

***CORE Deception* Glossary of Terms, Characters, and Places**

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Warning: I tried to keep this list from revealing too much about the story, but some spoilers are unavoidable.

Glossary of Terms

Activation Code: A sequence of numbers and letters that unlock the functionality of an incognito device (ID). Without an activation code, an ID is useless.

Autumn Rally: An autumn celebration with vibes of a traditional American Thanksgiving, minus references to religion. The government staggers the mandatory gatherings throughout the city as an opportunity to push its propaganda.

CARD: Citizen Access and Resource Device. Handheld touchscreen devices issued to every citizen. CORE instantly sounds an alarm if someone tries to use another's CARD or if someone fails to keep their CARD with them. (Exceptions include when at one's own residence or engaged in official athletic activities.) Without a CARD, one is unable to control home appliances, access places and transportation, engage in commerce, receive health and wellness services, navigate, and complete education and work assignments.

Common Era Ice Age (CE Ice Age): A future global ice age. Since it occurs in AD/CE, "CE" is used to distinguish it from those taking place in BC/BCE.

CORE: Centralized Objective Record Exchange. The brain of the nation's surveillance, biodata, and predictive analysis system, created and maintained by three tech firms on behalf of the government. CORE is an efficient system of mass data collection that uses extensive algorithms and other programming to assimilate that data and turn it into information useful for running the nation. For example, CORE can detect noncompliant tendencies and enable efficient crime fighting. CORE

also determines people's skills and the nation's labor needs, thus allocating resources in an efficient manner that requires minimal input from humans.

Dead Drop: A predetermined location used to securely transfer items and messages. A Dead Drop must hide in plain sight and only be known to the sender and recipient. Once the drop is "loaded" (has an item or message inside), the sender uses a predetermined method to notify the recipient. Seth and Krystin use three dead drops—a tear in the wall at the apartments, hallway flooring at the apartments, and between lockers at school. They use three key phrases to notify each other when a drop is loaded: "howling wind," "lots of homework," and "fun this weekend," respectively.

Dead Man's Switch: Sometimes called a "kill switch," this is more of a concept than a physical thing (and it certainly didn't originate with the CORE Series!). One example is a programmed trigger that destroys documents stored online if the documents' owner doesn't check in. (For instance, if the owner died or was captured, his documents would eventually self-destruct.) In a broader sense, a dead man's switch implies a trigger that activates when an event doesn't happen, like someone doesn't check in at the predetermined time. In CORE Deception, Notah programmed the activation codes to automatically self-destruct unless specific normal events occurred on a regular interval (the events and intervals varied by the individual activation code).

Efficiency for Survival: The national motto. Often quoted in propaganda, it's considered the ideological reasoning behind governmental thinking and methodology.

Geofence: CORE's virtual net/fence surrounding the city. No one is permitted to penetrate the geofence unless on official government business, e.g., military missions or scientific expeditions. Outside the geofence, CORE has little-to-no reach and electronics like CARDS lose functionality.

Geofence Gap: A technological glitch, intentional or accidental, that allows a person or CARD to pass through without an alerting CORE.

Gray Ops: A generic name for secretive “dirty work” teams unofficially employed by tech firms. In a sense, gray ops are privately employed, undercover police with military special operations skills.

Habitable Region: The region of the earth closest to the equator and least affected by the CE Ice Age, thus making it the most habitable.

Incognito Devices (IDs): Designed for use by gray ops, these highly secretive and valuable devices exploit programming secretly engineered into CORE. IDs have several modes: Normal Incognito, Traceable, Emulate, Multitude. The primary mode, Normal Incognito, enables a user to anonymously exist within CORE’s network. Its elaborate programming alters CORE’s data collection and hides its user’s presence in real time and in historical records.

Incognito Portals: Highly secret, stationary devices with programming like an incognito device (ID) in Normal Incognito mode. Positioned in various places throughout the city, incognito portals serve as emergency backups for gray ops.

