

С О П О Н Т Ъ Е К

MINDJAMMER™

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME



HEARTS AND MINDS

SAVING A WORLD ON THE BRINK OF WAR!
A MINDJAMMER ADVENTURE

by Sarah Newton

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THE ROLEPLAYING GAME



HEARTS AND MINDS — ACTION PACKED MINDJAMMER ADVENTURE!

“One hundred years ago no one had even heard of aliens. Then the sightings began — uncanny lights by the Snow-Layer, anomalies on our radar, strange reports from lone farmers or the pithecines in the backwoods. Some people thought it was the brave explorers of legend, returned from fabled Homeworld to help us in our hour of need; others thought it was the precursor to an invasion by an alien race, with designs on the fertile lands of our cratered home.

“Twenty years ago they announced themselves — and it was both. The Homeworlders had come, in force, and were nothing like our myths foretold. Heedless of our ways, they swept in like a whirlwind, and it seemed there was nothing we could do to stop them.

“They called themselves The Commonality...”

The world of Olkennedy is on the brink of civil war. Deadly factions with nefarious agendas conspire for power in a society reeling from culture shock, and your characters are the only thing holding back a bloody conflict which will tear the planet apart!

Hearts and Minds includes:

- a whole rediscovered world — maps, biosphere, civilisation, and society;
- a thrilling multi-session scenario of conflict, investigation, and intrigue against the backdrop of developing civil war;
- details of Commonality factions.

An action-packed scenario for **Mindjammer — The Roleplaying Game**. The **Mindjammer — The Roleplaying Game** core book is required for play.



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OLKENNEDY B-I

Olkennedy was recently designated a Wonder of the Darradine Restoration, a matter of great pride to its newly-contacted inhabitants. It's a mountainous, volcanic world, uninhabitable except for its spectacular "Crater"; deep enough to have its own atmosphere and ecosystem, it takes up 1/12th of the planet's surface, responsible for Olkennedy's bizarre weather, including the "Precipitation Zone" or "Snow-Layer" of snow-capped peaks and waterfalls along the Crater's rim.

Olkennedy was rediscovered a century ago, and quarantined as SCI Force engineered its culture to be less traumatised by Commonality arrival. Quarantine was lifted about twenty years ago, when it was decided to stop engineering Olkennedy as a neo-Yoosan culture world (its name means "Old Canada") and instead incorporate it into the Commonality mainstream as quickly as possible. Many are still awestruck by the sudden arrival of a vast and sophisticated interstellar civilisation on their doorstep.

The original colony used genurgy and xenomorph labour; the huge brown Nwasha pithecines mined the hazardous volcanic zones, and short and stocky nomadic Akantack hominids colonised the Snow-Layer. Modern-day Nwasha and Omianto are pithecine centres; Van Kuvrai and Columbiana are home to the pale, dark-haired native humans; and Akantack and the

Snow-Layer are hominid. Despite historical conflicts, these five "nations" have learned to coexist, with some population mixing.

High Concept: Cratered Wonder of the Darradine Rim

Aspects: M-class Red Dwarf in Binary System; Nearly a Neo-Yoosan Culture World; T-Congruent Biosphere; There's an Interstellar Civilisation Out There!

PLANETARY TYPE:
INFERIOR GARDEN WORLD
Planetary Age: Maturing (-1)

Orbit: Habitable Zone, Outer (+1): 0.34AU

Year Length: 171d

Size: Large Standard (+1): 17000km

Density: Standard (+0)

Surface Gravity: High Standard (+1): 1.3G

Day Length: Very Rapid (+3): 18h

Atmospheric Pressure: Standard (+1) in Crater: Oxygen (breathable)

Surface Temperature: Standard (+0) in Crater: 14 °C; Cold (-2) on Surface: -15 °C

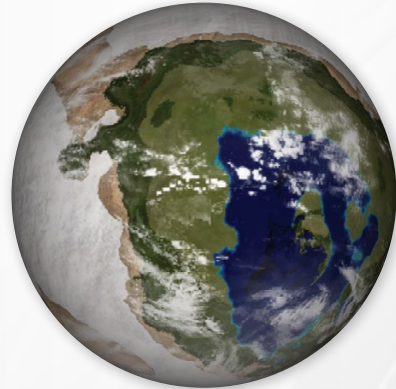
Surface Liquid: Very Low (-2): 5% water

Seasonality: Low (-2)

Satellites: No Moon; various moonlets

Planetary Bodies: 2 (no gas giants)

Habitability: Benign (+4)



CIVILISATION TYPE: UNITED WORLD

Civilisation Designation: Commonality Member (+3)

Population: Standard (+0): 30 million (40% human, 10% hominid, 40% xenomorph, 10% other)

Government Type: Representative (-2)

Societal Dev: Taxation and Representation (-1)

Openness: Self-critical (+1)

Control Index: Property (-2)

Trade Index: Ubiquitous (+4)

Embargo: No Embargo

Tech Index: T7 (+2): First Age of Space

Starport: Craterport Down C-class starport (+3)

Mindscape: Global (-2)

Culture: Fringe World culture in Stage 2 Normalisation





УПРКНС РЕРБ4РД

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Find out more about **Mindjammer** and other Mindjammer Press games and fiction at
www.mindjammerpress.com & www.facebook.com/mindjammerpress

DEDICATION — *To Mindjammer fans everywhere. The Commonality salutes you!*

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A WORLD ON THE EDGE!

"They never told us how much we'd be giving up. I don't think they ever even asked. They just assumed they had it right, and that every world they recontacted would want the benefits of their wisdom and technology. When I realised the Commonality wasn't going to take no for an answer, it made me as mad as hell. I'd rather die than see my world invaded!"

— Mymar Zaron, Olchan interview immediately before his death, *Inchaka*, 2137CD

Hearts and Minds is an action-packed scenario for a party of beginning to intermediate **Mindjammer** PCs, where the characters are all that stands between a rediscovered world and a bloody civil war. Based loosely on the example scenario described in **Chapter 22: Scenarios and Campaigns of *Mindjammer — The Roleplaying Game***, it combines physical, cultural, and Mindscape conflict with investigation and intrigue, firefights and starship combat.

The rediscovered world of Olkenedy (page 466 of ***Mindjammer — The Roleplaying Game***) is in culture shock, resisting Commonality integration with increasing violence. Local and Commonality factions push their agendas, from the **Fiver separatists** seeking independence for Olkenedy's five nations, to the Commonality **integrators** who want to forcibly absorb the world. It's a microcosm of the conflict playing out across thousands of planets, where big questions about the shape of the growing interstellar civilisation of the New Commonality Era are being hammered out — right here, right now!

PLAYING HEARTS AND MINDS

The PCs are caught in this storm of events as the world descends into civil war. Maybe they're merchants or travellers, or mercenaries looking for a ticket in the coming conflict; or maybe they're instrumentality agents, trying to defuse the situation before it all goes to hell. The sections below suggest ways to get involved with events on Olkenedy — and to set dramatic, achievable, and meaningful goals for the PCs.

Hearts and Minds is structured in two parts. First, we present the world of Olkenedy — its geography, biosphere, civilisation and society. Second, we present the **Hearts and**

Minds scenario — a series of episodes and scenes detailing a conspiracy of events which seems set to propel this turbulent world into a devastating civil war.

You can play this scenario as a one-shot in 3-4 hours, or as a longer scenario spanning several sessions. What follows assumes you're playing the long game — see page 41 for guidance on playing the one-shot.

Getting the Characters Involved

As page 420 of ***Mindjammer*** suggests, a typical scenario contains an external problem — maybe the machinations of a villainous character or organisation — and an interpersonal one, and it's the tension between these problems that drives the scenario forwards. **Hearts and Minds** gives you the external problem — a thrilling conspiracy where the future of a whole world is at stake — but the interpersonal problem is something that comes out of the aspects and personalities of your PCs. Take a moment to go over the guidelines on page 420 and draw out a good interpersonal problem to provide a dramatic counterpoint to the scenario's greater events.

WHO ARE THE GOOD GUYS?

Rediscovery is a fact of Commonality life, and for good or ill Olkenedy and the Commonality have to work things out. The Commonality might look like it has a single goal — "integrate Olkenedy into the Commonality" — but what that means varies hugely, depending on how SCI Force and the Commonality embassy handle events. **Hearts and Minds** introduces some of the factions at work in the Commonality (page 35), and

highlights their different approaches to Rediscovery. Some may be more appealing to players than others; some may choose a strict military solution to achieving the Commonality's goals, while others may sympathise with the Olkennedians and try to secure the best "deal" for them they can.

The premise of *Hearts and Minds*, to quote Professor Tolkien, is that "there are orcs on both sides", and without the PCs' intervention they'll get the upper hand and precipitate a bloody civil war which will result in the deaths of thousands or even millions of innocents.

The PCs can make a real difference on Olkennedy. Maybe they're striving to save themselves and a handful of individuals — allies, locals in the immediate vicinity, maybe a community or neighbourhood; or maybe they're movers and shakers, taking on organisations and cultures, opposing ambassadors, leaders, affecting global events. Regardless, make sure your PCs can **affect things**. Point out the consequences of their actions, the outcomes of scenes and episodes. Let them know they can rise to the occasion and be heroes — or the reverse.

CLASH OF CULTURES!

Hearts and Minds can feature culture conflict between the Fiver separatists and the Commonality (*Mindjammer* page 304). Each episode in the scenario section below represents

one exchange of culture conflict, described in its own scene. The PCs may interact with sides in the conflict, creating advantages or using culture stunts or extras to take culture actions. Alternatively you can describe culture conflict events happening in the scenario background instead.

In the culture conflict central to *Hearts and Minds*, the goal of the **Fiver separatists** is to isolate a **local culture instance** of the Commonality culture on Olkennedy (*Mindjammer* page 276) and attack it (*Mindjammer* page 304). They're doing this by actively attacking the Commonality presence, fomenting riots, causing unrest and engaging in acts of "terrorism" or "freedom fighting" (depending on your point of view). The PCs may try to stop them.

Meanwhile, **Dai-Nisen-Go**, the Commonality ambassador to Olkennedy (page 51), represents the **Integrator faction** of the Commonality government (page 36), intent on integrating Olkennedy as directly as possible — forcibly if necessary. Dai-Nisen-Go is exploiting the unrest to make cultural conflict attacks using *Provoke*, trying to inflict an extreme consequence or concession to change the Olkennedean culture's aspect *The Fivers Have Huge Support* to something like *The Commonality Is a Light for the Many Worlds of Space*. The PCs may oppose the ambassador's heavy-handed methods, and / or get involved in this cultural manipulation themselves, opposing both the destructive Fiver agenda and the ambassador's machiavellian cynicism with their own resolution.



WHERE IT ALL HAPPENS

"It's such a beautiful world. When you see the glistening peaks of the Snow-Layer, the wine-golden sea, the shadows of the fingertrees as they migrate across the Highback, you forget it was all born in fire and violence, an asteroid plunging into the planet's heart..."

— Cognisant Singer *gimel-he-vau-14*,
Mindjammer and author of the *Craterport Sonnet Cycle*

THE WORLD OF OLKENNEDY

Olkennedy is a "Wonder of the Darradine Restoration", a mountainous, volcanic world in a binary red dwarf system, uninhabitable except for its spectacular "Crater". Deep enough to have an atmosphere and ecosystem, the Crater takes up 1/12th of the planet's surface, responsible for Olkennedy's bizarre weather and the spectacular "Snow-Layer" peaks between Crater and uplands.

An ancient slowship colony rediscovered late last century, Olkennedy was quarantined until twenty years ago, when SCI Force abandoned plans to engineer it as a neo-Yoosan culture world (its name means "Old Canada") and instead integrate it into the Commonality mainstream as quickly as possible. Many Olkennedians are still awestruck by the sudden arrival of an interstellar civilisation on their doorstep.

Thousands of years in the past, the original slowship colony appears to have used genurgy and xenomorph labour to mine the volcanic zones and colonise the Snow-Layer. The Crater divided into five distinct regions: Nwasha and Omianto became pithecine xenomorph centres; Van Kuvrai and Columbiana became human; and the "Akantack" Snow-Layer became hominid.

Olkennedy humans are pale-skinned, short and muscular, with dark hair and eyes. The Nwasha xenomorphs are short and stocky forest-dwellers, brown-haired, with manipulative hands and feet. Akantack hominids are short, stocky, and dark-skinned, hirsute with barrel-like chests; they have flat faces, epicanthic folds, and are nomadic. Historically the restricted food supply kept the world's population low, which it remains even today; there's a *lot* of open space on Olkennedy.

Walking Outside

Olkennedy has two suns, one large pale red primary and a smaller red companion; the primary appears three times as large as Sol in the yellowish-orange sky. Its light makes colours look different; red things look redder, blue things look blacker, and yellows darken into orange.

Daylight on Olkennedy is relatively dim, as though always evening or early morning. Visitors may have difficulty seeing clearly, although natives are adapted; Akantacks have large eyes, and even Nwasha and humans have enlarged pupils.

Native plant life is greenish black, deep red, and brown, darkening in colour and even becoming black towards the poles. Transplanted Old Earth vegetation tends towards deep green, olive green, and khaki.

The world's gravity is 1.3G, and the year is a short 171 standard days (228 local days); Olkennedy's mildly varying seasons pass quickly. Day length is a rapid 18 hours, to which all Olkennedians have long since adapted; visitors may encounter sleep problems without medication or Mindscape therapies. Increased atmospheric pressure makes noises louder and sonic weapons more effective.

Olkennedy's atmosphere has high O₂ levels, meaning fires kindle easily; most communities have an efficient fire service. Combustion technology was risky throughout Olkennedian history, food preparation concentrating on drying and fermenting, or boiling food in naturally-occurring hot springs, rather than open fires.

Climate

Olkennedy's unique geology, large size, and rapid rotation mean it's always windy in the Crater, with energetic weather systems. Mean temperature is similar to Old Earth; Craterport is sub-tropical, northern latitudes are warm temperate, and only the far south is cold temperate. Storms develop rapidly, dumping several centimetres of water in a single squall. Prevailing winds bring highly charged dust clouds from the volcanic zones, causing spectacular dry lightning storms as they blow out over the central ocean, picking up moisture and huge cloud masses before depositing them as rain as they approach the uplands on the other side.

In the tropics, jet streams carry prevailing winds from west to east; closer to the equator trade winds blow from east to west. Olkennedy has low seasonality, so these climatic features are relatively fixed, determining factors in the world's history.

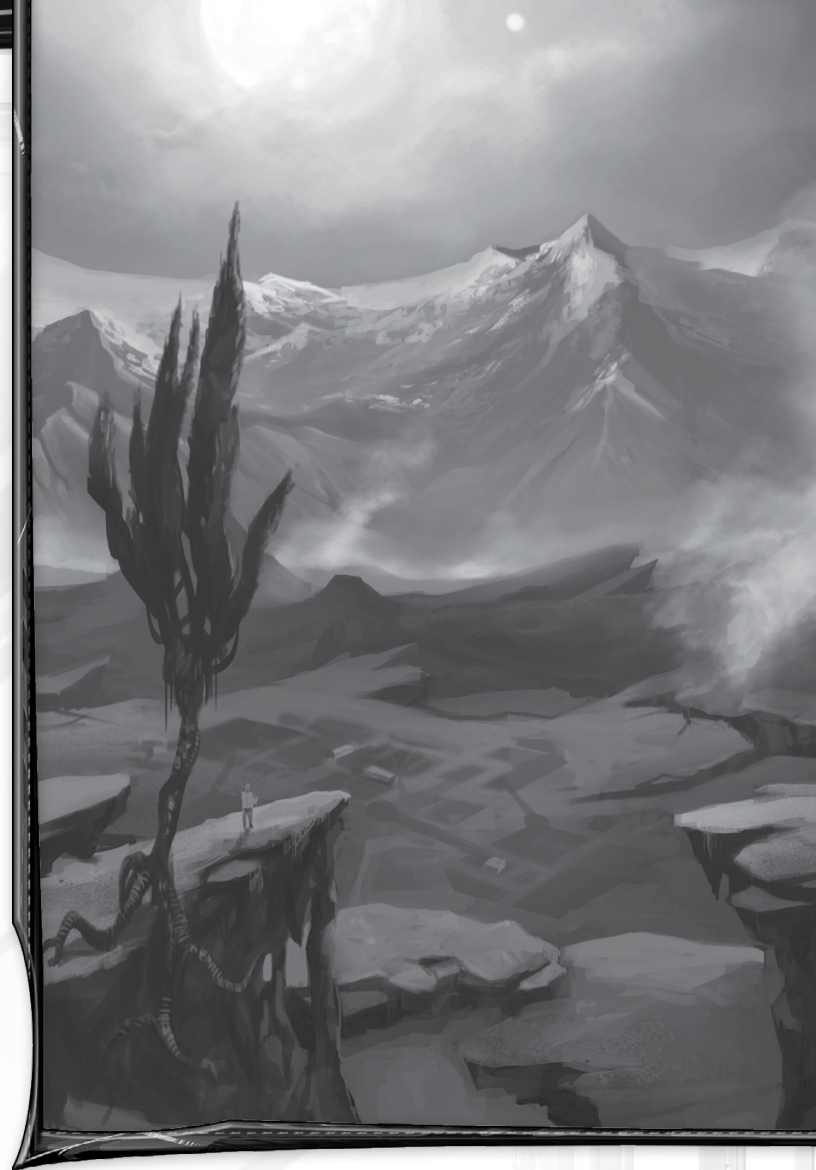
Most precipitation in the Crater occurs at the Snow-Layer, although there are squalls along ocean coasts. Native biosphere irrigation is mostly via meltwater and the Crater's river system, which has posed unique challenges to colonists.

Biosphere

Olkennedy's Crater is relatively young, as is its biosphere. It's a beautiful world, with yellow skies, red suns, and lots of volcanoes, hot springs, and earthquakes. Before colonisation, it had simple deep green, brown, and red vegetation — gymnosperm-analogues, but no grasses or flowers. There are four main climate zones:

- **Lowlands:** Covering the Crater bottom river system, gymnosperm forests (the Jungleback) and swamps (the Waterback), inhabited principally by humans.
- **Uplands:** Higher elevations in the Crater are hilly rainforest — the Highback — inhabited mostly by Nwasha xenomorphs.
- **Snow-Layer:** Hanging valleys and mountains of the Crater's edge, taiga and tundra, including the vast upland region of the Akantack Sanctuary, inhabited by hominids. Most precipitation falls as snow.
- **Volcanic Zone:** With the exception of the Crater, most of the planet's surface is a dry freezing volcanic waste, with an atmosphere too thin to be breathable, averaging -15°C , with noxious gases and a surface baked by radiation. Microbial life exists, but the Hostile (-2) environment requires vac-sealing or p-suits to survive.

Olkennedy's inhabitants have manipulated the native biosphere for millennia, introducing terrestrial organisms and engineering native flora and fauna to be compatible with terrestrial metabolisms. Minimal terraforming was undertaken by early colonists six millennia ago, creating a status quo of



high maintenance crops requiring extensive processing into some very weird foodstuffs. Secondary terraforming began with the rise of Columbiana a thousand years ago, establishing widespread grazing lands supporting generated livestock and more earth-like food products. The Olkennedian upland and lowland biosphere now has swathes of t-congruent agricultural land, interspersed with native t-analogue wilderness. Terrestrial livestock includes cows and sheep — there are cowboys on Olkennedy — and crop plants (including grains and fruit), and invasive species like grass; non-congruent exofauna and flora remain in marginal areas. By the Snow-Layer, the t-analogue ecosystem still dominates; the Akantack hominids metabolise native exoflora and fauna, and are not interfertile with humans. They have a radically different culture.

OLKENNEDY CRATER GEOGRAPHY

Arids, The: *The Redanta river snakes through thousands of kilometres of arid brown hills, dotted with stands of kanderzands (page 10). There's river and tourist traffic, but the hills are only lightly populated.*

Choron: *Many wars were fought over the city now called Choron on the fertile frontier between Nwasha and Columbiana. It's now the Omianto capital and its industrial heartland.*

Craterport Down: *Site of the ancient city of Sepey, the first colony of Olkenedy / Kumatku (page 29) and the capital of Columbiana for the past thousand years. It's never been formally renamed, but since Rediscovery and the founding of the starport twenty years ago most people refer to it as "Craterport".*

Dostep: *Third of the old Reliance League ports, Dostep lies on the border of the southern everblack forests and the fertile agricultural plains of Columbiana. It's a vibrant meeting place, and a lot of business is done here.*

Empire Sea: *The "Great Sea" of old Kumatku and birthplace of the Toraleen Empire; there are ruins here from before the Burning Sky event six thousand years ago.*

Gebek: *Riverine city and capital of the Nwasha, although most live in the forests to the east or following the kanderzands in the west.*

Halwaybor: *Lumber port for the Zoswiss and for contact with the Akantack of Jirimi Territory. It's an ancient Reliance League city and a melting pot. Factors for New Traders operate out of Halwaybor.*

Homeward Sea: *Prevailing winds made it historically easy to cross to the Victa Archipelago and then to Toralee, so this sea became important on the northern "return route" for Reliance League traders.*

Incandescent Ocean: *Dominant onshore winds have meant that Columbiana has had to rely on motorised sea and eventually air transport to easily return to Old Sepey (Craterport).*

Inchaka: *The only major settlement in Akantack; see page 20.*

Jirimi Territory: *Range of snow-capped mountains rising out of the breathable atmosphere; the fertile lower slopes to the west are inhabited by Akantack, with regular contact with the Columbians at Halwaybor. Jirimi*

Territory is a budding tourist destination, especially for glidewingers (page 20).

Kanderzand Plains: *Dry woodlands remarkable for their "walking forests", the famous migratory kanderzands or "fingertrees". There's little rainfall except from the sporadic violent thunderstorms, and the trees may move many kilometres in search of water.*

Narfa: *Second biggest trade port in the old Toraleen Empire, Narfa was originally a Toraleen colony which broke away during the Columbian expansionary period. Today it's a Columbian city, and still a major maritime power.*

New Sepey: *Relatively new Columbian colony carving itself a landward territory in the northern Van Kuvrai swamps.*

Pegany: *Smallest and least developed island of the Victa Archipelago and an Olkenedian biosphere preserve.*

Redanta Falls: *The most impressive waterfalls on Olkenedy and a major tourist destination. There's a dense Akantack population around the falls, which are surprisingly warm and fertile.*

Reliance Coast: *Historically the major trade route from Pegany to Narfa, and the location of what were once the city states of the Reliance League.*

Sea of Gold: *All of Olkenedy's ocean shines varying degrees of yellow, gold, and copper in the sun's ruddy light, but the frequently clear skies off Craterport make this sea shine a brilliant gold.*

Southern Everblacks: *Impenetrable forests of native gorblyar or "everblacks" gradually being developed by Columbiana. There's friction with the Akantack on the high mountain slopes to the south and west.*

Tindertree Savannah: *As well as kanderzand "walking forests", this arid expanse also sports a flame-resistant form of everblack known as a "tindertree". Tindertree wood was a major fuel and light source before the industrial era — its oil burns without consuming the wood, and it can "recharge" by being replanted.*

Toralee: *Largest trade port in the world and still a major maritime polity. The Toraleen Empire was ancient even before the Columbians re-emerged from stasis, powerful in the Homeward and Empire Seas. Even today Toralee remains the Van Kuvrai capital, and packs a lot of clout.*

Trizabane: *Arid port city by the Van Kuvrai savannah, once a Reliance League port. Its huge desalination plant salt flats are easily visible from orbit.*

Trondland: Historically where shipwrecked sailors from the northern passage would find themselves, and once a haven for pirates. It's now a thriving port on the mechanised trade routes, but the island's interior is still wild, with aggressive wildlife.

Victa: Oldest of the populated islands, with ruins from before the Burning Sky event. Once the main port on the Narfa — Toralee trade route and heavily contested, the Victa Blockades are legendary. Today it's a thriving mercantile centre, with close ties to Craterport.

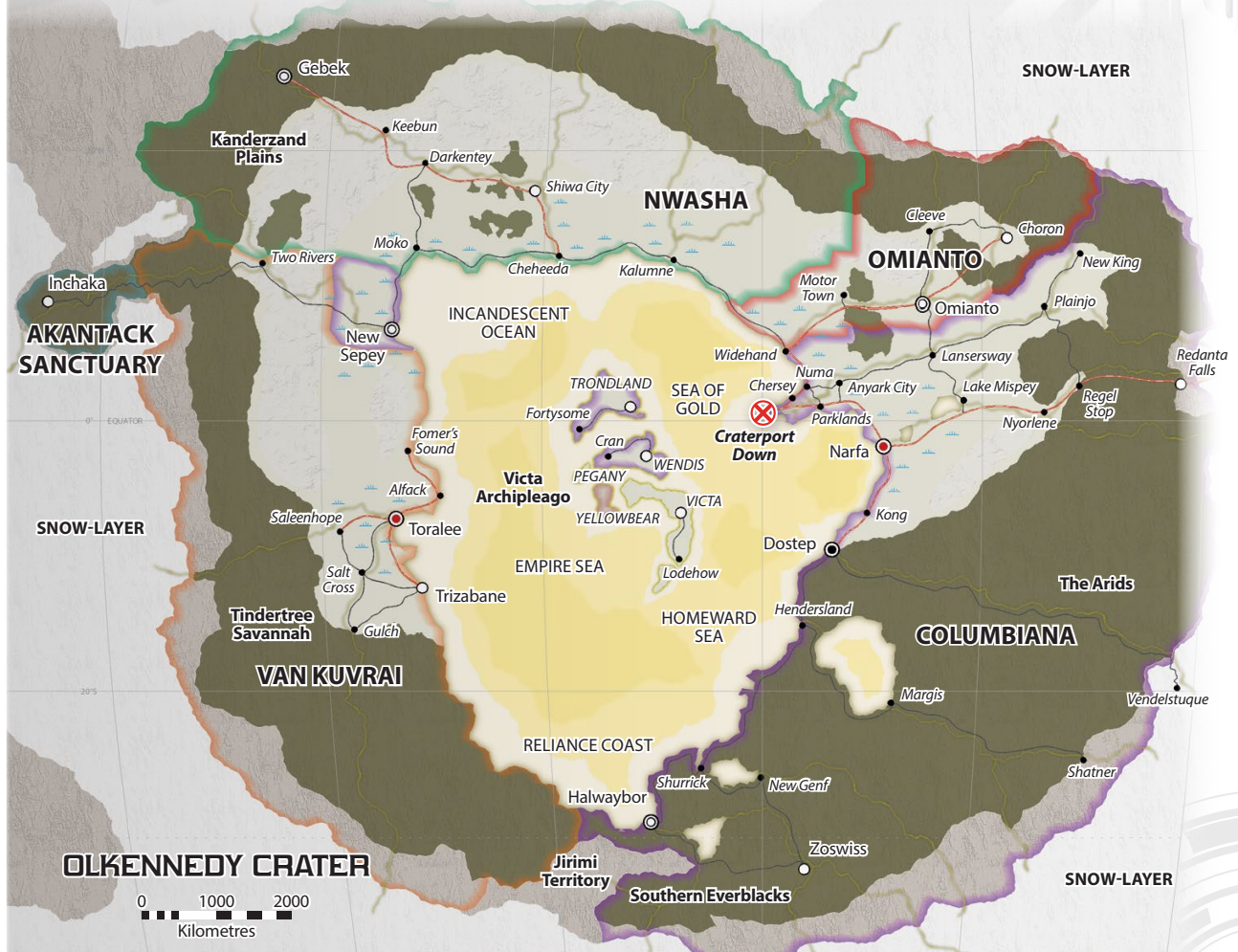
Victa Archipelago: The central uplift of the Crater forms an archipelago which has played a pivotal role in Olkennedian history. Also the place where life took hold, it's a "Garden of Eden" for the native biosphere, which still persists in places. There's a movement to declare the islands an ecological heritage zone.

Wendis: Once the hunting preserve of grandees of the Toraleen Empire, Wendis was the subject of protracted armed struggle following the establishment of Columbiana. It's now a playground for Columbiana's wealthy.

Yellowbear: The native yellowbear certainly isn't a bear and isn't really yellow, but it's still the mascot for this small island, once an exotic stopover on the Toraleen trade routes and now a semi-independent territory between Van Kuvrai and Columbiana.

Zoswiss: The Zoswiss of the Southern Everblacks are the most rugged of the Columbianans, proud of their harsh cold upland forests. Zoswiss is a port, and lumber is still shipped down to Halwaybor. Offworlders are rare, and may receive a rough welcome.

Geographical Data



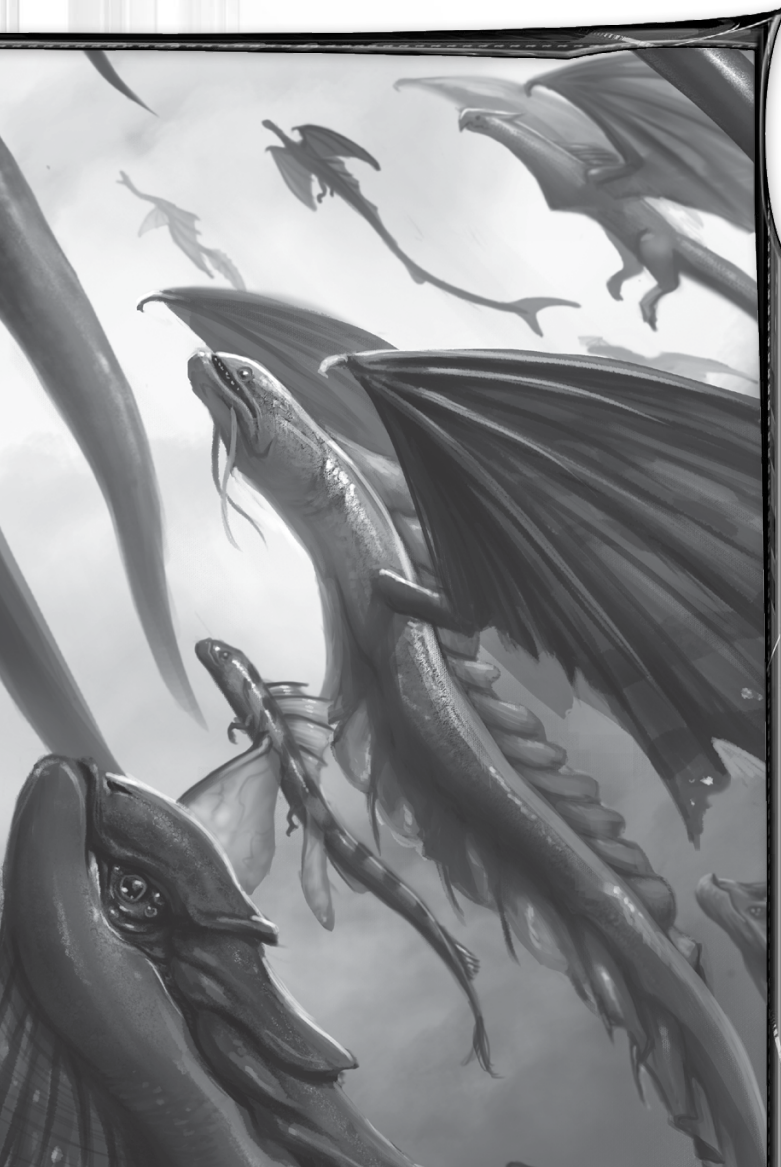
Native Ecosystem

Native Olkenedian fauna often use “filters” for feeding and breathing; the relatively high gravity and strong winds means life forms can wait for food and air to come to them. Most land animals breathe with a “land gill”.

Amphibians are common in the Van Kuvrai and Columbian lowlands. The Snow-Layer slopes are home to flyer-swimmers termed “sailfins”. Producers — plant life, broadly speaking — include many species of **gorbylar** (“ever-blacks”), similar to redwoods, with large black leaves which follow the sun. Gorbylar range from dark green and khaki at the equator, to black in higher latitudes. Arid regions host semi-sessile producers known as **kanderzands** (“fingertrees”), which have clusters of dark waxy lobes like giant “fingers” instead of leaves, which flex, squirm, and twist to catch sunlight and trap moisture. With tough, wide, yet shallow root networks, kanderzands can **move** across the landscape at speeds of up to 10 metres per day. “Walking forests” in arid regions are eerie places of constant rustling and cracking wood, and grasping fingers from the “trees”.

Biodiversity: Standard (-1).

Paradigm: T-Analogue.



Metabolic Bases: Photosynthesis; cellulose and flesh and blood analogues.

Body Plans: Primary Sessile: *Huge (+2) Bilateral 22+ Branched Unsegmented No Frame*; Primary Motile: *Large (+1) Radial 1-limb With Unsegmented No Frame*; Secondary Motile: *Medium (+0) Bilateral 6-limbed With Segmented Organs and Endoframe*.

