

ECLIPSE PHASE

QUICK-START RULES +ACRIMONY

Farcast into *Eclipse Phase Second Edition*

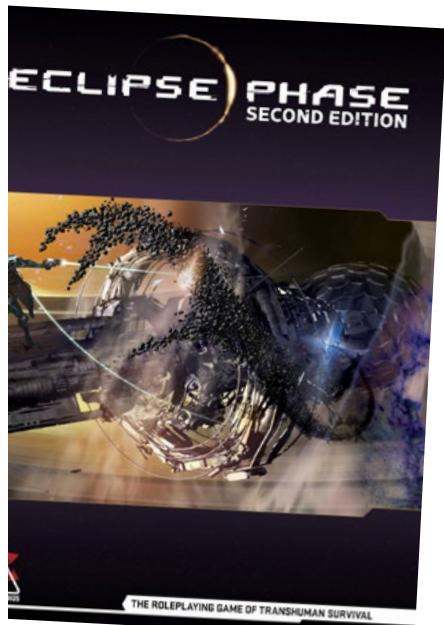
with the *Quick-Start Rules*, featuring condensed second edition rules,
an introductory adventure – *Arimony* – and four sample characters!

Then move onto the complete *Eclipse Phase Second Edition* from Posthuman Studios!

ECLIPSE PHASE SECOND EDITION

ISBN: 978-1-63127-006-2 **MSRP:** \$59.99

PAGES: 432 [Color, Hardcover] **CATALOG #:** PS+10000



Writing: Rob Boyle (Rules)
& Marc Huete (Arimony)

Editing: Rob Boyle & Adam Jury

Development: Rob Boyle & Jack Graham

Art Direction: Rob Boyle & Jack Graham

Cover Art: Stephan Martiniere

Interior Art:

Mobo Boehme, Daniel Brewer, Josu Hernaiz,
Anna Ignatjeva, Pixoloid Studios

Graphic Design and Layout: Adam Jury

Icons: Jim Marcus & Jeff Eaton

Special Thanks: David Cooper and all our
convention gamemasters!

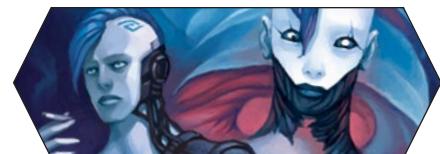
Version 2.0 by Posthuman Studios
(August 2020)

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ECLIPSE PHASE CREATED BY

Rob Boyle and Brian Cross



WHAT IS ECLIPSE PHASE?

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

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

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

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

The nations and super-powers of the old world are gone, decapitated and dismantled. New political blocs and factions have formed, loosely divided between the inner and outer systems. The capitalist economies of the inner system — Luna, Mars, and Venus — continue to enforce scarcity and intellectual property. They are dominated by the Planetary Consortium, a hypercorp-led entity that prioritizes business interests and that has declared Mars the new homeworld of transhumanity.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY, SEX, AND GENDER

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

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

Their habitats are identified by the influence of media and memetic conflict on civil discourse, the legalities and security restrictions that keep their populations safe, a lingering distrust of AIs and uplifts, and sharp class divisions. While socialites and hyper-elites play and prosper, many refugees have resorted to selling their labor as indentured servants to afford cheap, mass-produced synthetic bodies — the *clanking masses*.

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

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

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

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

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

WELCOME TO FIREWALL

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

WHAT IS TRANSHUMANISM?

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

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

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

A NOTE ON POLITICS

Eclipse Phase delves into numerous political themes; in fact, we start with the premise that *everything* is political. Like all authors, we write from the perspective of our personal biases. Our specific lens is radical, liberatory, inclusive, and antifascist. If you support bigotry or authoritarianism in any form, *Eclipse Phase* is not the game for you.

NEW TO ROLEPLAYING?

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

<http://eclipsepase.com/roleplaying>

SECRETS

Starting on ▶12 of this book is *Acrimony*, an introductory scenario. If you're playing but not gamemastering, don't beyond ▶11!

HOW TO PLAY

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

DICE BASICS

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

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

In a few rare cases, the rules may call for division. In this case, always round normally (i.e., a result of 1.5 or higher is rounded to 2).

WHEN TO ROLL THE DICE

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

MAKING TESTS

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

Though you want to roll equal to or under the target number, you also want to roll as high as possible in order to get a superior success ▶next column or to beat your opponent in an opposed test ▶5.

WHO ROLLS?

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

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

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

DIFFICULTY AND MODIFIERS

Fixing a common glitch in your favorite robot isn't as difficult as repairing an unknown malfunction on an unfamiliar model. These degrees of difficulty are represented by *modifiers* — adjustments that raise or lower the target number. An easy test provides a positive modifier, increasing the target number. A hard test inflicts a negative modifier.

Modifiers are assigned in multiples of ten, ranging from +10 to +30 and -10 to -30, as noted on the Modifiers table.

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

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

SUPERIOR RESULTS: 33/66 RULE

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

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

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

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

CRITICALS

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

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

- Double the damage you inflict with an attack.
- Gain a +/- 20 modifier to the next test you make.
- Take an extra action (critical success) or lose your next action (critical failure).
- Break a weapon/tool (critical failure).

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

TYPES OF TESTS

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

SUCCESS TESTS

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

OPPOSED TESTS

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

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

- If one opponent succeeds and the other fails, the successful one wins the contest.
- If both sides roll under their target number, whomever rolls highest wins and succeeds. The other either fails or succeeds but loses.
- If both sides tie or fail, either the opponents remain deadlocked or the highest roll or skill wins and succeeds (GM’s choice).

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

ACTIONS & TIME

Do you have time to leap across the micrograv module and defuse the bomb? Can you get your vacsuit on before the hole in the ship vents all the air? Most of your actions are handled in a free-form manner, with the GM only loosely tracking time. When timing and the order of actions become important, *Eclipse Phase* uses action turns to measure time in scenes. The type of actions you can make break down into four types—automatic, quick, complex, and task actions.

ACTION TURNS

An action turn represents roughly 3 seconds. During each action turn you may undertake one of the following:

- 1 complex action and 1 quick action
- 1 task action and 1 quick action
- 3 quick actions

Additionally, you may take any number of automatic actions per action turn. The GM may allow you to make additional quick actions, depending on their nature. Basic movement such as walking or running is an automatic action.

AUTOMATIC ACTIONS

Automatic actions are always “on,” reflexive, or otherwise require no effort to initiate. This includes base and full movement.

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

QUICK ACTIONS

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

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

COMPLEX ACTIONS

Complex actions require a few seconds of concentration and effort.

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

TASK ACTIONS

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

For task actions with timeframes of one day or longer, it is assumed that eight hours of effort equals one day of work. If you spend more or less time per day, adjust the time taken accordingly.

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

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

CHARACTER STATS

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

EGO vs. MORPH

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

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

APTITUDES

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

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

APTITUDE CHECKS

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

- Cognition Check:** Recall a memory, memorize a number, or resist mental manipulation.
- Intuition Check:** Evaluate a situation, see through an illusion, or grok alien intentions.
- Reflexes Check:** Catch a thrown object, balance, avoid blinding glare, or stop yourself from falling.
- Savvy Check:** Evaluate a social situation, express empathy, follow etiquette, or resist social manipulation.
- Somatics Check:** Exercise brute strength, endure hardships, or break free from grapples.
- Willpower Check:** Keep your composure, steel your resolve, or resist fear or emotional manipulation.

