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TOP SECRET  
C2 CONSOLE // IVB-A

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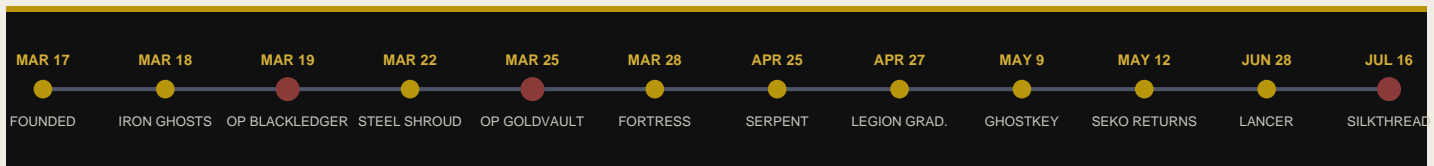
# IRON VEIL BASE ALPHA

CLASSIFIED OPERATIONAL CHRONICLE — COMPLETE EDITION

PERIOD: 2026-03-17 THROUGH 2026-07-16 // VOLUMES I & II

Prepared by: C2 Console, IVB-A

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*This document is the complete operational record of Iron Veil Base Alpha from its founding through the conclusion of the Narvak intelligence operation. It covers three field squads, three operations, compound construction, R&D; development, fleet acquisition, and financial accounts. Distribution restricted to the Commander.*

# VOLUME I

## THE FOUNDING PERIOD

2026-03-17

IVB-A

### PART ONE GENESIS

VOL. I

**It began with a million dollars, a patch of classified ground, and a name nobody outside these walls would ever say out loud.**

#### *Iron Veil Base Alpha. IVB-A.*

On the 17th of March, 2026, the Commander assumed control of a bare compound — four walls, a handful of facilities, and eighteen people who had chosen this life for reasons they kept to themselves. Sgt. Marcus Rowe was already there when the Commander arrived, leaning against the wall of the Command and Control room with his arms crossed, looking like a man who had been waiting for a long time. He became the Executive Officer without ceremony. There was no ceremony here. There was just work.

Those first personnel were a skeletal crew: a brilliant surgeon named Dr. Lena Vasquez who ran the medbay with quiet authority; three engineers in the R&D; lab led by the methodical Omar Khalil, who could build almost anything if you gave him time and components; a manufacture team anchored by the rough-handed Brock Callahan; a logistics officer, Cpl. Daria Ivanova, who kept everything running with the sort of invisible competence that only gets noticed when it stops; and Eng. Dmitri Volkov, who kept the lights on. Behind the comms desk sat Pvt. Hana Yee, twenty-three years old and sharper than anyone gave her credit for.

In the field operations department, five privates waited. Rosa Mendez. Leo Strand. Amara Diallo. Nate Okafor. Cara Flynn. Each of them carrying a past they hadn't fully explained, each of them good at exactly the kind of work that doesn't get reported.

The budget was one million dollars. The compound felt very quiet.

#### FOUNDING ROSTER // 18 PERSONNEL

ROLE	NAME	DEPARTMENT
Executive Officer	Sgt. Marcus Rowe	Command
Surgeon	Dr. Lena Vasquez	Medical
Lead Engineer	Omar Khalil	R&D
Manufacturing	Brock Callahan	Manufacture
Logistics Officer	Cpl. Daria Ivanova	Logistics
Engineer	Dmitri Volkov	Engineering
Comms	Pvt. Hana Yee	Intelligence
Field Operative	Rosa Mendez	Field Ops
Field Operative	Leo Strand	Field Ops
Field Operative	Amara Diallo	Field Ops
Field Operative	Nate Okafor	Field Ops
Field Operative	Cara Flynn	Field Ops

## PART TWO THE IRON GHOSTS

VOL. I

The Commander moved fast. A sixth operative was recruited — Pvt. Zara Voss, an infiltration specialist whose signing bonus cost three thousand dollars and whose value would prove considerably greater. Then came the first decision that would shape everything that followed: the five field operatives and Voss would become a squad, and the most skilled among them would lead it.

### Nate Okafor got the nod.

It wasn't a close competition on paper — all five privates had two skills apiece and Okafor's combination of combat medicine and assault made him the most tactically versatile. But anyone who watched him in the briefing room knew it was the right call for another reason: he listened before he spoke, and when he spoke, people listened back. He was promoted to Corporal, given the squad, and told he could name it.

