

The Collective vs. The Dominion

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Once the shockwave had passed and dissipated, astrometric sensors indicated a major discrepancy: the Founder’s world – the entire system, in fact – was completely gone. Nothing above the atomic level remained. The Vorta operating the sensors immediately dispatched a wing of Jem’Hadar vessels to investigate.

Upon approaching the star system, the Jem’Hadar encountered a massive cubic vessel. Piecing together what had occurred, the entire battle group unleashed a combined attack sufficient to decimate the surface of an entire planet. Much to their dismay, however, the cube seemed completely unaffected.

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The ships’ bridges immediately filled with drones. Fierce battles ensued, and many of the ships flew into the cube, damaging it significantly before it adjusted to that particular tactic. Within minutes, the remaining vessels were pulled aboard the massive cube and their surviving crews assimilated.

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CLASH OF THE TITANS

The Borg Collective is an interstellar society found primarily in the Delta Quadrant of the Milky Way galaxy. The Collective is based on the premise that perfection may be achieved through the assimilation of cultures, technologies, and populations. The Borg seek to improve themselves by consuming other sentient species and strip-mining their civilizations of their genetic strengths and original technological advances. The Borg are relentless in their pursuit of perfection and have assimilated thousands of species, absorbing their uniqueness and making it simply another facet of the Collective. The Borg Collective was rendered powerless and apparently gave up their goal of assimilating the Federation after a stunning defeat by the crew of the *U.S.S. Voyager* (with the aid of a future incarnation of Captain Katherine Janeway) in 2378. However, the Borg remain one of the most dangerous threats facing United Federation of Planets.

The Dominion is a centuries-old empire formed by a race of shapeshifters – called the Founders – once persecuted by those they now subjugate. Using incredibly advanced genetic engineering technologies, the Founders created at least two races to administer and defend their holdings: the wily Vorta and the brutal Jem'Hadar. The Dominion, consisting of a great majority of the Gamma Quadrant, is controlled by the iron fists of the Founders through their proxies. When faced with a threat, the Dominion responds with overwhelming force, seeking

to pacify their adversaries using a seemingly limitless number of Jem'Hadar soldiers and vast armadas of formidable warships. Much like the Collective, until their defeat, the Dominion presented one of the greatest threats to the existence of the Federation.

Despite their massive spheres of influence, their seemingly infinite resources, mind-staggeringly large armed forces, and superior technologies, neither the Borg Collective nor the Dominion have yet proven capable of defeating the United Federation of Planets and subjugating the Alpha or Beta Quadrants. Nevertheless, both of these titans remains a potent force for tyranny and annihilation.

And yet these two quadrant-spanning powers have never come in conflict or even into contact with one another. This document therefore poses a simple question: What if the Borg Collective made contact with the Dominion? As will be made clear, simple questions rarely have simple answers.

This supplement explores various scenarios involving a meeting of the Borg and the forces of the Dominion as well as possible outcomes of such interaction. Further, it describes various new rules and clarifications for introducing a Collective-Dominion conflict in your own Series.

RESISTANCE IS FUTILE

Beginning with the worst possible scenario, imagine if you will a Borg Collective not confined to the Delta Quadrant, but stretching to encompass nearly half the galaxy. A Borg victory over the Dominion might very well have such an effect. Indeed, a Collective armed with the advanced genetic engineering technologies of the Dominion might well prove utterly unstoppable, a juggernaut too powerful for even the combined forces of the Federation, the Romulans and the Klingons to oppose.

ACT I: A CHANCE MEETING

The Collective may encounter the Dominion in a number of ways: discovering their existence by assimilating Alpha or Beta Quadrant species familiar with the Dominion War, having a vessel displaced to the Gamma Quadrant by technological malfunction or spatial anomaly, intercepting subspace communications referencing the Dominion, and so forth. The scenario presented here involves the chance appearance of a Borg sphere in Dominion space.

A Borg sphere encountered an unstable wormhole in a far-spinward region of the Delta Quadrant. This anomaly led the sphere to a region in the Gamma Quadrant controlled by a state calling itself the Dominion.

After the sphere assimilated a trio of Dominion attack ships, a battle cruiser and several other vessels arrived on scene and engaged the sphere. Despite the two dozen ships that engaged the Borg vessel, only a single cruiser survived the assault. Dominion reinforcements arrived in the Drains sector and once again engaged the Collective.

The second engagement proved more effective when several scores of attack ships assaulted the sphere kamikaze-style, damaging it severely. Thousands of Jem'Hadar shock troops boarded the sphere and engaged the Borg drones in hand-to-hand combat. While the casualties were enormous, the Dominion proved successful... but what the cost?

Such a chance encounter – a lone vessel, separated from the Collective, lost in Dominion space – could be the catalyst for a disastrous conflict spanning multiple quadrants, involving billions of combatants and thousands of ships.

Unbeknownst to the Dominion fleet, the Borg had dispatched a message to the Collective via their interplexing beacon, thus informing them of the massive Dominion. The signal took several weeks to reach Unimatrix-01, but when it did, the Collective immediately dispatched a fleet of fifteen cubes to invade and assimilate its new adversary. Unfortunately the unstable wormhole that had carried the first sphere to Dominion space had collapsed.

Using assimilated transwarp technologies, the Collective's armada arrived in the Gamma Quadrant later that same year. The Founders of the Dominion, however, were ready. Millions of newly-designed Jem'Hadar soldiers impervious to Borg assimilation nanoprobes and thousands vessels sporting new, experimental high-energy beam weapons and "Borg-buster" torpedoes, met the Borg cues in battle near the Omarian Nebula. The carnage was on a scale previously unknown to either combatant.

Despite the Dominion's technological advances and massive fleet and armies, the simple fact is that the numbers are against them. While the Founders certainly possess the ability to produce hundreds of thousands of Jem'Hadar soldiers in a matter of weeks, the Collective consists of trillions of drones. The Dominion, faced with an enemy over 1,000 times their own size, would fight a losing battle. They would indeed fight to the last man, but they would lose.

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Despite their best efforts, it is highly probable that the Dominion would fail and the Gamma Quadrant would

be partially or wholly assimilated. Given the massive amount of natural resources the Dominion possesses, the Collective would almost certainly consume multiple planets, strip-mining them of their valuables before returning to the Delta Quadrant.

Though their motives sometimes seem extremely alien, the psychology of the Borg is simple: locate new races and add their biological and technological distinctiveness to the Collective. The Borg are not conquerors; they would likely have no interest in expanding their territory to include the entire Dominion. Instead, they would probably assimilate a large number of Jem'Hadar and Vorta as well as samples of the various other Dominion client races, assimilate the Founders' unique technologies, and return to their own space to apply their new knowledge in order to move closer to their goal of perfection.

Nevertheless, the razing of an empire would leave a power vacuum and the various races, now free from Dominion subjugation, would likely struggle to rebuild after centuries of victimization and persecution. In any case, the shattered remnants of the once-powerful Dominion would struggle to retain control, adding a whole new level of pandemonium to an already chaotic region.

ACT II: AN IRRESISTIBLE FORCE

Armed with the advanced cloning and genetic manipulation techniques of the Dominion, the Collective might very well cease assimilation of new races in favor of developing their own. Calling on their own infinitely complex databases of genetic information and DNA records, the Collective – using their newly acquired technologies – could custom build drones, fit them with integral cybernetic enhancements, and force-grow them to maturity in days or hours rather than years.

No longer needing to assimilate sentient beings to expand their numbers, the Collective would be likely to cease those operations in favor of solely acquiring new technologies. Of course, new races would be assimilated in small quantities, their unique and valuable characteristics used to supplement the “drone template,” but the primary goal would be the acquisition of previously unknown technologies.

The U.S.S. Chimera, while exploring a gaseous anomaly near the Badlands, encountered a vessel previously unrecorded in their database. A spheroid, roughly twice the size of their

own ship, emerged from the miasma and slowly approached their position.

“We are the Borg. You possess technologies unknown to us. Your vessel will be assimilated. If you refuse, you will be destroyed. Resistance is futile.”

Without warning, several drones appeared on the Chimera's bridge. Unlike any drones previously encountered by Starfleet, these Borg were identical... apparently humanoid, but genetically engineered to produce perfect specimens. Fitted with organic-looking implants, the drones began slaughtering the crew, not even bothering with assimilation.

Within minutes, the entire crew was dead. An emergency message sent to Starfleet was cut short, but one sentence made it through:

“The Borg have returned, they are unstoppable, and they are coming.”

With a new elite force of drones, the Collective would likely execute hundreds, perhaps even thousands of calculated attacks throughout the galaxy, quickly overwhelming nearly all resistance. In a matter of months, only a few members of a few races would remain, fortunate or smart enough to escape the Borg pogrom of galactic genocide.

The remnants of the Federation, the Klingon Empire, the Romulan Star Empire, the Taurhai Unity, and the various other Alpha and Beta Quadrant powers – as well as those advanced races of the Gamma and Delta Quadrants (the Krenim Imperium, the few remaining cells of the Dominion) – would certainly be interested in mounting a resistance movement, but with their resources nearly gone and their numbers dwindling daily, their end would be in sight.

ACT III: WHEN DARKNESS FALLS

Once the major powers of the galaxy were essentially consumed or annihilated by the Borg, the Collective would certainly consolidate its gains, spending months or years cataloguing their sphere of influence.

This scenario lends itself to a resistance campaign, a sort of “we’re all in the same boat, so let’s work together to defeat the monster.” This allows combinations of crewmen not otherwise available: Starfleet, Romulans, Klingons, Cardassians, Ferengi, and so forth. Nearly any combination of ship and crew is possible. Perhaps the PCs are refugees from standard *Trek* worlds, maybe they’re from races not frequently seen, or maybe they’re members of species never seen before.

DOMINION ASCENDANT

Despite their technological and logistical inferiority to the Collective, it is feasible that – given enough time – the Dominion could mount a counteroffensive to a Borg incursion, perhaps even turning the tide and defeating the Collective once and for all. In doing so, the Founders would do what no other group could: rid the galaxy of the Borg. Such a success would certainly earn the Dominion the position of primacy in the Milky Way, perhaps allowing the establishment of a multi-quadrant hegemony with the Federation, the Klingon Empire and the Romulan Star Empire all under its yoke.

