

Cyberpunk

FAST SYSTEM

Name _____ # of CPU _____ Total Cost _____
INT _____ + 10 Interface **DATA WALL STR** _____
AI? _____ **CODE GATE STR** _____

PERSONALITY ?

[] Friendly [] Hostile [] Stable [] Intellectual
[] Machinelike [] Remote

REACTION?

[] Neutral [] Kill [] Observe [] Report [] Talk

ICON

[] Human [] Geometric [] Mythological [] Voice
[] Technic [] Humanoid

SKILLS

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____

REMOTES

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____

FILES, VIRTUALS, ETC.

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
6 _____
7 _____
8 _____
9 _____
10 _____
11 _____
12 _____

DEFENSES

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
6 _____
7 _____
8 _____
9 _____
10 _____

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PROGRAMMING 101

Creating New Software for Netrunning

Although you've got a lot of programs to choose from, it won't take long before you'll want to design your own. Home-grown programs can be the edge your Netrunner needs; because the old stuff gets known pretty fast around the Net.

CONSTRUCTING NEW PROGRAMS

Every program is made up of three parts: **functions, options and strengths**. When you put functions, options and strengths together, you create a new program.

Functions

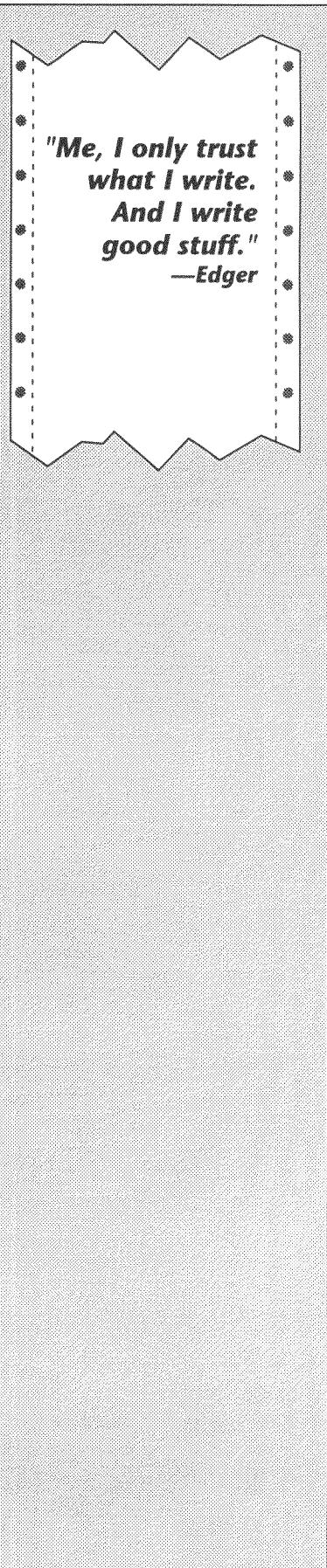
Functions are what the program *does*. Every program has a function.

You can often combine several functions into one program, making it more versatile and powerful.

DIFF	Type
10	Evasion: this function makes a program or the runner hard to trace
15	Stealth: this function makes the program or runner hard to detect
20	Anti Program: this function attacks and destroys other programs.
15	Anti System: this function damages or screws up a computer system.
10	Detection: this function detects intruding netrunners/programs
15	Alarm: this function alerts the system or Netrunner to intrusion
20	Anti-Personnel: this function attacks and kills Netrunners. The Netrunner is either killed (takes damage), taken over or mind wiped.
15	Intrusion: this function allows programs/netrunners to get through data walls.
10	Protection: this function stops attacks to netrunners or decks
15	Decryption: this function opens codes and locks
10	Controller: this function allows control of machines in Realspace.
10	Utility: this function restores damaged programs, copies things, improves deck speeds, reads files and does general library work.
10	Interactive: this program acts like a person in a virtual reality; it walks, moves around, manipulates objects in the virtual construct. When combined with psuedo-intellect and conversational ability, it can act much like a real person inside a virtual reality.
10	Compiler (Demon): This program manages other programs, and can reduce them in size by packing them tighter until needed.

The functions list above is designed to be general; the netrunner decides what his program is supposed to do, finds the function closest to his conception, and pays the Difficulty price for the function. How that function actually works is pretty much up to him and the Referee of the individual game; if your Anti-Personnel program kills a Netrunner by encasing his ICON in violet light and melts his brains with a burst of energy, that's great. But in game terms, it simply kills the netrunner.

Because functions leave a lot of leeway for imaginative thought, the Referee should always have the final word on whether a program really fits into that particular function or not. He or she may also want to raise or lower the Difficulty by a few points if the program stretches the boundaries of the



listed functions a bit too much. And hey, if it gets out of hand, feel free to have the sucker backfire and eat the player's face. It's the *Cyberpunk* way.

Options

Options are things that individualize a program. They allow it to move freely around the Net, to remember events, to recognize things, even obey commands and converse. You may want to create (with your Referee's approval), your own options as well.

A Note on ICON: ICONS are the visual representation of a program in the Net. An ICON can look like anything you want; people, monsters, objects, logos— you name it. Programs don't come with ICONS; they must be created for them. Not having an ICON doesn't mean the program can't be detected, but it does mean that it will just appear as an indistinct shape rather than a fully realized image.

DIFF Option

- 5 Movement ability: The program can move freely throughout the Net while its main programming remains in memory.
- 2 Trace: the program can follow another program or netrunner through the Net.
- 3 Auto Re-Rez: the program can reconstruct itself even if destroyed by rolling a 5 or 6 on 1D6.
- 2 Recognition: the program can distinguish between different netrunner signals and programs.
- 3 Invisibility: the program is +2 Strength to evade detection.
- 5 Memory: the program can remember specific events and people.
- 2 Speed: the program adds +2 to deck speed when it runs.
- 3 Endurance: the program is tireless and will never quit unless destroyed.
- 3 Conversational ability: the program can speak.
- 6 Pseudo-intellect: the program can think like a real person of INT 6.
- 1 ICON (simple): the program has a visible, cartoon icon in the Net.
- 2 ICON (contextual): the program has a Net ICON about the graphic level of a high-res computer image.

- 3 ICON (fractal): the program has some what realistic Net ICON, with shading, texture and sensation.
- 4 ICON (photorealistic): the program has a very realistic ICON about the level of a good video image or movie.
- 5 ICON (superrealistic): the program has an ICON that looks like a real person or object.

Strength

Strength is the power of the program. The higher a program's Strength, the more capable it is of fulfilling its functions. Strength is rated from one to ten. Most programs are around three or four.

WRITING THE PROGRAM

Once you've determined the functions, options and strength level of the program, you must determine how hard it will be to write it. Add together all the DIFFICULTY COSTS for all options, plus the level of Strength; the result is the Difficulty number for the program.

For example, Hellhound consists of:

Antipersonnel.....	+20
Movement	+5
Trace	+2
Recognition.....	+2
Strength 6	+6
Icon (Superrealistic)	+5

The total Difficulty of writing Hellhound would be 40

To make a skill check for this, you would add your INT+ Programming Skill+ 1D10 to get a value equal to or greater than this Difficulty number.

Pooling: Sometimes, you won't have enough Skills to write a program. However, two or more netrunners can pool their respective INTs and Skills together, rolling one D10 for the total. *Example: With an INT of 8 and a Programming of 10, Spider can't possibly write a Difficulty 40 Hellhound. But with the help of Edger (INT 9, Programming 7), the two can mount an impressive total of 8+10+9+7=34. They'll need to roll a 6 on their D10 to successfully write the program.*

HOW BIG IS THE PROGRAM?

Program size is determined by difficulty. Check the table below for the difficulty

number, then read across for the size in meg.

Difficulty	MU
10-15	1
16-20	2
21-25	3
26-30	4
31-35	5
36-40	6
41+	7

Hellhound has a Difficulty of 40; this means it will take 6 MU.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO WRITE?

For every point of Difficulty involved in the program, it will take 6 hours of work. The work need not be continuous and it may be divided between netrunners if more than one is involved in the process. *For example, with a Diff of 40, it would take 240 hours of work to program Hellhound. Spider and the Edger decide to work in eight hour shifts; at this rate, they'll finish in about 30 days. However, they decide to work at the same time, cutting the time to only 15 days.*

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Often, programs are purchased on the market rather than written at home. To determine the base cost of a program, multiply the Difficulty by 10eb. Multiply this value by the modifier below for the type of program.

Type	Modifier
Intrusion, Decryption	
Control, Utilities	1x Cost
Detection & Evasion	2x Cost
Anti System	3x Cost
Anti IC	4x Cost
Anti-Personnel	25x Cost

Example: Hellhound's Difficulty is 40; at 10eb per point, it would cost about 400 euro. But as an anti-personnel program, it is multiplied by 25; it will cost 10,000eb on the black market!

DEMONOLOGY

Demons are basically a specialized program designed to manage several other programs. These subprograms are compacted by the Demon's compiler function so that they take up half the space they would normally need, allowing the Ne-

runner to carry more programs in the same amount of memory.

To build a *Demon*, you'll start by building a normal program, using the Compiler/*Demon* function. To this, you can add as many options as desired, as well as setting its Strength. The Strength of the *Demon* is somewhat modified by the number of programs it carries; for each program "on board", the *Demon* will lose one point of Strength. Example: *Succubus II* starts with a Strength of 7. But by carrying 3 programs, this Strength is reduced to 4.

Next, build all of your subprograms. Don't worry about their strengths; they'll fight at the strength level of the *Demon*, not their own. Now, after you've created them, add all Difficulty numbers together and divide by 2. Add this result to the Difficulty of the *Demon* and you have the total Difficulty (and the amount of memory required) for your completed *Demon*.

Example: Edger builds a Demon to hold four programs. Nicknamed Pixie, the program is constructed like this:

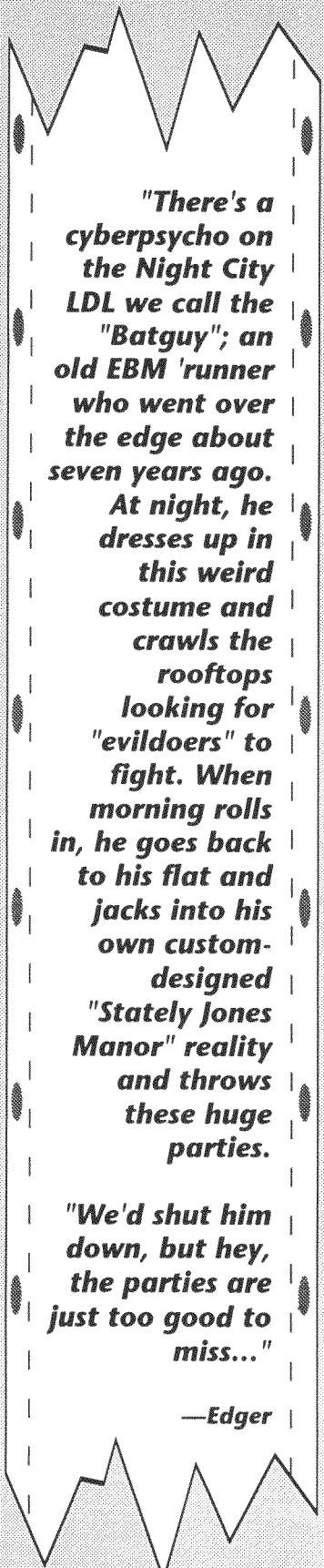
Compiler (<i>Demon</i>)	10
Icon (Simple)	1
Strength 7	7
TOTAL	18

He then plugs in four programs, one at 30, one at 25, and two at 15 for a total of 70 Difficulty. But thanks to the *Demon*, the cost is only 35 points! The result is a final version of *Pixie* that has a value of only 53 points, a savings of 17 points.

A *Demon* sounds like a great idea at first; you get a lot of programs in a small space. But there are a couple of serious gliches:

First, the *Demon* is only able to control all these programs by linking it's programming with theirs. This means that whenever the *Demon* is destroyed, all the programs linked to it are also destroyed (sort of like a ship going down with all hands).

Second, all the programs fight at the same Strength level as the original *Demon*. Not a bad idea; load the *Demon* up with some



"There's a cyberpsycho on the Night City LDL we call the "Batguy"; an old EBM 'runner who went over the edge about seven years ago.

At night, he dresses up in this weird costume and crawls the rooftops looking for "evildoers" to fight. When morning rolls in, he goes back to his flat and jacks into his own custom-designed "Stately Jones Manor" reality and throws these huge parties.

"We'd shut him down, but hey, the parties are just too good to miss..."

—Edger

cheap programs and if the *Demon's Strength* is high, they'll all fight like...well...demons. However, you won't have a very powerful *Demon* if you load up on a lot of subprograms.

Third, the *Demon* has to unpack each program before using it, then repack it when it's done. This means that there's a delay in Speed; a negative value equal to the number of programs currently loaded. For example, if you've got four programs loaded in a *Demon*, this will mean a corresponding -4 penalty to your deck Speed. When you have to get off the mark, this can be a disaster.

But if you're looking for a way to stash a lot of programming in a small space, a *Demon* is the way to go.

VIRTUALLY THERE

Artificial Realities in Netrunning

IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS CREATOR...

CREATOR, developed by Silicon Graphic Technologies in 2014, is a combination animation/drawing program which pulls objects from a huge database and tailors them to the designer's preferences. The object is then animated based on the overall background and the new objects relationship to the Netrunner and other objects in the memory area. *Creator* was originally designed as a demonstration program for Silicon's LYREX 3000 cyber-modem. However, it was so popular that it was integrated directly into the operating system of the LYREX and all other subsequent SG decks. *Creator* was soon copied in various forms by other cyberdeck corporations, so that by 2016, it was standard operating equipment on 98% of all modern decks.

Creator, of course, is just perfect for generating Virtual Realities.

Virtual Real Estate

A Virtual reality is just that; an artificial reality constructed via a combination of

sense stim and graphic imagery. It's like a pocket universe, often covering entire buildings, cities or even worlds. Virtual realities are the crowning achievement of interface technology in the 21st century.

How Big are They?

The extent of a virtual reality is based on two things. The first is how much is actually in the reality, or the number of objects contained in it, to be exact. Size doesn't really have much to do with the number of objects containable in a reality; a tiny figurine, for example, is far more complex than a huge box, and will take up far more memory to create.

To simplify this, we simply count the total number of objects existing in the reality, averaging the levels of complexity over all the objects within. The result gives us a pretty good thumbnail for how much memory (in MU) will be required to create a given reality.

"Creator? It's sort of like a Build-A-Universe Kit in a box. Sorta Godlike, yeah?"

—Spider Murphy

The actual space covered by the reality doesn't matter; you could build a huge virtual reality with only a hundred or so items, if one of them is an endless sky and the other is miles of empty grassland. What's important to the design is the number of separate objects that must be interacted with inside the reality.

This can lead to some interesting shortcuts. Want to build a huge mansion but don't have the MU for it? Build it as a 1,000 object reality, and make your vast shelves of books in the Library all one object (sure, you won't be able to pick up and read an individual book, but you don't often climb up there anyway). Make all of the walls as single objects; you won't be able to open windows or move pictures, but they'll look nice. And so on.

How much can be contained in a reality is

pretty much up to the Referee; he's the one who is best able to judge how much you will be able to interact with in a "game" context, after all (besides, he'll be the one who describes your virtual reality to you as part of the game). The descriptions in the table below are primarily there for reference; your Referee may decide that an aircraft carrier with a squadron of F-18s will

textures, tastes and sounds. They can pass through each other, around each other, and throw shadows.

Here's an example. There are a lot of ways to create a car. You can draw it as a box with a smaller box on top and four doughnuts for wheels. You can sketch it realistically, with the color, curves and reflections

VIRTUAL LIMITS TABLE

@ Number of Objects	Description	MU
100 objects	Virtual Conference room	1
1000 objects	Complex Conference, or Office	2
10,000 objects	Complex Office or Virtual Rec Area	4
100,000 objects	Virtual Building	8
1,000,000 objects	Complex Building or Virtual City	16
1,000,000,000 objects	Complex City or Virtual World	32

only require 10,000 objects, just as long as most of the jets are simple, non-flying shapes, and that the only places you actually ever go to are your cabin, the flight deck and the bridge. Or he may decide that if you want a fully functional office, it will require 10,000 objects just to cover every piece of paper, individual pencil, or paperclip.

Creating Individual Objects

The creation of individual objects is also possible; it's just a pain in the neck when you have to make an entire universe. After all, do you really want to visualize every single leaf on every tree in a forest?

However, you may occasionally want to create a single item for a specific reason; a book you want to read or a meal you want to "eat. As a general rule, it takes about .01 MU to create any simple object. About .02 MU would create a fully functional object of reasonable complexity. As with the creation of larger realities, exactly how much memory is required to create a single object is up to the Referee.

REALITY LEVEL

The second component of a virtual reality is the level of its realism. The greater the realism, the more objects within the reality relate in ways you expect. Things in the reality have color, shadow, reflections,

a real car would have. You can paint it in the superrealistic style of a modern artist, so real that the chrome seems to shine. You can take a photograph of a real car. Or you can build a real car.

Each one of these steps represents an increase in the realism of the car. As you go up the scale, the car gets more real all the time. Reflections and shadow, texture, tastes, sounds and weights can all exist at varying levels of realism in a virtual reality. All it takes is the right program and enough memory to implement it.

Creator is that program. Using a huge database of digital braindance recordings and three dimensional reality modeling routines, *Creator* sets the level of realism for the entire construct, choosing and creating images from the database. As part of the reality's ground rules, all objects contained with the reality will be of the same level of realism throughout. *Creator* has five levels of realism:

Simple: The object is like a cartoon. There are colors and blocky shapes, but no shading, texture or difference in tastes. All objects weigh the same, feel the same to the touch, make the same limited sounds ("bonk!" "beep!").

Contextural: The reality is like a very good

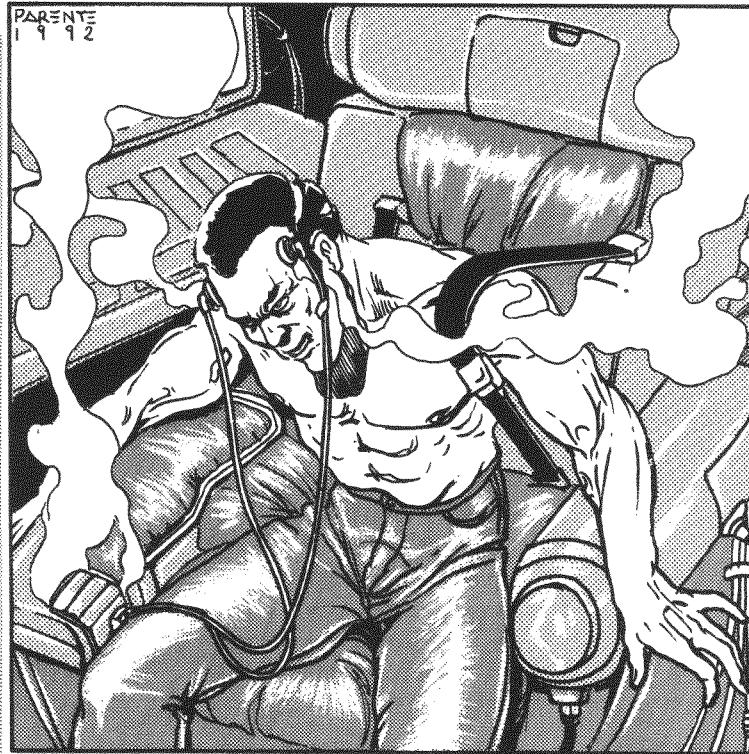
SCIENCE MEETS GAME

Some of you more math-oriented types are going to immediately (as Staff Editor Will "Mister Science" Moss pointed out when he read this section) realize that the number of objects in a virtual reality rises by an order of magnitude, while the MU required doesn't.

Here's the catch. Most of the objects in a large virtual reality are actually "repeaters"—things that are so much like other similar things that they don't require their own special codes to create them. Instead, they steal their construction formulas from something very similar (sort of like a GOSUB routine for you programming types). Each time you create an object of a particular class, you just use the subroutine to create it.

For example, in the *Arasaka Castle* reality, there are hundreds of guards; they just all look the same, with only minor variations (see the Crowd, pg. 163). In a Virtual City, all of the cars are pretty similar, just like all of the buildings, birds, trees, rocks, signs, telephone poles, etc.

This is how (in our game universe, at least) we get around the problem of MU size vs. object count. Of course, the main reason is that in a game context, to hold a billion object Virtual World would require at least 100,000 MU (reflecting true orders of magnitude), which would in turn require at least 10,000 MU. No one would ever have enough memory to build really interesting Virtual Realities, and the game would be a lot less fun as a result.



VIEW
FROM
THE
EDGE

video game. There is color and shading. Textures are limited, but soft things feel soft, hard things hard, rough things rough and smooth things smooth. Tastes are sweet, sour, salty and acidic. Things make sounds that are much like they do in real life (a car engine sounds pretty much like a car, a bird like a bird), but lack definition as they are created from digital sound recordings.

Fractal: The reality is very much like real life. Each object has a distinct taste, sound and texture. Colors are blended smoothly, and objects are shiny, dull, transparent and opaque. There is hot and cold, but not fine degrees of temperature. Distance and the relationships of other objects have effects on each other; planes pass through clouds and the air gets misty, the sun reflects off water, etc.

Photorealistic: The reality is much like a very, very good movie. Tastes are very close to what they are in real life, as are textures, sounds and colors. Light reflects naturally off of objects. Things relate almost exactly like they do in actuality; waves move and reflect light in interesting patterns, trees blow in the wind, dust rises off the furniture, things are hot and cold relative to each other.

Superrealistic: If there's a difference between this and the real thing, you can't tell.

Multiply the MU cost of the virtual construct by the multiplier for the level of reality to determine its final MU cost.

REALISM MULTIPLIERS

Simple	x1
Contextual	x2
Fractal	x3
Photorealistic	x4
Superrealistic.....	x5

Getting the Job Done

Creating a universe isn't an easy task; it takes the patience and imagination of a god to pull it off. To create a virtual reality, you must make a Skill check higher than the Difficulty number for that size of creation. This reflects your ability to interface with the Creator program and successfully direct it in the process of virtual reality construction.

1 object	automatic
100 objects	10
1,000 objects	15
10,000 objects	20
100,000 objects	25
1,000,000 objects	30
1,000,000,000 objects	35

Making it more or less real isn't a problem; *Creator* automatically sets the level of realism as desired and models its constructs accordingly.