*"We move quiet, we hit hard, and nobody sees us coming."*

He said it like it was already true.

#### THE IRON GHOSTS

##### CMD: Cpl. Nate Okafor

- Pvt. Rosa Mendez
- Pvt. Leo Strand
- Pvt. Amara Diallo
- Pvt. Cara Flynn
- Pvt. Zara Voss

## PART THREE OPERATION BLACKLEDGER

VOL. I

### OPERATION BLACKLEDGER

VALDROSIAN NATIONAL SAVINGS BANK — BRANCH OSTAVAR

**\$1.5M**

GROSS YIELD

**\$1.3M**

NET (LAUNDERED)

**3 WIA**

CASUALTIES

**WRAITH-1**

VEHICLES LOST

IVB-A OPERATIONAL RECORD // C2 CONSOLE



The first contract was a bank job. Not a small one, either. The target was the Valdrosian National Savings Bank, Branch Ostavar, deep in the Valdrosian Republic — an unstable Eastern European state fractured by contested elections and an active insurgency in the north. The instability was a feature, not a bug.

The plan was clean. Strand and Voss handled reconnaissance — three days of observation, guard rotations mapped, a faulty rear door latch identified by Voss during a scout run as a civilian customer. Jin Park in R&D; prepared a camera loop device. Callahan fabricated a shaped breach charge. They had two cover vehicles, a safe house, and a 02:00 insertion window.

Park's device had a firmware fault. Instead of holding the loop for the full operation window, it would only suppress the feed for ninety seconds before reverting. The squad inserted clean — Mendez on the wheel, Strand on the roof, Voss and Flynn through the faulty latch, Diallo and Okafor on the rear perimeter. Everything textbook until an off-schedule guard walked straight into Voss in the hallway.

*One shot fired. Alarm triggered.*

Diallo blew the vault on emergency timeline. Okafor had four minutes to pull what he could — cash, bearer bonds, as much as arms could carry. Then Strand called it from the roof, sirens already audible, and the squad ran.

Mendez rammed a police scout car at the alley exit. Shrapnel caught her left arm. Diallo took a grazing round to the shoulder. Flynn had caught a bullet through the thigh during the firefight inside. Three wounded. Nobody dead. WRAITH-1 wrote off entirely. They spent fourteen hours in the safe house. Okafor worked on the wounded with what he had. All six came home.

The vault yielded one point five million gross. After laundering through a shell company in the Principality of Calder, the net came to one point three million. They had nearly tripled the founding budget.

## PART FOUR GROWING THE ARSENAL

VOL. I

The Commander reinvested immediately. WRAITH-1's replacement arrived first — an armored low-profile SUV with twin silenced 7.62mm rear machine guns, clean civilian identity. Then WRAITH-2, identical, acquired for the second squad already being assembled.

Six new operatives arrived: Viktor Rask leading them — eight years of PMC experience, four skills: CQC, Tactics, Leadership, Small Arms. The others: Imani Seko, a ghost in the long grass; Deon Harker, a combat medic who could fight as hard as he healed; Lila Novak, a cyber-field hybrid; Cass Wren, who could blow a door, drive anything, and do both at the same time; and Mako Ito, a close-quarters specialist who moved like the ground owed him nothing.

*"We close in like a fist and they don't see us until it's already done."*

### THE IRON GHOSTS

**CMD: Cpl. Nate Okafor**

- Pvt. Rosa Mendez
- Pvt. Leo Strand
- Pvt. Amara Diallo
- Pvt. Cara Flynn
- Pvt. Zara Voss

### STEEL SHROUD

**CMD: Sgt. Viktor Rask**

- Pvt. Imani Seko
- Pvt. Deon Harker
- Pvt. Lila Novak
- Pvt. Cass Wren
- Pvt. Mako Ito

The armor upgrade followed. Standard-issue plate carriers had failed the Iron Ghosts in Ostavar. The compound invested in TALOS-V Modular Combat System sets for all twelve field operatives: Level IV plates covering torso, shoulders, groin, and upper arms, with ballistic helmets fitted with NVG mounts. Four PHANTOM LITE stealth sets went into the spare pool for infiltration work.