SAMPLE APTITUDES & DERIVED STATS

COG	INT	REF	SAV	SOM	WIL
20 ⁶⁰ ₆₀	15 ⁴⁵ ₄₅	10 ³⁰ ₃₀	20 ⁶⁰ ₆₀	10 ³⁰ ₃₀	20 ⁶⁰ ₆₀

Initiative: 5 • Lucidity: 40 • Trauma Threshold: 8 • Insanity Rating: 80

SKILLS

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

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

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

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

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

Free Fall (SOM): Physical activity in microgravity.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Know (COG/INT, Field): Specialized knowledge in an art, hobby, scientific pursuit, or professional trade.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MORPH

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

Movement Rate: Walker 4/20

Ware: Access Jacks, **TGP** Anti-Glare, **TGP** Claws, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, **TGP** Industrial Armor, Lidar, Mesh Inserts, Mnemonics, **TGP** Muscle Augmentation, **TMP** Neurachem, Puppet Sock

Morph Traits: Exotic Morphology (Level 1)

Notes: Light Frame (Armor 6/4)

POOLS

Your character acquires points in several pools during character creation and upon sleaving into a morph. These pools reflect your character's transhuman capabilities: augmented intelligence, enhanced physical prowess, elevated charisma.

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

- *Insight* pool is linked to mental capabilities: Cognition, Intuition, and their linked skills.
- *Moxie* pool is linked to social interactions: Savvy, Willpower, and linked skills. It may also be used for Rep and Infection Tests.
- *Vigor* pool is linked to physical efforts: Reflexes, Somatics, and their linked skills.
- *Flex* is a wild-card pool. It can be used to affect dice rolls for any tests and for narrative control.

USING POOLS

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

- **Before Roll:** Ignore all modifiers to the test.
- **Before Roll:** Add +20 to the test's target number.
- **After Roll:** Flip-flop a d100 roll. For example, 83 becomes 38.
- **After Roll:** Upgrade a success to a superior success (or one to two).
- **After Roll:** Downgrade a critical failure to a regular failure.

RECHARGING POOLS

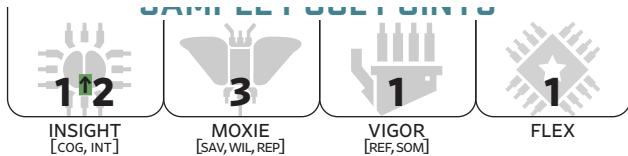
A recharge action recovers spent pool points. While recharging, you may only engage in light activity: eating, talking, taking watch, etc. If a recharge is interrupted all invested time is lost.

- **Short (2/day):** A task action with a timeframe of 10 minutes. Restores 1d6 pool points; you decide how to allocate them.
- **Long (1/day):** A 4-hour task action that recharges your pools to full value. You can't increase a pool above its original rating.

INSIGHT

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

- **Take the Initiative:** Go first in an action turn if you are only taking mental or mesh actions and no physical movement. If multiple characters choose this option, they go in Initiative order before everyone else.
- **Extra Action:** Take an extra complex mental or mesh action (or 2 quick actions) in an action turn. These actions may only be taken after everyone else has gone. If multiple characters choose this option, they go in Initiative order *after* everyone else has taken their turn.
- **Acquire a Clue:** Gain a hint or lead through investigation, research, or analysis of the facts at hand, without needing to make a test.



MOXIE

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

- **Ignore Trauma:** Ignore the effects of 1 trauma for 24 hours or until your next recharge ►[above](#).
- **Refresh Rep:** Restore rep network favors at a cost of 1 point for a Minor favor and 2 points for a Moderate favor. Major favors cannot be refreshed this way.
- **Acquire a Clue:** Get a tip or lead by gathering information via social interactions without needing to make a test.
- **Negate Gaffe:** Ignore a player's social gaffe that the character wouldn't make.



VIGOR

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

- **Take the Initiative:** Go first in an action turn. If multiple characters choose this option, they go in Initiative order before everyone else.
- **Extra Action:** Take an extra complex physical action (or 2 quick actions) in an action turn. This action may only be taken after everyone else has gone. If multiple characters choose this option, they go in Initiative order *after* everyone else has taken their turn.
- **Ignore Wound:** Ignore the effects of 1 wound for 24 hours or until your next recharge ►[above](#).



FLEX

Your wild-card pool may also be used for narrative control:

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



INITIATIVE & ORDER OF ACTIONS

The order of actions between characters within a turn is determined by *Initiative*. Your Initiative stat is equal to $(\text{Intuition} + \text{Reflexes}) \div 5$.

INITIATIVE ORDER

At the beginning of an action sequence, every character rolls for initiative. Roll 1d6 and add your Initiative stat. The highest total goes first, followed by the other characters in descending order. In the event of a tie, characters go simultaneously (or resolve by highest REF or roll-off). In Initiative order, declare and resolve the actions you will take that action turn. Once everyone has gone, a new action turn starts, using the same Initiative order. When it is no longer necessary to minutely keep track of who goes when, you can drop out of Initiative order and return to free-form game time.

TAKING THE INITIATIVE

You may spend Vigor ▶7 to go first in Initiative order. You may also spend Insight to go first if you are only taking mental or mesh actions and no physical movement. You return to your regular Initiative roll order the next round. If multiple characters spend Insight or Vigor, they go in Initiative order first, followed by everyone else.

DELAYING ACTIONS

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

Once you act, your place in the Initiative order in subsequent turns becomes the count on which you took the delayed action. If you delay past the end of the turn and into the next, your Initiative order will change, but you will only get your delayed action that turn.

If multiple characters delay and choose to act at the same time, the one with the lowest Initiative roll must declare their action first, and the higher Initiative character can choose to interrupt or go after.

EXTRA ACTIONS

You may spend Vigor or Insight ▶7 for an extra physical or mental action each turn. These extra complex or quick actions take place at the end of the turn, after everyone else has gone. If multiple characters take extra actions, they are handled in Initiative order. You cannot take more than two extra actions in a single action turn.

COMBAT SUMMARY

Combat is an opposed test.

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

RESOLVING COMBAT

Roleplaying games are about creating drama and adventure, and that often leads to adrenaline and conflict. It's important for the GM to detail the action in a way that everyone can visualize, whether that means using a map and miniatures, software, a dry-erase board, or quick sketches on a piece of paper.

STEP 1: DECLARE ATTACK

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

STEP 2: DECLARE DEFENSE

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

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

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

Psi Defense: Psi sleights are resisted with WIL Check.

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

STEP 3: APPLY MODIFIERS

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

STEP 4: MAKE OPPOSED TEST

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

STEP 5: DETERMINE RESULT

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

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

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

Attacker Critical Success: If the attacker hits with a critical, the damage is doubled.

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

STEP 6: ROLL DAMAGE

Every attack has a Damage Value (DV). If the attack hits, roll the dice and total the results. Superior/critical results may increase your damage dice. Some attacks have additional effects, as noted in the description and weapon/ammo traits. These may call for the defender to make additional tests.

STEP 7: APPLY ARMOR

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

Combat Modifiers

These modifiers apply to all types of attacks.

Situation	Modifiers
Attacker Running	-20
Superior Position	+20
Wounded	-10 per Wound
Called Shot (Superior Success Needed)	-10
Very Small Target (Mouse or Insect)	-30
Small Target (Child-Sized)	-10
Large Target (Car Sized)	+10
Very Large Target (Side of a Barn)	+30
Visibility Impaired (Minor: Glare, Light Smoke, Dim Light)	-10
Visibility Impaired (Major: Heavy Smoke, Dark)	-20
Blind Attacks	50% Miss Chance

Note that armor-piercing attacks reduce the AV by half.

STEP 8: APPLY DAMAGE

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

STEP 9: DETERMINE WOUNDS

If the inflicted damage, less armor, from a single attack equals or exceeds the defender's Wound Threshold, they suffer one or more *wounds*. A wound is scored for each multiple of the Wound Threshold that the damage exceeds. For example, against Wound Threshold 7, 1 wound is inflicted for every 7 points of damage inflicted at once (14 damage inflicts 2 wounds, 21 damage inflicts 3 wounds, etc.) Wounds represent more serious injuries and apply modifiers and other effects to the character.

