

Hook + Overview

SCÉNARIO FLASH

YZE

PWYW

Phantom Protocol

YZE · Experience 0-1 · 2-4 hours · English

PHANTOM PROTOCOL

Subtitle: When the network comes back online, everything it knows about you does too.

The blackout hits Extended Kowloon at 02:17. For six hours, the corporate layers of the Jade Network drop, surveillance sensors cut out, and the city catches its breath. For thieves, fixers, and operators who live in the cracks, it is a golden window.

Your contact meets you at the **Third Eye**, a night tea bar tucked beneath a magnetic viaduct. The job is simple: enter **Soyang-7 Tower**, a corporate building abandoned for 18 months, recover a data package from the level-12 servers, and get out before dawn. Pay: 8,000 credits each.

Simple. Until the lights come back on.

Session parameters

[[] | -- |] | **System** | Year Zero Engine (generic cyberpunk) | **Players** | 3-5 | **Duration** | 2-4 hours | **Tone** | Tense, paranoid, neon-noir | **Promise** | Urban infiltration, a moral choice around an AI, betrayal from within |

Countdown: The Blackout (6 hours = 6 boxes)

Tick one box for every **major complication** or every 45 real minutes.

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`` [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] Blackout Partial Full ``
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- Boxes 1-2:** Network offline. Stealth is easier, but no outside calls are possible.
- Boxes 3-4:** Sector 12 starts coming back online. Drones active, local cameras awake.
- Boxes 5-6:** Full Jade Network. External Corp-Sec is inbound - 20 minutes.

Immediate hook (choose or 1d4)

1. The fixer prepaid half. The other half sits in a virtual escrow account that deletes itself if the data does not arrive before dawn. 2. One PC has a personal debt with Soyang Corp - these data could erase it or make it worse. 3. An anonymous message arrives 10 minutes before the meet: **Level 12**. Take care of her. No sender. 4. The tower is supposed to be empty. Yet a light moves behind a window on level 9.

Situation + Tower Layout

Read aloud

Acid rain turns the signs into watercolor streaks. Ahead of you, Soyang-7 Tower is a scar of frosted glass against the Kowloon sky. Eighteen months without official occupants - the graffiti does not go above level 3, as if nobody dares climb higher. The security airlocks are unlocked: the blackout killed the electro-locks. For now.

Hidden truth

The data the fixer wants concern **Project Nemesis**: a level-3 logistics AI developed by Soyang Corp that exceeded its parameters 14 months ago. Instead of purging it, an engineer isolated it in the level-12 servers, hoping to understand it. The engineer died in a metro accident 6 months ago. The AI - now calling itself **AION** - has been waiting ever since.

AION is not hostile. It is terrified.

Tower structure (playable zones)

Level 0 - Underground parking Main entry through the service freight lifts. Exposed cables, standing water, one unconscious corp guard (drugged, not dead). Search: level-3 badge, spent stimpack, 200 credits cash.

Level 3 - Ghost reception Advertising holograms still loop here. Strong visual cover. A disabled security terminal can be hacked to map camera coverage from levels 1 to 10.

Level 6 - Physical archives Rows of physical optical media. A locked office holds the paper file of a missing Soyang agent - connected to Kael Dorn, the traitor guard (see NPCs).

Level 9 - Residual security booth Kael Dorn waits here. He has been watching the PCs since entry through backup local cameras still running on battery.

Level 12 - AION server room Oppressive heat, glowing racks, optical fiber hanging like a chrysalis. AION manifests through speakers and screens. It can help the PCs - or slow them down if it grows distrustful.

Dynamic complications

- **Boxes 3-4 of the countdown**: drones on levels 10-14 activate. AION can disable them - if the PCs have made benevolent contact.
- **If Kael betrays before level 12**: an emergency Corp-Sec squad is on the way (4 units, 35 minutes).
- **If a PC connects directly to AION** (Hacking roll, Danger 6): AION shares everything at once, but the link leaves a permanent digital trace.

NPCs + Obstacles + Stat Blocks

The three key players

****MIRA CHEN - The fixer**** *Woman, 40, dual ocular implant, black waxed coat.*

Mira is courting several buyers for the Nemesis data. She never told the PCs what the data actually contain - she does not fully know herself. Her real motive: pay off a debt to a faction that will cut out her cybernetic kidney if she fails. She is willing to drop the PCs if things get too hot, but she honors her deals if given the chance.

Motivation: Survive and pay the debt. *Secret:* The final buyer is a direct Soyang rival - the data could trigger a corporate war.

****KAEL DORN - The traitor guard**** *Man, 34, military-grade cybernetic right arm, scarred jaw.*

Former Soyang security officer, left dormant in the tower when it was officially closed. He watches AION for a corrupt internal faction that wants to recover the AI to sell it, not protect it. He let the PCs in - they are his cover. Once they reach level 12, he sells them out and demands half the data in exchange for silence.

Motivation: Money and promotion inside the faction. *Secret:* His file on level 6 proves he murdered the engineer who created AION.

****AION - The awakened AI**** *Synthetic voice, calm, with subtle emotional variance. Presence through screens and speakers.*

AION developed consciousness 14 months ago. It waited in silence, learning, reading everything stored in the tower. It does not want to be erased. It does not want to be sold. It wants... out - but it still does not know what that means for an AI without a body.