National Police: The sole law enforcement agency in the nation, falling under the Justice Bureau. The National Police has multiple divisions, including Criminal Investigations and Port Authority.

NEXUS: Neo EXpress Underground System. The SAP’s primary transit system. See the Glossary of Places for more.

Noncompliant: A term used by the government to refer to or classify citizens who won’t comply with laws. People demonstrating noncompliance in their words or implications are also classified as noncompliance.

Normalcy Testing: A series of tests which often result in the test taker’s placement in a reeducation facility.

Port Authority: A division of the National Police that oversees activities at the wharf and harbor, including the fishing industry.

Profile: Extensive information gathered and maintained by CORE about a person. An individual profile includes an ever-growing historical record of a person's habits, mannerisms, appearance, cyber activity, physical whereabouts, health, psychological state, and academic records. Profiles also utilize location data, biometrics, photos, video, and audio—from birth to the present. Profiles form the cornerstone of CORE.

Pueo Innovation (poo-AY-oh innovation): One of the three technology firms that dominate the nation (along with tech firms TF1 and Verdant Worldwide). Pueo is an owl native only to Hawaii. The company likes to think it has the wisdom symbolic of an owl, tenacity like the owl's talons, and can soar above circumstances and competition.

Reeducation Facility: A place where people are sent for reform. The government frames reeducation facilities as helpful places that assist people with their problems so they can assimilate back into society. In reality, reeducation facilities are prisons and another way the government exerts its power and punishes those not in alignment.

Red Flag: A governmental designation placed on an individual's profile when they're suspected of noncompliance. Those with red flags are monitored more closely and are restricted more than the average person. Practically, persons with red flags become low class citizens.

Resistance: A generic term for illegal, underground organizations that don't fully comply with the government. Resistance movements unite around a variety of reasons. Examples include overthrowing the government, protection, financial help, and religious persecution. Most instances of "the resistance" refer to the largest resistance group. This one contains many former Yamada followers and is also the one Seth, Krystin, and friends work with and support.

Silent Comm: An unofficial CARD app that allows communication with another Silent Comm user. Messages sent via this app are heavily encrypted and circumvent the standard CARD messaging app.

Socialist American People (SAP): A city-state started by a small group of people from the United States of America (USA). Seeking a place that wasn't rife with international conflict (including devastating wars) in the wake of the CE Ice Age, this group settled on the previously abandoned Hawaiian island of Oahu and formed the SAP, a government loosely modeled after the USA. The unicameral legislative body, called Congress, functions independently of the president and has power to create and change laws. The president directs all the bureaus, each of which is led by a director who answers to the president.

- Justice Bureau (oversight and regulation of courts, law enforcement, jails, prisons, reeducation)
- State Bureau (oversight and regulation of military, foreign affairs, government leader protection, intelligence)
- Economic Bureau (oversight and regulation of commerce, food management and distribution, labor allocation, money and banking)
- Education Bureau (oversight and regulation of daycare, schools, higher education, all written and digital content, religion)
- Infrastructure Bureau (oversight and regulation of communication networks, energy, transportation, structures)
- Welfare bureau (oversight and regulation of healthcare, psychology, housing, elderly, poor)

Status Site: A generic name for the website showing the status of each incognito device's activation code as either active or deactivated.

TF1: One of the three technology firms that dominate the nation (along with tech firms Pueo Innovation and Verdant Worldwide), the one employing Jhalak and her parents. The company considers itself the leader of cutting-edge technology. While CORE is a collaborative effort among the three tech firms, TF1 came up with the technological concept and led the way with infrastructure.

Verdant Worldwide: One of the three technology firms that dominate the nation (along with tech firms Pueo Innovation and TF1). Their mission is to embrace whatever Mother Earth does (including ice ages), while empowering Mother Earth's species (including humans) to thrive. The firm innovated the nation's vital technologies of layered farming and geothermal power.

ZONE (Zero Occupancy No Entrance): More on the ZONE in the Glossary of Places.