RANGED COMBAT

Ranged weapons have one or more firing modes:

Single Shot (SS): Single-shot weapons only fire one shot per action turn (no matter how many actions you take).

Semi-Automatic (SA): Semi-automatic weapons are capable of quick, repeated fire. You shoot once with each complex action.

Burst Fire (BF): Burst-fire weapons release a burst of shots with a single trigger pull. You can shoot a burst against a single target (concentrated fire) or against two targets who are standing within one meter of each other. In the case of concentrated fire, you can choose either a +10 modifier to hit or increase the DV by +1d10. In the case of two adjacent targets, make a single attack test against both. Firing a burst is a complex action. Each burst uses up 3 shots.

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

Ranged Modifiers

These modifiers apply to ranged combat attacks.

Situation	Modifiers
Aim (Quick Action)	+10
Aim (Complex Action)	+30
Attacker Behind/Coming Out of Cover	-10
Attacker in Melee	-10 (-30 long weapons)
Attacker not Using Smartlink or Laser Sight	-10
Attacker Firing Multiple Weapons at Once	-20 cumulative (after first)
Defender behind Minor Cover	-10
Defender behind Moderate Cover	-20
Defender behind Major Cover	-30
Defender Hidden	-30 and/or 50% miss chance
Defender Prone and at Range (10+ m)	-10
Firing Mode	
Single-Shot/Semi-Auto	+0
Burst Fire (Concentrated)	+10 or +1d10 DV
Full Auto (Concentrated)	+30 or +2d10 DV
Indirect Fire	-20
Range	
Point-Blank (2 m)	+10
Close (10 m)	+0
Range	-10
Beyond Range	-10 per Range increment -1d10 DV for kinetic weapons

make a single attack test against all of them. Full-auto fire is a complex action. Firing in full-auto mode consumes 10 shots.

RANGE

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

- Point-Blank:** 2 meters or less. +10 to hit.
Cone weapons inflict +1d10 DV.
- Close:** 10 meters or less. No modifier to hit.
Cone weapons inflict +1d10 DV.
- Range:** Up to the weapon's range rating in meters. -10 to hit.
- Beyond Range:** An additional -10 modifier per range multiple. For example, a target at 200 meters with a range 50 weapon would be -40 to hit. Additionally, kinetic and cone weapons hit targets beyond range at -1d10 DV, unless in vacuum.

Range and Gravity: The ranges listed assume Earth-like gravity conditions (1 g). At different gravity conditions, divide the range rating for kinetic, seeker, spray, and thrown weapons by the gravity. For example, a weapon with range 100 at 1 g would have a range of 200 meters in 0.5 g and a range of 50 meters at 2 g. In micro-gravity/zero g, the maximum range is effectively line of sight. Beam weapons are not affected by gravity.

Beam Weapons and Vacuum: Beam weapons fare much better in non-atmospheric conditions. Maximum beam weapon range in vacuum is effectively line of sight.



USING THE MESH

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

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

ONLINE RESEARCH

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

A few examples of how Research can be used:

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

HACKING

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

Brute-Force

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

Careful Probing

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

System Subversion and Defense

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

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

MUSES

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

MOVEMENT

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

MOVEMENT RATE

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

MOVEMENT ACTIONS

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

Base Move (Automatic)

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

Full Move (Automatic)

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

REPUTATION

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

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

USING REP SCORES

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

Rep Limits

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

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

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

TERMINOLOGY

Every player character knows these words:

Backup: A copy of a person's mind.

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

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

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

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

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

Fa Jing: A massive conglomerate.

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

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

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

Mesh: The omnipresent wireless data network.

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

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

Nanoswarm: A mass of tiny nanobots.

Psychosurgery: Modification or repairs to the ego.

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

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

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

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

Triad: A criminal cartel.

Utility Fog: A nanoswarm capable of replicating physical structures.



ACRIMONY

Firewall returns to Kongyùn to look for a TITAN artifact and to find what happened to Chi's last instance.

SYNOPSIS

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

SITREP

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

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

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

THE CHARACTERS

This scenario assumes the players are using the Firewall Rimward Ops team—Chi, Killjoy, Njal, and Zahiri. The players may use any of the other sample characters provided in the core book, or their own characters, but one must be chosen to take the role of Chi as the missing sentinel (preferably the one with the highest Persuade skill). Groups larger than four may be used, but the gamemaster (GM) should increase the difficulty level. The scenario assumes all PCs are members of Firewall.

MISSION THEATER: KONGYÙN

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

Kongyùn is roughly 9 kilometers in each dimension. The asteroid has three conjoined beehive habitats; Kongyùn Spaceport, which is being gradually scrapped; New City, with nearly 2,000 ex-Fa Jing employees surviving in a space that once held 8,000; and Fa Jing's secretive Lion installation. The asteroid is riddled with both public and private access tunnels (some in vacuum). All three sections are connected by an intra-asteroid tram. The entire asteroid is in microgravity, with limited power and mesh infrastructure. Utilities and heat are completely absent in abandoned tunnels and spotty elsewhere.



Travel Across Kongyùn → An end-to-end tram trip takes 40 minutes.

Walking/pulling across the asteroid by a marked route (i.e., New City to Lion) takes 4 hours. Unmarked tunnels wind and dead-end; every kilometer traveled takes $1d6 + 2$ hours.



Spotty Mesh/Grid → Any tests relying on the local mesh or power grid suffer a -10 modifier in public areas.

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

THE SITUATION ON KONGYÙN

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

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

Fa Jing never discovered the artifact. Their activities on the asteroid are limited to last-minute shipping and preparing their Lion installation as part of an outer-system early-detection network for spacefaring threats. Due to the sensitivity of the project, Fa Jing will capture anyone intruding physically or virtually in their areas, but otherwise are not involved in the conspiracy.

The triad members on Kongyùn also have no knowledge of the artifact. They are aware of Bves and his thugs, but consider them a simple semi-organized militia. Both parties have an unspoken agreement to look the other way and are careful to steer clear of each other's affairs.

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

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

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

MAJOR NPCs

Here is a quick summary of the key NPCs; see ▶24 for stats.

Mariposa Chen

Triad Boss

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

Josef Bves

Conspiracy Leader

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

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

Luke Best

Hacker

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

Chang'e Jade

Amateur Historian/Journalist

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

Dr. Ju Guo

Fa Jing Manager

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

Constable Yu

Fa Jing Security

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

FIT TO DEPART

This section details how to start the adventure off. If playing with the included sample characters, you can jump right to the *Mission Briefing*. If playing with your own PCs, start with *Getting In*.

GETTING IN

If the PCs are not members of Firewall, they can still be roped into the adventure by fabricating a reason for one of them to visit Kongyùn (preferably the most curious PC), having them go missing, and proceeding from there. This will alter the backstory and some of the details of the plot, so keep the following in mind:

- PCs that attempt to go through official investigation channels first will find that Fa Jing simply does not care and Kongyùn lacks any authorities or good samaritans who will take an interest. In fact, the locals will briskly brush off any attempts to look into it, with the exception of Chang'e Jade (who may or may not have interacted with the missing PC). To delve into the matter, the PCs will need to visit in person.
- If the missing PC was not delivering anything to (or otherwise involved with) the triads, the GM will need to invent a reason to involve them. Most likely they will take an interest in any strangers and consider them a potential threat, much like Fa Jing security.
- If the PCs are not Firewall, replace the Opposed Tests ▶5 with a hidden Confessor storage locker that is similarly equipped which the PCs stumble across in their explorations.