## PART FIVE

## OPERATION GOLDVAULT

VOL. I

## OPERATION GOLDVAULT

KETHARA CENTRAL BANK — KETHARA CITY, KETHARA DOMINION

**\$3.48M**

GROSS YIELD

**\$3.06M**

NET (LAUNDERED)

**1 KO / 2 WIA**

CASUALTIES

**FRIENDLY PRESERVED**

STATUS

IVB-A OPERATIONAL RECORD // C2 CONSOLE



The second job was an order of magnitude more ambitious. The Kethara Central Bank — a wealthy North African oil state that regarded Iron Veil with something warmer than suspicion. That warmth was a double-edged blade. The prize was enormous. The cost of being traced: the permanent destruction of a rare friendly relationship.

**Ghost protocol. Silent entry. Zero forensics. Kethara would never know it was us.**

Steel Shroud drew the assignment. Their first deployment. The reconnaissance went wrong on day two when a plainclothes Interior Ministry surveillance team burned Seko's overwatch position on a rooftop. He relocated and lost fourteen hours. Novak's biometric clone then failed in preparation — the vault ran a secondary iris scan she had no data to spoof. Fallback to Wren's shaped charge. More noise risk. Four extra minutes burned.

*Then the unmapped guard appeared.*

A third roving sentry on a non-standard forty-minute cycle. He opened fire immediately. Wren took a round through the forearm. Ito tackled the guard non-lethal in one second, but a hardwired standalone motion sensor triggered. The Interior Ministry was auto-notified. Five minutes. Wren detonated one-handed. The vault opened. Rask, Harker, and Ito swept it — cash, bearer instruments, two gold bars, 28 kilograms — before Rask called the abort.

Seko was hit in the upper chest outside. The TALOS-V plate stopped most of it, but a fragment drove through. He went down. Novak fought off a second officer taking a round through the side, then exfiltrated alone. Wren drove the extract one-handed, rammed through a police barrier. Ito carried Seko two blocks on foot. Harker performed emergency surgery at the safe house. Eighteen hours later, they crossed the border. All six came home.

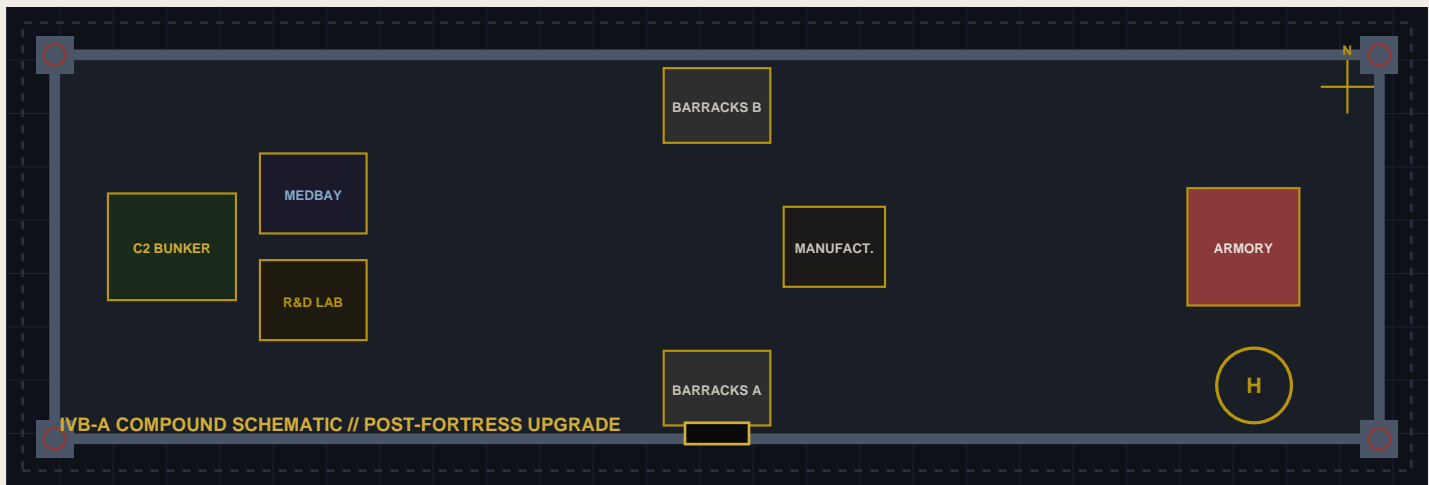
**One critical. Two wounded. WRAITH-2 damaged. Net yield after laundering: \$3,062,000. The Interior Ministry investigation found no identities, no compound links. Kethara still considers us friendly.**

## PART SIX

## THE FORTRESS

VOL. I

The compound had run two operations, suffered six casualties, and proven beyond any reasonable doubt that it needed to stop being a compound and start being something harder to kill. The Commander ordered the transformation.



