CORVUS BELLI
iNFiNiTY
THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

QUICKSTART

POWERED BY 2d20

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in your world and Ivan for translating the endless secret knowledge!

MŌDIPHIÜS
ENTERTAINMENT

WELCOME TO INFINITY

Infinity is a space opera. The Diaspora has swept humanity out amongst the stars. We have emerged from the womb of our homeworld and scattered ourselves across the galaxy. Space pirates cruise through the shattered planetoids of Human Edge. Scientist adventurers delve the oceans of Varuna. Alien warriors seek victory on the battlefields of broken worlds.

Infinity is a universe balanced on the brink. Humanity has fractured its society into powerful factions and fallen upon itself. The first space race was born of war, and the second gave birth to it. Beneath the delicate peace wrought in the aftermath of those wars, covert confrontations and direct action military operations are common. Titanic TAGs — Tactical Armored Gear — tower above infantry wearing military-grade exoskeletons. Remote dronbots dart between bioengineered super-soldiers. Hackers dance through the invisible tactical maelstrom of hellfire military cybersystems.

Infinity is a wonderland of technological marvels. The quantronics revolution remodeled a society which was already heavily dependent on its electronics. Humanity now lives in a true symbiosis between tool and toolmaker. Pervasive domotics have automated virtually every aspect of modern life. Comlogs implanted into the forearm provide a link to local holoprojectors, mesh nets, and the interstellar Maya network. Augmented reality technologies mean that the physical world is no longer the limit of the human experience. Social clouds broadcast by every individual — made up of meme-tags and patina cues — allow simultaneous physical and digital interactions between people, rooms, buildings, streets, and even entire communities.

Infinity is the destiny of mankind. Our bodies are pushed to the transhuman cusp through bioengineering and cybertechnology. Our memories are recorded in quantronic Cubes and hosted in artificial Lhost bodies. The creation of ALEPH, humanity's first true Artificial Intelligence, is an enigma which promises either the great hope of human civilization, its greatest existential crisis, or both. And from beyond the borders of our space, the alien Combined Army has invaded, threatening to destroy everything which we have built.

SURVEY OF THE HUMAN SPHERE

Scientists discovered the first viable wormhole in orbit around Saturn in the early 21st century. Ten years later, the Sorel sisters unlocked its secrets and opened the Gateway to the Stars.

Unfortunately, Project DAWN — the first attempt to colonize an alien world — ended in catastrophic failure when the wormhole leading to the neophyte colony permanently collapsed.

Humanity rallied in the wake of failure, though. PanOceanian vessels using powerful Minotaur motors punched through trans-Plutonian 'holes and took us to the stars. A race once confined to a single planet can now call eleven star systems home.

EARTH

The cradle of Humanity. A place of natural and cultural treasures. The cities here are full of history, but nearly uninhabited as a result of the star tide. The Sol System in general, however, remains more highly developed than any other system of the Human Sphere.

NEOTERRA

The first system to be discovered and colonized by PanOceanian explorers, Neoterra is now the capital of PanOceania and the seat of the Christian Church. It is home to the most important technology companies of the Sphere and is a daily destination for business travelers and tourists alike.

ACONTECIMENTO

PanOceania's breadbasket and the third planet to be added to the Sphere, Acontecimento saw massive colonization by Latinos. Famous for its garotas, particularly the spectacular women from the city of Portobelo, Acontecimento is a planet of contrasts. Endless crop fields and pastures alternate with vast, sprawling factory compounds that meet most of the agricultural and industrial needs of PanOceania. Acontecimento also has one of the largest Natural Parks in the Sphere, the Great Arboreal Reserve, last remnant of the planet's original biome.

VARUNA

The ocean planet. The third extraterrestrial planet found and the first populated with a semi-intelligent native species, the amphibian Helots. Home to the water gods, Varuna is a planet of small islands and soil is scarce. Visitors will be amazed by the sea platforms, subaquatic buildings, and artificial islands. Varuna harnesses the full potential of its oceans in the form of biotechnological research and sea factories and farms that employ numerous Helots. The quiet charm of the planet is disrupted, however, by the violent acts of Libertos, a group of Helot insurgents.

SHENTANG AND YUTANG

Two tidally-locked planets within the habitable zone of their star, the first discovered and claimed by Yu Jing as they struggled to catch up with PanOceania's deep space capabilities. The two planets were colonized at a rapid pace and Yutang now serves as the capital of Yu Jing.

BOURAK

A harsh desert world, discovered by the prophets of Haqqislam and named after the Prophet's Horse. In struggling to master its harsh realities, the Bourak Academy of Planetology has become the leading authority on terraforming technologies. Their goal is to transform their sun-blasted world into the gardens of Al-Andalus, or of lost Ninevah and Babylon. But that reality lies far in the future.

CONCILIUM

Claimed by O-12, the international and pan-planetary organization which theoretically has ultimate jurisdiction over the totality of the Human Sphere, Concilium is lightly populated. However, it is also home to the O-12 Senate and the various O-12 bureau headquarters.
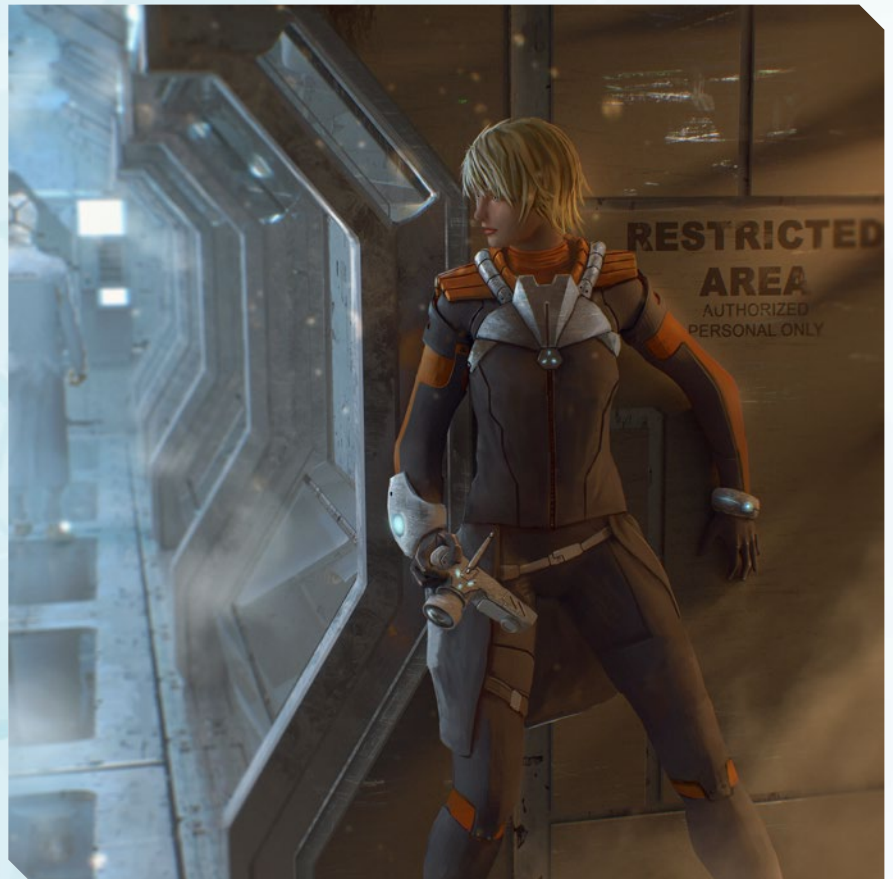
SVALARHEIMA

Discovered by PanOceania, Svalarheima has become a snowball of discord. It is so distant from its star that freezing temperatures make life nigh impossible save between its tropics. Despite its extreme climate, Svalarheima is coveted due to its abundance of resources, particularly Teseum. During its early settlement, despite PanOceania's initial claim, Yu Jing established a competing colony here. PanOceania now controls roughly two-thirds of the planet and Yu Jing one-third. Svalarheima is not a popular tourist destination due to its drab, snow-covered landscapes, its functional, industrial-looking towns, and its status as a contested land always on the brink of an open confrontation between superpowers.

HUMAN EDGE

Also referred to as the Edge of Humanity, this shattered system of asteroids and gas giants orbits at the furthest reaches of human exploration. Human Edge is studded with small orbital fortresses, laying claim to the rich resources which have whetted the mining appetite of every power and corporation in the Sphere.

PARADISO

The emerald jungle. When it was discovered, Paradiso was almost immediately fiercely contested between the Great Powers, becoming a triggering point for the NeoColonial Wars. Its wounds had scarcely had time to heal when the Combined Army invaded, turning its jungles into an endless battlefield and the testing ground of humanity.

ARIADNA

Nearly two centuries after the Project DAWN colony had been lost, it was rediscovered by the PanOceanian scout ship POS Nirriti and, much to the surprise of the rest of the Human Sphere, the colonists had survived and even thrived. A conservative people, driven behind defensive walls by the assaults of the native Antipodes, the Ariadnans now strive to stave off the iconoclastic assaults of the advanced societies they have fallen out of step with.

FACTIONS OF THE FUTURE

ARIADNA

Project DAWN was an international effort, meant to bring humanity together in a grand endeavor. Unfortunately, when the planet was cut off from Earth the colonists broke apart along cultural lines and fell into feuding tribes: The Americans of USAriadna, the French traders of Merovingia,

the English-Scottish Caledonia, and the Russian Cossacks of Rodina.

Long years of bloody war — against both each other and the native Antipodes — forced these disparate nations together again through the imperfect weld of violence. The strength of their union was tested when the Ariadna system was rediscovered by the Human Sphere and the Great Powers turned their greedy eyes upon the resources of the planet Dawn (including rich deposits of the neomaterial Teseum). The world still bears the scars of the Commercial Conflicts, and the Ariadnans still feel locked in a struggle to persevere in their independence.

HAQQISLAM

During the Great Energy Depression, the Muslim world suffered a crisis of faith. Out of those turbulent times, Haqqislam (meaning the New or True Islam) emerged as the dominant neo-Muslim culture. It followed the teachings of Farhad Khadivar, who saw in the Qur'an a clarion call summoning the faithful to the Search for Knowledge. Haqqislamites have built their society around the balance between the rational pursuit of knowledge through the comprehension of the outside world and the instinctive pursuit of knowledge through the apprehension of inner mysticism.

After following a holy vision to the world of Bourak, Haqqislam built its economy around three pillars: The Merchant Guilds which dominate interstellar trade. Advanced biomedical research (including a monopoly on Silk, the nanonic technology which makes advanced bioengineering and personality Cube-recordings possible). And terraforming, the vast industry which would remake their hostile home into a glorious paradise.

NOMADS

The Nomads have no planet to call their own, instead being primarily a coalition of three colossal Motherships: The Bakunin, Corregidor, and Tunguska.

They seek independence from the insidious, tyrannical control of ALEPH and the existential threat it poses to humanity. Or their illegal gene-experimentation and radical body modifications are a relentless drive towards an incomprehensible posthumanity.

They are fierce advocates for personal liberty and willing to die for their freedom. Or they are dangerous anarchists who seek to weaken the

Human Sphere when its strength is most needed.

Their small, libertarian commercial interests are a much-needed alternative to the faceless macroeconomic powerhouses which control society. Or they are ruthless, unprincipled profit-mongers willing to sell themselves to the highest bidder while using their "government" to leverage unfair economic advantages.

Regardless of your point of view, the Nomads stand apart from the rest of human society, even while their far-flung Commercial Missions — which serve as embassies and trade delegations — insinuate their presence throughout the Sphere.

PANOCEANIA

The Hyperpower. Larger, richer, and stronger than any of the other Great Powers. As Rome stood atop the world; as London was the ideal of Victorian society; as America and the West were the de facto culture of the 20th century; so history will write of PanOceania as the definitive experience of the Diaspora.

The people of PanOceania put more trust in ALEPH than anyone else in the Human Sphere. As a result their lives are automated, comfortable, and luxurious. In their lush, garden-like Living Cities they have the best technology, the highest living standards, and the most disposable income per capita.

YU JING

PanOceania's greatest rival is Yu Jing, the pan-Asian alliance forged in the economic gravity-well of post-Communist China during the Domino Effect that followed the collapse of the United States.

In order to fuse the disparate cultural groups thrust under their protection, China was forced to reinvent itself as something new. Yu Jing (the Jade Capital) was the result. Seeking a symbol around which the new Yu Jing could unite, the Party reinvented the old Imperial system. The authority of the new Emperor is balanced against the democratic processes of the Party, but the Jade Throne is an important reality within the vast propaganda sphere projected by the Ministry of Information.

Held back by the Old Guard, Yu Jing did not join PanOceania in the gamble to develop the technologies and infrastructure of extra-solar exploration. PanOceania reaped the benefits of Yu Jing's conservatism, but the StateEmpire learned its lesson. Fueled by the concerted action of its immense population and its indomitable army, it races forward with the unwavering goal to become the greatest power of the Human Sphere.

CORPORATIONS

The chartered companies used by PanOceania to rapidly develop its colonial prospects, the Merchant Guilds of Haqqislam which blazed the trade routes of the starways, and the keiretsu spun-off from the centrally-controlled economy of Yu Jing's StateEmpire became the seeds of the new hyper-corporations.

Corporations exist to limit liability and provide a structure for collective commercial action.

Megacorps become self-contained social structures for their employees and (in some cases) their customers, replacing the services and infrastructure traditionally provided by nation states (just as those nation states replaced feudal lords).

Hypercorps are the natural extension of the megacorp. Through complex systems of interlocking directorships, holding companies, and the broken loopholes of the M-CORP law, they have achieved a true transnational status. They exist in an interstice between national realities, which both coexists with and is held separate from the national territories they share.

CRIMINALS

Petty and violent crimes obviously have not gone away in the wake of interstellar flight, but if you are talking about criminals as a faction, then you are talking about organized crime. Some of those organizations have become incredibly large, spanning not only planets but the entire breadth of the Human Sphere.

These criminal syndicates include mob families (like the Acontecimento Mafia), criminal brotherhoods (like the Triads), pirate consortiums (like the Grey Band of Human Edge), terrorist groups (like Eco-Aktion), and Maya clusters (like Aug-Neon).

MERCENARIES

In an era of interstellar war, the Free Mercenary Companies and Private Military Corporations flourish. In the employ of state armies, O-12, and private corporations alike they can be found almost anywhere: Capitals and colonies, orbital stations and deep space patrols, the battlefields of Paradiso and the security of corporate compounds.