MISSION BRIEFING

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

- Alright, this is an emergency investigation. Ten days ago, Chi disappeared while delivering a payoff to a contact, a triad boss — Mariposa Chen. She was instrumental on Operation Earwig. Mariposa knows of Firewall, but is not a trusted asset.
- She currently resides on a mid-sized asteroid called Kongyùn.
- We know Chi arrived on the station then disappeared. Mariposa reports they never made contact. Chi is, of course, back here with us, resleeved from the backup they left before departing.
- Kongyùn used to be a Fa Jing mine. It's mostly abandoned, except for a Fa Jing outpost called Lion at one end, and scavengers and miners pulling off old Fa Jing equipment at the other. The Lion project doesn't seem dangerous to Firewall, but it's well protected so probably best to give it space. It's possible Mariposa knows something she isn't revealing so you might want to start there. Whatever the cause, we need to determine what happened to our sentinel, while continuing to protect Firewall operations and secrecy. Firewall has no other assets or stakes in the habitat, so you are authorized to act as you see fit.
- I have arranged transit on board the fast supply shuttle, the *Red Coronet*, leaving in two hours. At Kongyùn you'll be at the GoodRest motel. Sorry, all the five-star rooms were booked.
- You'll notice on your maps, we've marked a hidden scratch space of gear you can access in an emergency. Kongyùn has tight security checks, so no weapons, fabbers, or combat morphs will be permitted past immigration. Pack appropriately. That also means we will not be smuggling in a new payment to Mariposa. If she never got it, we'll arrange something in a month.
- Don't let her distract you from your mission.

If the characters ask about the operation Mariposa is being paid for, Eludere will tell them the operation is out of scope for the current investigation and they have not been cleared for that information. She can share the payment is a high-end nanoswarm hive. Eludere doesn't know anything about Fa Jing's Project Lion. If they inquire on the Eye (Firewall's internal social network), all anyone knows is that external pictures of the location show communications dishes.



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

- ▶ Kongyùn was formerly a Fa Jing mining colony. It is still inhabited by a large (roughly 2,000) civilian population.
- ▶ Chi was sent to Kongyùn ten days ago to deliver a payment to a Firewall triad contact, Mariposa Chen.
- ▶ Chi disappeared soon after, and Mariposa reports she is still awaiting payment.
- ▶ The PC named Chi in the party was restored from a recent backup copy of Chi's mind and sleeved into a new body.

GEARING UP

Arimony is designed to be an introductory adventure with the sample characters using just the morphs and gear on their sheets.

In an ongoing campaign, you may use the *Eclipse Phase Second Edition* rules: *Acquiring Gear* ▶312 EP2 and *Acquiring Morphs* ▶290 EP2.

The recommended MP for this mission is 6 and the recommended GP is 10 (this is what the sample characters have). Firewall does not see a need to heavily equip the PCs for a simple, low-priority investigation in a remote locale. If the GM opts to increase these allowances, the difficulty level of the scenario should also be raised.

TRAVEL

Fa Jing controls the only legitimate farcasting facility, and Eludere wants to avoid the triad darkcasting services until Firewall can confirm Mariposa was not involved in Chi's disappearance. The party has been provided transit on the fast transport, the *Red Coronet*. Eludere also gives the team fake identities as scrap resellers.



Scanning the Asteroid → **Interface Test** → The sentinels are only passengers on the ship, but if they hack or acquire access to the ship's sensors, they can identify Kongyùn's ports, a few minor surface installations, and eight small satellites. A superior success (33+ on the roll) provides asteroid density information. It is heavily mined and geologically unstable, with tunnels and vacuum pockets not listed on the public maps. With two superior successes (66+) or a critical success, the PCs identify the satellites as part of a radio or IR telescope.

Arrival

When the *Red Coronet*'s shuttle docks at New City, everyone disembarking will need to undergo a full scan for hazardous materials and weapons. Any lethal weapons, combat morphs, or unauthorized equipment (such as nanofabricators) must be left on the ship.



Smuggling In Gear → **Infiltrate Test at -30** → There is no modifier for items with the Concealable trait. Success gets the gear in.

The PCs' berths are reserved for the return trip in four days, so they can return to the *Red Coronet* and safely stow gear there. However, Fa Jing, the triads, or the Confessors may block them from departing if they appear to be investigating things they shouldn't.

NEW CITY

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

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Not far outside of the port, the characters are stopped by Constable Eli Yu of Fa Jing security ▶13. Though polite and friendly, he is firm in his questioning. Yu interrogates the PCs about their business on the station, where they are staying, and who they are meeting with. He is openly curious; outsiders are rare, as there is very little to draw people here.

Yu's primary concern is protecting Fa Jing's interests. If any characters have hypercorp affiliations, he will dig into the details. He is particularly on alert for any sign they may have an interest in Fa Jing's Lion project or might be spies or anarchist saboteurs. However, he is also interested in keeping peace on the station. He knows the locals are unfriendly to outsiders, and will do his best to avert any conflicts between the PCs and Bves or the triads.

Once Yu gets satisfactory answers, he emphasizes that the PCs should finish their business quickly and leave. If he has any reason to suspect the PCs, he will monitor their progress (remotely, via the mesh, when possible). If Yu detects any resistance or belligerence, he will subject them to a second weapons search and seize anything that looks appealing. He can call upon additional security personnel and bots if need be, though they will take some time (1d6 minutes) to arrive.



Recognition → Kinesics 50 Test for Yu (Chi may oppose this with Deceive) →
If successful, Yu recognizes Chi in their new morph.



Recruiting Yu → Persuade Test, opposed by SAV Check 45 →
Though such investigations are beyond the bounds of his assignment, if the PCs explain they are investigating Chi's disappearance and ask for help, Yu can be convinced to provide minor help or perhaps even material support with Fa Jing resources (such as reviewing surveillance footage or sending bots to search public tunnels).

GOODREST MOTEL AND INN

Each PC has a $2 \times 1 \times 1$ meter capsule room reserved for them at the GoodRest Motel. The motel also offers limited charging and nutrition stations for guests. The motel is mostly vacant, storing more broken morphs awaiting refit than living people. It is managed by a stodgy manager named Lee who is happy to take the PCs' money, but does not recall any details on anyone who stayed there previously. Eludere can confirm this is the same place Chi stayed. If they get access to Chi's room, they will find it has been cleaned and sterilized.



Hotel Mesh → The motel mesh is weak (-10 on all intrusion and interface actions) and actively monitored by a hostile hacker, Best (▶13 and ▶24).



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



Checking Cameras → Research Test → Local public camera archives confirm Chi checked in then left, still carrying Mariposa's payment in a steel case (see *Mesh Research* ▶16).

LOCAL CHARM

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

The local language is a pidgin of Cantonese, French, and English, with technical jargon and local references added liberally and a local accent that swallows words, making the results of real-time mesh translation a bit interesting.



Recognition → Kinesics 30 Test for locals (Chi may oppose with Deceive) →
If Chi is recognized from their previous visit, Chang'e Jade (▶13 and ▶24) will seek them out, chastising them for ignoring her, before attaching herself to their arm like an old girlfriend. Mariposa will also seek a word about the delivery.



Stirring Up Trouble → If the sentinels get too nosy with questions or reveal they are investigating Chi's disappearance, the locals refuse to talk, walk away, or bluntly tell the PCs to leave. Mariposa will escalate threats about the delivery and Bves will attempt to intimidate the PCs into leaving.

ADJUSTING THE DIFFICULTY

Pulling Punches

The largest problem the PCs will face is being outmatched and outnumbered by Bves's Confessor thugs. Provide the PCs with some extra weapons or bodies (maybe Mariposa lends them some of her enforcers) to even the odds. Alternatively, a timeline intervention from Fa Jing or the triads can save them if a fight goes bad—both parties are watching, after all.