Environmental Characteristics: *Dim Red Dwarf Light; Increased Gravity; Strong Winds.*

Key Parochials: *Infrared Senses; Flyer-Swimmers; Land Gills; Dark Foliage.*

SAILFINS

*Dark-skinned snake-fish with batlike flying fins, common in the Snow-Layer and steep river valleys. There are huge sailfin migrations to the barren lands of the Snow-Layer, to spawn, die, and fertilise the river sources in periods of **greenbloom**. Sailfins filter feed, but also grow razor-sharp lateral fins at spawning season. There are many species, from the six-legged lizard-like falcheika to the snakelike volsutch.*

Physical Stress: **Mental Stress:**

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

ASPECTS

River and Lake Filter Feeder, Razor Sharp Defences in Spawning Season, Small Schools, Panicked Frenzy If Threatened, Rigid Timescale Habits

SKILLS

Good (+3) Notice; Fair (+2) Athletics; Average (+1) Physique

STUNTS

✦ **Acrobat:** +2 Athletics bonus to overcome actions when making impressive acrobatic manoeuvres.

✦ **Danger Sense:** Notice is unaffected by environmental conditions when something means you harm.

✦ **Dazing Counter:** On a defend success with style vs Unarmed or Melee Combat, automatically counter and attach a Dazed situation aspect with a free invoke.

✦ **Take the Blow:** Use Physique to defend against bashes with Unarmed or Melee Combat.

EXTRAS

★ **Aquatic:** As aspect.

★ **Razor Sharp Lateral Fins:** Weapon:2 rating.

★ **Wings:** Use Athletics as Drive for aerial movement; move and attack a target up to 2 zones away.

DREDGERS

Amphibious swimmers like non-flying sailfins; they dredge through the swamps of Olkennedy's lowlands. Non-hostile unless provoked, they're easily capable of swamping a watercraft or dragging a human below the surface to drown.

Physical Stress: □²□³□⁴□ **Mental Stress:** □²□

Consequences: 2 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Large (+1)

ASPECTS

Plodding Omnivorous Swamp Gatherer, Big and Slow, Moves in Small Family Group, Raises Alarm on Threat, Dependent on the Swamp

SKILLS

Superb (+5) Physique; Great (+4) Provoke; Good (+3) Notice; Fair (+2) Unarmed Combat; Average (+1) Investigate

STUNTS

- ◆ **Armour of Fear:** Use Provoke to defend vs Melee and Unarmed Combat until damaged.
- ◆ **Danger Sense:** Notice is unaffected by environmental conditions when something means you harm.
- ◆ **Keen Hearing:** +2 Notice bonus to detect sounds.

EXTRAS

- ★ **Amphibious:** As aspect.
- ★ **Massively Muscled:** +2 Physique bonus for strength, and weapon:2 rating on Unarmed and Melee Combat attacks.
- ★ **Natural Armour:** Armour:2 rating.
- ★ **Swallow:** Create a Swallowed Unarmed Combat advantage, then target is automatically attacked each exchange.

LAND CLAMS (CLAFFI)

Land clams are easy to tread on in Olkennedy's forests. They snap shut like a vice, dissolving prey with acid secretions.

Physical Stress: □²□ **Mental Stress:** □²□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

ASPECTS

Carnivorous Undergrowth Trapper, Restricted Territory, Small Group, Clams Shut If Threatened, Non-Adaptable Single Attack

LYNCH NETS (ALGARS)

These radial, net-like creatures are ubiquitous in Olkennedy's woodland, and small ones are common in rural dwellings, where they keep the place clean of parasites. They hang between trees, branches, or any available support and wait for prey to drift, fly, or be blown into them — a surprisingly effective method of "grazing" in Olkennedy's almost constant high winds.

Physical Stress: □²□ **Mental Stress:** □²□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

ASPECTS

Immobile Trapper, Restricted Territory, Solitary, Moves If Threatened, Hard to See

SKILLS

Good (+3) Stealth; Fair (+2) Deceive; Average (+1) Notice

STUNTS

- ◆ **Ambush:** Use Stealth to make physical attacks as long as your target is unaware of your presence.
- ◆ **Slippery Target:** In darkness / shadow, use Stealth to defend vs Ranged Combat attacks at least one zone away.
- ◆ **Vanish:** Once per scene, spend 1 fate point to vanish while in plain sight.

EXTRAS

- ★ **Paralysing Venom:** Use Unarmed / Ranged Combat to create Paralysed-type advantage on target.

SKILLS

Great (+4) Stealth; Good (+3) Deceive; Fair (+2) Notice

STUNTS

- ◆ **Ambush:** Use Stealth to make physical attacks as long as your target is unaware of your presence.

EXTRAS

- ★ **Acid:** Weapon:2 rating; attack also creates Dissolving Acid situation aspect.
- ★ **Natural Armour:** Armour:2 rating.

TREE TRAPPERS (ZANDORS)

Found in forests and Snow-Layer taiga, zandors lodge themselves in trees and wait for prey. Some are dangerous to humans; they react to movement and vibration, and lash out with their single pseudopod, bashing then constricting.

Physical Stress: □²□²□² **Mental Stress:** □²□²

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

ASPECTS

Tree Canopy Ambusher, Lashing Death From Above, Armoured Shell, Slow Mover, Solitary, Vibration Sensitive, Narrow Niche Behaviour

SKILLS

Great (+4) Unarmed Combat; Good (+3) Stealth; Fair (+2) Notice; Average (+1) Physique

STUNTS

◆ **Heavy Hitter:** Reduce shifts by 1 on an Unarmed Combat success with style for an additional full situation aspect with free invoke.

◆ **Killing Stroke:** 1/scene, pay 1 fate point to increase a physical consequence you inflict by 1 step.

◆ **Slippery Target:** In darkness / shadow, use Stealth to defend vs Ranged Combat attacks at least one zone away.

EXTRAS

★ **Constriction Attack:** +2 attack bonus with tentacles, bear hug, etc.

Wilderness Events

If your game involves wilderness travel or exploration, you can include events and encounters. Use the terrain type descriptions on *Mindjammer* page 352 or the planetary hazards on page 453, or the Olkennedy-specific events below. Events may be situation aspects, hazards, NPC or life form encounters, or a combination of all three.

Pick an event when you feel the situation merits one, or as the result of a “success at a cost” when travelling. Not all events need be conflict-oriented, but those resulting from costly successes should at least pose some significant trouble.

EVENT NOTES

Broken Trees: Violent storms often devastate the Jungleback, causing obstacles to movement and even injury.

Claffi: The PCs stumble into an area inhabited by land clams (page 11); one or more PCs or their vehicles are affected or attacked.

Cold: The PCs are affected by intense cold, and must roll to avoid an exposure hazard (*Mindjammer* page 177) every 1-3 hours, starting at Fair (+2) Intensity. The cold lasts for 4 successive rolls, and can only be avoided by leaving the Highback or Snow-Layer entirely, or seeking or making shelter.

Community: The PCs encounter a small- to medium-sized settlement in the hilly rainforests of the Highback. This may be an opportunity to seek shelter and refuge, or a risky encounter to be negotiated.

Dredger: The PCs surprise or are surprised by one or more submerged dredgers (page 11).

Earthquake: Violent earthquakes are frequent, although situation aspects like *Daunting Rockface* or *Avalanche*

Table 1: Olkennedy Wilderness Events

4dF Roll	Jungleback	Waterback	Highback	Snow-Layer	At Sea
-4	Earthquake	Earthquake	Earthquake	Earthquake	Tidal Wave
-3	Storm	Storm	Rockfall	Tree Trapper	Vessel in Trouble
-2	Broken Trees	Dredger	White Algar	Lynch Net	Squall
-1	Lynch Net	Seedlands	Sailfins	Sailfins	Dredger
+0	Natives	Farmlands	Cold	Cold	Vessel
+1	Claffi	Seedlands	Community	Tribesfolk	Dredger
+2	Tree Trapper	Vessel	Tree Trapper	Glidewingers	Squall
+3	Vessel	Farmlands	Vessel	Vessel	Vessel in Trouble
+4	Offworlders	Offworlders	Offworlders	Offworlders	Offworlders

Overhang in the Highback or Snow-Layer make them more dangerous. See *Mindjammer* page 353.

Farmlands: The PCs pass through t-congruent terraformed agricultural lands, with t-congruent plants and possibly livestock. A settled farmstead may only be a few hours travel away, although it must be located; it may be invoked on survival or other appropriate rolls.

Glidewingers: The PCs encounter Akantack tribal glidewingers (page 20) travelling between mountain communities or demonstrating their fearlessness. If the PCs want anything from them, they may need to undertake glidewinger feats of their own.

Lynch Net: The PCs are “attacked” by one or more lynch nets (page 11); this may involve simply flying, driving, or walking into one.

Natives: The PCs encounter local humans, Nwasha, Akantack, or a combination, living, working, or travelling. This could be a welcome meeting, or an ambush or other hazardous encounter.

Offworlders: The PCs encounter one or more of Olkennedy’s rare offworlders. These are likely to be new traders, market makers, or mercenaries, defensive and wary when encountering other offworlders.

Rockfall: The PCs are affected by a rockfall or landslide (*Mindjammer* page 177) which may also create an obstacle to movement.

Sailfins: The PCs encounter one or more sailfins (page 10), and may be attacked or otherwise harmed by them. This may be an encounter with minor life form groups.

Squall: The PCs are affected by a storm at sea; treat as a storm affecting their vehicle as well as the PCs.

Storm: The PCs are affected by a Great (+4) or higher Intensity violent electrical storm (*Mindjammer* page 354) with high winds and possibly torrential rain. It’s at least Superb (+5) Magnitude, and lasts half a day to a few days.

Tidal Wave: The PCs are affected by a tidal wave; treat as an Earthquake (*Mindjammer* page 353) affecting vehicles as well as PCs.

Tree Trapper: One or more PCs are ambushed by tree trappers (page 12).

Tribesfolk: The PCs encounter a group of Akantack nomads of tech index T4 or less. This may be a challenge of Knowledge, Provoke, Rapport, Resources, and so on to successfully negotiate. The tribesfolk may be travelling between camps or following the sailfin migrations; genurgic incompatibility means they probably can’t share provisions. PCs may undertake feats of glidewinging prowess to win their goodwill.

Vessel: The PCs encounter a vessel. This may be a media remote, or passenger or cargo transport, or may belong to locals, traders, offworlders, allies, or hostile forces.

Vessel in Trouble: The PCs encounter a vessel in trouble, requiring assistance. It may have broken down, been swamped or be sinking, or been attacked by native life forms



like dredgers or other hostile forces (or may still even be under attack). The vessel may be a passenger or cargo transport, or even an offworld vessel.

White Algar: The PCs stumble, drive, or fly into one or more white algars (mountain zone lynch nets — see page 11).

OLKENNEDIAN CIVILISATION

Ancient History

Olkennedy was colonised early in the First Age of Space — as much as eight thousand years ago — by Yoosan colonists from a period when Yoosa was emerging from its tribal state. The early colony struggled with the environment, engineering the Nwasha xenomorphs from reserve stock to cope with the labour shortage. Signs of collapse six to four thousand years ago and the retreat of at least part of the human colony back into stasis are believed to have been caused by a near-catastrophic flare event from the system’s red dwarf primary, remembered in myths as “the Burning Sky”, which bathed the planet in deadly radiation. Commonality science suggests the sun left its flare phase millions if not billions of

years ago, and the reasons for the event remain a mystery. Columbian solar probes investigating this phenomenon led to Commonality first contact.

One thousand standard years ago a second wave of colonists emerged from stasis beneath the lost Pylon Ruins and founded the city of Craterport on the ruins of a much older abandoned settlement (now the Old Town of Sepey). They

The United Commonality Vessel *Columbia*

*There are few records of Olkennedy's initial colonisation. The original stasis ship was named the UCV Columbia, and the original colony was named Esperance (now Sepey). The Van Kuvrai are thought to be descendants of the Esperance colonists, but there's **nothing** left of colonists who didn't go back into stasis in Sepey — their fate is a mystery. Some say they left the planet, or that they're still sleeping in a hidden stasis ship elsewhere on the planet or in the Olkennedy system.*

quickly expanded, pushing back the Nwasha and Akantack and founding the nation of Columbiana and setting in motion the historical forces which created the Olkennedy of today. In a sense, modern Columbian humans are time travellers; culturally they're only a thousand years removed from their Yoosan tribesfolk ancestors.

Modern History

Modern Olkennedian history begins a century ago, when the Commonality arrived in secret and began its clandestine large-scale integration campaigns, encouraging globalisation, resettlement, and international exchange. The period coincides with the devastating outbreak of a previously unknown virus which became known as the **Brown Death**, which killed one in five of the Olkennedian population. Olkennedians are still traumatised by this event — even today they're fastidious about cleanliness and contact with strangers, contributing to a latent xenophobia. Nevertheless, the aftermath of the Brown Death precipitated moves towards a world government, and scientific research advanced Olkennedy rapidly from T4 to T6 in its search for a cure.

It now seems likely that Commonality contact accidentally caused the Brown Death, despite stringent contact and quarantine protocols. Conspiracy theorists say the Commonality deliberately introduced the virus to artificially create a world



Table 2: Timeline of Olkennedian History

Local Year Date*	Years Ago (Local)	Years Ago (Commonality)	Event	Local Tech Index
14823 BA	-17000	-8000	Slowship UCV <i>Columbia</i> makes planetfall.	T7
14823 to 10823 BA	-17000 to -13000	-8000 to -6000	Ancient Esperance civilisation.	T5
10823 BA	-13000	-6000	Burning Sky flare event.	T0
10588 to 6333 BA	-12765 to -8510	-6000 to -4000	Tribal dark age.	T1
4205 to 1014 BA	-6382 to -3191	-3000 to 1500	Toraleen Empire heyday.	T2
0 CD	-2177	-1020	Awakening	T3
1114 CD	-1063	-500	Industrialisation	T4
1965 CD	-212	-100	Rediscovery	T5
1965 to 2007 CD	-212 to -170	-100 to -80	Brown Death	T6
2135 CD	-42	-20	Disclosure	T6
2177 CD	0	0	Present day	T7

*BA = Before Awakening; CD = Columbiana Dating

government — the so-called **Space Plague Hypothesis** — which the Commonality of course denies. What is certain is that the Commonality was instrumental in helping create a cure, and took advantage of the situation to promote their own ends. The **World Unity Council** at Craterport Down has been in constant session for the past sixty years.

Twenty years ago, after three generations of rumours of “aliens”, the Commonality announced itself publicly in an event known as **Disclosure**, causing profound culture shock still felt today. A separatist movement known as **the Fivers** rose, believing the world’s “Five Nations” represent Olkennedy’s “natural order” which the Commonality and the World Unity Council have destroyed. Led by Epona Zaron, daughter of Mymar Zaron, a famous Akantack freedom fighter who died opposing Commonality “normalisation” twenty years ago, they’re a growing disruptive force in Olkennedian life. Exploiting popular fears of Mindscape implants and Commonality mind control, the Fivers instigate attacks on Mindscape users, World Unity Council workers, synthetics, and Commonality visitors.

Today, the planetary media of the Five Nations watch everything the Commonality does. People consume infonet broadcasts and Mindscape data via global terminals; even now, less than ten percent of native Olkennedians (usually police and government workers) have Mindscape implants.

The Commonality Presence on Olkennedy

The Commonality has had a visible presence on Olkennedy for twenty years. It doesn't attempt to govern the world, but provides SCI Force and Communications Instrumentality advisers, security support, and ambassadorial staff, as well as helping to run Craterport Down and Craterport High starports and the Alpha Node global Mindscape instance.

How Olkennedians Live

Olkennedians are lovers of freedom, self-reliance, and the great outdoors — most people are armed, but usually with native sonic weapons (page 27). It’s a modern society with a vibrant popular culture and strong musical traditions in Stage Two Normalisation. Olkennedians romanticise their forgotten mythical “Homeworld” as a world of liberty-loving explorers and farmers, a reflection of their own dreams and aspirations — this has caused friction in the face of Commonality contact. Pro-Commonality and traditionalist

THE OLKENNEDY CULTURE

Scale: Planetary (+6) **Physical Stress:** □²□³□⁴

Reach: Planetary (+6) **Mental Stress:** □²□

Tech Index: T7

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Memes: Reeling From Disclosure, Does the Mindscape Control Us? Nostalgia for the Old Ways, The Fivers Have Huge Support, Quick to Resist Oppression

Capability Memes: Personal Insignificance, Machines Will Take Over the World, What IS Intelligence Anyway? Power of the Mind, Science

Situation Aspects: Humankind's Destiny Is in the Stars, Mutability of Body Form (caused by Dai-Nisen-Go's own presence)

Skills: Great (+4) Structure; Good (+3) Provoke; Fair (+2) Rapport; Average (+1) Assimilate

STUNTS

✦ **Cacophony:** +2 bonus to Provoke defend actions

CAPABILITIES

Comms, Information

factions are clearly visible, and there's often a generation gap between the two.

Olkennedians traditionally have small families; the abundant food which Commonality contact has brought is changing that. Pro-Commonality groups are keen on Commonality goods and customs — hence the Ubiquitous (+4) trade index. The Five Nations media (see below) are instrumental in forming popular opinion, which the Commonality is very aware of.

See page 5 for ongoing culture conflict on Olkennedy, and how PCs may take part.

Before Disclosure, religious belief on Olkennedy had been in decline. Since then native faiths have seen a resurgence, and are increasingly important, yet changing through Commonality contact. There are two main philosophical systems; the new Columbianan belief system called **The Awoken**, and the older spirituality of the Nwasha, Akantack, and Van Kuvrai called **Kumatku**.

KUMATKU

Kumatku is the old name for the planet itself; Olkennedy is the newer, Columbianan name. The Nwasha say Kumatku was created to test the faithful, and that nature is at best useless, at worst an active foe.

Olkennedy has a year of 171 standard days, and a day of 18 standard hours, equating to a local year of 228 local days. It's been 1020 standard years since the founding of Columbiana; according to the Olkennedian calendar it's the local year 2177.

A local century is 46.85 standard years long; a "long life" is "two centuries", a "working life" is usually a century. Early childhood on Olkennedy lasts 21 local years; the age of majority is 40 local years. Middle age runs from 80 to roughly 130 local years. The traditional life span of 150 local years has extended since Rediscovery, and is now between 190 and 220 local years (approximately 90 and 100 standard years).

The Kumatku faith was originally a solar religion, with a Crimson Father and a "Bloody Slave" sometimes called "the Punisher", a devil-like figure represented by Little Red, the only other planet in the Olkennedy system.

Doctrine says the Burning Sky event (page 13) was a punishment from God, and that the periodic eruptions and volcanic gas clouds which sweep the Crater are the Punisher trying to "cast off" the life which has taken root on the world. Terrestrial life is "purer", more "holy", than native life; of the two main sects, one believes humans were exiled to Kumatku as punishment; the other believes humans (especially the ancient "Sky Giants") are descendants of angelic beings sent to Kumatku to perfect it.

Kumatku says the Three Peoples are in perpetual competition: the Nwasha are the forest people, big and strong; the Van Kuvrai are descendants of the Sky Giants Who Sleep Beneath the World; and the Akantack are the Betrayers, who fell to the Punisher and became part of the "fallen" native biosphere — they have uncanny powers.

Kumatku doctrine has no place for Columbianans; indeed, their return caused schisms. One says the Columbianans are the Sky Giants; another that they are usurpers. The most recent schism says the *Commonality* are the Sky Giants; and a counter-schism says even the Commonality are usurpers, and the true Sky Giants still sleep beneath the interdicted Pylon Ruins (page 29), and will awaken one day to save the world.

THE AWOKEN

The Columbianans descend from original colonists who returned to stasis after the Burning Sky event six millennia ago, and re-emerged a thousand years ago. The Awoken

Why Did the Awoken Waken When They Did?

There are many theories why the ancestors of the Columbianans re-emerged from stasis a thousand years ago. Some say the Pylons calculate the next flare event, and woke the Sleepers to prepare for it; others say the Pylons received a Commonality signal to prepare the way. More fanciful theories exist.

believe they are the most direct link to those original colonists, and that they've returned to the world to save it — by spreading the t-congruent biosphere, and incidentally their way of life.

The Awoken equate themselves with the Commonality, claiming to be its rightful representatives — a claim which the Commonality refuses to endorse.

The Five Nations

Olkennedy's population is a sparse thirty million: twelve million human, twelve million Nwasha, three million Akantack, and three million others (mostly Commonality visitors). A population explosion is underway, particularly in pro-Commonality areas as food supplies become abundant and stable.

COLUMBIANA

The dominant Olkennedian nation, with a population of twelve million, the Columbianans are almost "time travellers", only slightly removed from the original Yoosan colonists who emerged from stasis a thousand years ago. The youngest nation, they have ferocious self-belief, endless ambition, and a drive to dominate, as well as a higher tech index than the rest of the world.

Many Columbianans live in urban centres; those that don't tend to be ranchers belonging to the Big Old Families. South Columbiana is **cold**, used for industrial everblack logging, dogged by friction with the Akantack of the Snow-Layer.

Van Kuvrai



Columbiana



Nwasha



Omianto



Akantack



Columbianans wear culottes, light jackets, t-shirt tops, and thin “breathable” shin boots or sandals. Military and security forces wear black with white and red trim; padded jackets, helmets, and fatigues with boots. Formal wear includes garments which 21st century people would still recognise as “dresses” for women and “suits” for men. Craterport is subtropical, so clothing is lighter still.

Example Subculture Aspect: *Manifest Destiny.*

VAN KUVRAI

The Van Kuvrai number only four million; they’re frontier folk, living in small settlements, farms, lumber stations, and ranches, with a low T4 or T5 tech index. They’re believed to descend from original colonists who didn’t return to stasis after the Burning Sky event. The Southern Ocean Toraleen Empire two thousand years ago made the Van Kuvrai the major power on the planet until the Awoken.

Van Kuvrai wear plaids, checks, tartans, and denims, derived from ancient clan colours.

Example Subculture Aspect: *Harking Back to Lost Empire.*

NWASHA

Nwasha is the “old homeland” of the pithecine xenomorphs. Still agricultural, with a population of only five million, it covers the forests where the xenomorphs survived the Burning Sky event and colony collapse. They eventually thrived, but remain a largely arboreal culture. Many Nwasha live in other nations.

Nwasha wear culottes and jackets or bodices. Those in other nations often wear glove-like shoes.

Example Subculture Aspect: *Lords of the Trees.*

OMIANTO

A breakaway from Nwasha, Omianto is more progressive, aggressive, and technologically advanced. There are joint-ventures with the Columbianans, and a sizable human minority.

Historically Omianto was a frontier of the expanding Columbianan civilisation on traditionally Nwasha lands; the Columbianans introduced industry, logging, mining, and used the Nwasha as labour. Two hundred and fifty years ago Omianto broke free of Columbiana after a bloody revolution; conflict continued for another century, but over the past hundred years there’s been a rapprochement, and Omianto has emerged as a melting pot, industrialised and forward-looking, hosting significant Columbianan investment. Socially it’s a ferment.

Omiantans wear functional clothing, especially one-piece short-legged coveralls and boots and caps.

Example Subculture Aspects: *Fight For Your Rights, Industry and Progress.*

THE AKANTACK SANCTUARY

There are two million Akantack hominids, of which one million live in the Snow-Layer all around the Crater. The remaining million live in the Sanctuary itself, an isolated upland region two thousand kilometres long and one thousand kilometres wide. Mountainous and wild, Mindscape connectivity is unreliable and signals weak. The air is thin, and hard to breathe for humans and Nwasha.

The Sanctuary’s predominantly rural or nomadic population has a T4 or T5 tech index, rising to T6 in the capital of **Inchaka**, the ancient Akantack “holy place” where Mymar Zaron fought the Commonality and died. The Akantack wear hooded parkas and dark patterns woven from native fibres.

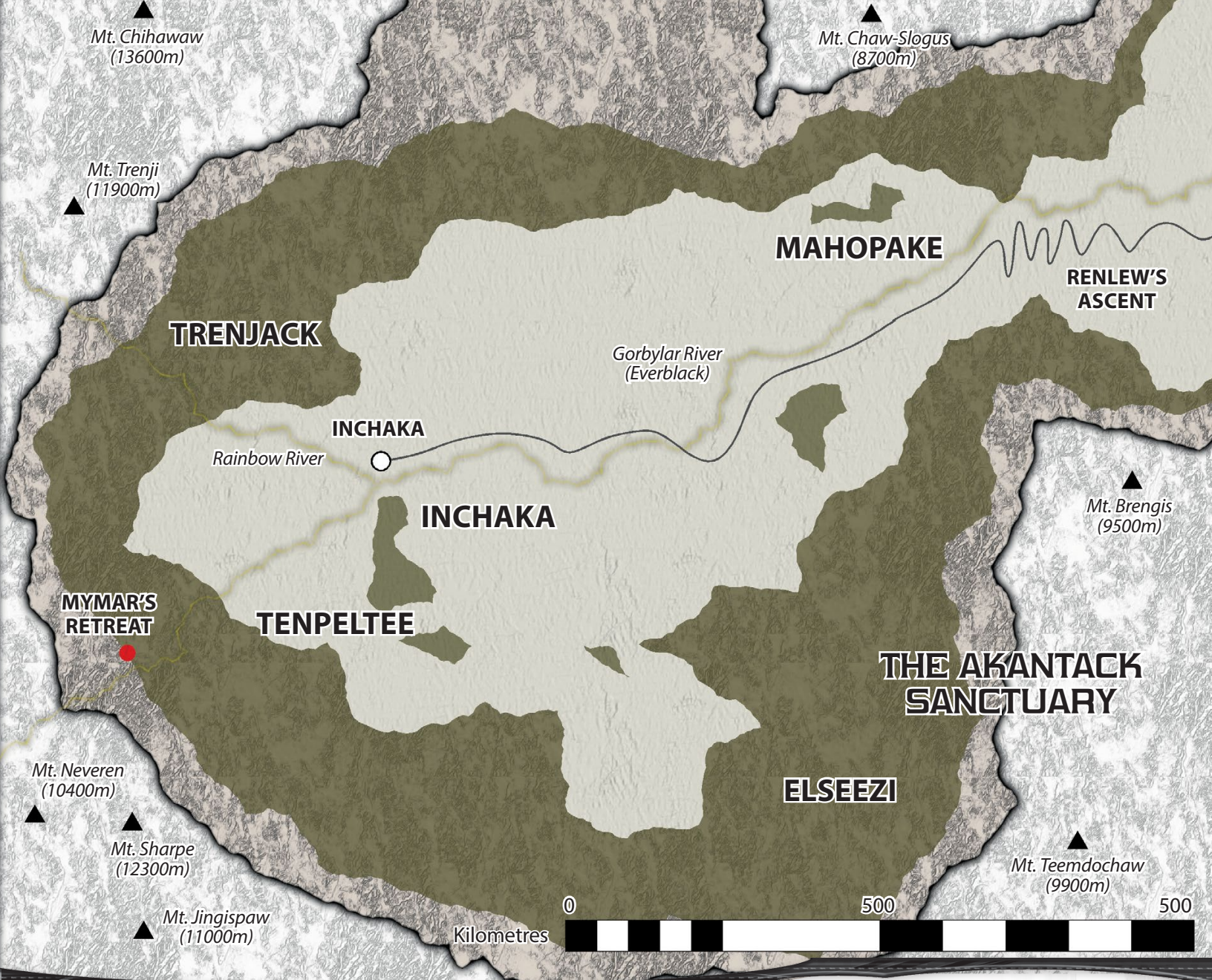
Example Subculture Aspects: *Pride In Hardship.*

Languages

Many languages are spoken on Olkennedy, all ultimately derived from an ancient proto-Yoosan Anglic tongue. None are automatically intelligible to Universal speakers. Universal is widely spoken in and around ComTowns, but less so elsewhere. Columbiana has a single language; Van Kuvrai has many, including modern Kuvrai and ancient Toraleen. The Nwasha have a formal tongue in settlements, but very heavy dialects in rural communities. Omianto is united by a language with many Columbianan loan words. The Akantack speak almost as many languages as they have tribes. Travellers to Olkennedy beyond the ComTowns are advised to use language chips, translator sentinels, interpreter synthetics, or local guides.

Red Clothing

Red is an effective colour on Olkennedy — it practically glows in the red sunlight. Olkennedians therefore consider it “their” colour, and it has acquired an increasingly patriotic significance — hence the Redjackets (page 22).



Akantack Hominid Genotype

Mandatory spend: 1 aspect, 2 stunts
 Most Akantack lead nomadic lives in small communities throughout the Snow-Layer, but the Sanctuary is their homeland, and the area of greatest population density. They're genurgically compatible with the native biosphere, and the more primitive tribes depend almost entirely on the sailfin migrations. They keep small lynx nets as pets, and use olivine gems and obsidian blades from the Volcanic Zone.

Chronological Age: 20-30.

Apparent Age: Young adult.

Typical Occupations: Barbarian, Fringe Worlder, Glidewinger (see below).

Typical Enhancements: Usually none.

Mandatory Extras: Highly Adapted (T-Analogue Biosphere)*, Robust Physiology

Genotype Aspects: You may take one or more genotype aspects, such as One With the World.

Inchaka

Inchaka, capital of the Akantack Sanctuary, is a small and basic city, with a population of 100,000. It lies by a wide rapid river called the Gorblyar, or “Everblack”, where the sailfins fly and swim to spawn in the nearby forests.

INCHAKA LOCATIONS

Chaka Airstrip

A basic ground facility with rotary connections (page 28) to cities across the Crater. There’s a daily shuttle to Craterport High (page 33).

Mymar Memorial

The Akantack have erected a memorial to their most famous martyr, Mymar Zaron, who died here fighting the Commonality twenty years ago. The Commonality doesn’t like it, but as yet has taken no action.

Peaceground

Peaceground is the nearest Inchaka gets to a “bar”, featuring the excellent thermal baths loved by Olkennedians. With loud and crazy Akantack music, and inedible Akan-

tack food, tribal and generally pretty dangerous, it’s a good place for carousing, or for getting your face shot off. Bring your own nibbles.

The Five Wards

The five main Akantack tribes — the Trenjack, Mahopake, Tenpeltee, Elseezi, and the dominant Inchaka — each have a separate quarter or “ward” of Inchaka, with clan buildings, gathering places, and so on.

Olivine Mart

Established for the Volcanic Zone olivine trade, Inchaka’s mart has grown to accommodate all manner of trade, including obsidian weapons, glidewings, and food and clothing made from sailfins, white algars, gorblyar fibre, and more.

Local Colour

Olkennedy has an ancient, vibrant, and complex society, with five nations gradually coalescing into a world government.

R&R

Olkennedy has leisure establishments which offworlders would recognise as “bars” and “restaurants”. Many sport thermal springs, as Olkennedians enjoy relaxing in their world’s ubiquitous natural spas, and they’re a popular place for informal meetings.

Olkennedian food includes beef, mutton, and farmed fish — more “real” and “primitive” than many Commonality



Downtecher Build: Glidewinger

Many Akantack are **glidewingers**; piloting the terrifying-looking monowings is a rite of passage, as well as a method of emergency travel between isolated Snow-Layer communities. Glidewingers risk sailfin attack during the mating season, and must also avoid straying into the territory of the rare white algars.

High Concept: Daredevil Snow-Layer Brave.

Trouble: Adrenalin Junkie.

Skills: Athletics, Pilot, Ranged Combat.

Stunts: Acrobat, Pedal to the Metal, Uncanny

Accuracy.

Enhancements: Heirloom weapon as extra.

Equipment: Glidewing (page 26), Akantack bone bow (page 26).

citizens are used to. Grains, farmed fruit and legumes are common, and traditional processed foods, including pulps, “cheese” (it’s not cheese...), pickles, and dried, boiled, or fermented preserves. Assume a *Challenging Native Cuisine* situation aspect for times when PCs simply must make a positive impression during a meal...

INFONET MEDIA

The Olkennedian media are ubiquitous, and can hamper as well as help the PCs. The world has a proto-Mindscape — the **infonet** — to which Alpha Node provides read-only access. It’s accessed via “terminals” rather than neural implants — portable T7 devices like voice control, holointerfaces, HUDs, and (recently) optical and audio nerve induction “links” (page 28).

There are three competing Olkennedian media networks:

- **FiveNet:** The pro-Fiver network. Epona Zaron (page 22) is its darling.
- **ProComm:** The pro-Commonality network, fed by Alpha Node. They interview Dai-Nisen-Go and Breath of Dawn (page 22) regularly.
- **OIChan:** The neutral arbiter courted by both sides.