Pooling: Sometimes, you may not be able to create what you want at all; the task is just too big. However, two or more netrunners can pool their combined INT and *Interface Skills* and add a 1D10 roll to the total of this amount. They can divide the time for construction between themselves as well. This is how very large commercial virtuals are created; a team of netrunners splits the work up, with each one taking a specific part of the visualization task.

How Long Will It Take?

Actually, a lot less time than you'd suspect. *Creator* works from the users' ability to visualize. It then generates an object from its memory as closely as possible to the user's visualization. Objects are created at the speed of thought. As a rule:

1 object	1 second
100 objects	2 minutes
1,000 objects.....	15 minutes
10,000 objects	2 hours
100,000 objects	24 hours
1,000,000 objects	240 hours
1,000,000,000 objects	2,400 hours

Spreading It All Out

You can spread out the memory cost of a virtual reality by placing it over adjacent memories. The actual load can be broken up into equal amounts and delegated to specific memories, or divided unequally with the overflow going into an empty memory. All memories used in a virtual reality must be adjacent to each other in the architecture of the system.

Doing it in Sections

You can elect to start small when constructing a virtual reality; most humans can't possibly visualize every contingency of a billion object reality, and there isn't much point to building a billion object space if you can't fill it. The easiest way to do this is to do a small section first, then add another part of the reality adjacent to the first, until the entire memory is filled. You can then extend new sections to the next memory. The

Arasaka Castle reality in Osaka was constructed in this way; the upper management has a full team of programmers

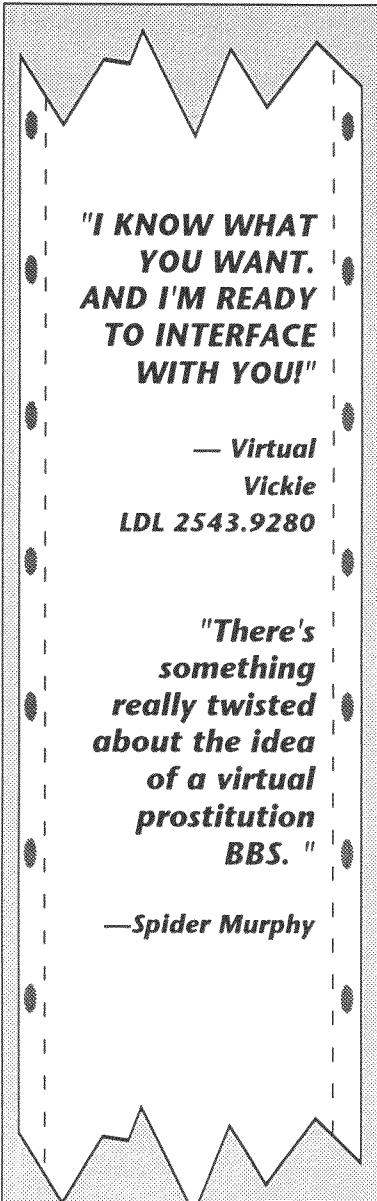
POPULATING YOUR REALITY

Okay, now you've made yourself a real nice place to play. Now it's time for some actors. Virtual realities are basically stage sets, with buildings, sky, trees and ground all serving as the major locations. Cars, AVs, books, furniture, etc., are all props in the virtual construct. But if you want other people to relate to, you need to create those separately, as programs. There are three kinds of "people" you can construct to populate a virtual reality:

The Crowd: The Crowd is an interactive program with limited conversational ability and a psuedo-intellect. The Crowd tends to act like...well...a crowd; all of its members think and do about the same things. For example, if the Crowd is at a party, they will mill about, chatter aimlessly about nothing, and "ooh" and "ah" if you do something really interesting. However, if you attempt to engage a single member of the Crowd in conversation, he or she will only be able to utter banal pleasantries, like "Yeah, nice party" and "Hey, what about those (Giants, 49ers, Bears, Yankees, etc.)?". The Crowd doesn't have a Memory option, so if you meet someone from the Crowd elsewhere, he will stammer, try to pretend that he remembers you, and generally do all the things you would do in a similar situation. Who says this is an artificial reality?

To create a Crowd takes a Difficulty of 16 (multiplied by whatever you spend for its level of realism). A Crowd takes up 1MU for every 100 people involved. The same crowd can be used in any part of the virtual reality; it just gets moved around and "redressed" for the next scene. Crowds are often sold on the open market or traded among Netrunners. After all, everyone needs a change from the same old Crowd.

Individuals: These are characters with all the psuedo-intellect and conversational abilities of the crowd, but with a memory option as well. They represent key players in your virtual reality, and can relate to you very much as real people would. They remember your name, what you've done together, and



"I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT. AND I'M READY TO INTERFACE WITH YOU!"

— Virtual Vickie

LDL 2543.9280

"There's something really twisted about the idea of a virtual prostitution BBS."

— Spider Murphy

"Knew a guy once who created a virtual of his boss in the Microtech system. Every night, he'd cut it loose in a Night City simulation and hunt it down.

One evening, he was out on the Street when he saw his boss getting out of a taxi. The guy went completely off-line—it took four C-SWAT cops to pull him off the body...

—Edger

even have their own personality quirks. Each individual has a Difficulty of 21 (multiplied by whatever you spend for its level of realism), and takes up 2 MU of space. But this can be well worth it if the individual is your own *Virtual Cute Blond Movie Starlet* (or *Hunk*).

Individual programs can often be bought or copied from other sources; there is a booming business in providing these one of a kind programs for virtual use. Most bulletin boards and shopping boards have advertising sections for individual copies; these are known as "meat markets", "slave pits" and "casting couches". Prices range from a couple hundred eb (for the *Boring History Professor* model) to two or three thousand (for the *Zarkonian Love God/Goddess* model).

Offensive/Defensive Programs: Not all the "inhabitants" of a virtual reality are simple minded conversation pieces. Any offensive or defensive program can, for a few extra Difficulty points, be outfitted with an interactive option, conversational ability and psuedo-intellect. This allows the program to have a decorative function as well as a protective one; you can come home to your virtual castle, put your feet up in your virtual chair, have your virtual servant pour you a virtual drink and relax while petting your virtual (and deadly) Hellhound on its shaggy metal head.

A SAMPLE REALITY

The HUNT CLUB is a BBS established in the Olympia region of the Net; its realspace coordinates are probably somewhere outside of Denver (although no one knows for certain). The Hunt Club consists of a single 1,000,000 object (Complex Building) reality. The realism level is superrealistic, which raises the required memory space from the base 16 MU to 80MU. Due to the limitations of space, this virtual reality is stored in eight large adjacent memory spaces in the Hunt Club's data fortress.

The majority of the Club consists of the **Mansion**, which is contained in memories one and two. Most of the Mansion is made up of huge, English Tudor-style rooms filled with brickabrack and curios. These many rooms are quite simple; floors, carpets, drapes, panelled walls with non-removable

paintings. Only the furniture is mobile. Each room has a heavy oak door with a brass plate designating its function; most are used as conversation rooms for the many members of the BBS who visit here. It's a good place to exchange information, play games and otherwise socialize; it fills the position of the various areas of a standard bulletin board. Because the Mansion is limited to a few large objects, it uses very little actual memory.

Most of memory number three is taken up with the **Garden**; a reproduction of an English garden with roses, walks, a small reflecting pool and a croquet green. The edge of the Garden is bounded by a high hedge and the sky; the virtual reality stops here and going beyond this is impossible.

The **Drawing Room** occupies a large part of memories four and five, and is by far the most complex of the rooms, accessible only to Senior members of the Club. It contains the Hunt Club's extensive files (disguised as old books behind moving panels in the walls), a message board (designed to resemble a hotel cubbyhole box), and its entertainment, game and program library. This library is presided over by an alarm program known as **Dent**.

Dent contains functions for *Detection*, *Alarm* and interactive options, including the ability to remember events and people, recognize cybersignals, obey commands, conversational ability, psuedo-intelligence and constant activity. The Dent program is of Strength 6 and is a superrealistic ICON of a bored and somewhat nasal English butler.

In addition to Dent, the Drawing Room is also home to the **DOG**, a Strength 8 modified *Hellhound* program. The DOG is programmed to react to any alarm raised by Dent, whereupon it will attack the intruder.

The **Dining Room** occupies most of memories six and seven; it is a baroque hall with a vast table loaded with rare foods and wines. Because of the many individual dishes served, this room takes up a lot of object space; when additional memory is required elsewhere, parts of the Dining Room's banquet is de-rezzed by the Club SysOp to free up space.



HISTORY
TECHNOLOGY
HOT TIPS
NIGHT CITY
MEGACORPS
SCREAMSHEETS

SECTION

11

**ALL
THINGS
DARK
&
CYBER
PUNK**

FUTURE SHOCK: History of An Alternate Time

In the United States, thirty-two years of corrupt government and economic destabilization have resulted in a nation divided— by class, by race and by economics.

By the end of the 1980's, it was evident that the nation was in trouble. Most social norms had dissolved under an all engulfing wave of competing special interest groups, media fueled fads, and an overall "me first" worldview. By 1994, the number of homeless on the streets had skyrocketed to 21 million. The technical revolution had further torn the economy apart, creating two radically divergent classes—a wealthy, technically oriented, materially acquisitive group

of corporate professionals, and a down class of homeless, unskilled, blue-collar workers. The middle class was nearly eradicated. It was this dismal beginning that led to the current American landscape of the 2000s.

In large cities, business areas are clean, neat, well lit showcases, free of crime and poverty, controlled by powerful corporations. Ringing the central areas are the **Combat Zones**—decrepit, squalid suburbs and burned out ghettos teeming with booster-gangs and other violent sociopaths. The outer suburbs are also corporate-controlled zones; safe, well-guarded tracts where executives raise their families in relative security.

Throughout the Midwestern states, many small towns have been abandoned, as local farms, businesses and banks collapsed in the wake of drought, famine and economic chaos. The farms have been bought up by huge agricorporations, and are maintained with hired workers, machine labor, and well-equipped guards. The open freeways are battlegrounds, as armed packs of Nomads travel from city to city, looting and pillaging like mechanized Visigoths.

In this bleak landscape is a bright light of hope. The upheavals of the last decade have unified the poor, oppressed and angry of the nation. There are signs that the gang mentality of

A FUTURE HISTORY TIMELINE

1990

START OF FIRST CENTRAL AMERICAN CONFLICT. U.S. ENGAGES IN INTERVENTIONIST ACTIONS IN PANAMA, NICARAGUA, HONDURAS, EL SALVADOR. MILITARY FORCES ARE SENT TO SECURE THE CANAL ZONE FROM AN EX-U.S. PUPPET DICTATOR.

WEST, EAST GERMANY REUNITED. WARSAW PACT BREAKS UP INTO SEPARATE NATIONS.

BREAKUP OF SOVIET MEGA-STATE. FROM THIS POINT, THE USSR BEGINS A NEW ERA OF REAPPROACHMENT WITH WESTERN EUROPE; BY THE 2000'S, THE SOVIETS ARE THE EUROTHEATRE'S MOST POWERFUL ALLIES.

SOVIET PRESIDENT GORBACHEV APPOINTS PARTY SUCESSOR, ANDREI GORBREV

FALL OF SOUTH AFRICA. FOR THE NEXT 4 YEARS, THERE IS LITTLE OR NO COMMUNICATION, ALTHOUGH TERRIBLE ATROCITIES AND GENOCIDAL WARS ARE RUMORED.

1991

EUROSPACE AGENCY LAUNCHES HERMES SPACEPLANE

CORBREV REGIME PURGES LAST OF OLD HARDLINERS

CHOOH2 DEVELOPED BY BIOTECHNICA

FIRST ARCOLOGY BUILT ON RUINS OF JERSEY CITY. 16 "ARCOS" BEGIN CONSTRUCTION OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS, UNTIL THE COLLAPSE OF 1997, LEAVING THE HUGE STRUCTURES HALF COMPLETED, FILLED WITH SQUATTERS AND HOMELESS.

ARTIFICIAL MUSCLE FIBERS DEVELOPED AT STANFORD RESEARCH CENTER.

1992

THE TREATY OF 1992 ESTABLISHES THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY. ZONES OF CONTROL AND PROTECTIVE TARIFFS REGULATE THE ACTIVITIES OF MEMBER NATIONS, FRANCE, BRITAIN, UNITED GERMANY, ITALY. A COMMON CURRENCY UNIT (THE EUROS) IS ESTABLISHED, BASED ON AVERAGE VALUE IN GOLD OF ALL CURRENCIES COMBINED. TRAPPED IN PARANOID ISOLATIONISM, THE U.S. DECLINES TO ENTER.

THE U.S. DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY DEVELOPS AND SPREADS SEVERAL DESIGNER PLAGUES WORLDWIDE, TARGETING COCA AND OPIUM PLANTS.

GOVERNMENTS OF CHILE, ECUADOR COLLAPSE.

A SAVAGE DRUG WAR BREAKS OUT BETWEEN EUROCOP-BACKED DEALERS AND DEA ALL OVER THE AMERICAS.

FIRST USE OF HIGH ENERGY LASER LIFT ARRAYS IN USSR. SIMPLE MASSDRIVER ESTABLISHED IN CANARY ISLANDS BY EIGHT MEMBER EUROSPACE AGENCY.

1993

FIRST TRC BIOLOGIC INTERFACE CHIPS DEVELOPED IN MUNICH, UNITED GERMANY.

AV-4 AERODYNE ASSAULT VEHICLE DEVELOPED TO DEAL WITH INCREASING RIOTS IN U.S. URBAN ZONES.

COLUMBIAN DRUGLORDS DETONATE SMALL TACTICAL NUCLEAR DEVICE IN NEW YORK. 15,000 KILLED.

1994

WORLD STOCK MARKET CRASH OF '94. U.S. ECONOMY TEETERS, THEN COLAPSES.

NUCLEAR ACCIDENT IN PITTSBURGH KILLS 257. CANCER DEATHS SOAR OVER NEXT TEN YEARS.

1995

KILAMANJARO MASSDRIVER BEGINS CONSTRUCTION, UNDER JOINT AGREEMENT BETWEEN ESA AND PAN AFRICAN ALLIANCE.

the early 2000's is giving way to a new movement, as Rockers, Nomads, Solos and Medias take to the streets to fight authority and oppression. Far from being finished, the United States seems to be, against all odds, coming back. But only time will tell if the so-called *Cyberpunk* revolution will succeed.

In the Eurotheatre, things are considerably better. The World Stock Exchange and the Common Market have created a stable, profitable economy in which most of the European nations participate—the exceptions are Italy, Spain and Greece—all of which suffer chronic political upheavals. Here, the international corporations also have a great deal of power, but various Euro-governments have skillfully managed to keep these business barons under control. Only Great Britain has suffered major economic trouble—swamped by massive immigration and an antiquated technological base,

its streets are almost as explosively dangerous as the United States'.

With the massive reforms of the early 1990's (and the subsequent purge of hardliners in 1991), the Neo-Soviet Union has emerged as a strong partner in the expanding Eurotheatre. Most of Eastern Europe now enjoys an autonomy unthinkable during the days of the Cold War. Where the Soviet State is weakest is in food production. It still cannot feed its hungry population, and its technology lags far behind most other nations in the Eurotheatre. With con-

tinuing failure of the revamped Neo Communist Party's economic and social reforms, the hardliners are once again gaining strength and a showdown between the surviving cold warriors and the liberal reformers is coming fast.

"Imagine a world where Central America didn't become a battleground; where the U.S. solved its problems of crime, inflation and drugs; where the Cold War ended in democracy, not a succession of squabbling dictatorships..."
—Dr. Albert Harper
author of History in Collision, 2015

able to down the incoming suicide bombers. The majority of regional peoples have been reduced to mob

1996

THE COLLAPSE OF THE UNITED STATES.
WEAKENED BY LOSSES IN THE WORLD STOCK CRASH, OVERWHELMED BY UNEMPLOYMENT, HOMELESSNESS AND CORRUPTION, MANY CITY GOVERNMENTS COLLAPSE OR GO BANKRUPT. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, SNARLED IN A STAGGERING DEFICIT AND THE MACHINATIONS OF THE GANG OF FOUR, IS TOTALLY INEFFECTIVE.

NOMAD RIOTS. BY NOW, 1 IN 4 AMERICANS ARE HOMELESS. HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS RIOT FOR LIVING SPACE THROUGHOUT THE U.S., NOMAD PACKS SPRING UP ON THE WEST COAST AND SPREAD RAPIDLY THROUGH THE NATION.

FIRST APPEARANCE OF BOOSTERGANGS.

LAWYER PURGE. IRATE CITIZENS LYNCH HUNDREDS OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEYS.

CONSTITUTION SUSPENDED. MARTIAL LAW ESTABLISHED IN U.S.

TOXIC SPILL KILLS OFF MOST OF SALMON POPULATION IN PACIFIC NORTHWEST. SEATTLE ECONOMY CRIPPLED.

'ROCKERBOY' MANSON KILLED IN ENGLAND.

1998

NEO-LUDDITES RE-ESTABLISHED IN WESTERN KENTUCKY. OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS, THE "LUDS" ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR BOMBINGS OF AIRPORTS, FACTORIES, FREEWAYS AND MASS TRANSIT TERMINALS.

THE DROUGHT OF '98 REDUCES MOST OF THE MIDWEST TO PARCHED GRASSLANDS. BETWEEN AGRIBUSINESS CORPS AND DROUGHT, THE FAMILY FARM ALL BUT DISAPPEARS.

10.5 QUAKE SHATTERS LOS ANGELES, OCEAN INUNDATES 35% OF THE CITY. AN ESTIMATED 65,000 ARE KILLED.

1999

FEDERAL WEAPONS STATUTE ESTABLISHED.

MILLENIUM CULTS BEGIN TO APPEAR, PREDICTING AN APOCALYPSE ON JAN 1, 2000. THOUSANDS MIGRATE TO ISOLATED COMMUNES AND TEMPLES TO "AWAIT THE END".

TYCHO COLONY ESTABLISHED. A MASSDRIVER IS CONSTRUCTED TO PROVIDE RAW MATERIALS FOR ORBITAL PLATFORMS.

2000

MILLENIUM CULTS RUN AMOK ON JAN 1ST IN AN ORGY OF SUICIDE AND VIOLENCE, MOST DESTROY THEMSELVES.

FIRST "EXTENDED FAMILY" POSERGANGS ESTABLISHED.

MASSIVE FIRESTORMS RAGE OVER NORTHWESTERN U.S., DESTROYING MILLIONS OF ACRES OF FARM AND GRASSLAND.

CRYSTAL PALACE SPACE STATION BEGUN AT L-5.

WASTING PLAGUE HITS U.S., EUROPE, KILLING HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS.

2001

THE FRAMEWORK OF THE NET IS NOW FIRMLY IN PLACE WITH CONSTRUCTION OF THE WORLDSAT NETWORK.

2002

FOOD CRASH; MUTATED PLANT VIRUS WIPES OUT CANADIAN, SOVIET CROPS. U.S. AGRIBUSINESS CROPS SURVIVE DUE TO NEW BIOLOGICAL COUNTERAGENT. USSR ACCUSES U.S. OF BIOLOGICAL WARFARE.

1997

MIDEAST MELTDOWN. TENSIONS IN MIDDLE EAST ESCALATE TO NUCLEAR EXCHANGE. IRAN, IRAQ, LIBYA, CHAD AND THE ARAB EMIRATES REDUCED TO RADIOACTIVE SLAG. WORLD OIL SUPPLY DROPS BY HALF.

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rule, clustered in their blasted cities or cowering under the tyranny of a local warlord. Many have fled into the desert, to reappear as warrior-tribes. Others have embraced religious fanaticism, sweeping out of the ruined Mid-East to avenge themselves with acts of terrorism and murder. Rumors of jihad—the Holy War—are on the radioactive wind, although it is still unclear what form the coming war with the infidel will take this time.

From the bloodbaths of Capetown, New Africa emerged as a fractured continent of warring countries under a bewildering array of dictators,

democracies and socialist states. Eventually, as the Euro-nations negotiated with Tanzania to build the Kilimanjaro massdriver, many of the African nations began to see their place in the 21st century. Bargaining with manpower, raw materials, and valuable land on the critical Equatorial orbital belt, the African states established their footholds in space—nearly one third of all space construction workers are African, and the majority of spaceport facilities and construction areas are on African soil. Technology has joined Africa under one government, and the last petty dictators and tribalisms are falling fast before the lure of the stars.

In the Far East, Japan faces an age of new challenges. Out from the protective shadow of the United States, it must not only cope with its own defense in a nuclear age, but also rising

competition with Korea, China and the re-organized New Phillipines. In recent years, the Japanese have changed from economic rivals and robber barons to economic supporters of the U.S. economy. But old scars from the trade wars of the 1990s die hard, and true mutual cooperation between the U.S. and Japan is a long time coming. This is further aggravated by the fact that China, a newly emerging power in its own right, has further strengthened its relations with the U.S. through the Mutual Defense Treaty of 2009.

After a lengthy war with the United States, Central America has emerged as a strong union of independent states, working under a pact of mutual cooperation. The U.S. has been expelled from all but the Panama Canal Zone, which it holds by sheer military force against ongoing guerilla aggression. South America is a warzone of juntas, secret police, ex-drug lords and military oppression, torn by periodic combat and revolution.

Legal Background

The police of the 2000's are organized much as they were during the 20th

2003

SECOND CENTRAL AMERICAN WAR. U.S. invades Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela. The war is a disaster that costs thousands of American lives. Eventually, the remainder of the Gang of Four is swept away on a wave of reform.

WNS MEDIA STAR TESLA JOHANNESON exposes secret NSA transcripts of the First Central American Conflict.

2004

FIRST CLONED TISSUE GROWTH IN VITRO. MICROSUTURES, STERILIZER FIELDS DEVELOPED.

TESLA JOHANNESON ASSASSINATED IN CAIRO.

FIRST CORP WAR. 12 MULTINATS, (INCLUDING EBM & OA) BATTLE FOR CONTROL OF TRANS-WORLD AIR.

2005

CYBERMODEM INVENTED.

EBM SOLOS ATTACK TOKYO OFFICE OF KENJIRI TECHNOLOGIES, KILLING 18.

END OF 1ST CORP WAR.

2006

FIRST HUMAN CLONE GROWN IN VITRO. MINDLESS, IT ONLY LIVES FOR 6 HOURS.