The artifact at the center of Kongyùn and the utility fog are meant to be nigh-unstoppable. Dealing with this no-win situation is the heart of the scenario; it's how they work around it that matters.

Heavier Hitting

To engage hard mode, give Bves some more thugs and have them interfere with the PCs more often. Don't forget that Bves forks himself, so even if he is taken out, he'll be back.

Another option is to increase the involvement of the triads and/or Fa Jing. If either gets wind that the PCs are on to something, they may attempt to beat them to it or may be waiting for them when (if) they escape the artifact chamber. The *Resolution* section ▶22 discusses how these factions will respond to learning about the artifact.

LEADS AND CONTACTS

Once arrived and settled, the PCs can pursue the following leads:

- Research security feeds, news, or speak to *Local Journalists* (►below).
- Contact Mariposa Chen (►below)
- Check the Firewall scratch space (►17)
- Explore New City for leads (►17)
- Explore the tunnels for signs of Chi (►18)

MESH RESEARCH

It is easy to access public AR maps of the asteroid (no test needed).

 **Better Maps** → **Research Test** → Maps showing the private and forgotten tunnels are harder to find and don't show everything.

Public camera feed archives (no test needed) show Chi taking a steel case from the motel to the Kongyùn tram, then from the tram stop to the Fa Jing Lion installation, where they hand the case to a guard, and return, by tram, to the ship.

 **Chi's Movements** → **Research Test** → PCs can find online posts made by Chang'e Jade that track Chi's last actions in the habitat (move to *Local Journalists* ►below). These do not match the video.

 **Video Artifacts** → **Interface Test** → If successful, PCs spot digital artifacts on the video from editing. Examining the artifacts suggests most of the images of Chi were forged. Any original videos of Chi's final movements have been removed.

LOCAL JOURNALISTS

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

Several local x-casters document news and events, but only one addresses missing persons and conspiracies: Chang'e Jade, reporter and amateur historian. Her "State of Mine" stream documents station history, unsolved mysteries, and sordid speculation. She has posted extensively about Chi and even led limited search efforts.

 **Honeypot** → Unknown to Jade, Bves tolerates her activities only because Best has thoroughly hacked her mesh inserts and accounts and monitors her closely.

Jade is eager to meet new arrivals, either online or in person. If the PCs spend more than a few days on Kongyùn without visiting her or if she discovers Chi is back on the station, Jade will seek them out. She is sleeved in a small dragonfly morph. Her speech, much like her behavior, is fast, fidgety, inquisitive, and prone to over-exaggeration. Jade already knows the PCs' cover identities. She will answer their questions, but for each response she gets to ask them one about their business, motivations, insights, and so on. Jade does her research; if she suspects they are lying, she will stop sharing.

 **Getting Chang'e's Help** → **Persuade Test opposed by Jade's WIL Check of 45** → If recruited, she will lead the PCs to where Chi was last reported seen (see *Circling the Fire* ►19).

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

MARIPOSA CHEN

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

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

Mariposa does not initially know the PCs are from Firewall. Any requests from them for information will require a favor. If they choose to reveal their identities, Mariposa expects to be paid what she is owed immediately and will attempt to hold the characters until they confess where the payment is.

 **Placating Mariposa** → **Persuade Test opposed by WIL Check of 60** → If successful, Mariposa will let them leave without issue and give them 12 hours to recover her hive. With a superior success, she provides the PCs with resources to help find what happened to Chi. With a superior failure, she calls in triad enforcers ►25 to emphasize the urgency of the situation, who will beat two members of the party with shock batons. Mariposa doesn't have the people for a decisive victory against an armed party. If fighting breaks out, she will disengage from unfavorable odds.

Mariposa made her own inquiries when Chi disappeared, but found little. The two had been talking online, planning a clandestine meeting, but hadn't yet met directly. Mariposa searched Chi's room and found some extra smart clothes, tools, and a few other personal effects, which she resold.

 **Enforcer Help** → **G-Rep Moderate Favor** → Mariposa can be convinced to lend an enforcer to help the PCs navigate Kongyùn. This enforcer will have orders not to engage with the Confessors or Fa Jing security in any way.

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

FA JING SECURITY

Infiltration

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

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

The airlocks are locked. Gaining access requires a Hardware: Electronics Test at -20 (timeframe 1 minute), hacking (resisted with Infosec 40), direct assault (AV 25/15, DR 150, WT 30), or the biometric handprint of a Fa Jing employee.

FA JING

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

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

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

Dr. Guo ▶13 is driven by her own curiosity and will pry into the sentinels' intentions, even sharing information of her own, though she will stay quiet about Project Lion. Depending on how the conversation goes, she may run searches for Chi on Fa Jing's private security feeds. This will provide the original footage of Chi following Bves and his armed crew into the tunnels (see *The Situation on Kongyùn* ▶13), but nothing more (Bves has removed Fa Jing sensors from areas near the artifact). She is aware of the asteroid's many disappearances, but believes poor safety is responsible. She is also aware of the local influence of Bves and Chen; though she communicates with neither, she will avoid antagonizing either unless necessary.

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

Fa Jing largely serves as a distractor in this scenario; some players are likely to jump to the conclusion that the secretive local hypercorp is up to no good. Fa Jing's Lion Project and other presence here, however, is largely unrelated and boring. Play up Fa Jing's suspiciousness only so far as to keep the players guessing and on their toes. If the PCs spend too much effort delving into Fa Jing, push some encounters with Bves and the Confessors to steer things back on course.

Hacking

A character may attempt to hack the Fa Jing network to collect information on Fa Jing operations or Chi's activities (see *Luke Best stats* ▶24). Infosec Tests are opposed by the facility's security AI with Infosec 40. If they fail, the network locks down, terminating all outside connections for six hours. On a superior fail, the hacker is directed towards a honeypot data node holding fake data. With two superior fails, they are also traced; Fa Jing dispatches a security crew that will arrive at the hacker's location in 5–20 minutes to subdue and interrogate them.

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

FIREWALL SCRATCH SPACE

The map Eludere provided shows the Firewall scratch space is hidden inside a concealed crevasse in the basalt walls of an unlit tunnel, a kilometer from inhabited space. Inside, the PCs find a small cache of gear ▶17, Chi's missing steel case, and a note. The case is locked (Armor 6/4, DR 40), but Chi's backup can guess the password with a successful INT Check. It contains an advanced, industrial disassembler swarm hive — Mariposa's payment.

The note says: "Someone is preying on the locals. I'm holding the triad payment until I know it's not them. I'll report back as soon as I have something." It is marked with the X-like Greek symbol for chi.

If the PCs are not part of Firewall, treat this as a Confessor gear cache that the PCs have a chance to stumble across when exploring the tunnels: either making a Perceive Test at -30 or making use of a t-ray emitter and enhanced vision at the right place and time to detect a hollow cavity in an otherwise unremarkable tunnel wall.

Gear Cache

The Firewall operatives find the following stashed gear:

- 2 doses of kick, a combat drug. It provides biomorphs +1 Vigor pool for 8 hours.
- 2 applications of healing spray (for biomorphs) and 1 of repair spray (for synthmorphs and equipment). Each is single use and repairs 1d10 damage an hour for 12 hours.
- A cleaner nanoswarm that can sweep and polish a room, which is handy to remove forensic traces. The swarm can be re-used multiple times for 5 days of use.
- A railgun pistol (DV 2d10, SA/BF/FA, Range 45, Armor-Piercing; reduce armor by half).
- The disassembler swarm once deployed will take apart any object (including characters!) in a 10-meter diameter sphere area; it can be programmed to target or ignore specific types of matter. It inflicts 1d10 DV per turn, destroying armor first. It is primarily intended to function as a precise industrial mining tool, but it can be used for other creative purposes. This hive can produce a new swarm or replenish an existing one once per day.