Each media network uses **media remotes** (page 27), constantly flying Olkennedy’s skies gathering information and stories. Major events attract flocks of them, and they may even be found in outlying areas.

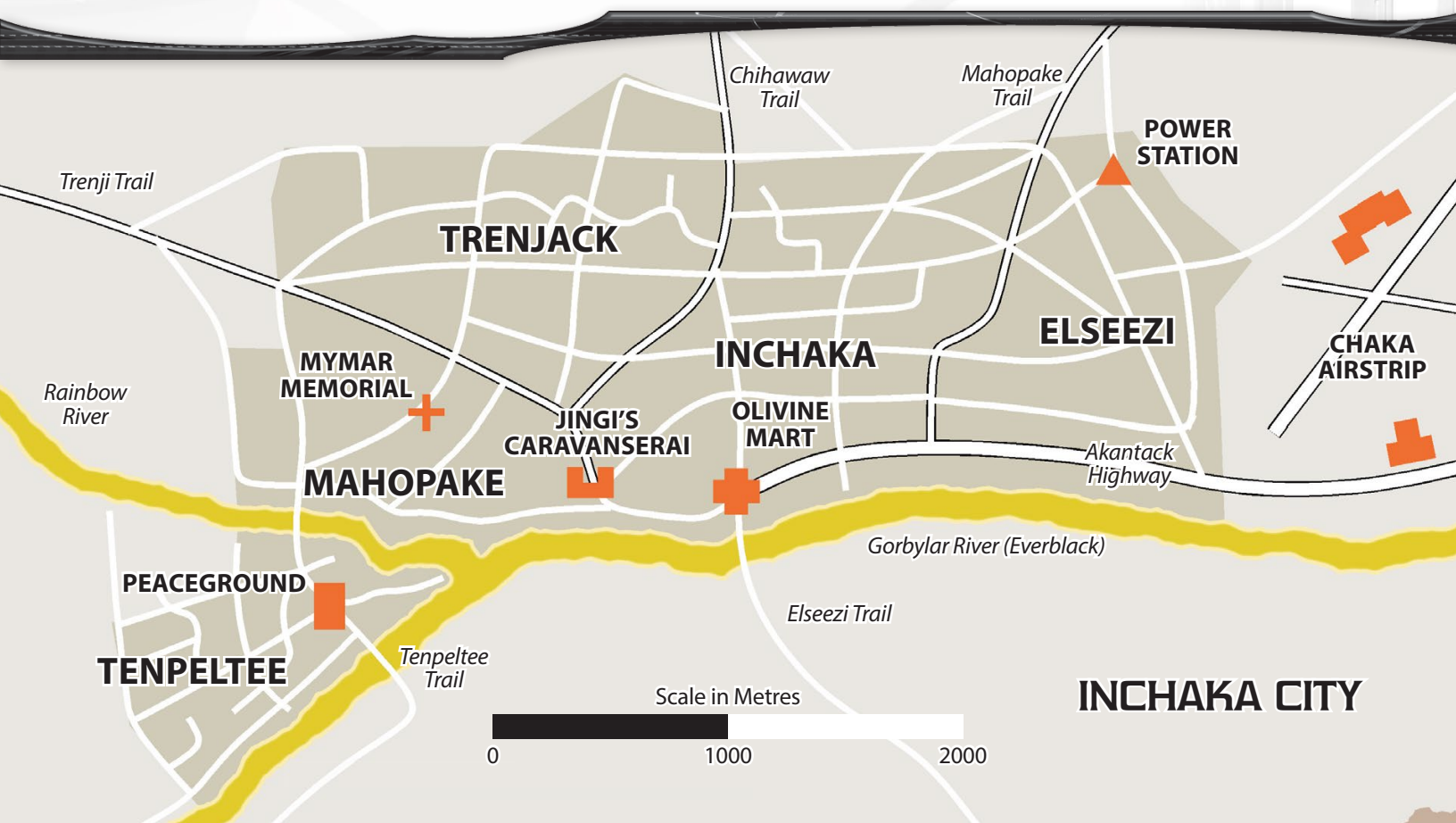
In *Hearts and Minds*, episodes and scenes have **media coverage** sections determining how (and if) the PCs’ actions are reported by the networks.

THE FIVER SEPARATISTS

Behind-the-scenes Commonality influence over the past century has guided Olkennedy towards unification and world government. Ironically, it has also led to a global self-awareness and the rise of the **Fivers**, separatists believing the

Scenario Hook: Some of My Best Friends Are Aliens

It’s only been twenty years since Disclosure, and Commonality visitors are still uncommon. There are offworlder “ComTowns” of 100,000 or so in most major cities, but they’re rare elsewhere — most of the rest live in Craterport Down and Highport. Some Olkennedians seek out alien visitors for their exoticness, even affecting Commonality fashions and customs (usually with glaring mistakes). Hapless PCs may gain a “following” of obvious and clumsy “alien groupies”, usually appearing at the worst moments...



How Are Commonality People Viewed?

Standard Commonality humans are, from the Olkennedian point of view, tall and physically weak, with exotically coloured skins. They also see poorly in Olkennedy's dim light — hence their epithet, “squints”, and the derogatory “Squint City” used to refer to Commonality “ComTown” districts. Redjackets and other hostile natives often accuse pro-Commonality natives of being “squint-lovers”.

Commonality citizens are also thought to have strange mental powers, including the ability to read minds, and otherwise well-disposed individuals may become surly and uncommunicative in their presence.

five nations should resist Commonality integration. Founded in blood by the martyr Mymar Zaron, it's led by his daughter, Epona, who runs a fine line between energetic political opposition and out-and-out insurgency. Recent events have tended to the latter, and many places are close to civil war.

Its key figures are:

- **Mymar Zaron:** Martyred Akantack founder of the Fivers and father of Epona Zaron, killed attacking Commonality representatives in Akantack lands during Disclosure. He famously wanted his children to use the Commonality's weapons against them.
- **Epona Zaron:** Mymar Zaron's daughter and current Fiver leader. With a groomed and controlled media profile, she's an Akantack, moderate and widely liked, though she has difficulty keeping extreme Fiver elements under control. She secretly has a Mindscape implant and monitor band cloak, a fact which is **very** difficult to discover. See page 73 for her stats.
- **Bwaga Bargo:** Deputy leader of the Fivers, a nasty and aggressive Nwasha and former Omianto union leader. He's also a former lover of Hom-Champa (page 46), a fact not widely known. Regarded as Epona Zaron's successor, he's less charismatic and generally thought to be a thug; he actively **wants** civil war with the Commonality. His “Redjacket” vigilantes police Olkennedian behaviour and persecute those with pro-Commonality sympathies. They're not illegal, but are pretty universally loathed. See page 64 for his stats.
- **The Redjackets:** “Bargo's Battalion” or “Bargo's Bastards” are a motley of thugs and disaffected Olkennedians, including a disproportionate number of Nwasha and Akantack. They're principally loyal to Bwaga Bargo, and think Epona Zaron is “too conciliatory”.

THE FIVER SEPARATISTS

Scale: Enormous (+3) **Physical Stress:** □□
Reach: Planetary (+6) **Mental Stress:** □□□□
Tech Index: T7 **Credit Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 2 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: Olkennedian Separatist Faction, Born Out of Opposition, Resort to Violence, Riven by Dissent

Skills: Fair (+2) Provoke, Security, Will; Average (+1) Rapport, Resources, Stealth

STUNTS

◆ **Extreme Sanction:** Make Security actions against characters

◆ **Populist:** +2 create an advantage bonus when appealing to “the people”

EXTRAS

★ **The Olkennedy Culture:** Good (+3) Provoke, Average (+1) Assimilate; The Fivers Have Huge Support

★ **Protective Bunker:** Armour:1 rating and 1 additional mild consequence.

Supporting Organisation

ALPHA NODE AND THE MINDSCAPE

Alpha Node is Olkennedy's sole Mindscape satellite, in geostationary orbit above the Crater. It's home to the installation sentience **Breath of Dawn**, media personality and Mindscape node dirigeant for the world (page 71).

The Node is the principal vector for Commonality ideas, and often the object of Fiver protests. Particularly contentious is the plan to extend Alpha Node to two more relay satellites, which will hook up the miners of the North and South Breaches and the Eastern Volcanic Zone, and the Akantacks of the Akantack Sanctuary.

DAI-NISEN-GO — THE FACE OF THE COMMONALITY

Dai-Nisen-Go is the Commonality ambassador to Olkennedy, an attractive and persuasive neuter autotroph who's a regular fixture in infonet broadcasts. It's also a dedicated **Integrator** (page 36), and a vocal champion of Olkennedy's role as a Commonality world.

Making a Living

Olkennedy is a major producer of agricultural and industrial raw materials. With a Ubiquitous (+4) trade index, it imports genurgy, know-how, and luxuries like personal flyers.

Offworld Activity

The Columbianan colonists who awoke from stasis a thousand years ago knew about their origins, and set about restoring their technology. Their first industrialisation failed due to conflict with the Nwasha, but the second, about three hundred years ago, focussed on exploitation and limited settlement of the volcanic zones.

With only one other planet in system, a small tidally-locked half-molten rock close to the sun known as Little Red, there's been little incentive to get off-world. A century ago the arrival of Commonality EHPs triggered a space programme, most of whose findings (including the existence of EHPs and signals from the Core Worlds) were kept secret.

Now there's a research base on Little Red, and an Olkennedian population of 50,000 or so in Craterport High (page 33). Most "exotic environment" exploitation efforts are still focussed on the Volcanic Zone.



The World Unity Council encourages tourism and leisure, especially since Olkennedy's designation as a "Wonder of the Darradine Restoration"; trekking in the Highback and glide-winging with the sailfins are popular activities. It exports nickel, base metals, and bauxite from the Volcanic Zone; and gold, diamond, red olivine (considered "holy" by the Akantack), and other precious gems from kimberlite deposits. There's also an active helium-3 mining industry in the Volcanic Zone, used for manufacturing the H₃ fusion power cells the planet depends on — as yet there's no native ZIP cell technology.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

Most trade is conducted in the Craterport High trade virtuality, which also caters for travellers from Belawis and the industrial world of Avidus in the Damask Veil Octant (Olchantavir Beta). Offworlders in Craterport Down and the booming ComTowns are usually involved in transhipment of products to and from orbit.

MONEY

Although the Commonality doesn't need it, it charges money for its goods on Olkennedy — otherwise the local economy would collapse. Even so, Commonality goods are mostly cheap — availability rather than cost is the issue, as the Commonality tries to inveigle the Olkennedian economy into its

Getting Into Trouble

The Fiver attacks are by no means the only challenge awaiting PCs on Olkennedy. New traders and corporacy market makers are responsible for a rise in corruption and gangsterism; the Columbianan expansionists aren't universally loved; and local factions are engaged in technological espionage and heavy-handed graft and manipulation. Several key archaeological sites are off-limits, and the Commonality has resisted forcing its way into the presumably operational facility beneath the Pylon Ruins. Perhaps a "sky giant" or national hero lies sleeping there, capable of causing untold trouble...

resource allocation network. The Commonality credit has mostly replaced the native **taler**, although people still use the old name, calling a credit a "taler" or "buck".

The Akantack still use their own currency — the **satchi** — based on the red olivine mined along the edges of the Volcanic Zone.

The Volcanic Zone

Although the Volcanic Zone constitutes the greater part of the Olkennedian surface, it's a hostile and undeveloped wilderness, very cold, with thin, unbreathable air. Nevertheless there's an increasing number of far-flung mining communities, generally run by Columbianan big families like Kaywor or the Fyker-Dennisats, Omiantan joint-ventures like VolCon or MagLink-SERN, or small-scale Van Kuvrayan or Nwashan grubstakes. The Akantack don't usually get involved beyond isolated expeditions in search of olivine and obsidian.

Travel to mining stations is usually by ATV, although reaction shuttles are occasionally available. Some affluent enterprises even use Commonality grav carriers.

Table 3: Volcanic Zone Events

4dF	Event
-4	Pyroclastic Flow
-3	Lava Flow
-2	Earthquake
-1	Gas Cloud
+0	Gullies
+1	Thin Ground
+2	Debris / Ruin
+3	Resource
+4	Tephra Flow

EVENT NOTES

Debris / Ruin: The terrain ahead is strewn with clearly artificial debris — perhaps a ruin or remnants of a crash, mine working, or other event. It's a movement obstacle, and may be salvaged (*Mindjammer* page 441).

Earthquake: Almost constant throughout the Volcanic Zone, these can cause catastrophic damage to pressurised ground vehicles. See *Mindjammer* page 353.

Gas Cloud: The atmosphere in the Volcanic Zone is unbreathable, so noxious gases are no more unbreathable to those wearing appropriate gear. However, they're also caustic, and represent an exposure hazard (*Mindjammer* page 177).

Gullies: The terrain is riddled with deep gullies, a movement obstacle. Attempting to rush through at speed and failing may result in a Superb (+5) falling hazard (*Mindjammer* page 353) of 10 metres.

Lava Flow: A slow-moving volcanic eruption (*Mindjammer* page 177) with Great (+4) Intensity, a weapon:2 rating or greater, and an Armour-Piercing stunt (*Mindjammer* page 129). With a Magnitude of Average (+1) or Fair (+2), it's usually fairly easy to get away from as long as you're mobile.

Pyroclastic Flow: Including lahars and mudflows, this is a rapidly moving volcanic eruption (*Mindjammer* page 177) with Epic (+7) Intensity and Superb (+5) Magnitude. It's difficult to escape once you're affected, though armoured vehicles offer protection.

Resource: A mining strike (*Mindjammer* page 441) of raw materials or ores like nickel, base metals, bauxite, gold, diamond, red olivine, or other precious gems; or alternatively a rich source of helium-3. It must be extracted and transported, or the location sold to a mining concern.

Tephra Flow: Huge rocks, burning cinders, and explosive globs of lava fall from the sky, a volcanic eruption (*Mindjammer* page 177) with a weapon:2 rating, automatically creating advantages like Burning or On Fire when its attack succeeds.

Thin Ground: See below.

OLKENNEDIAN TECH

Olkennedian tech is two tech indices below Commonality standard, lacking common technologies like anti-grav, synthetic sentience, and the Mindscape. The highest tech index is T7 (First Age of Space) in Craterport Down and major urban centres, although advanced research in comms and information capabilities is now touching T8 (Age of Ubiquitous Intelligence). Most of Olkennedy is still only T4 (Industrial Age) to T6 (Age of Genurgy).

Technological Paradigms

Use the following paradigms when describing Olkennedian life and the tech and equipment available.

POWER

Olkennedy has no zero point power, instead using helium-3 fusion reactors and power cells (see "Resources"). Imported flyers and similar equipment use ZIP cells, but only Commo-

nality facilities in big cities can maintain them — hence their rarity and expense.

TRANSPORT

Most robust transport is ground-based (wheeled or tracked), although high-end vehicles like helicarriers, helibikes, and so on (page 26) use VTOL rotary turbine lifters, taking advantage of Olkennedy's heavier atmospheric pressure and covering the ground between close-to-ground hover vehicles and full aircraft. The Akantack use a low-tech aerial apparatus known as a **glidewing**.

Water transport relies on boats, hydrofoils, and some GEVs. Orbital transport uses scramjet shuttles from designated airports; departures are frequent from Craterport Down, but also at least daily from other major cities.

Getting around outside Craterport can be difficult, at least Fair (+2) opposition to move between zones in half a day, with zone scale depending on the tech index of the transport capability (*Mindjammer* page 303).

WEAPONS AND ARMOUR

Olkennedy's Property (-2) control index restricts access to fully automatic weapons, meaning semi-automatic and sporting weapons are available, as are the ubiquitous sonic howlers. Urban Olkennedians have perhaps a howler pistol in the house for emergencies; those in outlying and rural areas may have more substantial weapons for use against local fauna.

Olkennedian civilians are unlikely to use armour, although Fivers and other activists may use makeshift mesh. Local technology equips military and security personnel with haze and dispersion fields, combat suits, combat armour, and p-suits, as required.

HOUSES

Earthquakes, fire, the lack of ambient light, high winds, and the overall heat and humidity all contribute to the construction of Olkennedian domiciles. Most are low-slung, one or two storeys, with food preparation partly out of doors or in "food garages" with geothermal "cooking wells" rather than kitchens. Historically, Olkennedian settlements grew up around geothermal springs, and hot water for "cooking" is still piped into homes.

In Nwasha and Van Kuvrai houses are small to match family size; Nwashan houses are often built in trees, away from local fauna, but still in loose settlements. In Van Kuvrai, farming hamlets are commonplace, with a handful of houses, raised on stilts in marshy areas. Both are usually wood-built, airy and shady, taking advantage of Olkennedy's winds for ventilation and cooling.

Akantack domiciles are large round "tents" of local hides, used by nomads; Inchaka has more permanent structures, though their nomadic origins are still visible in their designs, and few are above one storey. Akantack housing is insulated against the chill winds.

THIN GROUND

Challenge Hazard

The ground ahead is a thin crust of cooled lava covering a deep gully or lava pool.

Aspects: Deceptive Ground Cover, Suspicious Echoes

Skills: Variable Intensity; Fair (+2) Magnitude or above.

ACTIONS

Action 1: Roll Notice, Passive Sensing, or Active Sensing vs Magnitude to identify and avoid.

Action 2: Roll Athletics, Drive to defend against an attack equal to Intensity each exchange or sustain physical stress damage.

Action 3: Roll Athletics, Drive, Physique, or Technical vs Magnitude to escape the hazard; requires 3 victories.

Hazard

Scenario Hook: Conspiracy Theories

PCs paying close attention to Olkennedian culture and politics may realise several major historical events don't make sense. Trying to investigate them may embroil them in all manner of trouble.

Olkennedy was on a smooth path towards integration as a neo-Yoosan culture world before Disclosure upset things and massively accelerated the process. Why did the Commonality change its mind? Was it because of the Xeno Wars in the Successor States? A fear of the Venu? Or the fact that the Stop-Start War had just ended? Whatever the case, it looks like the Commonality wanted to ensure the Nwasha were committed to the Commonality, and the planet brought into the fold, before the Venu, Successor States, or Sentient Alliance could infiltrate and subvert them. What will people do if they find out?

Columbianan accommodation was traditionally large due to the tendency towards larger families; this has become exacerbated since Rediscovery, and Columbianan houses are often sprawling affairs, especially in rural areas.

Omianto housing is urban and cramped, despite families being second only to Columbiana in size. They're still low-slung, and often cheaply built.

Craterport Down mixes native builds with a more advanced and showy Commonality style. A hybrid "Pro-Comm" architecture has developed over the last twenty years, eschewing natural materials and ventilation in favour of artificial materials and high-tech climate control.

COMMUNICATIONS

Olkennedy is advancing from a terminal-based global infonet to full Mindscape connectivity; Mindscape implants are available to anyone who wants one (take-up is currently about 10%), and Alpha Node and its dirigent sentience Breath-of-Dawn (page 71) actively promote their use.

GENURGY

Olkennedy has rediscovered genurgy in the last generation, first under clandestine Commonality influence and later openly. People use it medically, but cosmetic and functional enhancements are still rare. A Chembu Genurgy outlet in Craterport Down provides more advanced enhancements, as well as sponsoring and mentoring among the local population.

INFORMATION

Olkennedy is entering the T8 "Age of Ubiquitous Intelligence". Breath of Dawn, the Alpha Node sentience and popular media personality, ensures Olkennedians are familiar with the concept of synthetic intelligence, but as yet there hasn't been widespread take up of synthetics, and there are few among the population. A synthetic in Craterport Down still makes people stop and stare.

RESOURCE EXPLOITATION

Olkennedy is resisting synthetic intelligence, partly due to its perceived impact upon employment, particularly in industrial Omianto. Robots and automation are sources of friction, and mechanical synthetics should be cautious.

Local Gear

The following items are typical examples of Olkennedian equipment.

AKANTACK BONE BOW

The risk of fire has restricted the take up of firearms among the Akantack tribes, and their traditional weapon is a T2 recurved bow made from the bones of the Takantuck sailfin.

- **Akantack Bone Bow:** weapon:2, range 2, T2, Control Index +1, *Requires Great Strength*; Cost 1S.

ATV

ATVs are common outside settled areas: logging and ranching utility vehicles in the Crater, rugged pressurised habitat vehicles in the inhospitable Volcanic Zone. Most are wheeled, although amphibious and tracked versions are found in swamp and mountain areas.

GLIDEWING

A robust low-tech hang-glider with articulated wings, capable of extended period gliding among the peaks and thermals of the Snow-Layer. Used in sailfin hunting and rites of passage among the Akantack, expert glidewingers may pull impressive stunts. Leisure versions are available for tourists.

- **Glidewing:** Glide; *Needs Nerves of Steel*; Cost 1S, 1A.

HELIBIKE

The twin rotary turbine helibike is a personal aerial vehicle like an oversized motorcycle. Used by police and security services, unarmed personal and sports versions are also available.

HELIBIKE

Scale: Medium (+0)

Physical Stress: □□

Tech Index: T7

Systems Stress: □□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: Sky Patrol Helibike, Exposed Propulsion, Fusion Cell, Zippy and Agile, Tailhugger

Skills: Good (+3) Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Manoeuvre (Atmospheric); Average (+1) Stealth

STUNTS

◆ **Charge!** +2 attack bonus when you move at least 1 zone before attacking.

◆ **Swarm:** Group attacks 1 scale larger; one bike attacks, others provide teamwork bonuses.

EXTRAS

★ **Autocannon:** w:3, range 4, high-explosive ammo, Full Auto.

Supporting Vehicle

HELICARRIER

Like a flying castle or ship with three or four enormous rotary turbines, the helicARRIER is frequently used by security services and corporacies.

Supporting Vehicle

HELICARRIER

Scale: Huge (+2)

Physical Stress: □²□

Tech Index: T7

Systems Stress: □²□³□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: Fusion-Powered Helicarrier Base, Vast Floating Cloud HQ, Distinctive Drone, Exposed Propulsion, Broad Area Dominance

Skills: Good (+3) Resources; Fair (+2) Active Sensing, Manoeuvre (Atmospheric), Systems; Average (+1) EW, Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat

STUNTS

◆ **Cargo Hold:** 30 units of Large (+1) cargo.

◆ **Docking Bay:** 1 Large (+1) construct, 10 Medium (+0) constructs.

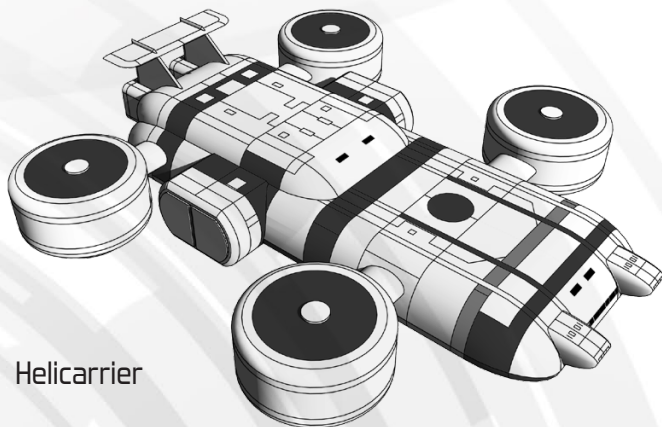
◆ **Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 20 passengers.

◆ **Top Urgency:** +2 to Passive Sensing when on top urgency alert.

EXTRAS

★ **Extended Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 200 passengers.

★ **Null Cannon:** w:0, range 4, Recoilless, Full Auto.



Helicarrier

HORSE

Used for low-tech transport, there are various breeds. Many are genurgically enhanced to metabolise hybridised plant silage.

Supporting Life Form

HORSE

Physical Stress: □²□³□ **Mental Stress:** □²□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

ASPECTS

Massively Muscled Grazer, Sleek Racer, Panicky, Smashing Hooves and Body Bash

SKILLS

Good (+3) Athletics; Fair (+2) Physique; Average (+1) Notice

STUNTS

◆ **Large:** +2 Provoke bonus, plus aspect.

◆ **Sprinter:** Move 2 zones per exchange for free.

◆ **Take the Blow:** Use Physique to defend against bashes with Unarmed or Melee Combat.

HOWLER

High O₂ levels make forest fires common, and Olkennedians prefer sonic weapons for defence against local wildlife. **Screamers** and **howlers** have three settings: stun, kill, and wide area (particularly effective against lynch nets).

- **Olkennedian Screamer Pistol:** +1 attack bonus OR +1 create *Stunned* advantage bonus, range 2, T6, Control Index -1, *Recoilless*, *Screaming*; Cost Auto (stats apply for use on Olkennedy only; otherwise as standard Sonic Disruptor Pistol).
- **Olkennedian Howler Rifle:** +3 attack bonus OR +3 create *Stunned* advantage bonus, range 3, T6, Control Index -1, *Recoilless*, as "Howl"; Cost 2S (stats apply for use on Olkennedy only; otherwise as standard Sonic Disruptor Rifle).

MEDIA REMOTE

The local media use reporter remotes (page 21); the Fivers often shoot them down. Most have no Mindscape connectivity. The Fivers use their own stealth remotes. Both types of remote can be hacked, by interception / jamming or via Mindscape as appropriate.

- **Media Remote:** Medium (+0); Fair (+2) Active Sensing; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Passive Sensing, Stealth; **Silent Running:** Use Stealth instead of Intrusion when passing unseen; *Rotary Turbine Snooper*; Cost: 1A, 1S, 5 SP.

MONITOR BAND DETECTOR

Paranoia about surveillance and invisible Mindscape implants has crept into Olkennedian society. Monitor band detectors smaller than a hand scanner are available, frequently worn on the wrist. See *Mindjammer* page 189 for detecting monitor bands.

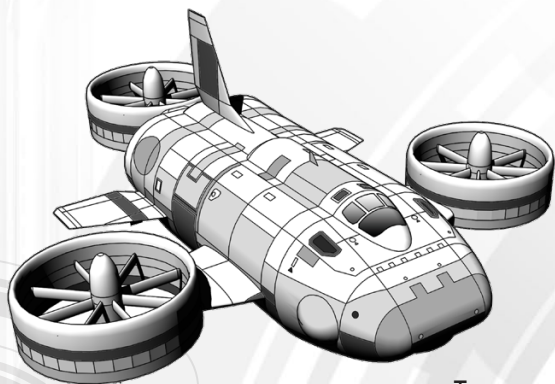
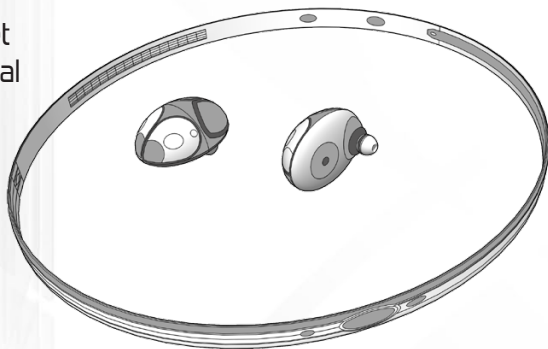
- **Monitor Band Detector:** Average (+1) Notice bonus to detect an active monitor band. Cost: 1SP.

TERMINAL

Rather than neural implants, Olkennedians use portable T7 devices to access the infonet, utilising voice control, holointerfaces, HUDs, or optical and audio nerve induction “links” (circlets and earpieces). They’re used for voice or text communication and invoking the infonet on mostly knowledge-based rolls.

- **Infonet Terminal:** *Infonet Interface Terminal*; Cost: 1A.

Infonet Terminal



Transport Rotary

Drones and Surveillance

Before Rediscovery, people enthusiastically uploaded imagery and personal information to the infonet. Since then they've become aware the infonet is linked to the Mindscape, and there's been an increased concern with privacy.

The Commonality is trying to do the “right thing” on Olkennedy. It doesn't overtly use its own drones, although it does mine the infonet. There are scare stories about “secret Commonality spies”, but its main source of information is Mindscape implants — hence the fear and prejudice.

TRANSPORT ROTARY

The workhorse of international transport, this large cargo hauler or passenger transport is thirty metres or more in length. Its signature drone is heard everywhere.

TRANSPORT ROTARY

Scale: Huge (+2)

Physical Stress: □□

Tech Index: T7

Systems Stress: □□□□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: Cargo / Passenger Transport Rotary, Exposed Propulsion, Fusion Reactor, Goes Anywhere

Skills: Fair (+2) Manoeuvre (Atmospheric), Systems; Average (+1) Passive Sensing, Resources

STUNTS

✦ **Cargo Hold:** 10 units of Large (+1) cargo.

✦ **Passenger Accommodation:** 20 passengers.

EXTRAS

★ **Extended Cargo Hold:** +10 units, Bulky and Difficult to Manoeuvre.

OR

★ **Extended Passenger Accommodation:** +200 passengers.

★ **Null Cannon:** w:0, range 4, Recoilless, Full Auto.

Supporting Vehicle

TURBOCAR

A hovercar with two rotary turbines forward and aft, capable of high-speed pursuit and low-speed patrols. It's used by OLSEC as a standard patrol vehicle.

Supporting Vehicle

TURBOCAR

Scale: Large (+1)

Physical Stress: □²□

Tech Index: T7

Systems Stress: □²□²□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: Flying Police Vehicle, Exposed Propulsion, Fusion Cell, One Size Fits All, Highly Manoeuvrable

Skills: Good (+3) Manoeuvre (Atmospheric); Fair (+2) Passive Sensing; Average (+1) Systems

STUNTS

◆ **Ace:** +2 Manoeuvre bonus when executing difficult manoeuvres.

EXTRAS

★ **Null Cannon:** w:0, range 4, Recoilless, Full Auto.

CRATERPORT DOWN LOCATIONS

Chembu Genurgy Enclave

Beneath Genhuyuk Bay lies an underwater facility staffed by Commonality aquatics — primarily cephalopods and Chembu hominids. The buildings offer an amphibious environment, and also Chembu Genurgy corporacy enhancement facilities.

Commonality Embassy

See "Friendship Square", below.

ComTown

Craterport's ComTown, its new residential quarter inhabited chiefly by Commonality citizens, has been built since Disclosure, like all the ComTowns in Olkennedy's major cities. Its high-tech high-rise buildings stand in stark contrast to the more traditional, low-slung Olkennedian architecture; it's a vibrant modern metropolis, the main Commonality presence on Olkennedy. It's expanding rapidly, a constant turmoil of construction and traffic from the neighbouring starport. Commonality synthetics, xenomorphs, hominids, and other interstellar travellers are common here.

Friendship Park

The "mountain" east of Craterport is a natural park dedicated to the friendship between Olkennedy and the Commonality, and location of a monument visible from all over the city.

Friendship Square

See below.

Harver

The old port district developed since the Awakening a millennium ago, Harver is always busy with traffic across the Sea of Gold. It's rough and ready, but there are also Commonality new trader and market maker factors dealing with import and export.

Kanda River

The Kanda river is the "First River", mentioned in myth, legend, and poetry, although the reality is more prosaic. It flows through tunnels beneath Friendship Square.

Munt Iffley

The Munt Iffley massif divides the ancient native city from the modern developments built since Rediscovery. It's mostly parkland, though some areas are urbanised; a major landmark is the Temple of Universal Mind, providing Mindscape implants and training for Olkennedians.

The Pylons

Over eight thousand years old, these broken, clearly ancient spires are the visible remains of the stasis ship which originally colonised the planet. The Awoken (page 16) emerged

CRATERPORT: CAPITAL OF A UNIFIED WORLD

As is common in the Commonality, Olkennedy's starport is divided into orbital and ground-based facilities known as Craterport High (or "the Highport") and Craterport Down (or "the Downport").

Craterport Down

Craterport Down is the capital of Olkennedy's nascent world government, and the mythical site of its first colony. Chosen by the Commonality for its symbolic significance, it's old, with ruins dating back to the prehistoric colony era.

Built by the sea, its old town of Sepey has waterways and canals. It has a subtropical climate, although not too humid unless there's a westerly wind. Vegetation is a deep bottle green and khaki. Like all Olkennedian cities, buildings are low-slung, generally less than ten storeys, and strengthened against high winds and earthquakes.

Craterport teems. It's also fraught with tension; several areas are off-limits to offworlders. Out of its three million population, just under a million are non-Olkennedian.

here a thousand years ago, and Columbianans still revere them. The central core, deep beneath tens of metres of rock and earth, is still powered, and off limits. Rumour says there are still colonists sleeping inside.

Sepey

The "old city" in parts dates back to the colonial period six to eight millennia ago. Until the founding of Columbiana Sepey was mostly ruins; now, rebuilt and restored, it still has an "ancient world" feel.