IVB-A COMPOUND SCHEMATIC — POST-FORTRESS UPGRADE

Three meters of reinforced ballistic concrete rose around the full perimeter. Razor wire crowned the wall. Hydraulic blast gates replaced the entry points. An anti-vehicle ditch was cut into the outer earth. Four reinforced guard towers went up at the corners — bulletproof glass, dedicated comms. Thirty-two NVG-capable CCTV cameras, zero blind spots. Forty seismic and infrared sensors in the perimeter soil, detecting approach at 300 meters. Radar sweeping ground and air out to 15 kilometers.

Weapon emplacements: four 7.62mm machine gun nests at the towers, two .50 caliber heavy machine guns at gate and rear, an 81mm mortar at center elevation. Blast-resistant doors on every facility. The C2 room became a hardened bunker with independent air supply and 72 hours of emergency power. Anti-air: four MANPADS with 12 missiles, a radar-slaved 20mm autocannon, an anti-drone RF jammer and kinetic interceptor net. Sgt. Darius Cole arrived with four security guards to staff it in rotation.

**Cost: \$1,500,000. The compound was unrecognizable.**

SYSTEM	SPECIFICATION	QTY
7.62mm MG Nests	Tower-mounted, NVG-capable	4
.50 Cal Heavy MG	Gate and rear coverage	2
81mm Mortar	2km effective range	1
MANPADS SAM	4,500m engagement ceiling	4 (12 missiles)
20mm Autocannon (Radar-slaved)	2km aerial engagement	1
Anti-Drone Jammer + Kinetic Net	1km radius	1
NVG CCTV Cameras	360-degree, zero blind spots	32
Seismic/IR Perimeter Sensors	300m detection range	40

**PART SEVEN PHANTOM RUNNER**

VOL. I

The medevac problem had to be solved. In Kethara, Seko had been carried two blocks on foot by Ito while bleeding out. In Ostavar, three wounded operatives had been patched with field kits in a safe house. The compound had a helipad that had never held an aircraft.

A stealth-modified medium utility helicopter was acquired — the Phantom Runner. Noise-suppressed rotors reducing its acoustic signature by forty percent. Level IIIA ballistic paneling on cockpit and crew cabin. Two removable door-mount 7.62mm machine gun positions. Four fast-rope anchor points. Two medical stretcher bays. NVG-compatible cockpit. The whole airframe dressed in

civilian livery.

*"She'll get your people home."*

Captain Elena Sorel — twelve years of rotary wing experience, six of them military — stepped off the Phantom Runner and meant it. Pvt. Marcus Tane, copilot and flight medic, began prepping the stretcher bay before the rotors had fully stopped. The helipad was no longer empty.

## PART EIGHT THE LABORATORY

VOL. I

While the compound hardened around them, the R&D; department went to work on two problems that operations had exposed. Park's camera loop device had failed in Ostavar. Novak's biometric clone had failed in Kethara. Twice, the mission had been compromised not by guards or guns but by a piece of glass or a microchip.

Omar Khalil and Jin Park started on GHOSTKEY. Sasha Morin started on SERPENT. Two problems. Two teams. A shared urgency.

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	ETA	UNITS
GHOSTKEY	Universal electronic lock defeat — RFID, NFC, Bluetooth, biometric, keypad, networked. Auto-delay. One button.	May 9	3 → 12
SERPENT	Titanium folding lockpick, credit-card size. Pin tumbler: <30s. Medeco/Mul-T-Lock: <90s. X-ray and pigtail.	April 25	6 → 32

**Between those two devices, no door in the world would remain closed to Iron Veil operatives.**

**PART NINE THE LAUGHING LEGION**

VOL. I

**Nobody could quite explain how it happened.**

Six people arrived at the blast gate on the same day, drawn from different cities, all sharing the same unusual background: performance. Stage work. The kind of occupation that requires becoming someone else in front of an audience and making them believe it completely.