Their services are traded on the well-regulated War Market, a mercenary stock exchange in which employers can find companies available for hire and the mercenary companies can find individual soldiers or squadrons ready for recruitment.

Although exact titles and ranks can vary from one company to the next, the existence of the War Market has standardized things to a certain extent. Mercenary units are commanded by a Captain. These captains will sell or lease their units to a Colonel in charge of a PMC or FMC, which is usually made up of multiple units. The colonels are, in turn, linked to Warmongers, who act as the company's CEO, financial workhorse, and professional agent.

ADVENTURES IN A WILDERNESS OF MIRRORS

The *Infinity* roleplaying game will give you all the tools you need to create an exciting campaign set anywhere within the Human Sphere: Play as Hassassin Govads seeking to recover the lost Cubes of their former brothers from the Equinox terrorists who stole them. Join the crew of the Go-Go Marlene! Show as location scouts. Journey into the depths of Acontecimento's oceans in aquatic Apsara Lhosts. Hunt Shasvastii Speculo Killers through the shattered planetoids of Human Edge. Sign up for a PanOceanian mercenary company fighting Libertos rebels on Varuna, then steal a spaceship and become Haqqislamite privateers!

The default mode of play for the game, however, assumes that you are agents working for Bureau Noir, O-12's Secret Service. Bureau Noir's operative teams are flexibly liaised through the other O-12 Bureaus, which means that their duties can effectively take them anywhere in the Human Sphere.

Theoretically, Bureau Noir — like O-12 itself — is a neutral agency and its agents are impartial and unaligned. In reality, the Human Sphere is wracked with factions and every PC will belong to one of them. Their loyalties will be divided and their true agendas will be hidden.

We call this the Wilderness of Mirrors.

Subterfuge Intensity: In addition to their primary mission objective, scenarios for the *Infinity* roleplaying game are designed with multiple faction goals. (For example, the primary mission objective might be to protect media tycoon Charles Angleton from threats made by the criminal AI Svengali. Yu Jing agents, however, have a faction goal to insert an eavesdropping virus onto Angleton's comlog, and Nomad agents have a faction goal to retrieve intel on Angleton's suspected collaboration with Svengali.)

When running an *Infinity* scenario, the GM needs to decide how many of these faction goals they're going to use. Using a single faction goal for each mission (while perhaps rotating which team member has a faction goal for each mission), for example, will lightly spice the campaign with complications. On the other hand, if every PC receives a faction goal then the mission becomes laced with paranoia in a complicated loop of espionage and counter-intelligence.

Paranoia Level: The GM will also want to decide on the paranoia level for their campaign.

In Deep Cover campaigns, the faction loyalties of the PCs are concealed and their secret agendas for each mission are kept hidden.

In Diplomatic Immunity campaigns, the PCs know the faction loyalties of their compatriots, but everybody smiles at the polite fiction that they are all loyal, unbiased O-12 agents. (In a campaign like this, it is even possible that the faction agendas are openly known at the gaming table, even if the characters are not aware of them.)

In a Faction United campaign, all of the PCs belong to a single faction and they're all working together to pursue both their primary mission objective and their faction goal. (This method also allows the GM to easily repurpose published scenarios for *Infinity* for campaigns that aren't using the O-12 framing device. For example, if the PCs are working for Yǎnjīng, the Yu Jing Military Intelligence Service, the GM can simply use the Yu Jing faction goal as the scenario hook.)

Finally, in a Loyal Agents campaign the PCs have no faction goals and their only objective is the primary mission.

Using the Wilderness of Mirrors: Setting the right subterfuge intensity and paranoia level for your group and your campaign may require a little bit of fine-tuning, but once you dial in the right values your players will feel the weight of the increased stakes in every action that they take, and the conflicting agendas will heighten the dramatic tension of every decision. The Wilderness of Mirrors will bring the broken alliances and fraught tensions of the *Infinity* universe to burning life at your gaming table!
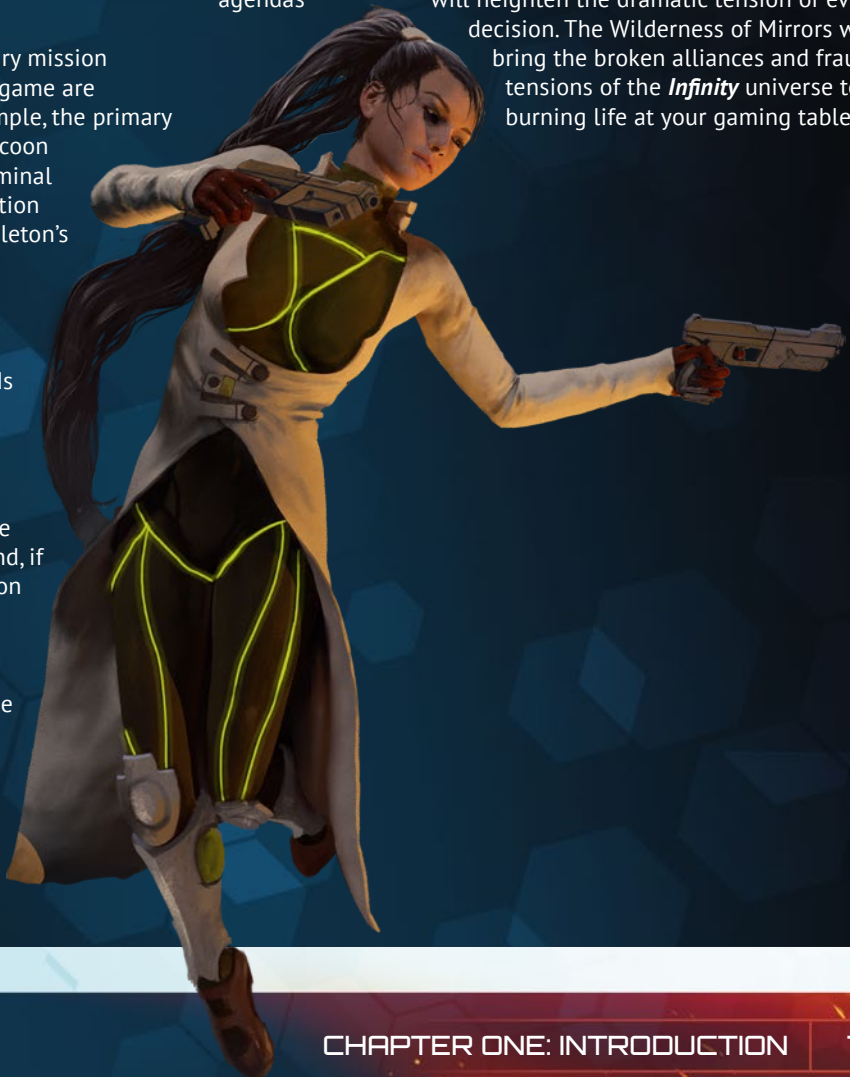
THE COMBINED ARMY

Led by the enigmatic Evolved Intelligence – a powerful alien AI with designs upon the destiny of humanity which it has not deigned to share – the Combined Army came screaming through the Daedalus wormhole and fell upon the colonies of Paradiso without warning or mercy.

As its name suggests, the Combined Army is a military force formed from the dozens of alien races conquered and subjugated by the EI. The two most prominent species of the Combined Army during the Paradiso Offensives are the Morat and the Shasvastii.

MORAT

Evolved upon a hostile world of super-predators and born from countless generations of endless warfare, the Morat are hirsute, red-skinned giants with vestigial horns. Morat males stand, on average, seven feet tall, and some are as large as the smaller TAGs. Their women are lither, but no less deadly.

The hunter-warrior culture of the Morat has molded itself to the EI's insatiable drive for conquest. They serve as eager foot-soldiers in its military campaigns. As merciless engines of destruction they have crushed countless civilizations in EI's name.

SHASVASTII

The Shasvastii are a lost race. They once flourished as a galactic civilization spread across the entirety of the island universe known to humanity as Messier 82, a starburst galaxy. One hundred million years ago, however, their galaxy collided with Messier 81 and their civilization was ripped apart.

In an effort to save their race, the Shasvastii spewed Embryo Arks out into the dark vastness of space, targeting thousands of galaxies across the Virgo Supercluster in order to maximize their odds of success. One of these Arks crossed a void of twelve million light years before finally alighting in the Milky Way. The local Shasvastii hope that other Arks were also successful in their journeys, but they have no way of knowing for certain.

In their quest for survival, the Shasvastii have become masters of genetic manipulation, subtly altering their genome to thrive in disparate environments. This mastery reaches its pinnacle in the fearsome Speculo Killers: Specialized in exploration, forward observation, espionage, incursion, and assassination, a Speculo Killer is capable of modifying its biosynthetic body into a near-perfect replica of its impersonation target. They can even download a victim's Cube into their own, allowing them to master their memories and intimately mimic their behavior.

BASIC RULES

Grab your CombiRifle, hop on your mag-bike, check your MediKit, and tell your comlog to load the soundtrack of your life.

The universe of *Infinity* awaits. You just need to open the door.

WHAT YOU NEED

In addition to a Game Master and one to six players, to use this Beta Book you will also want:

- **PREGENS:**
  One pre-generated character sheet for each player.

- **DICE:**
  Two d20s per player and a dozen or more d6s for the group.

- **PAPER & PENCIL:**
  To draw maps, keep notes, and track conditions.

- **TOKENS OR BEADS:**
  Five per player to track Infinity points, a dozen or more for the Game Master's Heat pool, and an optional third set to track Momentum.

COMBAT DICE

Combat Dice, or 🅝, are a particular way of rolling a d6. They are used for determining damage and governing special effects. When rolling a 🅝, ignore any results of three, four, or five. Results of one and two are counted normally, while sixes are referred to as Effects, which trigger certain special abilities.

Example—Rolling Combat Dice: Cassandra shoots a Morat trooper with her Heavy Pistol. The Heavy Pistol deals 1+4🅝 damage, so Cassandra's player takes 4d6 and rolls 4, 1, 6, and 2. The result of 4 is ignored. The results of 1 and 2 are added together with the base damage of 1 for a total of 4 damage. The result of 6 generates an Effect, so she checks the pistol's weapon qualities. One of the qualities is Knockdown (see p. 20), so the Effect means that the Morat trooper will need to pass an Athletics test (D1) or fall prone.

CHARACTERS

The *Infinity* roleplaying game will feature a Lifepath system, allowing you to create your character by simulating the story of their life. By the time you start play, you will have already walked a few miles in their shoes. (Or their Teseum-laced combat boots, whatever the case may be.)

For this Quickstart Rules Book, we have included six pre-generated characters, starting on p. 34.

ATTRIBUTES

Each character is defined by a collection of seven attributes. These attributes indicate a character's inherent abilities, and their physical and mental limitations. Most attributes for player characters have values from six to twelve, with eight representing the human average. Higher attribute ratings represent greater ability.

- **Agility:** Physical and manual dexterity, sense of balance, body control, and reflexes.

- **Awareness:** Perceptions, sensory acuity, gut feelings, and instincts.

- **Brawn:** Strength, toughness, endurance, and the ability to apply physical force.

- **Coordination:** Hand-eye coordination and spatial awareness.

- **Intelligence:** Wit, intellect, logic, reason, and the ability to apply knowledge or interact with technology.

- **Personality:** Charisma, comfort in social situations, and the ability to be threatening or charming as required.

- **Willpower:** Grit, determination, and psychological resilience.

SKILLS

Skills represent a character's specialised training within a particular field — knowledge, proficiency in tools or devices, conditioning, special techniques, and so forth. Each skill is tied to a particular

attribute, representing the most common association between that skill and the character's basic capabilities. (For example, Education and Tech are skills based on Intelligence.)

Skill Expertise: A character's Expertise in a skill is their mastery of the subject. Expertise with a skill increases the likelihood of success.

Skill Focus: A character's Focus in a skill is achieved through constant practice, superior discipline, and deeper insight. Focus with a skill improves the quality of success.

SKILL LIST

AGILITY
Acrobatics, Close Combat, Stealth

BRAWN
Athletics, Resistance

COORDINATION
Ballistics, Pilot, Spacecraft

AWARENESS
Analysis, Observation, Survival, Thievery, Vacuum

INTELLIGENCE
Education, Hacking, Medicine, Psychology, Science, Tech

PERSONALITY
Animal Handling, Command, Lifestyle, Persuade

WILLPOWER
Discipline

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

To simplify Skills for NPCs, *Infinity* uses six Fields of Expertise. Each Field has both an Expertise rank and, where relevant, a Focus rank. Whenever an NPC would be required to take a skill test, it uses the appropriate attribute for the test along with the Expertise and Focus of the appropriate Field of Expertise:

- Combat
- Fortitude
- Movement
- Senses
- Social
- Technical

SKILL TESTS

Whenever a character attempts a task where the outcome is in doubt, you will make a skill test to determine whether the task succeeds or fails.

TARGET NUMBER
Determine the target number of the skill test by adding the character's relevant Attribute to their Skill Expertise.

DIFFICULTY
A task's difficulty (a value from one to five) is determined by the Game Master. The levels of difficulty, and some examples of what tasks might fall into each level, are described on the *Difficulty Table* (see next page).

BASIC SKILL TEST
The player rolls 2d20. For each die that rolls equal to or less than the test's Target Number, the character scores a success. If the character scores a number of successes equal to or higher than the difficulty of the test, then they succeed at their task.

COMPLICATIONS
When making a skill test, a complication occurs for every natural 20 rolled on a d20. (This means that multiple complications can be triggered by a single skill test.)

A complication is an inconvenient change of circumstances. It is a new obstacle to overcome (like an explosion that cuts off a route of escape), a loss of resources (like a Reload), something that impairs the character (like spraining their ankle), or an embarrassing situation (like a social faux pas or accidentally downloading malware).

The inconvenience of the complication is independent of success or failure. It is entirely possible to succeed at a skill test while simultaneously generating a complication that will make things a little more interesting for them. (The complication should never turn a success into a failure, however. If their gun runs out of ammunition on a successful attack test, for example, it only happens after their last shot strikes the target.)

HEAT AS COMPLICATION
If the GM has trouble thinking of a good complication in the moment, they can choose to add 2 Heat to their pool instead. If an NPC suffers a complication, the players can similarly choose to have the GM remove 2 Heat from their pool. Heat is described later in this booklet.