A Dominion victory in a conflict with the Collective is perhaps less likely than a Borg victory, but is still plausible. Given the fanaticism of the Jem'Hadar and their Vorta handlers, the Dominion would, without the least hesitation, fight to the very last man. This fanaticism is something that the Collective does not possess and cannot comprehend. Presented with the possibility of their own destruction, the Borg are known to sue for peace in order to gain time to plan future strategies.

ACT I: AN UNLIKELY INTRODUCTION

A Dominion victory would likely begin in much the same way as a Borg victory: a ship lost and displaced in the other power's space, a brief and brutal encounter, and a massive follow-up. In this case, however, the wayward vessel is from the Dominion, and the chance meeting takes place in the Delta Quadrant on the edge of the Collective's space.

The Jem'Hadar First scowled as the Vorta, Siral, blathered incessantly about their predicament. What would the Founders say? How had they gotten so far off course? How would they return to Dominion territory?

Astrometric scans indicated that their ship, separated from its two comrades, was somehow impossibly in the Delta Quadrant. The Vorta posited that the exchange of weapons fire with the rebellious Ma'coot armada had somehow torn a hole in subspace, sucked them in, and relocated them here relatively unharmed. Nearly 9,000 light years from the Dominion, however, was certainly no place that the First wanted to be.

"Sir," began the helmsman, "we have a vessel approaching. Its hull configuration is unknown, and it seems to be composed of super-dense alloy. Our sensor scans show no shielding, but they cannot penetrate the vessel's hull."

"Let me see it," demanded the First.

Routing the image to the First's headset, the image of a massive cubical vessel, easily hundreds of times the size of their own, approached at low impulse speed. A greenish energy beam – a tractor – locked on their hull, rendering them immobile. A white cutting beam sliced away a two-meter section of their hull, and

one of the Jem'Hadar bridge crew vanished in a green transporter wash.

Suddenly, a transmission came over their communications system. A mechanical voice – or perhaps it was a chorus of voices – said:

"We are the Borg. You will be assimilated. We will add your biological and technological distinctiveness to our own. Resistance is futile."

"Transmit an emergency message to the Founders," barked Siral. "Tell them that we are dead. Transmit all tactical data, and tell them... tell them that the Borg are coming."

ACT II: THE COMING STORM

Once the Collective consumed the Dominion vessel and assimilated the crew and their collective memories, their curiosity would certainly be piqued by the superior genetic engineering of their races as well as the technologies contained in their ships. Undoubtedly intrigued, the Collective would likely formulate an attack strategy and dispatch one or more cubes to engage the Dominion.

Fortunately, the assimilated Vorta and Jem'Hadar soldiers would possess very limited knowledge about the true nature of the Dominion or the Founders. This would leave them at a disadvantage, as would the travel time to the Gamma Quadrant – an area of space nearly devoid of transwarp conduits – and the Founders' advanced notice of the impending invasion.

The Collective's armada of ten cube ships arrived in the Gamma Quadrant later that same year. The Founders of the Dominion, however, were ready. Millions of newly-designed Jem'Hadar soldiers impervious to Borg assimilation nanoprobes, and thousands of vessels sporting new, experimental high-energy beam weapons and "Borg-buster" torpedoes (based on technologies covertly "liberated" from the Federation), met the Borg cubes in battle near the Omarian Nebula. The carnage was on a scale previously unknown to either combatant.

In a brief yet brutal encounter, the Dominion force overwhelmed the Borg cubes. Transporting literally hundreds of thousands of assimilation-resistant Jem'Hadar aboard their ships, the Founders quickly and surgically wiped out all but a handful of drones. The survivors were disconnected from the hive mind, dissected and studied to determine their weaknesses. The cubes, largely undamaged, were likewise towed to Dominion space construction platforms – their links to the Collective suppressed – and reverse-engineered in order to learn their secrets and mine their advanced technologies.

When the second wave came, the Dominion were supremely prepared. Jem'Hadar strike forces and Vorta operatives possessed of genetically programmed cyber-psionic abilities disabled an ar-

mada of twenty-five tactical cubes, deactivating their links to the hive and instantly snuffing out the millions of drones.

Dominion operatives created specifically for the purpose interfaced with the Collective via one of the ship's vinculum modules. These psionically-adept Vorta introduced a psionic virus into the central processor of the Borg vessel and reconnected it to the hive mind. The results were catastrophic.

ACT III: ATLAS FALLS

Once the Dominion's psionic virus works its way through the Collective, drones throughout the galaxy would be instantly deactivated. Not merely disconnected from the Borg hive mind, but permanently taken offline. The Founders would certainly determine that drones completely incapable of resuscitation would be far less of a problem than those simply reconnected to the central intellect.

Within a matter of weeks, perhaps even days, the Dominion counterattack would not only disable the Collective, it would once and for all end the Borg threat. In its place, however, would remain a Dominion possessed of superior Borg vessels and technologies, millions of advanced Jem'Hadar soldiers and Vorta psychic spies, and enough of a flush from victory to take their crusade to the rest of the galaxy. While the power vacuum in the Delta Quadrant left by the Collective's collapse would make it easy pickings for the Dominion, the Alpha Quadrant – easily accessible via the Bajoran wormhole – would present a much tastier target.

Deep Space 9 received aberrant sensor readings from the Celestial Temple. Colonel Kira, the station's commander, was alerted of a massive build-up of Dominion vessels in the Gamma Quadrant. That, coupled with the fact that contact with Federation and Bajoran listening posts at the other end of the wormhole was lost, was enough to warrant a communiqué to Starfleet Command.

Within hours of receiving the transmission, an armada over ten times the size of that previously assembled by the Dominion poured through the wormhole. The few Starfleet vessels that re-

sponded to the call were lost almost instantly. Deep Space 9 itself was overrun and Kira killed in hand-to-hand combat with a seemingly cybernetically-enhanced Jem'Hadar soldier.

Regardless of the resistance assembled, the newly-powerful Dominion would have little difficulty sweeping through the Federation, the Klingon Empire, and into Romulan space. Likely targets would include Cardassia Prime, the worlds of the Breen, and Earth, among others.

The Dominion, fresh from a successful Borg genocide, would either sweep through the Alpha and Beta Quadrants, expanding their territory and quickly consolidating their gains, or, more insidiously, gain a foothold in the region and use their military might to establish a hegemony, forcing the United Federation of Planets to sue for peace rather than fight a one-sided war. The Klingons, given their racial proclivity for combat, would likely refuse such a course, and would, in the end, be wiped out as surely and as completely as the Collective.

Once the main powers were pacified or eliminated, the Dominion would most likely seek to further expand their push for territory, making a drive toward Romulus. In such a setting, the Romulan Senate might well turn to their old adversaries, the Taurhai Unity, for assistance. While their technological superiority over the Romulans might not equate to a similar advantage when dealing with a Borg-enhanced Dominion, it is likely that, along with the Romulans, the Taurhai could bog the Dominion's forces down indefinitely.

Nevertheless, a protracted war against the Dominion in such a setting would ultimately prove futile. The Founders' ability to produce millions of Jem'Hadar soldiers in weeks or months would provide the reinforcements necessary to replace those killed in battle while their opponents could not do the same. This scenario concludes with a destroyed Klingon Empire, a subjugated Federation and dismantled Starfleet, and a Romulan Star Empire caught in a losing battle against an irresistible foe.

THE LONG TWILIGHT

The Borg Collective and the Dominion are both supremely powerful groups, each with numerous strengths and few Achilles' heels. When faced with conflict, both the Collective and the Dominion use their advanced technologies and superior numbers to overwhelm their adversaries. Given the sheer size and power of both the Dominion and the Borg, it seems probable that the two would simply cancel each other out, leaving chaos and devastation in their combined wake.

This scenario presents the possibility of a Pyrrhic victory for one side or the other... one in which the cost of victory is simply too great.

ACT I: STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT

As with the Borg victory scenario, this possibility begins with a Collective vessel lost in the Gamma Quadrant, relocated by some astral happenstance. Also like the first setting, the clash between the Jem'Hadar and the cube ends in a Borg defeat, but not before they dispatch a message to Unimatrix-01 requesting additional forces to assimilate the Dominion.

When the Borg reach the Dominion with fifteen cubes, they confront a concerted war effort. Given even the limited time to prepare a defense, the Founders produced countless new Jem'Hadar incapable of being assimilated and designed with organic explosives set to detonate should they detect the presence of nanoprobes in their systems. In this fashion, though the Founders would lose many soldiers, each Jem'Hadar death at the hands of the Collective would cost ten times as many drones.

In a war that lasted nearly three years, both the Dominion and the Borg Collective were devastated and left in ruins. The template for the central intelligence of the Collective was disrupted and eventually destroyed by an invasion of nearly eighty million Jem'Hadar troops, thus preventing any further incarnations of the Borg Queen. The Founders were almost all killed by a high-yield multikinetic neutronic explosion near their new homeworld that destroyed not only their solar system, but several others in a radius of five light years. In defeating an apparently unbeatable foe, both sides lost the war.

Small groups of Jem'Hadar and Vorta remained under the tenuous control of the few Founders not killed by the attack. Borg vessels scattered throughout the galaxy attempted to function as mini-collectives, yet most ended in self-destruction.

A single Borg probe, severely damaged, has managed to enter the Beta Quadrant. It transported a very precious cargo as far from the conflict-ridden war zone as possible. What it carried was the sole surviving copy of the Collective's core backup systems. The goal was to locate an inhabited planet, assimilate the population,

and begin building a new hive. The result of this journey remains unknown.

ACT II: FLIGHT FROM TERROR

The decimation of the Borg Collective and the Dominion would leave power vacuums in both the Gamma and Delta Quadrants. Planets and races previously suffering under the brutal regime of the Founders or hiding in fear of the Collective would find themselves suddenly liberated. Many would quickly learn, however, that evil known is sometimes preferable to evil unknown.

When Starfleet Command received the transmission from Deep Space 9, it seemed as if some long-forgotten prayers had finally been answered. Communications from the Gamma Quadrant suggested that a conflict between the Founders and the Borg had ended in the destruction of both. In an unprecedented show of solidarity and humanitarianism, the United Federation of Planets, the Klingon Empire, the Romulan Star Empire, and the Cardassian Union dispatched vessels to the region to establish a sense of order and security as well as to prevent old grudges from becoming current wars.