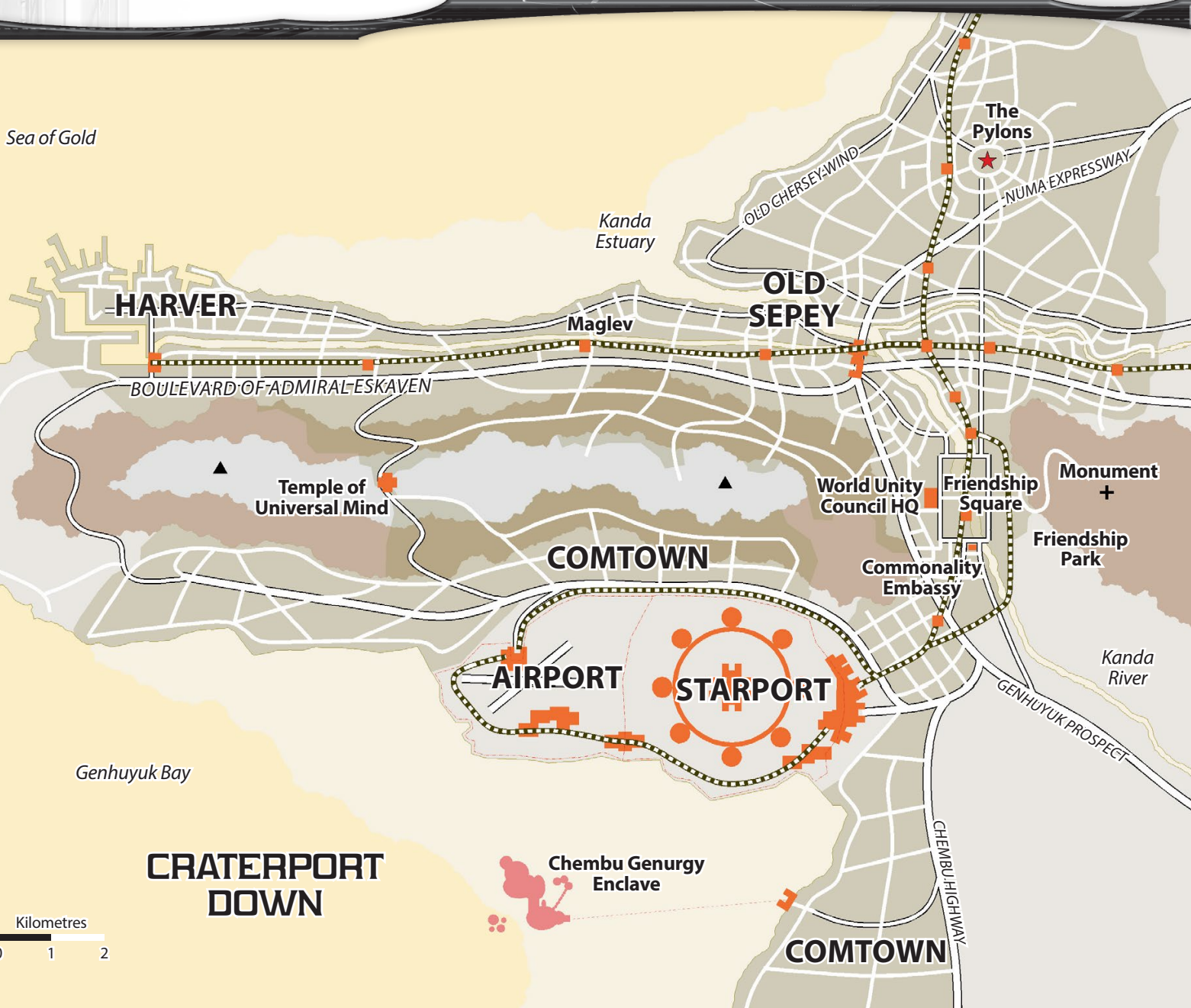
Starport

Craterport Down starport is an impressive Commonality edifice on the edge of the city, in constant contact with Craterport High in orbit above. It sits alongside the more elevated buildings of ComTown, and comprises landing bays,

often multi-storey, as well as hostel, maintenance, and resupply facilities. The "Craterport Bar" has branches on the ground and in orbit, and is a typical traveller's establishment, with shady nooks and clientele, local food and drink and expensive Commonality specials, and piped and live music. Both branches operate according to Commonality law (Property (-2) control index), although they're used to Olkennedian customs, even when their patrons aren't. Both branches have optional spa areas.

Friendship Square

An open area where Old Sepey meets the New City and starport district, Friendship Square houses the nascent Olkennedy world government and the Commonality presence. It's the site of frequent protests.



FRIENDSHIP SQUARE LOCATIONS

1. *The Speakeasy*

Eatery and thermal spa specialising in fusion cuisine, and a popular place for discreet meetings.

2. *Junmai Gifts and Toys*

This emporium of tourist tat and imported paraphernalia is the front for a Fiver safe-house.

3. *Library*

This repository of Columbianan history and culture is a rendezvous for Fiver sympathisers. It's accessible via infonet and Mindscape.

4. *OLSEC HQ*

Headquarters of the Olkennedian Security Services, aka OLSEC (page 45).

5. *Columbiana Government*

This fifteen-storey reflective tower is inspired by Commonality architecture and the World Unity Council HQ. Officially the heart of the Columbianan government, these days most functions are fulfilled by the World Unity Council (location 19).

6. *Akantack Embassy*

A low building decorated with the dark red flags of the Akantack Sanctuary. It's frequented by Akantack, and there's a constant and unwelcome OLSEC guard post outside.

7. *Omianto Embassy*

A severe monumental building of blocky, functional design, the site of frequent demonstrations for worker's rights. Nwasha and Olkennedian humans are encountered here in equal measure.

8. *Van Kuvrai Embassy*

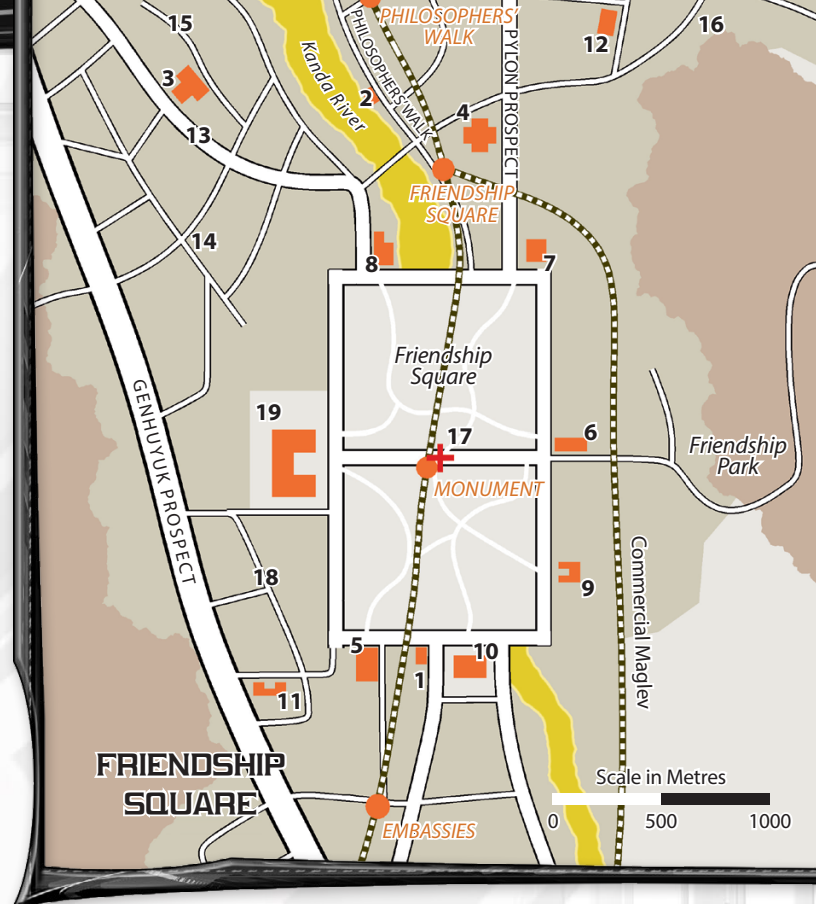
Laid back in comparison with other embassies, the Van Kuvrai are more interested in agricultural pursuits than political intrigue. It's easy to get in and out.

9. *Nwasha Embassy*

More a tourist office than a conventional embassy, the Nwasha run exhibitions for offworld visitors extolling the virtues of Olkennedy's "great outdoors". Proximity to the Commonality embassy means there's considerable exchange between the two.

10. *Commonality Embassy*

An impressive five story stone and glassteel building in a landscaped compound surrounded by high walls, over which a defence shield can be erected at any time. The building corpus is discreet — most Olkennedians are unaware it's there at all — but has a defence array in case



of attack. There's a constant protest outside the embassy's gates. It's guarded by Commonality and OLSEC forces, and is the home of Ambassador Dai-Nisen-Go (page 51), and local instrumentality representatives, including a SCI Force bureau with a security cadre and a hotline to Breath of Dawn (page 71).

11. *Kened Luxury Flyer Hire*

Olkennedy tech doesn't extend to grav suspensors, but that doesn't mean there isn't demand. Kened's establishment provides high-end flyers to embassy staff, high net-worth individuals, Big Families, and corporacies. Several large (and fairly nasty) new trader cartels have flyer supply almost sewn up with Kened, but it's not quite the only outlet.

12. *Hunt and Supply*

Olkennedians aren't typically armed, though rural families may own sonic weapons for defence against wildlife. Paranoia has increased with the growing unrest, though, and people have been buying weapons. **Hunt and Supply** is typical; you can buy sport and hunting sonics, and non-automatic (usually sonic) personal weapons. Recently the latter have been more popular.

13. *Bukkinista Boulevard*

This ancient tree-lined boulevard of low-slung ruddy stone buildings has for several centuries been home to painters, sculptors, writers, and bookbinders. These days it's a hotbed of agitation, with underground theatre, music, meetings, and heated discussions in basement bath-houses. SCI Force and OLSEC snoop regularly, but the locals usually sniff them out.



14. New Quarter

An upmarket district of refurbished Old Sepey dwellings, fitted with modern conveniences and security suites and inhabited by Olkennedian entrepreneurs, businessfolk, ambassadorial workers, and offworlders.

15. Old Sepey

A warren of low-slung buildings of ruddy stone, courtyards, alleyways, and hidden secret spaces. It's easy to get lost among the overhanging buildings, where aerial transport and surveillance is useless. Areas nearer Friendship Square are touristy, but others are the real thing.

16. Wash Flats

The flood plain of the Wash River is an impoverished ramshackle neighbourhood, home to itinerant workers and the overflow from Craterport's rapid expansion. OLSEC rarely patrols here, and parts are no-go.

17. Friendship Monument

This Commonality monument is typical of rediscovered worlds. It depicts two noble and transcendent-looking humans or hominids — one of whom may be synthetic — together with one Nwasha, one Olkennedian human, and one Akantack, in a heroic pose pointing to the sky and looking optimistically to the future. These days there's usually at least one OLSEC trooper at its base.

18. Cosmo Quarter

The most cosmopolitan district in Friendship Square, the streets more properly belong to ComTown; there are many offworld styles, and most inhabitants are offworlders, including starport officials, Commonality embassy staff, and trade factors.

19. World Unity Council HQ

It's doubtful this enormous building would have been possible without Commonality support. It precedes Disclosure, dating from the consolidation period following the Brown Death. It's an attempt at a unified "Olkennedian architecture", but is heavily influenced by Columbian styles, and much of Columbiana's government business is conducted here. However, it's been a true world government for a couple of decades, employing at least 10,000 people from the Friendship Square neighbourhood and beyond. Like the Commonality embassy, it has a discreet corpus sentience and energy shield.

EVENTS IN THE CITY

These days Craterport Down can be livelier than most people would like, especially if you're an offworlder. Use the following table for events in the old or new cities. See page 12 for selecting events.

Table 4: Craterport Down Events

4dF	Sepey / Harver	New City
-4	Ambush	Terror Event
-3	Fiver Enclave	Tech Vandals
-2	Brawl	New Traders
-1	Sticks and Stones	Visitors
+0	Curious Locals	Pro-Comm Locals
+1	These People Need Help	OLSEC Patrol
+2	Tourist Provocateurs	Market Makers
+3	OLSEC Patrol	Cephalopods
+4	Friendlies	Exotics

EVENT NOTES

Ambush: The PCs are attacked by a group of Fair (+2) minor NPC locals, equal in number to the PCs +1, armed with Howler rifles and makeshift melee weapons. Their goal is to beat up or drive out the PCs.

Brawl: The PCs are involved in a brawl, probably between pro-Commonality and separatist factions. Figure one supporting NPC or a group of 3 Average (+1) minor NPCs per PC, either facing the PCs or on each side. If blood starts to get shed then OLSEC will soon arrive.

Cephalopods: The PCs encounter a group of cephalopod xenomorphs from the Genhuyuk Bay Chembu Genurgy facility, probably in environment suits and grav harnesses. They may be contacts, or attract undue attention.

Curious Locals: The PCs attract curious locals. This may become an ambush or brawl; alternatively, see “These People Need Help” or “Friendlies”.

Exotics: The PCs encounter a group of what Olkennedians would call **exotics** — synthetics, divergent hominids, or unusual avatars or xenomorphs. They’ll attract attention, but may also be useful to know.

Fiver Enclave: The PCs enter a neighbourhood which is a hotbed of Fiver sympathies, facing a Superb (+5) roll to avoid an ambush or brawl. They may make Fiver contacts, or witness why some Olkennedians oppose Commonality integration.

Friendlies: The PCs encounter a group of pro-Commonality locals, who may help them if they’re in need, or provide information or equipment. They may draw attention to PCs keeping a low profile.

Market Makers: The PCs encounter corporacy representatives seeking new business, in rivalry with those already here.

New Traders: The PCs encounter one or more new traders and any retinue. Usually on the hunt for cargoes, they may be the source of work or information, or may be up to no good.

OLSEC Patrol: The PCs encounter a group of Fair (+2) minor NPCs armed with Howler rifles, equal in number to twice the number of PCs. They may assist the PCs, or provide direct opposition.

Pro-Comm Locals: The PCs encounter a group of pro-Commonality locals residing in ComTown. They may have contacts in the old city, or be otherwise able to help the PCs if persuaded.

Sticks and Stones: The PCs encounter a hail of sticks, stones, and other impromptu missiles. There’s no one directly to attack unless the PCs give chase; otherwise figure it’s a Great (+4) conflict hazard, requiring 3 victories to escape and incurring physical stress damage on failure.

Tech Vandals: The PCs encounter vandals hellbent on destroying Commonality tech. Figure a group of Fair (+2) minor NPCs armed with weapon:1 improvised melee weapons and Howler rifles, equal in number to the number of PCs +1; their goal is to ruin any Commonality gear the PCs have, and consequences affect equipment.

Terror Event: The Fivers stage a terror attack in ComTown, likely a loud and public bombing. Treat this as a single rocket launcher attack (*Mindjammer* page 128). The neighbourhood will be closed off within an exchange or two, potentially trapping the PCs and subjecting them to scrutiny by security forces.

These People Need Help: The PCs encounter locals who desperately need their help: medical attention above the local tech index, threats from a local gangster, Fiver separatist group, or even OLSEC troopers. The PCs must commit infractions to help, or incur the consequences of not helping from a neighbourhood of angry locals.

Tourist Provocateurs: The PCs encounter offworlders wreaking cultural havoc. Pick another local event — a negative one — and describe how it’s being caused by the offworlders, and how the PCs are in the middle of the mayhem.

Visitors: The PCs encounter offworld visitors, perhaps Commonality citizens, tourists, or others with potentially troublesome agendas. Roll on the “Craterport High” events table (page 35).

Craterport High

Craterport High is Olkennedy’s orbital starport: cosmopolitan, advanced, and jointly run by the Commonality and Olkennednian government. With a population of 150,000, including 50,000 Olkennednian citizens, it includes the Alpha Node satellite (page 70) run by Breath of Dawn, even though physically it’s a separate facility.

Craterport High is a C-class starport (*Mindjammer* page 346) and a modular facility typical of Fringe World systems. It's sentient, self-building, and gradually growing. From a distance it looks vaguely like a snowflake — a fractal, constantly repeating simple structure.

Craterport High is a bustling stop on the *Mindjammer* route into the Darradine Rim octant; routes lead to Belawis in one direction, and to Avidus in the Damask Veil octant in the other.

CRATERPORT HIGH LOCATIONS

1. Hub Habitat

A city in space, a closed environment with domiciliaries, offices, gardens, recreation, and life support for 150,000 individuals. Over a kilometre across and accessed via six ports, it

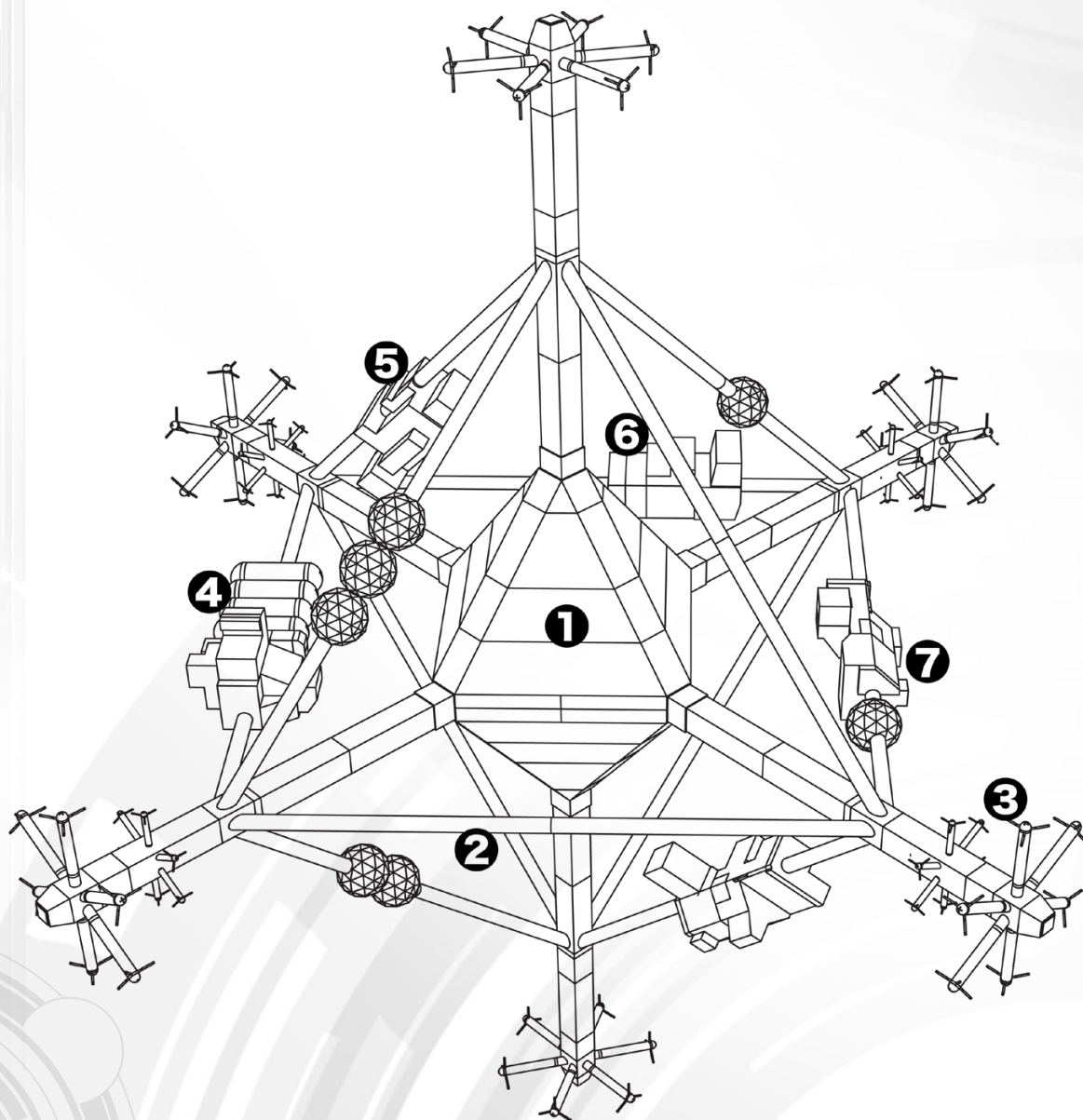
operates under Commonality law, though with a pronounced Olkennedian bias in its local culture and traditions.

2. First Concentric

This lattice of laterals and transverses is where one day the new "skin" of Craterport will be constructed as the hub habitat grows to its next larger size and the Second Concentric constructed. For now it's still skeletal, the location of vac transport tubes and orbital factories and warehouses, sitting midway between the docking splines and the hub habitat.

3. Splines

Six main splines extend from the First Concentric, splitting into subsplines (and even microsplines) to provide docking facilities for ships from Medium (+0) to Enormous (+3) scale.



4. Darradine Transits

Spline Five and facilities on the First Concentric are dedicated to the Darradine Transits shipping corporacy.

5. Olkex Mining

A large Olkennedian mining conglomerate which is nevertheless small fry on the Commonality scale, Olkex Mining operates storage facilities on the First Concentric and regular shuttles to the surface transporting refined products.

6. Craterport Bar

The orbital branch of the famous bar (page 30). Shady deals and rendezvous occur here round the clock.

7. Olkennedian Trade Virtuality

Accessible via the global Mindscape, the Olkennedian Trade Virtuality locates its physical offices in the hub habitat, and storage facilities on the First Concentric. The old Toraleen Van Lox dynasty, one of Columbiana's Big Families, has a controlling interest.

8. Alpha Node (off map)

A separate orbital in geostationary orbit 500 kilometres from Craterport High, administered by the Breath of Dawn sentience (page 71).

CRATERPORT HIGH EVENTS

Events in Craterport High may connect the PCs with the world below or the Commonality around them, at the GM's (and often the PCs') decision.

EVENT NOTES

Attack: Someone stages a small but murderous attack on part of the starport. This is probably Fivers (page 21), a physical assault of a couple of supporting NPCs and a group of Fair (+2) minor NPCs equal in number to the number of PCs +1 (see page 52 for stats).

Brawl: A classic starport brawl, for any one of a thousand reasons, rapidly spilling onto concourses and pedwalks. Figure one Good (+3) minor NPC brawler per PC; any conflict lasting longer than 3-4 exchanges will run foul of starport security.

Contraband: The PCs are asked to smuggle contraband onto Olkennedy which contravenes its Property (-2) control index, like automatic weapons.

Mercenary Ticket: The PCs are offered a mercenary ticket, either training the Fivers or doing a mission on behalf of the Fivers or another faction on Olkennedy. Completing the ticket can involve a reward of a significant milestone or higher.

Mistaken Identity: One of the PCs is mistaken for someone else; pick another event, describing it as a result of that mistaken identity.

Table 5: Craterport High Events

4dF	Event
-4	Attack
-3	Brawl
-2	Wrong Place Wrong Time
-1	Contraband
+0	Trade Opportunity
+1	Urgent Passenger
+2	Mistaken Identity
+3	Treading on Toes
+4	Mercenary Ticket

Trade Opportunity: The PCs gain the opportunity to bid on a valuable cargo, up to 10 units of a Fantastic (+6) cargo of whatever size desired. They must still roll to buy the cargo, but gain a +2 bonus on the roll.

Treading on Toes: The PCs inadvertently "tread on someone's toes" in the starport — spilling their drink, buying their cargo, ruining a local gangster's day. It's a Great (+4) difficulty to avoid a physical confrontation.

Urgent Passenger: The PCs automatically find a last-minute Fair (+2) passenger complement with a *Dodgy Passenger*-type aspect. This may be invoked for greater profit when making the passage, and / or compelled to inveigle the PCs in all manner of shenanigans.

Wrong Place Wrong Time: It's just bad luck; through no fault of their own, the PCs' immediate surroundings go to hell. Choose another event, and this time the PCs are witnesses or bystanders as everything goes wrong.

FACTIONS OF THE COMMONALITY

While the Commonality would like everyone to think it's a unified, monolithic polity, with common agenda and goals in its approach to Rediscovery, that's far from the reality. The Commonality government is split into many **factions**, from conservative and controlling to liberal and accommodating. All agree that Rediscovery is happening, and will continue to happen, but how the Commonality deals with it, and how it approaches rediscovered worlds and compromises in response, is up for grabs.

Use factions in different ways. Active faction members form an **organisation**, usually with Galactic (+9) reach and a

scale from Continental (+5) to Interplanetary (+7). Each faction's philosophy (maybe its high concept and other aspects) is present in the Commonality as a **situation aspect**, and sometimes a **meme**, **cultural aspect**, or **game issue**. Each faction also maintains a **memoplex** servitor gestalt (*Mind-jammer* page 188) which new members may be required to join. Examples are given below.

In *Hearts and Minds*, the Commonality aims to find an accommodation with Olkennedy. Which solution SCI Force chooses will strengthen one or more of the factions. This drama is playing itself out on every world in the New Commonality Era.

THE INTEGRATOR FACTION

The oldest faction, the integrators represent the forces which kept such a tight control over Old Earth for the millennia of the Old Commonality. Ambassador Dai-Nisen-Go (page 51) is an integrator. They're often seen as "invaders"; the Core Worlds are overwhelmingly integrator.

Scale: Interplanetary (+7) **Physical Stress:** □²□³□⁴

Reach: Galactic (+9) **Mental Stress:** □²□³□⁴

Tech Index: T10 **Credit Stress:** □²□³□⁴

Consequences: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: Integrating Every World Into the Commonality

Trouble: This Is How It's Done

Other Aspects: The Ends Justify the Means, Forcible Integration, For Their Own Good

SKILLS

Fantastic (+6): Rapport

Superb (+5): Deceive, Provoke

Great (+4): Investigate, Knowledge, Resources

Good (+3): Security, Stealth, Structure, Will

Fair (+2): Assimilate, Bureaucracy, Contacts, Intrusion

STUNTS

◆ **Divide and Conquer:** +2 create an advantage bonus to target a local instance of an organisation.

◆ **Extreme Sanction:** Make Security actions against characters.

◆ **Public Relations:** +2 create an advantage Deceive bonus.

◆ **Shadow Management:** +2 create an advantage bonus when using clandestine methods.

◆ **The Ties That Bind:** +2 bonus to Contacts create an advantage actions.

EXTRAS

★ **Diplomatic Team:** Special Diplomatic Envoy with Good (+3) Rapport.

★ **Inquisitors:** Team of Inquisitor Synthetics; double bonus when burning mental stress for extra effort.

★ **Integrator Memoplex:** Characters joining the memoplex may take:

Aspects: The Commonality First, The Ends Justify the Means, Forcible Integration, For Their Own Good;

Skills: Good (+3) Deceive; Fair (+2) Knowledge; Average (+1) Contacts;

Stunts: Ear to the Ground, Insider, Shield of Logic, Suspension Matrix, We Come In Peace.

★ **Mole:** 1/session, pay 1FP to make a single Intrusion attack with a +2 bonus vs Mediocre (+0) or normal passive opposition.

★ **Strike Force:** Make Security attacks up to 2-zone range.

THE DIALOGIC FACTION

The Dialogic faction maintains dialogue with each rediscovered world — the Commonality on the one side, and all the collective voices of the Fringe Worlds on the other. Watcher Craypast, the Rim Sector custodian, appears to be a Dialogic — although some say he's a Polyvox (see below).

Scale: Planetary (+6) **Physical Stress:** □ □
Reach: Galactic (+9) **Mental Stress:** □ □ □ □
Tech Index: T9 **Credit Stress:** □ □ □ □

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: The Commonality Talks to Everyone, Two Sides to the Argument, Transhuman Dialectic, Respect and Listen, Noblesse Oblige

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Contacts, Rapport; Superb (+5) Empathy, Will; Great (+4) Investigate, Knowledge; Good (+3) Resources, Stealth; Fair (+2) Provoke, Security; Average (+1) Bureaucracy, Intrusion

STUNTS

◆ **Aid Package:** Use Resources for moderate and severe physical recovery actions for organisations.

◆ **Arbitration & Reconciliation:** Use Empathy in recovery actions for moderate and severe consequences.

◆ **Esprit de Corps:** +2 defend bonus vs demoralising attacks and propaganda campaigns.

◆ **Populist:** +2 create an advantage bonus when appealing to "the people".

◆ **Zeitgeist:** +2 bonus to create an advantage actions with Empathy.

EXTRAS

★ **Consultants:** 1/session when making extra effort and stressing mental stress track, automatically create Eye on the Ball advantage for the rest of the session.

★ **Dialogic Memoplex:** Characters joining may take:
Aspects: The Commonality Talks to Everyone, Two Sides to the Argument, Transhuman Dialectic, Respect and Listen, Noblesse Oblige;

Skills: Good (+3) Empathy; Fair (+2) Rapport; Average (+1) Contacts;

Stunts: Cultural Redaction, Demagogue, Ear to the Ground, Negotiator.

Other Factions

There are many other factions; here are some of the main ones.

POLYVOXES

The Polyvox faction wants to let rediscovered worlds affiliate themselves with the Commonality on their own terms — to create a true "commonality". They believe the Commonality should be a collection of disparate voices, and that Old Earth is just one world among many, on equal footing with any other world. It's the newest faction. CORESEC actively persecutes Polyvoxes in the Core.

CONSOLIDATORS

The Consolidator faction believes Rediscovery has gone far enough, and that Expansion should cease while the Commonality consolidates its holdings and brings its culture conflicts under control.

REDUCTIONISTS

The Reductionist faction believes that Rediscovery has gone too far, and that the Commonality should withdraw its borders, possibly as far as the Core Worlds.

DISSOLUTIONISTS

The Dissolutionist faction believes that the New Commonality was a bad idea, and that it should dissolve itself and reform as the original Commonality centred on Old Earth and the Core Worlds.

STARTING PLAY

"Sometimes you make a mistake. You tell yourself the Commonality embargo is wrong — that everyone has a right to get hold of whatever you can give them, as long as they can pay. Sure you can blow yourself and half the neighbourhood sky high with a bunch of ZIP field decouplers — but who the hell would want to do that?"

— Henda Delgadis, pre-Reeducation statement, Craterport Massacre Inquiry, 194NCE

The PCs may become embroiled in many adventures on Olkenedy. In this section, we focus on just one — a conspiracy which threatens to inflame the world's culture conflict into open civil war.

WHO ARE THE PCS?

In the episodes and scenes which follow, the PCs stumble onto a hotbed of unrest and imminent revolution. How did they get there? Here are some ideas.

Diplomats

The PCs may be members of the Communications Instrumentality, ambassadorial and diplomatic personnel, or those who support them, like Mindscape technical staff or technopsi agents. Perhaps they've been present on Olkenedy for some time when the troubles flare up; or perhaps they've recently been assigned to troubleshoot the world's descent into chaos.

A Different World — Things Visitors Notice

Here's a summary of the main things visitors to Olkenedy will notice that tell them they're on an alien world:

- Heavier gravity — Standard (+1).
- Yellow-orange sky.
- Two red suns: one large (three times the size of Sol in the sky), one bright star.
- Dim light: colours look different, shadows softer, with brownish edges.
- Almost constant high winds.
- Dark or black vegetation.
- Dual biospheres.
- Same temperature ranges as Old Earth; Craterport Down is subtropical, but not too humid.
- Slightly thicker air and lots of rotary turbine aircraft.
- High O₂ — fires burn rapid and bright.
- Short day — 9 hours day, 9 hours night.
- Modern buildings look more "standard" than exotic older ones (page 25).
- Sparse population.
- Natives are short, with large eyes.
- Media remotes flying in the sky.
- Lack of synthetics.
- Anti / pro-Commonality tensions.
- Thermal baths as "bars" for socialising.

SCI Force

The PCs may be members of SCI Force — perhaps a special operations team. They know Olkennedy is a powder keg, and have been told to contact Ambassador Dai-Nisen-Go (page 51) for a situation report and take whatever culture ops are required to bring the situation under control. The presence of a SCI Force ops team on a world is a big deal; maybe the PCs would prefer to begin under cover? What happens when that cover is blown?

AFI

The PCs may be members of the Armed Forces Instrumentality — perhaps a company of AFI troopers from the local Octant Defence Force — called to Olkennedy by Ambassador Dai-Nisen-Go to respond aggressively to the deepening disorder. AFI characters will probably put the cultural consequences of their actions in the background in favour of more direct military goals — although their loyalties may be challenged by the nature of the Olkennedian situation.

Merchants and Traders

The PCs may be the crew of a new trader vessel, or perhaps corporacy market makers, in search of profit only to find a

world on the brink of war. There's a fortune to be made for those with the wits and guts to take advantage of the situation — but the PCs aren't the only game in town, and the longer they spend on the planet, the less clear-cut making that fortune seems to become.