DIFFICULTY TABLE

NAME	SUCCESSES	EXAMPLES
Simple (D0)	0	Opening a slightly stuck door. Researching a widely known subject. Hitting a target at a shooting range with a bullet.
Average (D1)	1	Overcoming a simple lock. Researching a specialized subject. Shooting an enemy at optimal range.
Challenging (D2)	2	Overcoming a complex lock. Researching obscure information. Shooting an enemy at optimal range in poor light.
Daunting (D3)	3	Overcoming a complex lock in a hurry. Researching restricted information. Shooting an enemy at long range in poor light.
Dire (D4)	4	Overcoming a complex lock in a hurry, without the proper tools. Researching classified information. Shooting an enemy at long range, in poor light and heavy rain.
Epic (D5)	5	Overcoming a complex lock in a hurry, without the proper tools, and in the middle of a firefight. Researching a subject where the facts have been thoroughly redacted from official records. Shooting an enemy at extreme range in poor light and heavy rain.

MOMENTUM

When the number of successes scored on a skill test is greater than the difficulty rating, then each excess success becomes a single point of Momentum. Momentum can be spent immediately to perform the task faster or more effectively, or it can be saved for the group and applied to subsequent actions.

Momentum can also represent cooperation, group dynamics, leadership, action coordination, assistance, and other forms of teamwork. Momentum is a powerful resource not only for individuals but for groups working in concert.

Players are encouraged to be creative in their use of Momentum as they build success on top of success.

SPENDING MOMENTUM

A player may spend Momentum they have generated freely on whatever benefits they wish. Each Momentum Spend may only be used once on any given task, unless that spend is noted as Repeatable. Repeatable Momentum spends can be used as often as the character wishes and has sufficient Momentum to spend on them.

Examples of Momentum
- Spend one Momentum to add a bonus d20 on a skill test before rolling (repeatable).
- Spend one Momentum to add +1 to the difficulty of an enemy's skill test (repeatable).
- Spend one Momentum to add +1 damage to an attack (repeatable).
- Spend two Momentum to disarm an opponent.

SAVING MOMENTUM

Players may save unspent Momentum for the group. Up to six points of Momentum may be saved in this way at any one time, and any player in the group can draw from this pool of saved Momentum, spending it in addition to any Momentum generated on a skill test.

MOMENTUM DEPLETION

At the end of each scene and at the end of each round during an action scene, the group pool loses one point of Momentum (if any).

MOMENTUM AS HEAT

The GM does not need to track saved Momentum for each individual NPC. Instead, NPCs with unspent momentum convert their remaining Momentum into Heat.

FACE-TO-FACE TESTS

When two characters are in direct opposition to each other, each character involved in the task performs a skill test. The character who achieves the greatest quantity of Momentum succeeds, achieving their goal. In the case of a tie, the character with the highest Expertise in their skill wins.

If there are no other factors involved, the difficulty of a face-to-face test is usually Simple (D0). For example, if two characters are running a race the winner will simply be whichever character has the better skill test.

PLAYTEST TIP:
TRACKING MOMENTUM
We recommend setting aside a d6 or using a pool of tokens to track the group's saved Momentum.

Face-to-Face tests with higher difficulties represent situations in which it is possible for everyone participating in the task to fail. For example, if two characters are both trying to be the first person to solve a Challenging (D2) puzzle, it is possible that neither of them will be able to solve the puzzle.

If either side has some circumstance which would make the test more challenging for them than for their opponent, simply adjust the difficulty of their check.

UNSKILLED TESTS

A character can make a skill test using a skill in which they possess no Expertise. The target number for the test is simply equal to the relevant Attribute (since they have no Expertise to add to it.)

Unskilled tests are less reliable, however: Complications occur on rolls of 19 or 20 (instead of just 20).

IMPROVING YOUR ODDS

Astute players may notice that achieving more than two successes is actually quite difficult for a character rolling only two dice. This is intentional — the more difficult tasks require some degree of effort above and beyond simply attempting the test, and there are several ways to add d20s to a character's skill test. Regardless of the method used, however, a character cannot add more than three bonus d20s to a single test.

MOMENTUM
A character can use the Create Opportunity Momentum Spend to buy additional d20s before a skill test.

INFINITY POINTS
A character can spend an Infinity Point before attempting a skill test in order to add a bonus d20 to the test. However, this die is not rolled. Instead, it is simply set on the table with the '1' facing up. It is otherwise counted normally, which means it will automatically count as a success (and characters with a Skill Focus will automatically score a second success).

THE POWER OF INFINITY POINTS
Infinity Points can be used for more than just buying successes. See p. 21 for a full description of how these powerful resources can be used.

TEAMWORK
If the situation, time, and GM allow, several characters can work together as a team while attempting to perform a task.

One character is designated as the leader, and the other characters are designated as assistants. In order to assist with a skill test, each player must describe how their character is assisting the test's leader. If the GM approves, each assistant rolls 1d20, using their own attributes and skills to determine if any successes are scored.

If the leader scores at least one success, then any successes generated by the assistants are added to the leader's total. If the leader fails, then any successes scored by the assistants are lost.

Complications rolled by the leader and their assistants are all totalled and take effect regardless of the leader's outcome.

Assistants may not buy additional dice themselves, although the leader can do so normally.

ACTION SCENES

Across the worlds of the Human Sphere, characters will find themselves opposed by rivals and adversaries of all shapes and sizes. In *Infinity*, these conflicts are resolved through the heightened stakes of action scenes.

Sometimes, direct action is the only solution.

CINEMATIC ACTION
Action scenes in *Infinity* are pulse-pounding, action-packed encounters. Characters have the abilities and the resources to accomplish daring and heroic feats that seem ripped out of the latest action movie.

ROUNDS

Action scenes are divided into rounds. Each round represents a distinct slice of time, during which characters can attempt actions and respond to the actions of their enemies. These rounds are of no fixed duration. Instead, their length will vary based on the encounter in question — an intense firefight in the cramped corridors of a spaceship may have rounds that last only ten seconds, while an aerial TAG dogfight through tight canyons could have rounds lasting for minutes. A complicated digital heist on *Tunguska* or a massive battle between spaceships silently manoeuvring through the darkness of space could even have rounds lasting a quarter hour or more.

ACTIONS

Regardless of how much time a round may represent, during the round each character will have a single turn. On their turn, a character can take a single Standard Action, a single Minor Action, and any number of Free Actions.

FREE ACTIONS

Free Actions require very little time or effort. A character can perform any number of Free Actions on their turn (at the GM's discretion), but cannot perform the same Free Action more than once during any given turn.

MINOR ACTIONS

Minor Actions do not require much energy or effort, but they do require a certain level of focus. A character can also use a Minor Action to perform any number of Free Actions.

STANDARD ACTIONS

Standard Actions are the focus of action scenes and take up most of a character's attention and effort. A character can also use a Standard Action to perform any minor action.

REACTIONS

Reactions do not occur during a character's turn, but are special actions triggered by some other event (like an enemy attacking). A character may perform several reactions during a round, but they come at an increasing cost: The first reaction a character attempts during a round requires that they pay a single point of Heat (into or out of the pool, depending on whether the character is a player character or non-player character). The second reaction costs two Heat, the third reaction costs three, and so forth, with each successive reaction costing one more Heat than the previous one.

WHAT TYPE OF ACTION IS IT?

For some actions, the type of action is defined. (For example, it requires a Standard Action to Withdraw from an enemy's reach.) At other times, the GM will need to make a judgment call about what type of action is required. Here are some rules of thumb that you can use:

- Actions that could be resolved in the blink of an eye (like dropping an item held in your hand) or which can be done while simultaneously focusing on other tasks (like talking) are probably a Free Action.

- Most tasks that require a Simple (D0) skill test or no skill test at all are Free Actions. (If a character wishes to roll the dice on the skill test in order to generate Momentum, however, that bumps it up to a Standard Action.)

- Any action that requires significant focus but does not require a skill test is probably a Minor Action.

- Any action that requires a skill test is usually a Standard Action, unless specified otherwise.

TURN ORDER

During each round, the player characters act first. The players can simply agree among themselves which player character will act next, but once a character begins their turn they must resolve all of the actions they wish to take before another character can take their turn.

Once all the player characters have taken their turns, all of the non-player characters take their turns (in whatever order the GM wishes).

After all player characters and non-player characters have taken their actions in a round, that round is over. Each player character loses one saved Momentum (if any) and a new round begins.

SEIZING INITIATIVE

At the start of the round before anyone has acted or at any time immediately after a player character has finished their turn (and before another player character has begun their turn), the GM can spend one Heat to interrupt the player characters and allow an NPC to immediately takes it turn.

The NPC resolves its actions normally and, once its turn is done, the turn order passes back to the player characters. (Unless, of course, the GM spends additional Heat to allow other NPCs to take their actions.) That NPC does not get to act again that round.

DITHERING

If the players spend too much time deliberating and discussing their choices during an action scene rather than actually acting, the GM can take one Heat as a warning that they are ceding the initiative to their opponents. At his discretion, the GM can take additional Heat points if the dithering continues.

SURPRISE

When one group of characters attempts to gain an advantage over another group of characters by taking them by surprise, the attempt is resolved as a face-to-face test. Each side nominates a leader who will attempt the skill test, while the other members of the group assist the test as normal.

If the group attempting surprise succeeds at the face-to-face test, each character on their side gains the benefits of an Exploit action for free and acts immediately at the start of combat (even if they are an NPC).

If the group attempting surprise fails at the face-to-face test, the losing side may choose to pay

two Heat, an Infinity Point, or four Momentum to gain the benefits of surprise themselves.

Typical surprise scenarios include an ambush (Stealth vs. Observation), breaking a Mexican stand-off (Ballistics vs. Ballistics), or betraying your supposed allies at a wedding (Persuade vs. Analysis).

ZONES

During an action scene, knowing where everyone is can be of vital import, and determining both absolute position (where you are in the scene) and relative position (how far you are from a given friend or foe) is important. Rather than tracking everything using precise distances, however, *Infinity* divides the setting of the scene into abstract zones.

At the start of an action scene, the GM will define the zones which make up the setting. (Generally three to five distinct zones are a good place to start, although this number will vary depending on the exact nature of the scene.) Each zone is a small, contiguous area. A zone will be adjacent with one or more other zones, but will likely be separated from others by intervening zones.

There are no hard and fast rules when it comes to defining the size or boundaries of a zone, but the identity of a zone will generally flow naturally from the divisions and logic of the setting.

For example, a Varunan cop exchanging gunfire with Libertos terrorists in the hallway of a building might dive out of the line of fire into one of the apartments lining the hall. The hallway is one zone; the apartment is another.

Similarly, think about the landmarks by which people will define their position. On a Qingdao street, for example, Imperial Agents approach a building where they suspect PanOceanian agent provocateurs are laying low. When shots ring out, they look around for cover and see a parked car, a streetlight, and an AR art display. You can easily imagine them running from their car (one zone), across the street (another zone), to the streetlight (a third zone).

Because zones are of no fixed size, they can also be varied to accommodate other factors in the scene. For example, a battle amidst the towering trees of the Great Arboreal Reserve on Acontecimento might be divided into many small zones amongst the trees (difficult to navigate and offering lots of cover) and a couple of larger zones representing clearings (easy to see or run across).

CREATING DISTANCE WITH ZONES

If you want to create a scene in which there are only two zones of interest which should nonetheless feel distant from each other, you can fill the space between them with any number of "empty" zones in order to create the right feel.

RANGE AND MOVEMENT

To keep things simple and fluid, the distance between zones is handled in an approximate manner, using five broad range categories:

Reach is when an object or character is within arm's length. Characters enter Reach to interact with objects manually, to attack in close combat, and to perform any other actions where they may need to touch the subject of their action. A character can move within the reach of a target as part of any movement action that ends in the same zone as the target. Moving out of an enemy's reach may be risky, as it leaves the character open to the Retaliate reaction unless they take a Withdraw action.

Close range is defined as the character's current zone. Moving within Close range is a Free Action.

Medium range is defined as any zone adjacent to the character's current zone. Moving to a point within Medium range is a Minor Action.

Long range is defined as any point two zones away from the character's current zone. Moving to a point within Long range is a Standard Action.

Extreme range is defined as any point three or more zones away from the character's current zone. A character cannot move to Extreme range in a single action.

A character cannot perform more than one movement action per turn. (For example, they cannot use their Minor Action to move to an adjacent zone and then use their Standard Action to move an additional two zones.)

RANGE AND PERCEPTION

The further away something is, the harder it is to notice. Increase the difficulty of Observation tests by one step at Medium range, by two at Long range, and by three at Extreme range.

ZONE EFFECTS

Individual zones can — and often should — have terrain effects defined by the GM. Only a few key options are described here, but a wider variety will be found in the *Infinity* core rulebook (and GMs are encouraged to create their own to fit the scene).

Cover: To gain the benefits of cover in a zone, a character must move within Reach of it. A character in cover gains a bonus to their Soak. Light cover provides +N2 Soak. Heavy cover provides +N4 Soak.

Difficult Terrain: Moving into, out of, or within a zone of difficult terrain requires an Athletics or Acrobatics test. (The difficulty of the test depends on the difficulty of the terrain.) Failure on the test means that the character makes no progress after the point where the test was required — so a character attempting to enter a zone stops before they enter the zone.

Hazardous Terrain: A zone of hazardous terrain works like difficult terrain, but with an additional consequence for failure — damage, a condition, or some other peril, such as becoming trapped or stuck. (The simplest example would be a gap that needs to be jumped across, which would cause damage from falling if the character fails their skill test.)

ATTACKS

There are four different methods of attacking a target: Demoralize, Infowar, Melee, and Ranged. As a Standard Action, an attacker nominates a single target within range and declares the type of attack they are making.

ATTACK TABLE

ATTACK	SKILL	RANGE	DAMAGES	DEFENCE REACTION
Infowar	Hacking	Close range of hacker or hacker's remote.	Quantronic	Hacking
Psywar	Persuade	Close range, +1 difficulty for each additional range category.	Mental	Discipline
Melee	Close Combat	Reach	Physical	Close Combat or Acrobatics
Ranged	Ballistics	Per weapon, +1 difficulty for each additional range category in either direction.	Physical	Acrobatics

The target has the option of performing a Defence reaction, in which case the attack is resolved as a face-to-face test using the skills shown on the *Attack Table* (see previous page). If the target does not perform a Defence reaction, the attacker makes an **Average (D1) test with the skill required** for that type of attack. (The difficulty of the attacker's checks may be modified by their range.)