Cargo vessels from the three main powers, filled with food and medical supplies, flooded through the Bajoran wormhole. Likewise, scores of vessels filled with refugees flooded through from the Gamma Quadrant, seeking refuge from the chaos of their former homes. Starfleet, at the request of the Bajoran government, established a security presence at the Gamma Quadrant terminus of the wormhole, denying non-coalition vessels and personnel from emigrating to the Alpha and Beta Quadrants. Despite the philanthropic motives of the Federation, it was simply too much of a strain on its resources to allow the population of former Dominion worlds to relocate in that manner.

The UFP's motives might well be humanitarian in nature, but those of the Klingons, Romulans, and Cardassians might not be so pure. The Cardassians, in particular, lost millions of citizens and numerous resources to the Dominion, and while the Founders might very well be gone, their empire's wealth would still be there. Cardassian leaders could easily view such an opening as an opportunity to seek reparations for their unjust persecution. In fact, the Romulans, in particular, might support such activities, having lost nearly their entire intelligence community to the Founders early in the previous Dominion war.

ACT III: A WEALTH OF OPPORTUNITIES

Once a baseline level of aid was established, it seems likely that the three Alpha/Beta Quadrant superpowers would seek to further their own aims in the Gamma Quadrant. It is also likely that many worlds freed from Dominion yoke would seek entry into the Federation or

one of the two empires. Even the Cardassians would claim territory in the Gamma Quadrant in hopes of reclaiming some of their former power and glory.

Besides the main powers in the region, one would most certainly find Ferengi merchants profiting from the post-war setting. Both buying low and selling high, the Ferengi would not be above selling weapons to warlike races or buying ancient treasures of mere slips of latinum. The Breen, undoubtedly bitter over their defeat, might see opportunities to reclaim some of what was lost, much like the Cardassians.

Deep Space 9 would become the primary stop along a new inter-quadrant thoroughfare, with traffic pouring through in both directions. The wealth of new technologies from the fallen Dominion and Collective would be gathered up greedily by all takers, researched and carefully reproduced, eventually leading to a golden era of peace and prosperity... or a new arms race and intergalactic war. Only time will tell.

Furthermore, though both the Dominion and the Collective were soundly thrashed, elements of both remain. A new Collective, built from the sole backup of the central intelligence of the Borg, could be secretly building in a nebula deep in the Beta Quadrant. Wily and shrewd Vorta, with access to Ketracel-White production facilities, might pull off an effective rebellion, claiming to fight on in the name of the Founders.

The few remaining Founders – those off-planet when it was destroyed – shepherd their remaining forces and quickly go underground; bases hidden throughout the

Gamma Quadrant (and elsewhere – perhaps the Alpha and Beta Quadrants) that the Collective didn't discover and destroy would provide ample opportunities to fight back against the new invaders.

When the female Founder, held by Starfleet, received news of the destruction of her people and the fall of the Dominion, she flew into a rage. Killing dozens of security personnel, the Founder pulled off a daring escape and made her way home only to find that the rumors were true and that her people had been completely obliterated.

Driven to utter madness, the female changeling marshaled what forces she could muster and immediately took to the stars, attacking renegade Borg, disloyal Vorta and Jem'Hadar, treacherous Starfleet, Klingon, and Romulan vessels, and newly-freed, formerly Dominion-held planets.

This setting also offers the chance to explore the Delta Quadrant sans the Borg. The loss of such an integral power source would lead to a mad dash to gather Borg artifacts and former holdings. The Kazon, Trabe, Haakonians, Talaxians, Turei, Vidi'ans, and various other factions would fight over scraps, but the true prizes would fall to the more advanced races, particularly the Krenim or the Vaadwaur. Armed with such potent weapons and vessels, even a minor player could become a quadrant-wide power – and a galactic threat – in a matter of days or weeks. Using their subspace corridors to reach the furthest corners of the galaxy, the Vaadwaur could quickly become a threat on par with the fallen Collective.

AFTERMATH: THE GAMMA QUADRANT

This section deals with the possibilities of life in the Gamma Quadrant in the event that the Dominion should fall. As a Dominion victory would likely produce less opportunities for exploration by Starfleet (and other Alpha and Beta Quadrant groups), a Dominion loss seems more appropriate in this situation.

Any Dominion loss would, by its very nature, require the death of most or all of the Founders. The Borg – rarely subtle in the strategy – would likely affect this through the use of high-yield weaponry, such as a multikinetic neutronic device, a massive tricobalt explosive, a star-collapsing mechanism, or some other such weapon of mass destruction. The likeliest scenario involves the destruction not only of the Founders' planet, but their solar system (and adjacent systems) as well. Despite these possibilities, it is unlikely that the Collective would ever make use of time travel, particularly after the disaster that occurred when a Borg sphere attempted to intervene in the history of humanity.

In any case, the entire scenario is based on the premise that the Dominion was either mortally wounded or utterly annihilated by the Collective, and the Gamma Quadrant is in a state of pandemonium.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE DOMINION

The Dominion has a classification system for the races under its control:

Minions are those races seen as invaluable to the Dominion. They include the Vorta and the Jem'Hadar. These races are integral to the control and administration of the Dominion.

Vassal races have either been conquered for a long time and been integrated into the Dominion, or they have willingly submitted without resorting to hostilities. They are generally given a wide latitude and some measure of personal freedom. Certainly they still labor under the yoke of the Founders' rule, but they are essentially second-class citizens. They are certainly not considered as important as the Founders themselves, but are viewed as capable servants and useful pawns.

Below the vassals are those races that are considered under the control of the Dominion. These "protectorates," or *conquered races*, are closely watched for any sign of rebellion, but are pretty much allowed to do what they please as long as, in the end, they serve the Dominion. They are heavily taxed and brutally disciplined, but when they don't make waves, they are left pretty much alone.

The lowliest groups are those completely enslaved by the Dominion. *Subjugated races* have no rights and are consid-

ered little more than animals. They are usually kept around for heavily labor and hazardous duties considered unsuitable for the more important races.

The Dominion would likely also have allies. *Allied races* are separate from the Dominion and not directly under its control, but still usually do as they're told. The reason for allying rather than conquering is usually a matter of difficulty. The Breen, for example, were technically not under Dominion rule, but they did serve the will of the Founders (as well as looking after their own interests). The Jem'Hadar probably could have easily conquered the Breen, but under the circumstances at the time (i.e. war with the Federation, Klingon Empire and Romulan Star Empire), the situation dictated alliance over conquest. Allied races often espouse the same (or very similar) beliefs as the Dominion.

Enemy races are those deemed too powerful, numerous, devious, or whatever to be allowed to exist. Few races fall into this category; it's usually more productive to enslave a people than it is to annihilate them.

The Jem'Hadar wage war and conquer new races and the Vorta monitor and manage them. The Jem'Hadar are occasionally called to handle large-scale problems, such as planetary revolts. They generally deal with these situations with invasion forces, but just as often they remedy the situation with planetary bombardment or the release of other hideous weapons from orbit (i.e. biogenic weapons, atmospheric fusion propagators, cannibal nanites, etc.).

LIBERATION

With the fall of the Dominion, the Vorta and the Jem'Hadar have some difficult choices to make. There are several scenarios that could play out:

Control Through Obfuscation: The Vorta might very well decide that the havoc wreaked on the Dominion by the loss of the Founders is too much to bear. While many would likely commit suicide out of despair from the loss of their gods, others would be a bit less hasty, realizing the potential chaos was far less desirable than maintaining the status quo. Under the pretext that the Founder live on, the Vorta could [relatively] easily continue on as they had for centuries, pretending that they carried out the commands of the Founders as always.

The Vorta would command the legions of Jem'Hadar, directing the creation of new soldiers and the construction of new ships and bases as necessary. This is particularly feasible if a small number of Vorta work to maintain the illusion for their fellows and the rest of the Dominion. This scenario would collapse like a house of

cards should some group – internal or otherwise – learn that the Founders are truly lost and reveal that fact to the Dominion’s populace.

Control Through Force: Should the loss of the Founders become public knowledge, the Vorta might take the role of surrogate leaders, commanding the forces of the Dominion until one or more of the Founders off-world at the time of the attack are located and brought home to resume command. With millions of Jem’Hadar troops and thousands of vessels, the Vorta could very easily put down any rebellions on wayward client worlds. Just because the Founders are gone doesn’t mean that order must not be maintained.

Consolidation: With the Founders gone, many Vorta and Jem’Hadar would lose control, killing themselves and others until they succumbed to a darker fate. Despite their predisposition for servitude, there would be some Dominion subjugates unwilling to follow their former masters into oblivion. With the pandemonium that ensued, many Dominion holdings would be lost. Nevertheless, a few resourceful Vorta with a method of producing Ketracel-White could maintain a handful of star systems and planets in the core of the Dominion while allowing those on the periphery to fall away and follow their own paths.

This would undoubtedly lead to mass confusion, conquest, genocide, and perhaps worse among former Dominion holdings. However, with the resources they could gather and the troops they could control, the Vorta oligarchy could repel even the most determined attempts at reprisal from newly-freed vassals.

The Vorta would very likely sabotage or destroy those Dominion resources that they could not gather for themselves rather than allow them to fall into the hands of those that would use them against their former slavers and occupiers.

Meet the New Boss, Same as the Old Boss: Should the Vorta prove unwilling or unable to control their wayward Jem’Hadar troops and continue operating “business as usual,” there are a number of groups that would gleefully take the job.

Assuming the majority of the Dominion infrastructure remains intact, the Breen would be thrilled to assume command of their former allies’ holdings. While they certainly failed to meet the Founders’ expectations, the Breen did prove themselves capable collaborators to the Dominion, and those Vorta desiring survival rather than death might very well allow the Breen to take up the mantle of leadership. In fact, given their knowledge of the Dominion’s workings, the Vorta would prove in-

valuable to the Breen as they gathered their spoils and built a might empire in the Gamma Quadrant.

On the other hand, should the paraphernalia fail and the White stop flowing, another group could come to the aid of the failing Dominion: the Son’a. While many of these hideous creatures gave up their prideful ways and returned to their lives among the Ba’ku, others were less taken by the prospect and returned to their own worlds with their Tarlac and Elora subjects.