Scientists

Olkennedy is taking a dizzying rollercoaster ride to becoming a high-tech civilisation, and is in danger of coming apart at the seams. Scientists are at a premium — not just teaching people how to make and maintain the new devices being introduced every day, but also to study the world's societies to help them cope with the rapidly changing situation. But there are those who see scientists as "collaborators" — and those who'd expel the Commonality would have no hesitation doing the same to you, with extreme prejudice!

Others

PCs may be on Olkennedy for any number of reasons — it's on the Mindjammer routes, and there's lots to do. As GM, come up with justifications for the PCs being in the highport or downport when everything starts to go to hell, or — better still — ask the PCs how they come to be in the middle of this mayhem!



Mindscape Troubles — the Political Situation

Many Olkennedians think Mindscape implants are a way of controlling their thoughts, and disruption of Mindscape connectivity is increasingly common, often through sabotage, but also through technical inadequacies around the edge of the Crater, where the signal from Alpha Node attenuates. Compel or invoke this notional Sporadic Mindscape Connectivity aspect to make Mindscape use more problematic.

Tracking the PCs

Don't forget the PCs can be tracked by Mindscape tracer unless they have monitor band cloaks. The Commonality can do this, as can OLSEC if the Commonality supports their search. The Fivers have no such capacity, but equally they don't have Mindscape implants.

WHO ARE THE OPPOSITION?

The PCs' opponents are detailed below, but include:

- **The Fivers:** The violent faction agitating for Olkennedy to throw out or resist the Commonality (page 21).
- **Citizens:** People are polarised between pro- and anti-Commonality factions, and PCs can find themselves quickly surrounded by a hysterical mob.
- **OLSEC:** The Olkennedean Security Services have their own agenda, and the PCs may fall foul of them.
- **Dai-Nisen-Go:** The Commonality ambassador on Olkennedy has its own Machiavellian plans, and will be ruthless if the PCs get in its way.
- **The Wildlife:** Parts of this scenario may involve crossing Olkennedean wilderness — lethal for unprepared characters, and an opportunity to shoot at alien critters!

THE DEFAULT PLOT THREAD

According to *Mindjammer* page 424, the "default plot thread" is a description of what happens in the scenario if the PCs refuse to get involved. It's intended to be a quick summary and background guide to action which you as GM can fall back on when you need to work out what's happening elsewhere in the scenario.

At the beginning of *Hearts and Minds*, tension in Craterport Down is finally getting too much, and without the PCs' intervention a riot in the city centre breaches the Commonality Embassy and results in bloodshed. A cell of violent Fiver separatists kidnaps several hostages and transports them to a secret base in the Akantack Sanctuary, where they issue demands for the Commonality to withdraw from Olkennedy. A tense stand-off ensues, which probably ends in a massacre.

In the meantime, a well-known media personality and daughter of a former resistance leader, Epona Zaron, who the Fiver separatists regard as their leader, travels to Alpha Node, the Mindscape node satellite, for a publicised meeting with the transhuman sentience Breath of Dawn. There, together

A WORLD IN FLAMES

Plot Stress Track

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (-2): Open rioting in your area.
Moderate (-4): Curfew; heavy policing, no-go areas.
Severe (-6): Martial law.
Taken Out: Civil war!

CAUSES OF PLOT STRESS*

Protestors publicly beaten 1 stress
Protestors publicly killed 2 stress

Fiver kidnap occurs 1 stress
Kidnap rescue without bloodshed recover 1 stress
Commonality manipulation proven 1 stress
Commonality involvement in anti-Fiver violence / killing proven 2 stress
Overt Commonality military action 1 stress
Alpha Node destroyed 1 cons
Epona Zaron killed 1 cons
Epona Zaron compromises recover 1 cons
Bwaga Bargo takes over the Fivers 2 stress

*the event must be reported / public knowledge to cause plot stress.

Plot Stress

with a group of fanatical followers, she takes the sentience hostage, and then detonates a bomb, destroying the node and all Mindscape connectivity on the planet.

With the martyr as their figurehead, the Fivers rise up to drive the Commonality off Olkennedy. The situation deteriorates into civil war.

Can the PCs prevent this outcome, and capture the Olkennedians' hearts and minds?

PLOT STRESS: A WORLD IN FLAMES!

Hearts and Minds uses the *Mindjammer* plot stress rules (*Mindjammer* page 432) to track the world's descent into civil war. Track the events which cause plot stress in the stat block above, and mark off the plot stress consequences in sequence.

GATHERING INTEL WHAT'S GOING ON?

There are many ways the PCs can gather information. If they spend any time interacting with the infonet via terminal or Mindscape, they'll encounter the three media networks and

their respective "darlings" (page 21). They may research the Olkennedians situation further.

Research, Surveillance, and Carousing

Research is surfing the infonet and Mindscape; **surveillance** is identifying targets and tracking or bugging them; **carousing** is hanging around bars, thermal spas, and other venues, pumping people for information.

Olkennedy is notable for its spas, bars and eateries — great places to relax, observe, lie around in warm water, and pick up rumours. See "The Speakeasy" (page 31), "Craterport Bar" (pages 30 and 35), and "Peaceground" (page 20) for examples. Players may make Empathy, Investigate, Knowledge, Provoke, Rapport, or even Science rolls to ferret out information.

Some Colourful NPCs

The following NPCs are "colourful characters" who may be met in various places on Olkennedy, depending on your story's needs. Use them as allies, adversaries, rivals, or conveyors of useful information.

Running the Scenario as a One-Shot

You can run *Hearts and Minds* in a single session. This requires compressing the plot into three key scenes:

SCENE 1: RIOT AND KIDNAP

Run the "Flashpoint!" riot (page 43), assuming the Fivers' goals are to kidnap hostages and flee to Mymar's Retreat (page 66). The hostages may be the PCs, Commonality representatives, or pro-Commonality Olkennedians.

SCENE 2: ESCAPE / RESCUE

The PCs attempt to rescue the hostages from Mymar's Retreat (page 63) or, if they've been kidnapped themselves, to escape (page 65).

SCENE 3: DISARM THE BOMBER

The PCs learn the kidnap was a distraction (perhaps from OLSEC, SCI Force, or Dai-Nisen-Go), and accept the mission to prevent Epona Zaron from destroying the Alpha Node global Mindscape instance (page 72).

SILVERBACK

"It's a tough life in the Outback. But at least it's just us workers — the overseers don't even dare."

Silverback is a Nwasha Volcanic Zone miner from Omianto, and a passionate agitator for workers' rights. He doesn't dislike the Commonality, but opposes any attempt to limit his freedom.

Physical Stress: □²□³□⁴ **Mental Stress:** □²□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Nwashan Omianto Miner, Quick to Resist Oppression, Knows the Outback Like the Back Of His Enormous Hand

Skills: Great (+4) Physique, Rapport; Good (+3) Empathy, Provoke; Fair (+2) Knowledge, Technical; Average (+1) Athletics, Unarmed Combat

STUNTS

◆ **Tough As Nails:** 1/session, pay a fate point to reduce moderate physical consequence to mild, or erase a mild.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Howler Rifle:** +3, range 3, Recoiless.

★ **Nwasha Mechanics tracked ATV:** Fair (+2) Manoeuvre, Average (+1) Systems.

Supporting NPC

STRONTIUM JACK

"I can get you anything — if you can pay."

Strontium Jack is from a Fringe World somewhere in the Rim Sector, and smuggles **anything** he thinks he can get away with. He's not averse to violence, but doesn't consider himself a murderer or even a criminal — just someone with a legitimate social grievance against the trade restrictions of the Commonality.

Physical Stress: □² □² **Mental Stress:** □² □²

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Grasping New Trader, In Between Ships Right Now, I Can Get You Anything — If You Can Pay, No Stranger to Skullduggery

Skills: Great (+4) Contacts, Deceive; Good (+3) Pilot, Resources; Fair (+2) Provoke, Rapport; Average (+1) Ranged Combat, Athletics

STUNTS

✦ **Finder:** Use Contacts to find cargoes or take other construct actions.

✦ **Starship Pilot:** Use Pilot for construct actions.

HALO

Biomed Array: Fair (+2) Technical skill for overcoming mild consequence recovery obstacles.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Enhanced Reflexes:** +2 bonus to rolls where quick reactions are important.

★ **Neural Disruption Field:** Average (+1) Mental Blast skill doing mental stress damage causing confusion, unconsciousness, even brain damage.

★ **Null Pistol:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating, range 3, Recoilless.



ELLEM GRADISTI

"I guess you're not so bad — for a squint. You want I should take you somewhere in my boat?"

Ellem Gradisti is a hoary old seadog, long in the tooth but still piloting her ocean-going transport anywhere it's required — for a price. She tells it how she sees it — but respects honesty and strength of character. She's not sure about the rest of them damn offworlders, though.

Physical Stress: □² □² □² □² **Mental Stress:** □² □²

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Grizzled Mariner, Bluff But Friendly, Instinctive Xenophobe

Skills: Great (+4) Contacts, Pilot; Good (+3) Physique, Rapport; Fair (+2) Knowledge, Resources; Average (+1) Technical, Unarmed Combat

STUNTS

✦ **Ear to the Ground:** Use Contacts for initiative in physical or virtual space where you have operating contacts network.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **InfoNet Earpiece HUD:** Connection to Olkennedian infonet.

★ **Transport GEV:** Fair (+2) Systems; Average (+1) Manoeuvre.

EPISODE ONE REVOLUTIONARY TIMES

IN WHICH DISORDER PREVAILS IN CRATERPORT DOWN,
AND THE PCS MUST RESPOND.

SCENE ONE: FLASHPOINT!

The PCs are swept up in a riot in the heart of Olkennedy's capital.

Locations: Craterport Down (page 29); Friendship Square (page 30)

Environment: *Rioting Rabble* situation aspect.

Planning: Little to none. The PCs may know a little about Olkennedy; assume the equivalent of the planet sheet on the inside front cover. Other knowledge rolls, including Mindscape queries, may be made during the scene.

The Hook

A riot is breaking out in Friendship Square (page 30) at the centre of Craterport Down, the Olkennedian world government capital. Crowds of Fiver separatist supporters (page 21) have gathered outside the Commonality embassy and scuffle with security forces and pro-Commonality factions while Olkennedian media reporter-remotes hover above.

Enck Lamizen, a Fiver demagogue (see below), is speaking to the mob, protesting about plans to extend Alpha Node, Olkennedy's Global Mindscape Instance (page 22).

Let the PCs decide where they are, or throw them straight into the action — the rioters will see them as representatives of the hated Commonality unless they bluff it out. This is a great opportunity for self-compels, or for preemptive fate point awards as you “pre-compel” PC aspects by inserting them *in media res* (see **Mindjammer** page 426).

Dealing With It

It's up to the PCs how they handle the deteriorating situation. Here are some ideas:

FORCE THEIR WAY THROUGH

The PCs may be surrounded, trying to get back to their ship, accommodation, or the Commonality embassy. They must overcome a group of 5 rioters to get to safety (see below for stats). It's easier to engage them in social or mental conflict than physical; the rioters have only Moderate (+0) skills to resist *Provoke*, *Rapport*, and so on.

A RABBLE OF 5 FIVER RIOTERS

These are pro-separatist civilians, although *Notice* may spot some *Redjackets* (page 22) in the crowd. They're armed with *saps*, *clubs*, *knives*, and *improvised weapons*.

Stress:

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Mob of Rioting Separatist Rabble

Skills: Average (+1) *Melee Combat* (+4 teamwork bonus)

Group of 5 Average
(+1) Minor NPCs

SNEAK THROUGH

The PCs may try and keep their heads down and sneak through the crowd to wherever they're going. This is an overcome roll, perhaps using Stealth vs Fair (+2) opposition; any obvious Commonality appearance aspects may be invoked against them. On a failure the PCs must make a good case for themselves using Rapport or Deceive against a hostile crowd (see "Talk to the Crowd"), or end up fighting one group of 5 rioters each.

TALK TO LAMIZEN

The PCs take the bull by the horns and try and persuade or intimidate the demagogue to keep the crowd calm. This may be a Provoke conflict in front of the listening rioters — a battle for their hearts and minds immediately — in which the PCs may be forced to concede to escape or be taken hostage by a hostile crowd if they fail.

ENCK LAMIZEN, THE FIVER DEMAGOGUE

Lamizen is a Redjacket (page 22), and an acquaintance of Bwaga Bargo (page 64), who he idolises. He's an extremist, and definitely not above murder or other crimes. If necessary, he can order a group of 5 rabble rousers to attack, or attach themselves to him in physical or mental conflict.

Physical Stress: □ □ □ **Mental Stress:** □ □ □

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Rabble-Rousing Demagogue, Don't Let Them Control Your Minds, We Must Protect Ourselves, The Five Nations Are the Natural Way! Blinded by Xenophobia (flaw), Refused a Mindscape Implant (flaw)

Skills: Good (+3) Provoke, Rapport; Fair (+2) Deceive, Unarmed Combat; Average (+1) Notice, Will

STUNTS

◆ **Rabble Rouse:** +2 Rapport bonus when creating advantages.

EXTRAS

★ **InfoNet Wrist Link:** Voice and holo connection to Olkennedian infonet.

★ **The Fivers:**

Skills: Average (+1) Provoke, Resources, Security;

Stunts: Extreme Sanction

Supporting NPC

TALK TO THE CROWD

This is a direct contest between the PCs' best speaker and Enck Lamizen, who for his part will be urging the crowd to tear the PCs apart. The difficulty is Average (+1) for Enck; and variable but higher for the PCs, depending on who the crowd think they are.

Outcome

Successfully talking to Lamizen or the crowd can create a situation aspect the PCs may use in **Scene Four: Clash of Cultures!** below. If they can't calm the crowd, then eventually the OLSEC riot police arrive and wade in, and the PCs must overcome, avoid, or otherwise deal with them.

A MURDER OF 5 OLSEC RIOT POLICE

Wearing black riot gear with red trim, OLSEC riot police are single-minded and unsubtle.

Stress: □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Shoot Before Asking Questions

Skills: Fair (+2) Melee Combat; Average (+1) Athletics, Ranged Combat (+4 teamwork bonus)

Group of 5 Fair (+2) Minor NPCs

- **Mistaken identity:** The riot police assume the PCs are rioters. Do the PCs tell them who they are? Do OLSEC believe them?
- **Attacked and imprisoned:** If the PCs can't persuade, resist, or escape the riot police, they'll be arrested and imprisoned. This determines their subsequent encounter with Nwasha Hom-Champa (page 46) or Ambassador Dai-Nisen-Go (page 51).
- **Taking refuge:** The PCs may escape both rioters and riot police. Where do they go? Do they need anyone's help? What do they do after the riot is over?
- **Comrades in arms:** The PCs may side with OLSEC or even the rioters. In the former case, see **Scene Two: OLSEC** (below); in the latter, see **Scene Three: Going Underground** (page 47).
- **Spotted by reporter-remotes:** Unless the PCs avoid observation by the Olkennedian media reporter-remotes hovering above the riot, their actions are captured on the local media. Any interested parties identify them easily.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The PCs may be identified by OLSEC or Dai-Nisen-Go, resulting in an “interview” (in person or by virtuality). Otherwise they may proceed with their original plans or choose new actions based on the riot’s outcome — perhaps including meeting the Fivers.

SCENE TWO: OLSEC

The PCs meet Nwasha Hom-Champa, officer of the Olkennedian Security Force.

Locations: OLSEC HQ, Pylon Prospect, Craterport Down (page 29)

Environment: *Eyes and Ears Everywhere, Intimidating Efficiency, No Quick Getaway* situation aspects.

Planning: The PCs may do limited quick research as soon as they know they’ve been summoned.

The Hook

Following the riot, the PCs meet **Nwasha Hom-Champa**, an officer of the Olkennedian Security Service (OLSEC), probably at OLSEC HQ, and a potential ally or adversary. She’s a Nwasha pithecine xenomorph (page 18), well-disposed to pro-Commonality PCs. Depending on their actions in the riot,

she may be congratulating the PCs for defusing the situation, thanking them for their assistance in quelling a riot, or cuffing and caging them for rioting themselves.

This encounter establishes the PCs’ relationship with OLSEC, creating a situation aspect lasting for the rest of the scenario.

Dealing With It

The PCs have a chance to impress Officer Champa and gain her support — and that of OLSEC. This may involve Provoke, Rapport, or Deceive; it may be a conflict if things devolve into a slanging match or even fist fight (not a good idea with a pithecine...); or it could be a contest if the PCs get into a debate.

Here’s how to run the scene as a challenge:

- **Action 1 — Impress Officer Champa With Professionalism:** The PCs may use an appropriate professional skill or Deceive to impress Officer Champa. Have one PC make a create an advantage roll, with the others providing teamwork bonuses. Deceiving her is hard — a roll against her Empathy — but using a professional skill need only overcome her Will. If the PCs are in a weak position (for example, if they’ve been locked up by OLSEC for rioting...), increase the opposition by +2.





Meanwhile...

While the PCs are meeting OLSEC, their quarters are discreetly searched and each of their haloes hacked (**Mindjammer** page 186). The PCs may detect this (Good (+3) opposition), perhaps tracing it back to OLSEC. If successful, OLSEC identifies any compromising aspects or secrets the PCs may have, which may subsequently be used against them.

- **Action 2 — Help Officer Champa With Her Investigation:** Officer Champa is investigating the riot's instigators, discovering more about Enck Lamizen and the Fivers. Each PC may make a create an advantage roll using Investigate, sensorview, etc, to assist. But beware — failed rolls may make things worse!
- **Action 3 — Gain Officer Champa's Support In Future:** Any advantages (or disadvantages) the PCs create in actions 1 and 2 now work for or against them, as one PC makes a Rapport or Deceive create an advantage roll against Officer Champa's Will or Empathy respectively, resulting in a situation aspect representing her future support of or opposition to the PCs — and that of OLSEC.

NWASHA HOM-CHAMPA, OLSEC OFFICER

Officer Champa is a female Nwasha and OLSEC officer. She's also secretly a Fiver sympathiser — although a moderate. She doesn't work for the Fivers, but could be tipped that way. She once had a relationship with Bwaga Bargo, the Fiver second-in-command (page 22), when she was a student and he was a young activist in a city on the Nwasha / Omianto border.

Physical Stress: □□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Pithechine OLSEC Officer (GD60), Secret Lover, Strong Sense of Justice, Are We Doing the Right Thing? Sympathy for the Fivers

Skills: Great (+4) Empathy, Investigate; Good (+3) Deceive, Notice; Fair (+2) Ranged Combat, Unarmed Combat; Average (+1) Athletics, Will

STUNTS

- ◆ **Eye For Detail:** For a fate point, make a Notice / Investigate roll to "look over" a place you've already left.
- ◆ **Lie Whisperer:** +2 Empathy bonus to detect lies.
- ◆ **The Power of Deduction:** 1/scene, spend a fate point to discover / create one aspect per shift on target of Investigate roll; you get one free invoke.

HALO

Mindscape Implant: Local Mindscape connectivity and technopsi.

OTHER EXTRAS

- ★ **OLSEC:** Average (+1) Bureaucracy, Contacts, Resources.
- ★ **Screamer Pistol:** +1, range 2; Recoilless, Screaming.

Outcome

If the PCs are successful, they create a situation aspect expressing an advantageous relationship with Nwasha Hom-Champa and OLSEC which they can draw on during the scenario. This may act as a permission, allowing a PC to temporarily spend advancement points to acquire extra abilities representing OLSEC as an organisation extra; or it may be an aspect which a PC can invoke on a Contacts, Resources or other appropriate roll to gain OLSEC assistance, including information, access to minions, and so on.

On a failure, OLSEC becomes an active or potential opponent, creating an appropriate situation aspect.

THE FIVER SEPARATISTS

Scale: Enormous (+3) **Physical Stress:** □□

Reach: Planetary (+6) **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Tech Index: T7 **Credit Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: Olkennedian Security Force, Works Hand in Glove With the Commonality, No Nonsense Reputation, Agents Are People Too

Skills: Fair (+2) Investigate, Resources, Security; Average (+1) Bureaucracy, Contacts, Will

STUNTS

- ◆ **Counterintelligence:** Use Investigation instead of Deceive against attempts to learn your aspects.
- ◆ **Only Connect:** Use Investigate instead of Knowledge to deduce facts from observation.
- ◆ **The Ties That Bind:** +2 bonus to Contacts create an advantage actions.

EXTRAS

- ★ **Armament (Medium):** w:2 for Security attacks.

Supporting Organisation

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

From here play can proceed to **Episode Two: Hostage Situation**, and the PCs' meeting with Dai-Nisen-Go (**Scene One: The Velvet Glove**), if that's been scheduled; or the attack in **Scene Two: Fivers in the Night**, as appropriate. Alternatively, PCs may have different plans, like going underground with the Fivers (see **Scene Three: Going Underground**, below).

SCENE THREE: GOING UNDERGROUND

The PCs unexpectedly find themselves on the run with the Fivers!

Locations: The Fiver Safe House (*Junmai Gifts and Toys*, page 31), Craterport Down

Environment: *No Access to Equipment or Resources* situation aspects.

Planning: The PCs may find themselves suddenly in this situation, with little chance to plan. They may make local Knowledge rolls to find out more about the Fivers and their current location, including Mindscape queries if they have connectivity.

The Hook

Somehow, things went off the rails during or after the riot. Now the PCs are suddenly and unexpectedly on the run, with the Fiver separatists! Depending on their actions during the riot, they may be their guests, prisoners, or even allies. Figure there is at least one group of 3 Fair (+2) minor NPCs per PC, plus any survivors from **Scene One: Flashpoint!** The Fivers may know the PCs' identities, or may believe their cover stories — for now. If the Fivers suspect the PCs — if they're prisoners, or not yet trusted — they use monitor band cloaks to cut their access to the Mindscape.

Although the PCs don't know this to begin with, the Fivers are planning to return to Mymar's Retreat in the Akantack Sanctuary (page 66) with hostages they're planning to capture shortly. This scene determines how much the PCs understand of the Fivers' goals, who the hostages are, and what they do with that information.

Dealing With It

Having wound up in the Fivers' company, the PCs have several options, including:

ESCAPE BACK TO THE EMBASSY / OLSEC

The PCs flee the Fivers' company. If they're prisoners, they need an opportunity, which happens once they arrive at the Fiver safe house, probably *Junmai Gifts and Toys* (page 31). This is a challenge:

- **Action 1 — Break Their Bonds:** A Fair (+2) Intrusion or Great (+4) Physique roll. The former gives the PCs chance to sneak away; the latter makes a lot of noise, and automatically alerts two guards.
- **Action 2 — Sneak Away:** A Fair (+2) Stealth roll. On a success, the PCs are free; on a failure, they've alerted the two guards and must overcome them or be recaptured.
- **Action 3 — Overcome the Guards:** The PCs must neutralise the two guards instantly and silently. Appropri-

ate stunts (like Ambush) may apply; otherwise the PCs must have initiative and disable the guards in a single exchange, bearing in mind the PCs have been divested of any obvious weapons. Each PC may make one attempt; any surviving guard raises the alarm.

Characters who fail the challenge are automatically recaptured. Characters who succeed are at liberty in Craterport Down (page 29).

A COUPLE OF REDJACKET GUARDS

Wearing casual clothes or work fatigues with characteristic red jackets. They're armed with Howler rifles.

Stress: □□ □□

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Suspicious and Uncommunicative

Skills: Fair (+2) Provoke; Average (+1) Notice, Ranged Combat (+1 teamwork bonus)

Group of 2 Fair
(+2) Minor NPCs

SPY AND REPORT BACK

The PCs gather information before escaping. This is Great (+4) opposition if they're prisoners, Fair (+2) opposition if not, using skills like Notice, Investigate, or Intrusion. Successful characters learn the Fivers are planning to take hostages in an attack on the Commonality embassy (if the PCs aren't already the hostages), and take them to Mymar's Retreat and demand the World Unity Council break ties with the Commonality. A Fair (+2) Knowledge or other appropriate roll notes this is a ludicrous demand. Characters who fail the roll to gather information may simply fail, or gain the information at the **serious cost** of being found out and taken prisoner if they're currently free.

Meanwhile...

While the PCs are with the Fivers, their quarters are searched — and not all that discreetly. It's immediately apparent, and a Fair (+2) Investigate roll produces forensic evidence linking members of the Redjackets to the scene. Apprehending those individuals is another matter entirely.

Reporting back to the Commonality or OLSEC requires the PCs to escape (see above). If already free, they need only **sneak away**; otherwise, they must **break their bonds** first.

GO UNDERCOVER

The PCs gain the Fivers' trust and go undercover. This is a Deceive contest, against Fair (+2) opposition if the PCs have previously acted in the Fivers' interests, Great (+4) if not, and Fantastic (+6) if they've acted against the Fivers' interests. The contest occurs over time; the first roll occurs in the safe house, the second when crossing the ocean (page 53), and the third roll occurs on the approach to Mymar's Retreat (see **Episode Two, Scene Three: Hot Pursuit** for more details of this journey). Successful characters are welcomed into the Fivers' ranks (see "Switch Sides" below), and find out more about the Fivers' plans; those who fail are taken prisoner.

SWITCH SIDES

Similar to going undercover, except the PCs aren't lying; they really do want to join the Fivers. It's the same roll as above, except using Rapport instead of Deceive.

Characters who join the Fivers are given roles according to their strengths — as guards, intrusion experts, intelligence agents, and so on. See **Episode Three, Scene Four: Escape!** for more.

BECOME A HOSTAGE

PCs taken prisoner by the Fivers become **hostages** which the Fivers use to make demands of the World Unity Council. Otherwise, the Fivers go on to take hostages in **Episode Two: Hostage Situation** below.

Outcome

The PCs may end this scene with more information about the Fivers' plans. They may even join the Fivers, as undercover spies or genuine allies.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

PCs remaining with the Fivers as allies (whether actual or not) or hostages travel to Mymar's Retreat in the Akantack Sanctuary. See **Episode Two, Scene Three: Hot Pursuit** below (page 53).

PCs escaping from the Fivers may know something about their plans. See **Scene Four: Clash of Cultures** and then **Episode Two: Hostage Situation**.

SCENE FOUR: CLASH OF CULTURES!

The PCs' actions may have unexpected cultural implications.

Locations: Anywhere on Olkennedy.

Environment: *Spotlight on Scandal, Media Feeding Frenzy* situation aspects.

Planning: Usually culture conflict events happen at a pace slow enough to allow PCs to research, plan, and react.

At this stage, PC actions may have two kinds of cultural impact: media coverage, and culture conflict.

Media Coverage

The PCs' actions in the Friendship Square riot may be noticed by Olkennedy's media networks. Their relationship to OLSEC may be observed.

Judge the extent of this based on the PCs' actions. For example, the PCs may try to avoid media coverage by using Stealth beforehand or Hacking, intimidation, or even outright theft or destruction of media remotes after. Opposition is Fair (+2) unless the PCs are very visible, in which case appropriate situation aspects are available to invoke.

All three media networks are present at Friendship Square to observe anything the PCs do, but each only reports actions which further their causes (page 21). OIChan reports any observed significant action by the PCs.

RESULTS

If the PCs don't avoid media coverage, they become known in the media. This is a situation aspect which can be used in subsequent culture conflict exchanges (see below), and which lasts through the next episode unless removed. Any PC actions reported should also be checked for plot stress: see **Plot Stress: A World in Flames!** (page 40).

Culture Conflict

If you're incorporating culture ops or culture conflict in your game, run a **single exchange** of culture conflict to represent this entire episode. The PCs need culture extras or cultural stunts for their characters to participate actively; otherwise, let the players roll on behalf of the Commonality culture, treating the results of PC actions as situation aspects. Let the players decide what culture action to take and what skill to use.

For example, if the PCs were heavy-handed in the riot, cooperating with OLSEC or Commonality forces and causing casualties, they may have a Violence By the Commonality situation aspect which may be used by the Fivers in their culture conflict attack to damage the Commonality culture's reputation and inflict stress. On the other hand, if the PCs were lenient, just, or politically

savvy in handling the riot, they may have a Commonality Cultural Sensitivity situation aspect to invoke in their own attack on the Olkennedian culture.

As mentioned above (page 5), the goal of the Fivers' culture actions is to isolate a local (Planetary (+6) scale) instance of the Commonality culture on Olkennedy (see **Mindjammer** page 276), and then attack it. If they haven't yet done so, the Fivers' culture action this exchange is an Average (+1) Assimilate create an advantage roll against the Commonality's Superb (+5) Structure to do just that, with a +6 bonus due to the initial scale difference. If they have already done this, their action is a Good (+3) Provoke attack against the Fantastic (+6) Will of the local Planetary (+6) scale instance of the Commonality culture.

Media networks and other factions may take create advantage actions or provide teamwork bonuses. Any media coverage situation aspects may be invoked or compelled.

For example, you may decide Epona Zaron (page 22) uses her Charismatic Leader stunt to create an Open Critique of the Commonality advantage to be used by the Fivers in their attack. Alternatively, the PCs may make appropriate rolls to influence ProComm (page 21) to provide positive coverage for their attack, giving either a teamwork bonus or a situation aspect.

Additionally, Ambassador Dai-Nisen-Go makes its Great (+4) Provoke attack on the Olkennedian culture (page 5), with a -6 penalty due to scale difference if a local instance of the Commonality culture hasn't been isolated, which defends with Average (+1) Assimilate. Damage done by the Ambassador receives a +12 shift bonus if scale differences apply, making it an obvious and heavy-handed attack. This may be the first time the PCs witness the Ambassador's culture conflict attack; you may require Investigate or Notice rolls to trace it to its originator. It shouldn't be that difficult...

Outcome

Olkennedian society, or OLSEC or the Commonality, may become aware of the PCs' culture conflict actions in this scene, creating possible situation aspects and potentially limiting the PCs' options. The PCs may also become aware of the broader cultural implications of their actions, and in particular that Ambassador Dai-Nisen-Go is conducting its own cultural conflict. This may cause them to seek out the Ambassador — see **Episode Two, Scene One: The Velvet Glove**.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Usually you can play this scene once you're ready to move on from Episode One to any subsequent episode. As a result, you can play any appropriate scene next.

EPISODE TWO HOSTAGE SITUATION

IN WHICH FIVER SEPARATISTS STAGE A DARING KIDNAP ATTEMPT —
AND THE PCS TRY TO THWART THEM!

SCENE ONE: THE VELVET GLOVE

The PCs encounter Dai-Nisen-Go, the Commonality ambassador.

Location: The Commonality Embassy, Friendship Square, Craterport Down

Environment: Nootrope Virtuality Meeting, Commonality Embassy Security situation aspects.

Planning: The PCs know about autotrophs (*Mindjammer* page 39), but knowledge or research rolls may reveal which Commonality faction (page 35) the Ambassador belongs to, etc.

The Hook

The PCs meet Commonality Ambassador **Dai-Nisen-Go**. This can occur in several ways. First, especially if the PCs are diplomats or SCI Force agents, the ambassador may be their superior or point of contact on Olkennedy. Second, they may be summoned to meet the ambassador following the riot on Friendship Square or their encounter with OLSEC in **Episode One: Revolutionary Times**. The meeting may occur in the Commonality embassy (page 31) or in a baroque Mindscape virtuality based on the nootrope halls of power in Jiva on Old Earth.

Ambassador Dai-Nisen-Go is an autotroph **nootrope** (*Mindjammer* page 39) from the Core Worlds, who looks like a very attractive androgynous Olkennedian. Sexually neuter, sophisticated and charismatic, it works for the Communications Instrumentality.

This scene establishes the PCs' relationship with the ambassador, creating a situation aspect lasting for the rest of the scenario.

Dealing With It

This is a social encounter, using skills like Rapport, Empathy, Deceive, Investigate, Notice, to establish the relationship between the PCs and the ambassador — is it good, bad, hostile, frosty, friendly, or businesslike? The PCs may use skills to gain information from the ambassador, including assessing its aspects; the ambassador does the same.

The PCs may present themselves to Dai-Nisen-Go in whatever light they wish. In turn, the ambassador evaluates them like a machiavellian arch-manipulator. In particular, it wishes to know:

- What are the PCs doing on Olkennedy?
- Can Dai-Nisen-Go use the PCs in its plans?
- Does Dai-Nisen-Go need to surveil the PCs?
- Does Dai-Nisen-Go need to deport or even kill the PCs? If necessary, it has access to at least one **mechanical assassin** (*Mindjammer* page 184).