2007

SECOND CORPORATE WAR: INVOLVING A NUMBER OF FIRMS INCLUDING PETROCHEM, THE DISPUTE IS OVER OILFIELDS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA.

BRAINDANCE DEVELOPED AT UC SANTA CRUZ.

2008

US ASSAULT ON SOVIET WEAPONS PLATFORM MIR XIII. EUROSPACE AGENCY INTERVENES. AND ORBITAL WAR BREAKS OUT BETWEEN THE "EUROS" AND THE "YANKS", UNTIL TYCHO COLONY MASSDRIVER DROPS A ROCK ON COLORADO SPRINGS. AN UNEASY PEACE IS REACHED.

2009

JOINT EURO-SOVIET MISSION TO MARS DEPARTS.

CORPORATIONS ERADICATE MOB RULE IN NIGHT CITY.

ABORTIVE TAKEOVER ATTEMPT BY U.S. "TERRORIST GROUP" OF CRYSTAL PALACE CONSTRUCTION. ESA DISCOVERS DEFENCE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY PLOT AND DROPS 12 TON ROCK OFF WASHINGTON AS A WARNING.

century with Homicide, Vice, Burglary and Traffic Squads; about 5 men each. The most recent addition to police organization has been the addition of the Cyberpsycho Squad (also known as the Psycho Squad), whose main job is to deal with cybernetic criminals. While the average beat cop hits the Street in an armored squad car, wearing an armor jacket, helmet and carrying a smart-chipped Beretta sidearm, the Psycho Squad detail employs aerogyrus, AV-4's, miniguns, assault weapons and Stinger missile launchers.

City cops can patrol all areas of the city. Corporate Cops are deputized to patrol only corporate facilities. However, in areas where a large number of office areas are side by side, this effectively can turn an entire downtown region into Corporate Cop territory. Corporate Cops are usually better armed and armored, and often have full Trauma Team medical coverage. They are also more vicious, sadistic and likely to shoot first—after all, they know the Corporation can cover the incident up.

The Uniform Civilian Justice Code

Skyrocketing crime rates in the 1990's,

proved that the existing legal structure was falling apart. Following the Purge of 1996, (when citizen's groups lynched hundreds of criminal defense lawyers), the Government declared martial law throughout the U.S. for a period of three years. During this time, justice was dispensed by local military courts. The amazing thing is, it worked.

A death penalty for looting brings a wonderful element of stability to a rioting neighborhood.

During this period, the Military Justice Code was the main rule of U.S. law. Its draconian standards of crime and punishment served so well that when martial law was suspended in 1999,

UNIFORM CIVILIAN JUSTICE CODE

HERE ARE THE MAJOR CRIMES OF THE 2000'S AND THEIR PUNISHMENTS AS PROVIDED FOR UNDER THE UCJC:

Assault & Battery: Any unprovoked attack on another person. Punishable by personality adjustment or 1D6+1 months in jail.
Assault with Deadly Force: As with Assault. 1D6+1 years in jail, mandatory braindance.
Burglary: Entering private property with intent to steal. Punishment: Exile, prison (1D6+1 years) or braindance.
Conspiracy: the crime of conspiring to commit a felony. Subject to Exile, prison (1D6+1 years) or braindance.
Counterfeiting & Forgery: the crime of creating false coinage, money, or documents with intent to defraud. Punishment: prison (1D10+5 years).
Extortion or Blackmail: the crime of obtaining something from another through threat of injury. Punishment: Prison (1D10+5 years).
Homicide (1st Degree): Premeditated murder, or murder while in the commission of a felony. Punishment is death.
Homicide (2nd Degree): Accidental murder, murder without premeditation. Punishment: Prison for 1D10+10 years, braindance, personality alteration.
Homicide (Justifiable): Self defense, preventing the commission of a felony. No punishment.
Kidnapping or False Imprisonment: To hold another against his will. Punishment: Prison for 1D10+10 years, braindance, personality alteration.
Larceny, Theft or Robbery: The theft of another's property, either through force, threat, or embezzlement. Punishment varies by severity of act from exile, to prison for 1D10+10 years, braindance, personality alteration.
Malicious Mischief, Vandalism: the wanton destruction of another's property. Punishment: Exile, jail for 1D6 months.
Rape: Forcing another to have sex by use of threat or force. Punishment: Prison for 1D10+5 years, braindance, personality alteration.
Resisting Arrest/Obstructing an Officer: Attempting to escape legal arrest by a police officer, or preventing an officer from carrying out his legal duties. Punishment: Exile, braindance, jail for 1D6+1 weeks.
Riot or Unlawful Assembly: A gathering with the purpose of destroying property, inciting violence, etc. Punishment: exile, jail for 1D6+1 days.
Trespassing: Entering private property of another. Jail for 1D6 days.

2010

END OF SECOND CENTRAL AMERICAN CONFLICT.

NETWORK 54 NOW CONTROLS 62% OF ALL MEDIA BROADCASTING IN U.S.

FOOD RIOTS IN DENVER KILL 52.

2011

CRYSTAL PALACE IS COMPLETED. ESA NOW HAS A PERMANENT HOLD IN HIGH ORBIT ZONE.

ESA/SOVIET MISSION REACHES MARS.

2012

BIOPLAQUE KILLS 1,700 IN CHICAGO.

CONCERT RIOT IN NIGHT CITY KILLS 18, WOUNDS 51. OLD ARASAKA COMPLEX GUTTED.

2013

NETWATCH ESTABLISHED BY JOINT U.S./EUROTHEATRE TREATY.

FIRST TRUE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE DEVELOPED AT MICROTECH'S SUNNYVALE, CA. FACILITY.

2014

I-G TRANSFORMATIONS REDESIGN THE NET.

"METAL WARS" BEGIN IN NIGHT CITY AS GANGS BATTLE FOR TURF.

2015

RISE OF THE CYBER-MERCENARIES; LITHUANIA HIRES CYBER-SOLDIERS TO REPEL INVASIONS BY LATVIAN NATIONALS.

2016

THIRD CORPORATE WAR IS FOUGHT IN THE NET, AS RIVAL CORPS ATTACK EACH OTHER'S DATA FORTRESSES.

2017

FIRST SELF-AWARE HUMAN CLONES CREATED.

2018

BRUSHFIRE WARS ERUPT IN EASTERN EUROPE.

ESA MISSION LAUNCHED TO JUPITER

2019

ORBITAL COLONY REVOLT AT L-3.

2020

THE PRESENT.

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the Government established a Uniform Civilian Justice Code in its place. Although the law is now administered by civilian governments, the Code is the guideline for all criminal procedure in the United States of 2020.

Plea bargaining (pleading guilty to a lesser charge to speed up a trial) has been eliminated. Probation is almost unheard of. The death penalty is standard for murder cases—there is a 3 month appeal process during which new evidence can be produced. Most felonies have mandatory prison terms of 5 to 10 years. Lesser crimes are covered by exile or personality adjustment.

Self defense is defined as "any instance in which the assailant can show just cause that his/her life, or the life of another party was threatened, in circumstances where a duly appointed officer of the law could not be summoned, or where it was impossible to restrain the injured party by any other means.

Theoretically, narcotics may not be possessed within the premises of the United States. However bioengineered plant diseases developed through the 1990's by the Drug Enforcement Agency wiped out 96% of the coca and opium plants in existence, making the point moot. The law also does not cover "designer drugs" such as endorphins, which are defined as medicinal.

Crime & Punishment

The punishment for criminal actions under the Uniform Justice Code of 1999 are swift, certain and draconian. The simplest is personality adjustment—a process which implants an aversion to committing the crime ever again. Adjustment has some nasty side effects, including exaggerated fears of situations and events related to the crime (such as a terror of money based on an anti-robery adjustment).

Exile implants are keyed to a transmission signal broadcast thru the city

phone Net. If the offender enters the city, the implant causes excruciating pain. The offender is effectively exiled from ever entering that specific city again. Repeat offenses in other cities simply cause additional city codes to be added to the implant. After enough crimes in enough cities, the offender will be unable to enter civilization again.

Prisons of the 2000's are horrendously overcrowded and deadly. After the riots of the 90's, prison authorities couldn't care less about rehabilitation—they are mostly interested in penning up society's "mad dogs" and keeping the streets clear. To cope with overcrowding, many prisons force inmates into "braindance"—they are placed in cryo tanks, wired to interface loop programs, and "shut down" for periods of two or three years. Continuous braindance creates a nightmare of unending, bland horror, making it the thing cons fear most.

The simplest method of punishment is still execution. Most states have a State Executioner who administers justice with one well placed .44 slug at point blank range. He is also empowered to hunt down escapees from Death Row.

Weapons

By 1997, even the most well-intentioned gun control statutes were buried under a wave of public protest as crime rates made America a siege state. Self-defense soon became an American lifestyle, and there was an explosive increase in light personal protection weapons.

By 1999, most gun control statutes involved 1) filling out a "carry application" allowing you to carry a concealed handgun; 2) waiting 4 days for an extensive background check and approval, which could be refused on the basis of a criminal record or history of mental illness; and 3) paying the \$25.00 fee and having a serial num-

ber laser etched into the butt of the gun. This number is cataloged with the ballistics firing pattern of your weapon at FBI/CIA Headquarters in Washington D.C.

The Federal Weapons Statute of 1999 states that if a gun with your ID number is used in the commission of a crime, you are liable for that crime, unless you have previously reported the weapon as lost or stolen, and have had this report filed with your local police agency.

Under the provisions of the Federal Weapons Statute, it is not legal to carry submachineguns and other fully automatic weapons—possession carries a stiff 5 to 7 year mandatory prison sentence. Not that this stops anyone.

While there's a certain style in using an old model sidearm like a Colt .357 or .45, the sensible cyberpunk knows that a modern pistol makes a good backup. Since the introduction of the Glock 17 automatic in the mid-1980's, most major handgun manufacturers now produce polymer resin pistols in a variety of calibers.

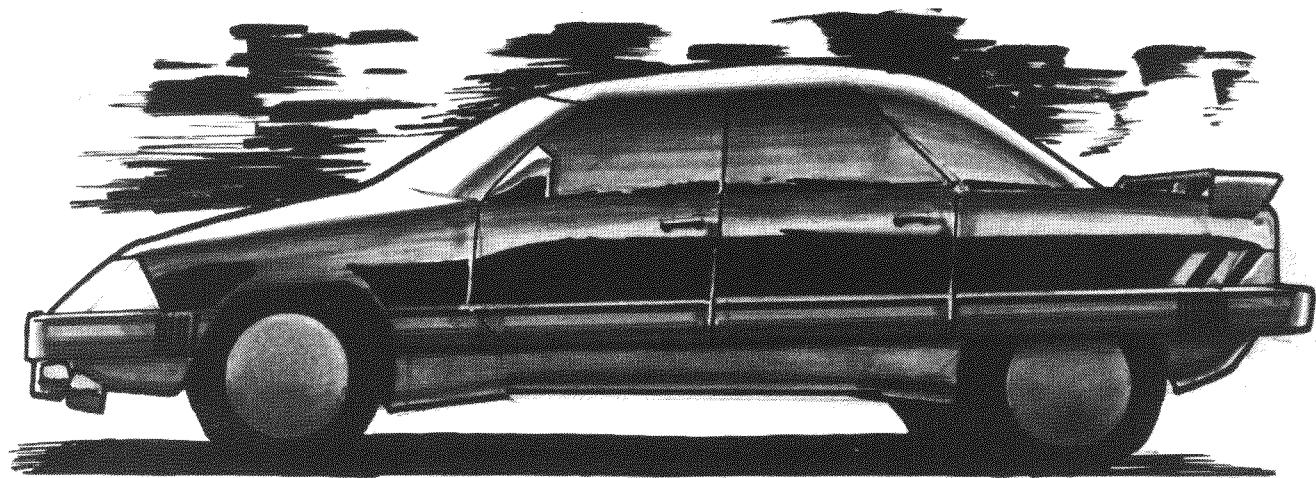
The most ubiquitous of these is the Federated Arms X-22 and X-9 series, a line of polymer plastic handguns. Manufactured in a variety of bright, designer colors, these so-called "Polymer One-shots" carry an easy to load 10 or 8 round clips of caseless ammunition, retail at \$150 to \$300, and are available in most sporting goods stores. They combine practicality, durability and style in potent little packages. The new *Cyberteen™* line includes airbrushed casings with colorful shapes and artwork molded right in—the perfect gift for the young consumer interested in personal defense.

Vehicles

Surprise, surprise. Contrary to expectations, the year 2000 has not yielded any staggering new developments in transportation. Years of economic strife

Toyo-Chrysler Omega

A typical medium sedan. Top speed about 90mph. Price around 10,000eb.



and civil unrest have discouraged research into new ways to travel—in fact, the very act of travel has become very restricted. Expect the inner city world of 2020 to be much like the 20th century—a network of crowded freeways, packed trains, and swarming airports.

Automobile

(Manufactured by Ford-Mazda, New American Motor, Toyo-Chrysler, Yugo-Marakovka, BMW, Mercedes, Porsche, etc.)

Powerplant: Alcohol or methane fueled internal combustion.

Groundspeed: 100 to 160mph.

Structural Damage Points: 50. Armored cars may have up to 30 SP of armor on all surfaces including windows.

There haven't been any major changes in automobiles since the 1980's—externally. Most cars are still basically a box on wheels, with smooth or hard edges. The Cyberpunk ethos being, "if it works, keep it till it doesn't work." In the cash poor environment of the 2000's, auto manufacturers have kept to conservative, unimaginative designs, so that by today, the average family car is little changed from it's practically antique Ford or Toyota roots.

With the extremely high price of petroleum, almost all cars of the 2000's are powered by tanks of liquified methane or meta-alcohol fuels such as "CHOOH-2." Electric cars are the exception, not the rule. Control systems are roughly like those of the late 20th century employing a few more digital displays and pushbutton controls.

The biggest change has come with the introduction of cybernetic control systems. These employ servos at the wheels, throttle and transmission, which are controlled by a modified cybermodem in the dash. The driver simply "studs" into the cybermodem and thinks the car through the motions. Cybervehicles are relatively uncommon—the upgrading price is steep, and the removal of external controls renders the vehicle useless to anyone but a cybered driver. So far, no major manufacturer has produced a purely cyber-driven automobile, although there are several after-market firms which will convert a standard car to cyber control.

Bell Boeing V-22B Osprey

Powerplant: Allison 937 Gas Turbine
Performance: Max speed=275 knots.
Range=600 miles

Structural Damage Points: 200 (Ospreys are not armored).

The Osprey mounts two large, wide propped engine nacelles at the ends of long, high-lift wings. The engines can be tilted from a forward facing direction to a vertical position, allowing the aircraft to take off and hover vertically. The wings can be folded back along the body for easy storage, making the Osprey a perfect vehicle to work from rooftop airpads and unprepared airstrips.

A revolutionary concept when it was unveiled in 1988, the Osprey tilt rotor aircraft has become a standard vehicle throughout the 2000's. The military version served with distinction throughout the riots of the 90's and the Central American Conflicts. Various civilian manufacturers (Cessna, Lear, Avionica) have licenced the original Boeing design and applied it to smaller commercial and business applications. The Lear Tiltjet even applies the Osprey principles to a tiltwinged turbojet version.

Ospreys can be found as commuter vehicles between city centers and hub airports, or as corporate aircraft operating from rooftop pads atop

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headquarters skyscrapers. Small versions such as Cessna's AE-800 Featherlite are popular light aircraft throughout the world, allowing flight operations in even the most remote and unprepared sites.

Light Rail Lev Train

Numerous Manufacturers

Powerplant: Electric third rail induction field.

Groundspeed: 200 mph.

Structural Damage Points: 80 per car of train.

Superconductor magnets have made it possible to build extremely cheap and durable "levitation trains." Riding on magnetic cushions, these "levs" have become one of the major transportation resources in the 2000's. Financed by Corporations or city governments, they are present in most major cities.

Levs are usually underground within the city limits, running on high pillars out in the suburbs. Usually one line, headed out to the Corporate suburbs, is sealed off and requires an entry code or pass to get into that station. Corporate lev stations are always clean, well lit, and well guarded by corporate security. City lev-stations are usually not up to these standards, although most cities run police patrols on the line to control crime and vandalism.

Lev-tickets are charged at a rate of 50¢ per station passed; a trip passing through three stations, for example, would cost 1.50eb. Tickets may be purchased from automatic ticket machines, using credit cards or cash. These machines are located in the stations themselves and in local convenience store outlets.

Bell F-152 Aerogyro

Powerplant: one Bell-Mazda 2600 rotary aircraft engine.

Performance: Max airspeed: 300 mph. Operational radius: 50 miles.

Structural Damage Points: 40

The riots of the late 90's required new tactics for operating in urban areas.

Chief among these was the introduction of light, one man helicopters or aerogyros. The F-152 is currently used by police units, Corporate defense teams, Solo assault operations teams and drug-running gangs. An unarmed version, known as the Bell-15, is a popular recreational vehicle.

McDonnell-Douglas AV-4

Tactical Urban Assault Vehicle

Powerplant: one Rolls-Royce Pegasus II Vectored Thrust Turbofan (21,180 lbs thrust)

Performance: Max airspeed: 350 mph. Operational radius: 400 miles.

Structural Damage Points: 100. Most AV-4s are armored to an SP of 40.

The nearest thing to a science fiction jet-car, the AV-4 Tac Vehicle was developed as a light assault aircraft capable of operation in close urban areas where rotary and tiltwing aircraft cannot penetrate. Short, bulbous, and equipped with only rudimentary maneuver wings, the AV-4 has the aerodynamic characteristics of a rock, relying on the brute force of its huge jet engine to keep it aloft (the original Pegasus engine lifted a 19,550 lb Harrier jumpjet, while a fully loaded AV-4 weighs about 8,600 lbs).

The AV-4 is used by police or corporate troops for urban assaults (using 2 belly mounted GAU-12U minigun pods). They are also used as emergency vehicles—specifically by the Trauma Team organizations—or as corporate vehicles for special deliveries and meetings.

AV-6 Combat Assault Aerodyne

Powerplant: two Rolls-Royce Pegasus IV Vectored Thrust Turbofans

Performance: Max airspeed: 480 mph. Operational radius: 600 miles.

Structural Damage Points: 100. Most AV-6s are armored to an SP of 40.

This is a high speed, fully combat capable version of the AV-4 aerodyne, with fans mounted in heavily armored side housings. AV-6's mount cyberas-

sisted chin turrets (20mm cannon), plus rockets and missiles. AV-6's are primarily used by military units.

AV-7 Personal Aerodyne

Powerplant: one Rolls-Royce Pegasus Mini-Turbofan.

Performance: Max airspeed: 250 mph. Operational radius: 400 miles.

Structural Damage Points: 50.

A recent development of the AV classes, these are small aerodyne vehicles designed to fulfill the light helicopter role. While the internal avionics and engines are usually designed by Douglas, a unique licensing arrangement permits other vehicle manufacturers to build their own body shells on the basic chassis. Manufacturers now include BMW, Mercedes, Toyota and Maserati.

Information Services

Letter

A stamp in 2020 costs 95 eurocents. There are usually two deliveries—once in the morning at 10.00 a.m. and once in the afternoon at 3.00 p.m. Letters are normally used for personal correspondence, or in regions where Fax machines are not available.

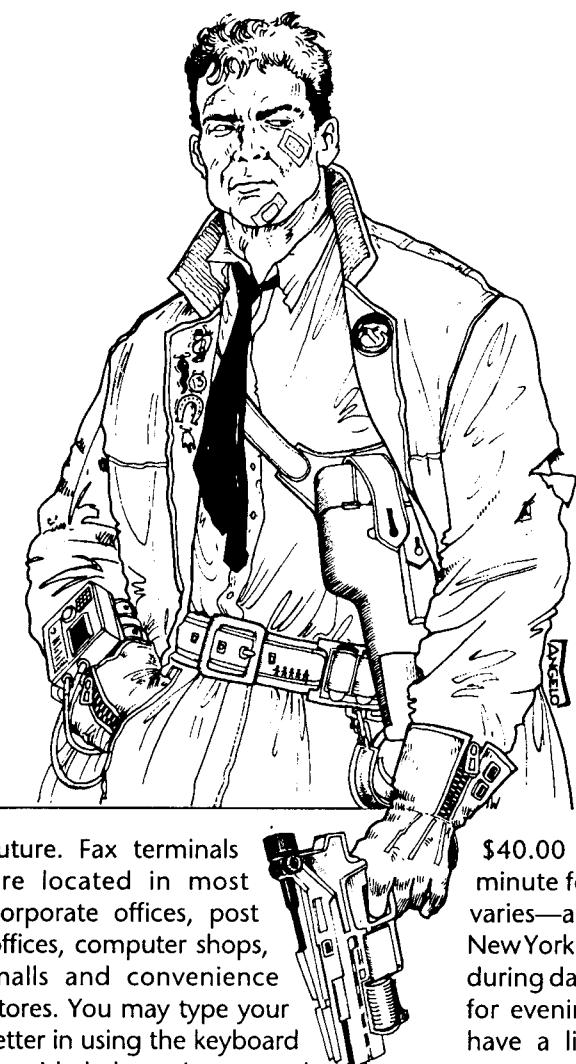
Data Term

The Data Term is a streetcorner computer terminal, built into a heavily armored concrete post. Data Terms have a direct Net link to a central Data Term service in their home city, and can provide maps of the area, information, news updates, phone numbers, current events and entertainment information and shopping services. Data Terms may also be used to jack into the Net. Rates are about 1eb per minute.

Most Data Terms are operated by a local DT service, which is often a subsidiary of a local newspaper or screamsheet publisher.

Fax

This is the letterwriting mode of the



future. Fax terminals are located in most corporate offices, post offices, computer shops, malls and convenience stores. You may type your letter in using the keyboard provided, have it scanned from your own laser disk, or use the built-in scanner to "read" any typed letter. The faxed copy is then transmitted by wire to a local post office in your destination area, where it is automatically typed off, inserted into an envelope, and delivered by letter carrier to the mailbox. Fax copies may also be sent directly to a Fax receiver at your destination. Fax letters costs 1eb per page.

Cellular Phones

The phone of the future is mobile and cordless, allowing the cyberpunk on the go to talk from his car, office, or even on the street. These "cellular" phones operate by using a series of stationary transceivers which pick up your phone signal and relay it into the regular phone Net. Calls can be made not only from within the city, but also

long distance (with a Long Distance service of your choice) all over the world and even into orbit.

