

Campaign Overview

Core Premise and Tone. Prelude to Iron is a double blind asynchronous wargame played over Discord. Five players will navigate a manufactured civil war without realizing they are actively playing against one another. The primary themes explore the cost of progress and the inevitability of war. The narrative will highlight how unseen forces in the shadows truly run the world. The setting is high fantasy, but the tone is strictly Cold War espionage. The technological baseline resembles the 1840s infused with heavy magic.

Stakes and Endpoints. Player character death is rare but possible if someone makes a catastrophic error. Political ruin is the far more likely consequence. The campaign will run for roughly seven to ten in game days. The ultimate doomsday scenario is the outbreak of a full global war. If the players somehow manage to deescalate the tension, the world survives and we move on to a different scenario entirely. The Automatica data remains a narrative MacGuffin for this specific campaign.

Contingencies for Player Elimination. The game must remain fun and engaging even if a player fails their primary objective early. If Kristina loses control of the government, she will transition to playing a government in exile. If Jamie's rebellion is crushed, I will provide her with a brand new faction to control. Zavi securing his extraction early will not end the simulation for everyone else. I will simply provide his Wolgari operatives with secondary corporate objectives while the geopolitical chaos continues to unfold around him.

Guarding the Secret. I must protect the secret of the shared player sandbox at all costs. I will actively deflect any suspicions. I am open to introducing fake NPC factions acting as red herrings to throw the players off the scent. Players can send formal diplomatic cables to other nations. I will take these formatted messages and pass them along to the respective players to maintain the illusion of NPC interactions. The grand reveal will happen only during a post mortem debriefing. I plan to host a massive group voice call and present a comprehensive document detailing exactly how all their choices intersected.

Logistics and Boundaries. I expect this campaign to run for about seven to ten days in real life. The pacing requires one post per day with a twenty four hour reply window. If someone misses a day, I will pause the simulation and fabricate real world excuses to buy time with the other active players. I will manage the backend campaign data using Bookstack. I will run the individual games through private 1 on 1 Discord channels. All mechanical trackers will remain hidden behind my screen to maintain a narrative, vibe based experience.

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