Outcome

The PCs end this scene with a situation aspect representing their relationship to the ambassador. Ideally, this should result from a Rapport or Deceive roll, but failing that you may create any appropriate aspect. They may have a new ally, with

DAI-NISEN-GO, THE COMMONALITY AMBASSADOR

Dai-Nisen-Go is almost ethereal — a neuter autotroph, attractive, androgynous, with pale olive skin helping it synthesise its own food. It's human but otherworldly from the Olkennedian point of view. Typical of many Commonality nootropes — the enhanced intelligence class of Pansectorate and instrumentality administrators — it's a member of the Integrator faction (page 36), dedicated to Olkennedy's integration whatever the cost.

Physical Stress: □□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 3 **Scale:** Medium (+0)

ASPECTS

High Concept: Otherworldly Commonality Ambassador.

Trouble: Sexually Ambiguous Nootrope.

Other Aspects: Ardent Instrument of the Integrator Faction, Iron Hand in a Velvet Glove, Natural Diplomat.

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Rapport

Great (+4): Deceive, Empathy

Good (+3): Contacts, Resources, Will

Fair (+2): Bureaucracy, Knowledge, Notice, Provoke

HALO

Special Operations Chip: Local Mindscape connectivity and special ops technopsi.

Neurosynthetic Extensors: +2 bonus to Knowledge, Science, or Technical rolls where reasoning power is the determining factor.

STUNTS

- ◆ **Cultural Liaison:** Use Rapport for culture actions.
- ◆ **Cultural Redaction:** Use Empathy for culture actions.
- ◆ **Domination:** Roll Will vs Will to control the target's actions.
- ◆ **Executive Officer:** +1 bonus to organisation action where you act directly.
- ◆ **We Come In Peace:** Use Deceive to take culture actions.

EXTRAS

- ★ **Autotroph:** As aspect to synthesise own food.
- ★ **Cosmetic Enhancer:** As aspect to customise physical appearance.
- ★ **The Commonality Culture:**
 - Skills:** Great (+4) Provoke; Fair (+2) Intrusion;
 - Stunts:** Propaganda Campaign, Shock and Awe.
- ★ **The Integrator Faction:**
 - Skills:** Good (+3) Deceive; Fair (+2) Security; Average (+1) Contacts;
 - Stunts:** Extreme Sanction, The Ties That Bind.

considerable power and resources, or a formidable foe. Dai-Nisen-Go is aware of the PCs' existence from this point, and factors them into its plans accordingly.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

This encounter occurs after the Friendship Square riot. If the Fivers haven't yet acquired their hostages, they should do so next in **Scene Two: Shots in the Dark**. The PCs may act on their own initiative, choosing their next actions; or may

Meanwhile...

*While the PCs are meeting Dai-Nisen-Go, their quarters are discreetly searched and each of their haloes hacked (**Mindjammer** page 186). The PCs may detect this, perhaps tracing it to the ambassador's staff (**Superb** (+5) opposition). If successful, the ambassador identifies any compromising aspects or secrets the PCs have, which may subsequently be used against them.*

Major NPC



follow the ambassador's orders, pursuing the Fivers and their hostages (see **Scene Three: Hot Pursuit**) or travelling to

Mymar's Retreat to rescue them (see **Episode Three, Scene One: Getting There**).

Where Are the PCs Staying?

Finding accommodation in Craterport Down is a Fair (+2) Resources roll, higher if the PCs are wanted by the authorities. Let the players choose the location; they may need Deceive or Stealth rolls to remain incognito, or Resources rolls to bribe staff to keep quiet. Accommodation usually comes with one or more situation aspects.

- **Amity Hostel:** *Basic but adequate accommodation for Commonality and Olkennedian visitors. Low Security and Exposed, but also In Touch With the Pulse of Olkennedian Life.*
- **Commonality Embassy:** *PCs must be on good terms with the ambassador, and will be observed. It's Luxurious and High Security.*
- **Fiver Safe House:** *There are several in Craterport — **Junmai Gifts and Toys** (page 31) is typical. PCs must be On Good Terms With the Fivers.*
- **Old Sepey Rooming House:** *Traditional Columbian accommodation, usually built around a hot spring and servicing only Olkennedians (and the occasional curious tourist). Beyond the Commonality's immediate reach, even OLSEC may not show up if there's trouble. The Fivers know immediately if the PCs are here. It has an Immediate Access to the Olkennedian Grapevine aspect.*
- **Cosmo Quarter Domiciliary:** *Short-term self-catering accommodation in the Cosmo Quarter (page 32), rubbing shoulders with Commonality workers and Olkennedian functionaries, it offers Privacy and Government Contacts.*
- **ComTown Hotel:** *Not very private, but fairly anonymous and easy to move from place to place. ComTown hotels are mostly used by offworlders, and are Remote From Olkennedian Life.*
- **Starport:** *The PCs are staying on board their ship. It's cheap and pretty secure, although standard berthing fees apply. It's also very inconvenient; the PCs must pass through immigration control each time they come and go. Isolated From Olkennedy and Red-Tape and Delays situation aspects apply. It does provide easy access to the Craterport Bar (page 30).*

SCENE TWO: SHOTS IN THE DARK

The PCs are attacked by Fiver terrorists, and may be taken hostage.

Location: The PCs' Quarters

Environment: *Under Cover of Darkness, Home Turf Advantage* situation aspects.

Planning: This is principally a reactive scene. If the PCs have reason to feel threatened, they may post guards or activate security measures.

The Hook

That night, the PCs are attacked in their accommodation by Fiver separatists. If the PCs are staying in the Commonality embassy, the Fivers may be aiming to kidnap other embassy personnel; if they're staying in their own accommodation elsewhere in Craterport Down, the Fivers may be aiming to kidnap Commonality sympathisers or representatives — including the PCs!

Dealing With It

Give the PCs the chance to detect the attack before it happens, for example rolling Notice against the Fivers' Stealth skills, accounting for any accommodation or environment situation aspects. PCs may be disoriented and unarmed, with only Mediocre (+0) defence for the first exchange and no weapons to attack with.

The attackers comprise Nwasha-Ziu Ugomko and Zy Borrower, supporting NPCs, and up to one group of 3 Fair (+2) minor NPCs per PC (depending on how combat-oriented the PCs are and how tough you want the fight to be). If defeated, the PCs are taken as hostages to the Akantack Sanctuary — see **Outcome** below.

FIVER THUGS

Stress: □□ □□ □□

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Adrenalised Amateurs

Skills: Fair (+2) Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Athletics, Stealth (+2 teamwork bonus)

Group of 3 Fair
(+2) Minor NPCs

NWASHA-ZIU UGOMKO, NWSHAN FIVER

Physical Stress: □□□³ **Mental Stress:** □□□³

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Hulking Nwshan Freedom Fighter, Overachieving Hero Complex

Skills: Great (+4) Empathy, Investigate; Good (+3) Deceive, Notice; Fair (+2) Ranged Combat, Unarmed Combat; Average (+1) Athletics, Will

STUNTS

◆ **Heavy Hitter:** Reduce shifts by 1 on a Melee Combat success with style for an additional full situation aspect with free invoke.

◆ **Overseer:** 1/scene, make an overcome action to generate a pool of shift points you can redistribute.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Olkennedian Howler Rifle:** +3 bonus, Stunned advantage, r3, Recoilless, as “Howl”.

★ **Hand Scanner:** Fair (+2) Investigate.

ZY BORROWER, OLKENNEDIAN FIVER (HUMAN)

Physical Stress: □□ **Mental Stress:** □□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Redneck Separatist Troublemaker, Sneering Xenophobe

Skills: Great (+4) Provoke, Ranged Combat; Good (+3) Deceive, Notice; Fair (+2) Athletics, Stealth

STUNTS

◆ **Covering Fire:** On successful Ranged Combat attack, also create Fair (+2) opposition against movement in affected zone.

EXTRAS

★ **Olkennedian Howler Rifle:** +3 bonus, Stunned advantage, r3, Recoilless, as “Howl”.

★ **Mesh Armour:** A:1, Head and Limbs Exposed.

Outcome

The PCs have encountered the violent wing of the Fivers, and are either on their trail to rescue their hostages or are hostages themselves.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Hostages are smuggled out of Craterport Down by water from the old port of Harver (page 29). If the PCs give chase, see **Scene Three: Hot Pursuit**, below; if they marshal their forces and track the Fivers to their base, see **Scene Five: Cold Pursuit**. If the PCs are hostages themselves, they end up in Mymar’s Retreat in the Akantack Sanctuary — see **Episode Three: Break Out!**

SCENE THREE: HOT PURSUIT

The Fivers leave Craterport Down with their hostages — and the PCs give chase.

Locations: Craterport Down, Harver, the Sea of Gold, Victa Archipelago.

Environment: *Isolated From Commonality Support Networks, Out on a Limb, Who Is Friend or Foe?* situation aspects.

Planning: PCs pursuing the Fivers directly have minimal time to plan or prepare; they grab their equipment and jump aboard locally available transport. Everything else is improvised on the fly.

The Hook

This scene assumes it’s not the PCs who’ve been taken hostage by the Fivers — or at least not all of them. Instead, several key members of the Commonality or Olkennedian establishment have been seized — possibly even Officer Champa or Dai-Nisen-Go.

The PCs pursue the Fivers to rescue the hostages en route. They probably won’t succeed, but may track them to their base.

Dealing With It

Run this scene as an **evasion contest** (*Mindjammer* page 217), pitting the PCs’ Investigate or Active or Passive Sensing skill against the Fivers’ Manoeuvre or Stealth. The Fivers are the survivors of **Scene Two: Shots in the Dark**, above (ie possibly Nwasha-Ziu Ugomko and Zy Borrower, and up to one group of 3 Fair (+2) minor NPCs per PC). The PCs must have access to appropriate transport, possibly requiring Rapport, Provoke, Resources, or other appropriate rolls. The Fivers are attempting to escape from the PCs; the PCs are attempting to catch up with them. The first side to accumulate 3 victories wins. The contest may span the following three phases:

- **Phase 1: Craterport Down:** The Fivers travel through the streets of Craterport to the Harver waterfront, where they rendezvous with a working sea vessel or GEV. The PCs need to find locally available transport.
- **Phase 2: Ocean Crossing:** The Fivers travel to the Victa Archipelago, where they transfer to the *Red Glory* transport rotary (page 55), piloted by steersman Piter Arbathy (*Piloting's In My Blood; My Mother — the Sea, My Father — the Sky!*).
- **Phase 3: Sky Crossing:** Arbathy pilots them to Mymar's Retreat in the Akantack Sanctuary (page 66).

If the PCs don't intercept the Fivers by the time they accumulate 3 victories, then they lose the trail; see **Scene Five: Cold Pursuit**.

USING THE MINDSCAPE

The PCs may try to pursue the Fivers by tracing the monitor band signals of any hostages with Mindscape implants. If successful, switch to a standard Manoeuvre vs Manoeuvre chase to intercept.

To do this, the PCs must first defeat the monitor band cloaks the Fivers use on them.

- **Identify the Monitor Band Signals to Look For:** Even though not every Olkennedian has a Mindscape implant, there are still enough monitor band signals detectable by sensorview from orbit to make the task like finding a needle in a haystack. The PCs must first discount all the false positives. This requires a Mindscape tracer (*Mindjammer* page 138), and the PCs must know the hostages' Mindscape IDs, requiring a Knowledge roll if the PCs have Commonality cooperation, or a Hacker (Intrusion) roll otherwise.
- **Detect the Monitor Band Signals:** To detect a specific Mindscape implant requires an Investigate, Active Sensing, or Passive Sensing roll. In this case the PCs must have orbital sensor support, meaning either the cooperation of Alpha Node, a Hacker (Intrusion) or other appropriate roll to temporarily "borrow" that support from Alpha Node, or appropriate equipment in a starship of their own.
 - **Uncloaked Difficulty:** If the hostages' Mindscape implants were uncloaked, detecting them using Mindscape tracer would be Average (+1) in Phase 1: Craterport Down, Fair (+2) in Phase 2: The Ocean Crossing, and Good (+3) in Phase 3: The Sky Crossing.
 - **Cloaked Difficulty:** However, the Fivers are probably using monitor band cloaks, meaning that a success with style is required just to detect even the presence of that Mindscape ID in a given zone — not its specific location (see below).

- **Locate the Monitor Band Signals:** To pinpoint the exact location of a cloaked Mindscape implant after detection requires a Fair (+2) Hacker (Intrusion) roll.
- **Communicate With the Hostages:** Successfully hacking a cloaked Mindscape implant even allows the PCs to communicate with the hostages, not just to track them. The hostage in question must make a successful Stealth or Deceive roll to give or receive a communication without being spotted by the Fivers.

Outcome

The Fivers have seized their hostages and have escaped without trace, or have been located by the PCs en route.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If the PCs successfully catch up with the Fivers en route, go to **Scene Four: Interception** below. If they fail, go to **Scene Five: Cold Pursuit**.

SCENE FOUR: INTERCEPTION

The PCs miraculously intercept the Fiver kidnappers en route — and attempt to rescue the hostages.

Locations: Craterport Down, Harver, the Sea of Gold, Victa Archipelago, the Akantack Sanctuary.

Environment: *Need For Speed, Knife to the Throat, Save the Hostages!* situation aspects.

Planning: Interception in Phase 1 allows the PCs no time for planning or preparation; in Phase 2, they have one exchange to prepare; in Phase 3, they have two.

The Hook

If the PCs intercept the Fivers before they reach Mymar's Retreat, this scene replaces much of **Episode Three: Break Out**.

Dealing With It

In this scene, the PCs stage a raid on the *Red Glory* transport rotary to rescue the hostages. The biggest problem is preventing the Fivers from executing the hostages.

Plot Stress: Countdown to Execution!

To track whether or not the Fivers execute hostages, and if so how many, we're using **plot stress** (*Mindjammer* page 432). For plot stress to occur, the Fivers must be aware of the event causing it; killing a guard won't cause plot stress until his body is discovered, for example.

When figuring plot stress, calculate firefight casualties and apply them collectively as plot stress at the end of that

firefight, rather than applying each point piecemeal. Note that this plot stress track is also used in **Episode Three, Scene Two: Raid!** below.

COUNTDOWN TO EXECUTION

Plot Stress Track

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (-2): The first hostage is executed.

Moderate (-4): More hostages are executed.

Severe (-6): The rest of the hostages are executed.

Taken Out: The Fivers surrender / flee

CAUSES OF PLOT STRESS*

The Fivers are alerted to the PCs' presence. 1 stress

The Fivers come face to face with a PC. 1 stress

The Fivers get into a firefight with the PCs. 1 stress

A Fiver supporting NPC or minor NPC group is killed by a PC. 1 stress

Bwaga Bargo is killed (Episode Three only). 2 stress

*the event must be known to hostage guards to cause plot stress.

Plot Stress

In many ways much of the action in this scene parallels that of **Episode Three, Scene Two: Raid!** We consider Epi-

sode Three, Scene Two more likely to occur in your adventure, so detail the various actions there. You can use those actions in modified form in this scene, with the following differences:

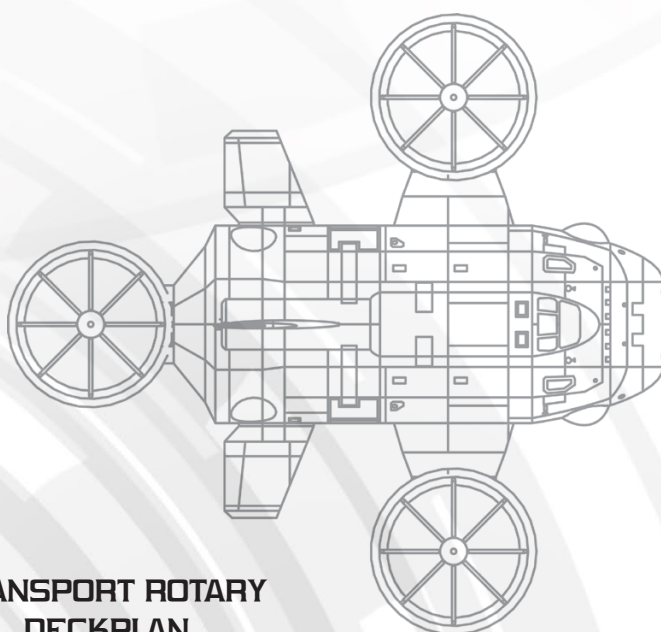
- Use the deckplan of the *Red Glory* transport rotary below.
- There's no real stealthy option: the PCs must fly right up to the *Red Glory* and fight their way on board.
- The PCs may make a **rapid drop** (page 59) to embark upon a **raid with surprise** (page 60); otherwise it's a **raid without surprise**.
- When **getting in** (page 60), Stage One is a boarding attempt, breaking into the cargo storage hold; Stage Two is a running firefight through decks one and two; and Stage Three involves cracking the locks on the aft storage section of deck two and then **getting the hell out of there** (page 64).
- Figure that there's a maximum of one group of 3 Fair (+2) minor NPCs per PC (page 52) on board the *Red Glory*, plus any surviving Fivers from **Scene Two: Shots in the Dark** or **Scene Three: Hot Pursuit**.

Outcome

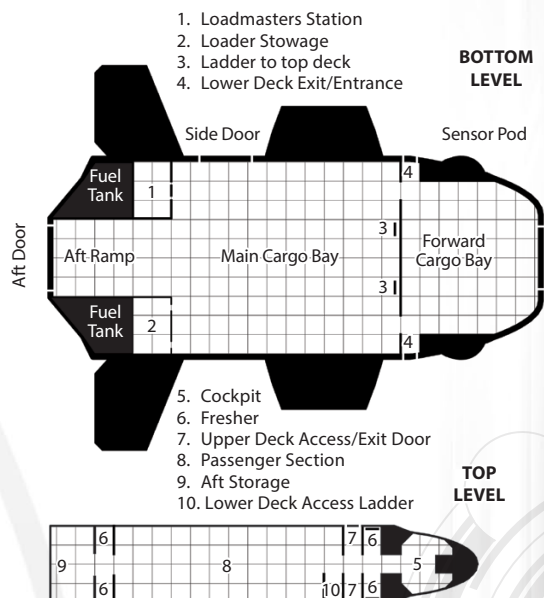
The PCs successfully rescue the hostages, or fail, resulting in the deaths of themselves or the hostages, and possibly both. The scene has significant culture conflict implications (page 57).

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If the PCs successfully rescue the hostages, or fail and all the hostages die, proceed to **Scene Six: Clash of Cultures!** and



TRANSPORT ROTARY
DECKPLAN



then **Episode Four: The Edge of the Abyss**. If the PCs fail but at least some of the hostages survive, proceed to **Scene Six** and then **Episode Three: Break Out!**

SCENE FIVE: COLD PURSUIT

The Fivers have escaped with their hostages — the PCs must track them down.

Locations: OLSEC HQ, the Commonality Embassy, Alpha Node, the PCs' ship.

Environment: *Race Against Time, Pressure From Above* situation aspects.

Planning: The PCs may take their time and marshal their forces as they attempt to locate the Fivers' base.

The Hook

The Fivers have vanished with their hostages. The PCs try to find out where they're hiding, soliciting the aid of OLSEC or the Commonality, or working solo.

The Fiver Demands

The Fivers make their demands in a public announcement to the whole world. They are brutally simple:

- *The World Unity Council must immediately freeze relations with the Commonality and announce that Olkennedy is an independent world (Civilisation designation: Independent, No Embassy (-4)).*
- *Dai-Nisen-Go, the Commonality ambassador, must immediately leave the Olkennedian system.*
- *All members of the World Unity Council must step down, and elections be held, in which the Fivers are permitted representation.*
- *Offworlders must be prevented from passing beyond the starport, and those currently on planet should be isolated, until the results of the elections are known.*

If these demands aren't met with an announcement and expulsion of the Commonality ambassador within one local day, one hostage will be executed at that point and every local day thereafter. If the ambassador is expelled and the withdrawal of Commonality forces does not follow within one local week, one hostage will be executed every local day.

Dealing With It

The PCs have several options to track down the Fiver kidnappers.

USE THE MINDSCAPE

See **Scene Three: Hot Pursuit** above, using the difficulties for Phase 3. You can also invoke the Akantack Sanctuary's *Sporadic Mindscape Connectivity* situation aspect. A success with style is required to even detect the presence of a cloaked monitor band; hacking is needed to pin down its location to Mymar's Retreat.

INTERROGATING THE KIDNAPPERS

Minor Fiver NPCs don't know where the Fivers are taking the hostages, only that it's somewhere *On the Edge of the Akantack Sanctuary*. Supporting Fiver NPCs know about the Fiver HQ at Mymar's Retreat, and use Will or Deceive to resist interrogation.

RESEARCH AND INTUITION

The PCs may research the backgrounds of key Fivers like Epona Zaron and Bwaga Bargo, leader and deputy leader of the movement. A successful Superb (+5) Investigate roll (perhaps with advantages from Empathy, Contacts, or Knowledge) may throw up Mymar's Retreat — a dwelling on the edge of the Akantack Sanctuary once belonging to Epona Zaron's father — as a possible Fiver base which will check out on closer inspection (page 58).

WAITING FOR THE DEMANDS

Eventually the Fivers make their demands public (see sidebar). They don't give away the hostages' location, but the announcement generates sufficient infonet chatter to allow the PCs a Fair (+2) Investigate attempt to trace the communique to Mymar's Retreat. At this point, the clock starts ticking — see "The Fiver Demands".

Outcome

If successful, the PCs track the hostages to **Mymar's Retreat**, a dwelling on the edge of the Akantack Sanctuary by the Volcanic Zone which once belonged to the martyr Mymar Zaron, father of the current Fiver leader.

If the PCs fail to locate the hostages, the Fivers won't execute them before Epona Zaron has successfully infiltrated Alpha Node, as the entire kidnapping is an elaborate distraction.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If the PCs track the Fivers to Mymar's Retreat, go to **Episode Three: Break Out!** Otherwise, go to **Episode Four: The Edge of the Abyss.**

SCENE SIX: CLASH OF CULTURES!

The PCs' actions may have unexpected cultural implications.

Locations: Anywhere on Olkennedy.

Environment: *On the Defensive, Looking for Someone to Blame* situation aspects.

Planning: Usually culture conflict events happen at a pace slow enough to allow PCs to research, plan, and react.

The PCs' actions feed into the ongoing conflict between the Commonality and Olkennedy cultures.

Media Coverage

The extent of media coverage now depends on PC attempts to limit it, using Stealth, Hacking, intimidation, or theft or destruction of media remotes. Opposition is Fair (+2) unless the PCs are very visible. Media networks only report PC actions in the following scenes:

- **Scene Two: Fivers in the Night:** Depending on the attack location, this event may be highly visible.
- **Scene Three: Hot Pursuit:** PC actions are highly visible in Craterport Down, less so elsewhere.
- **Scene Four: Interception:** PC actions are highly visible in Craterport Down, not visible elsewhere.

Media networks only report actions furthering their causes. Olchan reports any observed significant PC action.

RESULTS

The results of media coverage depend on the PCs' overall performance and who the hostages are.

- **If Olkennedians are hostages,** then whether or not they survive the episode creates a situation aspect lasting at least the next episode if not removed.
- **If Commonality citizens are hostages,** a situation aspect is created based on how the PCs treat the Fivers; a mini-

mum of bloodshed and overtly fair treatment is positive, heavy-handed brutality and loss of life is negative.

- **If the PCs themselves are hostages,** then this creates a negative situation aspect.

Reported actions should also be checked against plot stress (see **Plot Stress: A World in Flames!** on page 40).

Culture Conflict

In this culture conflict exchange, the kidnap attempt represents either an Average (+1) Assimilate attack vs the Commonality's Superb (+5) Structure, with a +6 bonus due to scale differences; or (more likely) a Good (+3) Provoke attack vs the Commonality's Fantastic (+6) Will, made at equal scale (ie no modifier).

COMMONALITY REACTION

If Ambassador Dai-Nisen-Go isn't itself a hostage, it will make its Great (+4) Provoke attack on the Olkennedean culture (page 5) with a -6 penalty if scale difference applies, which resists with Average (+1) Assimilate. Damage done by the Ambassador receives a +12 shift bonus if scale difference applies.

OLSEC REACTION

If Dai-Nisen-Go has been taken hostage, OLSEC attempts to mitigate the Fiver's cultural attack by using its Average (+1) Contacts skill to create a *Solidarity With Our Commonality* Friends advantage via the media, giving the free invoke to the Commonality to use on its Will or Structure defence roll.

Outcome

It may now be obvious that the Fivers aren't a peaceful organisation. Equally, the PCs may have shown the Commonality in a ruthless or diplomatic light — possibly in conflict with the actions of Ambassador Dai-Nisen-Go.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If the PCs attempt to rescue the Fiver hostages, or to escape themselves, go to **Episode Three: Break Out!** If the hostages are already rescued or dead, go to **Episode Four: The Edge of the Abyss.**

EPISODE THREE

BREAK OUT!

EPISODE THREE

*IN WHICH FIGHTING BREAKS OUT AT THE FIVERS' SECRET BASE
AS THE HOSTAGES BATTLE FOR THEIR FREEDOM!*



A group of Fiver Separatists has taken hostages and is holding them in a secret base on the edge of the Akan-tack Sanctuary. The hostages may be the PCs themselves, who are trying to escape; or Olkennedian or Commonality citizens whom the PCs are trying to rescue. This is an action-oriented episode, with the potential for violence and bloodshed.

THE BOMB PLOT

Unknown to the PCs, the Fiver kidnap attempt is merely a diversion, intended to distract Olkennedian and Commonality security services, while Fiver leader Epona Zaron gets aboard Alpha Node for the main part of the Fiver attack — an attempt to destroy Alpha Node with a zero point bomb — dealt with in **Episode Four: The Edge of the Abyss**. You can put the players under as much time pressure you like in this episode — they don't know when the Fivers are going to start executing hostages — but for your own purposes assume there's a variable amount of time available before Epona makes her move and episode four begins. You don't want to interrupt exciting action when the PCs confront the Fivers at Mymar's Retreat, but at the same time if you find a lull and want to advance the scenario to its climax, you can decide Epona makes her move at that point.

Astute PCs have opportunities to uncover the bomb plot while at Mymar's Retreat; see the text boxes below.

SCENE ONE: GETTING THERE

The PCs travel through the Akantack Sanctuary to Mymar's Retreat.

Locations: The Akantack Sanctuary; Inchaka City.

Environment: *Cold Thin Air, Sporadic Mindscape Connectivity, Alien Biosphere, Suspicious Natives* situation aspects.

Planning: Unless the PCs have chased the Fivers right to the doors of Mymar's Retreat, they should have time to gather their forces and plan their approach.

The Hook

The PCs are trying to reach Mymar's Retreat without being spotted by the Fivers, prior to starting their raid.

Dealing With It

There are several ways to approach Mymar's Retreat:

ORBITAL DROP

If the PCs know about Mymar's Retreat, they can drop in from orbit. They may be spotted on approach and shot at, but it gets them to the target quickly. Depending on how far away they land, the Fivers may be relatively unprepared, or may have time to send out teams against them.

- **Rapid Drop:** The PCs aim to get in close and fast. This is a Pilot roll against the base's Passive Sensing skill (page 61). Stealth may be used to create an advantage. If successful, the PCs embark upon a **raid with surprise** (see **Scene Two: Raid!**); on a failure, they're in close for a **raid without surprise**.
- **Stealth Drop:** The PCs aim to get close without being spotted, then approach on foot. This is a Stealth roll against the base's Passive Sensing skill (page 61). If successful, the PCs embark on a **stealthy intrusion attempt** (see **Scene Two: Raid!**); on a failure, they're engaged before landing by the *Red Glory* transport rotary (page 28), and the base is alerted to their attack.

OVERLAND APPROACH

The PCs may approach overland via the Akantack Sanctuary, on foot or by vehicle. If the Fivers discover their approach, they dispatch teams to ambush them. The PCs may also attract unwelcome attention from hostile locals.

Travelling on foot takes a couple of standard days (2-3 local days) from a more distant dropzone, but is stealthy. It makes negotiating the wilderness harder, and incurs a plot stress consequence (see **Plot Stress: A World in Flames!** on page 40). Put the players on the clock and introduce Epona

Zaron's ultimatum (page 68) just as they reach their destination (see **Episode Four: The Edge of the Abyss**).

Travelling by vehicle takes a standard day — a couple of travel periods at most. It's harder to approach stealthily, although negotiating the wilderness is easier.

Approaching Mymar's Retreat overland is a challenge:

- **Action 1 — Identify the Location of Mymar's Retreat:** This requires Mindscape access and a Fair (+2) Knowledge or Investigation roll, or a Survival (Knowledge) or appropriate Science roll, or a Resources roll at Inchaka to find a guide (and a successful Empathy roll to get one who is trustworthy and discreet). Failure to find a guide at Inchaka may result in an encounter there, and / or result in finding an indiscreet guide.
- **Action 2 — Negotiate the Wilderness:** A Survival (Knowledge) roll against a Fair (+2) opposition if approaching in a vehicle, and a Fantastic (+6) opposition if approaching on foot; a guide can provide an advantage. On a failure, the PCs take wounds or have an encounter (using the "Snow-Layer" column on page 12), and PCs are more easily spotted on their approach.
- **Action 3 — Approach Without Being Seen:** A Stealth roll against a Fair (+2) opposition on foot, and a Fantastic (+6) opposition in a vehicle. On a success, the PCs conduct a **raid with surprise**, or a **stealthy intrusion attempt**; on a failure, it's a **raid without surprise**; see **Scene Two: Raid!** Failures in actions 1 and 2 may work against the PCs as indiscreet guides gossip, rumours are spread by people encountered, fires are seen, vehicles heard, and so on.

TAKEN BY THE FIVERS

Characters who are hostages or allies of the Fivers needn't worry about getting to Mymar's Retreat — they travel with the Fivers aboard the *Red Glory* transport rotary from Trondland (page 55).

Outcome

The PCs arrive at Mymar's Retreat, where the hostages are being held. They may have been spotted by the Fivers, or may be unobserved.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

See **Scene Two: Raid!** below.

SCENE TWO: RAID!

The PCs launch a raid on Mymar's Retreat to rescue the hostages.

Location: Mymar's Retreat

Environment: *The Enemy's Home Turf, Cold Thin Air* situation aspects.

Planning: The PCs have time to plan. There are opportunities for using skills like Intrusion to case the HQ and create tactical advantages.

This scene details the PCs' attack on Mymar's Retreat, a base high in the Akantack Sanctuary on the edge of the habitable zone, with the objective of penetrating through to the imprisoned hostages (see **Scene Three: Free the Hostages**). Their opponents are Fiver separatists — mostly Akantack, but including humans and Nwasha. In total there are three supporting NPCs (one Akantack, one Nwasha, plus one offworlder meditech), and 1 group of 5 Average (+1) minor NPCs per PC, plus optionally any survivors from **Episode Two: Hostage Situation**. The Retreat is commanded by Epona Zaron's deputy, Bwaga Bargo, who is in the hostages' area (page 67).

Mymar's Retreat has no Mindscape access: first, it's on the edge of the Olkennedy Crater, and has little natural connectivity with Alpha Node; and second it's affected by the complex's ECM jamming station — see location 9 below (page 67). Mindscape use therefore requires a PMI or better; drones require at least an LMI.

For the purpose of the raid, Mymar's Retreat is divided into three broad stages: the Clifftop, the HQ Building, and the Underground Chambers. At each stage, one PC must make a skill roll to overcome an opposition, aided by other PCs if appropriate. On a success, all the PCs may move on to the next stage; on a failure, the PCs will face specific consequences, perhaps involving combat or a "holding action" by one or more PCs while the rest press on with their mission.

Use the location descriptions below to track PC progress. Depending on your preferred style of play and the PCs' strategy, they could be clearing the Retreat one location at a time, systematically exploring as they go, or they could move directly to the heart of the action.

Crimeworld

Astute readers will notice we're using some of the principles of the "Crimeworld" section from the Fate Core book Fate Worlds Volume Two: Worlds In Shadow, and in particular the heist structure detailed in "Getting Into the Heist: Breaking the House". For more in-depth guidance on tailoring the Fate Core rules to run crime capers, see that excellent volume.

Getting In

Pretty much everyone wants a stealthy op: sneak up on the Retreat, break in without the guards noticing, rescue the hostages, and get out without making so much as a whisper. Unless the PCs are absolute masters at stealth ops, it's unlikely the raid will go down that way. At some point, things will go wrong, someone will raise the alarm, and bullets, blaster bolts, and null beams will fly.

The structure of this raid is designed such that at each stage one or more PCs can undertake a "holding action" to keep a specific threat at bay while the rest of the PCs press on with the mission. For example, one PC could use automatic fire to keep the guards on the clifftop busy while the rest of the PCs enter the HQ. Players must strike the right tactical balance between pushing ahead with their mission and stretching their lines too thin.