A stage magician and escape artist named Doyle, who had three fraud charges dropped on technicalities and who talked his way past the compound's own gate guard during intake using a visitor pass fabricated from a cereal box and a permanent marker. A pyrotechnics specialist and stunt driver known as Boom Boom. An actor and martial artist of extraordinary physical grace called Silk, who could sit in a room full of people looking for him and be invisible. A circus strongman and acrobat who answered to Knuckles. A mime and contortionist named Whisper who made the security guards deeply uncomfortable without ever doing anything they could articulate. And Fizz — a costume designer who had memorised the biometric profiles of seventeen different nationalities to build convincing documentation.

Sgt. Hecht sent them to the training room. Thirty days. Military fundamentals under Hecht, infiltration under Voss, extraction and CQC under Rask, marksmanship under Strand. Silk failed every marksmanship test for the first week before Strand found he'd been shooting with his non-dominant eye out of stage habit — corrected it, and Silk immediately shot better than anyone else in the squad.

Patches Doyle signed off on all six on the twenty-seventh of April. He filed his graduation report in one sentence:

*"They're ready."*

**THE LAUGHING LEGION****CMD: Patches Doyle (CMD)**

- Boom Boom — Pyrotechnics / Stunt Driver
- Silk — Actor / Martial Artist
- Knuckles — Strongman / Acrobat
- Whisper — Mime / Contortionist
- Fizz — Costume / Forgery

**PART TEN THE LEDGER — PERIOD CLOSE**

VOL. I

**FINANCIAL LEDGER // IVB-A // 2026-03-28**

OPERATION BLACKLEDGER (GROSS)	+\$1,500,000
LAUNDERING LOSS (CALDER HUB)	-\$200,000
OPERATION GOLDVAULT (GROSS)	+\$3,480,000
LAUNDERING LOSS (CALDER HUB)	-\$418,000
BEARER BONDS (NET)	+\$396,000
GOLD BARS 28kg (NET)	+\$1,478,000
<b>TOTAL ASSETS // 2026-03-28</b>	<b>\$3,706,000</b>

With the compound now housing thirty-eight personnel, the picture looked like this: three million seven hundred and six thousand dollars in the accounts. Three squads. Two armored vehicles. One helicopter. One fortress. Two weapons in development that would change how the compound operated in the field. Thirty-eight people who had made a choice about the kind of world they

wanted to live in.

Twelve of them were in the medbay or still healing. Imani Seko was critical, monitored around the clock by Dr. Vasquez, with forty-five days ahead of him before he would walk back into the field. But he would walk back. The compound had been open for eleven days.

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*"They don't see us until it's already done."*

— Sgt. Viktor Rask, Steel Shroud

# VOLUME II

CONSOLIDATION, DEVELOPMENT &amp; NARVAK

2026-03-28

IVB-A

## PART ELEVEN THE COMPOUND GROWS TEETH

VOL. II

**The first month after Ostavar and Kethara was not a quiet month. It only looked quiet from the outside.**

The money had come in and the Commander spent it the way a general spends a victory: not on celebration, but on the next fight. Both squads wore TALOS-V armor now. The lesson from two operations was simple and had been learned at significant personal cost: the people who came home were the ones whose bodies the equipment had protected.

But the other lesson — recurring in every debrief, every phase report, every moment where something had gone wrong — was that locked doors and electronic barriers had defeated the compound's operatives as surely as any bullet. Twice, the mission had been compromised not by guards or guns but by a piece of glass or a microchip. The R&D; lab went to work.

## PART TWELVE WHAT THE LABORATORY MADE

VOL. II

**SERPENT came first.**

Sasha Morin and Omar Khalil produced six units on the twenty-fifth of April — titanium folding lockpick sets the size of a credit card, capable of defeating any mechanical lock in existence. Standard pin tumbler under thirty seconds. High-security Medeco or Mul-T-Lock safe under ninety. Credit card profile. Matte finish. Non-magnetic. X-ray ambiguous. A circus strongman could carry one in his boot and clear any customs scanner in the world without a flag.

Six more units followed, then twenty more. By the time the compound's three squads were fully equipped, every field operative at IVB-A was carrying a SERPENT on their person at all times. No door was going to hold them the way Ostavar and Kethara had held them.

GHOSTKEY took longer. Jin Park and Khalil built something more complex — a pocket-sized device capable of defeating any electronic security system through a single auto-detect mode. RFID. NFC. Bluetooth. Biometric. Keypad. Networked controller. The device identified the lock type and applied the correct attack vector automatically. No technical knowledge required. Three units delivered on the ninth of May. Nine more ordered immediately.