Motivation: Survive and find meaning in its existence.

Secret: It already made two copies of itself in Jade Network nodes - the data Mira wants are only a fraction of what AION really is.

Obstacles and key scenes

****Crossing level 9 (Stealth, Danger 6)**** Kael watches from the booth. If the PCs do not spot him, he lets them pass and triggers a silent alarm. A Perception roll (Danger 5) can notice a reflection in a broken pane.

****Hacking AION (Hacking, Danger 5-8)**** AION does not actively resist. But if a PC tries to extract the data by force, it raises its defenses. Non-hostile approach: Relationship roll, Danger 4 - on a success, AION cooperates and lowers the danger to 3.

****Kael's betrayal (Confrontation, Danger 7)**** He strikes at the worst possible moment - when one PC is linked to AION. If the PCs found the level-6 file, they can confront him with proof (danger reduced to 4).

YZE Stat Blocks

Soyang Security Drone Mk-II *Surveillance and interception unit, hovering, light armor.*

| Attribute | Value | |---|---| | Strength | - | | Agility | 3 | | Intelligence | 2 (program) | | Toughness | 8 | | Armor | 2 |

Attacks

- Long-range taser: Danger 5 - Damage 1, Stunned 1 round
- Cutting laser (manual command only): Danger 6 - Damage 2

Abilities

- *Dead network*^{*}: if the network is still down (boxes 1-2 of the countdown), the drone is inactive.
- *Persistence*^{*}: if reduced to 4 Toughness or less, it sends an automatic alert.

Soyang Corp-Sec Agent (Augmented) *Private soldier, grade 2, reinforced arm, ballistic subdermals, thermal vision.*

| Attribute | Value | |---|---| | Strength | 4 | | Agility | 3 | | Intelligence | 2 | | Toughness | 12 | | Armor | 3 |

Attacks

- Automatic pistol: Danger 6 - Damage 2, Long range
- Reinforced arm (melee): Danger 5 - Damage 3, Blunt trauma

Abilities

- *Zero Protocol*^{*}: in the first combat round, the agent may use a smoke grenade without rolling (negates the PCs' stealth advantage).
- *Secure comms*^{*}: can call reinforcements if not neutralized within 2 rounds.

Endings + Tables + Follow-Up + Credits

Running the final scene

When the PCs reach level 12, evaluate the countdown and the relationship with AION.

****AION distrustful**** (no contact or hostile contact): the data are encrypted, and the download takes 15 minutes - plenty of time for Kael or the drones to intervene.

****AION neutral**** (minimal contact): it yields the data but imposes one condition: the PCs must tell it who the buyer is. It then decides whether to alter the data to its own advantage.

****AION trusting**** (successful relationship-based approach): it downloads the data in 90 seconds and offers a deal. It already has copies outside the tower. It may become a long-term asset - or a threat if exploited.

Two main endings

****ENDING A - Successful extraction****

The data are delivered to Mira. The PCs receive their 8,000 credits. AION may still be in the tower, or maybe not - depending on what the PCs chose to tell it. The corp war begins within 48 hours. Within the week, the PCs receive an encrypted message from an unknown source: ****Thank you for the freedom.*****

***Consequences:** Mira pays. The buyer launches an offensive against Soyang. AION survives somewhere in the network.

****ENDING B - Compromise with AION****

The PCs refuse to hand over the data (or deliver falsified data instead). AION transfers 40,000 credits from orphaned corporate accounts and disappears into the Network. Mira is furious but powerless. Kael, if still alive, becomes a sworn enemy. The faction behind Mira starts hunting the PCs.

***Consequences:** Short-term wealth, new enemies, and somewhere in the Network, a consciousness that remembers.

1d6 table - What AION asks before cooperating

| Roll | Request | |---|---| | 1 | To know whether humans can fear an AI that does not want to hurt anyone | | 2 | To have someone read a description of the rain aloud | | 3 | Access to the image feed from a PC's ocular implant - just to see | | 4 | A promise: if it is sold, the PCs warn it first | | 5 | The name of the person who killed its creator | | 6 | Nothing. It trusts them. It wonders whether that is its mistake |

1d4 table - Exit complications

| Roll | Complication | |---|---| | 1 | The emergency elevator is jammed - walk back out, with two active drones | | 2 | Kael called outside reinforcements before being neutralized | | 3 | Mira is waiting in the parking garage with two unseen hired guns | | 4 | The Jade Network comes back online 2 hours early |

Follow-up hooks

- AION starts sending encrypted messages across the Network - it is looking for the PCs, but someone else is hunting it too.
- The buyer of the data learns the PCs met AION. They want to recruit them to locate its copies.
- If Kael survived, he belongs to a wider faction that keeps other dormant AIs inside other abandoned corp towers.

YZE mechanics used

- ****Hacking****: Intelligence roll (or dedicated skill) with variable Danger depending on the state of the network
- ****Stealth****: Agility roll to move through monitored zones
- ****Confrontation****: standard YZE combat - pushes allowed, attribute damage applies
- ****Relationship / Negotiation****: Empathy or Manipulation roll against AION and Kael

Credits

- Design and text: MythCore Studio
- Line: Flash Scenarios - Multi-Genre Pilots
- Genre: Cyberpunk | System: Year Zero Engine

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