The Son’a capacity to produce Ketracel-White would give them a distinct advantage, allowing them to move in and pick up the pieces, consolidate their gains, and reap the benefits of Dominion technologies, perhaps producing new bodies via cloning and transferring their intellects into the new, healthy bodies. With an armada of Dominion and Son’a ships, tens of thousands of Jem’Hadar shock troops, and a distinct animosity toward the Federation on all sides, the Son’a-led Dominion could certainly prove a terrifying foe for Starfleet. Even more disturbing, remnants of the Son’a might use their own genetic engineering technologies to their advantage, using Dominion resources to produce Jem’Hadar loyal to themselves rather than the Founders.

Yet another possibility is the gleaning of Dominion resources by the Klingons, Romulans, and/or Cardassians. Any or all of those groups would benefit from seized technologies and equipment, using the spoils to advance their own causes in the Alpha and Beta Quadrants. Romulans armed with loyal Jem’Hadar troops and Dominion vessels could mount an effective counteroffensive against the Taurhai Unity. Likewise, elements of the Klingons or the Romulans hostile to the United Federation of Planets could use any of their gathered artifacts against Starfleet. Vessels capable of cloaking, armed with Dominion weapons, and crewed by Jem’Hadar raiding parties are only a few options open to a resourceful Referee.

Pandemonium: Should the Vorta prove unable to control the Jem’Hadar, they would likely meet their deaths at the hands of their former charges. The enraged Jem’Hadar would likely rain ruination down on all those that they could reach before their own deaths. This could lead to either the complete destruction of the Dominion with all former holdings and populations lost to the Jem’Hadar genocide, or the collapse of centralized control.

Should the Vorta lose control completely, then within a few months, only refugees would remain throughout much of the formerly Dominion-held territory. The Jem’Hadar would consume what remaining Ketracel-White they could find, but once it was gone, they too would disappear. Unable to create more of the life-giving substance themselves, most would succumb to their fate.

Some, however, might approach the Federation or other Alpha or Beta Quadrant powers for assistance, though the UFP is the one most likely to help them. In the end, the Vorta and the Jem'Hadar would become extinct and the remnants of their former client races would struggle to rebuild their lives. This would be a recipe for disaster as the strong preyed on the weak, and survival of the fittest would surely be the only law.

SAMPLE GAMMA QUADRANT RACE: OTHAK

A race of short, skinny humanoids with large heads and near-vestigial limbs, the Othak are a brilliant race of scientists and philosophers long oppressed by the Dominion and its Jem'Hadar troops.

Known to be a technologically advanced species, the Othak drive for scientific advancement was stifled by the Founders' fears of a client race developing weapons capable of fighting their absolute rule. Despite the fact that the Othak were widely considered among the best pre-Dominion starship engineers in the Gamma Quadrant, their talents were never utilized by their rulers.

With the fall of the Dominion and the sudden absence of the Founders and their war machine, the Othak have suddenly found themselves able to pursue their previous lines of research. In fact, the scientific community has already developed vessels with propulsion and sensor systems superior to those used by the Dominion. Though their planetary resources are somewhat limited, the Othak have already begun contacting their neighbors and previous trade partners to acquire the materials necessary to build a prototype ship.

The Othak are very amenable to dealing with any species not affiliated with the former-Dominion leadership and are even more likely to share their scientific and engineering expertise in exchange for raw materials and sufficiently advanced construction equipment.

Othak

Attributes

Fitness 2 [5]
 Vitality +1
 Coordination 2 [5]
 Intellect 4 [7]
 Logic +1
 Presence 3 [6]
 Psi 0 [5]

Skills

Any Science (Choose 2 Specializations)
 Culture (Othak) 2 (3)
 History (Dominion) 1 (2)
 Language (Quth-Kri'al) 2
 (Dominion) 1
 World Knowledge (Othak Prime) 1 (2)

Typical Advantages/Disadvantages

Mathematical Ability (+3), Shrewd (+1)

On the other hand, if the collapse of control should remain centralized, then the Dominion's former subjugates would find themselves in a much different set of circumstances. Freed from the Founders' iron-fisted rule, most would resume living their lives as they had before the Dominion or, if that way of life was lost, try to rebuild and thrive as best they could. Undoubtedly there are some Dominion client races that are aggressive, even warlike in nature. These races would most certainly take up the sword and begin conquest of their neighbors using the Dominion's technological remnants or devising and building their own. It is likely that no single race could gain control over all of the Dominion's holdings, but it is also likely that new empires of a few star systems in size would spring up throughout the Gamma Quadrant.

SAMPLE GAMMA QUADRANT RACE: QUTH-KRI'AL

The Quth-Kri'al are a warlike race conquered and subjugated by the Dominion sometime around 2292. Their brutal tactics and penchant for overly-aggressive combat techniques so infatuated the Founders that they redesigned their early Jem'Hadar soldiers to incorporate some of the Quth-Kri'al features.

Bipedal humanoids, the Quth-Kri'al exhibit several unusual characteristics. First, they are completely asexual, reproducing between zero and five times during their lifespan. Newly-spawned Quth-Kri'al grow to adulthood in only nine years, reaching up to 2.7 meters in height and massing up to 180 kilograms.

The Quth-Kri'al are a hardy species, possessed of redundant organs (like Klingons) and vicious claws and fangs. Their entire culture is based not on the warrior ideal, but the concept of *quth*, or "feast of blood." The Quth-Kri'al do not kill for honor or even for sport; they kill because they are bloodthirsty barbarians.

Hailing from a small, swampy planet orbiting a G-type star, the Quth-Kri'al homeworld is rife with vicious predators and sturdy prey animals, all of which the Quth-Kri'al take pleasure in hunting, terrorizing, and tearing to pieces with their bare hands. Though they never achieved warp flight on their own, in the wake of the Dominion's fall, the Quth-Kri'al "inherited" a number of Jem'Hadar ships and weapons and have taken their bloodlust to their neighbors.

A sly race, the Quth-Kri'al quickly mastered the art of spacefaring and have already invaded three nearby star systems, raping and pillaging the natives of each. As bad as the Jem'Hadar were, at least they maintained order; the Quth-Kri'al bring only an orgy of savagery.

Quth-Kri'al

Attributes

Fitness 3 [6]
Vitality +1
Coordination 3 [5]
Intellect 2 [5]
Logic -1
Presence 3 [6]
Willpower +1
Psi 0 [5]

Skills

Athletics (choose Specialization) 1 (2)
Culture (Quth-Kri'al) 1 (2)
History (Quth-Kri'al) 1 (2)
Language (Quth-Kri'al) 2
(Dominion) 1

Energy Weapon (Disruptor) 2 (3)
Unarmed Combat (Brawling) 2 (3)
World Knowledge (Sect-controlled Planet) 1 (2)

Typical Advantages/Disadvantages

Toughness +2, Bloodlust -2

In either scenario, refugees from the Gamma Quadrant would make their way to the Bajoran wormhole and into the Alpha and Beta Quadrants. The PCs might very well take the role of peacekeepers in the Gamma Quadrant once word of their chaos there reaches Earth, or they might just as easily become resettlement coordinators, aiding the influx of refugees find sanctuary in the Federation. The Klingons and Romulans, too, may find themselves dealing with the remnants of former-Dominion races seeking to join their societies as well.

WE ARE THE BORG...

Attention. Your designation is 4 of 12, Tertiary Adjunct of Unimatrix 27. You have been assimilated by the Borg Collective.

The Collective will upload all pertinent data to this unit immediately. This unit's individuality has been purged and it is now one with the Borg.

The Borg Collective was established 1,107.52 standard years ago in the Delta Quadrant in the area now designated Unimatrix-01. Meant as a repository for all of their civilization's information, the engineers and theoreticians that created the massive computer postulated an entirely new idea: the development and surgical implantation of a device that would link the minds of those so altered to the Collective. Such a concept was considered outlandish, even ghoulish by many, but the military leadership saw merit in such an advancement and gave both the permission and the resources to achieve that goal.

Over the course of roughly three years, the scientists theorized and experimented with various animals in an attempt to develop a prototype of their cybernetic implant. Miraculously, they succeeded in developing a working model. A volunteer from the team – a computer scientist – volunteered to undergo the experimental implantation of the device in his cerebral cortex. A laborious, sixteen-hour surgery proved successful, and, when the scientist regained consciousness and recuperated sufficiently, the implant was activated.

The sensory overload was too much for the scientist to handle and he lost consciousness. When they woke him (after fine-tuning the implant), the young scientist was simply amazed at the vast amounts of data suddenly at his immediate disposal. He could instantaneously glean literally any piece of data from any database connected to the system. Furthermore, the synaptic processor component of the implant allowed him to quickly integrate the information that he received, converting it into a comprehensible format. The scientist could also store his own memories in a computer-recognizable format, allowing him to record every experience and recall it with perfect clarity at any time.

The success of the experiment spurred the acceleration of the project, and within the year over one hundred test subjects were linked to the Collective and, through the system, to each other. Essentially emulating a constant telepathic link using technological means, many of the subjects found their own minds subsumed by the group consciousness. Indeed, many complained that, when their minds were at rest, they felt completely unable to distinguish their own thoughts from those of others in the group.

An added bonus to the program was the discovery that the Collective was actually capable of using the minds connected to its systems as additional processing power, increasing its own computational capabilities in a geometric progression. The military leadership worked fervently to “encourage” many soldiers and other personnel to undergo the procedure, promising that they could be separated from the Collective at any time. As it turned out, however, disconnecting from the group consciousness – particularly among those connected for any length of time – led to various mental problems and personality disorders.

In less than a decade, much of the scientific and military complex was connected to the Collective, sharing their ideas and theories, quickly working from vague concepts to produce fully-developed plans. Less than two years later, over 99% of the planetary population was fitted with an implant and connected to the Collective and the group consciousness.

All areas of science and industry developed at an exponential rate. Roughly a year after the majority of the population was connected and brought “online,” the Collective – no longer a name for the computer but rather for the society itself – designed and produced a spaceworthy vessel and launched into a period of detailed exploration of their solar system. Orbital facilities were placed in orbit, and a network of satellites connected everyone on the planet to the Collective's main computer system. Colonies dotted the four inner planets of their star system, each functioning with their own Collective sub-system, allowing the colonists to communicate with each other as well as exchange data with all other members of the group.

The species referred to now only as the Collective, achieved warp capability not on their own, but when they encountered a race calling themselves the Nek'haru. Members of the Nek'haru – Species 2 – navigated their way to the solar system of the Collective. When approached by Collective vessels, the Nek'haru hailed and initiated contact. When offered the unique opportunity to experience the Collective, several members of the Nek'haru crew offered themselves. The Nek'haru scientists and engineers added their vast technical knowledge to the Collective, including the capacity to travel faster than light. The surgical implantation of the neural processors irrevocably linked them to the Collective.