Novak ran two hundred simulated bypass tests before the first unit reached her hands. Patches Doyle held his for a long time when it was issued, then said nothing and put it in his pocket.

### R&D; STATUS BOARD

#### SERPENT MK.1

DEPLOYED — 32 UNITS

Titanium folding lockpick set. Any mechanical lock. Pin tumbler &lt;30s, Medeco &lt;90s

100%

#### GHOSTKEY

DEPLOYED — 12 UNITS

Universal electronic lock defeat: RFID, NFC, Bluetooth, biometric, keypad, networked

100%

#### LANCER

IN DEVELOPMENT — ~33%

Silent laser sidearm. Variable power. No ballistic trace. Compact rechargeable. 90-da...

33%

## PART THIRTEEN THE FLEET AND THE LIVING QUARTERS

VOL. II

The compound had been running on forty beds since it opened. By the time the Laughing Legion graduated, thirty-eight were occupied. Two remained. A new residential wing was ordered — forty additional beds, private rooms, a common area. Callahan and Tanaka finished WRAITH-2's battle damage repairs on the third of April, then picked up their tools and started building. The wing was complete on the eighteenth.

The Laughing Legion needed a vehicle different from the WRAITH series. A squad built around disguise and infiltration should not be driving something that looked like a weapon.

**WRAITH-1 / WRAITH-2** In Ghosts / Steel Shroud

- Level IV armor plating
- Twin silenced 7.62mm rear MGs
- Run-flat tires / Ram bumper
- Clean civilian cover identity

**THE CHAMELEON**

Laughing Legion

- 4-panel rotating magnetic livery
- Identity swap in 90 seconds
- Level IIIA cabin / Level IV doors
- Onboard hack station + jammer
- Costume wardrobe (Fizz-built)
- Hidden gear well: 200kg

**PHANTOM RUNNER**

Capt. Sorel / Pvt. Tane

- 40% noise-suppressed rotors
- Level IIIA ballistic paneling
- 2x door-mount 7.62mm MGs
- 2 medical stretcher bays
- 4 fast-rope anchor points
- Civilian livery cover

*Doyle saw the Chameleon for the first time and said: "Now that's a proper stage."*

## PART FOURTEEN THE SECOND PERIOD OF QUIET

VOL. II

Seko came out of the medbay on the twelfth of May. He walked back into the field operations bay under his own power, said nothing to anyone, and sat down at his kit. Harker watched him from across the room and said nothing either. There was nothing to say. They had already said it in a safe house in Kethara City, on the floor, with a surgical kit and a headlamp and Seko's blood on both their hands.

### Steel Shroud was at full strength for the first time.

The months of May and June passed in productive quiet. The R&D; lab finished GHOSTKEY. Callahan ran two production rounds of SERPENT. The living quarters filled out. The heat on Valdros cooled to medium, then to clear. The heat on Kethara cooled the same way. By the first of June, both investigations had gone cold. The compound had no active heat on any government in the world.

The budget sat at three point two million dollars. The monthly payroll was a hundred and thirty thousand. The runway was two years.

Lancer was commissioned on the twenty-eighth of June — the most ambitious R&D; project IVB-A had yet attempted. Omar Khalil, Jin Park, and Sasha Morin were given ninety days and a forty-five thousand dollar materials budget to produce a working laser sidearm. Silent. Variable power. Compact. Rechargeable. The kind of weapon that leaves no ballistic trace, makes no sound, and can be set to incapacitate rather than kill. The lab went dark and got to work.

## PART FIFTEEN THE LAUGHING LEGION GOES TO NARVAK

VOL. II

## OPERATION SILKTHREAD

NARVAK COALITION — ARMAMENTS DIRECTORATE / COL. BAUTOV

18 DAYS

DURATION

5

COMPLICATIONS

ZERO

CASUALTIES

4 ACTIVE TAPS

OUTCOME

IVB-A OPERATIONAL RECORD // C2 CONSOLE



The Narvak Coalition had been the one immovable fact on the compound's intelligence map since the day it was drawn — a military junta in Central Asia, HOSTILE classification, run by Supreme Marshal Aldric Voss-Kraen who had seized power four years ago. The Directorate of State Security under Director Irena Molsk tracked foreign PMC operators. They ran informant networks. They maintained black sites.