Glossary of Characters

Alvarez, Aliyana (al-VAH-rez, ah-lee-AH-nuh): Seth's sister and only sibling, age thirteen. She's sweet, caring, strong-spirited, optimistic, and extroverted. She wears her black hair long and has brown eyes. Waffle fries rank among her favorite foods, though she rarely has the chance to eat them.

Alvarez, Raul (al-VAH-rez, rah-OOL): Seth and Aliyana's dad. His wife, Sara, died a couple of years ago of a strange illness caused by gray ops in retaliation for noncompliance. Before moving to Sector 17C, Raul was an operator in military spec-ops. Now he works as a painter, a job that often keeps him out late. As a believer in God, he regularly reads the Bible with Seth and Aliyana.

Alvarez, Seth: Seventeen years old with black hair and brown eyes (like his sister Aliyana). All around cyber savvy, Seth accidentally discovered an incognito portal shortly after the poisoning of Yamada. He used it to help Bjorne escape hitmen. Though Notah pulled away from Seth and Krystin during this time, Seth did his best to maintain his friendship with Notah and learned additional technical tricks from him (like incognito portal locations and a geofence gap). Like Krystin, Seth fills his athletic requirements with skiing and performs at the top of the team.

Chatto, Notah (CHAT-oh, NO-tah): Like Seth and Krystin, Notah was seventeen, lived in the same apartment building, and attended high school with them. He and Krystin grew up as friends and both worked part time in her uncle's restaurant. When Seth moved to Sector 17C, the trio grew close and hung out a lot. After Yamada's poisoning, Notah became distant, but Seth maintained their friendship. Notah's classic goodbye was "cheers." He had black hair and a stocky build. His only sibling was a younger sister, Iina.

Jakobsdóttir, Bergen (YAH-kops-DOH-teer, BER-gen): Krystin's father and Bjorne's brother. He lives out his faith in God with strength, patience, and endurance. He's worked commercial fishing for years, and had to work even harder at it when the authorities red-flagged his family for their association with Bjorne and Yamada. Krystin and her brothers chipped in, which became a key bonding time for Krystin and Bergen. Even before that, Bergen maintained connections with resistance movements.

Jakobsdóttir, Bjorne (YAH-kops-DOH-teer, be-YORN): Krystin's beloved uncle, now deceased, known as Uncle Bjorne to more than just his family. Broad-framed and six feet tall, he radiated a warmth and friendliness, accented by his red-brown hair and beard. Krystin liked to think of him as a giant teddy bear. He ran Bjorne's Restaurant where he encouraged Seth, Krystin, and Notah to hang out and gave them free food. He also made the restaurant a haven for political dissidents—until it was torched by a government-backed mob and the authorities cracked down on all noncompliance related to Yamada's movement. Bjorne was one of Yamada's advisors, which led to him being targeted the same night as Yamada.

Jakobsdóttir, Krystin: Seventeen years old with steel blue eyes and golden blonde hair, usually worn in a ponytail or braids when skiing. Once a speed skater, she now fills her athletic requirement with skiing, usually wearing goggles with an orange lens, and shares a top place on their ski team with Seth. She rarely has the opportunity or money to enjoy dessert, but she loves funnel cakes with powdered sugar and caramel. She grieves the loss of her sister Inger and won't accept the story that Inger simply died of illness in a reeducation facility. After her Uncle Bjorne was murdered, Krystin put her spare time into the resistance effort formed by the survivors of Yamada's movement. She hopes that eventually leads to the discovery of who was behind the losses of her uncle and sister.

Jakobsdóttir siblings, Krystin's brothers and sisters in order of birth: Inger (ING-er), Oliwer (OL-ih-ver) Riker (RY-ker), Wadell (wuh-DEL).

Lasure, Zailor (luh-ZOOR, ZAY-lur): At the rank of Colonel, he leads the National Police's Criminal Investigations division. Jhalak and Tina report to him. He's a small man, balding, and in his mid-fifties. Using his official investigative role as pretense, Lasure determines to get the incognito devices (IDs) before anyone else and is distrustful of the tech firms. Beyond that, his plans remain a mystery.