GMs should add any gear the PCs need (especially if they are struggling or you have increased the challenge of the scenario).

EXPLORATION & ENCOUNTERS

Eventually the characters are likely to explore New City or the tunnels of Kongyùn. This section details what they find as well as several encounters the GM can use as needed to move the plot forward.

NEW CITY LEGWORK

Attempts to question the locals will be met with closed-mouth neutrality at best. No one remembers Chi and few care to deal with outsiders. The best luck the PCs will have is a local bar that Chi visited, the *Dust Breather*. Some drinks or minor favors will get a few locals to remember that Chi was there and was asking lots of questions about Bves, the triads, Fa Jing, and other things. People will also remember that Chi spent a couple of nights here talking intimately with Chang'e Jade.



Next → After the PCs have gotten a feel for New City, they will see Bves at work as described in *Confession Time* ▶ below.

VACANT HALLWAYS, EMPTY SPACES

The PCs may choose to explore Kongyùn hoping to uncover clues. The tunnels themselves form a dense three-dimensional tangle; they are easy to get lost in, even with maps.



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



Bves Lies Waiting → The first time the PCs leave the inhabited portions of Kongyùn, they will be stopped by Bves; see *Confrontation* ▶ next column.

CONFESSTION TIME

If the PCs spend some time in New City, they are likely to come across the Confessors, led by Bves. If Bves sees the PCs, he will stare them down and tell them they are not welcome here. If Bves is not interrupted, his posse enters an XP store and seizes a stock boy by the arms. Bves addresses the stock boy in a loud voice, "Shamsu heiroah yanaksha." These words mean nothing to the PCs (they are expected to trigger a response from infected individuals). The terrified boy responds, "Iltubzuga, isthazuhma." Bves and his group

then drag the boy into the tunnels. Onlookers cry or stare, but do not interrupt. They take the boy a short distance to where Bves has a guarded psychosurgery lab. Here they will amputate portions of the boy's personality in order to excise infection. After a few hours, the boy will be released, remembering nothing about the incident.

The PCs may attempt to intervene. Bves does not want to fight, but he is attempting to rescue the boy from a terminal infection (though he will not say so). If hostilities seem imminent or the PCs attack, a patrol of Fa Jing security guards (perhaps including Constable Yu) arrive and attempt to de-escalate. They command Bves to release the boy and leave. Bves will comply and the gaurds will escort the boy away, keeping the PCs away from him too. The Confessors will eventually grab the boy again, when things have died down and the time is right.

If the characters choose to track Bves over several days, he will eventually return to the artifact as part of his normal patrol for stragglers (see *Circling the Fire* ▶ 19).

CONFRONTATION

Bves and the Confessors will be watching the PCs. The first time they attempt to access a private tunnel or one not listed on the public maps, Bves and a group of his Confessors will emerge from the darkness and shout, "Shamsu heiroah yanaksha." Seeing the characters aren't infected, he continues, "You have no business here. This is our home, our ways. Leave now or stay forever."

Bves will not permit the PCs to proceed down the tunnels and will fight if attacked. If this turns into a stalemate, after a few minutes a pair of Fa Jing security guards (perhaps including Constable Yu) will arrive to de-escalate, asking the PCs to find a different route to their destination. If the sentinels leave, Bves's group will clear out after ten minutes.

UNWANTED COMPANY

Once it is clear the PCs are searching for Chi, Best will take the time to hack their mesh inserts using careful probing (*Hacking* ▶ 10).



Best's Hacking → **Best's Infosec 70 opposed by the PC's Infosec (or their muse's Infosec 30)** → The GM should roll in secret; the players' should be asked to make their opposed rolls, but shouldn't be told what it is for unless they succeed and Best fails. If successful, Best will create backdoors to monitor the PCs and use against them later (see the *Hacked* sidebar ▶ 19).

Tunnel Exploration

Result

d10 Roll

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1-2 | Nada. Hours of exploring discover miles of abandoned tunnels, sealed off without power, mesh, or fresh air. The characters return with only rock dust. |
| 3-4 | Unmarked Lion Door. The PCs discover a door not on the public maps. The door is clearly a new addition, and is firmly locked (requiring a Hardware: Industrial Test at -10 to force open; AV 15/15, DR 100). If breached, the Fa Jing station goes on high alert and responds with 2 Fa Jing guards (use <i>Fa Jing Security</i> stats ▶ 25) who will attempt to capture or drive away any interlopers. Captured characters are taken to Dr. Guo (see <i>Fa Jing</i> ▶ 16). |
| 5-6 | Private Mines. The characters stumble into a privately owned (and defended) set of tunnels. The tunnels have air, but mesh and power is locked down (Interface at -10 to gain access). If the PCs are detected, they are confronted by a pair of Kongyùn miners who will demand they leave. If the sentinels start trouble, the miners call the local militia for backup — use <i>Confessors (Synthmorphs)</i> stats ▶ 25. |
| 7-9 | Remote Trouble. The PCs find a section of forgotten tunnels, left without power, mesh, or atmosphere. Several hours from the populated areas, a band of five locals confront them, telling them they have no business on Kongyùn and threatening to hurt them. If the locals feel they have an advantage, they will use non-deadly force to rough up and rob the characters (use <i>Confessors (Synthmorphs)</i> stats ▶ 25). They will respond to force with force. |
| 10+ | Chi's Breadcrumbs. While exploring a series of tunnels not on the AR maps, the PCs detect a taggant nanobot set to respond to Chi's mesh ID. Proceed to <i>Circling the Fire</i> ▶ 19. |

HACKED

If Best previously hacked the PCs' mesh inserts (*Unwanted Company* ▶ previous page), he will use the backdoors he installed to directly interfere with the PCs when the Confessors attack (*Save Strangers; Kill Strangers* ▶ below).

Best has crafted a few audio transmissions that mimic the PCs' voices, such as "there's too many of them!" and "we need to surrender!" Hacked characters will hear it over their mesh as though another PC said it, but will recognize it as false with a successful Perceive Test opposed by Best's Interface 70. Best may also barrage the PCs with augmented reality pop-ups and noises, inflicting a -20 penalty for distraction.

Best will next attempt to brute-force hack the cyberbrain of any synthmorphs in the party by rolling his Infosec

of 70 with a -30 modifier. The PC's muse (or the PC themselves, if they are foregoing combat actions to defend their mesh) can roll an opposed Infosec Test to keep Best out. If Best gains access to the synthmorph's cyberbrain, he will use his next action to make another opposed Infosec Test to shut it down. If successful, the PC will be unable to act until they reboot, which takes 1d6 action turns. The PC can choose to prolong this shutdown by 1d6 action turns.

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

Meanwhile, Bves will try to remove any Kongyùn natives from the party. If they are in public spaces or get separated from the PCs, two of Bves's people will pull the NPCs aside and convince them to disappear for a while. If the characters keep the NPCs within sight, Bves won't get an opportunity to confront them. Instead, he will send warnings over the mesh that they need to leave the characters.

If the PCs attract the attention of Fa Jing, they will be monitored via the mesh and public sensors. A pair of *gnat bots* ▶ 25 will follow them at a distance if they stray outside of public surveillance.

 **Spotting The Tail** → Perceive Test (-10 due to size), opposed by the bots' Infiltrate 30 → Spotted bots will keep a distance but still follow.

As the characters approach a particularly narrow switchback, Bves's team will remotely detonate three improvised explosive devices (IEDs). They are positioned with one at the turn, and one on either side, to hit the entire party.



Spotting The Devices → Perceive Test (-20 due to distraction) and Hardware:

Demolitions at -30 → The GM should roll these secretly for the PCs. Even if noticed, the devices appear as common junction boxes or sensor packages attached to the wall and are not unusual. Only if the Hardware Test succeeds are they identified as potential bombs.