RELOADS

When making a ranged attack, a character can spend a reload to gain +1d20 on their Ballistics test and +Ⓝ1 to the weapon's damage. The maximum number of reloads which can be spent on a single ranged attack is equal to the weapon's Burst rating.

DAMAGE

If the attack is successful, it inflicts damage. The amount of damage is determined by the damage rating of the weapon, technique, or software used to make the attack. Damage ratings are a combination of two numbers — a fixed value (normally 1 or 2) and a number of Ⓝ. (Some characters may have bonus damage when using a particular attack. This will be noted on the pre-generated character sheets where appropriate.)

DEMORALIZE

A basic demoralization attack deals 1+Ⓝ2 damage. If you threaten the target with a weapon, you can instead deal the weapon's damage as Resolve damage. If one or more effects are rolled, the target suffers the Staggered condition for one round per effect.

UNARMED STRIKE

A melee attack made without a weapon deals 1+Ⓝ2 damage. If one or more effects are rolled, the target suffers the Staggered condition for one round per effect.

OTHER DAMAGE SOURCES

Some environmental effects can also inflict damage, such as falling from a great height, being set on fire, being targeted by a spam cloud, or encountering something terrifying.

HIT LOCATIONS

For physical damage, the amount of Armour Soak will depend on the part of the body hit by the attack. (If you're wearing a flak jacket, you'll have Soak on your chest, but not on your head. This is indicated on the pregenerated character sheets.) For Melee and Ranged attacks, therefore, you should roll on the *Hit Location* table to determine where the attack struck. To speed things up during combat, a player should roll the d20 for hit location along with any damage dice being rolled for the attack.

D20 ROLL	HIT LOCATION
1-2	Head
3-5	Right Arm
6-8	Left Arm
9-14	Torso
15-17	Right Leg
18-20	Left Leg

SOAK

As shown on the *Damage Table,* there are forms of protection which can shield against damage from each type of attack. These protections are referred to as Soak, and it comes as both Persistent (static values) and Conditional (random values). Any

Conditional Soak is generated by rolling Ⓝ is rolled at the same time as damage. All Soak reduces damage on a 1 for 1 basis, to a minimum of 0.

STRESS AND HARM

When a character takes damage from any source, it is marked off from the impact Capability (Vigour, Resolve, or Firewall, as shown on the *Damage Table*).

This damage is considered incidental unless 5 or more points of damage have been inflicted or the Capability has been reduced to 0 or less. If either of these events occur, the character suffers a Harm. (If both events occur, they suffer two Harms.)

Harms have different names and effects depending on what caused the Harm, as shown on the *Damage Table*. (For example, mental damage will inflict Trauma and inflict a penalty on Awareness, Intelligence, Personality, and Willpower tests. A quantronic attack will cause a Breach and cause a +1 difficulty while using any technology connected to the character's personal network.)

The effects of Harms stack.

INCAPACITATION AND DEATH

If a player character suffers four Wounds or four Trauma, they become incapacitated and can only take an action by spending an Infinity Point. If they take a fifth Wound, they die.

If a player character suffers four Breaches, their personal network has become compromised and they cannot take any actions or reactions that rely on their network systems. If they take a fifth Breach, their system has either been burned out (permanently destroying it) or taken over (preventing them from using it in any way and allowing the enemy hacker to take actions using it).

NPCs require fewer Harms before they are incapacitated. The least important NPCs are taken out after the first Harm, the most powerful suffer damage as player characters do, and all others are incapacitated after the second Harm. The GM may declare whether or not any incapacitated NPCs are killed.

RECOVERY

Vigour, Resolve, and Firewall can be recovered quickly and with few issues. A character will fully recover all three Stress tracks at the end of an action scene.

Harm, on the other hand, must be treated using the appropriate skill (as indicated on the *Damage Table*), with a difficulty equal to the number of Harms the

DAMAGE TABLE

ATTACK	PERSISTENT SOAK	CONDITIONAL SOAK	STRESS	HARM	RECOVERY	TREAT SKILL
Mental	Courage	Morale	Resolve (Will + Discipline)	Trauma (Awareness, Intelligence, Personality, Willpower)	Discipline	Psychology
Infowar	Armour	Cover	Vigour (Brawn + Resistance)	Wound (Agility, Brawn, Coordination)	Resistance	Medicine
Melee	Armour	Cover	Structure	Fault (Any Test involving object)	–	Tech
Ranged	Security	Interference	Firewall (Intelligence + Hacking)	Breach (Any test involving network)	Hacking	Tech

patient is suffering from. On a success, one of the patient's Harms are treated, plus one additional Harm for each Momentum spent (Repeatable). A treated Harm no longer imposes any penalties, but they are not completely healed/restored. If a character suffers another Harm of that type, then the penalties from all Treated Harms return in full, as new damage aggravates old.

Completely healing from Harm takes time, proper attention, or a combination of both, which come at the GM's discretion, normally between adventures.

COMBAT ACTIONS

ABSTERGE (STANDARD)
As a Minor Action, a character can attempt a skill test to end a condition they are suffering from (such as Bleeding or Staggered). If the condition has a specific rating (such as Burning 3), the difficulty of the test is equal to the rating. If not, the test is Challenging (D2).

Physical conditions require a Resistance test, technical conditions a Tech test, and mental conditions a Psychotherapy test.

DROP ITEM (FREE)
The character drops a single item held in one or both of their hands. The item falls within reach.

DROP PRONE (FREE)
The character immediately drops to the ground. Ranged attacks targeting a prone character at Medium range or further are made at +1 difficulty and the prone character also gains +2 Soak for each Effect rolled on Cover dice. However, melee attacks and ranged attacks made at Close range gain +1 bonus momentum. When making a movement action, a prone character moves one fewer zone than normal. A character cannot drop prone and stand in the same turn.

EXPLOIT (STANDARD)
The character takes additional time and concentration readying his next attack, to find vulnerabilities in his target's defences. The character nominates a target he is able to perceive, and attempts an Average D1 Observation test (modified by distance, lighting, and so forth as normal for Observation tests). If this succeeds, the character's first attack before the end of his next turn gains the Piercing 2 quality. If the character wishes, he may spend one Momentum on this test to add one bonus +d20 to the attack's skill test, and +1 to the attack's damage; this is Repeatable, but these bonus d20s count towards the normal limit of three bonus

d20s on any skill test. The benefits of this action can only be gained once per round.

"Absterge"—meaning to cleanse or purify—was the code name for a virus purger used during the Neocolonial Wars to reset TAG operating systems that had been compromised by infowarriors. It entered the popular vernacular as the equivalent of "walk it off" or "get over it". It has also become a common way to refer to taking any kind of break, as in, "I just need to absterge for a second."

STAND (MINOR)

A prone character can take a Minor Action to stand up, losing all the benefits and disadvantages of being prone.

WITHDRAW (STANDARD)

As a Standard Action, a character can Withdraw to any point within Close range which is not within reach of an enemy. A character performing a Withdraw cannot be targeted by a Retaliate reaction that turn.

COMBAT REACTIONS

COVERING FIRE

As a Reaction at any time, a character can provide covering fire to an ally by expending a single reload from their ranged weapon. Until the beginning of the character's next turn, any attacks made against the ally being assisted are made at +1 difficulty. If multiple characters provide covering fire to support a single ally the effects stack.

To provide covering fire, a character must be able to see either the character they are supporting or the enemy they are trying to suppress.

DEFENCE

As a Reaction to an attack, a character can attempt to defend themselves against an attack. The attack becomes a face-to-face skill test. The skill used by the defender depends on the type of attack (see *Attack Table*, p. 15).

GUARD

A character within Reach of another character may aid in their defence by standing in harm's way. The guarding character makes a Challenging (D2) face-to-face skill test. If they succeed, they become the target of the attack and can use momentum to defend as per the Defence action. If they fail, the original target remains the target of the attack.

RETALIATE

If an enemy moves out of reach without taking the Withdraw action, a character can Retaliate by making one free melee attack against the retreating combatant. The retreating combatant cannot use the Defence action in response to this attack.

RETURN FIRE

After being declared the target of a ranged attack, a character can perform a Return Fire Reaction, as long as he has a suitable weapon equipped. The character returning fire makes an

READY (STANDARD)

A character may declare that they are waiting for a certain situation or event to occur before performing a Standard Action. In order to ready the action, they must specify both the action and the triggering condition. If the triggering situation occurs, the character with the readied action temporarily interrupts the acting character's turn to resolve the readied action. Once the readied action is resolved, the acting character continues their turn normally. (Note that characters who take a Readied action can still use Minor and Free Actions during their turn. If the triggering situation for a Readied action does not occur before the character's next turn, the Readied action is lost.)

RECOVER (STANDARD)

The character hunkers down, grits their teeth, and fights through the pain. The character pays one Heat as a Standard Action and chooses a single type of damage and attempts an Average (D1) skill test — Resistance for physical, Discipline for mental, Hacking for quantronic. On a successful test, the character regains two Vigour (physical), Resolve (mental), or Firewall (quantronic), plus two more for each Momentum spent (Repeatable).

SPEAK (FREE)

A character may talk to allies, bellow a war cry, shout an order, threaten a rival, or otherwise converse with a few sentences or phrases as a Free Action. (Any verbal action which would require a Command test, Persuade test, or any other skill test requires a Standard Action.)

immediate ranged attack against the triggering enemy, though he cannot spend more than one Reload on this attack. Both attacks are resolved simultaneously — that is, damage (and other effects from either attack) is applied after both attacks have been made, so that neither attacker suffers any penalty from damage sustained on the attacks they're making.

COMBAT MOMENTUM

Momentum is a key tactical resource for *Infinity*. When a character generates Momentum in combat, he has numerous options available to him which can help overcome his enemies, empower his allies, and bolster his own prowess.

The following table provides a number of options available to a character when he generates one or more Momentum in combat, but players should remember that they always have the option of creating new uses for Momentum. (GMs may also establish scene-specific Momentum spends.)

CONDITIONS

There are a number of detrimental conditions that can afflict a character during action scenes. A few common conditions are described below.

Bleeding: The character suffers 3🅝 physical damage, ignoring all Soak, at the beginning of each of their turns.

Blind: The character's vision has been severely damaged. Upon being blinded, a character suffers 3🅝 mental damage, and any skill test reliant on vision increases in difficulty by two steps.

Burning X: The target is set alight. This condition lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of Effects rolled on the attack that inflicted it. If no 🅝 were rolled, the cause of the burning effect will list a duration. At the end of the target's turn, it suffers X🅝 Physical and Mental damage (roll once and apply it to both), ignoring armour Soak. Any Effects rolled increase the number of rounds that the character remains aflame. If the character is hit by another Burning attack or effect while already ablaze, the existing status is extended by a number of rounds equal to the number of Effects rolled.

Dazed: All skill tests performed by a Dazed character increase in difficulty by one step.

Staggered: A Staggered character can only perform a Standard Action on his turn if he is willing to pay one Heat. A Staggered character cannot perform a Reaction unless he spends one Infinity point in addition to its normal Heat cost.

MOMENTUM SPEND	COST	EFFECT
Bonus Damage	1R	A character can increase the physical, mental, or digital damage inflicted by a successful attack. Each Momentum spent adds +1 damage.
Confidence	1R	The character gains 1 Morale Soak per Momentum spent (maximum 3) until the start of his next turn.
Defend	1	The character may designate a target within Reach (including himself). The next attack against that target before the start of his next turn increases in difficulty by one step.
Disarm	2-3	One weapon held by the target is knocked away and falls to the ground within Reach. This costs 2 Momentum if the target is holding the weapon in one hand or 3 Momentum if the weapon is braced or held in two hands.
Penetration	1R	The damage inflicted by the current attack ignores an amount of Soak equal to twice the Momentum spent.
Re-Roll Damage	1	The player may re-roll any number of damage dice from the current attack.
Secondary Target	2	A second target within Reach of the primary target is also affected by the attack, and suffers half the attack's damage, rounding down.
Swift Action	2	The character gains an additional Standard Action, increasing the difficulty by one step on any skill test that action requires. This may only be done once per round, but can be done in addition to spending an Infinity Point to gain a Standard Action.
Withdraw	1	The character leaves the Reach of an enemy, without triggering any Retaliate reactions.

EXAMPLE OF COMBAT

Cassandra kicks in the door of a Svalarheima tavern and demands that Snake Dunnigan surrender. Snake dives over the bar and takes cover. The bar is in Close range, so this is a Free Action (and Snake declares that he's within Reach of the bar at the end of his movement so that he can take advantage of the cover it provides). Snake grabs the CombiRifle e the bartender keeps back there and opens fi re with a Standard Action. The CombiRifl e has Burst 2, allowing Snake to spend two Reloads and gain +2d20 to his Ballistics attack test. The gun also has Expert 1, which grants Snake an additional +1d20.

Cassandra spends one Heat in order to take the Defence reaction. Since she's defending against a ranged attack, she'll be making her defence test with Acrobatics. Cassandra rolls 2d20 and generates one success. Snake simultaneously rolls 5d20 and generates 3 successes. Cassandra is hit and Snake gains two Momentum.

WEAPON QUALITIES

The following weapon qualities are either used by the pre-generated characters or are found in the scenario.

Biotech: The weapon relies on biological, chemical, or technological means that bypass conventional armour. Damage inflicted by a Biotech weapon uses the target's BTS as Persistent Soak, instead of its Armour.

Breaker: The weapon is designed to bypass and degrade modern bio-technological shielding (BTS). For each effect rolled, permanently reduce the BTS value of the target's armour by 1, to a minimum of zero. If the BTS value was already at zero before damage was dealt, each effect rolled deals 1 damage instead.

Burst: A weapon's Burst determines the maximum number of Reloads which can be spent when attacking with it.

Close Quarters: The item is designed for close combat, and can be used against targets within Reach without penalty.

Concealed X: The item is easy to hide, or is designed for disguise as something else. When concealed, any search of the character requires a D(X) Observation test to locate the hidden item. You can spend Momentum from the roll when using the item to stow it away immediately after use: two Momentum for items with Concealed 1 or 2, and one Momentum for any item with Concealed 3 or more.

Electromagnetic: Electromagnetic or E/M weapons generate an electromagnetic pulse that scrambles electronics and overwhelms computer systems, inflicting Quantronic damage. If this damage causes a Breach, it cannot cause a different Breach Effect— the pulse is indiscriminately destructive, lacking the advantages of subtler hacking attacks. Equipment or vehicles without the Hackable quality are immune.