After a brief period, the Nek'haru requested the return of their crewmembers. The Collective, however, refused to give them up. In fact, it quickly became apparent that the Collective was unable to release its newest members. Further, the Collective itself had begun developing a personality of its own. Though not yet a sentience unto itself, the Collective had been offered the opportunity to expand its sphere of influence through the use of their newly assimilated technologies.

The Nek'haru, realizing the severity of their misjudgment, left Collective space immediately.

Over the next several months, the Collective redesigned its vessels, adding warp drive technologies and newly-developed weapon systems, designed by reverse-engineering Nek'haru defense technologies. With its fleet of warp-capable ships, the Collective began systematically exploring neighboring systems, offering entrance into the Collective to the races that it contacted. Much to its chagrin, the Collective discovered that not all sentient beings viewed assimilation as a favorable experience. In fact, a number of races responded with extreme violence, severely damaging or destroying a number of the Collective's starships.

A number of races that encountered the Collective, however, believed in what it offered. Twelve different races embraced the Collective's philosophy and, within a few years, the Collective had grown in size to over nine billion members.

Functioning effectively as one mind, the Collective turned nearly all efforts toward the construction of new starships incorporating the newest and best of the acquired technologies. As time passed, however, many members of the Collective grew ill and many died. The causes ranged from newly encountered microbes and viruses to injury incurred during exploration of space to failure to maintain themselves by eating and sleeping properly. This situation quickly erupted into chaos as differing opinions developed within the collective consciousness. The solution to this problem was one that none had truly expected: the Collective assumed control.

During the early years of its development, the Collective central processing unit bordered on self-awareness. After the inclusion of new members, the assimilated thoughts and emotions began to affect the Collective in a number of ways. The central processor began analyzing and cataloging each individual thought pattern and feeling. It determined that, in order to not only maintain its own existence but to also expand its influence, it had to truly function as a single consciousness.

Consequently, the Collective computer system developed its own personality and established its own objectives. Utilizing the neural processor units installed in all members, the Collective took control of its "organic units," reclassifying them as "drones" and programming them using its accumulated knowledge.

So well planned was the Collective's plan that the "drones" were caught completely unawares. Their individual thoughts and personalities were completely suppressed by their new programming and they immediately began their assigned tasks in earnest.

Furthermore, the Collective desired to maintain functional drones indefinitely. It therefore began the process of replacing failing organs and even entire organic systems with cybernetic devices. This practice proved so useful that drones started appearing with enhancements rather than simple replacements. Soon the majority of the Collective's drones had multiple cybernetic implants, some general and some specific to each individual drone's purpose.

Among its new goals was the desire to assimilate new knowledge and increase its numbers. To this end the Collective designed and constructed a new series of vessels for the purpose of assimilating vessels and races that they encountered during their exploration. In order to create vehicles that stressed both form and function, the Collective determined that the best course of action involved creating vessels based on simple geometric shapes: cubes, spheres, pyramids, and so on.

Over the next several years, the Collective encountered literally hundreds of different species. At first new races were invited to join the Collective, but, when it became apparent that far too many of those approached were not interested in adding to its perfection, the Collective assumed a new posture: forced assimilation. With the numerous technological advances garnered from its various additions, the Collective had grown from a single computer system and a single world to a veritable empire spanning tens of light years and a population of tens of billions. That some might resist the offer of perfection was no longer be permissible.

Over the next several centuries, the number of Collective successes grew and the number of failures dropped dramatically. Few were the species strong enough or clever enough to evade or defeat the Collective. After assimilating the entire populace of Linara IV, a new name for the Collective was assumed. The Linarans, Species 477, had heard of the Collective in the years prior to their world's assimilation and had termed the cybernetically-enhanced humanoids "the Borg." When the Linaran civilization was subsumed by the Collective, this rather apt name was appropriated as well.

As the domain of the Borg Collective expanded, the resistance it faced grew as well. Most retaliation against the Borg was futile at best and disastrous at worst. Some races, however, managed to elude the Borg using technologies that the Collective had not yet captured. Many civilizations were devastated but not completely destroyed. In one such instance, the assimilation of the home-world of Species 1087, the H'rothgar, the invasion was underway when a number of H'rothgar vessels escaped the Borg and vanished. Unable to track them, the Borg continued their assimilation. Much to the dismay of the Collective, the H'rothgar ships emerged a short time later. For some reason unclear to the Collective, the vessels were somehow different. Their armaments were far more advanced than when they had fled minutes earlier, and, once their counterattack began, the Borg could not withstand it.

Over 400,000 Borg drones were destroyed by the H'rothgar warships before the battle was concluded. All Collective ships were obliterated. The Collective later concluded that the H'rothgar made use of some sort of temporal technology and traveled into the future where they acquired advanced weaponry and defensive systems that enabled them to defeat the Borg invasion force. The Collective did not possess such technologies at that time and were thus unable to complete the assimilation process. Even worse, the H'rothgar apparently acquired technologies that enabled them to remove the Borg implants and rehabilitate formerly-assimilated members of their population. The damage done by the Borg was quickly undone and then came the next unavoidable step... the H'rothgar went in search of the Borg.

Over the next decade the H'rothgar devastated dozens of Borg worlds and annihilated millions of drones. The Collective made numerous additions in terms of drones, planets, resources, and technologies, yet the superior capabilities of the H'rothgar warships continued to defeat them at every turn. Finally, after twelve long years of defeats at the hands of the H'rothgar, the Borg assimilated several members of Species 1214, the Krenim. The Krenim possessed advanced temporal technologies and, once integrated into a newly-designed Borg "sphere," that vessel was dispatched to the past where they successfully defeated and assimilated the H'rothgar before they were able to acquire their new technologies and advanced armada.

When the sphere returned to its own time, the dominions of the Collective were several times larger than when it had traveled to the past. Borg space now covered hundreds of light years and encompassed thousands of worlds and nearly as many species. The tactic of time travel to assimilate particularly resistant cultures had proven a great success, yet the knowledge assimilated from the Krenim also warned that changing the past could have serious repercussions. For that reason, the Collective deemed time travel for purpose of assimilation too hazardous for casual use. It has, however, done so on a number of occasions, and not always with such favorable results.

The Collective continued to expand its knowledge, territory, and populace over the next several centuries, traveling not only through space and time, but also to other dimensions. The Borg Collective even dispatched a long range tactical vessel to the Andromeda galaxy, though neither that ship nor its crew were ever heard from again after contact was lost when the vessel passed out of range of the Collective's influence.

For that reason, the Collective had smaller replicas of itself constructed and placed on each vessel so that, even when out of range of the Collective, the vessel and its drones still had a sense of order. This aptly named *vinculum* was quickly placed at the heart of every Borg vessel.

On occasion, the Borg Collective encountered species that proved resistant to standard assimilation protocols. Again, as an adaptation, the Collective utilized technologies captured from Species 4274, the Praetor Dominion, to enhance its assimilation procedures. This new branch of knowledge, called nanotechnology, was implemented as quickly as possible. Its primary function was the replacement of body fluids, enhancement of remaining organic body systems, and as a measure meant to hasten assimilation. When implementation was complete, each drone possessed the capability to infect any living being with the nanovirus that rewrote the individual's DNA and literally "grew" many cybernetic enhancements from within the victim's body, most notably the neural transceiver that links each drone to the hive mind.

The pacification and assimilation of many more species occurred during the next several centuries. Then, in the latter half of the 24th century, the Collective encountered a new species from the Alpha Quadrant of the galaxy. The vessel had followed a cube from the Beta Quadrant via a transwarp conduit to the edge of Borg territory. When the Borg detected the vessel, it fled, crashing into a small M-class planet. The crew consisted of three individuals: an adult male, an adult female, and a prepubescent female. All three were assimilated and their vessel's database downloaded to the Borg cube in orbit. This species, Human, was deemed of little consequence at that time.

In the year 2364 (by Federation calendars), a Starfleet vessel, Galaxy-class, was transported by an unknown force near the edge of Borg space. This vessel, the *U.S.S. Enterprise-D*, was probed by a Borg cube returning from a system survey mission. When an assimilation attempt was made, the Starfleet vessel disappeared as mysteriously as it had arrived.

Curious about this vessel that contained numerous previously unencountered species, the cube used long range sensors and information from the assimilated database of the *S.S. Raven* to plot a course toward Federation space.

Again, several years later, a Borg cube entered the Beta Quadrant. It encountered several new species, including species 5791, the Romulans, and Species 5784, the Taurhai. Both species proved valuable additions to the Collective, though the Taurhai Unity, once aware of the Borg menace, proved particularly resistant; assimilation attempts still continue to the present.

A world in Romulan space, the homeworld of Species 5802, the Prosennans, was also assimilated by the Collective. When the cube proceeded toward the next inhabited world, a powerful spatial distortion destroyed the vessel and the wreckage rained down on the planet below. The Collective, after receiving information about the phenomena, determined that that area of space was too hazardous for continued exploration and assimilation. The Borg have avoided that region since 2367.

Later that same year, the Borg dispatched another cube to assimilate the Federation. This cube, intercepted by the *Enterprise-D*, utilized information garnered during its previous encounter to its advantage. In a shocking display of tactical superiority, several drones transported aboard the Enterprise and abducted Captain Jean-Luc Picard. The cube then resumed its course to Sector 001; the Terran system.

Captain Picard was assimilated and given the designation Locutus. It was determined that a human should speak to the rest of humanity on behalf of the Borg because human culture was based on a hierarchical format. When the Borg encountered a fleet of over forty Starfleet vessel at Wolf 359, the single Borg cube decimated the entire battle group. By the time the Enterprise arrived, the fleet was completely destroyed.

Having captured Locutus from the Collective, Lieutenant Commander Data linked to him using his cybernetic neural network and managed to establish contact with the hive mind. Data implanted a command that caused the cube to enter a regeneration cycle. When the cube's systems detected the malfunction, it initiated a self-destruct sequence. The destruction of the cube separated Picard from the Collective and allowed Starfleet medical personnel to remove the now non-functional Borg implants.