You can use plot stress to track how much the hostages are endangered; see "Plot Stress" below.

Here's an overview of how to get to the hostages.

STAGE ONE: THE CLIFFTOP

Negotiating the clifftop down to the hidden base in a **stealthy intrusion attempt** involves skills like Intrusion or Stealth. It's Good (+3) opposition, or Superb (+5) if the Fivers are expecting the PCs. PCs may climb down the cliff face, using Athletics to create an advantage on the Stealth or Intrusion roll. On a failure, the action becomes a **raid with or without surprise**, or a success at a cost involving consequences such as falling damage.

On a **raid with surprise**, the PCs are opposed by two groups of 5 Average (+1) minor NPCs (see below); on a **raid without surprise**, they're opposed by one group of 5 Average (+1) minor NPCs per PC. If desired, one PC may hold down one minor NPC group while the rest press ahead with the raid; in this case, you'll be running a separate combat on an ongoing basis as the other PCs enter the base.

STAGE TWO: THE HQ BUILDING

On a **stealthy intrusion attempt**, the PCs may case the HQ using Intrusion, then pick any door to break in (roll against the Retreat's Passive Sensing skill — see below). On a failure, one character must undertake a holding action and try to disengage the HQ's alarm system (a contest against the Retreat's ECM Array), or the action becomes a **raid with or without surprise**.

On a **raid with surprise**, PCs entering the base are attacked by 2 groups of 5 Average (+1) minor NPCs for the first 2 exchanges, which are then reinforced by the three gun turrets (location 8) and possibly even the missile emplacement (location 17); on a **raid without surprise**, the PCs are attacked by 1 group of 5 Average (+1) minor NPCs per PC, and

the gun turrets and missile emplacement, simultaneously. As before, one PC may hold down one gun turret or NPC group. If the opposition is defeated, any survivors fall back, and the PCs may proceed to the underground chambers.

STAGE THREE: THE UNDERGROUND CHAMBERS

On a **stealthy intrusion attempt**, one PC must try to disable the guard posted in the underground chambers, a Fair (+2) opposition, or Good (+4) if the PCs are expected. On a failure, the action becomes a **raid with or without surprise**. In either case, proceed to **Scene Three: Free the Hostages**.

Attacking the Retreat as a Construct

The PCs may decide they want to bombard the hell out of Mymar's Retreat using a transport rotary or even starship. This involves construct conflict; statistics for the Mymar's Retreat construct are given below.

Supporting Construct

MYMAR'S RETREAT

Scale: Huge (+2)

Physical Stress: □²□³□⁴

Tech Index: T7

Systems Stress: □²□³

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: Secret Fiver Base, By the Snow-Layer, Climate Controlled, Hallowed Residence of Mymar the Martyr, Half Underground

Skills: Great (+4) Hull Strength; Good (+3) EW, Passive Sensing; Fair (+2) Resources, Stealth, Systems; Average (+1) Ranged Combat, Ranged Combat, Ranged Combat, Technical.

STUNTS

- ◆ **Passenger Accommodation:** Accommodations for 20 passengers.
- ◆ **Rugged Superstructure:** 1/session, pay 1 fate point to reduce a moderate consequence to mild, or remove a mild.

EXTRAS

- ★ **ECM Array:** +2 defend bonus vs EW and Mindscape attacks.
- ★ **Lab (Meditech):** Access to Meditech stunt.
- ★ **Missiles:** Contest of Ranged Combat vs Manoeuvre, explosive effect, Limited Supply.
- ★ **Null Cannon:** w:0, range 4; Full Auto, Recoilless.

The Bomb Plot

Characters taking note of their surroundings may find clues to the bomb plot (page 58) in Mymar's Retreat. Use Notice or Investigate rolls; this is particularly effective if the PCs are exploring using the map and key on page 67. See Dr "Fingers" Lonesku (page 63) and location 15, the recovery room (page 67), below.

Plot Stress: Countdown to Execution

This scene uses the plot stress rules provided in **Episode Two, Scene Four: Interception** to pace how quickly the Fivers start to kill the hostages. See page 55 for more.

Stat Blocks

The following NPCs may be encountered in Mymar's Retreat.

Supporting NPC

SHEVA TENPEL

A thuggish female Akantack from the local Tenpeltee tribe, she's devoted to the Zaron family and Fiver cause.

Physical Stress: □²□³□⁴ **Mental Stress:** □²□³

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Thuggish Fiver Fanatic, Local Tribe Member, Devoted to the Zaron Family, Knows the Retreat Like the Back of Her Hand, Acclimatised

Skills: Superb (+5) Provoke, Ranged Combat; Great (+4) Athletics, Notice; Good (+3) Physique, Unarmed Combat; Fair (+2) Deceive, Will; Average (+1) Intrusion, Stealth

STUNTS

- ◆ **Armour of Fear:** Use Provoke to defend vs Melee and Unarmed Combat until damaged.
- ◆ **Covering Fire:** On successful Ranged Combat attack, also create Fair (+2) opposition against movement in affected zone.

EXTRAS

- ★ **Auto Shotgun:** w:4/2, range 2; Burst Fire, Full Auto.

NWASHA GUNNAR-JAN

A large male Nwasha and devoted Olkennedian patriot, Gunnar-Jan joined the Fivers because he believed in self-determination for his people. He sometimes doubts whether the ends justify the means.

Physical Stress: □²□³□⁴ **Mental Stress:** □²□³

Consequences: 2 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Massive Nwasha Warrior, When a Slow-Moving Object Meets an Unyielding Force, Arboreal Patriot, Xenomorph Most Likely to Compromise

Skills: Superb (+5) Empathy, Physique; Great (+4) Ranged Combat, Unarmed Combat; Good (+3) Athletics, Notice; Fair (+2) Knowledge, Rapport; Average (+1) Stealth, Will

STUNTS

◆ **Grappler:** +2 create an advantage Physique bonus when wrestling or grappling.

◆ **Nose For Trouble:** Use Empathy for initiative as long as you've observed / spoken to participants for a few minutes in the same scene.

EXTRAS

★ **Olkennedian Howler Rifle:** +3 bonus, Stunned advantage, r3, Recoilless, as "Howl".



DR “FINGERS” LONESKU

“Fingers” Lonesku is a dodgy Fringe Worlder meditech, brought to Olkennedy for dubious purposes — specifically to implant the zero-point bomb in Epona Zaron. Fingers didn’t source the bomb herself — but she does know it was highly sophisticated, and nothing the Olkennedians could have made themselves. She’s adept at using her subdermal holoprojector to make a hasty getaway.

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Black Market Meditech; Kicked Off a Fringe World Near You; I Just Like Bodies, You Know? Unnatural Proclivities; Aura of Unhealthiness

Skills: Great (+4) Deceive, Technical; Good (+3) Bureaucracy, Provoke; Fair (+2) Contacts, Will; Average (+1) Notice, Ranged Combat

STUNTS

♦ **Meditech:** +2 Technical bonus for overcome actions to treat physical consequences.

HALO

Mindscape Implant: Local Mindscape connectivity and technopsi.

Monitor Band Cloak (secret): Disables an active Mindscape implant.

EXTRAS

★ **Subdermal Holoprojector:** As aspect, plus use Will to create images as advantages.

A GANG OF 5 FIVER THUGS

These may be recruits from nearby Akantack tribes, or old hands from around the planet. They may use howler rifles, null pistols, or traditional, low-tech (and usually pretty nasty) Akantack missile and melee weapons.

Stress: □□□□□

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Reckless Rabble, Strength In Numbers

Skills: Average (+1) Ranged Combat (+4 teamwork bonus)

Outcome

The PCs penetrate deep inside Mymar’s Retreat, closing on the hostages, either facing an alerted and substantial opposition, or still undetected.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

See **Scene Three: Free the Hostages** below.

SCENE THREE: FREE THE HOSTAGES

The PCs fight through to the imprisoned hostages and rescue them.

Locations: The Cells, Mymar’s Retreat

Environment: Mission on a Knife Edge, Beset From All Sides, Separate Reinforced Holding Cells situation aspects.

Planning: The PCs don’t have time to make a detailed plan of action at this point. They’ll probably find the hostages’ area, and have to act immediately. If they’ve arranged things well enough, give them an exchange or two to make appropriate preparations.

By this point, your game may be running at screaming high tension as the PCs *still haven’t* been discovered, or they may be fighting a running gun battle and fending off the Fivers as they go. On a **stealthy intrusion attempt**, there’s no one here apart from the normal guards; on a **raid with or without surprise**, all remaining defenders, probably including Bwaga Bargo, are here to repel the PCs.

The hostages are held in individual cells in location 16; unless things have worked out otherwise there are three of them, maybe including: Dai-Nisen-Go itself; Officer Nwasha Hom-Champa; one of the PCs, or his or her friend, contact, or relative; a new trader; one or more members of SCI Force or employees of the Commonality embassy; or anyone else sufficiently important to your story.

By default, Bwaga Bargo is one of the people guarding the hostages. His quarters are in location 11, but unless surprised he’ll be in location 16 with at least one group of 5 Average (+1) minor NPC guards (see adjacent), and any other survivors of the PCs’ assault (this is a good time to collect any stray minor NPCs into new groups of 5).

On a **stealthy intrusion attempt**, freeing the hostages is a challenge; on a **raid with or without surprise**, it’s slightly simpler.

- **Action 1 — Bypass the Sensors and Avoid the Guards:** This is Great (+4) opposition, using Intrusion or possibly Technical, aided by Stealth; or Fantastic (+6) opposition if the base has been alerted. On a failure, the guards are alerted and immediately attack; one PC may hold off a major or supporting NPC or a group of minor NPCs while

the rest push on with the next action. On a **raid with or without surprise**, this action isn't necessary — the guards know the PCs are there.

- **Action 2 — Crack the Locks:** This is a Good (+3) contest to bypass the locks on the holding cells, probably using Intrusion. Explosives or Technical may also work, but may harm hostages and will alert any guards. Each victory point frees one hostage.
- **Action 3 — Get the Hell Out of There:** At any point the PCs may decide to leave. On a **stealthy intrusion attempt**, this is a Stealth roll against Good (+3) opposition, or Superb (+5) if the base is on alert; on a **raid with or without surprise**, it's a chase contest against the same opposition, with the PCs facing a firefight of the remaining opposition if defeated. Possible consequences of success at a cost in the chase contest include physical injury to the hostages. PCs also have a *Hostages In Tow* aspect which may work against them.

Outcome

The PCs may have rescued some or all of the hostages, and ideally have escaped with them from the Retreat.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If the PCs' actions at Mymar's Retreat have been observed, or if they've been particularly destructive and the Fivers have informed the global media, they could have cultural repercussions — see **Scene Five: Clash of Cultures!** below. At some point the PCs should realise the kidnap attempt has been a distraction, and the main action is now unfolding high above in orbit on Alpha Node, the world's global Mindscape instance. They may detect clues to the bomb plot in the Retreat themselves (see the descriptions of the Retreat below), or may hear about Epona's seizing of the node in the global Mindscape. See **Episode Four: The Edge of the Abyss.**

BWAGA BARGO

Bwaga Bargo has supervised the bomb plot and Fingers Lonesku's operation on Epona Zaron, and is now determined nothing should come between Zaron and her mission. He'll go to great lengths to keep the PCs and government attention focussed on Mymar's Retreat.

Physical Stress: □□□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□□

Consequences: 3 **Scale:** Medium (+0)

ASPECTS

High Concept: Second in Command of the Fivers.

Trouble: Nasty and Aggressive.

Other Aspects: Rugged and Self-Reliant Nwasha, Once Cared For Somebody Who Betrayed Him, Hellbent On War, Former Union Jobsworth.

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Provoke

Great (+4): Physique, Will

Good (+3): Deceive, Ranged Combat, Unarmed Combat

Fair (+2): Athletics, Contacts, Notice, Resources

STUNTS

✦ **Ardent Leader:** Use Will for organisation actions.

✦ **Armour of Fear:** Use Provoke to defend vs Melee and Unarmed Combat until damaged.

✦ **Expert Climber:** +2 bonus to overcome and create advantage actions when climbing.

✦ **Fortress of the Will:** +2 Will bonus to defend vs Provoke and Will damage / control attacks.

✦ **Jumper:** +2 bonus to overcome and create advantage actions when jumping.

✦ **Minions:** 1/session, use Rapport to "attach" minor NPCs to yourself, gaining stress boxes and teamwork bonus.

✦ **Okay, Fine!** Use Provoke instead of Empathy to learn aspects.

EXTRAS

★ **Dispersion Field:** +2 defend; Noticeable.

★ **Hand Scanner:** Fair (+2) Investigate.

★ **Holosleeve:** As aspect to mimic the visual appearance of another life form.

★ **Mesh Armour:** a:1.

★ **Olkennedian Howler Rifle:** +3 bonus, Stunned advantage, r3, Recoilless, as "Howl".

★ **The Fivers:** Fair (+2) Investigate; Average (+1) Stealth.

★ **The Redjackets:**

Aspect: Private Redjacket Army;

Skills: Fair (+2) Manoeuvre, Security; Average (+1) Intrusion.

Major NPC

SCENE FOUR: ESCAPE!

The PCs are themselves guests or hostages at Mymar's Retreat, and must escape!

Locations: The Cells, Mymar's Retreat.

Environment: *No Mindscape, Disarmed and Imprisoned* situation aspects.

Planning: If the PCs are prisoners of the Fivers, they're disarmed, without equipment or Mindscape access, imprisoned in separate cells in location 16. Even as guests they won't have Mindscape access, and are closely observed. Otherwise they have time to make plans.

In this case the PCs are the hostages which the Fivers are using to force negotiations with the Commonality, instead of their rescuers. They may be there voluntarily, cooperating with the Fivers, or they may be genuine hostages.

Fiver Demands

The Fivers make a public announcement of their demands (page 56), letting OLSEC and Dai-Nisen-Go know about the PCs if they don't already. If they can locate them, they'll send a raiding force to attack the Retreat, comprising at least one transport rotary, two supporting NPCs, five groups of 5 OLSEC troopers (page 44), plus one group per PC. See **Scene Two: Raid!** above.

Discovering the Bomb Plot From Within

The PCs may uncover the bomb plot (page 58) while "guests" of the Fivers. An Empathy roll reveals that everyone's *Waiting For a Specific Moment*. An Investigate roll reveals *Someone's Recently Left*, and finds *Travel Itineraries from Craterport Down to the Highport*; whereupon a Mindscape or infonet search reveals a very public meeting has been scheduled between Epona Zaron and Breath of Dawn on Alpha Node — reported as a "new chance for peace and reconciliation". Finally the PCs may detect the forensic traces in the operating theatre and recovery room (locations 14 and 15 — see page 67).

How to Escape

If the PCs are imprisoned, escaping is a challenge. If they're guests, things are slightly easier.

- **Action 1 — Break Out of the Cells:** The most difficult part: the cell doors are *Beyond Human Strength*, and Fantastic (+6) opposition even if a PC gains a permission to roll. Some characters may have hidden intrusion gear like intrusion folds, effectors, thermite lances, etc; otherwise they must influence their guards or even Bwaga Bargo to free them — perhaps by convincing them they've

switched sides. It's physically difficult to break out of the cells, but let any reasonably well thought-out plan succeed. One possible success at a cost is to alert the whole base, turning the scenario into a part-chase, part-running combat.

- **Action 2 — Sneak Out of the HQ:** This is Good (+3) opposition, or Superb (+5) if the Fivers are alerted; PCs who were imprisoned have a *Without Useful Equipment* aspect against them. On a failure, the PCs face two groups of 5 Average (+1) minor NPC guards as a minor cost, or one group per PC as a serious cost. One or more PCs can hold off this opposition while the rest make it to safety.
- **Action 3 — Make It Back to Civilisation:** Escaping from Mymar's Retreat isn't over once the PCs make it into the open air; they have possibly thousands of kilometres of hostile terrain between them and the safety of a government outpost. It's a Stealth roll against Fair (+2) opposition on foot, and Fantastic (+6) opposition if in a vehicle. On a failure, they run into the *Red Glory* Fiver transport rotary (two supporting NPCs plus one group of 5 Average (+1) minor NPCs per PC). A possible success at a cost might be to encounter local wildlife (page 12), or suffer injury from exposure or the environment.

Outcome

The PCs escape from Mymar's Retreat and return to civilisation and their allies. They may have information about the bomb plot.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

At this point, it's conceivable the PCs could prevent Epona Zaron from ever reaching Alpha Node, in which **Episode Four: The Edge of the Abyss** might never happen. Alternatively, the PCs' warning might come too late, or only soon enough to give an advantage in tackling the threat: see Episode Four.

SCENE FIVE: CLASH OF CULTURES!

The PCs' actions may have unexpected cultural implications.

Locations: Anywhere on Olkennedy, on returning from Mymar's Retreat.

Environment: *Destabilising Interference, Commonality Agitators* situation aspects.

Planning: Astute PCs with cultural empathy may see this coming and prepare for it.

Culture conflict in this episode depends on how visible the PCs' actions are, and whether anyone from the Fivers reports on them.

Media Coverage

The hostages' fate has been decided; how much media attention this receives depends on how public the PCs' actions were at the end of **Episode Two: Hostage Situation**. PC actions at Mymar's Retreat could happen under a blaze of media publicity. Alternatively, it could be done under great secrecy. Either way, if the PCs stage a raid, attack, or violent escape at Mymar's Retreat, the Fivers launch a blistering public propaganda attack against the "interfering and destabilising Commonality warmongers". Unless the PCs have prepared otherwise, there's no media coverage of events at the Retreat; the Fivers release their own, heavily edited to show PC actions in the worst light. It's a direct culture conflict attack — see below.

RESULTS

Results of media coverage depend on public knowledge of the hostages' fate.

- If the public believes the hostages are alive, the PCs gain a favourable situation aspect lasting until the end of the scenario.
- If the public believes one or more hostages are dead, the PCs gain a negative situation aspect lasting until the end of the scenario.
- If the public doesn't know the hostages' fate, create a situation aspect representing this doubt, invoked only in restricted circumstances.

Even if all the hostages are dead, if the PCs impose a media blackout, they face only limited consequences.

Culture Conflict

In this culture conflict exchange, the rescue or escape attempt may represent up to a Fantastic (+6) Provoke attack by the Commonality via the PCs against the Olkennedian culture's Average (+1) Assimilate; scale differences may apply, but probably by now the Fivers have successfully hived off a Planetary (+6) scale instance of the Commonality culture to target. At least one PC must have an appropriate cultural stunt or extra.

The Olkennedian and Commonality cultures may also take separate cultural actions, as follows:

- Unless it's a hostage, Dai-Nisen-Go will make its Great (+4) Provoke attack on the Olkennedian culture (page 5). Scale differences may apply.
- If they've got word out about the events at Mymar's Retreat, the Fivers make a Good (+3) Provoke attack against the Fantastic (+6) Will of the local Planetary (+6) scale instance of the Commonality culture.

Breaking News About Alpha Node

If the PCs haven't already worked it out, the news is all over the Mindscape and Olkennedy's infonet. Epona Zaron, leader of the Fiver separatists, has smuggled a bomb onboard Alpha Node, the planet's global Mindscape instance, and is threatening to blow it up, destroying the world's Mindscape, herself, and the Breath of Dawn sentience!

Outcome

The hostages are either free, dead, or still captive. However, their fate is no longer important to the adventure, as the entire kidnapping has been a distraction for the Fiver attack on Alpha Node. End the episode with the revelation that Epona Zaron has smuggled a bomb onto Alpha Node, and is threatening to blow it up and destroy Olkennedy's Mindscape unless the Fiver demands are met. People are up in arms, there's open rioting, and Olkennedy is close to civil war!

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

See **Episode Four: The Edge of the Abyss**.

MYMAR'S RETREAT

This section describes the Fiver base at Mymar's Retreat, for use in your descriptions. It's a rustic yet affluent dwelling, a "country lodge" in an everblack grove on the edge of the Akantack Sanctuary, hard against the Snow-Layer. It sits at the headwaters of the Gorblyar River which bisects the Sanctuary, where sailfins spawn and die in deadly battles defending their trees. Built into the crater wall, aboveground it's a one-storey building, with rooms extending into the cliff face.

To enter Mymar's Retreat, you have to reach a clifftop about a third of the way up the crater wall, where there's a clearing in the everblacks, then descend a narrow path to the ledge where the Retreat is built. See the adjacent schematic.

A Fair (+2) Notice roll spots the three gun turrets (locations 8); a Great (+4) Investigation roll spots the missile emplacement launch tube (location 17).

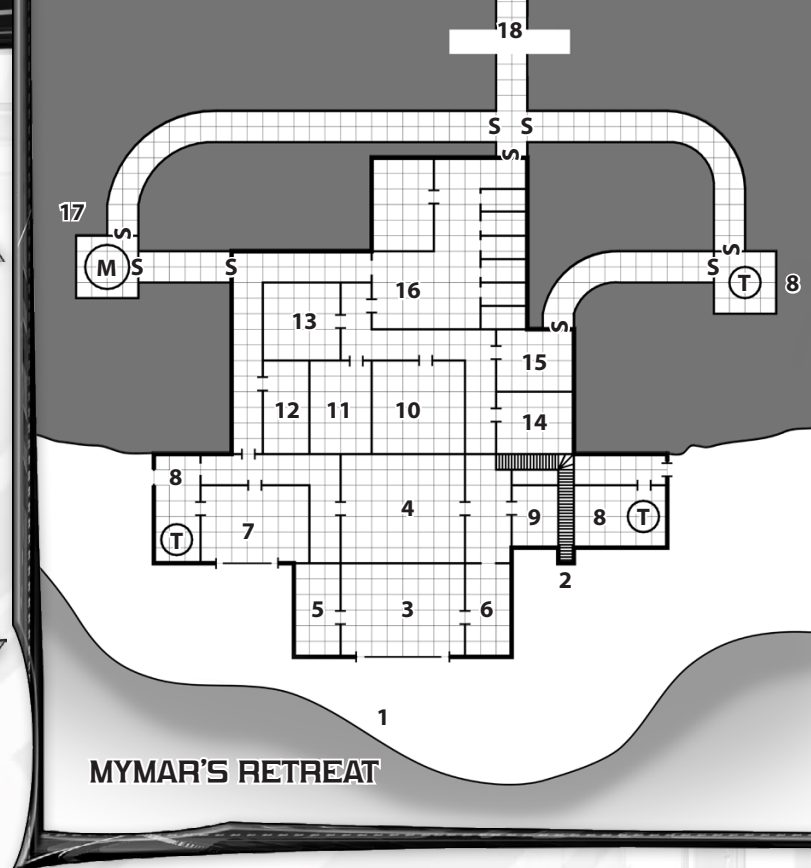
LOCATION DESCRIPTIONS

1. **Cliff Ledge:** Twenty metres wide at its widest, flattened and cleared of debris, this ledge is accessible by transport rotary, or via stairway and narrow cliff path. There's a spectacular view down into the Akantack Sanctuary.

Recent Events at the Retreat

If you haven't used *Bwaga Bargo* (page 64) elsewhere, he may manage operations here. His presence makes the Retreat a more dangerous encounter. Epona Zaron (page 73) recently underwent an operation here by Dr Lonesku to implant the zero point bomb in her body, used in **Episode Four: The Edge of the Abyss**. Organised PCs may even spot Zaron leaving on their arrival, or even intercept her before she makes it to Alpha Node.

2. **Steps:** The steep path down the cliff face ends in *Exposed Vantage Point* steps over the roof of the Retreat.
3. **Lounge:** People usually use the side doors (Locations 8), leaving the transparent lounge windows onto the Retreat's *Spectacular View*. The lounge contains a jacuzzi-style spa pool typical of luxury houses, numerous low-slung recliner chairs and tables, a bar, food service area, infoscreens, and so on.
4. **Function Room:** The doors to location 3 can be opened to create a single chamber, but are usually closed, leaving this room for dining. There's a large table and chairs. It has a *Functional, Barracks-like Feel*, and has clearly seen better days.
5. **Guard Station:** Two guards are usually on duty here, in contact with the ECM Station and other guards. They have *Cameras Throughout the Retreat*, but aren't usually observant unless the base is on alert.
6. **Guest Quarters:** A well-appointed chamber used by Dr "Fingers" Lonesku, the Fiver medic. It contains a bed, basic furniture, and her effects.
7. **Garage:** Parking for two helibikes armed with autocannon (page 26). There's usually a Fiver mechanic performing maintenance.
8. **Gun Turret:** An autocannon (*Mindjammer* page 208), usually manned by one Fiver guard. It has an a:1 armoured hull against external attacks.
9. **ECM Station and Power Plant:** A small domestic fusion power unit, state of the art for Olkennedy but outdated and quaint to Commonality eyes. A small security station features monitor band jamming equipment, passive sensing gear, and broadcast and tightbeam comms. The Fivers perform a tightbeam relay infoburst once per hour from here, Superb (+5) to detect.
10. **Ready Room and Food Prep:** A "dining kitchen", effectively the hub of Mymar's Retreat, with a duty table and chairs, and any Fivers not busy elsewhere. Maps of Olkennedy's key areas cover the walls, and a large infoscreen is used for comms or infonet.



MYMAR'S RETREAT

11. **Bwaga Bargo Quarters:** A multiple occupancy chamber, recently also occupied by Epona Zaron. Bwaga Bargo's effects are here, as is he during sleeping hours (page 64).
12. **Barracks:** Principle barracks for up to two dozen people, with bunks and private storage lockers. Three quarters of the Retreat's guard force (5 guards per PC) are here at night, and a handful by day.
13. **Stores:** A well-organised store room, with food, drink, and also spare weapons, ammunition, parts, tools, and so on. PCs trying to acquire equipment during play (*Mindjammer* page 125) can do so here.
14. **Operating Theatre:** A reasonably well-equipped T7 medical station, with basic operating facilities. Dr "Fingers" Lonesku (page 63) works here.
15. **Recovery Room:** Epona Zaron was recently here after having the zero point bomb implanted in her abdomen (page 58) — it's clearly been *Recently Used*. Telltale forensic evidence like *Lingering Z-Radiation* can be found on an appropriate roll. Only Fingers Lonesku and Bwaga Bargo know the details — and of course Epona Zaron.
16. **Cells:** This large chamber has *Locked and Soundproofed Cells* with solid doors along one wall, with Superb (+5) T7 locking mechanisms. There are five cells in total; usually each holds up to one hostage, although the Fivers will double up if they have more. See page 63 for who the hostages might be.
17. **Missile Emplacement:** Similar to the Gun Turrets (Location 8), this is Great (+4) to spot from outside, and has an a:2 armoured hull. One guard controls the Retreat's missiles (*Mindjammer* page 208).
18. **Secret Exit:** Exits to forested cliff face approximately 100m distant.

EPISODE FOUR THE EDGE OF THE ABYSS

IN WHICH THE PCS RISK EVERYTHING TO STOP EPONA ZARON DESTROYING THE MINDSCAPE —
AND PLUNGING THE WORLD INTO BLOODY CIVIL WAR!

This episode is the climax to **Hearts and Minds** — a major threat to the Commonality presence on Olkennedy which threatens to plunge the world into civil war. The ill-advised leader of the Fiver separatists, Epona Zaron, has been led into an act of terror, seizing control of Alpha Node, the world's global Mindscape instance, during a public meeting between her and the Breath of Dawn sentience. She's threatening to blow it up using a zero-point bomb implanted in her body. Can the PCs defuse the situation — literally! — before the worst happens and war breaks out?

This episode is a "race against time", with a series of overcome actions, contests, and challenges aimed at stripping away the PCs one at a time and tying them up in holding actions, while the remaining PCs press on to the Alpha Node corpus and Epona Zaron.

ZARON'S DEMANDS

Epona Zaron's demands are public, announced via broadcast, infonet, and Mindscape; the Fivers have no interest in secret negotiations. The PCs may engineer a media blackout to prevent people finding out about what's happening in orbit, but it's unlikely.

On the face of it, the demands reiterate those issued when the hostages were taken (page 56), but with one crucial difference: this time, they must be met within three hours, or Zaron will destroy Alpha Node!

The situation is electric; Olkennedy polarises into two camps, one supporting the Fivers, one supporting the Commonality. Violent clashes break out, and Dai-Nisen-Go offers Commonality troops, and to impose martial law if Alpha Node is destroyed.

COUNTDOWN TO DETONATION!

Plot Stress Track

CONSEQUENCES

- Mild (-2):** Zaron sends her Fiver Elite directly against the PCs.
- Moderate (-4):** Zaron locks off her area of Alpha Node.
- Severe (-6):** Zaron depressurises all access to her area.
- Taken Out:** Zaron detonates the bomb and destroys Alpha Node.

CAUSES OF PLOT STRESS

- The PCs stop to think.** 1 stress
- The PCs spend a scene doing something unrelated to tackling Zaron.** 2 stress
- The PCs are delayed by anything.** 1 stress
- The PCs kill either of Zaron's Fiver Elite, and she finds out.** 1 consequence
- The PCs cut the power or hack Alpha Node, and Zaron finds out.** 1 consequence

Plot Stress: Countdown to Detonation!

This episode uses plot stress to manage the countdown to Epona Zaron blowing herself up and starting a civil war. The PCs should realise that the slightest miscalculation could spell disaster.

SCENE ONE: BOARDING ALPHA NODE

The PCs try to board the Mindscape node satellite without alerting Zaron.

Location: Alpha Node, the system's sole Mindscape satellite (page 22).

Environment: *You Have Three Standard Hours! Paranoid Mindscape Node, They Have Eyes Everywhere* situation aspects.

Planning: Any advance planning causes plot stress. Even rushing to board Alpha Node costs 1 of the 3 hours allotted by Epona Zaron.

Epona Zaron controls Alpha Node, with at least terminal access to its sensors. As a Dialogic (page 37), Breath of Dawn is going along with her, believing she should be talked to instead of being terminated outright. It's hoping the PCs can make it through, but at least overtly must follow Zaron's orders.

To board Alpha Node, the PCs must make an overcome roll to avoid Epona Zaron noticing and ordering Breath of Dawn to attack. On a failure, the situation escalates to a confrontation, the exact nature of which depends on how the PCs are trying to get on board.

How to Proceed

The PCs' allies provide advice, but ultimately this is the players' call. The scenes below should give you the support you need. There are two broad options: negotiating with Zaron remotely, or letting Commonality negotiators keep Zaron busy while the PCs secretly board Alpha Node to tackle her face-to-face (and possibly terminally). Dai-Nisen-Go and the Integrators favour the most aggressive option, demanding Epona Zaron's termination. Other factions and especially Fiver sympathisers may recommend the Commonality even agreeing to the Fiver demands, walking away from the table to play another day.

Negotiating remotely is risky (see page 75); the following scenes assume the PCs secretly board Alpha Node to face Epona Zaron directly.

Approaching the Corpus by Ship

The PCs must make a Good (+3) Stealth Pilot-type roll to dock with the station undetected; see the schematic below (page 70). On a failure, Zaron is alerted and directs Alpha Node to fire on them. This is a conflict hazard (*Mindjammer* page 176), in which the PCs must achieve 3 victories on a Pilot-type roll to board, while Alpha Node attacks with its null cannon and Mediocre (+0) Ranged Combat skill (page 71).

Approaching From Inside

The PCs land in the Alpha Node habitat (page 70), still staffed and operational, and proceed through the interior to the secure corpus access (the part of Alpha Node which constitutes Breath of Dawn's "body"). It's Superb (+5) opposition, requiring physical stealth and security intrusion skills. On a failure, Zaron is alerted and the PCs are attacked by station automated defences, a Fair (+2) conflict hazard opposed by Ranged Combat (shooting the defences) or Intrusion (shutting them down).



Approaching Via EVA

The PCs must each make Good (+3) Stealth EVA rolls to approach Alpha Node outside of their ship using p-suits or other EVA gear. On a failure, Zaron is alerted and the PCs are individually attacked by automated defences; one PC must succeed in a Fair (+2) conflict hazard using Intrusion or other appropriate skill to hack the airlock while being shot at.

Virtual Assaults

The PCs may make a Fair (+2) Mindscape Intrusion or other appropriate skill roll to distract or even attack Breath of Dawn's mental stress track while they board. A roll to distract may not be noticed; a Mindscape attack will be. On a failure, Zaron is alerted and the PCs are attacked by automated defences as well as via Mindscape.

Outcome

The PCs enter Alpha Node. Depending on their success, Epona Zaron may or may not be aware of their presence.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once inside Alpha Node, the PCs must proceed through the corpus to Breath of Dawn's node brain, where Zaron is waiting. See **Scene Two: Inside the Corpus**.

SCENE TWO: INSIDE THE CORPUS

The PCs penetrate Breath of Dawn's corpus, searching for the node brain and Epona Zaron.