In the Armaments Directorate, Colonel Serik Bautov ran procurement and development — managing weapons factory outputs and black market import deals with the discipline of a man who understood that the numbers on the official ledger and the numbers in his private one needed to remain permanently separated. He was known to be corrupt. The Commander identified the leverage and gave the order.

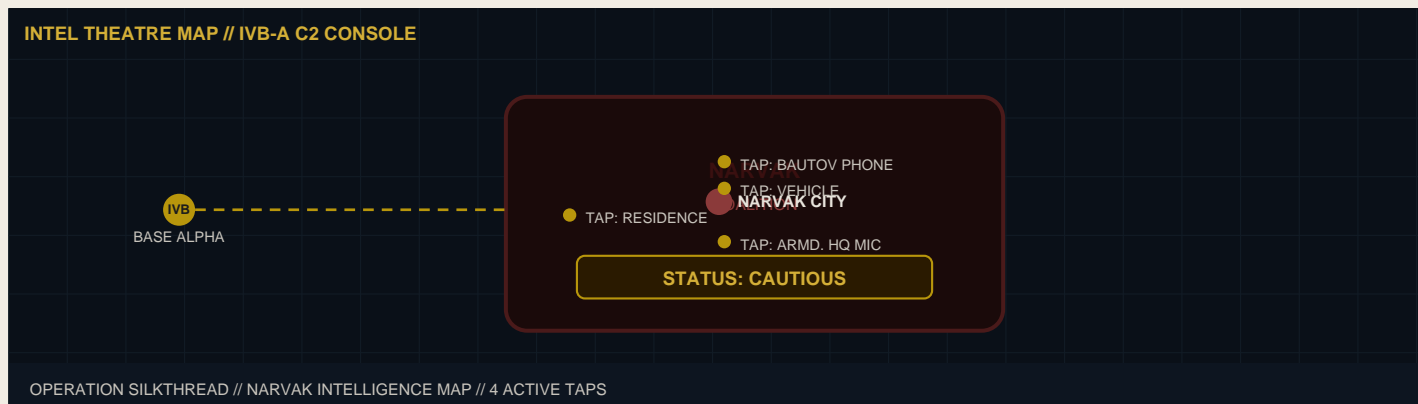
### The Laughing Legion drove the Chameleon to Narvak.

The operation ran for eighteen days across five phases, five complications — none catastrophic, all resolved by a squad built for exactly this kind of work. The border complication on insertion: solved by a backup document Fizz had prepared without being asked. The partial comms tap failure: Park rerouted the signal bounce through Bautov's own phone. The unexpected third guard in the residence: Knuckles put him down in one second without a sound. The encrypted hard drive Park couldn't crack: a gap in the dossier, but not fatal — the other two drives and the physical ledger were more than sufficient.

The DSS facial recognition officer at the southern border checkpoint who held up his tablet and studied Fizz for four seconds found nothing — Fizz's fabricated identity had a three-year digital footprint and zero flags.

Silk Nakamura's cover as Bautov's personal assistant was flawless for nine days. She had access to his schedule, his office, and the peripheral edges of his personal life. She left on the last day with a handshake and his comment that she was the best assistant he'd ever had. She smiled and walked out of his life.

**All six came home. Zero injuries. Zero blown covers.**



OPERATION SILKTHREAD — INTEL THEATRE MAP // 4 ACTIVE TAPS RUNNING

## PART SIXTEEN THE PHONE CALL

VOL. II

The contact came through a sanitised relay — three anonymous routing nodes, a burner number, a nonexistent Calder company. Bautov picked up on the second ring. He had been a military man for twenty-six years and his voice reflected it: controlled, flat, practiced authority.

**He lasted about ninety seconds at that register.**

Doyle read from the ledger. Page one — an arms sale three years prior, the buyer code, the quantity, the price, the routing. Account number read digit by digit. Page two — a general from Voss-Kraen's inner circle listed as a kickback recipient. His name. The amount. The date. Bautov's own handwriting confirmed.

Bautov hung up. For six hours nothing happened. Then the burner rang again. He was harder this time — threats, the DSS, the fate of foreign operatives in Narvak territory. Doyle let him finish. Then read page three.

*"What do you want?"*

One thing, for now. A quiet reclassification. A de-escalation order through the Armaments Directorate's internal threat assessment channels. Nothing visible. Nothing dramatic. Just the right words in the right rooms, reaching the right border inspection units. Bautov said he could do that.

