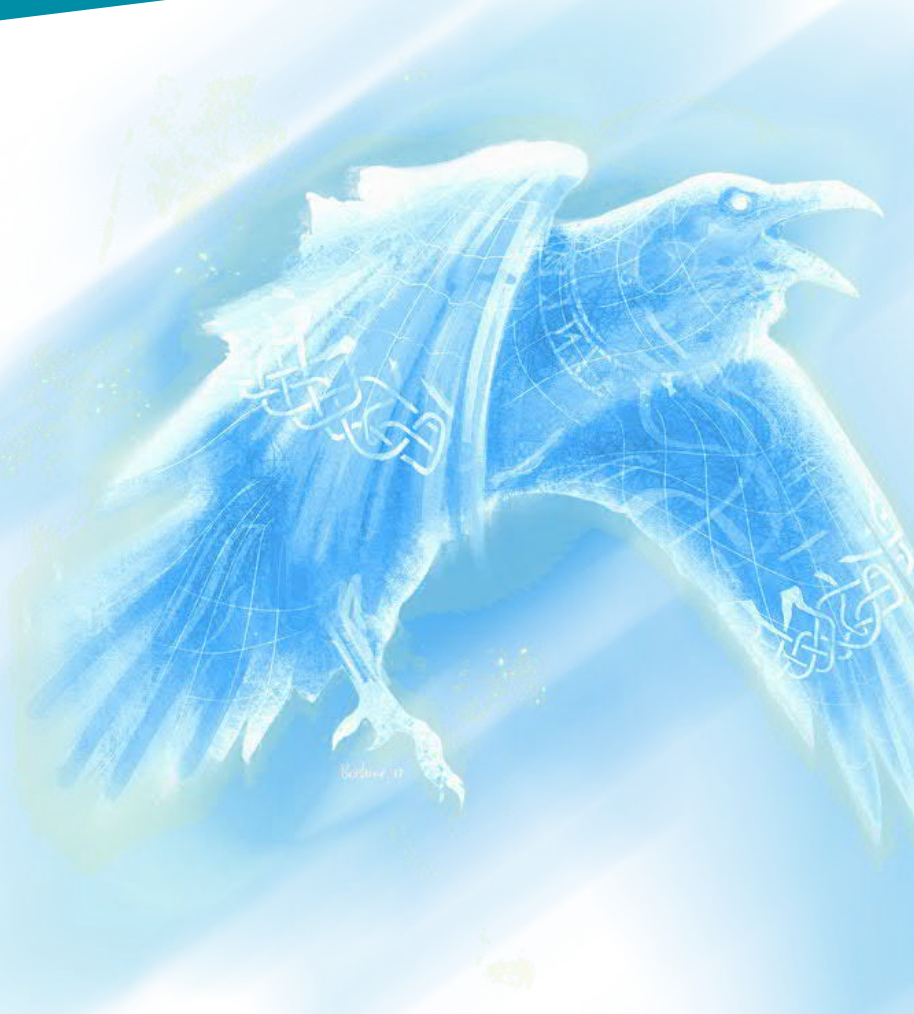
Short (1d6)

Short (1d6)

Long (full)

NJAL

ANARCHIST HACKER/PILOT



APTITUDES & DERIVED STATS

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
20	15	20	10	15	15
Aptitude Checks (Aptitude x 3)					
60	45	60	30	45	45
Initiative: 7			Lucidity: 30		
Trauma Threshold: 6			Insanity Rating: 60		

REPUTATION

@-Rep 60	c-Rep 40	i-Rep 10
∞ □□□□□□	∞ □□□□□□	∞ □□□□□□

SKILLS

Skill	Apt	Total
Athletics	⚙️ SOM	55
Fray	⚙️ REF ^{x2}	70
Fray vs. Ranged Attacks		35
Guns	⚙️ REF	60
Hardware: Robotics	🔧 COG	50
Hardware: Electronics	🔧 COG	60
Infosec	🔧 COG	80
Interface	🔧 COG	50
Kinesics	👉 SAV	30
Perceive	🔍 INT ^{x2}	50
Pilot: Aerospace	⚙️ REF	70
Pilot: Groundcraft	⚙️ REF	50
Program	🔧 COG	60
Survival	🔧 INT	35
Know: Computer Science	🔧 COG	80
Know: Corvid Mythology	🔧 COG	50
Know: Cryptography	🔧 COG	80
Know: Flight Crew	🔧 COG	60
Know: Uplift Rights	🔧 COG	50

Gear

Anonymous Account, Backup Insurance, Encryption App, Exploit App, Fake Ego ID, Gnat Bots x2, Radio Booster, Sniffer App, Spoof App, Standard Muse, Tracking App

Ego Traits — Positive: Situational Awareness (no Distracted modifier)

Motivations: +Anarchism, +Uplift Rights, +Open Source Movement

Languages: Skandinaviska, Mandarin

Faction: Anarchist

Full Name: Njáll Hrafnsson

Your security AI can't find me; your drones can't catch me. Pluck out your eye for knowledge, shiftless sysop, or a bird who's all-thought will peck it out for you.