IEDs → DV 3d10 + 6; PCs who identified the IEDs may make a Fray Test to reduce damage by half → The explosions fill the area with smoke and dust (-20 penalty to actions requiring vision).

Best, watching remotely, will immediately hack the party, using the backdoors he planted earlier (if that failed, he will initiate a new brute-force hacking attempt at -30, targeting synthmorphs first).

Ahead in the tunnel are six of Bves's soldiers (5 biomorphs and 1 synthmorph — Confessor stats are on ▶ 25), led by Bves himself. They attempt to pin the characters down at the curve. Behind the characters by 140 meters are a group of three more of Bves's people (2 biomorphs, 1 synthmorph), who will move forward 10 meters per turn. Both will attempt to pin the PCs where they can throw thermite at them, using their freezers to create cover and barricade the PCs in.



Freezer Foam → Hardens in 1 turn and provides moderate cover (-20). It has AV 5/10 and DUR of 20. It breaks down and degrades over a 12-hour period.

The Confessors will attack until the sentinels surrender or are incapacitated/killed. If the tide of battle turns, Bves's people will fall back, detonating additional explosives behind them and using freezer foam in an attempt to block the tunnels (and the PCs within).

During the battle, triad members traveling with the party will attempt to disengage, rather than attack their neighbors on behalf of strangers. Jade has no combat skills, but will try to help in other ways.

Finding Chi

Shortly past the combat zone, there is a radio taggant buried within the tunnel wall. If the PCs dig, they will find Chi's hidden corpse. Chi's head has been brutally smashed, but the rest of the body has been preserved in the vacuum.



Dead Friend → WIL Check at -30 → Those who fail are shaken and -10 to all actions for the next hour. For groups using the full *Eclipse Phase* rules, treat this as SV 1d6; SV 1d10/1 for Chi.

GLORY BE

PCs that survive the fight with the Confessors will find a bulkhead door a bit further down the tunnel, past Chi's buried corpse. The door has a large biohazard symbol in rust-red marking chalk, but is not locked. None of Bves's people will enter the room, even to chase the PCs.

THE CHAMBER

Past the door, the tunnel opens into a large, mist-filled chamber. The room is unlit and unpowered. The fog hangs in microgravity, slowly churning under its own power, obscuring the walls both high and low. The fog blocks all sensors, even enhanced vision and radar, past a few meters. The scene should be portrayed as creepy and ominous.

A radio taggant mote is on the inside of the door. A message, encrypted with Chi's private sig, can be read by any Firewall character: "Collect a sample, report back to Eludere to decide what to do with it."

The chamber is roughly spherical, about 100 meters across. The PCs can easily pull themselves along the walls all the way around, but there are no notable features aside from the bulkhead door. To uncover the chamber's secrets, the PCs will need to dive into the fog.

THE FOG

The fog is a massive self-replicating nanoswarm (►412, EP2). For stat purposes, it can be broken down into dozens of swarm units, each roughly 8 meters in diameter. These units follow the rules for swarms (►344, EP2), summarized here. Swarm units will not gang up on individual PCs; the fog is in no rush and is confident in its capabilities.



Analysis → Use of a nanodetector tool reveals the mist is a nanoswarm utility fog beyond transhuman technology—most likely of TITAN design. It does not appear to be hostile, but it does block radio communications.



Countermeasures → Any drones or nanoswarms sent into the fog suffer DV 1d10 per turn (reducing armor first) as the nanobots eat away at them.

PCs may kick off the wall to enter the fog, but only characters with thrust-vector movement will be able to maneuver in open space. Once free from the wall, the fog will gently influence their movement, directing PCs towards the artifact at the center of the chamber.

The fog can move objects at a rate of 2 meters per turn or negate movement of objects up to 15 meters per turn.

Fog units can modify themselves to perform any nanoswarm function (►345, EP2) and can nanofabricate most transhuman-equivalent tools and weapons given the proper time. With capabilities beyond transhuman nanoswarms, the utility fog nanobots can link together into a physical lattice in order to create large-scale physical forms and mechanisms.



Fog Attack → DV 1d6 per action turn (no test, anyone within swarm affected, armor protects but is reduced by the damage inflicted) → The fog targets eyes/sensors first, treat this effect as blinding (►216, EP2); targets must make a REF Check or be blinded for 1 action turn, plus one turn per superior success. Blind characters have an automatic 50% of missing their attacks and suffer -30 to all physical actions.



Evasive the Fog → REF Check → PCs that try to move outside of a swarm's volume must make a REF Check or the swarm sticks with/on them.



Damaging the Fog → The fog is immune to wounds and shock effects. Non-area attacks inflict 1 DV, area-effect weapons inflict half damage.

The fog will not leave the chamber, unless the artifact itself is somehow moved.

Self-Replicating Nanoswarm

Stress Test: SV 1d6

Initiative: 8 • **Fray:** 40 • **AV:** 0/0

WT: — • **DUR:** 70 • **DR:** 140

Insight ♦6 **Moxie** ♦0 **Vigor** ♦4 **Flex** ♦3

Disassembly: DV 1d6 per action turn to anything within swarm; armor protects but AV is reduced

Fuel-Air Explosive: The nanoswarm creates tiny floating bubbles filled with fuel, disperses uniformly over an area, and ignites it. DV 3d10 +5, uniform area effect (10 meters), armor-piercing, knockdown. Fabbng a new FAE takes 12 hours.

Snare and Stab: 60 (*Grappling* ►205, EP2); the swarm locks together into entangling snare lines with gripping teeth, requires a superior success. Grappled victims get no defense to piercing needles that spurt on subsequent turns; DV 1d10, armor does not apply.

Perceive: 50, 60 hearing/vision

Move: Walker/Microlight (Slow 4/12), may construct others

COG: 25 75 • **INT:** 20 60 • **REF:** 20 60 • **SAV:** 5 15 • **SOM:** 15 45 • **WIL:** 15 45

Skills: Free Fall 50, Infiltrate 80, Melee 50 (*Grappling* 60), Program 80, any Technical or Know skill they need at 40+

Ware: 360-Degree Vision, Chem Sniffer, Electrical Sense, Enhanced Hearing, Enhanced Vision, Fractal Digits, Nanoscopic Vision, Radar, Radiation Sense, T-Ray Emitter, others as needed

Nanoswarm: Functions like a (nanoswarm ►344, EP2), except can move normally in vacuum and does not require a nanohive

Nanofabrication: Can nanofabricate items in half the time as transhuman nanofabricators; can replicate effects of any nanoswarm at will

Self-Repair: Automatically repair 1d10 damage per hour

Take Form: Can cohere/dissipate simple physical/mechanical forms (arms, mobility systems, tentacles, cages, traps, etc) with a complex action; these may take physical actions such as Fray or Melee Tests

THE ARTIFACT

The TITAN artifact floats silently at the center of the chamber, hidden by the fog. A PC that approaches it (or is pushed gently by the fog in its direction) will first see it as a dark chasm in the mist. As they get closer, the fog falls back and the artifact can be seen. It is reflective as mercury, jagged as a cadmium crystal. PCs can see their own reflection in its surface of the artifact, but strangely the beams of any flashlights or lasers are not reflected; nor does it show on radar.



Ominous Sight → **WIL Check** → PCs that fail are shaken and suffer -10 to all actions for the next hour (if using full *Eclipse Phase* rules, treat this as SV 1d6 + 1).



Once within 10 meters, the artifact will emit coded bursts of light, attempting to implant a suggestion in the character's mind by hacking their visual sensory inputs (a "basilisk hack," ▶ 345 and 384, EP2).