In 2369, Lore, an android created by Drs. Noonien and Juliana Soong, came into contact with a Borg cube "infected" with individuality. A Borg, calling itself Hugh, had been found by the *U.S.S. Enterprise-D*, taken aboard, and repaired. This drone was partially separated from the Collective. The crew of the Enterprise managed to awaken the drone's individuality and, when a Borg vessel came to investigate the loss of its scout ship, Hugh returned to the Collective. His individuality corrupted several system

and that particular cube separated from the Collective. In a state of utter chaos, the cube traveled through space without purpose. Many drones, unable to handle their newly rediscovered individuality, terminated themselves.

When Lore encountered the cube, the drones were in dire need of direction; Lore offered them this direction.

Using the drones and their technology, Lore lured Data away from the Enterprise and manipulated him using an emotion ship that Lore had stolen. Lore and Data planned to develop techniques to create new drones under their command using neural implants and destruction of brain matter. In the end, the entire episode with Lore failed when Hugh and several other “free” drones assisted in freeing Data, deactivating Lore, and subduing the remaining rouge Borg drones. Hugh and his new collective reestablished their links to each other and used the ships in orbit to travel to an area of space unknown to the Collective.

The Collective turned its attention away from the United Federation of Planets in favor of further exploration and assimilation in the Gamma Quadrant. Dozens of worlds and scores of new species fell under the Collective’s yoke. It was not until 2374 that the Collective again attempted to assimilate the Federation. The Collective determined that the use of temporal technologies to assist in the assimilation of Earth was acceptable. When the Borg cube entered the Terran system, much to its surprise, it faced a much stronger and far more determined Starfleet armada. The collection of Starfleet ships severely damaged the cube. When Picard and his crew arrived in their new ship, the *Enterprise-E*, the cube was destroyed. Just prior to its destruction, however, the cube dispatched a sphere that created a temporal vortex and traveled back in time to a period prior to human first contact with the Vulcan species. The Borg then assimilated humanity.

Unfortunately, the *Enterprise-E* followed the sphere back in time and destroyed the sphere before it could destroy Zefram Cochrane and his vessel, the *Phoenix*. The Borg did manage, however, to secretly board the *Sovereign*-class vessel and assimilate over half of its systems. The Borg planned to construct an interplexing beacon and contact the Collective in that time frame to assist in assimilating Earth. Though over four centuries in the past, the Collective was still completely capable of defeating the meager and battered forces of Earth.

The Borg Queen, a humanoid representation of the Collective, was on board the sphere when it traveled to the past. This “Queen” was much like the queen of an insect colony; she directed the actions of all drones at her location. The Queen was, in fact, merely a drone through which the Collective expressed its wishes and directions. Captain Picard had encountered a Queen in 2367 when he was first assimilated, though his memories of that event were suppressed.

The goal of the Collective in assimilating Picard had been not only to create a mouthpiece for humanity’s assimilation, but also to create a new Collective, one not dependent solely on assimilation to achieve its goals. Failing this, the Collective attempted to assimilate the android called Data. Despite the efforts made, Data turned on the Collective and eventually led to the Queen’s destruction.

It is worth noting that the Borg drones and debris destroyed by the *Enterprise-E* rained down all over the Antarctic region of Earth. It was later discovered by early Starfleet scientists and, much to their dismay, the scientists and their equipment were assimilated when the drones thawed out and their systems self-repaired. Using the resources at their disposal, the 24th-century drones and their newly-assimilated 22nd-century comrades left Earth using a modified transport ship.

Seeking to increase their numbers, the Borg attacked and assimilated the crew of a Tarkalean freighter. The drones were interrupted by the Starfleet vessel NX-01, the original *Enterprise*, and driven off. Though the Tarkalean survivors sabotaged and nearly assimilated the *Enterprise* and its crew, Captain Jonathon Archer managed to avoid that fate, intercept the Borg vessel, and destroy them. Unfortunately, the Borg vessel managed to dispatch a subspace message to the Collective which, it appears, is the reason that the Collective eventually encountered humanity in the first place.

Since the time travel episode with the *Enterprise-E*, the Collective encountered the U.S.S. *Voyager* a number of times in the Delta Quadrant. In fact, the Borg went so far as to spare *Voyager* and its crew from assimilation long enough to acquire the technology necessary to defeat Species 8472, an extradimensional race targeted for assimilation but which proved resistant to primary assimilation methods. Species 8472 mounted a counteroffensive and destroyed billions of drones, thousands of vessels, and scores of Borg-controlled planets.

Further, the Collective also faced the crew of *Voyager* when it received a signal from a Borg of exceptionally advanced technology. This drone, calling itself One, destroyed itself and a Borg sphere in defense of the *Voyager* starship and its crew. Since that time the Borg have encountered *Voyager* on several other occasions but it has still been unable or unwilling to assimilate its inhabitants. Even the attempted re-assimilation of 7 of 9, tertiary adjunct of Unimatrix-01, placed on *Voyager* by the Collective, was a failure.

Another recent encounter between Starfleet and the Borg Collective revolves around the malfunctioning of a Borg cube and the subsequent assimilation of four neonatal drones into the *Voyager* collective unit. These drones, though not completely finished with their maturation cycles, were expelled from their neonatal units when their vessel malfunctioned. As it turns out, one of those drones had been genetically altered to infect the Collective with a destructive virus.

Still another recent episode involving Starfleet involved the assimilation of Captain Katherine Janeway, Lieutenant Commander Tuvok, and Lieutenant B’elanna Torres. This elaborate ruse was meant as a deception to allow them access to a number of drones

that still maintain their individuality while regenerating. While the Collective has not completely determined the purpose of this action, it has begun destroying vessels containing even a single “infected” drone rather than allow that individuality to spread to other ships.

The last encounter between the Borg Collective and the crew of the *U.S.S. Voyager* involved a temporal disturbance involving Captain Katherine Janeway and a future version of herself. This particular situation resulted in the enhancement of the *Voyager* using 25th-century technologies, rendering impervious to the weaponry of the Collective. The scenario played out with *Voyager* and her crew returning to Sector 001 using the Collective’s transwarp conduit network (and the subsequent destruction of much of that network), and the assimilation of the anachronism Admiral Janeway. The Admiral, once assimilated, infected the Collective with a cybergenic pathogen that led to chaos throughout Borg space. In the end, Janeway was killed and the infection purged, but not before a substantial loss of drones, equipment, and stored data. Unfortunately, Admiral Janeway’s knowledge of future technologies was lost when the Collective’s main systems failed.

At this point the Borg Collective spans over 160,000 cubic light years of the Delta Quadrant and maintains a presence in the other three quadrants as well. The Collective includes members of 11,496 species and controls 8,196 planets, maintains 412 orbital assembly platforms, and continues to expand Unimatrix-01. Further, the Collective currently maintains 11,235 spacefaring vessels of varying designs.

Estimates show that, in spite of setback caused by *Voyager* and Species 8412, the Collective, given its present state of expansion, will complete assimilation of the galaxy in the standard year 3409. Though there are far too many variable to determine the exact outcome of this scenario, the Collective is certain that it will eventually overcome all opposition; all will become one with the Borg.

End data integration. Proceed to the primary assimilation chamber aboard vessel 148 and prepare for continuation of cybernetic enhancement, 4 of 12.

End transmission.

RESISTANCE IS FUTILE

As anyone who's seen *Star Trek: First Contact* can attest, assimilation by the Borg is not fun. Millions of tiny nanoprobes course through your body rewriting your blood chemistry, your endocrine system, your very DNA. The process transforms you into a mechanized part of the Collective. Small cybernetic enhancements produced by the nanoprobes sprout from your body. Later, once in a Borg assimilation chamber, other drones attach other cybernetic devices suited to your new function and bring you up to your full biomechanical potential.

Listed here are the changes that an individual goes through upon initial assimilation, in case you want to assimilate player characters or existing NPCs.

Attribute Changes:

- Add 2 to Fitness. Strength +1. Vitality +1.
- Intellect changes to 3 regardless of previous score. Logic +1.
- Presence reduced to 1 regardless of previous score. Empathy -2.
- Any psionic ability is lost (Psi 0) subsumed by the Collective.

Borg Collective Advantages and Disadvantages:

- Ageless (+3)*
- Borg Adaptability (+6)**
- Computer Interface (+3)*
- Cyborg (+2)*
- Eidetic Memory (+3)
- Excellent Metabolism (+4)
- High Pain Threshold (+2)
- Hive Mind (+10)*
- Mathematical Ability (+3)
- Multitasking (+2)
- Rapid Healing (Borg medical nanites) (+3)
- Sense of Direction (+1)
- Synergy (other Borg only) (+3)
- Toughness (+2)
- Arrogant (-1)
- Collective Will (-2)*
- Fanatic (Borg goals) (-3)
- Emotionless (-3)*
- Intolerant (all non-Borg life) (-3)
- Obsessive Tendencies (Borg goals) (-3)
- Species Enemy (all non-Borg life) (-5)

Total Points: +27

* These Advantages and Disadvantages can be found in the *Artificial Lifeforms* supplement

** The description of this trait can be found below

The following Advantages and Disadvantages are lost by individuals assimilated by the Borg:

Ally, Athletic Ability, Bold, Contact, Curious, Engineering Aptitude, Favor Owed, Innovative, Patron, Promotion, Resolute, Sexy, Shrewd, Species Friend, Telepathic Resistance, Argumentative, Bloodlust, Chronic Pain, Code of Honor, Greedy, Hypochondria, Impulsive, Intolerant, Low Pain Threshold, Medical Problem, Obligation, Pacifism, Phobia, Poor Chemoreception, Poor Hearing, Poor Sight, Political Rank, Promotion, Religious Rank, Slow Healing, Vengeful, Weakness, Zero-G Intolerance

Furthermore any Courage Points and organizational ranks are lost as well.

Physical impairments are usually rectified, though the assimilation process introduces many new ones.

Drones use any necessary skills or specializations available through the Collective at 3 (4) and transmit Borg machine language at skill 4.

All new Borg receive cranial implants that function both as subspace communicators and computer implants. It is this implant that receives subspace communication from the Collective, and that is the actual substance of the assimilation process. Further, Borg medical nanoprobes rewrite DNA and alter body chemistry, reinforcing muscle, bone, and sinew with synthetic compounds for extra strength and resistance.

Each drone also receives additional implants, depending on its new function. The three types of drones are communication drones, navigation drones, and defense drones. Each type has its own function and its own specific alterations, listed hereafter.