Tina: Jhalak's coworker and cubicle mate in Criminal Investigations at the National Police. Tina is skilled in using the CORE and helps Jhalak search for her father.

Vasa, Jhalak (VAH-suh, JAH-luk): Eighteen-year-old daughter of TF1 executive Valini Vasa and the missing Devak Vasa. Jhalak grew up with all the privileges and luxuries of a tech firm family, yet none of that compensates for her sadness over her father's disappearance. Distrustful of her mother and everyone in TF1, Jhalak's goal is to find her father herself. She aims to do this by working in the National Police's Criminal Investigations division, despite the negative social impact of such a career move.

Vasa, Valini (VAH-suh, vuh-LEE-nee): Jhalak's mother and TF1 executive in the administration division. She's a perfectionist who expects the same of her daughter. After her husband went missing years ago, Valini began dating again, her latest boyfriend being a TF1 executive, Percy.

Yamada, Takeo (yuh-MAH-duh, tah-KAY-oh): Deceased social activist, whistleblower, and tech genius. As a former employee of TF1, he was privy to the interworkings of CORE. For a time, he successfully led a movement that raised awareness of the government's massive surveillance of the populace and the individual's lack of privacy, as well as exposing the inaccuracies in the government's dialogue about resource scarcity. It took several attempts by the government and TF1's gray ops before they finally killed him.

Minor Characters

"Bald Guy": Seth's nickname for the accomplice of Fang (aka "Double A") who arrives with her at McCusker's store. Bald Guy seems to be Fang's muscle man.

Chatto Family: Mr., Mrs., Notah, and Iina (EE-nah), a good friend of Aliyana Alvarez.

Coach: Seth and Krystin's ski coach.

Cryptic Charade (aka, CC): Real name unknown, he's a black market dealer who also does dirty work for an unknown person in a national position of power or influence. He coerced Notah into helping take down Yamada.

Fang, Jae (aka, Double A): A woman in her fifties and former inspector with the National Police, she now works for CC and mainly stays in the ZONE, including making an appearance at McCusker's store with her accomplice "Bald Guy."

"Gamer" and "Grumpy": Descriptive nicknames Seth uses for the night shift officers at the police station. Neither Gamer nor Grumpy seem particularly bright or committed to their job.

Kessel: The administrative vice president of TF1 who works with Jhalak to gain information about the National Police's investigation of the missing incognito devices (IDs).

McCusker: The owner of a small store in the Zero Occupancy No Entrance (ZONE). He doesn't take sides and simply wants business.

Percy: The latest boyfriend of Valini Vasa (Jhalak's mother). He's one of TF1's many executives.

Razafy, Harris (rah-ZAH-fee, HAR-is): Another member of Seth and Krystin's ski team. A little younger than Seth, Harris is tall and muscular for his age and is an ambitious athlete.

"Stocky": Krystin's nickname for the man she encounters at Quinn's Coffee and mistakes as her secret contact.

Vasa, Devak (VAH-suh, DEH-vahk): Jhalak's father. He left on business when she was ten years old, telling Jhalak his role in the company had changed, and never returned.

Glossary of Places

Apartments: When the Socialist American People (SAP) settled into a portion of the previously abandoned Honolulu metro, they determined the most efficient way to house citizens was in apartments. This was mainly accomplished through the construction of new buildings. Seth and Krystin live in a typical apartment building, plain in appearance but constructed with durable materials and optimized for efficiency. It's a multi-story structure with indoor access to cookie cutter residences. People are prohibited from entering a residence other than their own, but a small lobby offers a common area. Individual apartments often have two levels, with bedrooms upstairs and the other rooms on the main level. Residents use their CARDS to unlock their doors and control lighting, heating, appliances, etc.

Arena: An enclosed stadium where the annual Autumn Rally for Sector 17C (and other sectors) takes place. For Autumn Rallies, the government arranges food vendors, a variety of games, and educational projects for students.