Expert X: The weapon has an Expert System for the Ballistics skill, granting X bonus Momentum on all Ballistics tests.

Hackable: The item relies on quantronic connectivity, and is connected to the user's personal network. It is vulnerable to attacks that deal quantronic damage, and the consequences of Breach effects.

Knockdown: If one or more Effects are rolled on a damage roll, the target is knocked prone unless they pass an Athletics or Acrobatics test with a difficulty equal to the number of Effects rolled.

Monofilament: The weapon uses a weaponized monomolecular wire — a single-molecule-thick edge stabilized by a faint E/M field. The weapon ignores all Armour Soak, but it has +2 Complication Range, and does not gain any bonus damage from a high attribute.

Mounted: The item is fixed into position, attached to a vehicle, or otherwise immobile. Use requires quantronic access and permissions, or physical access to the mounted item.

MULTI [Medium]: MULTI weapons are designed to use multiple forms of ammunition, switching seamlessly between preloaded primary and secondary modes as the situation requires. Swapping out a mode's ammo type for a different one requires a Minor action (or a free Action if the wielder has the Speed Loader talent). A character declares which mode they're using when they nominate a target for an attack.

- **MULTI [Medium]** weapons fire any Standard ammo in their primary mode, and any Special ammo (DA by default) in their secondary mode.

Nonlethal: The attack is designed to incapacitate rather than inflict lasting harm. Any Harms inflicted by a Nonlethal attack are temporary, and are removed entirely when treated, or after the next scene, whichever comes first.

EXAMPLE OF COMBAT DAMAGE

Snake's CombiRifle deals 1+5[N] damage and an additional +2[N] from his reloads. Snake rolls the dice and gets 2, 4, 2, 1, 5, 3, 3. The 4, 5, and 3's would be discarded, but Snake spends one Momentum to re-roll them, getting a result of 1, 3, 3, 1. The 3's are discarded, but the rest of the dice are now totaled, along with the base damage, for a total of 8 damage. Snake spends his second Momentum to add +1 damage, for a final total of 9 damage.

Cassandra is wearing Heavy Combat Armour, which gives her an Armour Soak of 4. This is subtracted from Snake's damage, but Cassandra still suffers 5 Vigour damage. Because she took 5 points of damage in a single hit, she also suffers a Wound.

Parry X: The weapon is exceptionally good at turning aside incoming attacks. A Parry weapon grants the wielder X⬤ additional Cover Soak, but only against melee attacks; a character wielding two Parry X weapons adds their ratings together.

Piercing X: The weapon's attack ignores X points of Soak for each effect rolled on its damage roll.

Salvo (Knockdown): If the target suffers one or more Harms from an attack with this quality, then the target is also knocked prone.

Spread X: This weapon is designed to affect a larger area. For each Effect generated, the attack inflicts an additional hit, inflicting half the damage inflicted by the first hit, each of which is reduced by Soak separately. If the target has multiple hit locations, roll a separate location for each additional hit.

Stun: The weapon inflicts the Staggered condition on the target if one or more Effects are rolled. This condition lasts for one round for each Effect rolled.

Subtle X: The item is particularly quiet and draws little attention — any Observation test to hear the use of the item increases is at +(X)D.

Torrent: The weapon fires a stream of flame, deadly liquid, gas, or some other substance that can be swept back and forth across an area to affect a group and overcome cover. Torrent weapons cannot affect targets beyond Medium range and they ignore all Cover Soak. A Torrent weapon is otherwise treated as an Area attack.

Toxic X: The attack has a lingering, deleterious effect. If the attack inflicts one or more Harms, then the target suffers this alternative Harm instead: the target suffers 1+X⬤, Vicious 1 damage at the end of each of its turns. This extra damage can be of any type, determined by the type of attack that caused it.

Unbalanced: If the wielder has Brawn of 9 or higher, this weapon can be used one-handed. If Brawn is 8 or less, this weapon is considered to be two-handed for that character.

Unforgiving X: This weapon is either exceptionally precise or capable of inflicting much greater harm on a direct hit. If the weapon's wielder uses the Exploit action, the weapon gains the Vicious X qualities on the attack.

Unwieldy: The item is extremely bulky and cumbersome, and not particularly portable. Any use of an Unwieldy item is at +2D and +2 Complication Range. These penalties can be removed by taking the Brace action. Unwieldy items cannot be wielded in one hand.

Vicious X: The weapon deals X additional damage for each Effect generated.

HEAT AND INFINITY

INFINITY POINTS

Player characters have access to a special type of resource called Infinity points. This reflects the fact that the player characters have drive, ambition, and determination above and beyond most people, and can succeed where others might fail. Whether or not they are viewed as heroes, the player characters are destined for greatness.

A player character begins each session with three Infinity points, and he cannot have more than five Infinity points at any point. GMs will award Infinity points during a session for reaching milestones, creating entertaining moments at the table, and other accomplishments. (As a general guideline, there should be two or three opportunities for players to gain Infinity points per hour of play.)

USING INFINITY POINTS

Here are just a few of the ways in which Infinity points can be spent during play:

- **Bonus Die:** Add an extra d20 to a skill test. The extra die is treated as having automatically rolled a 1.
- **Bonus Action:** Perform an additional Standard Action on your turn.
- **Second Wind:** Recover all lost Vigour, Resolve, or Firewall (choose one).
- **Overcome Weakness:** Ignore effects of Wounds, Trauma, or Breaches (choose one) until the end of the current scene.
- **Story Declaration:** Introduce a fact or add a detail to the current scene. (The GM may veto some story declarations, or require multiple Infinity points for particularly large or significant declarations.)

HEAT

The GM's biggest tool — beyond his imagination — is the Heat economy. At the beginning of a session, the GM's Heat pool will have a number of points equal to the total number of Infinity points at the table. (For example, if there are four player characters each with three Infinity points, the GM will begin play with twelve Heat points.)

During each adventure, the Heat pool will grow and shrink as the player characters take action and the GM responds (and vice versa). Heat is an abstract measure of potential threats and dangers — the larger the Heat pool, the greater the likelihood that something will endanger or imperil the player characters. Spending Heat turns that potential danger into actual problems.

GAINING HEAT

The GM gains heat in a number of common ways.

Complications: When a player character suffers a Complication, the GM may decide to add two points to Heat instead of causing a normal Complication.

Reactions: When a player character attempts a Reaction, it adds points to Heat; one for the first Reaction attempted each round, two for the second, three for the third, and so forth.

Momentum Spends: Player characters may use Momentum Spends by adding to Heat instead of paying Momentum.

NPC Momentum: NPCs do not bank Momentum as player characters do, but instead add any unspent Momentum directly to the Heat pool.

USING HEAT

NPCs can use Heat in the same way player characters can, though in reverse. That is, an NPC can buy extra d20s for a skill test, or take Reactions, by paying Heat from the pool, rather than adding points to it. Similarly, just as PCs can add points to Heat when they suffer complications, an NPC suffering a complication can cause the Heat pool to shrink.

NPC Resources: Reloads, coagulant, parts, and other expendable resources used to boost the effect of a skill test are not tracked individually for NPCs. Instead, an NPC can be granted the benefit of a single unit of a resource by paying one Heat.

Activating Special Abilities: Some particularly powerful or experienced NPCs may have access to potent abilities or equipment. As noted in their descriptions, these abilities may require the GM to spend one or more Heat to activate them.

Seize the Initiative: The GM may spend Heat to interrupt the action order and allow one of the NPCs to act by spending one Heat (see p. 14).

Triggering an Environmental Effect: Dramatic scenes often play out in exciting environments — a firefight in a crumbling tenement, a chase through a busy marketplace, a chasm over a river of lava, etc. When describing encounters, the GM is encouraged to provide details to the players to help them visualise the scene, and sometimes it can be interesting to bring the environment alive through the use of Heat. Triggering an environment effect comes in two levels of magnitude. Minor effects — costing one Heat — are typically things like flickering lights, crumbling walls, thick smoke, which add to the difficulty of skill tests, or force tests where one was not previously required. Major effects — costing two or more Heat — may pose significant impediments to the characters, or even cause them harm (Physical, Mental, or Digital) or short-lived conditions.

Other Complications: GMs can also introduce other complications into a scene. As a general guideline, spending one Heat should create a complication requiring a Minor Action to fix, overcome, or circumvent. A complication created by spending two Heat should require a Standard Action to do the same.

CIRCULAR FILE

Eduardo Teixeira, a duellist in the violent and wildly popular sport of Aristeia!, has been found dead in his berth. He was travelling between worlds on board a Circular, headed to a tournament. It was not a peaceful death.

With the media itching for a scoop, and a dangerous new recreational drug spreading onboard the starship, can the agents of Bureau Noir find out who is responsible?

OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

The player characters represent Bureau Noir, the secret service arm of the panplanetary O-12 organisation. They are travelling aboard a wormhole-hopping Circular at the time of Eduardo Teixeira's death and are called in to investigate.

Teixeira has died from a brain aneurysm. Early on, the cause is unclear; in reality, he was killed by a dangerous experimental variant of the recreational drug nitrocaine. Evidence in Teixeira's berth points in two directions: to the Drift, a low-g bar in the spine of the Circular, and to Teixeira's girlfriend Gesine Maurer.

As the investigation spins outwards, the drug begins to spread aboard the Circular. Users are suffering vivid hallucinations, connected in some way to the local Maya datasphere. Some of them are turning violent. The player characters come under increasing pressure to figure out the source of the drug.

Teixeira's dealer was a Circular rat known as Noemi de Silva. She's small-time, working out of ship-board bars and dives, including the Drift. She has just started dealing for a new crew called the Bone Spurs, who are holed up onboard the *Sullied Marduk*, a small ship anchored to the Circular.

By the time the player characters reach the *Marduk*, it is in full lockdown. To apprehend the Bone Spurs and bring an end to the spread of the dangerous nitrocaine variant, the player characters will need to breach and storm the ship.

BACKGROUND

CIRCULARS
In the last two centuries humanity has spread to the stars. The Human Sphere now consists of eleven solar systems, divided up amongst the Great Powers. These planets are linked by a system of wormholes. Trade and transport through them is facilitated by the Circulars, vast starships looping endlessly along fixed routes, from one system to the next.

WILDERNESS OF MIRRORS

Teixeira's death unexpectedly activates the player characters' cell, so their handlers do not have their Wilderness of Mirrors assignments ready at the beginning of the scenario. Instead, their orders will come in as the situation evolves. Sidebars throughout the scenario will provide recommendations on when to introduce each objective. It is assumed that the player characters keep their handlers informed of their progress off-camera.

Ariadna: The player character is ordered to make contact with a friendly agent, in a bar in the Circular's Perpetual Sunset district called the Shentang Sling. The agent is carrying sensitive information, and reports that she is being followed. Take possession of the information packet, and make sure no one knows you are carrying it. A courier will collect it when the player character arrives at their destination.

Haqqislam: The Silk trade is the primary source of Haqqislam's economic and political might. Haqqislamite authorities use biochemical markers on any Silk derivatives to track who is supplying the Silk and ensure that no trade secrets have been stolen. The player character is ordered to obtain a sample of the experimental nitrocaine for testing. Make sure that no one else does the same.

Nomads: Aristeia! is a huge money-spinner, and Teixeira a popular PanOceanian Aristo. Anything that damages his reputation, damages PanOceania. The player character is instructed to leak evidence to the media that Teixeira's death was due to a drug overdose, and that his drug use may have extended to illegal performance enhancers.

PanOceania: Circular security is usually shared between the PanOceanian Knights of Santiago and O-12's Bureau Aegis. The Knights are eager to make it their sole responsibility. The player character is ordered to leak the conclusions of their investigation to Knight-Investigator Brother Antonio Leão ahead of any official announcement, so that he can claim credit.

Yu Jing: The berth that Eduardo Teixeira died in is preferred by PanOceanian and O-12 dignitaries travelling on the Circular. The player character is instructed to plant sophisticated bugs throughout the berth, so any future visitors can be surveilled.

Criminals: Nitrocaine trafficking is a lucrative business, and a new variant of the drug is a new opportunity for profit. The player character's criminal organisation wants a sample. A fresh vial will do, but an uncut sample direct from the source is preferred.

Corporations: The player character's corporate masters are sponsoring Eduardo Teixeira's latest Aristeia! season. The news of his drug addiction could be damaging. Keep the story out of the media. If that proves impossible, plant evidence implying that he was drugged against his will.

Mercenaries: The Bone Spurs have history with the player character's mercenary company. They betrayed your Captain in the past, and left with incriminating evidence on quasi-legal operations. Who knows what secrets they'll offer up under interrogation? Ensure that none of them can ever talk. technology far beyond human capabilities. The player character needs to get access to it (either through subterfuge or negotiation).

Each Circular is a massive vessel, carrying freight, passengers, and a small city's worth of Circular locals to support them. Smaller starships — from private yachts all the way up to the huge motherships of the Nomad Nation — dock with the Circulars and ride them through the wormholes that connect star systems.

Bureau Hermes, a branch of the panplanetary O-12 organisation, is responsible for operating the Circulars. They remain independent of national squabbles, keeping goods, people and information flowing even during times of conflict. Part city, part cruise liner, part freighter, if you are travelling between systems in the Human Sphere, you are travelling aboard one of the Circulars.

NITROCAINE
The development of Silk by Haqqislamite scholars heralded a medical renaissance throughout the Human Sphere. The threads of this unique technology wind through the human body, granting unparalleled protection against injury and aging, and easy access to cosmetic alterations. Silk even enables perfect real-time digital imaging of a user's brain, allowing personality backups to be stored in a quantronic implant known as a Cube.

Inevitably, an industry has grown around illegal Silk derivatives. In particular, the drug nitrocaine is rapidly gaining popularity, especially amongst the wealthy elite. This drug bonds with the user's synapses, enabling long-term highs that can be controlled using custom hacks installed on the user's Cube. The synaptic-bonding makes the drug highly addictive.

This scenario focuses around a new, experimental nitrocaine variant that allows the high to be controlled directly from the user's comlog — a wearable peripheral carried by virtually every resident of the Human Sphere. This drug was

developed by a rogue Haqqislamite doctor named Al-Daran, and distributed by his Bone Spurs gang.