Cellular phones come in a variety of brands and styles, although most are about the size of a hand held walky-talky. They operate on rechargeable batteries good for about 12 hours, recharging from a wall socket in 6 hours. Brand names include Magnavox, NEC, Okidata, GE and Radio Shack. Prices range from \$400.00 for an inexpensive model, to \$3,000.00 for models with multiple lines, built in hold-buttons and memory-autodial.

Like other phones, you must pay a monthly service charge. Baseline rates are \$40.00 per month plus 20¢ per minute for local calls. Long Distance varies—a call from Los Angeles to New York might cost \$2.00 per minute during daylight business hours, \$1.50 for evening hours. Cell phones also have a limit on how far they can operate outside of the city limits; about 20 miles.

Screamsheets

To stay competitive with television, most newspapers now use Fax technology. Entire pages are typeset and laid out by computer, photos scanned into places, and the entire newspaper reduced to digital code. This code is transmitted to hundreds of newspaper boxes all over the area. The newsboxes reassemble the code and print the paper (using high speed xerography) on the spot. The result is a slick, flimsy newspaper known in streetslang as a screamsheet.

Screamsheets have many advantages over previous newspapers. You can dial the newsbox to print only the sections of the paper you want, paying 1¢ per page printed. New edi-

tions can be compiled in hours, allowing the public to keep abreast of a story even as it happens (although most screamsheets are updated at 6:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.).

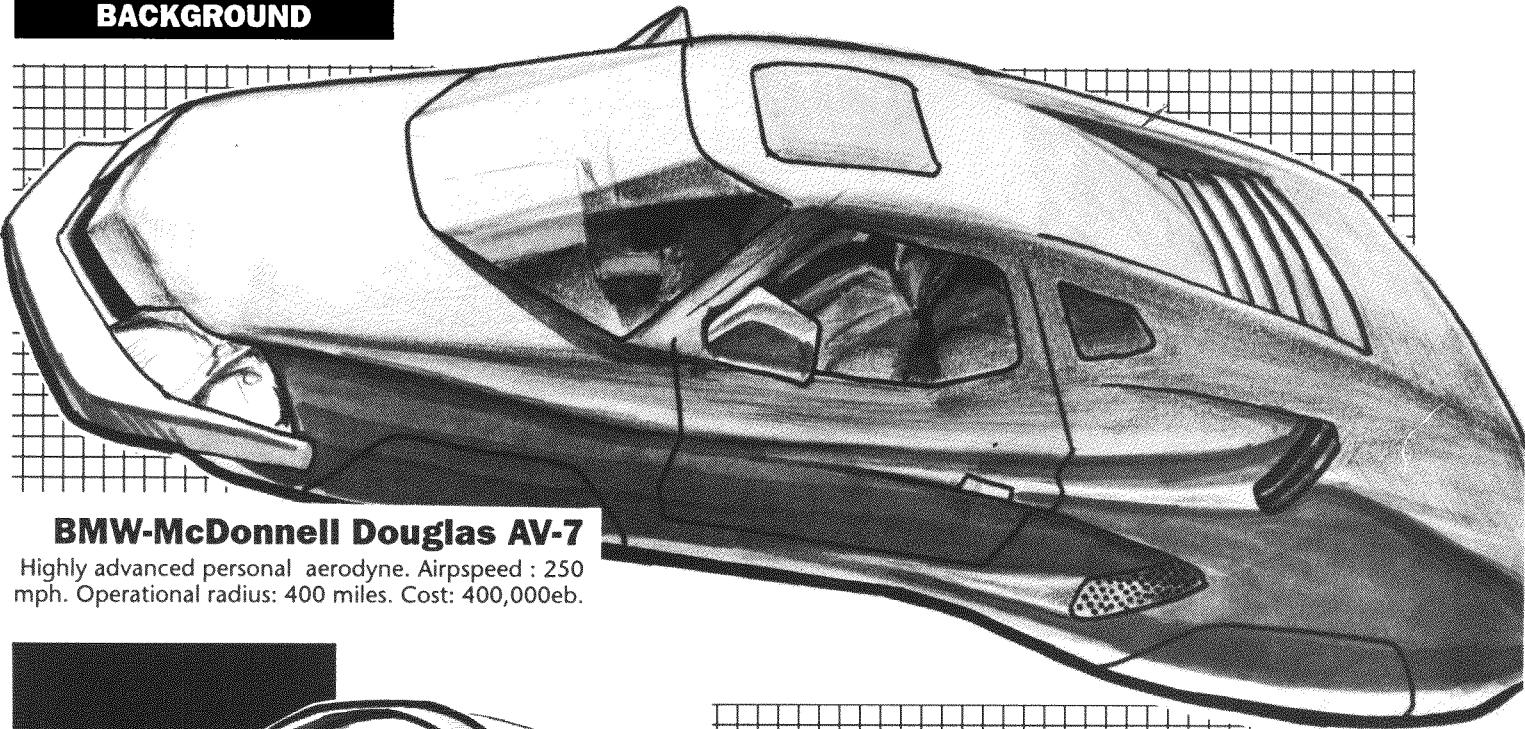
Television & Radio

An all pervasive force in 2020, television has moved into the realm of total entertainment. One hundred and eighty one channels now crowd the airwaves, as well as various cable and subscriber channels. These cover everything including sports, news, music video, old movies, foreign shows, religious programming, debate, erotic and adult programming, business news and weather. In addition, there are at least 200,000 radio stations throughout the Western world.

In the Euro and Asian theaters, most programming is state-controlled; the BBC in Great Britain, and NGK TV in Japan, for example. In the United States, three privately owned entertainment networks predominate: 21st Century Broadcasting Network (CBN), World Broadcasting Network (WBN) and Network News 54. These networks are the broadcast divisions of three massive entertainment conglomerates, each producing records, tapes, videos, movies and books for the masses. The product is bland, mindless, and caters to the lowest possible denominator.

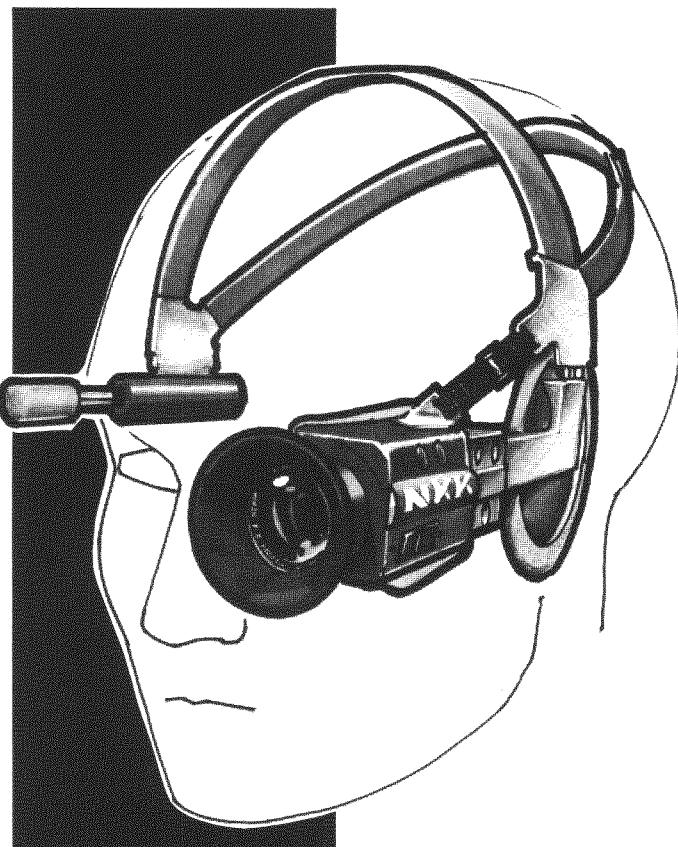
In addition to network programming, there are satellite feeds, featuring programming from around the world. There are also a large number of "pirate" TV stations, operating out of hidden stations and through cable and satellite patchups. These are often a major source of news and information untainted by corporate and government interference.

In addition to the now standard high definition flatscreen TV, experimental (and expensive; up to 10,000.00 per set) holographic TV systems are now available.



BMW-McDonnell Douglas AV-7

Highly advanced personal aerodyne. Airspeed : 250 mph. Operational radius: 400 miles. Cost: 400,000eb.

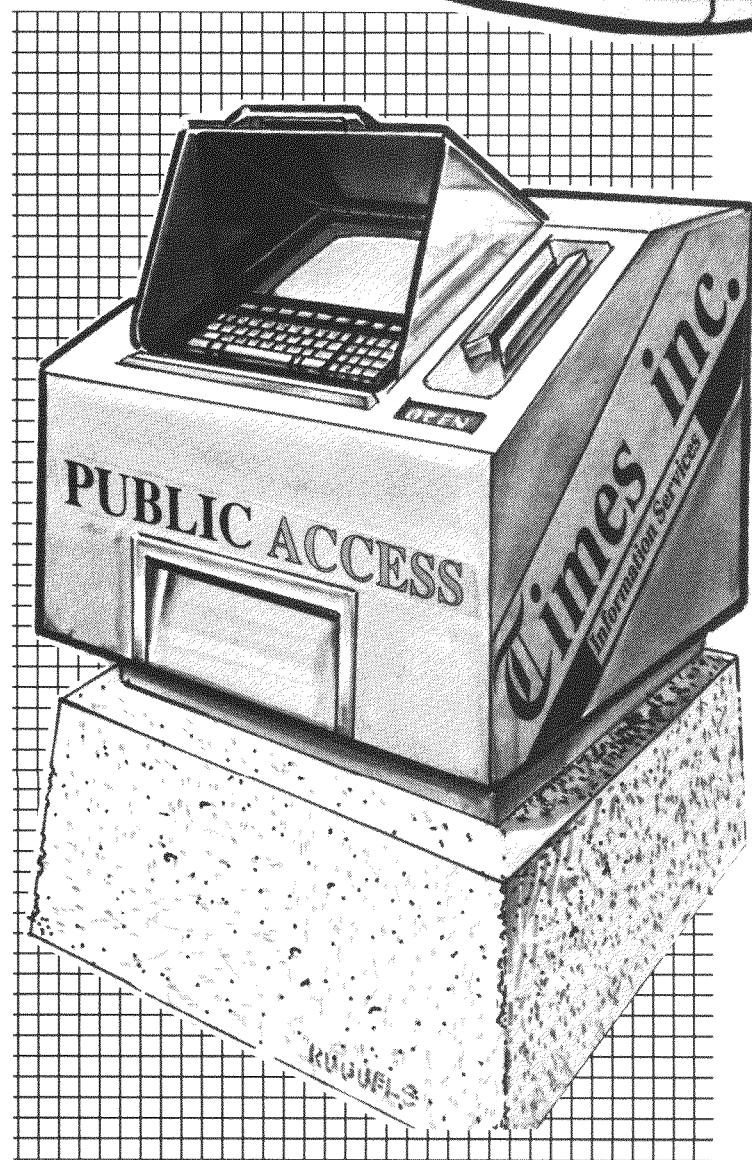


Zetatech Hi-Profile® VideoCam

A favorite design used by Medias for mobile assignments. Pickup mike range is 200 feet. Cellular uplink allows instant transmission to Network broadcast studio. Cost is 875eb.

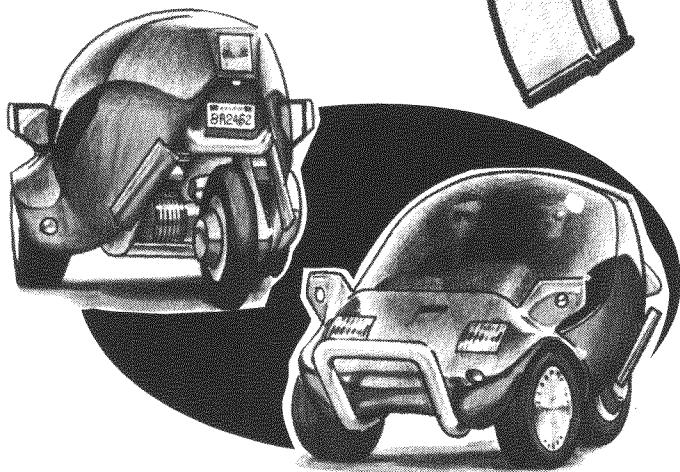
Dataterm

Providing news, information, weather reports, entertainment news. Data Terms may also be used to access the Net and to make phone calls. 1eb per minute use.



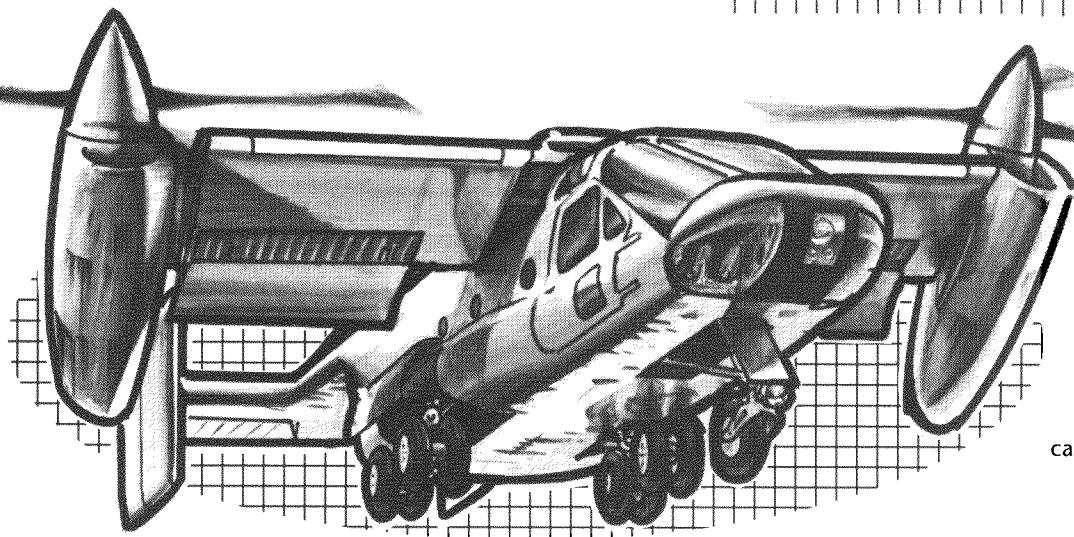
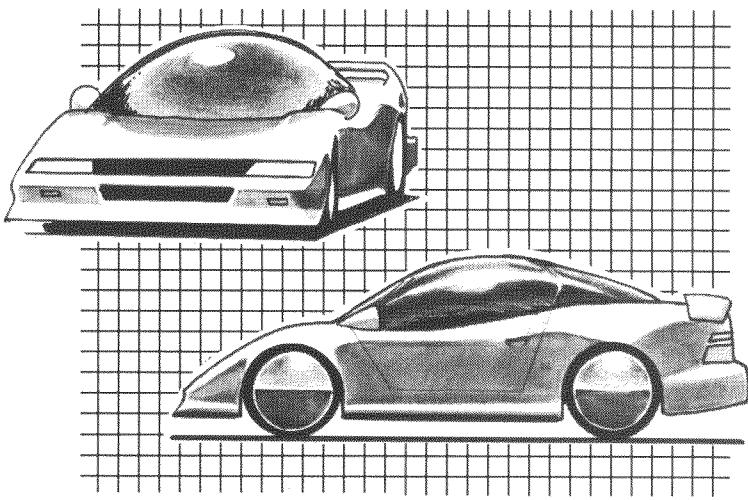
AKR-20 Medium Assault Rifle

Common assault rifle for battlefield combat. 500 eb.



Honda Metrocar

Common type of city car, powered by CHOOH². Top speed about 40mph. About 2000eb.

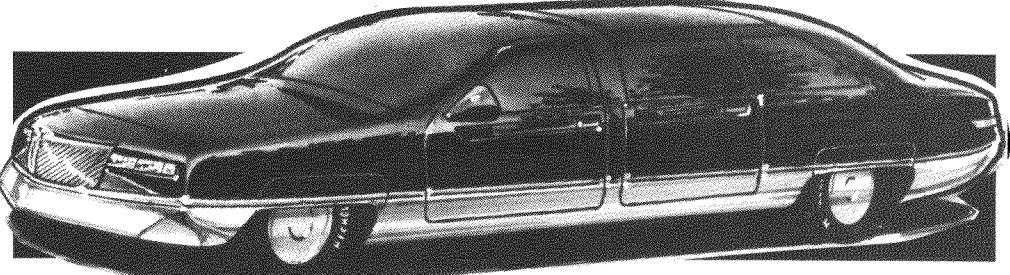


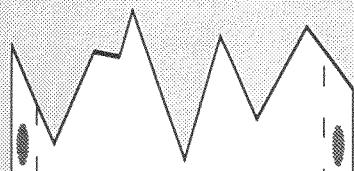
Bell-Boeing V-22F Osprey

Heavy lift version of the original tilt-rotor craft, capable of airlifting large cargos to isolated areas. Cost 750,000 eb.

Ford-Mazda Luxus 14

Cybercontrolled luxury car, favored by many high level Corporates execs. About 40,000 eb.

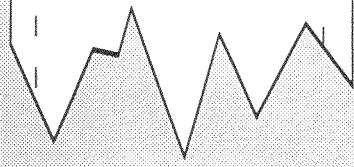




"Life in 2020 isn't just all guns and drugs. If it was, we woulda named the game Dungeons & Drug Dealers."

The best Cyberpunk games are a combination of doomed romance, fast action, glittering parties, mean streets and quixotic quests to do the right thing against all odds. It's a little like Casablanca with cyberware..."

—Maximum Mike



SECTION

12 RUNNING CYBERPUNK

Assorted tips, clues, good stuff and tricks of the Cyberpunk genre

So how do I run this game?

Glad you asked. *Cyberpunk* is a challenge for even an experienced Referee, in that you must create the right atmosphere of grunginess, sleek technology and pervasive paranoia throughout your entire game. The *Cyberpunk* environment is almost always exclusively urban. Its landscape is a maze of towering skyscrapers, burned out ruins, dingy tenements and dangerous alleyways. In short, any major city in the world at about 2:30 in the morning when the lowlives come out in force.

The Urban Environment

The urban environment is critical to your *Cyberpunk* world. Whether you use our *Night City* or create your own, remember that your setting has to have all the right elements. There should be garbage-strewn alleyways. There should be bodies lying in the gutters. There should be wild-eyed lunatics, staggering through pre-dawn streets, muttering darkly and clutching sharp knives. Taxis won't stop in the combat zones. There are firefights at the streetcorner as the local gangs slug it out. Players should find their apartments regularly broken into, their cars vandalized, their property stolen. Crossing town should be like crossing a battlefield, filled with looters, riots, crazies and muggers.

And it always rains. Every day should be grim, gloomy and overcast. The stars never come out. The sun never shines. There are no singing birds, no laughing children. (The last bird died in 2008 and the kids are grown in vats.) The ozone layer decayed, the greenhouse effect took over, the sky is full of hydrocarbons and the ocean full of sludge. Nice place.*

* Okay, we're exaggerating. But not much.

Trust No One. Keep your...er..Minami 10 Handy

Paranoia is important in a *Cyberpunk* run. Players shouldn't be able to tell who are the good guys and who are the bad just by looking at them. Choices between sides should be ambiguous—there should be no clear cut sense of good and evil, much like real life. Sworn enemies may be thrown together without notice or preparation. Heroes may have to do something illegal or distasteful to accomplish something good; villians may have to do a little good once in a while. It's the breaks.

Your world should have staggering contrasts. In the glittering citadels of the rich, there should be fine food, expensive vices, and beautiful scenery. On the Street, things should be cold, hungry and desperate. There's no middle ground between the haves and have nots. It's all or nothing.

Know The World

First trick to running *Cyberpunk*: **Immerse yourself in the genre.** We've given you a start with the story *Never Fade Away*—it should give you the style of speech, the urban feel, and the hard-edged realities of the *Cyberpunk* world. But you should also hit the local video-store, the library and the record shops for source material. We've included a bibliography of places to start in the sidebar.

Play For Keeps

Second trick to running *Cyberpunk*: **Play hard and fast.** You should not be afraid to kill off player characters. You should constantly be getting them into fights, traps, betrayals and other soap operas. There should be no one they can trust entirely, no



place that's absolutely safe. Never let 'em rest. This doesn't mean you shouldn't play fair. But you should always play for keeps. If they cache weapons somewhere, steal them. If they stop for a rest, mug them. If they can't handle the pressure, they shouldn't be playing Cyberpunk. Send them back to that nice role-playing game with the happy elves and the singing birds. We've given you some great encounter tables which we suggest you use everytime the action drags (in *Friday Night Firefight*).

Set the Mood

Third trick to running Cyberpunk: Atmosphere. Get out your heaviest rock tapes and play them during your run. Encourage your players to wear leather and mirrorshades. Adopt the slang and invent your own. Replace all the lights in your room with dim blue bulbs. This is the dark future here; and it can't be accurately portrayed in a brightly lit room with milk and cookies on the table.

Teamwork; The More the Bloodier

Fourth and last trick to running Cyberpunk: Teams. You'll notice—Cyberpunk groups are not social. The players will have no reason to trust anyone, and the conventional reasons (stop evil, kill monsters) for an adventuring party won't work. A bar isn't a place to meet new adventurers—it's a place to scope out potential victims. Parties are more likely to kill each other in a firefight than divide the spoils fairly.

For this reason, you'll need a more solid "hook" on which to hang a Cyberpunk adventure. Our hook is the team. A team is a group of people who are already thrown together by Fate in some way which forces them to co-operate. They don't have to like each other, but they have to work together. Besides giving the party a spring-board from which to work, the team also makes the adventure easier to run. Players

A CYBERPUNK BIBLIOGRAPHY

Just a few of the most well known books in the cyberpunk genre:

William Gibson
Neuromancer
Count Zero
Mona Lisa Overdrive
Burning Chrome

Norman Spinrad
Little Heroes

John G. Batancourt
Johnny Zed

Joan D. Vinge
Psiion
Catspaw

Mick Farren
Vickers

Walter Jon Williams
Hardwired
Voice of the Whirlwind
Angel Station

Bruce Sterling
The Artificial Kid
Mirrorshades: The Cyberpunk Anthology
Islands in the Net

John Brunner
Shockwave Rider

George Alec Effinger
When Gravity Fails
A Fire in the Sun

Steve Barnes
Streetlethal
Gorgon Child

John Shirley
Eclipse
Eclipse Penumbra

Rudy Rucker
Software
Wetware

RUNNING CYBERPUNK

A CYBERPUNK FILMOGRAPHY

Just in case you ran out of books...