You hatched in a Titanian aviary, part of a Science Ministry uplift project. Upon adulthood, you ditched your body and left Titan for the excitement of anarchist space. With your skills flying ships and running infosec, someone always gives you server space. You've sleeved all kinds of ships and you've achieved some wicked hacks. Firewall recruited you through Magnus Ming, your favorite professor at Titan Autonomous University before you got bored and left. When he offered membership in a society that "tackles challenging puzzles," you were eager. Flying and solving puzzles are what ravens do best.

MORPH WIREHEAD

Ware: Mental Speed (* +2 Insight modifier factored in), Mnemonics, Panopticon

POOLS (SPENT)

4*	🔍	_____
INSIGHT [COG, INT]		
0	👉	_____
MOXIE [SAV, WIL, REP]		
2	⚙️	_____
VIGOR [REF, SOM]		
2	🔧	_____
FLEX		

30 DURability

6 Wound Threshold

45 Death Rating

RECHARGE
Per 24 hrs

Short (1d6)

Short (1d6)

Long (full)

INFORMORPH

Damage Taken

Wounds Taken

SVÁFA

TITANIAN SCIENCE POLICE INSPECTOR



APTITUDES & DERIVED STATS

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
15	20	15	15	10	20
Aptitude Checks (Aptitude x 3)					
45	60	45	45	30	60
Initiative: 7			Lucidity: 40		
Trauma Threshold: 8			Insanity Rating: 80		

REPUTATION

@-Rep 50	i-Rep 10	r-Rep 40
∞ □□□□□	∞ □□□□□	∞ □□□□□

SKILLS

Skill	Apt	Total
Fray	REF ^{x2}	65
Fray vs. Ranged Attacks		33
Free Fall	SOM	45
Guns	REF	45
Hardware: Nautical	COG	40
Kinesics	SAV	70
Medicine: Forensics	COG	65
Perceive	INT ^{x2}	65
Persuade	SAV	65
Pilot: Nautical	REF	35
Program	COG	35
Research	COG	70
Survival	INT	40
Know: Detective Procedures	COG	70
Know: Field Scientist Procedures	COG	55
Know: Methane Hydrography	COG	65
Know: Physiology	COG	55
Know: Sci-Fi Literature	COG	50

Medium Railgun Pistol	2d10	SA/BF/FA	45	armor-piercing: reduce armor by 1/2
RANGED WEAPON DAMAGE VALUE FIRING MODE RANGE NOTES				
Unarmed	Melee		1d6	
MELEE WEAPON SKILL DAMAGE VALUE				
Armor Vest (Light)			4/10	
ARMOR ENERGY/KINETIC				

Gear

Firewall Agent: Anonymous Account, Backup Insurance, Ecto, Encryption App, Facial/Image Recognition App, Fake Ego ID, Fiber Eye, Klar (5 doses; +10 Perceive for 8 hours), Maker, Scout Nanoswarm, Smart Clothing, Speck Bots (2), Standard Muse, T-Ray Emitter Bot

Motivations: +Technoprogresivism, +Titan, -TITANS

Languages: Skandinaviska, English

Faction: Titanian

Full Name: Saga Norqvist

Exit wounds look like biter rounds. But I also see nanoswarm damage.

You were a post-doc researching Titan's methane lakes when the Fall came. After the war, with more openings available in civil service than the sciences, you got into police work and became a detective. You're good at it. You have a low-key interviewing style that makes criminals give themselves away without even realizing that they're under interrogation. Your department is the Science Police, a Titanian Commonwealth agency that investigates crimes related to state-sponsored research. One of your favorite professors from university recruited you into Firewall, calculating correctly that Firewall and its work are would be too irresistible a puzzle for you to resist.

MORPH FUTURA

Movement Rate: Walker 4/20
Ware: Biomods, Cortical Stack, Glands, Mesh Inserts

BIOMORPH

POOLS

2	INSIGHT [COG, INT]
4	MOXIE [SAV, WIL, REP]
1	VIGOR [REF, SOM]
2	FLEX

(SPENT)

35 DURability

7 Wound Threshold

53 Death Rating

RECHARGE Per 24 hrs

- Short (1d6)
- Short (1d6)
- Long (full)

Damage Taken

Wounds Taken