The experimental nitrocaine suffers from two interconnected flaws. First, it bonds incorrectly with the user's synapses, causing hallucinations, frequently leading to brain damage and death. To complicate matters, the freelance hacker who developed the comlog control software did a shoddy job. Memory errors in the software feed inputs from the nearby datasphere directly into a user's sensorium. This can result in shared hallucinations between users, compounding emotional feedback and dangerously heightening the effects of the drug.

EDUARDO TEIXEIRA, ARISTO

The first high-profile victim of this experimental nitrocaine is Eduardo Teixeira (pronounced tay-SHAY-ra), an Aristo from the PanOceanian world of Acontecimento. Aristos are duellists in the popular sport of Aristeia! A hugely violent media spectacle, Aristeia! matches feature bloody combat between Aristos, occasionally even to the death. Aristos are superstars, revered throughout the Human Sphere.

> #### ASPECTS OF ALEPH
> ALEPH is the sole AI in the Human Sphere, watching over and aiding humanity in countless ways. It is present virtually everywhere, including aboard the Circulars. Occasionally, it chooses to carve off a fragment of itself, a temporary subprogram with its own appearance and personality. Sarama is such an Aspect.

Teixeira grew up poor, the son of farmers. His fluid fighting style, developed from the capoeira brought to Acontecimento by South American colonists, carried him from small displays on market days in his home town all the way to the heights of the Aristeia! circuit. On Acontecimento, Teixeira is a folk hero.

Teixeira was travelling aboard the Circular en route to an Aristeia! tournament. During the voyage, he settled in at the Sorel Sisters' Drift and Tiki Bar, where he met the dealer Noemi de Silva. De Silva was peddling the new nitrocaine. As the scenario begins, Teixeira's body has been found by the ship's AI, dead due to complications from the illegal drug.

MISSION BRIEFING

While travelling onboard a Circular, an Aspect of ALEPH appears to the PCs. (If they are not together, the Aspect will bring them together through augmented reality and make it appear that they were all in the same space.)

The Aspect calls itself Sarama, and appears as an androgynous figure in a sleek business suit. It will ask the PCs to "walk" with it as they talk and then inform them of Teixeira's death. Sarama instructs the player characters to determine what killed Teixeira, identify any threats to the Circular's passengers, and put a stop to them. It emphasizes that Teixeira's death is high profile, but that its main concern is the safety of the Circular and its passengers.

Sarama will answer any questions they may have, but at some point they will arrive at Teixeira's berth (see *Scene 1: The Disturbing Dead*).

SCENE 1: THE DISTURBING DEAD

Eduardo Teixeira's body was found in his berth, an isolated bungalow in one of the Circular's green spaces. Artful landscaping conceals the berth from view despite the small size of the shipboard park. Meandering paths cleverly guide walkers away, granting a surprising degree of privacy. This accommodation is reserved for wealthy travellers.

When the player characters first enter the berth, read or summarize the following:

> *The small bungalow has been torn apart. Furniture is smashed, the remains of a meal splattered across a wall. Glass crunches underfoot. Teixeira's body lies in the middle of the carnage, bruised and scratched. His face is frozen in an expression of rage, or perhaps fear.*

The key pieces of evidence in the scene are described below:

The Body: Sarama was alerted to a medical emergency by automatic monitoring routines, but medics were unable to reach Teixeira in time; they are packing up when the player characters arrive. According to the medics, the cause of death was a brain aneurysm.

A character with the Medicine skill can examine the body. An Average (D1) Medicine test confirms

the medic's diagnosis, and also reveals that Teixeira was under considerable stress at the time of death. His physical injuries — bruises, cuts — were self inflicted. He has micropuncture track marks on his wrist, near his surgically-embedded comlog.

A Challenging (D2) Medicine check, with time and access to appropriate facilities, reveals that the brain damage was caused by a drug that looks similar, but not identical, to nitrocaine. It is still in Teixeira's bloodstream, along with drastically elevated levels of stress hormones.

The Room: If the player characters take their time, they will be able to thoroughly sweep Teixeira's berth. Otherwise, call for an Observation test:

- **Simple (D0):** There is a damaged Tiki mask lying next to Teixeira's body. He was wearing it when he died; the medics removed it when they attempted to revive him. It is a tacky souvenir, carved into a snarling face. An inscription indicates it came from The Drift and Tiki Garden, a bar aboard the Circular.

- **Average (D1):** There is a single dress in Teixeira's wardrobe, and a few scattered cosmetics in his bathroom. (The owner of these items, Gesine Maurer, moved out in a rush two days previously.)

- **Challenging (D2):** A thorough forensic sweep confirms that only two people have been in Teixeira's berth: Gesine Maurer, and Teixeira himself. This implies that either Maurer inflicted Teixeira's injuries and destroyed his quarters, or Teixeira did both himself, in some sort of frenzy. (The latter conclusion is correct.)

PLAYTEST TIP: PANOCEANIA AND YU JING

When the player characters have had a little bit of time to investigate Teixeira's berth, but before they are done, ping any PanOceanian or Yu Jingese agents with their Wilderness of Mirrors objectives (see p. 24).

PLAYTEST TIP: NOMADS AND CORPORATIONS

As soon as any Nomad or Corporate players have plausibly had time to alert their handlers to Teixeira's drug use, issue them their Wilderness of Mirrors objectives (see p. 24).

The Quantronic Trail: Accessing Teixeira's comlog and other quantronic data will require a Simple (D0) Hacking test. Ask the players what they wish to search for — each point of Momentum generated on the roll reveals one of the following:

- **Berth registration:** Teixeira's berth is reserved under two names: Teixeira, and Gesine Maurer.

- **Personal messages:** Teixeira's messages include frequent contact with Gesine Maurer, who is clearly his girlfriend. Their communication abruptly stopped two days ago.

- **Teixeira's AR:** The player character can reconstruct Teixeira's augmented reality (AR) environment at the time of his death. The room suddenly fills with screaming and noise. Teixeira's old Aristeia! duels are layered on top of each other, opponents coming from all directions, shooting and kicking and slashing. It is intense and panic-inducing, a sensory overload.

- **Unusual code:** There is a small piece of code buried on Teixeira's comlog, which was used to control a nitrocaine high. Normally, this control requires complex Cube hacks. If this new nitrocaine can be controlled using comlog software instead, it is likely to be both cheaper and much more dangerous.

SCENE 2: THE SOREL SISTERS' DRIFT AND TIKI GARDEN

The Drift and Tiki Garden is a low-gravity bar, located at the central axis of the Circular. Here, rotation provides only minimal gravity. Dropped objects drift slowly to the floor on curving trajectories, and some patrons are disoriented by the difference in gravitational force between their heads and their feet. This feeling is referred to as "having the spins".

This scene is an opportunity for social characters to shine. Clues point to the drug dealer Noemi de Silva, and a screaming match between Teixeira and his girlfriend Gesine Maurer. There is also an opportunity for the player characters to sample the experimental nitrocaine, and a small piece of evidence connecting the drug to the *Sullied Marduk*.

As the player characters approach one of The Drift's two entrances, read or summarize the following:

You pass through the maw of a huge, leering Tiki mask and into The Drift. It's like being on the inside of a lazily spinning rum barrel. Polynesian by way of 20th century American kitsch, patrons drift at deck chairs scattered around the circumference of the barrel, drinking fluorescent cocktails under stunted palm trees. The air is humid, and the default AR projects the sounds and smells of the ocean. Portraits of the Sorel Sisters, Cécile and Émeline, hang above the bar.

The Drift only ever seems moderately busy — something about the beach-side affect encourages a relaxed mood. It is owned by Dr Emília dos Anjos Drummond, a retired particle physicist from the PanOceanian world of Acontecimento.

Working the scene: The player characters might ask the staff and patrons at The Drift about Teixeira, or about the nitrocaine. Each requires a Persuade test:

- **Teixeira (Simple (D0) Persuade):** Virtually all of the patrons have seen Teixeira at The Drift. A few nights ago, he had a screaming fight in the bar with his girlfriend, Gesine Maurer. Glasses were thrown, Teixeira's table overturned. Station security were called to remove Maurer.

- **Nitrocaine (Average (D1) Persuade):** The Drift has a regular drug dealer, a Circular rat called Noemi de Silva. She has been peddling a new batch of nitrocaine, which is proving very popular with the customers. Cheaper than the usual stuff, and easier to use. If the player characters set up surveillance (an Average (D1) Observation test, over a few nights) they will spot Noemi de Silva dealing nitrocaine themselves.

Teixeira's Table: The bar's owner, Emília Drummond, is keeping Teixeira's preferred table for him. It is in the perfect position to see and be seen by the entire bar. Teixeira didn't go to The Drift to hide, he went there to be on display.

Although Drummond has kept the area clean, the player characters might still conduct a search. With an Average (D1) Observation test, they will turn up a partially-damaged, used micropuncture. It contains traces of the nitrocaine.

The micropuncture bears a maker's mark, a tiny AR data packet with a MesoMed corporate logo. An Analysis test will provide additional information:

- **Simple (D0):** MesoMed is a small pharmaceuticals company focussing on Silk-derived therapies.

- **Average (D1):** A MesoMed transport ship, the *Sullied Marduk*, is currently docked with the Circular.

- **Challenging (D2):** Irregularities in MesoMed's credentials imply that the company is fake.

PLAYTEST TIP:
FINDING NOEMI

To find Noemi, the player characters need to generate two Momentum on any appropriate D0 or D1 tests. These might be Hacking tests, to access security footage, Persuade tests to ask around, perhaps even Stealth tests to lay an ambush. This technique allows players the freedom to drive play in whichever direction they choose.

THE SOREL SISTERS

Cécile and Émeline Sorel were crucial figures in humanity's ascent to the stars. Their research into quantum gravity provided the theoretical framework for stabilising wormholes, a decade after the first viable wormhole was discovered orbiting Saturn. Crucially, they were able to develop so-called Sorel field manipulators, which allowed ships to traverse these wormholes safely. They were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for their great gift to humanity, and are particularly revered by people who live and work aboard the Circulars.

MOMENTUM SPEND: JOINING THE DOTS

If the players spend one Momentum on either Persuade test while working the scene, one of the patrons will join the dots for them. They'll mention that Teixeira bought drugs from de Silva, and bring up the fight between Teixeira and Maurer.

FANCY A HIT?

While the player characters are in The Drift, they will have an opportunity to sample the experimental nitrocaine. The peddler — either a high customer, or Noemi de Silva herself — will try to persuade the player characters to try the drug on the spot. If you think it's appropriate, call for Discipline tests to resist. The dose consists of a micropuncture for injecting the drug, and a software packet to be loaded into the user's comlog. Once the drug has bonded with the synapses, the software can be used to control the high.

Unless the software packet is studied in detail (a **Daunting (D3) Hacking test**), anyone taking the drug will be unaware of a crucial glitch. The software is interfacing with the local datasphere, tweaking the user's emotional response based on nearby inputs. As the errors in the code cascade, the emotional feedback compounds, and the user begins to hallucinate.

If one or more of the player characters samples the drug, this is your opportunity to heighten the weirdness. Mysterious figures — perhaps even Teixeira himself — appear fleetingly in the distance, noises that other characters don't hear, sudden compulsions (requiring Discipline tests to resist) to do strange things.

GESINE MAURER

APPEARANCE

Dark skin and worry lines on a broad face. Dreadlocks, dyed green and piled up on her head, held roughly in place with a pale scarf.

ROLEPLAYING:

- Abrasive, impatient. She assumes everyone will treat her as a handsome, mindless extension to Teixeira, and doesn't like it.
- Her hands are always in motion as she talks.
- When she hears about Teixeira's death, all the energy goes out of her. She struggles to focus.

BACKGROUND

Maurer the artist, creator of graceful murals in motile paint and AR overlay. Teixeira the Aristo, a hedonistic fighter. The match was unexpected, the media never sure how to handle Maurer. It was also rocky — the two often fought, and weren't reluctant to do so in public. But something about it worked.

Two nights ago, Maurer and Teixeira fought in The Drift. Following that, she took her things from their shared berth and moved to a hotel room in the Circular's Perpetual Sunset hold. This district — tall, narrow, about the length of a city block — is piled high with restaurants and clubs, theatres and bars. It's a never-ending nightlife, heavily influenced by bustling Yu Jing cities. The player characters will find her there.

KEY INFO:

- Maurer knows that Noemi de Silva was supplying Teixeira with his nitrocaine. She can provide a remarkably clear description of the dealer.
- She also knows that Teixeira has been spending all his nights in The Drift. This is what they fought about. Maurer wanted to experience everything the Circular had to offer, and found The Drift tacky. Teixeira was happy where he was. The fight was part genuine anger, part performance, but it wasn't serious. They would have patched it up in a few days.

DANGEROUS HIGH

NITROCAINE USERS

Here is a list of names that you can use for nitrocaine users, innocent bystanders, or accidental victims:

Rien Ng, Magnar Einarsson, Jens Leeworth, Nasheen Tran, Sol Arias, Soto van der Garde, Wu Jia, Aitor Carreño, Beca Chiaki-Jones, Frog Berninger.

As the investigation proceeds, the experimental nitrocaine spreads through the Circular. It's cheaper than older nitrocaine variants, and the high is easier to manipulate via comlog. It is also very dangerous, causing hallucinations, freak outs, and ultimately brain damage.

Give the players a sense for this growing crisis by

SYMPATHETIC REACTION

The experimental nitrocaine interacts with the surrounding datasphere in unexpected ways. Users will often hallucinate episodes from their recent Maya viewing history — emotionally-charged dramas or Aristeia! fights in particular. These can bleed into other nearby users via the faulty comlog software.

PLAYTEST TIP:
HAQQISLAM AND CRIMINALS

Once the player characters have established that a new variant of nitrocaine is circulating, supply Haqqislam and Criminal characters with their Wilderness of Mirrors objectives (see p. 24). If you're looking for a dramatic moment, in the middle of dealing with an addict may be appropriate.

planting nitrocaine users in the background of early scenes. Here are a few suggested examples:

- A man in The Drift quietly strips off all of his clothes, and then curls up on his chair, hugging his knees.

- A woman screams at a pedal-powered passenger cart in the streets of Perpetual Sunset. She is re-enacting, word for word, a scene from a recent episode of the Maya drama *The Sun Always Shines*.

- A customer at a noodle restaurant starts attacking a wall, pounding his fists bloody and screaming Eduardo Teixeira's name.

As the situation escalates, Sarama alerts the player characters directly to unfolding incidents. It is clear that the drug is becoming a risk to the Circular, not just to a few isolated junkies. Use any or all of these scenes to provide additional clues, add tension, or improve pacing.

