

**[Scene 3B]**

**Dr. Riley Eckhart**

There is another option. You, personally, have some really solid contacts in Dribia that C. J. Orkney doesn't realize you have, including in the Dribian government. Dribia can't possibly be happy with Tursa's new space efforts. You can get what will look like top Dribian tech companies to buy significant shares in Blue Phoenix.

Technically, selling the Dribian investors any share of a company with defense contracts is against the law. But it's worth it. The company C. J. Orkney started before Blue Phoenix, ESTS, had to circumvent the law a few times. But Blue Phoenix doesn't have that clout, and C. J. Orkney may need to actually bribe regulators; you certainly know of several recent cases in which the laws against foreign ownership of defense contractors went conspicuously unenforced. It's worth the risk; it's a manageable problem. And if it came out, the right people in Dribia would likely be very grateful, especially with Tursa acting so aggressively.

*Traitor.* You can hear everyone's voice in your head. But it's the right choice. Dribian "private" backers are still far better people than your own military is, and you're the only person who can guarantee those connections pan out.