Blade Runner

Max Headroom

Terminator 1 & 2

Alien/Aliens

Liquid Sky

Overdrawn at the Memory Bank

Mad Max

The Road Warrior

Thunderdome

Cyborg

Total Recall

Robocop 1 & 2

can be given assignments from a "higher power", or the entire group can be faced with a problem which requires co-operation to solve. The group stays together or it dies. Simple.

We've given you a number of Teams which might naturally evolve in the *Cyberpunk* world. Each proposes a good mix of character roles and offers many ways in which all the players can become equally involved.

Corporate Teams: Corporate teams are groups that are oriented around a specific corporation, working together to accomplish the company's goals. The main base of operations is the corporation's offices or security areas. A good corporate team might consist of one or more Corps (an executive and an assistant), a Netrunner (who runs the team's intrusion and computer systems), a Fixer (who deals with the team's Street contacts), a Tech (either medical or mechanical), and two to three Solos (who handle the combat).

Bands: Bands are any group of Rockerboys who have gotten together to play music. The band travels from place to place, getting into trouble at each new gig, holding concerts and raising hell. The main base of operations can be a practice hall, a club, or a road bus. There may be any number of Rockers in the band itself (although three to four is considered best). In addition, there will be at least one Fixer (who acts as manager), a possible Techie (to handle equipment needs), and several Solos (who are both bodyguards and roadies). Various other slots such as groupies and tour personnel can be Nomads, Corporates (playing record execs), and Medias (as rock-reporters or reviewers).

Trauma Teams: Trauma Teams are groups of licensed paramedics who patrol the city looking for accident victims. They operate from an AV-4 Urban Assault Vehicle, redesigned into an ambulance configuration and armed with a belly mounted minigun. A typical Trauma Team would include a driver (Corporate, Fixer or Solo, although Nomad is best), one or more Medtechies, and two or more Solos acting as "security". The team may also have a Dispatcher (Corp or Fixer) in charge of sending them on their missions. A Media might also tag along with the team, writing stories about their adventures.

Mercenaries: Mercs are often hired throughout the *Cyberpunk* world. A typical merc group could include at least one Fixer (to handle

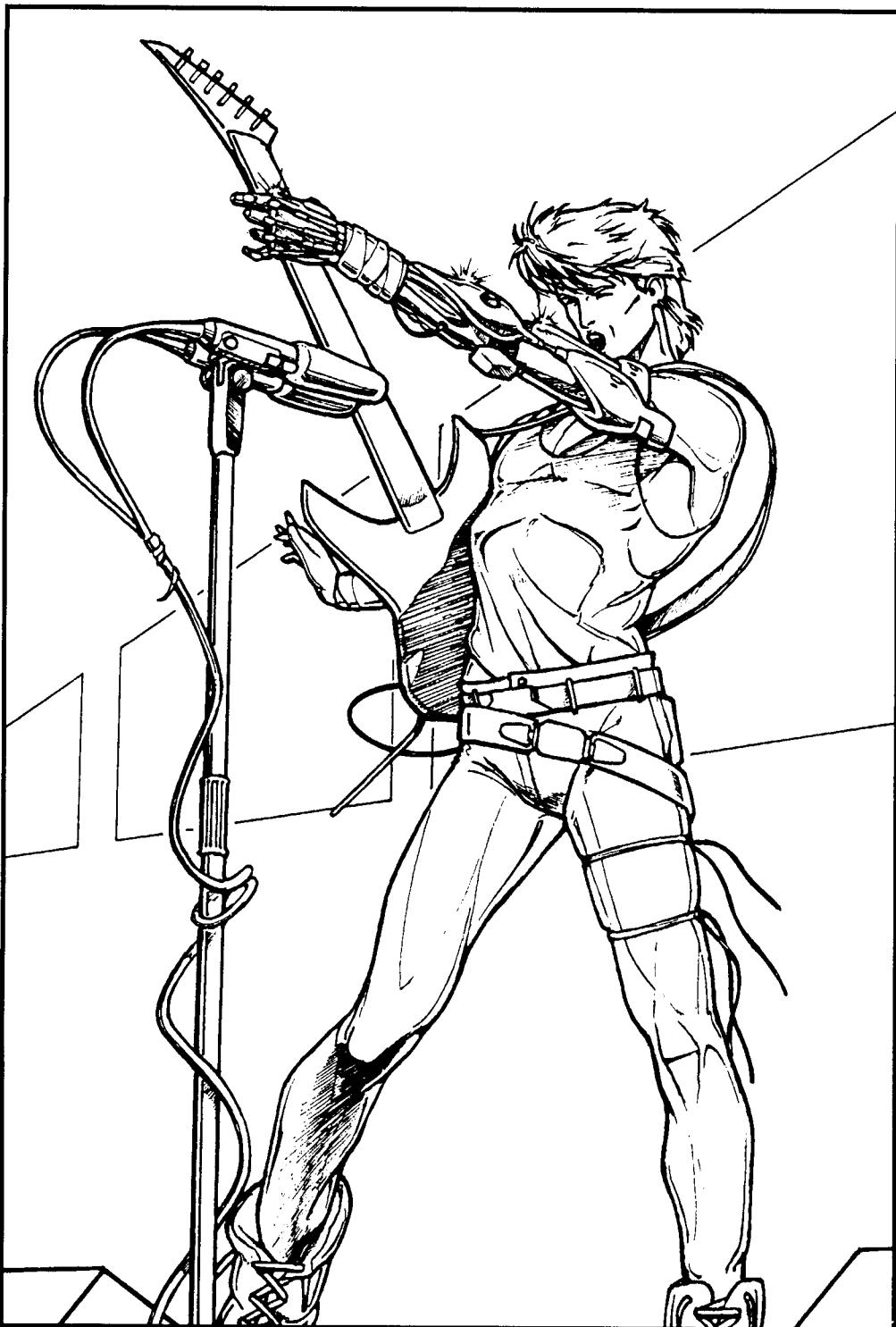
contracts), one Netrunner (to handle security systems, computer assault, etc.), one Techie (for weapons), one Medtechie (for wounded), and any combination of Solos or Nomads (as grunt soldiers). It wouldn't be out of line to have a Media there, writing as a war correspondent. A merc group could operate out of a club, a bar, or a well-hidden paramilitary base camp.

Gangs: Gangs and countergangs are usually the enemy in *Cyberpunk*. But why not turn the tables? Gangs can also be created for positive purposes—neighborhood defense, to stop other more violent gangs, or to resist a major invasion by Government or the Corps. In this context, you could look at Robin Hood or the WWII Resistance as gangs. A typical Gang would have lots of Solos, Nomads and Fixers. There might be a Medtechie or Techie around, and possibly even a Corporate if the gang is one of those controlled by a covert organization. A Media could be covering the gang from the Street angle. Gangs operate out of clubs, bars and deserted buildings.

Nomad Packs: Nomad packs are natural teams—they are already together in one group, and everyone knows each other. A good Nomad pack could include a few Fixers (to handle in-town negotiations), a Netrunner (who handles the pack's intelligence work), a mixture of Techies and Medtechies, and any number of Nomads and Solos. The pack operates from the Caravan—an assemblage of RV's, trailers, buses and cars moving across the blasted landscape of freeway America. The pack members could travel with the main caravan, or as scouts traveling ahead in their own vehicles.

Cops: The Cop team operates out of a seedy, heavily-fortified police station. They might include a few Fixers on the Vice Squad, a Netrunner on Counter Intelligence, a Captain (Corporate) who handles connections with the City Government, and a large number of grunt Cops. Don't forget a few maddened Solos on the Psycho Squad. Cop teams are better than most, as they allow the Referee to break the team into smaller groups of "partners" if needed. A Media might also choose to follow the Cop team, looking for hot stories on the crime beat.

Media Teams: Media teams go anywhere, do anything to get the story. A Media team can operate out of a TV or radio station, a newspaper office, or even a major network news bureau. A good Media team might include two or three Medias (as hard-hitting reporters), a Netrunner (running communications, information gathering, and computer snooping), a



Techie for the equipment, and a couple Solos or Nomads to provide muscle and protection. A good newsroom also will have at least one harried Corporate who has to cover the team with the bosses upstairs.

Don't Give Up Your Day Job

Any one of these Teams can fit a character role that isn't described. A low-level Rocker-

boy could moonlight as a Trauma Teamer while waiting for that big score. A Netrunner might do a little time with a Corporate team, while sneaking into the Company mainframe at night. A Nomad might do almost anything to earn money while his pack is in town. In these cases, the main character role should be treated as an interest, which may become more important to the team as time passes.

*"Sixteen and
sixteen hundred/
Wired with the
max processor
edge.
Never die and
never breaking/
Throw my self
over the ledge."*

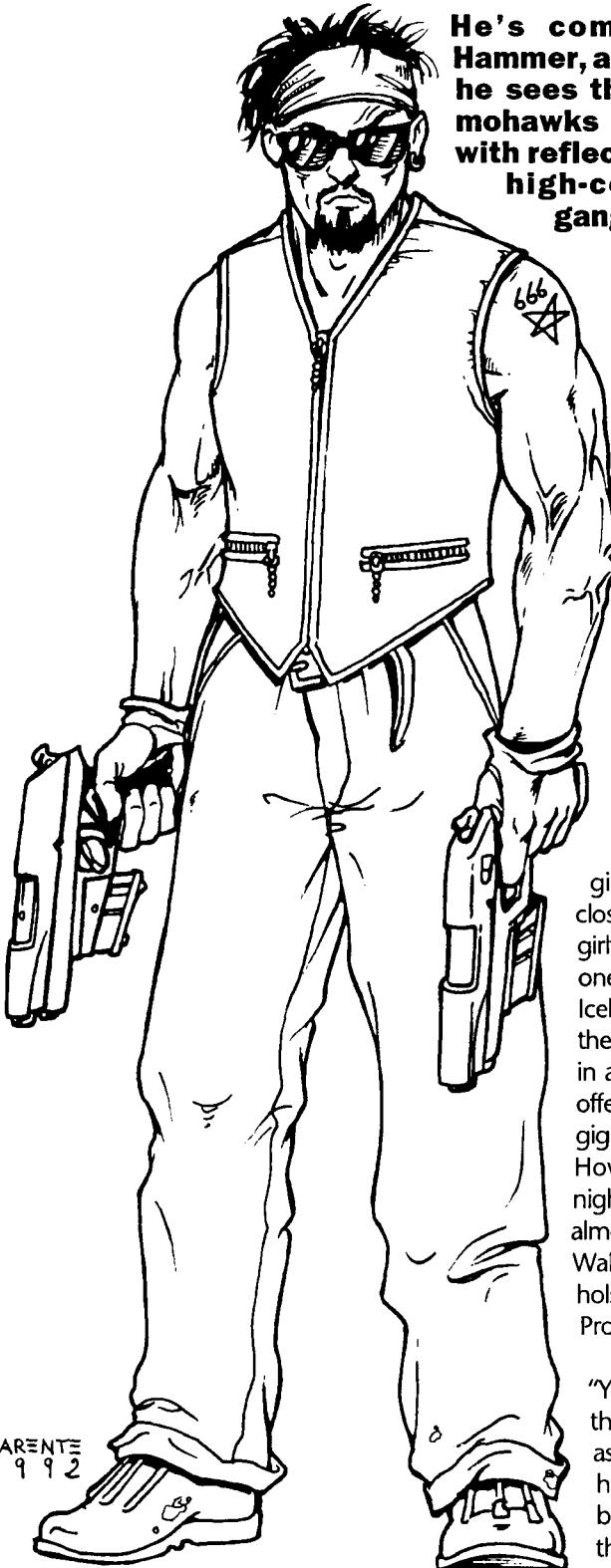
*Have you ever
seen the
sunlight/
Screaming fast
and mean and
low?
Get your self
illuminated/
Get yourself that
cyber glow.*

*Made of steel
and hard
emotion/
Give my love
and face the
day/
In your face and
here to party.
Never gonna
fade away"*

—Johnny Silverhand
Never Fade Away

SECTION

13 NEVER FADE AWAY



He's coming out of the Hammer, about midnight, and he sees them. Three punks, mohawks bright and bristly with reflected neon, wearing high-collared jackets; gang colors.

"Yo! Rockerboy!" one of them yells, "Good show! Good noise!" Johnny Silverhand waves absently. Fans. They're right; the gig was good. He'd rarely been better. But the show's over.

They start walking towards him. One waves a bottle; the light strikes oily yellow tequila sloshing to and fro. "Yo, Silver-rocker!" he says. The smaller one, with the face scarred in African tribal tattoos. "Join us! Share some! Fair price for a good gig, eh?" The distance is closing; Johnny steers Alt, his girlfriend, to his bad side. The one without the Hand. "Hey, Icebrothers," he says, noting the gang's colors and speaking in a temporizing tone. "Your offer's solid, but it's been a long gig. I'm nearly flatlined as it is. How 'bout a replay, next night?" By that time, they're almost on him. He lets the 9mm Walther drop from the spring holster, settling into the Hand. Probably nothing, he thinks.

"Yeah. Replay next night!" the big one says enthusiastically, and that's when they hit him. This fast, they're a blur. The Walther booms in the close confines of the

alley; whines as spent rounds ricochet off into nowhere. There is a metallic "snick" as the smaller punk brings up his arm—light reflects off the fistfull of razors that pretends to be a hand; then an excruciating impact lifts Johnny off the ground. Blood sprays over wet concrete. Silverhand hits with a bone wrenching impact. His pale eyes stare blankly at the sky. Alt's terrified screams recede swiftly into the dark. Sixty to zero in eight seconds flat.

Johnny comes to. There's something like broken glass in his guts. Red fire blots out the cool blue neon. He rolls over in a pool of something greasy. Blood. His.

A cat topples off the dumpster, picking a cautious pattern around his body. No fool, this cat. A survivor. Not going to get involved. Its eyes are tiny red LEDs moving up alley; Johnny watches it. Smug bastard, he thinks. And closes his eyes.

Behind his eyelids, red digitals feebly clock out his remaining moments. Bio-clock running down. Cars whispering past on the filthy, rain-wet street beyond. A Trauma Team ambulance in the distance, siren screaming. But not for him. He's checking out.

He balls the Hand that is his trademark into a chromed fist, servos clicking in one by one.

He stares blankly up at the flat black ceiling of the city. Overhead, there's the shimmer of distant heat lightning interacting with the pink actinic glow of the City lights. The stars look painted in. A VTOL passes overhead, giant propblades thrashing the night. Johnny tries reaching up to it. He can see the Hand etched against the sky; slick, superchrome winking back at him. He balls the Hand that is his trademark into a

chromed fist, servos clicking in one by one. He thrusts it into the gaping belly wound, gasping at the shocking pain. Somehow, he gets to his feet; staggers to the alleyway. He leans his feverish face against the cool, wet bricks. He makes a decision. He's not going to die. *They're* going to die. Closing his eyes, he pitches forward into the streak of passing traffic blur.

Something stops him. Hands firmly grapple him, holding him up. Silverhand has just enough strength to open his eyes. There's a face looking intently at him, thin, bearded. "Lord Almighty", the face says. "They really *did* you, didn't they?"

Fade to black.

TRAUMA WARD

Something is screaming when Johnny wakes up. Fine. Just as long as it isn't him. He must have missed the ambulance ride to the hospital, but here in the trauma ward he can hear the sound of jet engines. That's the screaming. It mounts higher and higher, while the ward fills with warm air and the smell of ozone. From his stretcher, he can see the bulky AV-4 vehicle spin on its fans and hurtle upwards. The din dies down and he can hear screaming for real all around him; casualties of the regular firefights around the City.

The doctor puts him back together. The same doctor who did his transparent Kiroshi eyes; his trademark silver hand. The same doctor who "plugged" him for interface and installed the software chips in the back of his skull. Johnny considers taking out a service contract.

Microsurgical waldoes ripcut through the perforated guts, swabbing, tying off, prep-ping. The doctor stitches in three feet of glistening wet, tank-grown intestine; plugs the punch holes with synthetic skin and muscle. Airhypoes inject the area with speeddrugs, fasthealers, endorphins and antibacterials. Microscopic stitches hum off the serrated teeth of a mini-closer,

bonding flesh together almost as well as the original. In a month or two, there won't even be a scar. Let's hear it for newtech.

The doctor's hands are quick and sure. He has done this a thousand times. He has a German accent. "Ach...Johnny..Johnny" he says, over and over as he works. Over his head, the sterilizer lamps glitter like an insect's multifaceted eyes. "Johnny...When are you going to give this up?" says the doctor.

When it ends, thinks Silverhand, from the fog of the dorphs and general anesthetics. "Johnny," says the doctor sadly. Silverhand is a second son to him. His first son was Johnny's best friend. His first son was killed in an inter-corporate war eight years ago. No man should lose more than one son in a lifetime.

Thanks, thinks Johnny. I owe you one, again.

His alleyway benefactor is named Thompson; a thin, reedy type, wearing an armor jack trenchcoat three sizes too large. He packs no visible hardware. But a minicam mount straddles his head like an oversized headphone; a mike loops in front of his mouth, the camera itself coming around the right side of his skull and hardwiring into a startlingly bright green cyberoptic. He's a Media; a one man team of cameraman and reporter, direct feeding to some mediacorp downline. "Hey, Rocker", he says, leaning over the table as Silverhand recovers under the sterilizer beams.

"Ready for a little vengeance?"

THE NAMING OF NAMES

Johnny pulls on a red T-shirt. The shirt has the logo of his last band, *Samurai*. The shirt drags over the freshly stapled wound; hangs up on the bandages. He curses in Japanese. He pulls an armor jacket over his shoulders.

ABOUT THE STORY

Never Fade Away is the story of twenty four hours in the life of Johnny Silverhand, a famous Rockerboy suddenly catapulted into a deadly game of cat and mouse with a sinister Corporate foe. As the cyberpunk genre is mostly literary, it seems fitting we introduce you to Cyberpunk roleplaying the same way.

Never Fade Away is primarily a story; but we've made it easy to run as an adventure as well. In these sidebars, you'll find notes on key characters, maps of important locations, data on weapons and combat, and ideas for using the story as a springboard to the adventure.

We suggest you begin your players as characters in the upcoming scene in the *Atlantis*, hired by Johnny to help him get his girlfriend Alt back. Or your players may want to play one of the NPCs from the story.



JOHNNY SILVERHAND

Ex-Central American vet, now Rockerboy, Johnny is the leader of a top band called *Samurai*. He's known for his musical skill, his compelling songs, and a history of trashed relationships.

Stats

INT 7 REF 8 CL 8
MA 7 BODY 7

Cybernetics

Chromed cyberarm with recorder. Sandevistan boost. Two cyberoptics with IR, Low Lite, Enhancement.

Skills

Charismatic Leader +10, Handgun +6, Rifle +4, Guitar +9, Perform +7, Notice +6, Seduction +8.

Possessions

Heavy Armor Jacket, Light Helmet. H&K MPK-11, Arasaka Rapid Assault.

He pulls the autoshotgun out of his battered bedroom dresser, checking the load and weight. He slips it carefully into the worn under-arm holster, under the jacket. He stuffs shiriken into pockets on the outside of the jacket. He picks up the heavy H & K smartgun and slides it into his back holster. There is a fury behind glittering pale eyes.

"So," he says. "Tell me."

Thompson leans back into the wall, body bracing against Johnny's intensity. He grins; takes a slug of Silverhand's tequila. "They didn't want you. They wanted her. She's an extraction. Business as usual."

Johnny's eyes are blank. "No surprise", he comments shortly. He gathers up a ragged handful of shells and begins to stuff-load the H&K's spare clip. Only the trembling of his hand—the meat hand—betrays any emotion. "So why'd they do me?" he asks.

"I let you take it, because I knew it would take at least five minutes for you to bleed yourself dry..."

"You was home", grins Thompson. It's an old line. They both smile like friendly sharks. Thompson stops smiling. "They wanted you flatlined so it'd look like a gang job. Boostergang sees the high and mighty Mister John Silverhand out strolling with his input; decides to slash him a bit. You go down, they grab her; they're gone like vapor. Real convenient when the cops find her body in an alley 'bout a week later. They'll have motives—lots of ugly motives, but they'll be those of high-powered boosters, not pros."

"Pros." Silverhand finishes loading the second clip. He stuffs the remaining shells in the armorjack's pockets. You can never have enough ammo.

"Yeah, pros," repeats Thompson. "You got shredded for fine, bro. At least a clean ten thousand Eurobucks of hardware on those boys. The speed they hit you with took maybe a seventy percent reflex boost, and

those were custom rippers. The type that fold out along the fists. That sort of hardware isn't something you pick up on the Street."

"You saw them on me?"

Thompson's eyes are cold, slate-like. You could write anything you wanted in them. "Get real," he grates. "These were pros. If I'd jumped in, we'd both be dead." The eyes appraise him. "You've been off the Street too long, Rocker. You think everyone has a nice agent, a couple Solos covering their butts, and a comfy apartment like this somewhere. I let you take it, because I knew it would take at least five minutes for you to bleed yourself dry. I waited for them to move on, then used my Trauma Card." There is a longish silence. Then, "Look, Rocker. You want to guilt-loop, or you want to get your girl back?"

"So name names," says Johnny. He sits down on the edge of the bed, favoring his stapled side. He reaches out for the tequila and takes a slug.

"Good news/bad news," says Thompson. He's unlimbered the cybercam unit from around his head and set it down on the table between them—the only indication of hardware is the silvermounted skull plug drilled through his right temple. The cam's cellular link through the NET is off. Thompson says, "Good news is, it isn't one of the really big guys, like Eurobusiness Machines. "Fair enough," says Silverhand, taking another swig from the bottle.

"Bad news is, it's Arasaka."

"Jesus H. Christ!" explodes Johnny. The Hand, resting on the edge of the table, convulses. There's a rending noise and splinters fly in all directions.

"Your input was playing with hotdeck materials, rocker. You know she ran for ITS, right?"

"Yeah. So you gotta work somewhere. Alt didn't talk much about her work."

"True. But your Alt was ITS's pet netrunner. She moved info up and down the NET and

handled their security as well. She made a lot of classy software just for them." Long pause. "She built *Soulkiller*, you know. Or maybe you didn't. Like you said, she didn't talk much about her work."