Location: Interior of Alpha Node.

Environment: *You Have Two Standard Hours!* A *Warren of Conduits and Walkways* situation aspects.

Planning: The PCs are on board Alpha Node, and proceed through the corpus to Epona Zaron. At best they have two standard hours — but with plot stress they could have far less!

Alpha Node Layout

Alpha Node comprises the zones shown below. The PCs begin at an entrance to the corpus, and proceed to any other zone, including the node brain.

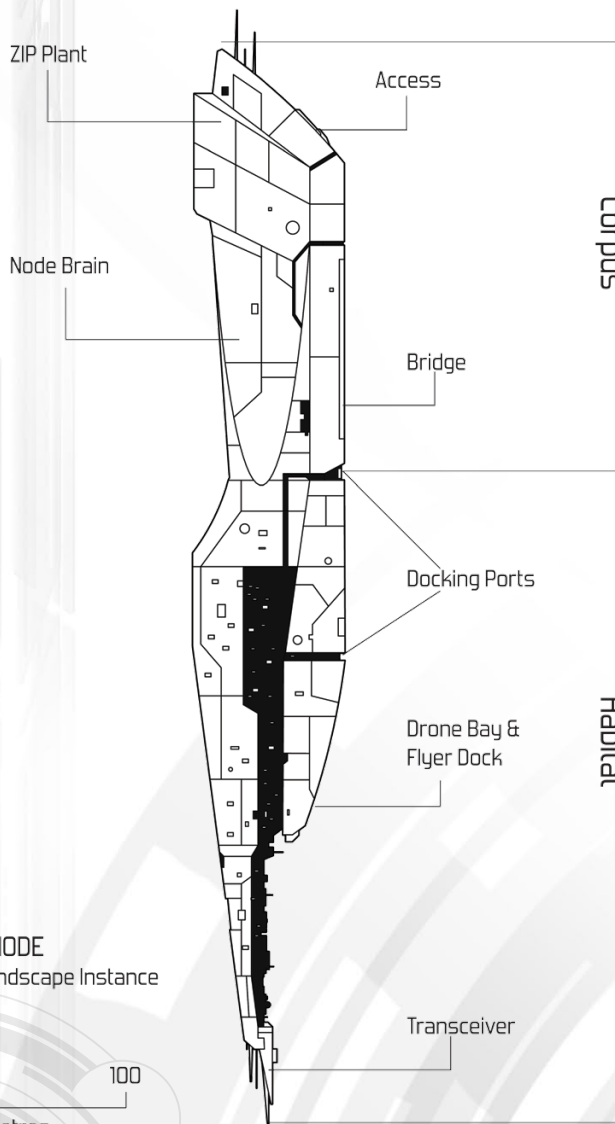
CORPUS ZONES

Habitat: Includes several hundred Commonality staff, including those from the Communications instrumentality and SCI Force. The habitat interfaces with Breath of Dawn regularly, and it advises them on their projects. Staff are aware of the situation, but are in lockdown — no one in or out. PCs liaising with the habitat may learn that two former habitat personnel appear to be with Zaron — though whether as hostages or allies is unknown.

Corpus: The "body" of the Breath of Dawn sentience, protected by automated defences, internal and external, housing the station's ZIP plant. It's usually unmanned, but since the Fiver takeover Fivers have been patrolling and guarding this zone and its subsidiaries; see **Action 2: Sneak Past the Fiver Guards**, below.

Node Brain: A sizable chamber housing the genur-gic brain of the Breath of Dawn sentience. Epona Zaron's much-publicised meeting took place here; since then she's been holed up here with the bomb.

ZIP Plant: This standard ZIP plant for a global Mindscape instance can be jettisoned at a push. It's currently functioning normally.



Corpus

Habitat

ALPHA NODE
Global Mindscape Instance

0 100
Metres

BREATH OF DAWN – THE ALPHA NODE SENTIENCE

For years *Breath of Dawn* was a **Mindjammer**, but settled down as a rediscovered world *Mindscape* node just after *Disclosure* twenty years ago. It regards the *Olkennedians* as “its” people, respecting their sensibilities, in contrast to *Dai-Nisen-Go*. *Alpha Node’s* shining needle is visible from *Craterport High*, and *Breath of Dawn* frequently interacts with it and with media outlets and government bodies planetside. A member of the *Dialogic* faction, it’s always willing to listen to *Olkennedian* concerns, which may frustrate the hell out of more action-oriented characters.

Scale: Enormous (+3) **Physical Stress:** □²□

Tech Index: T9 **Systems Stress:** □²□³□⁴

Consequences: 1 mild **Mental Stress:** □²□³
+ 1 moderate

Aspects: *Olkennedian Mindscape Node*, *Dialogic Faction*, *Respectful of Olkennedian Ways*, *Fascinated by Humans*, *Well-Traveller in a Previous Life*

Skills: *Fantastic (+6) Knowledge*; *Superb (+5) Rapport*; *Great (+4) Bureaucracy*; *Good (+3) Systems*; *Fair (+2) Will*; *Average (+1) Passive Sensing*; *Mediocre (+0) Ranged Combat*

STUNTS

- ◆ **Dirigeant:** +2 *Bureaucracy* for administering *Mindscape* node and access privileges.
- ◆ **Mindburn:** Use *Will* for mental attacks using the *Mindscape*.
- ◆ **Passenger Accommodation:** Accommodations for 300 personnel

HALO

Special Ops Mindscape Instance: *Local Mindscape connectivity and special ops technopsi.*

OTHER EXTRAS

- ★ **Haze Field:** +1 *defend* bonus and *basic ray shielding*.
- ★ **Null Cannon:** *Default Ranged Combat weapon*; no bonus or weapon rating, Full Auto, Recoilless.

Access: Approaching the station by EVA takes the PCs here, a service hatch providing direct access to the corpus.

Bridge: Most of the time (including now) the corpus bridge is unmanned, although it houses centralised sensor and comms control equipment for *Breath of Dawn*. There are automated defences at the entrances, and a set on the bridge itself. Key *Communications Instrumentality*, *SCI Force*, and

Space Force personnel have permission to enter, but usually *Breath of Dawn* is the only operator.

Docking Port: Approaching the corpus by ship takes the PCs to either of these points, providing direct access to the corpus or habitat.

Drone Bay and Flyer Dock: Approaching the corpus from the station interior means first docking here. There are multiple *Commonality* and *Olkennedian* drones, and one or more orbital interface flyers.

Transceiver: This antenna array transmits and receives to ground-based relays, maintaining *Olkennedian’s* *Mindscape*.

Once on board *Alpha Node*, the PCs must advance through the corpus to the node brain, a challenge comprising three actions.

Action 1: Avoid Breath of Dawn’s Sensors

The PCs must avoid *Breath of Dawn’s* sensors to move to **any** other zone in the corpus, not simply the node brain. This is at least *Average (+1)* opposition, but may be *Good (+3)* or higher if *Epona Zaron* suspects the PCs are on board.

Failure means at least one PC must engage in a contest using *Deceive*, *Intrusion*, *Technical*, etc, to confuse the sensors. Other PCs may proceed to *Action 2*. If the PC gains 3 victories, he may rejoin the rest; if the sensors win, then the *Fiver Elite* (below) arrives on the scene.

Action 2: Sneak Past the Fiver Elite

The PCs must sneak past the *Fiver Elite* guarding access to the node brain (see below), at least a *Fair (+2)* opposition. On a failure, one or more PCs must fight the elite and hold them off so the remaining PCs can get to the door.

Action 3: Bypass the Door Lock

The PCs must bypass the high security lock on the node brain access and break in. This is a *Superb (+5)* contest, using *Intrusion*, *Technical*, *nanocells*, or even *explosives* (*Highly Dangerous in an Enclosed Area!*). On a failure, the PCs are detected and attacked by the *Fiver Elite* if they weren’t already; otherwise they must continue until they win, whereupon the door opens and they may enter the node brain zone: see **Scene Three: The Martyr**.

THE FIVER ELITE

Two *Fiver Redjackets* were carefully infiltrated into the *Olkennedian Alpha Node* personnel over the course of almost two standard years. One has recently had a subdermal

ANHARATH FEYDEEN

Female Columbianan; ruthless, cold, intrusion specialist.

Physical Stress: □²□² **Mental Stress:** □²□²□⁴□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Elite Intrusion Specialist, Fanatical Grudge, Ready to Die For the Cause, Looks Like Regular Commonality, Cold and Analytical

Skills: Superb (+5) Intrusion; Great (+4) Will; Good (+3) Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Stealth; Average (+1) Deceive

STUNTS

✦ **Mindburn:** Use Will for mental attacks using the Mindscape.

HALO

Black Chip (secret): Special ops local Mindscape connectivity and technopsi.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Null Pistol:** +0 Ranged Weapon, range 3, Recoilless.

★ **Monitor Band Cloak (secret):** Disables an active Mindscape implant.

KAZPA LOAGIN

Male Van Kuvrayan; hair trigger, combat specialist.

Physical Stress: □²□²□⁴□ **Mental Stress:** □²□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Scale: Medium (+0)

Aspects: Elite Killing Machine, Lives For the Thrill, Ready to Die For the Cause, Looks Like Regular Commonality, Hair Trigger

Skills: Superb (+5) Ranged Combat; Great (+4) Physique; Good (+3) Notice; Fair (+2) Deceive; Average (+1) Unarmed Combat

STUNTS

✦ **Coolness Under Fire:** Use Ranged Combat to defend against ranged physical attacks.

HALO

Mindscape Implant (secret): Local Mindscape connectivity and technopsi.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Subdermal Projector:** +2 Ranged Weapon, weapon:2 rating null beamer.

★ **Monitor Band Cloak:** Disables an active Mindscape implant.

implanted on a planetside visit, and both have been prepared as Epona Zaron's protectors and facilitators in this mission. Both are Olkenneidian humans, selected to appear sufficiently similar to Commonality humans to not stand out too much. They're long-term sleeper agents who've now been activated to fulfil the mission of their lives.

Outcome

The PCs have gained access to the Breath of Dawn node brain, and are ready to come face-to-face with Epona Zaron.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Take a close look at any accumulated plot stress, then proceed to **Scene Three: The Martyr**.

SCENE THREE: THE MARTYR

A dangerously unstable Epona Zaron threatens to destroy them all. Can the PCs stop her?

Location: The node brain zone in Alpha Node.

Environment: You Have One Standard Hour! Madwoman With a ZIP Bomb, Hyperadvanced Yet Icky Genurgic Brain situation aspects.

Planning: The PCs come face-to-face with Epona Zaron, and the time for planning is over. Even attempts to create advantages are costly.

The PCs reach the node brain of Breath of Dawn — a fusion of organic brain and synthetic installation hypertech, highly advanced yet in places stomach-turningly icky. Fiver leader Epona Zaron is holding the world hostage here, threatening to detonate the zero point bomb implanted in her stomach. The slightest wrong move will spell disaster.

But there's a twist (isn't there always?). The zero point bomb is itself a synthetic, an eidolon based on the fragmentary thanogram of Mymar Zaron — Epona Zaron's martyred father, an Olkennedian resistance hero and one of the first Olkennedians to have a Mindscape implant! In severe eidolon crisis, the Mymar Zaron bomb is consumed with hatred for the Commonality, and has been mentally torturing Epona Zaron with guilt. Thanks to the monitor band cloak it can't currently communicate with her — but she's already in a hell of a mess. She knows the bomb can't be her father — but how does it know what's in her mind so well?

This scene is in two halves: first, a description of Epona Zaron and the PCs' encounter with her; second, a discussion of how the PCs may tackle her — either by neutralising her before she can detonate the bomb, and then deactivating it; or by talking to her and finding an acceptable compromise.

Be flexible, and give any reasonably well thought-out plan a good chance of success, as the consequences of failure are dire.

Meeting Epona Zaron

Epona Zaron, leader of the Fiver separatists and only daughter of Olkennedian martyr and hero Mymar Zaron, is an Akantack (page 18). She's a popular figure, frequently appearing on media broadcasts, in which she harangues the Commonality for their "cultural imperialism", and demands it stop its "so-called normalisation project".

Her heart is in the right place. However, she's also driven to live up to her famous father's legend, and currently feels backed into a corner by her deputy, Bwaga Bargo (page 64), and his Redjackets. The bomb is an act of sheer desperation.

When the PCs meet Zaron at the node brain, she's in a dreadful state, at the end of her tether and highly unstable. She's already suffering two consequences — one moderate, one severe — and is quite close to being taken out. There's no bomb or other explosive device immediately visible, but an ominous orange light pulsates in her abdomen! As they observe or talk to her, the PCs (using Empathy or other appropriate skills) may ascertain her state of mind and avoid blundering in and getting the place blown up. If they can take her out before she has chance to detonate, or if they can persuade her to give up, they can save the day. Note that it's not obvious she even has a Mindscape implant; it's a secret (though PCs may have worked it out by now), and most of the time she keeps it suppressed by monitor band cloak.

Neutralising Zaron

Epona Zaron is a time bomb — literally! If not handled correctly, she detonates the zero point bomb in her abdomen, taking the Mindscape node (and the PCs) with her.

The bomb is on a countdown with less than one hour to go, and Zaron can also detonate it manually by dropping her

EPONA ZARON, FIVER LEADER

Physical Stress: □□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 3 **Scale:** Medium (+0)

ASPECTS

High Concept: Akantack Leader of the Olkennedy Fivers.

Trouble: In Her Father's Shadow.

Other Aspects: I Will Avenge My Father! Well-meaning But Radicalised Patriot, I'd Die For Olkennedian Freedom!

Consequences: My Father In My Belly (Severe), Backed Into a Corner (Moderate)

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Rapport

Great (+4): Contacts, Will

Good (+3): Provoke, Ranged Combat, Resources

Fair (+2): Bureaucracy, Deceive, Intrusion, Notice

Average (+1): Athletics, Investigate, Knowledge, Stealth, Technical

STUNTS

◆ **Charismatic Leader:** Use Rapport in actions against other organisations (including cultures).

◆ **Demagogue:** +2 bonus when using Rapport to sway followers.

HALO

Mindscape Implant (secret): Local Mindscape connectivity and technopsi.

OTHER EXTRAS

★ **Monitor Band Cloak (secret):** Disables an active Mindscape implant.

★ The Fivers:

Skills: Average (+1) Resources, Will;

Stunts: Populist.

★ The Olkennedy Culture:

Aspect: Quick to Resist Oppression;

Skills: Fair (+2) Provoke; Average (+1) Rapport.

Major NPC

monitor band cloak and using the Mindscape — a kind of deadman's switch. To neutralise her, the PCs must take her out in a single exchange of attacks before she can set the bomb off (they may create advantages before these attacks in preceding exchanges). This can be physically, or via mental intimidation, persuasion, or even technopsi Mindburn or Domination. On a failure, she attempts to detonate the bomb — see "What If She Detonates?"



If the PCs neutralise Zaron in a way which renders her uncooperative, such as by knocking her out or triggering a mental breakdown, then they still have to disable the bomb (see below). If they neutralise her in a way which leaves her functional, she disables it herself.

Compromising With Zaron

Neutralising Zaron is an act of aggression, with terrible consequences for failure. The PCs may instead choose to negotiate with her. They may use Rapport, in which case any compromises they offer must be demonstrably real, or Deceive, in which case compromises must appear to be real, but in fact be fabricated.

Stress this is a pivotal moment in Olkennedy's history, when the world can be steered away from civil war. It's a tense, difficult, and dramatic confrontation between the Commonality and a violently resisting culture.

Zaron effectively represents her culture; the PCs, the Commonality. The negotiation forms an exchange of cultural conflict. Any compromises the PCs make may need SCI Force agreement, possibly with support or opposition from one or more Commonality factions (particularly Dai-

The Machinations of Dai-Nisen-Go

PCs acting on Dai-Nisen-Go's instructions are already aware of its instructions to terminate Epona Zaron. In any case, the Commonality ambassador — if possible — monitors the PCs' progress. If they appear about to resolve the stand-off leaving Zaron alive, Dai-Nisen-Go thoughtcasts them directly — even in the tensest moments of negotiation — to ensure she is killed. It will even make a remote Domination attempt on one of the PCs, or Breath of Dawn, to kill her if it looks like the PCs won't comply willingly.

Nisen-Go's Integrators). This can be represented as create an advantage actions.

For example, Thaddeus Clay wants to offer to Epona Zaron that the Commonality will make Olkennedy a Commonality Aligned world (Civilisation Designation +0) rather than its current status as Commonality Member (+3), even though the Fiver demands are for total independence with no Commonality embassy (Civilisation Designation -4). To do this he must persuade Dai-Nisen-Go, possibly rolling his Provoke, Rapport, or Deceive against the Ambassador's Will, or another appropriate skill. If Clay succeeds, he gains an Offer of Commonality Aligned situation aspect for use in the negotiations with Zaron.

Negotiating with Zaron is a contest of the PCs' best Rapport against her Great (+4) Will. The first to 3 victories wins; if she wins, she detonates the bomb — the PCs have pushed too far. If the PCs win, then she agrees with them and tries to disable the bomb (see below). If the PCs say or do the wrong thing, then Zaron can invoke the consequences on her defend rolls. If they do the right thing, they can invoke the consequences.

Disabling the Bomb

Epona Zaron may instruct the bomb to disarm itself via Mindscape. If this isn't possible, the PCs must do it themselves. In either case, given the bomb's nature, it's possible it won't *want to comply*...

Disabling the bomb is a **conflict hazard (Mindjammer page 176)** using the bomb sentience stats below. The PCs must take it out, while it tries to accumulate a number of victories to either realise it's under attack or overcome attempts to prevent it from detonating. If the bomb sentience is taken out, the PCs disable it; if it reaches 3 victories, it detonates. The PCs roll an appropriate skill against a corresponding bomb sentience skill, as follows:

PHYSICALLY DISABLING THE BOMB

The PCs must physically open Epona Zaron up, then use tools to disarm the bomb. This is a Superb (+5) Technical (Meditech) roll. Appropriate tools provide bonuses, and failure implies a success at a cost of physical damage consequences to Epona Zaron caused by the extraction.

Physically disarming the bomb is a Technical roll against the bomb sentience's Passive Sensing skill, doing physical stress track damage.

INSTRUCTING THE BOMB TO DISARM ITSELF

This is how Epona Zaron tries to disable the bomb, and the PCs may do likewise. It's a Rapport, Provoke, or even Deceive roll against the bomb sentience's Superb (+5) Will or Average (+1) Empathy, doing mental stress damage.

HACKING THE BOMB

This is an Intrusion or even EW attack against the bomb sentience's Good (+3) Deceive, doing systems stress track damage. It requires Mindscape or nanocell access.

USING TECHNOPSI ON THE BOMB

This is a Mindburn or other technopsi attack using Will against the bomb sentience's Superb (+5) Will, doing mental stress damage. It requires Mindscape or nanocell access.

THE MYMAR ZARON BOMB

The bomb in Epona Zaron's abdomen is a small yet sophisticated device, a flattened disk 10cm in diameter. A Fair (+2) Technical roll using a hand scanner or sensorview confirms it's at least T9, higher tech than Olkennedy is currently capable of, and powerful enough to annihilate the entire Alpha Node complex and probably cause structural damage to nearby Craterport High. It's a fanatical eidolon, based on the corrupted thanogram of Mymar Zaron, Epona's father — far more radicalised than her, and less willing to back down. She's terrified of it. It's clearly Commonality manufacture — but where from?

Scale: Small (-1)

Physical Stress: □□

Tech Index: T9

Systems Stress: □□

Mental Stress: □□□□

Supporting Construct

Acting Remotely

The PCs may contact Epona Zaron remotely, for example via Mindscape virtuality or infonet. This is risky; the infonet is impersonal and fraught with misunderstandings, not good when someone is as jumpy as hell and ready to explode. A Mindscape virtuality is better, except that Zaron isn't a Commonality citizen and will be disoriented, again easily causing her to panic. However, if the PCs persist in trying to "short-cut" the negotiating process, here's how to handle it.

- **Neutralising or compromising with Zaron remotely** can be done by intimidation or persuasion via infonet, giving her a Resists Impersonal Contact situation aspect to use when resisting; or by intimidation, persuasion, or technopsi Mindburn or Domination via Mindscape, providing a Panicked by Remote Contact situation aspect which makes her far more likely to react badly.
- **Disabling the bomb remotely** doesn't allow the PCs to physically defuse it, but otherwise there's no difference between trying to disable it in person or at a distance — both happen via Mindscape.

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: Fanatical Synthetic, Derived From Mymar Zaron Thanogram, In Eidolon Crisis, Hates the Commonality, Self-Hatred, Love For Daughter

Skills: Superb (+5) Will; Great (+4) Provoke; Good (+3) Deceive; Fair (+2) Passive Sensing; Average (+1) Empathy.

STUNTS

◆ **Domination:** Roll Will vs Will to control the target's actions.

◆ **Mindscape Warrior:** +2 Provoke bonus to mental stress attacks in the Mindscape.

HALO

Black Chip: Local Mindscape connectivity and special ops technopsi.

Outcome

The PCs have disabled the zero point bomb, or it has detonated, destroying Olkennedy's Mindscape and maybe the PCs. Even if they succeeded, Epona Zaron may be dead.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If Alpha Node has been destroyed, chaos reigns on Olkennedy as civil war breaks out between the Fiver separatists and their sympathisers and Olkennedy's pro-Commonality faction, assisted by Commonality forces. See "Civil War" (page 77).

If Alpha Node remains, but Epona Zaron has been killed, Dai-Nisen-Go's Integrator faction steps in to quell the protests and unrest intensifying across the world as the Fivers vent their frustration. See "The Integrators Tighten Their Grip" (page 77).

If Alpha Node remains, and Epona Zaron is still alive, the PCs may have established a new era of detente on Olkennedy, in which case they've possibly incurred the wrath of Dai-Nisen-Go and its Integrators, and set a new balance of power between the Commonality factions on the world. See "Detente" (page 77).

SCENE FOUR: CLASH OF CULTURES!

The cultural consequences of the PCs' actions are finally seen.

Locations: Anywhere on Olkennedy.

Environment: *Civil War Breaking Out, A New Era of Detente, The Integrators Tighten Their Grip* situation aspects.

Planning: The PCs have time to prepare for this final exchange of culture conflict.

This is it — the climax of the Fiver attack on the Commonality profoundly affects Olkennedy's place within it, depending on how effective the PCs have been.

Media Coverage

This episode takes place in the glare of media publicity, unless the PCs have blacked out the Fivers' announcement of their demands.

If the PCs' actions are known to the media, then create a situation aspect representing their public reputation based on their actions in the episode. In particular, if both Alpha Node and Epona Zaron survive unscathed, the PCs could become local heroes with a lot of clout.

Culture Conflict

If it hasn't already occurred, Episode Four isolates a local instance of the Commonality culture if Alpha Node is destroyed or, if already done, inflicts a consequence. See Plot Stress on page 40 for what happens if Alpha Node is destroyed or Epona Zaron is killed.

If Alpha Node is destroyed, the Olkennedy culture's Comms and Information capabilities are immediately removed.

If Epona Zaron survives, *Reeling From Disclosure* becomes *Live and Let Live*, mitigating *The Fivers Have Huge Support*.

Otherwise the episode probably represents the final exchange in this current culture conflict. Let each side take an action to achieve the maximum effect possible, either by inflicting stress on the opposition, or creating a situation aspect (or changing an existing one) which either represents that side's desired ideology, or the impact of their actions in the current episode. Use as many of the situation aspects and consequences which have been created in this and previous episodes. As much as possible, try to tie up the conflict in a way which is meaningful for Olkennedy's relationship to the Commonality, and which highlights the PCs' participation in events. The final exchange therefore comprises:

- Dai-Nisen-Go's cultural action, if possible — probably a Great (+4) Provoke attack or create advantage action against the Olkennedian culture (page 5), which resists with Average (+1) Assimilate. Scale differences may apply.
- The Fiver's cultural action, either a Fair (+2) Provoke attack or create advantage action against the Fantastic (+6) Will of the local Planetary (+6) scale instance of the Commonality culture, or a Fair (+2) Provoke create an advantage action against the Olkennedy culture's Average (+1) Assimilate.
- Any cultural action the PCs wish to take, either against the Commonality, the Olkennedian culture, or another target.



EPILOGUE

*IN WHICH THE PCS FACE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTIONS.
IS IT WAR-WAR, OR JAW-JAW?*

The outcome of Epona Zaron's threat to destroy Alpha Node marks the end of **Hearts and Minds**. But it's by no means the end of your PCs' adventures, either on Olkennedy or elsewhere. Here are some thoughts about what might come next.

CIVIL WAR

Civil war has been threatening on Olkennedy for years, and **Hearts and Minds** may end with it finally breaking out. Culture conflict exchanges will continue, with no chance for stress to be recovered.

Olkennedy will suffer terribly from a civil war. Not only will the global Mindscape be down, but the damage to Craterport High and the system's reputation will adversely affect trade, and the economy will crash. Both sides — the Fivers and anti-Commonality faction on the one hand, and the pro-Commonality faction and Commonality forces on the other — will settle in for a protracted conflict.

There'll be lots of opportunities for PC action, whether military missions working for either side, diplomatic missions trying to establish cease-fires, or illicit attempts to smuggle weapons and technology, promote technological breakthroughs, or destroy technological resources and research. A classic "world at war" campaign can take place in the ashes of **Hearts and Minds**, and its cultural effects can even spill over into neighbouring systems.

DETENTE

The best the PCs can hope for is a new era of detente on Olkennedy, as this particular culture conflict ends, and both sides regain stress and recover from consequences.

If the PCs compromise with Epona Zaron and the Fivers and neutralise the threat of civil war, it's a victory for SCI Force. However, Dai-Nisen-Go will likely try to countermand or subvert any non-Integrator solutions, which may cause further friction and conflict.

In this case there's less for action-oriented PCs to do. However, there's a lot of scope for intrigue and political adventure as the Commonality factions manoeuvre for control. The PCs have probably opposed Dai-Nisen-Go's Integrators, so will be approached by other factions closer to their standpoints, either within SCI Force or other instrumentalities, giving the PCs a chance to rise to higher positions of authority and influence within their organisations. Olkennedy can become a base from which the PCs can mount the next phase of their grand plan.

THE INTEGRATORS TIGHTEN THEIR GRIP

This is a victory for Dai-Nisen-Go and its faction, consolidating its position on Olkennedy and squeezing the Fivers as Olkennedy is forced into the Commonality mold. The PCs may go along, taking Dai-Nisen-Go as a powerful patron, and possibly joining the Integrators or taking advantage of their support in their own organisations.

In this case the PCs will probably find themselves on missions on Olkennedy or in other systems on behalf of

Dai-Nisen-Go or its faction. Alternatively, the PCs may find themselves on the opposite side, joining with the remaining Fivers and their supporters, on Olkennedy or elsewhere, trying to salvage the Fivers' increasingly elusive dream.

COMMONALITY IMPACT

The outcome of *Hearts and Minds* likely favours one or more Commonality factions. Let the PCs create a situation aspect representing the impact of their actions on one such faction. This could be a positive aspect, representing their support, or a negative one representing the harm they've done. You can create this aspect yourself if you're monitoring the effect of the PCs' actions in the background.

PCs with factions or other Commonality organisations or cultures as extras may use their milestone advancements to modify their stat blocks to represent the effects of their actions on Olkennedy.

THE WRATH OF DAI-NISEN-GO

The PCs may emerge from *Hearts and Minds* with a new and powerful adversary: Dai-Nisen-Go, Commonality ambassador to Olkennedy. Dai-Nisen-Go has contacts everywhere, including in CORESPAN (*Mindjammer* page 63), the Rim Sector Pansectorate (headquartered on Tsen Tair), and of course the

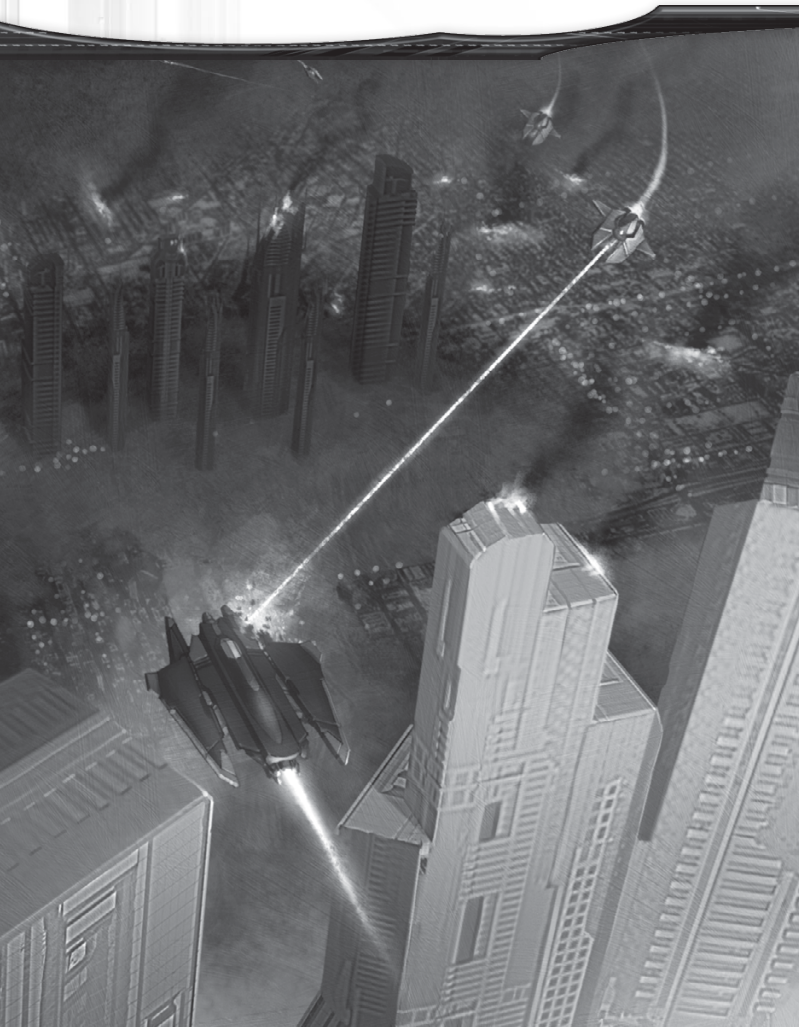
What Happened to the Bomb?

If Epona Zaron failed to blow herself and Alpha Node up, what happened to the Mymar Zaron thanogram bomb implanted in her stomach? It was far too advanced for Olkennedian tech, and its eidolon sentience (albeit in eidolon crisis) had all the hallmarks of Commonality manufacture.

Dai-Nisen-Go is very interested in the bomb, and will do almost anything to ensure it falls into its hands or, failing that, is destroyed. If the PCs analyse it and who created its flawed eidolon sentience, they could find themselves in possession of dangerous information indeed...

Apart from the Fivers, who stood to benefit from the destruction of Alpha Node? Cui bono?

Communications instrumentality. If the PCs have overtly and significantly opposed its plans, they can expect life to become very interesting — in a complex, potentially lethal way — in the near future.



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We were — or rather the probe was — in some kind of forest. Weird plants everywhere, no wildlife. The probe wove through lianas, tangled undergrowth, ferns bigger than a flyer. The place stank, but it was also deadly quiet. Biodata scrolled down my peripheral vision, then suddenly flashed up an anomaly.

"Okay," the ship interrupted. "This is where things get weird. Weirder. Whatever. There's a life form over there — through that dense patch of foliage. Keep watching. It's only a flash."



It was. The probe broke cover, and suddenly amidst all the green there was this flash of pink, and a stink like the rankest body odour ever. An impression of something huge — monstrous, monolithic, big as a house, just sitting there. Then — and my flesh still crawls — there was a groan. A really human groan. Then the probe went down.

There was silence as the recording ended, and Dr Clay looked up. "We're gonna have to go down there. Suit up!"

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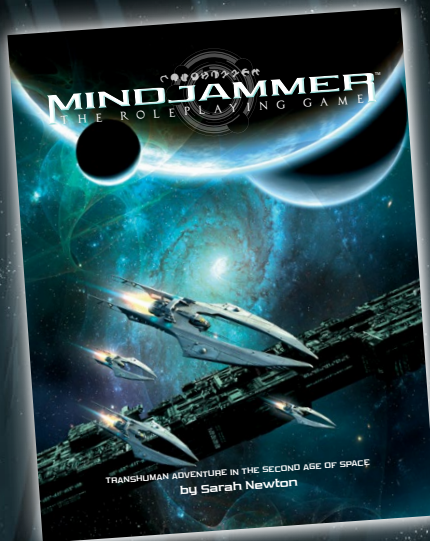
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