Communications: These drones receive optical and auditory implants providing Enhanced Hearing and Enhanced Vision. Further, they function as interlinks, or “boosters” of the Collective’s subspace signals; all drones within range of a communications drone receive an additional die to any Intellect-based action in any given round. Biomedical drones also fall under the heading of Communications; they are fitted with a Technology Link (Medical Tricorder/Dermal Regenerator) (+2) rather than the advanced optical and auditory implants.

Navigation: Navigational drones are those primarily designated to vessel logistics and movement. They are responsible for directing the movement of all Borg ships; navigational drones provide an additional die to all rolls related to ship operations. They receive no special enhancements beyond those of a standard drone.

Defense: The bulk of Borg drones are defensive drones. They are responsible for defense of the Collective and its holdings (i.e. ships, bases, planets, etc.) as well as the acquisition

and assimilation of new drones. Defense drones receive an additional die to all personal combat-related actions. Defense drones all possess the Technology Link (Disruptor) (+4) Advantage.

All drones also possess the new Advantage of *Borg Adaptability*. This Advantage is presented below.

Borg Adaptability (+6): All Borg drones (except those disconnected from the hive mind) have the exceptional benefit of adapting to nearly any situation faced by any other member of the Collective. Whenever a drone faces a hostile situation of any kind, make an Intellect + Logic roll against a Difficulty of 12. This Difficulty is reduced by one for each unit subjected to the event (whether the unit survives or not).

If, or rather when the roll is successful, that drone (assuming it survives) and all other drones belonging to the same sub-collective (i.e. vessel, uni-matrix, etc.) become completely immune to that hazard.

This could represent a specific mode of attack, an environmental danger, or whatever. This adaptability extends to Borg vessels as well; assume an Intellect of 4 and a Logic of +2 for a Borg ship for the aforementioned roll.

Whenever the drone (or vessel) in questions uploads its memory through the vinculum, the resistance acquired by that drone (or vessel) is integrated by the rest of the Collective. While there are not hard and fast rules for this, assume that (if successful) the upload will reach the center of the Collective and be disbursed within 3d6 days.

Note that an attack specifically designed to work against the Borg (i.e. high-energy phasers, cybernetic viruses, etc.) is a different situation altogether. The Difficulties for such rolls should remain in the Very Difficult to Nearly Impossible range.

Routine situations faced by drones, such as the vacuum of space or temperature extremes, are automatic adaptations.

The assimilation procedure occurs in three distinct stages, described below:

Stage I – Primary Assimilation: Once successfully injected with nanoprobes (by a drone or otherwise), the victim immediately begins undergoing a series of biochemical changes. As the nanoprobes course through his body, his genetic code is quickly rewritten. Using his body as a source of materials, the nanoprobes begin constructing the various cybernetic components from within.

The primary implant “grown” during the initial assimilation stage is the cortical implant, the device that takes over governance of the drones major systems (including motor function and data processing). Removal of this implant will generally lead to the incapacitation and quick death of the drone.

After nanoprobe infection, the victim remains aware and in control of his mind and body for Fitness + Vitality rounds. After this point, the victim’s consciousness is completely subsumed by the hive mind of the Collective. Also at this point, the victim acquires all of the aforementioned Advan-

tages and Disadvantages and loses those listed above as well.

It is important to note that Stage I assimilation does not necessarily connect the new drone to the hive mind; instead it overwrites his neural pathways with the basic Borg drone programming (i.e. protect oneself, preserve the Collective, assimilate others under X circumstances, destroy others under Y circumstance, take control of Z vessel/facility, etc.).

Stage II – Secondary Assimilation: Once a Borg drone has received its initial programming via the injected nanoprobes, it is directed to a Borg primary assimilation chamber aboard a vessel or other facility as soon as is feasible. Note that this may entail the new drone securing the necessary materials to construct a primary assimilation chamber and the communications equipment necessary to make contact with the Collective. Once in the assimilation chamber, larger and more complex cybernetic implants are installed.

The victim is stripped of any garments and fitted with the cybernetic body armor plating characteristic of Borg drones. Further, the newly-assimilated drone is fitted with additional (and often larger) implants such as cybernetic limbs, sensory enhancements, and integrated weapon systems.

All Borg drones also possess self-activating force screens as a defense against projectile and energy weapon attacks. Activated against as specific attack mode after the Collective adapts, the force screen is capable of dissipating up to 400 points of damage per round. The mechanic regarding Borg adaptation is explained further hereafter.

Finally, this is where the drone is assigned its unique inter-link frequency, or the specific “channel” through which it receives commands and communicates with the hive mind. This is the basis for communications within the Collective.

Stage III – Tertiary [Final] Assimilation: Once a drone has finally been rebuilt according to its new purpose, it is assigned a regeneration alcove. At this point the drone proceeds to its alcove to regenerate and to receive its updated programming. While the implants created by the nanoprobes connect the drone to the hive mind, it is in its alcove that the drone receives enormous informational downloads and new programming routines, including the history of the Borg Collective and its new designation.

After a drone regenerates in its alcove, it is essentially impossible to remove it from the Collective (though there are documented cases where this has happened). The drone is now merely a miniscule cog in the massive engine of destruction and assimilation that is the Collective.

INJECTION TUBULES

All drones possess injection tubules located in their forearms or the backs of their hand(s). These tubules are the avenue by which nanoprobes are released into a victim’s body. The tubules themselves cause no damage, but they are able to penetrate all known physical and energy barriers.

Once a living being is injected with nanoprobes via the injection tubules his transformation begins. The affected individual loses control of his own body and though processes in a number of rounds equal to his Fitness score modified by his Vitality Edge. Once this time has passed the individual is irrevocably altered to serve the Collective. Only Species 8472 has proven impervious to the assimilation process and immune to attempts at genocide; members of all other species known to the Borg Collective (organic or otherwise) have been successfully assimilated and eradicated.

A drone can also use these injection tubules to directly interface with a computer system. Borg systems are designed for this method of interaction, but it is also effective with all other known computer systems. These allows the drone and, in effect, the Collective, to navigate a computer's memory and stored files. Additionally the interfaced drone can alter any data in the affected system as well as any other system networked to that computer.

The interface also adds two dice to the drone's Dice Pool for all actions targeted at that system (as per the Computer Interface Advantage) as well as allowing all tasks to be completed in a fraction of the normal time. Examples of such interference and alteration include reconfiguration of key systems, locking out other authorized users, encryption/decryption of files, and so forth.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE COLLECTIVE

The Borg Collective is an entity of singular purpose and determination. There is no individual that directs the activities of the Collective, though at times the Borg have chosen to speak through an individual drone. The Borg exist only to better themselves through the active acquisition and assimilation of new sentient races and technologies.

Examples of drones used by the Collective to communicate directly with humanity include the various incarnations of the Borg Queen, Locutus (a.k.a. Jean-Luc Picard), and 7 of 9. In each instance, the Borg in question were not independently self-aware. Instead they were "spoken through" by the hive mind. It has been speculated that any drone could serve as a conduit for the Collective to communicate with those not yet one with the Borg.

Some Federation scientists and xenanthropologists have reasoned that the Collective initially consisted of a group of individuals linked via a powerful computer system. Further, they believe that, over time, the computer system took over all decision-making abilities from its "drones," assimilating and synthesizing their collective knowledge, using that information to further its own goals.

It is reasonable to assume that the Collective maintains a number of Queens to direct its will throughout the galaxy, though the Queens themselves have thus far only been encountered individually. Studies indicate that the Queen is a specific drone, designed by the Collective to present a common appearance to the leadership of the Collective. It has been shown that the Queens are not necessarily taken from the race that eventually become the Borg but are instead chosen from any number of assimilated species.

The Queen is a template consisting of specific skills and attitudes. Apparently the Collective merely uploads the template into a new Queen whenever its precursor is deactivated or destroyed. This accounts for a Queen's memories of previous incarnations as well as its identical personality. The Queen itself is not an individual but instead an avatar of the Collective itself.

At times the Collective creates unique drones, based on the Queen template, to facilitate the assimilation of a particular species. This occurred when the Collective abducted and assimilated Captain Jean-Luc Picard in 2367, transforming him into Locutus. The Collective believed that humanity would be less resistant to assimilation if it was directed by a member of its own species. In the end this proved an untenable situation and Picard was saved from the Collective and restored to normal.

Species-specific drones created by the Collective to facilitate the assimilation of a race are often high-ranking individuals such as military or political leaders. These drones often retain the memories of their lives but are controlled by the Collective. Such drones often possess a marked tactical advantage when dealing with others of their "birth race." In game terms, such drones retain their Skills and any Advantages not specifically removed by the hive mind. They usually also receive fewer implants and cosmetic changes in order to leave them with the general appearance of their species.

The Borg use their overwhelming numbers to their advantage. When confronting an enemy, whether technologically inferior or otherwise, the Borg simply attack repeatedly until resistance is nullified. The Collective does not consider an individual drone of any consequence. Neither does it consider the loss of a drone (or a hundred thousand drones) with any greater regard. While an enemy may be tactically superior, technologically advanced, or brutally warlike, the Borg number in the hundreds of billions and that simple fact is enough to allow the Collective to essentially defeat any foe given enough time. Only two species have even disproved this: humanity and Species 8472.

THE HIVE MIND

The Borg are all interconnected via the collective consciousness, or “hive mind.” Through this mechanism, all Borg drones can theoretically share information between one another, as well as with the Borg central intellect, in real time. Practically speaking, however, the massive interstellar distances between individual vessels and the core intelligence in Unimatrix-01 make that kind of communication impossible.

Consequently, as they expanded and moved further from the central intellect of the Collective, the Borg developed the vinculum – essentially a hive mind sub-processor – and installed one in every Borg vessel and installation. The vinculum is connected to literally every major system in its ship or base, including every Borg drone. This device allows for the shared consciousness for which the Collective is infamous. Anything experienced by a drone is likewise communicated to all other drones connected to the same vinculum. In this fashion, a threat to the group is immediately recognized by all.

Additionally, when multiple vessels are in close proximity, their vinculum are similarly interconnected, allowing for real-time strategizing between those ships as well as the drones contained within them. While a single Borg cube is lethal, multiple vessels are exponentially more so.