Johnny sits back on the couch, the bottle halfway to his lips. Even the normally disconnected Silverhand has heard of *Soulkiller*, the legendary black program that sucks the very soul from its Netrunner victims. *Soulkiller*. What a joke. *Soulkiller* is a 2,000,000 meg AI superroutine that can track an intruding Netrunner's cyberlink faster than a boostergang snorts drugs. It tears out the cyberpirate's brain with brutal force, recreating it in a frozen storage matrix inside the mainframe. The word is on the Street that *Soulkiller* may be the closest thing to Hell on earth, and in these days, that's saying a lot.

And Alt made that? Johnny bites down a momentary wave of revulsion, superimposed over Alt's big green eyes, tousled mane of hair. "No wonder she didn't talk about her work," he says finally.

"I was following her, Rocker," says Thompson. "Word's out that Arasaka is working on its own version of *Soulkiller*. Something that can walk the NET freely, getting upclose and personal with people Arasaka doesn't like."

"A black program assassin for a security company?" Johnny is up and pacing now. He knows where this is going, and he doesn't like it.

"You probably believe in Santa Claus too," says Thompson, reclaiming the dregs of the bottle. "Your Alt is the missing link. I figured they'd have to recruit her sooner or later, whether free or forced. *Soulkiller*'s main programming is buried in her head somewhere. So I followed her."

"Thanks for the concern."

"You don't get it, Rockerboy. I want Arasaka. I want them bad. I'll put anyone and anything on the line to get them. Even myself—if I have to broadcast this story from the grave, I'll do it. They're mine. You get in my way, you're flatlined. You go with me..." Thompson lets it trail out.

Johnny stops pacing. The room goes still. Only the Hand moves, like something alive; silver metal joints clicking, takeup reels whirring, tiny pistons shooting in and out in simulation of a pulse. The Hand turns Johnny to face the mediaman. It makes him say, "How long do we have?"

Thompson reaches down to his feet; draws up a long black, nylon bag. "FN-FAL assault," he says, standing up. "I was in the War. I like lead. Lots of lead."

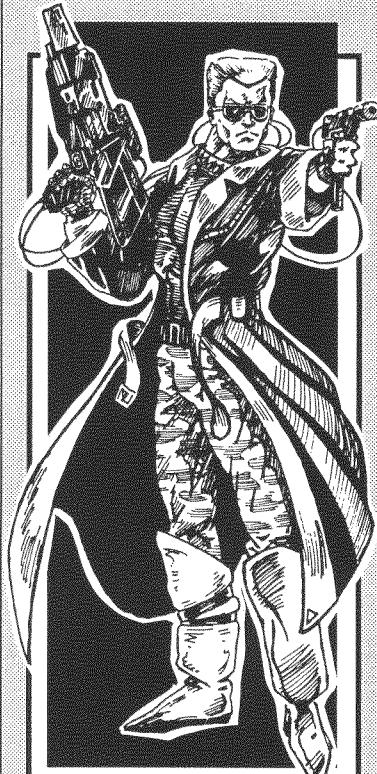
Thompson smiles lopsided. "How long will it take your input to rewrite *Soulkiller*? A day? Two?"

"Yeah." Johnny turns, scoops up the keys to the Porsche. "You chipped for a smartgun?" he says. Thompson reaches down to his feet; draws up a long black, nylon bag. "FN-FAL assault," he says, standing up. "I was in the War. I like lead. Lots of lead."

Rain runs down the front of the speeder. A wall of Corporate glass and steel looms to either side as they pull out into the downtown traffic. The Porsche whistles slightly in the chill air, its methanol powerplant throwing it against the City night. "So where are we going, Rocker?" says Thompson.

Johnny grits his teeth. "I've got a marker I have to pull in," he says.

ROGUE & SANTIAGO



THOMPSON

A top reporter for World News Service, Thompson has a running feud with the infamous Arasaka Corporation, whom he suspects of having murdered his wife. He will do anything to get the elusive security firm—anything. Thompson also served in the Wars as a correspondent, and is fond of heavy weapons.

Stats

INT 8	REF 8	CL 7
MA 8	BODY 8	

Cybernetics

One cyberoptic with IR, Low Lite, Targeting scope. Cyberaudio with radio splice, scrambler, chip recording.

Skills

Credibility +8, Rifle+6, Interview +9, Composition +7, Athletics +6, Notice +6, Intimidate +5.

Possessions

Med. Armor Jacket, Light Helmet. FN-RAL Hvy. Assault Rifle.



ROGUE

Rogue and her partner Santiago, are hit men and bodyguards. The word on the Street is that they're the best. Rogue's one weak spot is Johnny Silverhand, her ex-lover. Their violent, passionate relationship disintegrated in a massive blowup a year ago, but the scars haven't healed yet for this hardbitten Solo.

Stats

INT 7 REF 12 CL 9
MA 10 BODY 8

Cybernetics

Two cyberoptics with IR, Low Lite, Targeting scope, Sandevistan boost, Karate chipped to +3.

Skills

Combat Sense +9, Handgun +10, Brawling +9, Drive +7, Rifle +10, Melee +6, Athletics +9, Notice +8, Seduction +8.

Possessions

Med Armor Jacket, Light Helmet. Armalite 44 Very Heavy Pistol.

"You don't let personal caca get in the way of business," he says. A lot he knows.

Her back is to the wall of the booth—her mirrorshaded eyes scan the room like monitor cameras. What she can't see is covered by her partner, Santiago, from the opposite side of the booth. His burly shoulders bulk the heavy armor jacket—he looks like scowling mountain. He's not her type. But he wants her. Somehow, they've managed to work this out—the way they worked out a combat style; the division of spoils. But he keeps hoping. Stupid Nomad.

Then she finds herself facing what she's dreaded for the last two years; the reason she hates this crummy bar; hates this crummy town. Johnny Silverhand walks into the Atlantis.

He still has the moves, she thinks, as he strides through the big brass doors. Head held high, a cocky light in his pale glass eyes. After all this time, Rogue still can't decide whether she wants him, or just wants to kill him. He looks like he owns the place as he crosses the room towards her; a comment to an old friend here, smiling at a fan there, a narrowed glance at a potential troublemaker; then he's standing in front of her. "Rogue," he says. Like nothing'd ever happened. "I need your help, Rogue." His voice is urgent, magnetic.

"You can go to hell," she replies evenly. On the other side of the booth, there's a faint sound as Santiago slides one hand over the Mac 10 in his lap.

Johnny leans closer. "Look," he says, "I'm sorry. I know how you feel. I wouldn't do this if I had any other choice. He pulls up a chair and straddles it, staring at her. "Tough," she shoots back acidly. She hopes her voice sounds steadier than she feels.

"You owe me one," he says, his voice taking an edge. "For Chicago. You owe me one at least. And it's not like I won't pay you. I've got euro."

"How much?" interjects Santiago. Johnny turns to face him. "Word on the Street is you're pulling five grand a night. I'll match and double it."

Santiago's eyes grin in his swarthy face. He scratches his chin with his free hand. His partner has a real mad on about this guy. But he's a Face—he's got credit; that pulls weight in Santiago's world. "How long?"

"Two days max. I need an extraction. I won't haze you—it's Arasaka." A long pause. "I'll understand if you think it's too much for you."

**Rogue reacts, her chipped reflexes kicking into overdrive.
Her hand is a blur as it stabs up off the table, the bunched knuckles smashing the Solo's nose back into his face. He's dead before he hits the floor...**

Santiago's eyes narrow. On the Street, their team is known as the best. Who does this choob think he is? Then the nomad realizes he's being baited. Silverhand's already figured the score between the two partners. If Santiago backs up on this, it'll be all over the Street tomorrow. If he goes with it, Rogue's going to have to back his play. Rogue's right—Silverhand is a bastard. Santiago grins. He can take this punk with one hand behind his back. "It's going to cost you thirty thou, Rocker."

"Done."

Santiago grins and raises the stakes. "And you come with us," he finishes. From her side of the booth, Rogue's eyes smolder at her partner. She'd object, but the rule of the game is, "You don't let personal caca get in the way of business". When Johnny pulled out his wallet, as far as Santiago was concerned, it became business.

"Done" says Johnny. He is reaching out across the table to match grips with the big Nomad when one long shadow falls over the table, then another.

"Ah, Mister Silverhand," the bigger shadow says, leaning close. You can see red LED light scrolling behind his optics, forming crosshairs as he brings the smartgun up.

Rogue reacts, her chipped reflexes kicking

into overdrive. Her hand is a blur as it stabs up off the table, the bunched knuckles smashing the Solo's nose back into his face. He's dead before he hits the floor, but spasmed muscles tighten on the trigger of the big Beretta. There's a deafening BOOM! in a very small space, but Johnny's boosted reflexes have already thrown him up and over. There's a scream as the slug rips through the back of the booth and blows through the chest of a Corp sitting on the other side of the thin wall. Rogue's other hand fires the silenced Automag from under the table, ripping the smaller solo in half.

Santiago rolls, hitting the floor. Over by the bar, three figures in armorjackets stand up, weapons in hand; Santiago's MAC 10 hammers a short burst. The figures go flat; one staggers back into the window and falls through in a shattering sound like a hundred dropped chandeliers. Thompson brings up the FN-FAL with studied nonchalance, covering the two remaining, prone figures. "Gotcha," he says.

Johnny hits the bar floor; gun high and eyes scanning the corners. Patrons keep their hands away from weapons—everyone plays cool. The disemboweled Solo on the floor whimpers. Back to back, the four of them edge out of the bar.

RUNAWAY

"We are seriously tagged," gasps Rogue as they hit the sidewalk. "They must have tracked my Trauma Card," grunts Thompson. "Guess they wanted to finish the job. You know some nice people, Rocker."

They reach the Porsche just in time to see the shadow of an unmarked AV-4 sweep over it. Garbage, oil, and filthy water explode into steam as the jet exhausts hit the pavement. Rogue is already down, drawing a bead on the cockpit with her .44. Above her head, Santiago's MAC 10 roars in deafening staccato. The tiny red spot of her laser scope pinpoints the AV-4 pilot's forehead, even as she sees the minigun sweep around towards them. She's not going to make it. The canopy's got to be armored. She doesn't even have time to watch her life flash before her eyes.

Then the laserdot is eclipsed by a screaming WHHHHHOOOOMMMMP! as something slams into the AV-4. The entire canopy—the entire front of the aircraft belches out in a horrible slow-mo inferno—a rancid smell of hot metal, melted plastic and



NOMAD SANTIAGO

Santiago is a Nomad who runs with the Aldecaldo Pack; displaced farmers thrown off their land by the Corporations. Santiago is a simple guy—he likes girls, guns, and fast cyberbikes. He teams with Rogue mostly because she's the one girl he hasn't been able to score with yet.

Stats

INT 5 REF 11 CL 9
MA 10 BODY 10

Cybernetics

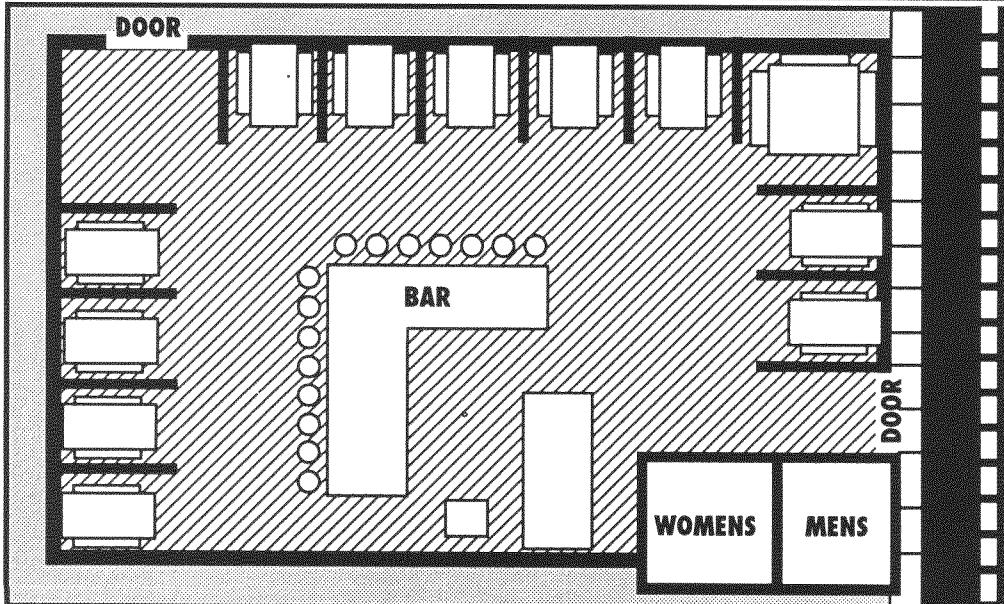
Two cyberoptics with IR, Low Lite, Targeting scope, Kerenzikov boost, Cyber-arm with Kevlar armor, 9mm SMG, Cyberleg with 9mm pistol in thigh holster.

Skills

Family +8, Handgun +9, Judo +9, Drive +7, Rifle +9, Melee +9, Athletics +9, Notice +8, Seduction +8.

Possessions

Heavy Armor Jacket, Light Helmet, AKR Medium Assault Rifle, Bimoda Cyberbike.



ALL THINGS DARK & CYBERPUNK

NEVER FADE AWAY



seared flesh gouts against her as the AV tilts to one side and drunkenly impacts the street. A fireball shatters the night. "Love those grenade launchers," smirks Thompson, lowering his steaming FN-FAL.

Santiago's MAC 10 hammers a short burst. The figures go flat; one staggers back into the window and falls through in a shattering sound like a hundred dropped chandeliers.

"We gotta get out of here," grits Johnny from behind a parked car. Rogue looks into his eyes—she can see the faint red etching of a targeting pattern flickering in their pale depths. "Right," she says, already up and moving. Her breath catches ragged in her throat as they run back into the shadows.

Santiago takes point; he knows all the best boitholes in the area. Thompson is next, the big FN-FAL sweeping their way like a flashlight. Johnny keeps his H&K close to his body; his nerves are tingling with booster effects; he's running like he's on speed. Alleyways streak by as blurs—he compensates his time sense. Rogue is covering the rear, and he can hear her breathing behind him. He says over his shoulder to the breathing dark shadow, "I'm sorry, Rache."

Her voice is flat. "Never call me that," she says. "Never again." He keeps running. "Okay," he says finally. "fair enough."

She stops running. She says, "Why Johnny? Why now? Couldn't you have gotten anyone else?" She can hear him slow ahead of her. He says, "I needed the best. And you're still the best, Rogue."

The best. Damn him.

ALT

She wakes with her mouth full of cotton wool. She's smart enough to keep her eyes closed; to stifle any urge to scream. Boosterboys like it when you scream. They like

it so much, they'll do anything to make you scream over and over again.

Alt silently triggers commands to redline her senses to maximum. She's relieved to find herself still clothed and relatively unharmed. Not typical Booster, but she won't complain. Her enhanced hearing picks up breathing nearby; the click of glasses and ice, computer terminals. Definitely not Boosters. Alt takes a chance and opens her eyes, spits out the gag.

A slender, Asian-looking man is watching her. Neat, well-tailored suit. A glass of real Scotch in one hand, which he offers towards her. "Welcome, Ms. Cunningham", he says, his mouth smiling and his eyes frozen. "I am Toshiro." He gestures towards another man; a hulking presence lounging by the bar. "This is Akira", he says.

Alt sits up slowly, cautiously, her boosted senses giving her clues. The comforting weight of her plastic autogun is missing. But she still has her cybered arm. "Can I get a drink of that?" she says, gesturing towards the glass in Toshiro's hand. "Certainly" he says. A gesture to Akira, and the hulk turns obediently to mix a drink. Alt is surprised at the grace of the big man's hands. He moves like an athlete. He moves like a professional killer. Akira brings her the drink, and Alt doesn't even think about making a break for it.

"Thanks." The drink cools the pounding flame in her head.

"Certainly. It is the least we can do for a promising new associate."

Bingo! she thinks. She's been grabbed by corporate headhunters. Fine. Great. She can deal with it. Just learn the rules, play the game, and go to work. After a week, it'll be just like checking into work at the ITS offices. "So..." she says cautiously. "What kind of work do you have lined up for your new...um...employee?"

Toshiro leans forward, setting the drink down on the couch. He says, "So." He says, smiling, "Ms. Cunningham. I wish you to tell me all about the program you call...Soulkiller."

Her blood freezes like a silenced scream



BASIC GOONS

These are the type of disposable cannon fodder that often shows up on the Street. They're just what your players need to get themselves bled out and ready for tougher challenges.

Stats

INT5 REF10 CL5
MA6 BODY9

Cybernetics

One cyberoptic with IR, Targeting scope, Karate chipped to +3, Rippers.

Skills

Combat Sense +5, Handgun +5, Brawling +5, Drive +7, Rifle +5, Melee +5, Athletics +5.

Possessions

Med Armor Jacket, Light Helmet. Sternmeyer Type 35 Heavy Pistol.

A GATHERING OF HOSTS

Johnny, Santiago, Thompson and Rogue. They are perched two hundred feet in the air on a rusting fire escape. From their vantage point on the blackened brick side of the old Mark Luxor Hilton they can see ten blocks in any direction. Rogue's eyes are switched to infrared, scanning for AV's and airogyros. Johnny is watching the street below. Thompson is scanning the radio chatter and Santiago is talking. "We go in," he says. It's been two hours since the firefight.

"Fair enough," replies Rogue. "But we do it ASAP." Santiago grins. "You got a reason?"

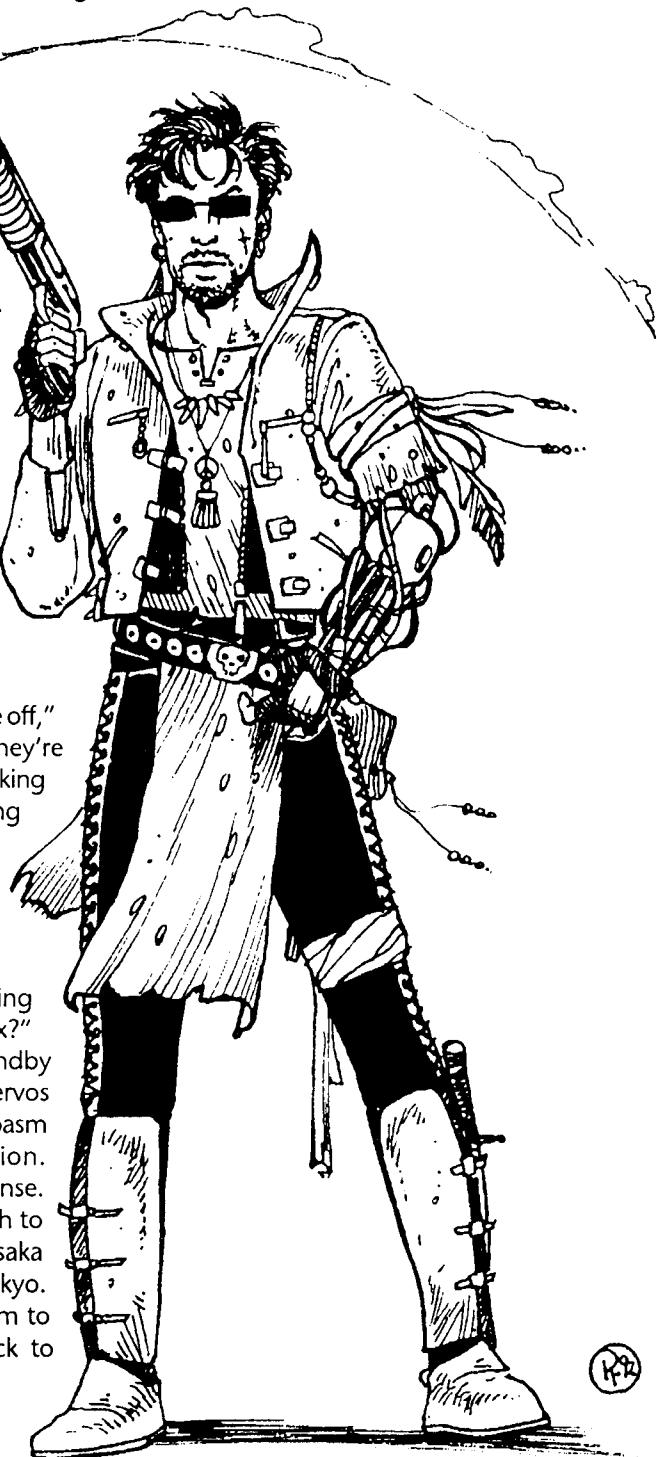
"Getting shot at always pisses me off," she grins back. "Besides, I figure they're combing the Street right now, looking for us. They'll expect us to be trying to ditch them—they'll be putting their best out to find us. Meanwhile, the secondstringers are guarding the offices."

"How you figure they're holding her in the Arasaka office complex?" says Johnny. The Hand is in standby mode, running a test routine. Servos click and whirr and silverfingers spasm and flex of their own volition. Thompson speaks up. "Makes sense. The only mainframe big enough to run *Soulkiller* is in the main Arasaka building. Either that, or in Tokyo. We're not a big enough problem to rate flying her all the way back to Japan."

"Thanks."

"So this means we've gotta punch into the main offices of the most rabidly paranoid security company in the universe," considers Santiago. "Homeboy, you pick some great places to lose your women."

"Stuff it," cuts in Rogue. "Here's the plan."



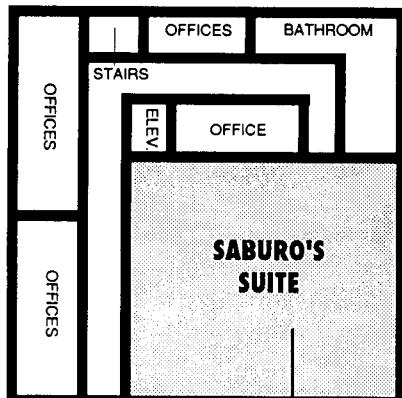
INTERFACE THE MUSIC

Headfirst in the Net, Alt weaves magic.

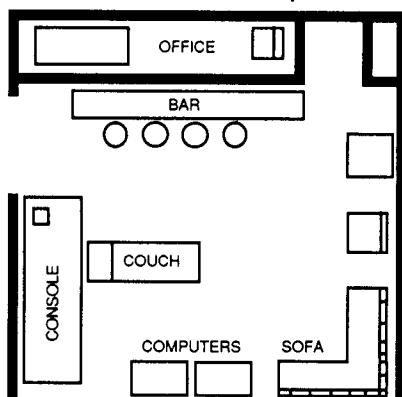
They've studded her into the Arasaka mainframe, given her room to run, hemmed in only by three Arasaka netrunners who watch her every move. Her body lies comatose on a contour couch, linked by cables to a cybermodem. She's pulling down subroutines, crunching the compilers, getting comfy with the CPU's. From memory and notes, she's recreating *Soulkiller*, the eater of minds.