- Public transport throughout the Circular is via vacuum transport tube. In one tube station, a nitrocaine user has somehow forced the airlock doors, been sucked into the tube, and suffocated. The resulting decompression has strewn debris around the terminal station, injured other travellers, and stalled the transport network. A villain with a small oxygen re-breather used the exact same method to escape arrest in the blockbuster *Circular Blues*.

- A drone controller, responsible for repairs on the surface of the Circular, has lost her mind and begun racing remotes across the ship's outer hull. She is convinced that she is the famous Nomad hacker-pilot Olga Stolyarova. A half dozen remotes have already been lost — flung off into space, or smashed into the Circular's heat sinks and sensor arrays.

- A party at the Shentang Sling, a bar in the Perpetual Sunset district, ends in tragedy. Bartenders initially thought some sort of flash mob had formed when a half dozen patrons

started a synchronised dance reminiscent of Eduardo Teixeira's fighting style. This drove a second group of patrons into an inexplicable rage and a genuine fight erupted.

Evidence: If the player characters chase up on any of the victims, they'll find the following clues:

- Some of the victims have recently been in or around The Drift. This information can be found by asking around (Average (D1) Persuade), or by accessing security camera footage at the bar (Average (D1) Hacking).

- In a few cases, financial transactions can be traced to Noemi de Silva. This will happen in the middle phase of the nitrocaine epidemic, when de Silva is struggling to keep up with demand, but hasn't yet realised the dangers. A victim's credit history can be obtained by hacking their comlog, a Challenging (D2) Hacking test.

- Two customers have been caught on surveillance camera — a roving security microdrone — purchasing nitrocaine directly from one of the Bone Spurs. Tracking down this information is a Challenging (D2) Observation test. Once the deal has been observed, an Average (D1) Analysis test is required to link the Bone Spur thug to his ship, the *Sullied Marduk*.

SCENE 4: SIEGE ON THE SULLIED MARDUK

Records show that the *Sullied Marduk* belongs to a pharmaceuticals company known as MesoMed. In reality, the ship is crewed by a gang of violent mercenaries and drug runners called the Bone Spurs. They are led by Al-Daran, a rogue medical scientist.

Al-Daran and the Bone Spurs have been monitoring the situation aboard the Circular, preferring to stay aboard the *Sullied Marduk* and distribute the drug through intermediaries. By the time the player characters arrive, the Spurs will most likely know the situation is spinning out of control, and will be hunkered down and prepared for a siege.

NOEMI DE SILVA

APPEARANCE

Extremely pale, perhaps due to a lifetime aboard the Circular, perhaps a deliberate gene tweak. Her clothes are a clash of cultures, a different mix every time you see her.

ROLEPLAYING:

- Early on in the nitrocaine outbreak, de Silva projects a personality much larger than her size. She's loud, and aggressively friendly.
- As the situation worsens, de Silva gets more and more jumpy.
- Never holds anyone's gaze for long. She is constantly consulting her comlog, surveying the room for customers.

BACKGROUND

De Silva is a Circular rat. Unlike other Circular locals, her relationship with the ship is parasitic. She knows its layout and shifting underground power structures intimately. Plenty of people aboard the Circular know her, but few would call her a friend; she is extremely self-reliant. Although she has dabbled in a wide variety of minor criminal enterprises, her major source of income has always been drug dealing.

She was proud of her professional relationship with Teixeira. It makes her normally tawdry business seem glamorous. She'll begin to learn that something is wrong with the nitrocaine ahead of the general populace, and will grow progressively more terrified. When she goes to ground, the player characters will need to generate at least two Momentum on D0 or D1 tests (see *Playtest Tip: Finding Noemi*) to find her.

KEY INFO

- De Silva regularly dealt nitrocaine to Teixeira.
- She saw Maurer and Teixeira fighting in The Drift. If she thinks she can get away with it, she will suggest that the fight was serious, that Maurer had a temper and sometimes got violent.
- De Silva's new nitrocaine came from the crew of the *Sullied Marduk*. She has never worked with them before — they came to her, and she was happy to help out. She finds the Bone Spurs' cosmetic alterations freaky, but doesn't judge.

THE TRANSPORT BAY

The *Sullied Marduk* is berthed in one of the Circular's vast transport bays. These rectangular bays house dozens of ships, nestled in a lattice of gantries. The gantries act as anchor points for fuel and coolant lines, as well as remotes and cranes. The hangar is kept in zero-g vacuum to allow for the safe transport of ships never designed for gravity wells.

Articulated cranes shuffle ships throughout the transport bay without the need for firing thrusters. Sarama manages this process with optimal efficiency. The player characters may be able to convince it to move the *Sullied Marduk*, but there's no way to do so in secrecy. The crew of the ship will know the instant they are moved.

THE SHIP

The *Sullied Marduk* is a classic small freighter design. A small cockpit sits atop two circular decks, followed by a long spine running the length of the ship. Modular cargo containers are attached to this spine, and can be accessed from the central tunnel. The reactor, engineering, and main engines are located at the end of the spine. Decks are connected by ladders.

The two living levels and Al-Daran's lab have artificial gravity, but the spine and the cargo pods are zero-g environments. There is atmosphere throughout the ship. In an emergency, each of the crew quarters can be sealed and ejected separately, acting like an escape pod. Their beds double as acceleration couches. Both the cockpit and engineering are too cramped for any serious fighting.

The following key describes the map locations:

1. Central Spine
2. Al-Daran's Ready Room
3. Al-Daran's Sleeping Quarters
4. Crew Quarters
5. Head
6. Airlocks
7. Rec Room
8. Mess
9. Kitchens
10. Storage, including weapons locker
11. Storage
12. Cargo Pods
13. Al-Daran's Lab

MAP

There are ten Bone Spurs, plus Al-Daran, aboard the *Sullied Marduk*. If they are caught unawares, they will be scattered throughout the ship and carrying only sidearms. If they have had time to prepare, then all of the Spurs will be armed, and defending the following locations:

- **2:** Two Spurs in Al-Daran's ready room, one disguised as the doctor (Average (D1) Observation test to notice the subterfuge).

- **10:** Two Spurs guarding the weapons locker, using storage crates as cover.

- **12A:** One Spur hiding in the first cargo pod.

- **12B:** Three Spurs in the second cargo pod, two standing guard and one hacker opposing any attacks on the shipboard network.

- **13:** Al-Daran and two Spurs are defending the lab.

They have prepared the following defences:

Shipboard Network: The Spurs have fortified their shipboard network, and cut off external access. A Challenging (D2) Hacking test is required to access internal cameras or comms.

Bulkhead Doors: All of the shipboard doors are locked down. Internal doors require an Average (D1) Hacking or Tech tests to open. The blast doors leading to the cockpit, spine, and engineering are reinforced, requiring Daunting (D3) tests instead.

Airlocks: Breaching airlocks requires Challenging (D2) Hacking or Tech tests. A point of Momentum is required to open them without tripping alarms.

Sentry Guns: In the corridors beyond the airlocks, the Bone Spurs have hastily set up autonomous sentry guns.

Nitrocaine Aerosols: Al-Daran has ordered his men to jury-rig nitrocaine aerosols into the air circulation system. Each of the Bone Spurs carries a small oxygen re-breather. At Al-Daran's order, the system can be activated, filling the air with the drug (see *Heat Spends: Nitrocaine in the Air*.

Cargo Pods: The Bone Spurs have loosened the straps and shoved the cargo around, creating a dangerous maze. Extraplanetary tests are required to fight in these pods, and there are opportunities for both Heat and Momentum spends.

Al-Daran's Lab: The lab is filled with sophisticated medical equipment and dangerous chemicals. As a last-ditch defence, Al-Daran has rigged this room with explosives on a three-round timer. He can arm them remotely (Challenging (D2) Hacking test to jam the signal), or via a dead man's switch that triggers if he is killed. The explosives are sufficient to destroy the lab, and may damage the ship's reactor.

TROOPER
SENTRY GUN

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	Will
6	8	9	11	7	–	–

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE						
Combat	+2	1	Movement	-	-	Social	-	-
Fortitude	+2	-	Senses	-	-	Technical	+	-

DEFENSES (TROOPER)					
Firewall	3	Resolve	0	Vigour	4
Security	2	Morale	0	Armour	3

ATTACKS
- **Mk12 (Range M, Damage 2+5 Ⓝ, Burst 3, Mounted, Salvo (Knockdown))**

SPECIAL ABILITIES
- **Automated Turret: The Sentry Gun is an immobile turret, controlled by a low grade software agent. It is immune to any Psywar effects. It uses its Intelligence Attribute only to resist Infowar attacks.**

NOTES: One Sentry Gun has been placed facing each airlock on board the Sullied Marduk (map locations 6).

THE BONE SPURS, CREW OF THE SULLIED MARDUK

The Bone Spurs are a gang of thugs and mercenaries. Their leader, Al-Daran, trained as a doctor on the Haqqislamite planet of Bourak, but found his temperament better suited to experimentation. The Bone Spurs make their money pedalling nitrocaine and other Silk-derived drugs, operating as a mercenary company when the drug trade grows thin.

The experimental nitrocaine is Al-Daran's first attempt to carve himself a unique niche. Unfortunately, he has overestimated his own skill, and the freelance hacker who built the comlog software for managing the drug was sloppy. This combination has proved deadly.

The Bone Spurs have a love for dramatic cosmetic modifications: they grow spurs of bone from their bodies and faces. In some cases, they allow the bone to pierce the skin, forming exposed horns or shards. Otherwise, the bone contorts their features into unnatural shapes — sharp-edged

HEAT SPEND: NITROCAINE IN THE AIR

Spend 2 Heat to activate the nitrocaine dispensers aboard the Sullied Marduk. The air will fill with smoke, carrying the aerosolized drug. Anyone breathing the drug will begin to suffer low-grade hallucinations, which escalate the longer they are exposed. In particular, the Bone Spurs will look more and more like hulking demons, looming out of the smoke.

Discipline tests will be required to keep calm; if the character fails, they become Dazed. These tests begin at Simple (D0), or Average (D1) for existing nitrocaine users. Spend 1 additional Heat at any time to raise the test difficulty by 1, to a maximum of Daunting (D3).

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cheekbones, ridged foreheads, plated forearms or chests. They often tattoo themselves to emphasise these features.

In combat situations, Al-Daran keeps his men supplied with adrenaline enhancers, lactic-acid regulators, and a suite of other drugs. In combination with their cosmetic alterations, this makes them frightening opponents in close quarters.

ELITE

BONE SPUR

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	Will
8	8	12	10	8	7	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

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

DEFENSES (TROOPER)

Firewall	8	Resolve	10	Vigour	12
Security	0	Morale	1	Armour	2

ATTACKS
- Light Shotgun (Range C, Damage 1+4🅝, Burst 1, Burst (Close), Spread 1, Knockdown)
- AP Submachine Gun (Range C, Damage 1+4🅝, Burst 2,, Piercing 2, Spread 1)
- Pistol (Range C, Damage 1+3🅝, Burst 1, Close Quarters, Vicious 1)
- Spiked Knuckles (Damage 1+4🅝, Piercing 1, Vicious 1)

GEAR: Subdermal Grafts

SPECIAL ABILITIES
- Fear: Cosmetic modifications turn a Bone Spur into a fearsome sight. Whenever a Bone Spur attempts a Psywar attack based on fear, he gains 1 bonus Momentum.

NOTES: Bone Spurs are scattered throughout the Sullied Marduk. One, located in the second cargo pod (map location 12B), carries a Hacking Device. This is loaded with no useful software, but can be used to oppose any player character attempts at Infowar.

NEMESIS

AL-DARAN, LEADER OF THE BONE SPURS

Appearance: A thick beard and artificially blue eyes. His armour is clearly Haqqislamite in origin.

Roleplaying:
- Though he appears slight in comparison to the Bone Spurs, Al-Daran exudes an air of fierce control that marks him out as a leader.
- Tracks the flow of conflict via his comlog, even if fighting erupts in his vicinity.
- Communicates tersely with his Bone Spurs — issuing orders, demanding reports — but doesn't speak to the player characters at all.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	Will
8	10	7	11	10	12	12

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	-	Movement	+2	1	Social	+3	2
Fortitude	-	-	Senses	+4	3	Technical	+2	2

DEFENSES (TROOPER)

Firewall	12	Resolve	12	Vigour	7
Security	2	Morale	2	Armour	2

ATTACKS
- Wetspike (Damage 1+3🅝, Piercing 1, Biotech, Toxic 1, Subtle 3)
- Viral Pistol (Range C, Damage 1+3🅝, Burst 1, Biotech, Close Quarters, Vicious 1)

GEAR: Light Combat Armour

SPECIAL ABILITIES
- Fast Recovery (Vigour 2): Thanks to custom engineered Silk treatments, Al-Daran regains two points of Vigour at the start of each turn. He can spend Heat to remove Wound impairments at a cost of one per impairment currently being suffered.
- Nitrocaine Aerosols: See Heat Spends: Nitrocaine in the Air on p. 31.
- Bone Spurs Leader: if Al-Daran is targeted by an attack, he may spend a point of Heat to redirect the attack to a Bone Spur within Reach.

NOTES: Al-Daran can be found in his laboratory, a converted cargo pod (map location 13). He is initially defended by two Bone Spurs. Other Spurs will fall back to his location if pressed.

The Human Sphere

BŌSŌZOKU

FACTION: YU JING OR CRIMINAL

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	Will
11	10	11	12	8	7	11

SKILLS

Skill	EXP	FOC	TN	Skill	EXP	FOC	TN
Athletics	1		12	Pilot*	3	2	15
Ballistics	1	1	13	Resistance	2		13
Close Combat	1	1	12	Spacecraft	1		13
Discipline	1	1	12	Stealth*	2	1	13
Educaton	1		9	Survival	2	2	12
Observation	1		11	Tech*	2	1	10
Persuade	1		8	Thievery	1		11

INCIDENTAL DAMAGE

Vigour	Resolve	Firewall
13	12	8

BONUS DAMAGE

Infowar	Psywar	Melee	Ranged
–	–	+2(N)	+2(N)

SOAK

BTS	Head	Torso	L. Arm	R. Arm	L. Leg	R Leg
0	–	1	1	1	1	1

EARNINGS: 2 / ASSESTS: 8

TALENTS
- **Pilot:** Ace, Born to the Wheel; **Stealth:** Scout; **Survival:** Self-Sufficient; **Tech:** Natural Engineer

TRAITS
- Criminal Record, Orphan

LANGUAGES
- English, Japanese, Yu Jingyu

WEAPONS
- **Sensei Wraps 2** (Melee, Damage 1+5(N), Expert 2, Hackable, Nonlethal, Parry 1, Stun, Subtle 1)
- **Submachine Gun** (Range C, Damage 1+6(N), Burst 2, Unbalanced, MULTI[Med], Spread 1)

GEAR
- 2 Normal Reloads, 3 AP Reloads, Armoured Clothing, Chameleonwear, Fireflies, Inlaid Palm Circuitry necessary to perform Thievery tests to disable electronic security systems)

PROFILE:

Live fast. Live hard. Die fighting.