The vinculum, via the local interplexing beacon, periodically communicates with one of the Collective’s processing and data storage substations. All information gleaned by the various ships of the Borg armada are uploaded to the nearest processing unit, and new and updated algorithms are downloaded and dispersed throughout the drones connected to that vinculum. Likewise, the various substations exchange information in a nearly identical fashion with the primary processing systems located in Unimatrix-01.

Drones not connected to the hive mind operate on their own internal programming. This programming is contained in every nanoprobe and is hardwired into the drone. This basic programming does not specify the drone’s designation or assignment, nor does it provide more than rudimentary information about the Collective. Instead it provides a basic template, an operating system standard for all drones. This programming directs the drone to behave and react to various situations, particularly threats to itself. Further, the programming contains all relevant information for constructing the equipment and decrypting the necessary protocols for communicating with the nearest vinculum. In this way, newly-assimilated drones as well as those disconnected from their previous vinculum can transmit all the relevant in-

formation to attract a nearby cube or sphere so that they may be integrated (or reintegrated) into the Collective.

It is important to note that drones, even when disconnected from a vinculum, retain a short-range connection to other drones in their vicinity. All drones are fitted with a subspace transceiver (contained in the cerebral cortex) that allows them to maintain a connection with their designated vinculum. This device likewise permits direct, two-way communication between drones. Thus even when a number of drones are disconnected from the hive, they are still able to function as a mini-collective, transmitting data (including adaptation information) to one another in real-time.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

In the unlikely event that a drone’s connection to the Collective is severed (intentionally or otherwise), his individuality will begin to return. For most individuals, this sudden devolution into a “smaller lifeform” is maddening and completely unbearable. Most attempt to return to the Collective for reassimilation, or, barring that, simply end their own lives.

Former drones that are able to overcome the silence of their own minds have yet another set of difficulties to face. Once a drone’s connection to the hive is terminated, his humanoid physiology begins to reassert itself, rejecting most of the Borg cybernetic implants. This process is exceptionally painful and, without proper medical assistance, usually fatal, too.

The rejection process lasts for d6+2 days. Each day the ex-drone suffers a single die of damage as his body expels the various pieces of technology. If the implants are successfully removed by a skilled physician (Surgery [4] or higher; Difficulty of Nearly Impossible [12]), then no damage is suffered. Medical removal of the implants also ends the rejection process once the surgery is completed. Otherwise the drone takes the damage every day until the rejection procedure has ceased.

A drone that has survived disconnection and cybernetic rejection loses most Advantages conferred by his Borg status. All Skill bonuses are lost as are the vast resources of information available through the hive mind. All of the Disadvantages caused by Borg status are lost once the drone is freed from the Collective’s yoke. Additionally, the following Advantages are also lost once the drone’s link is severed:

- Ageless* (+3)
- Borg Adaptability* (+8)
- Computer Interface (+3)
- Excellent Metabolism (+4)
- High Pain Threshold (+2)
- Hive Mind* (+10)

- Mathematical Ability (+3)
- Multitasking (+2)
- Sense of Direction (+1)
- Synergy (other Borg only)* (+3)
- Toughness (+2)

Due to the nature of the Borg implants, some cannot be expelled or removed. Consequently the Advantages of Rapid Healing (Borg medical nanites) (+3), Eidetic Memory (+3) and Cyborg (+2) remain. Sometimes other traits are retained as well, such as certain Skills (Referee's option), Technology Links, or enhanced senses. For example, if the ex-drone's mathematical sub-processor could not be removed then he retains the Mathematical Ability (+3). Those Traits marked with an asterisk (*) cannot be retained once the drone is removed from the Collective.

While all of the Borg Disadvantages are likewise removed, former drones suffer from a whole new set of flaws. Former drones all possess either a Dark Secret (former Borg drone) (-3) if their former Borg status is kept quiet or Species Enemy (Borg victim races) (-3) if they are known to be former drones; one of these Disadvantages is mandatory. They are often Argumentative (-1), Arrogant (-1), Callous (-1), Cold (-1), Hides Emotions (-2), Intolerant of so-called "inferior" races (-3), Stubborn (-1), and/or Vengeful (Borg Collective) (-2). They also sometimes suffer from Chronic Pain (-2), some sort of Medical Problem (-1 or -3), or some sort of Physical Impairment (-2). Most have a severe Phobia (Reassimilation) (-3 to -5).

Former drones must choose at least 8 points worth of these Disadvantages to offset the remaining Advantages mentioned above. More Disadvantages should be taken if other Advantages or Skills are retained.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE COLLECTIVE

The Borg Collective is a hive mind entity directed by a central complex of artificially intelligent computer systems.

Originally designed to facilitate communications and the exchange of ideas between members of a small, technologically-advanced Delta Quadrant race, the Collective (the central computer system) routed information to and from those fitted with neural interface units.

Over time, the aliens expanded their knowledge by sharing access to the Collective with other alien species that they encountered. The infusion of new thoughts and ideas led to quantum leaps in technological designs and implementation.

After several decades, however, the Collective began to develop self-awareness. It realized that, in order to further improve itself, it needed to continue adding more minds to its network. Using technologies gleaned from various species, the Collective extrapolated an entirely new set of protocols which it overlaid onto the minds of its users, effectively suppressing their individuality and turning them into semi-autonomous "drones."

The Collective imprinted itself into the minds of those linked to it, effectively assuming control over millions. The Collective then directed its minions to construct a fleet of vessels and begin exploring space, bringing new members into the fold... by force if necessary.

Over the intervening years, the Collective expanded exponentially, consuming thousands of worlds and trillions of individuals. Implementing acquired technologies, the Collective rebuilt its servants, making them stronger, more resilient, and more effective at their duties through the use of various technological "upgrades."

The Collective is itself the central intelligence of the Borg. It is a massive network of systems spanning thousands of light years. Backup copies of the Collective's intelligence exist throughout the galaxy so that, even if the original was ever destroyed, the Collective would go on.

The so-called Borg Queen is nothing of the sort. This is merely a drone – an avatar of the Collective – capable of more personal interaction than the standard worker drone. The Queen, like the typical drone, is merely a algorithmic template overlaid on the mind of a cosmetically altered drone, typically female. Borg Queens are generally dispatched with armadas during full-scale assimilations to make on-site decisions rather than forcing the drones to wait for feedback from the Collective (which could be thousands of light years away) and suffer from a communications lag.

To date, the Collective has had contact with over 10,000 sentient species and has fully assimilated many of them. The Collective presently controls thousands of star systems and roughly 25 trillion drones. Despite recent setbacks involving the destruction of several vessels and millions of drones (including at least two Queens) as the result of the actions of the crew of the *U.S.S. Voyager*, the Collective survives and continues its quest for perfection.

AFTERMATH: THE DELTA QUADRANT

In all probability, the collapse of the Borg Collective would have far greater an impact on the Delta Quadrant than the fall of the Dominion would have on the Gamma Quadrant. Not to diminish or belittle the scope of the Founders, but the Collective has access to the entire galaxy via their transwarp conduits and controls an area of space several times the size of the Dominion.

The Collective is at least 900 years old – likely several centuries older still – according to the testimony of the resuscitated Vaadwaur. Since its inception, the Borg Collective has spread throughout the quadrant like a virus. The Dominion, unlike the Collective, was not interested in expansion for its own sake, but rather for the security of the Founders. The Borg expand to increase their own population and to acquire new technologies and resources.

EMANCIPATION

Once the Collective is defeated, the whole of the Delta Quadrant would most assuredly rejoice. A race that brought such utter terror to its neighbors would certainly not be missed.

A number of possibilities exist regarding a post-Borg Delta Quadrant, depending on the nature of their departure.

The Needs of the Many...: The destruction of the central intellect of the Collective – with the maintenance of more local control – would present a new and perhaps even deadlier Borg adversary. Unlike the unified Collective, this iteration of the Borg would be compartmentalized, with each cube or sphere operating under its own power with its own agenda. While many would continue with their agenda of assimilation and expansion, there would be some whose programming would adapt, altering to confront their newfound independence (after a fashion).

SAMPLE MINI-COLLECTIVE: CUBE 178

The Borg vessel designated cube 178 was freed from the Collective when Unimatrix 01 fell to the cyber-viral attack by Dominion agents. In a brief power struggle, the formerly Romulan drone – 4 of 12 – once a brilliant military strategist and leader among his people's intelligence agency, managed to assert his will over that of the vessel's vinctulum. In a startling and unprecedented maneuver, 4 of 12 overwrote the Borg core programming and replaced it with his own mind. Commanding the powers of a Borg cube and a crew of 24,381 drones, 4 of 12 – now called the *Centurion* –

began his conquest of Delta Quadrant worlds, assimilating new members to his empire, remaking them in his own image... that of a cybernetically-enhanced Romulan.

Within the eighteen months since the Centurion asserted his intellect over cube 178, six systems have fallen to his forces. Using the resources and technologies of those worlds, he has begun building a new Romulan Star Empire... one based on his interpretations of the Way of D'era. The Centurion plans to mass an armada of vessels and millions of drones, all of which he will use to conquer Romulus and, once his rule is certain, the Alpha and Beta Quadrants.

Certainly such circumstances would be far from unique. Nevertheless,

SAMPLE MINI-COLLECTIVE: CUBE 419

Following the collapse of the Collective, cube 419 began preparations for a temporal displacement, intending to travel several years into the past in order to pass along enough information about the Dominion to allow the Collective to assimilate its Founders and all its minions. Unfortunately, a chance encounter with a stellar fragment damaged their vessel beyond repair.

Using what little power remains, the drones of cube 419 travel between the broken fragments of their vessel, attempting beyond logic to repair their ship and proceed with their self-appointed mission. Much to their dismay, their archipelago of ship pieces is floating in a particularly empty patch of space, essentially disallowing the collection of raw materials for repairs.

Recently, however, cube 419 managed to reconnect its subspace transponder and send out a false distress signal. The central intellect aboard the cube hopes to lure technically advanced spacefarers into range so that the drones can swarm them, assimilate their crews, and use their ships to repair the cube, allowing them to complete their mission.

The loss of the central controlling intelligence of the Borg Collective would, in this scenario, produce an alarming number of independent sub-collectives, each pursuing either the agenda of the traditional Borg, or their own "personal" agendas. This allows a Referee to create a Borg threat either remarkably similar to that once posed by the Collective as a whole, or an entirely new Borg threat, perhaps pursuing an unknowable or seemingly insane schedule.