Soulkiller is a stationary program, locked to a part of the system architecture. The challenge Toshiro has given her is to give it movement—the ability to navigate the Net on its own.

TOP FLOOR



SABURO'S SUITE



SABURO'S SUITE (DETAIL)

It's a subtle problem—navigation data and decision subroutines take up a huge amount of memory; the reason freeroaming programs are so limited in scope. *Soulkiller* already eats a lot of megabytes, to make it freerunning will take more memory than any normal computer can handle. The problem excites her professionalism even as the creation revolts her humanity.

God, they know her so well.

The original *Soulkiller* started as a matrix to contain artificial personalities. She'd studied the concept, worked out the parameters for creating a storage matrix. She'd been fascinated and awed to discover that the same matrix could contain living engrams; transfer them from computer to body and even back again. It was immortality.

ITS had taken it from her to build a killer. And she hadn't known how to stop them.

Now Alt looks over her options. If she doesn't build Arasaka's monster, they'll torture or kill her. If she builds their horror, they'll keep her alive. But.

But once it's built, they'll put her into it.

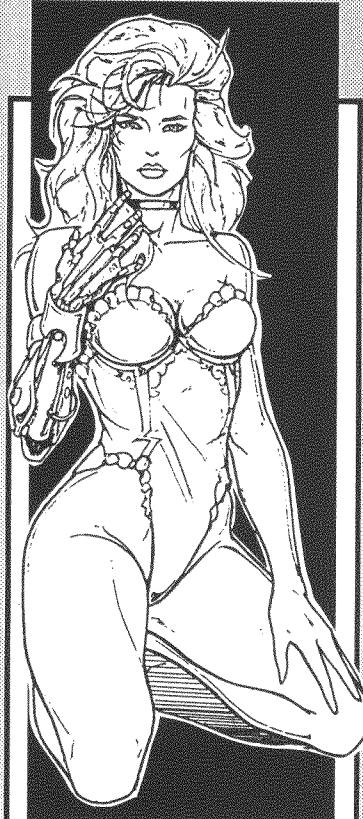
WAR PARTY

A plan hinges on strange elements.

Rogue leaves their motel bolthole at nine. She moves fast, travels light, moving from place to place. Here, she picks up five pounds of plastic explosives; there, flash-bombs, timers and tripwires. Santiago covers her. He picks up more explosives, a combat assault cyberdeck, and a long, bulky black sniper rifle.

Johnny's on the cellular, working the connections. He pulls his bandmates in from around the City, carefully dodging the phone taps, shadowers and snoops. He sets the time and place and the gig is on.

Thompson is on the Street, working hard. A phone call here, a tip to the screamsheets



ALT

Johnny's new girlfriend, Alt has a history he hardly suspects. A hotshot programmer and Net whiz, she's written an incredibly deadly program that can suck your mind out and eat it. But Alt is no helpless heroine, as Toshiro learns to his undoing.

Stats

INT10 REF 7 CL 9
MA 6 BODY 6

Cybernetics

Interface plugs. Gold cyberarm with hidden compartment.

Skills

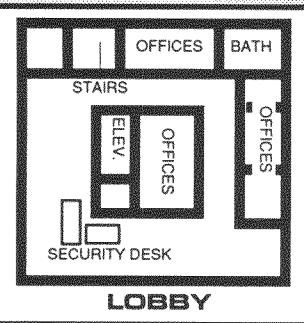
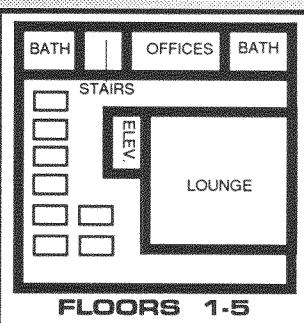
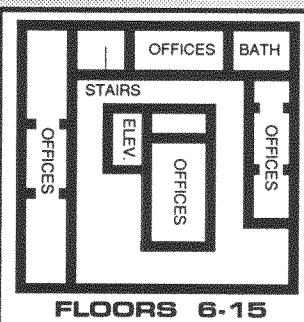
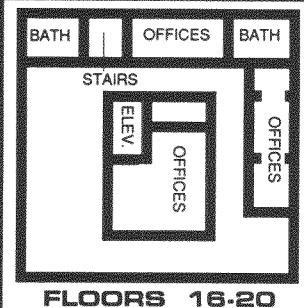
Interface +10, Handgun +2,
Drive +4, Athletics +5,
Notice +8, Seduction +7.

Possessions

Light Armor Jacket,
monoknife, Federated Arms X-22 pistol.

ALL THINGS DARK & CYBERPUNK

NEVER FADE AWAY



THE ARASAKA FLOOR PLAN

Here's the internal layout of the Arasaka Tower. Place your players at the front door, about to enter the Security Desk area. At the start of the attack, the guards have been overwhelmed by the mob rampaging through the lobby, and may not attack the players for three rounds.

there. A Fixer picks up a little euro on the side, and passes the word down. By ten a.m., the Street knows there's going to be a party. By noon, the word is all over the Street—the band is Samurai, the time is sundown, and the Smash is free.

By one, the Street knows the party is going to be on the edge of town at Industrial Park.

Arasaka's twenty two story office compound faces Industrial Park.

Like a single, hungry thing, the mob converges.

SORCEROR'S APPRENTICE

7.29 p.m.

The twisting construct spins, a blazing pillar of white fire, sparkshowers of stars. A glowing DNA chain, a whirling dervish takes shape and form, in the construct reality of the interface, towering above her, looming like fear itself. Dazzling, it exudes the palpable scent of terror. It speaks in a voice like crystal, and momentarily Alt's breath is taken by its perfect, murderous beauty. "I am." it sings triumphantly to the cold stars.

"I am your Controller." Alt replies. "You will follow my commands." A slight hesitation in her voice.

"As always," it says, as though doubt had never existed in the universe. "What is your bidding, Mistress?"

Alt lets out a long, exhausted breath. She's gotten the Controller override past her watchdogs. Now she has a chance.

"This is what I want you to do," she begins.

PARTY HARD

Seicho Harada is second in command of Security for the Arasaka complex at Industrial Park. Seicho is afraid. Since early afternoon, the people have been pouring into

the large, grassy park opposite his guard position; at first a trickle, then a stream, then a torrent. He can't figure it out. They don't do things like this in Tokyo. In Tokyo, people are consistent. They make sense. Here, people are animals. He thinks about calling the City Cops, but that would reflect badly on Arasaka. The world's largest security corporation calling for help? What a loss of face. But there are six thousand people crammed into the tableau in front of him.

Up on the makeshift stage, acting as though invulnerable, struts Johnny Silverhand, working the crowd up. Seicho wants him. He wants him dead. But Silverhand might as well be on Luna as far as Arasaka is concerned. A single gunshot could trigger a riot of unbelievable proportions. Seicho can feel the tension building. So can Johnny. An invisible thread binds them as adversaries, eye to eye over a battlefield of unwitting bodies.

Johnny smiles. He's got them, so far. The crowd is paranoid—they expect to be thrown out at any minute. He's been pumping them for the last hour with chromatic and metal rock, getting them edgy and irritable; in a party mood to scream and shout, kick some tail. The first uniformed bozo who interrupts their party is going to get himself hosed.

*Got the chrome in the bloodstream
Got a metal soul,
I'm out looking for action,
Guess I'm on a roll*

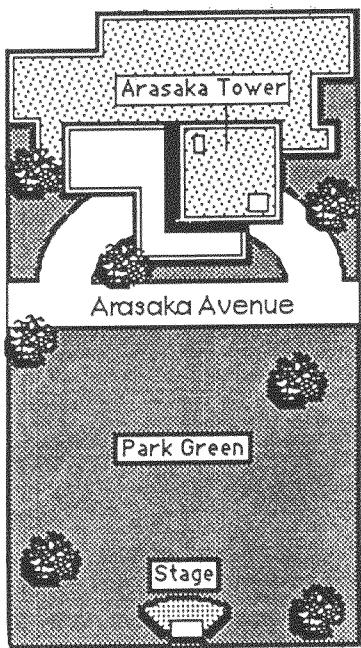
It's like driving the freeway at two hundred miles per hour. The crowd swells and breathes as the first verse goes down, taking on the cohesiveness of a living thing. The bass player picks up the back beat and the two of them slam into the next turn of the song, dragging the crowd with them.

*Got the old mega violence,
When I boost, it's for real,
The capacitors roarin' inside my brain
You know just how I feel*

*Cold chrome, molten lead
Can't be hurt cuz I'm already dead
Ain't no time as real as realtime
I'm chipping in
Chippin in.*

THE ARASAKA TOWER

Here's the story. The group that Johnny is leading numbers about 100 people. There are twenty guards facing the park. Each turn, roll 1D6 for the Arasaka side and remove that many people. Then, roll 1D10 for the crowd and remove that many people. When the guards get down to four men, they'll break and run. Meanwhile, you and your group should use the crowd as cover to get into the building. Goodluck, chomba.



Johnny's eyes scan the perimeter of the park. To one edge, he can see Santiago in position on the rooftop opposite of the Arasaka complex. Deep in the crowd, Thompson and Rogue are poised, ready to make the break. All he has to do is give them the chance; the diversion.

All he has to do is turn around and lead six thousand people right into a wall of weapons.

*Chippin in (got my head to the wall)
Chippin in (can ya hear me call)
Chippin in (I'm the man of steel)
Chippin in (Is that how ya feel?)
Well, comon!*

The moment freezes, hanging in air like a death. Punching his battered Telecaster

guitar over to "remote", Johnny leaps off the stage, pushing his way through the crowd. His voice holds solid over the radio mike; powerful, pleading, entreating, seducing, and the huge crowd turns with him; surges around him, swallows him. It's knifeedge balanced—six thousand people teetering on the edge, chanting, singing. At the perimeter of the park, Arasaka police stand guard nervously, their eyes riveted on the mob. Silverhand starts towards them, and they choke on the decision—twenty guards facing down a wall of humanity, centered on one man whose voice holds them, binds them. An assault rifle comes up, and the crowd, like an irritable dog, notices the small army facing them down. The scene is set; the guards distracted, and on the rooftop, Santiago takes aim...

It's like driving the freeway at two hundred miles per hour. The crowd swells and breathes as the first verse goes down, taking on the cohesiveness of a living thing.

Then it goes wrong. One of the faceless guards loses his nerve. The staccato sound of gunfire splits the air. But Johnny is already gone, faded back into a mob that howls like a wounded thing, then surges forward, shattering like surf against armored bodies, lobby doors, massed vehicles, guns. Screams. Gunfire. The strobe flash of the mob tearing a guard apart with vampire teeth, and ripper claws. The sound of a sniper rifle high above the melee, as Santiago methodically picks out guards and blows them away with his Walther WA-2000 rifle. The lobby doors explode inwards as six thousand bodies slam against them.

Rogue is already in—in when Santiago took out the pair of guards by the main doors. She's on the floor and rolling, a fast dazzle bomb palmed over the top of the security desk to fry the optics of the monitor team, followed by a frag grenade a second later. The deafening explosion goes unnoticed in the typhoon roar of the mob. Thompson's right behind her, his video rig and FN-FAL sweeping everything in his path. Both wear armor jacks with the colors of the infamous Iron Sights boostergang, a known Arasaka hit group.

ADVANCED GOONS

These are Arasaka's front line defense; the guards covering the inside of the Tower. Use an equal number of goons as you have players. At the start of the attack on the Tower, the Arasaka guys will be in the Lobby. Remember; if it gets too hot for your players, use Rogue and Santiago to bail them out.

Stats

INT5 REF11 CL5
MA6 BODY10

Cybernetics

One cyberoptic with IR, Targeting scope, Karate chipped to +3, Rippers.

Skills

Combat Sense +7, Handgun +7, Brawling +5, Drive +7, Submachinegun +5, Melee +5, Athletics +6.

Possessions

Medium Armor Jacket, Light Helmet. Sternmeyer Type 35 Heavy Pistol or Minami 10 submachinegun.

AKIRA: SUPERGOON FROM HELL

Hmm. Wouldn't it be chill if Alt flubbed the play and Akira was still up and round when the players burst into Toshiro's office. Sure it would. Everyone should have a chance to battle the Hulk from Hell.

Stats

INT2 REF 12 CL 3
MA 8 BODY 12

Cybernetics

One cyberoptic with IR, Targeting scope, Body plated.

Skills

Combat Sense +9, Handgun +10, Karate +9, Submachinegun +8, Melee +8, Athletics +9.

Possessions

Medium Armor Jacket, Minami 10 submachinegun, Bad Attitude.

LASER DEFENSE SYSTEM

Powered by building current, the laser can hit any point in the room, causing 5D6 damage. It hits on a roll of 7 or higher on 1D10.

There are four lasers, one in each corner, and each has 10 SDP.

Rogue skids around the corner towards the elevator bank, moments ahead of the crowd. Rapidly, she opens each car, spraypaints the monitor lens, punches a destination, then ducks out. The last car in line, she places a shaped charge explosive on the ceiling, wired to a microtransmitter. This one she sends to the twenty-second floor; the executive office suites. Then the rampaging mob hits and carries her along in the swell.

She's on the floor and rolling, a fast dazzle bomb palmed over the top of the security desk to fry the optics of the monitor team, followed by a frag grenade a second later .

Thompson is waiting for her by the stairwell. Moments later, Johnny shows up wearing an Arasaka company jacket he's pulled off a guard's body. The name tag reads Harada.

OPTIONS

Akira turns from the security board. "It has started," he announces. "Instructions, Toshiro-sama?" Toshiro considers. It was a masterstroke for Silverhand to raise a literal army of fans against him. Toshiro is checkmated—Arasaka cannot gun down the crowd with impunity. But he does have options. He turns to Akira. "Send teams to the elevators. Guard the top and bottom of the stairwells, and kill anything in the elevator cars." He looks over at Alt's dormant form. "We have the program," he says. "If we do not have her body, there is no evidence."

Seemingly oblivious, the plugged in Alt permits herself a brief smile. A lot he knows.

• • •

Elevators chime open on floors ten, eighteen and five. The fire teams on ten and eighteen throw a hail of lead through the doors. The elevators are empty. The team on five is warned, and opens the doors with greater caution. Empty. "It's a trick!" shouts the team leader. "To the stairwell!"

On floor six, a panting Johnny and Thompson reach the stairwell landing, crack

open the firedoors and scout the hall. They can hear other doors slamming open as the fire teams converge; they bolt for the elevator bank. Prying the doors open, they can see the top of the car on floor five. They drop down to its top. Thompson hotwires the motor, and they start up.

Rogue can hear running feet behind her. She pauses from her vantage point on floor seven and fires a quick burst down the stairwell. How much time? she thinks. She judges the breathing and the heavy booted tread, and punches six seconds on the timer, then rolls out of the seventh floor firedoor. She is halfway down the hall when the first of the charges go off, collapsing the stairwell in on itself and burying the pursuing fire teams. Jamming open the elevator doors with her gun butt, she drops down onto the rising car.

• • •

"Hold her", says Toshiro. Dimly, through the interface, Alt can feel Akira's hands pressing her into the seat. She struggles as the techs strip her plug guards off and hold her wrists. "Can the program be run?" Toshiro demands. His techs nod. Helpless in the grip of the interface, Alt can only sense Toshiro jacking himself into the cyberdeck, giving the command to RUN.

Then her mind is ripped away.

• • •

The elevator streaks upwards, the shaft echoing to either side. They can hear explosions; the sound of running feet, the hammer of machinegun fire. They pass the burned out husks of the cars on floors ten and eighteen. At the twentieth floor, the elevator starts to slow. Just above them, they can see the bottom of the express elevator on the twenty second.

She is halfway down the hall when the first of the charges go off, collapsing the stairwell in on itself and burying the pursuing fire teams.

"Duck and cover!" yells Rogue. She taps the transmitter button on her collar and the world blows up.

ANGEL HEAVEN

She floats naked in a sea of stars. Around her swirls the matrix of Soulkiller, towering into measureless space. Alt reaches out with her enhanced mentality, shaping and forming. A brief flare of thought, and Soulkiller sucks away the minds of her three guardian techs, letting their bodies drop.

From the mind of the head techie, she pulls out the access codes to the mainframe's inner levels. She strips the memory of data, downloading it to her hidden files throughout the Net. Twenty million dollars vanishes from Accounting, to reappear in a subaccount under her name. Pulling Toshiro's signature from his checking account file, she signs his name with a flourish.

Using the access codes, she activates the room monitor. She can see the three techs slumped senseless in their chairs; her own unconscious body limply sprawled across the central console. Akira moves towards it. Alt triggers the room lasers and cuts him in two; his body hits the floor with a steaming thud.

Toshiro's eyes widen in shock, then narrow as he realizes what has happened. "Congratulations, Ms. Cunningham," he says with mock formality. "It seems you have found a way to escape your demise."

"You zaibatsu bastard," she says through the interface, a tiny voice in his ear. "You're going to sit right here with your hands on the table, where I can watch them. You move, and you're laser meat." She tracks the defense system onto him, locking it to fire at the slightest position change. Then she turns back into the Soulkiller construct, wrapping its power around her, gathering herself to transfer back into her body.

The room staggers; lurches, as five pounds of plastique explosive slams through the ceiling of the elevator, creating an instant fireball. The lasers go wild, spilling a maze of ruby light in every direction. Toshiro throws himself flat, toppling the cyberdeck and breaking Alt's connections. She flails wildly

with the Construct—too little, too late.

Three figures burst into the room, smartguns laying down a pattern of fire though the maelstrom. IR suppressed, enhanced vision on, Johnny spots Alt's still form slumped over a contour couch. He bend down her, taking her in his arms, trembling. Across the room, Rogue looks away.

Silverhand raises the big black gun. A red pinpoint centers on Toshiro's forehead. "Bang." says Johnny. The Hand convulses. "Bang" says the gun.

"Well, well, well," says Thompson, striding across the wrecked room towards the corporate head. "What do we have here? Looks like kidnapping and maybe murder. They're going to put you away for a long, long time, Toshiro-chan." His green cyberoptic winks bright as he transmits live and direct to his news net; his head swivels right to left with practiced ease as he subvocalizes the opening to his story; the story he will use to break Arasaka in Night City.

Johnny stares a long time at Alt's almost lifeless body. There is a feeble pulse. But Alt—Alt is gone; lost in the machine; trapped behind crystal. Lost forever. Gone.

He stands away from the couch. "Cut transmission," he says to Thompson. The green cyberoptic goes dark. Silverhand's own eyes are featureless white marbles. The Hand convulses in fury by his side, locking onto the H&K in its lowslung hip rig. The metal fingers lock to the butt, scrabble-clicking along the parkerized grip.

He just doesn't care anymore. He's dead inside. To hell with it.

Silverhand raises the big black gun. A red pinpoint centers on Toshiro's forehead. "Bang." says Johnny. The Hand convulses.

"Bang" says the gun.

Silverhand turns to gather up her still warm body in his arms. Behind the wall of monitors, a disembodied Alt screams to him.

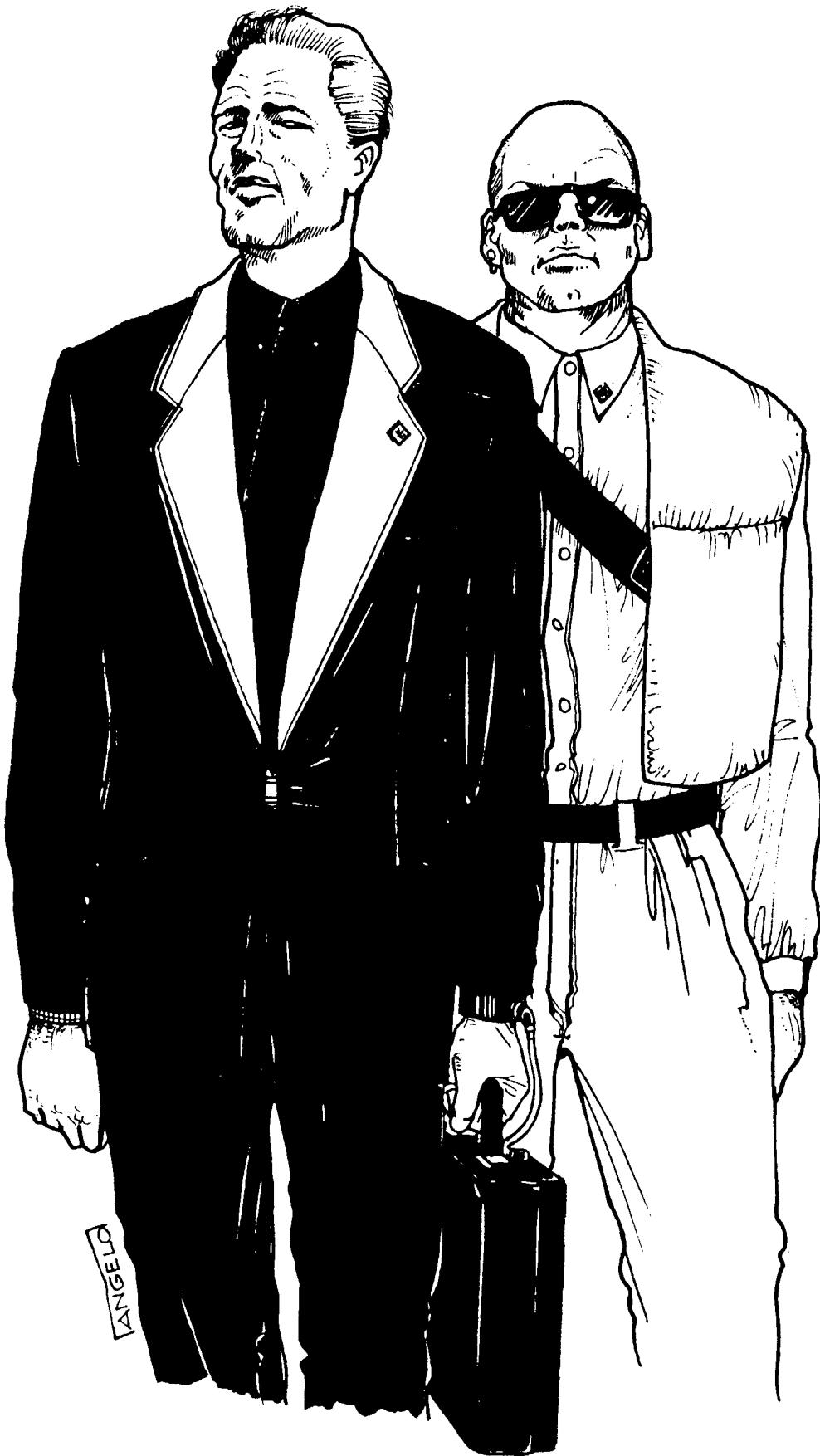
But he can't hear her as he walks away. ■

*"Of course I work for
the Corporations.
You think I'm crazy?
Look, you have to
be realistic. Appraise
your options. There's
nothing but grunt
jobs on the Street.
Most of the good
jobs out there are
managerial; you're
bossing a bunch of
Als and robots. To
score that kind of
work, you need an
MBA minimum these
days.*

*"So once you've put
in six, seven years,
you want to
maximize that
investment. And the
Corporation makes
that possible. Health
care when everyone
else is festering on
the streetcorner
because doctors cost
200 eb an hour.
Company sponsored
housing, because the
average two
bedroom home
comes in at
500,000.eb. Perks,
like an office, a
secretary, and a
bodyguard.*

*"So of course I'm a
Corporate Man. Only
an idiot wouldn't
be."*

—Dave Whindam



SECTION

14 MEGACORPS 2020

Corporate Life

It's Big Business As Usual in the 2000's

The modern corporations of 2020 are much like the corporations of the late 20th century, only much larger and more fully autonomous. They are very nearly nations in themselves, with their own laws, cities, factories and armies. Most corporations in 2020 are multinational; i.e., they have branches and operations all over the world. These branches may be as small as a research facility or sales office, or as large as a major manufacturing facility and security center.