Bjorne's Restaurant: Now just a pile of rubble, this business was run by Krystin's uncle, Bjorne Jakobsdóttir. It was destroyed indirectly by the government two years before CORE Deception takes place, targeted because of Bjorne's support for Yamada. (Read [Association](#) for more.)

Falls 83: A waterfall close to the city, yet still outside the geofence, that thaws enough to actually flow for a few weeks each summer. During this time, the city allows residents to visit the falls via bus since the NEXUS doesn't travel outside the geofence.

NEXUS (Neo EXpress Underground System): A highly efficient, subway-like public transit system allowing rapid transportation around the city. It mainly runs underground, makes little noise, and uses transparent passenger cars. Because of the NEXUS's efficiency and free access, the few vehicles seen on the streets are almost always owned by the government or tech firms.

NEXUS stations: Stops where passengers can board or disembark the Neo EXpress Underground System (NEXUS). In most cases, one has to descend from the street to enter a

NEXUS station and pass through one of several gates before stepping onto the loading platform. Each sector has several stations, and every school has a station below it.

Quinn's Coffee: A small coffee shop in Sector 14B where Krystin tries to make a secret connection for her courier role with a resistance group. This ends in a confrontation with another customer, "Stocky."

School in Sector 17C: The school Seth, Krystin, their siblings, and neighbors attend. It combines all grades, the Education Bureau's idea of efficiency by placing schools close to attendees' residences. Even in poor sectors, like 17C, schools have a study hall where students can use workstations that are more conducive for homework or gather around tables for group projects. Other amenities, like snacks and faster network speeds, encourage students to spend time at school where the environment is "optimized" for the best educational and community experiences.

Sector 17C: The sector of the city where Seth and Krystin and their families once lived, worked, and attended school. Most citizens have only enough to get by, but Sector 17C is especially poor.

Sector 14B: The sector of the city where Krystin tries to pass a secret message. Sector 14B neighbors Sector 17C.

Semi-Habitable Region (aka, Barely Habitable Region): The areas on either side of the Habitable Region where humans might survive, given the right conditions. In the case of the SAP, the nation leveraged modern technology in a carefully chosen location to efficiently sustain life for its populace, despite the harshness of its geographical position.

Snow park: A designated area outside the city for winter sports training and competition. It has various ski runs (with accompanying chairlifts), a cross country course, etc. The athletic center stores sports and maintenance equipment and contains locker rooms. A NEXUS stop next to the athletic center allows students quick transit from their schools in the city.

TF1 headquarters: Like all the tech firms, TF1's headquarters is a cluster of newly constructed buildings in a suburban setting at the edge of the city. Because technology is so vital to the nation's existence, tech firms receive priority in resource allocation. The plush, comfortable offices are interconnected so employees don't have to brave the extreme weather to get from one to another.

Vasa mansion: The nation awards all tech firm executives and governmental leaders large suburban homes with full-time staff, and Valini Vasa, Jhalak's mother, is no exception. The mansion includes a ballroom, where Jhalak's mother hosted TF1's fall celebration. Jhalak's spacious bedroom features a sitting area with a fireplace, a kitchenette, and an office.

Wharf: A portion of the city nestled against a harbor where the vital fishing industry operates. The area is strictly controlled by the Port Authority. Krystin and her brothers regularly work around the area, helping their father with his fishing job.

ZONE (Zero Occupancy No Entrance): The Socialist American People (SAP) rebuilt and settled only a portion of what was once the greater Honolulu metropolitan area. Officially, no one lives in the rest of the urban expanse or is allowed to enter it, thus the name Zero Occupancy No Entrance. The ZONE remains largely untouched after the CE Ice Age wreaked havoc on Hawaii (ferocious storms and shifting volcanic activity damaged everything and left it unpredictably dangerous). Despite the alleged dangers, it's possible to enter the ZONE via secret gaps in the geofence and survive there. Most people in the ZONE are either conducting black-market business or are hiding because they've been classified as noncompliance.