 **Basilisk Hack** → INT Check → PCs that fail suffer DV 1d6 (armor does not apply) and undergo a grand mal seizure for 1 minute (they are incapacitated and may not act). During this time, the fog will push the PC into contact with the artifact, which will attempt to infect them (*Infection* ▶ next column).
 **Evasive the Basilisk** → REF Check → PCs who are aware of the basilisk hack threat may attempt to block out the visual input.

The artifact sometimes deploys small batches of invisible utility fog beyond the chamber to make physical contact with people and implant suggestions at a distance.

 **Implanted Suggestions** → INT Check, requires 20 minutes of contact → If the victim fails, the artifact implants a single, post-hypnotic suggestion. The PC believes the idea is their own and carries it out to the best of their ability.

The artifact itself is robust and resistant to most damage or attempts to move it (GM discretion for both). The fog will immediately respond to any attacks made against it.

 **Threat Detection** → INT Check 60 → The fog is smart enough to identify work that is done within the chamber that might lead to harm against the artifact, such as setting explosives.

Other options for handling the artifact are discussed under *Resolution* ▶ 22

INFECTION

The artifact attempts to infect anyone it comes into physical contact with (even through vacsuits). Flashes of silver lightning will ripple across their skin/frame, creating a tingling sensation inside of the body and head, like tiny hands crawling under the skin. The artifact can attempt to infect multiple characters with one action, but can only attempt infection once every five turns.

 **Infection** → INT Check at -30 → PCs that fail are put asleep/knocked offline for 10 minutes. They may only be awoken through medical intervention (GM discretion), which interrupts the infection and reduces its effects.

After 10 minutes, an infected character awakens feeling euphoric. Wounds are ignored as the PC feels stronger and healthier than before. Over the next 4 hours the infection continues, causing the PC to occasionally experience traumatic flashbacks, go catatonic, or speak gibberish. After 4 hours, the artifact acquires full control over their mind. At that point, the infected PC will convince or force others to return to the artifact to spread the infection.

While the artifact works to infect a victim, the fog will create lights and ghostly shapes to distract others in the chamber. The utility fog serves as the artifact's manipulators and will defend it from attacks. To protect the artifact and victims undergoing infection, it will materialize floating barriers and solidify cages around targets.

 **Barriers** → AV 10/10, DR 20
Cages → REF Check to avoid capture

An unusual side effect of infection is the implantation of involuntary language-response triggers. Bves and the Confessors have learned to use these to identify those infected. Infected PCs may make a WIL Check to suppress the response, with a penalty of -10 per 30 minutes of infection.

RESOLUTION

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

INFECTED CHARACTERS

Once the infection process is complete (taking 4 hours), the character becomes an NPC. Any characters who return to Firewall (via egocasting or suspended animation to slow infection) can be quarantined and treated. Bves (or Chi) can also use their psychosurgery skills to reverse the character's infection, but this will destroy memories and skills in the process. Firewall can repair this later using the character's backup.

THE ARTIFACT

The PCs have a number of options in addressing the artifact itself. The utility fog that protects it can move through the tiniest of cracks and will work to prevent the artifact from being moved, attacked, or sequestered.

The characters may attempt to destroy the artifact with a considerable quantity of explosives (which are available in bulk on the station) or similar destructive force. These explosives may require rep tests or skill rolls to acquire. Bves, the triads, and Fa Jing will object to any plan involving major detonations. If an appropriate amount of explosives (GM's call) are planted and detonated, the artifact is destroyed, but roll 1d10. On a 1 or a 2, Kongyùn itself fractures, splitting straight through the old port. Major areas suffer catastrophic decompression as atmosphere vents into space. This results in hundreds of people dead or missing. Less than the necessary amount of explosives will damage (but not destroy) the artifact. Large explosions will draw attention, ruining Bves's attempts at quarantine and alerting Fa Jing to the artifact.

The PCs can call on Eludere and Firewall for aid, in which case they will need to secure the artifact for four days until a second team can be dispatched. This new research team will take over the operation, taking time to study the artifact and determining the safest way to destroy it in whatever way the GM sees fit. Bves and the Confessors will need to be handled or otherwise roped into the plan.

If Fa Jing or the triads find out about the artifact, there will be a race to secure the artifact or any remains, as well as samples of the utility fog, regardless of the transhuman risk, unless the PCs somehow contain the situation (see *Fa Jing* ▶ next column). Both factions will call upon outside support, which arrives in a matter of hours (specialist that egocast in) and days (troops and weaponry). This may lead to a hostile takeover of the habitat or open conflict between factions, with the PCs in the middle. If the situation gets this bad, Firewall will resort to more severe options, first sending in an eraser squad — a heavily armed team of proxies — to blow the artifact up, and if that fails, then destroying the entire habitat. The failure of the PCs may leave the blood of thousands on their hands.

GMs should keep in mind the artifact's potential. If it deems itself in danger, it may decide to more proactively infect the residents, use infected characters for other purposes, launch itself into space, summon a TITAN fetch (►408, EP2), or simply disappear.

BVES

Bves's group will seek to contain any infected. Bves (or his fork, if killed) confronts characters with "Shamsu heiroah yanaksha," expecting the infected to respond "iltubzuga, isthazuhma." If the characters do not appear to be infected, Bves will explain why

the artifact must be sealed in the asteroid, at least for the next few years, until the asteroid is too far on its orbit to be easily accessible. Bves sees no way the PCs can adjust to living permanently in Kongyùn, so they must die to protect the secret. Bves expects the characters to understand the logic of this, and will offer them the opportunity to kill themselves.

The PCs may be able to convince Bves to agree to another plan, if they have a better way to handle the artifact that won't harm any people. If Bves is not convinced, he will agree and offer to take them back to New City (an opposed test pitting Kinesics against his Deceive skill will detect his ill intentions). Once they are a safe distance from the artifact room, he will detonate a cache of explosives hidden in a tunnel wall as they pass, killing himself and potentially the PCs (DV 6d10, Fray Test to reduce this by half) in order to protect the artifact's secret.

Bves may be convinced to join Firewall and coordinate a more sophisticated quarantine method. If the PCs can prove their capabilities, Bves will agree to a meeting with Eludere. He is willing to commit to continuing to isolate and protect the artifact for years with Firewall support. He has also considered developing a ruse to force Fa Jing and others off the asteroid, so that the entire thing could be safely destroyed. Up until now, he has lacked the resources for such an audacious plan, but with Firewall's help ...

FA JING

If Fa Jing has been following the PCs and learns of the artifact, they will immediately scramble teams to secure it. This may involve killing any surviving members of Bves's ambush and offering a "finder's fee" to the PCs to buy them off. If the characters decline the offer, Fa Jing will attempt to kill or delay the PCs and protect the artifact long enough for a corporate security shuttle to arrive in two days. At that point, the Fa Jing forces will most likely be so strong that the characters will need to call on Firewall's nuclear arsenal to destroy the artifact. The PCs can attempt negotiating with Dr. Guo, but she will be under intense pressure from her Fa Jing superiors to claim the artifact, no matter the cost.

TRIADS AND OTHER ALLIES

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

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

CHANG'E JADE

If the PCs did not keep her contained during the adventure, Jade is a liability. Her behavior will largely be impacted by how Chi treats her. If she gets brushed off or otherwise left feeling used, she is more inclined to write a scathing tell-all exposé of her experiences. If her and Chi stay on good terms, she will do her best to keep what she knows secret. Unfortunately, Jade's chatty nature means she will eventually slip some of what she knows to others on the station and friends abroad. This means information about the artifact will eventually work its way to Fa Jing, who will investigate the situation. It also means that information on the PCs' involvement with Firewall will eventually end up in the hands of Oversight, an oligarch, or some other potential threat. This leak may be a potential hook for a future adventure.