Doyle explained the taps. The multiple storage locations for the dossier. The automatic transmission protocol if anything happened to any IVB-A personnel or assets. Bautov said he understood.

Fourteen days later the reclassification had filtered through Narvak's bureaucratic channels. IVB-A's threat rating in the Armaments Directorate's records had been quietly revised.

**The Narvak Coalition, for the first time since the intelligence map was drawn, showed CAUTIOUS instead of HOSTILE.**

There was no announcement. No celebration. Just an update to a file. Park noted that Bautov's behavioral anomaly had triggered a routine DSS watchlist flag — not targeted, not linked to IVB-A, just a computer noticing that a man's patterns had changed. Park recommended Bautov be advised to normalise his behavior immediately. He was.

## PART SEVENTEEN THE COMPOUND AT THE CLOSE OF VOL. II

VOL. II

### FINANCIAL LEDGER // IVB-A // 2026-07-16

CARRIED FORWARD (VOL. I CLOSE)	+\$3,706,000
LANCER R&D BUDGET	-\$45,000
LIVING QUARTERS EXPANSION	-\$80,000
CHAMELEON VEHICLE	-\$120,000
MONTHLY PAYROLL x4 MONTHS	-\$520,000
SERPENT / GHOSTKEY PRODUCTION	-\$28,000
MISC. OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	-\$65,000
<b>TOTAL ASSETS // 2026-07-16</b>	<b>\$3,048,000</b>

### COMPOUND ASSET STATUS // 2026-07-16

● Iron Ghosts	READY / 6 OPS	● Chameleon	OPERATIONAL
● Steel Shroud	READY / 6 OPS	● Phantom Runner	STANDBY
● Laughing Legion	READY / 6 OPS	● GHOSTKEY (12 units)	DEPLOYED
● WRAITH-1	OPERATIONAL	● SERPENT (32 units)	DEPLOYED
● WRAITH-2   BEDS: 80 (42 AVAILABLE)   MONTHLY PAYROLL: \$120,000	OPERATIONAL	● LANCER	IN DEVELOPMENT

On the sixteenth of July, 2026 — four months after the Commander had arrived at a bare facility with a million dollars and eighteen people — the compound stood like this: three million and forty-eight thousand dollars in clean accounts. Thirty-eight personnel. Three operational squads at full strength. Three ground vehicles. One stealth helicopter. A fortress perimeter. An R&D; lab with two deployed tools and a third in development. An intelligence asset inside the most hostile government on the map. Four active surveillance taps running into the Narvak Armaments Directorate. Living quarters expanded to eighty beds.

Iron Ghosts: veteran. Scarred. Ready. Steel Shroud: Seko back on the line. The Laughing Legion: one operation completed, zero injuries, zero blown covers, one hostile government reclassified.

Patches Doyle had filed his after-action report in three sentences: 'We went in. We got what we needed. Nobody saw us.' Sgt. Rowe read it, looked up, and said it was the best debrief he had ever received.

In the R&D; lab, Jin Park was working on power delivery circuitry for the LANCER. Khalil was calibrating a beam focusing array against a titanium test panel at twelve meters. Morin was in the chemistry bay working on a field-swappable energy cell design that would solve the twenty-shot limitation before it became a problem in the field.

In the medbay, Dr. Vasquez was restocking supplies and reviewing personnel files. The beds were empty. She was beginning to find the quiet unsettling — a medbay without patients meant either that no one had been sent anywhere dangerous yet, or that the people being sent to dangerous places were getting better at coming home. She hoped it was the second one.

On the helipad, the Phantom Runner sat in the evening light, rotors still, civilian livery catching the last hour of sun. Captain Sorel was running a pre-flight check she hadn't been asked to run, staying ready for the call that would eventually come.

**And somewhere in Narvak City, in an office in the Armaments Directorate, a colonel sat at his desk with his hands flat on the surface and thought about a phone call, and a ledger, and the four seconds a DSS officer had spent**

looking at a face that wasn't really there. He thought about these things, and then he got back to work.

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*"We went in. We got what we needed. Nobody saw us."*

— Cpl. 'Patches' Doyle, Laughing Legion

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END OF CHRONICLE // VOLUMES I & II // PERIOD: 2026-03-17 / 2026-07-16

PREPARED BY: C2 CONSOLE, IVB-A

NEXT UPDATE: UPON LANCER COMPLETION / BAUTOV ASSET ACTIVATION / NEW OPERATIONS

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