Born to parents sentenced to a gulag on the Yu Jing portion of Svalarheima, you were released at the age of 14 to an indifferent universe. Despite losing your parents, you found you always had "family" wherever you drifted. Your family's ties to the Japanese resistance to Yu Jing rule may have kept you from taking on legitimate jobs, but you somehow made a living doing what you pleased.

You ended up on Shentang where you fell in with a Bōsōzoku motorcycle gang. You scored a couple of heists, and each credit you stole was spent fixing up your bike or living as lavishly as possible. You had a few close encounters with the Imperial Service, but you managed to leave them in the dust as you rode off with pockets full of cash and a few bullet holes in your ride.

Your luck ran out on Yutang, when, during a chase with the authorities, you turned down a street that was full of children playing. You were a criminal, but you were human after all. You came to a stop and chose to be captured rather than risk innocent lives. Fortunately for you a commander in the StateEmpire Army was witness to your chase and arranged for you to receive a pardon if you agreed to a tour of duty in the Imperial army.

You may have to wear a uniform from time to time, but you are still a thief at heart. You are viewing your time in the army like a stint in

---

DOG WARRIOR

FACTION: ARIADNA

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	Will
11	12	13	8	8	7	9

SKILLS

Skill	EXP	FOC	TN	Skill	EXP	FOC	TN
Acrobatics	1		12	Persuade	1		8
Athletics	3	1	16	Pilot*	3	2	11
Ballistics	1	1	9	Resistance	1	1	14
Close Combat*	3	1	14	Spacecraft	1		9
Discipline	1		10	Stealth	1	1	12
Education	1		9	Survival*	4	1	16
Medicine	1		9	Tech	1	1	9
Observation	1	1	13				

INCIDENTAL DAMAGE

Vigour	Resolve	Firewall
14	10	8

BONUS DAMAGE

Infowar	Psywar	Melee	Ranged
–	–	+3(N)	+3(N)

SOAK

BTS	Head	Torso	L. Arm	R. Arm	L. Leg	R Leg
0	–	1	1	1	1	1

EARNINGS: 2 / ASSESTS: 10

TALENTS
- **Pilot:** Ace, Push the Envelope (2); **Close Combat:** Martial Artist, Deflection, Riposte; **Survival:** Self-Sufficient

TRAITS
- Dog-bowl MVP, Nagging Injury

LANGUAGES
- English (Scots) Russian (Kazak)

WEAPONS
- **Claws** (Melee, Damage 1+5(N), Subtle 1, Vicious 1)
- **Chain-Colt** (Range C, Damage 1+8(N), Burst 1, 2H, Spread 1, Torrent, Vicious 1)
- **Teseum Chopper** (Melee, Damage 1+8(N), Unbalanced, Piercing 4, Vicious 2)

GEAR
- 5 Normal Reloads, Armoured Clothing, Parachute Pack, Survival Kit

PROFILE:

Yours is a life of service. You serve the people. You serve God. You serve Bakunin.

At times, you find your thoughts turned to what your life might have been. You lost your family at a young age, when their living module was destroyed by Yuan Yuan pirates thinking they could breach Bakunin. In the Convent of the Observance of Mercy, however, you found the path that God intended for you. The Sisters taught you that when the Great Apostasy seized the Catholic Church—when they made their agreement with the Devil ALEPH—that the faith of the multitudes had been corrupted.

Only by facing the Devil on its own battlefields could that corruption be cleansed. That is why you became a Reverend Moira. As a Moira, you are one of the best AI experts and hackers in the Sphere. You will stand strong in your faith. And you will guide others to find their own.

REVEREND MOIRA
FACTION: NOMADS

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	Will
11	11	9	9	13	6	9

SKILLS

Skill	EXP	FOC	TN	Skill	EXP	FOC	TN
Acrobatics	1		12	Lifestyle	1		7
Athletics	1	1	13	Medicine*	1	1	14
Ballistics	1	1	12	Pilot	1		10
Close Combat	1	1	12	Science	1	1	14
Education	1		9	Spacecraft	1		10
Extraplanetary*	1		11	Stealth	1		12
Hacking*	1		8	Tech	1		14

INCIDENTAL DAMAGE

Vigour	Resolve	Firewall
9	9	16

BONUS DAMAGE

Infowar	Psywar	Melee	Ranged
+3 Ⓝ	–	+1 Ⓝ	+2 Ⓝ

SOAK

BTS	Head	Torso	L.Arm	R.Arm	L.Leg	R Leg
1	2	2	1	1	1	1

EARNINGS: 3 / ASSESTS: 2

TALENTS
- **Extraplanetary:** Meteor Head; **Hacking:** Hacker, Tricks of the Trade, Quantronic Flak; **Medicine:** Physician; **Science:** Scientist

TRAITS
- Orphan, Religious Upbringing

LANGUAGES
- German, English

WEAPONS
- **Assault Hacking Device** (CLAW-3, IC-3, +3 Ⓝ bonus damage)
- **Standard Pistol** (Range C, Damage 1+6 Ⓝ, Burst 1, 1H, Close Quarters, Vicious 1)
- **Stun Baton** (Melee, Damage 1+5 Ⓝ, Knockdown, Stun, Subtle 1)

GEAR
- Basic Medical Supplies, Deployable Repeater, Forensics Kit 1, Light Combat Armour[Nomad], MediKit

PROFILE:

Yours is a life of service. You serve the people. You serve God. You serve Bakunin.

At times, you find your thoughts turned to what your life might have been. You lost your family at a young age, when their living module was destroyed by Yuan Yuan pirates thinking they could breach Bakunin. In the Convent of the Observance of Mercy, however, you found the path that God intended for you. The Sisters taught you that when the Great Apostasy seized the Catholic Church—when they made their agreement with the Devil ALEPH—that the faith of the multitudes had been corrupted.

Only by facing the Devil on its own battlefields could that corruption be cleansed. That is why you became a Reverend Moira. As a Moira, you are one of the best AI experts and hackers in the Sphere. You will stand strong in your faith. And you will guide others to find their own.

HASSASSIN
FACTION: HAQQISLAM

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	Will
12	9	11	9	8	9	9

SKILLS

Skill	EXP	FOC	TN	Skill	EXP	FOC	TN
Acrobatics	1	1	13	Hacking	1	1	9
Analysis	1		10	Medicine*	1	1	9
Athletics	1		12	Observation	1		10
Ballistics	2	1	11	Persuade	2	2	11
Close Combat*	4	1	16	Stealth*	3	1	15
Discipline	1		10	Tech	1		10
Education	1	1	9	Thievery	2	1	14

INCIDENTAL DAMAGE

Vigour	Resolve	Firewall
11	10	9

BONUS DAMAGE

Infowar	Psywar	Melee	Ranged
–	+1 Ⓝ	+2 Ⓝ	+1 Ⓝ

SOAK

BTS	Head	Torso	L.Arm	R.Arm	L.Leg	R Leg
0	–	1	1	1	1	1

EARNINGS: 3 / ASSESTS: 4

TALENTS
- **Acrobatics:** Graceful; **Close Combat:** Martial Artist; **Medicine:** Physician; **Stealth:** Scout, Disguise (2)

TRAITS
- Haqqislamite Exemplar

LANGUAGES
- Arabic, Turkish, Japanese

WEAPONS
- **Grazeblade** (Melee, Damage 1+6 Ⓝ, 1H, Breaker, Stun, Toxic 3, Vicious 3)
- **Knife** (Melee, Damage 1+5 Ⓝ, 1H, Concealed 1, Subtle 2, Unforgiving 1)
- **Silenced Sniper Rife** (Range L, Damage 1+6 Ⓝ, Burst 2, Unwieldy, Subtle 1, Unforgiving 2)

GEAR
- Breaking and Entering Kit, Disguise Kit, R1 Fake ID (Elite), Hacking Device, Light Combat Armour[Haqqislam], MediKit

PROFILE:

People underestimate you because you are quiet. They look past you because you blend into the background. They misjudge you because you look harmless.

That is how you get close enough to kill.

You were raised by the Hassassin Society. They took you in when you were just a child. You remember the warm smile of the Old Man of the Mountain when you first entered the secret stronghold deep in the desert. He embraced you and promised to look after you. Here was family, and in his eyes you felt the power that comes from certainty.

That was a long time ago. You are a true hassassin now, fully grown, completely equipped and trained, serving the Society. You go where the Old Man sends you and strike dead the enemies of Haqqislam and those who would stand in the way of the Search for Knowledge. You work best up close. You look them in the eye as they go and they know why they have died. A knife in the heart to kill, and a knife in the head to destroy the Cube. So that everyone knows you do not cross the hassassins and get a second chance.

One day, it will be too much. Sooner or later the day will come where you will face more than you can handle. And you will die in the service of the Society. For you will know that the Old Man is proud of you.

FATHER-KNIGHT

FACTION: PANOCEANIA

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	Will
12	10	12	9	8	9	10

SKILLS

Skill	EXP	FOC	TN	Skill	EXP	FOC	TN
Acrobatics	1		13	Education	2	1	10
Athletics	1	1	13	Lifestyle*	2	1	11
Ballistics*	3	2	12	Observation	1	1	11
Close Combat*	4	1	16	Resistance	2		14
Command	1		10	Survival	1	1	11
Discipline	2	1	12	Tech	1	1	9

INCIDENTAL DAMAGE

Vigour	Resolve	Firewall
14	12	8

BONUS DAMAGE

Infowar	Psywar	Melee	Ranged
–	+1(N)	+3(N)	+2(N)

SOAK

BTS	Head	Torso	L.Arm	R.Arm	L.Leg	R Leg
3	4	5	3	3	3	3

EARNINGS: 4 / ASSESTS: 9

TALENTS
- **Ballistics:** Marksman, Clear Shot; **Close Combat:** Martial Artist, Quick Draw; **Discipline:** Stubborn; **Lifestyle:** Socialite

TRAITS
- Decorated Veteran, Studious

LANGUAGES
- English, Spanish

WEAPONS
- **Combi Rifle** (Range C/M, Damage 1+7(N), Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, Vicious 1)
- **Teseum Sword** (Melee, Damage 1+8(N), Parry 2, Piercing 4, Unbalanced, Vicious 2)

GEAR
- 4 Standard Reloads, AutoMediKit, Powered Combat Armour [PanOceania]

PROFILE:

You are a decorated Father-Knight. You never set out to serve God with sword and gun, but now you know that it was His plan for you all along.

As far back as you can remember, you always wanted to be a priest. You knew you had a vocation to serve God. But in the seminary something never felt right. You bounced aimlessly from one area of study to another. One day your Bishop came and spoke with you for many hours. Then he told you that what you longed for was to be the Church in action, and he gave you a letter of referral and told you where you needed to go.

He was right. In the Order, you felt you felt right at home immediately. Missions gave you purpose. The rigours of training let you make the most of your God-given physical talents. In the joy and terror and relief of a battle fought and won you could feel His hand.

HEXAS AGENT

FACTION: PANOCEANIA

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	Will
10	10	7	10	10	13	8

SKILLS

Skill	EXP	FOC	TN	Skill	EXP	FOC	TN
Acrobatics	1		11	Lifestyle*	3	1	16
Analysis	1	1	11	Observation	2	1	12
Athletics	3	1	10	Pilot	1		11
Ballistics	3	1	13	Persuade*	3	2	16
Close Combat	2	1	12	Psychology	1		11
Discipline	1		9	Stealth*	2	1	12
Education	2		12	Tech	1		11
Hacking	1		11	Thievery	1		11

INCIDENTAL DAMAGE

Vigour	Resolve	Firewall
7	9	11

BONUS DAMAGE

Infowar	Psywar	Melee	Ranged
+2(N)	–	+3(N)	+2(N)

SOAK

BTS	Head	Torso	L.Arm	R.Arm	L.Leg	R Leg
1	–	1	1	1	1	1

EARNINGS: 4 / ASSESTS: 12

TALENTS
- **Analysis:** Pattern Recognition; **Lifestyle:** Socialite; **Persuade:** Charismatic, Enticer, Equivocator, Magnetic Personality

TRAITS
- Nemesis, Overconfident, Wealthy Ex-Lover

LANGUAGES
- English, German, Japanese, Spanish

WEAPONS
- **Silenced E/M Pistol** (Range C, Damage 1+6(N), Burst 1, 1H, Close Quarters, Electromagnetic, Piercing 1, Subtle 1, Vicious 1)
- **Paired Tonfa Bangles** (Melee, Damage 1+3(N), 1H, Concealed 2, Parry 2)

GEAR
- 2 E/M Reloads, Aletheia Kit, Analysis Suite, Armoured Clothing, Covert Dermal Grafting, Disguise Kit, R3 Fake ID, ModCoat (long), Nannies, Portable Monkey Bar

PROFILE:

When you are out on a mission, there is only you. You are beyond the law, beyond oversight. Beyond retribution… unless you slip up.

That is what being a Hexas agent is all about: total responsibility for your own actions. You get the latest weaponry, all the coolest spy gadgets, and any luxury you need in order to maintain a cover. In return you shoulder the burden of deciding what is right for PanOceania's interests. And what is *needed* for its survival.

A noble purpose. But has it justified everything you have done? Deals with the worst people in the world. Lies. Betrayals. The occasional killing. "They had it coming." That is what your station chief said after every death. They had it coming. Would a priest say that, if you told him in confession? You do not know. You think not.

It is not all doom and gloom. More often than not, you get to live a rockstar lifestyle. Luxury spaceliners, high-roller suites at the Sphere's best casinos, the finest food and drink money can buy, all the trimmings. You enjoy it all; you make friends fast and forget them in the blink of an eye. There is always a new mission, a new place to go. And you make the most of it.

In the end, death comes to us all. So you enjoy life while it lasts.