There are two types of corporations: public and privately held. A public corporation can and does sell stock to the public. The stock is for sale in any of the offices of the World Stock Exchange, and anyone with enough money can buy it. Privately held corporations are more like family businesses. All stock (and thus all power) is concentrated in the hands of a very few—usually partners, relatives, or one extremely powerful individual (Howard Hughes would be a good example).

Most corporations are manufacturers—they produce some kind of commodity for sale on the open market. Oil, steel, automobiles, aircraft, weapons, computers, cybernetics, biotechnologies; these are only a few of the literally millions of corporate operations. Many corporations have several commodities on the market—they may control chemical plants in Europe, computer factories in Japan, and steelmaking operations in the United States.

Mediacorporations

One type of corporation that deserves special attention is the mediacorp. These huge conglomerates grew out of a trend in the late 1980's, in which certain firms bought up TV networks, film companies, record companies, radio stations, and book, magazine, and even comic publishers; effectively centralizing the media under the control of a very few people.

Entertainment has become generic and bland. Print material has a "sameness" as a hundred magazines are produced by the same company. Dissenting opinions and independent productions are usually buried under an avalanche of media hype, or worse, co-opted or destroyed by the vicious competitive practices of the major mediacorps. Still worse is the effect on news and information. Political candidates have realized that the right connections to the right mediacorp exec can win elections—only a short step to where the media corporations actually select, package and sell their own candidates. While no major government is yet directly controlled by a mediacorporation, most socioanalysts suspect that it is only a matter of time.

Agricorps

The Age of the Family Farm came to an end somewhere in the 1990s. The United States has always been the world's foremost producer of raw food stock. Coupled with the increasing need for grain and bulk crops to create alcohol fuels and organic plastics, agribusiness became one of the most powerful forces of the post-crash U.S.

"Most people who don't know anything think being a Corporate is a sellout; you'd lick the bottoms of Ulf Grünwald's shoes for a safe desk and a computer terminal. But you can actually do some good in the Corporate arena, because working for a Corporation gives you a lot of power."

"Not all Corps are bad guys. Take my bunch. Last year, we bought up 23,000 acres of Amazon rainforest and set it aside as a bio-preserve. Some people say we did it for selfish reasons; we make biotech animals, and buying up that environment just puts a little more Nature in our pockets."

"But I see it another way. That's 23,000 acres that won't be cut down to make furniture. That's a dozen endangered species that will exist somewhere else besides a gene bank..."

—Lyle Harrison
Staff Biologist,
Biosystems LTD.

Agricorporations now control (directly or indirectly) nearly 65% of all of the farmland in the United States, feeding roughly a third of the world's population and supplying organic fuels and plastics to nearly two thirds. As the technological world underwent crash conversion from its dwindling petroleum reserves over to advanced forms of methanol, ethanol and meta-alcohol, many of the leading oil producers bought up agricultural lands and shifted their refineries to organic fuel production. As a result, a list of most major agricorporations reads like a Who's Who of energy corporations.

Corporate Powerbrokering

The modern corporation is usually organized as a vast hierarchy, with a President and Board of Directors at the top, and a huge sea of workers at the bottom. In the middle of this, one finds the realm of the corporate executive, a struggling middle class overachiever, usually with the singleminded goal of grabbing as much power and privilege as possible. The average corporate begins as a junior executive, "bossing" a particular project or group of people. At the next level, he becomes a Manager, controlling a specific department or production area. The major infighting begins here—only very successful Managers get elevated to the position of Assistant Vice President, where they control entire factories or other operations. They are, in turn, bossed by Vice Presidents, who control entire divisions of the company. Near the top is the Executive Vice President, who effectively runs the corporation. His boss is the President, who answers only to the Board of Directors (major stockholders) and the Chairman of the Board.

Theoretically, corporate advancement is based on merit. In reality, the corporate world is rife with nepotism, deal making, brown nosing, cheating, lying and credit stealing. Extortion, blackmail and frameups are common.

One of the most disturbing factors in this web of corporate powerbrokering is the role of organized crime. Realizing

in the early '90s that the new megacorps represented an unprecedented new field of opportunity, the powerful families of the Mafia and other crime groups began to offer their services as bodyguards, hitmen, and general corporate enforcers. This pattern had previously been established among the zaibatsu (corporate families) of Japan, who routinely hired both ninja (assassin) and yakuza (gangster) clans for their covert operations. In some cases, the retainers remain faithful—at least to the people who pay the most. In other more unfortunate cases, the hired guns have taken direct control of the corporations themselves, leading to a new age of intercorporate infighting unchecked by even a sham of legality.

Employment Contracts

In the savage world of Big Business, it's not unusual for an executive to jump from firm to firm, looking for a big success. To prevent this, most Corporations require their employees to sign Employment Contracts, specifying how long they must work for the firm until they can quit. Contracts may run from a year for a low-level executive, to an entire lifetime for a key researcher or company president.

The penalties for breaking Employment contracts are extremely severe; ranging from garnishment of wages, lawsuits, and loss of licenses (in the case of lawyers or physicians). Corporations have also been known to use sabotage software and deadly booby traps to ensure loyalty. Blackmail is common. Assassination and kidnapping are expected.

This makes Corporate "headhunting" (hiring away another company's staff for use by your own company) a deadly game of cat and mouse. Most Corporations have their own "extraction teams" of Solos, who, like the KGB or CIA, arrange "defections" of key personnel from one side to the other. Headhunting can be especially lethal, as most corporations will use any and

all means to stop a rival extraction team.

Corporations & Governments

Since the Crash of '96, the governments of the world have been in the uncomfortable position of having to let the multinational corporations do pretty much as they please. Paying lip service to pollution control, product safety and minimum wage rules, the modern multinational usually strikes a bargain with the local government. Sometimes this may be as simple as a bribe to the right places, or military support for the local dictator. In the more sophisticated United States, corporations tread lightly, going out of their way to hide their more illegal operations, and making sure to toe the line in their more visible ones. On the local level it's often a case of trading power, influence or money with the right leaders; a judge or police chief here, a senator or congressman there.

One major exception to corporate domination is the Soviet Union. Although interested in acquiring the technologies of the West, the Soviets have successfully kept most corporations from gaining any political foothold within its borders.

Most corporate offices now hold a status roughly equivalent to a national embassy, with employees carrying corporate-issued international passports and identification cards (better, by far, than almost anything national governments can produce). Since the unfortunate *Yasubisu Affair* of 1997 (in which guards of Tokyo-based Arasaka Corp killed 24 French policemen who attempted to storm Arasaka's Paris offices to arrest an executive charged with rape), most corporate foreign branches maintain a policy of shipping criminal employees back to the company's home office. Company negotiators then arrange

to extradite the felon back to the nation where the crime took place.

The World Stock Exchange

The modern corporation rests on its stock. Stock is essentially a "share" in the company's assets, which can be traded and sold much like property cards in Monopoly. Corporations sell stock to outsiders in exchange for hard cash, which the corporation can then use to finance its activities. As a stockholder, you are gambling that the stock you hold (which is a percentage of the total value of the company) will increase in value as the company's assets increase in value. For example, if in 1975, Cyber Computer was worth a grand total of \$100.00, and you owned 20% of this, your stock would be worth \$20.00. Eight years later, when Cyber is worth two million dollars, that same 20% is now worth \$400,000.00! On the other hand, if Cyber goes bust, that stock is worth nothing.

The more stock you have, the more control you have over the assets and activities of the corporation. One reason for this is that each share you hold is equal to a vote concerning what is done with the company. As a general rule, if you own more than 50 percent of the stock of a corporation, you have the majority vote. This vote can be used to fire or choose the leadership of the corporation, direct corporate decisions, and even force the corporation to merge with another company.

The basic form of corporate stock holding is little changed from the early stock exchanges (places where people go to buy, sell or trade stock in companies) of the 20th century. What has changed is the scale of operations. The stock exchanges of London, Tokyo, New York and other major cities were merged into a gigantic World Stock Exchange late in the 1990's. A generic exchange rate (known as the Eurodollar) had been

established, and a system of trading imposed over the various subexchanges worldwide.

While there are stockbrokerages all over the world, the major Exchange offices are located in London, Paris, Zurich, Tokyo, New York, Cairo, Rome and San Francisco. However, with the creation of the Net—the vast web of communications that blankets the planet—the ability to buy, sell and trade shares has been extended to almost anyone. Investors can now use their phone nets to contact their brokers at any time or from any place, even the remotest jungles. Never before has the business of making millions on the "market" been so universal. And never before has the Market been balanced on such a razor's edge between incredible wealth and worldwide economic disaster.

Corporate Espionage & Covert Activity

In the 2000's, almost every corporation employs at least one force of highly trained covert operatives, specializing in espionage, counter-espionage, sabotage, and counter-terrorism. In extreme cases, measures such as assassination and terrorism are not unknown, whether against other corporations or within the corporate structure itself.

This is not an entirely new phenomenon. For many years, the powerful Japanese industrial combines, or *zaibatsu*, were known to secretly employ *ninja* clans in many of their covert operations. These connections stretched back into the distant past, when many of the same clans served the feudal ancestors of the *zaibatsu* rulers. Less covert operations requiring muscle and a lack of subtlety were often delegated to various Japanese gangster mobs, many of whom had full or partial interests in the corporations themselves. As Western corporations

began to adopt various methods of Japanese management and production, it was a simple step for these companies to adopt or create their own "*ninja*" forces. This historical reference may be one reason why hired corporate killers and spies are known on the street by colorful terms such as *ninja*, *samurai*, *ronin* and *yakuza*.

A corporate covert operations arm usually is made up of weapons specialists, computer technicians, and various "hired guns". Almost all of these covert forces are cyberenhanced with the best technology available. Covert action arms frequently search the deadzones and arcologies for promising young criminals to recruit, promising them high pay, the best enhancements, and a life of glamor and adventure.

Corporate Wars

While most aspects of corporate competition remain on the economic level, there are instances where it moves into the arena of actual warfare. While these are not declared wars, per-se, they have all the aspects of the real thing, as missiles, armored vehicles, jet aircraft and cyberenhanced ground troops are brought into play.

By its very nature, a corporate war must be covert—very few nations are willing to allow two companies to "duke it out" on their soil. Early on, most corporations hired actual terrorist groups to strike at enemy targets. As these groups became more undependable, the companies began to actually create battle forces disguised to resemble terrorists. Many terrorist groups such as the infamous *Red Flag Army* and the *New Aryan Sons* are actually fully equipped corporate strike forces, whose seemingly random attacks on rival offices and strongholds are part of larger covert warfare actions.

A corporate war never lasts longer than necessary—if combat activity becomes noticeable, there is too great a chance of government intervention. While no corporate army is yet powerful enough

to challenge a major government directly, there are already reports of smaller nations who have capitulated to the power of the business armies.

The Corporate City

In the 1960's thru '70s, social unrest and upheaval tore through the central cities of America, leaving burned out tenements, deserted factories, and dying businesses in its wake. Most major corporations soon moved their operations to safer suburban business parks and malls.

But as real estate prices began to rise, and the suburbs became more crowded, the major companies began to reconsider their strategies. By the middle 1980's, corporations working with city governments began to rehabilitate the inner city. The corporations provided the money for new buildings, shopping malls and model community areas, while the government provided tax incentives, inexpensive land, and police protection. By 1989, many inner city areas across the U.S. including New York, San Francisco, Baltimore and Boston had undergone this "gentrification" process.

The human cost of this restructuring was the displacement of the "undesirables" of the urban dead zone. Poor, drug dealers, pimps, gangs and streetpeople were all pushed out from the city center, creating a region bounded on one side by affluent suburbs and on the other by the now showcase central city. This "doughnut" effect had a further impact on the community—by shoving the dead zone inhabitants between the two areas, crime rates on both sides of the line began to skyrocket. Street gangs routinely shuttled between the middle class suburbs and the model inner city to prey on new victims.

By the mid 80's, corporations routinely hired guard patrols to supplement already overloaded city police forces.

These corporate police were well paid and had access to the best equipment available. As police services began to collapse throughout the U.S., many cities took to hiring corporate forces outright, deputizing them and turning city law enforcement over to them.

The corporations were equal to the task. Ruthlessly, they equipped their teams with the best weapons and armor. When an arrest was made, they made the best use of their considerable legal talent and influence to ensure the severest penalties. When an arrest wasn't possible, they often resorted to the harshest of policies. Entire gangs would be decimated in a single night by heavy weapons teams and armored vehicles. The bodies would summarily end up in the landfill, and the legal staff would quietly arrange to cover the incident over.

In the 2000's, the corporations usually control both the inner city and a large portion of the company owned suburban developments outside of the city. To facilitate their commuters, many of the megacorps have installed light rail and underground systems between the showcase innercity and the well-protected suburbs. Patrolled by corporate guards, monitored by cameras and the most sophisticated sensors, these railways are always clean, quiet and ominously crime free.

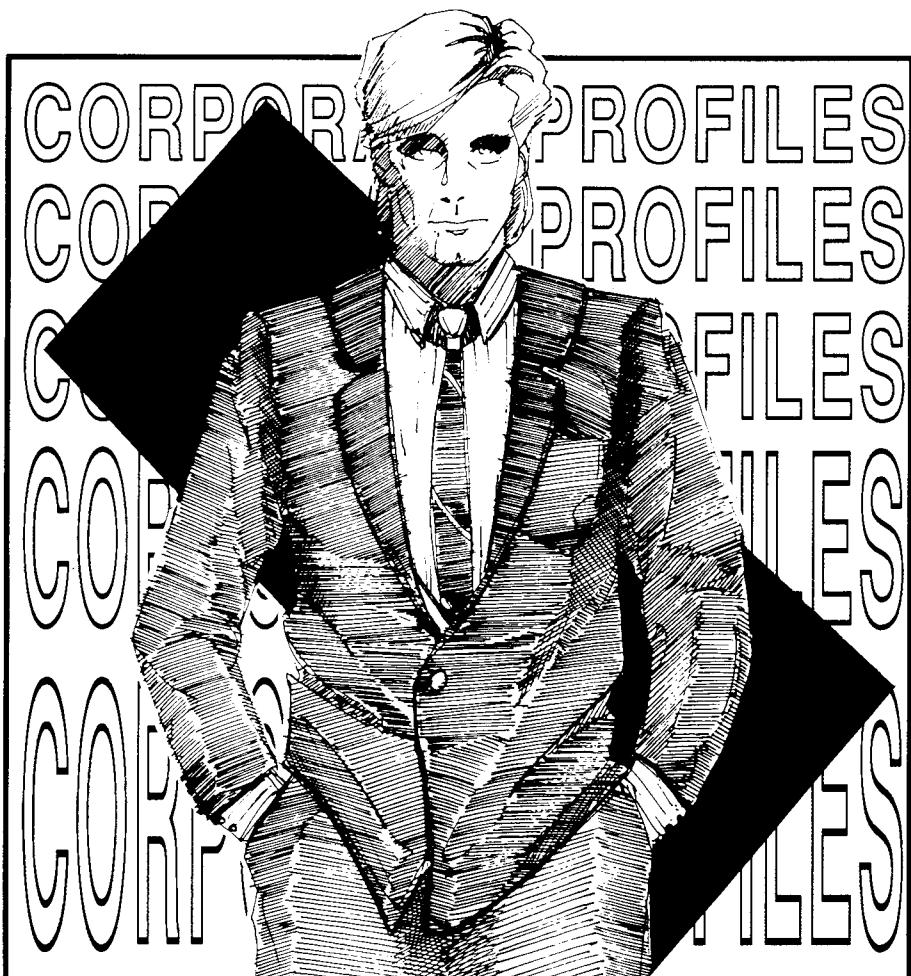
Corporate Suburbia

By 1990, a two bedroom house cost a median \$200,000.00; more than most families could hope to raise. As the corporations fought for skilled employees, they realized that an affordable home could easily become one of the many fringe benefits to offer a prospective worker. Soon, in the U.S. and abroad, corporations began



building or buying large tracts of housing, which were then offered at drastically reduced prices to company members.

A further stage of development was reached in 1995, when, in the historic *Tennicorp vs Davis* decision, the Supreme Court ruled that while a corporation could not restrict housing sales on the basis of race, creed or color, it did have the right to offer housing to its employees on a preferential basis. As a result, most areas of corporate suburbia are routinely comprised of upper middle-class execs and their families. While made up of widely varying races, religions and nationalities, all corporate communities share a common origin—the Company.



Corporate Profiles

The following report contains essential information and breakdowns on some of the 21st century's most prominent and powerful corporations. These profiles are intended to be used by the Referee as guidelines, not as inflexible parameters.

Head Office is the location of the firm's board of directors, usually, but not always, the largest and most important executive facility the corporation has. Offices are other manufacturing or executive sites owned by the corporation. Listed sites are major offices. A corporation may have small bureaus worldwide.

Stock is the total number of shares in existence for that corporation. Listed in

each profile is the name and location of residence of that company's major shareholder. This is the single person who wields the true power behind the company. Any person or organization (such as the board of directors) which holds over 50% of the total stock wields ultimate control over the corporation. Open Shares are the shares currently up for sale on the World Stock Exchange. Usually in the neighborhood of ten percent.

Troops represent the combined number of combat soldiers available to the corporation. Usually, troops are spread among the offices of the corporation, with heavier numbers stationed at potential trouble sites or high security compounds. Covert Operatives are

industrial and political espionage agents and covert combat Operatives. Among other things, troops and covert operatives are used in the dangerous field of corporate extractions, removing valuable personnel from one corporation to another, either by defection or force.

Equipment and resources are the vehicles, technology and weapons owned by the corporation, as well as equipment it can commandeer or procure from other sources, such as governments, in an emergency. Most corporations own private helicopters and jets which can be retrofitted for rapid deployment and combat use, as well as dedicated military vehicles...commonly the AV-4 urban assault vehicle and the Osprey II V-TOL aircraft. The Osprey II is also used as a corporate transport in high-security situations. Large companies maintain a private airlift capability, usually using the Boeing C-25 heavy cargo aircraft. The C-25 can haul six AV-4s, two dismantled Osprey IIs, three tanks, or five hundred troops depending on how it is fitted. Combination loads are also possible due to the aircraft's modular interior design. It can be assumed that such things as armored limosines and high-tech site security are standard.

Some corporations have small orbital workstations for specialized zero-g production and research. These workstations consist of a number of pressurized "shacks" with no gravity of their own. The shacks are anchored together by a flexible structural framework that also supports power and life-support pods, and are normally staffed by a few dozen people and a small contingent of space troops. These stations also maintain weapons systems to repel attack from rival corporations if necessary. Workstations each have a few small pressurized and unpressurized service and transport vehicles. All corporations, with the exception of the Orbital Air Corporation rely on government lifting vehicles or Orbital Air to shuttle products and personnel to and from orbit.

ALL THINGS DARK & CYBERPUNK

CORPORATE PROFILES



EUROBUSINESS MACHINES CORPORATION

Multi-role computer and electronics manufacturer.

- Headquarters: Hamburg.
- Regional Offices: W. Berlin, Rome, Madrid, Paris, Stockholm, Geneva, Oslo, Helsinki, London, Tokyo, Cairo, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, Chicago, Dallas, New York, Hong Kong.
- Name and Location of Major Shareholder: Dr. Rudolf Muller, Bremen, Germany, holding 20.8% of total shares.
- Employees:
- Worldwide Troops Covert
1,000,000 20,000 2000

Background: In the late 1990's, EBM, already the largest computer and high-tech manufacturer in the world, and one of the most significant corporations in existence, pulled off the greatest free-market hostile takeover in history. Led by master corporate raider Dr. Kurt Muller, this maneuver caused the merger of EBM with many other prominent computer companies around the world, consolidating EBM's already fearsome market power. Currently, Muller, and his two partners in the triumvirate, Ulf Grunwalder of Munich and Sir Nathaniel Poole of London, comprise the majority vote of EBM, holding 52.1% between the three of them. Their long-term goal is to consolidate as much of the world's high-tech manufacturing as possible under their label by any means.

Equipment and Resources: Dispersed among the EBM offices as dictated by need are forty-six AV-4s, twenty Osprey II V-TOL attack craft, twenty corporate jets for the use of the executive board and five heavy cargo planes. In addition, each office has two helicopters and a fully staffed clinic and infirmary. EBM's power and stature gives it access to the highest levels of military technology. EBM also has a top secret underground medical and research/training facility hidden in the Alps. EBM maintains a small orbital research facility with about thirty researchers and ten soldiers.

ZETATECH

Wetware and computer hardware and software design.

- **Headquarters:** Cupertino, California. (Silicon Valley).
- **Regional Offices:** San Francisco, San Jose.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Bob Rosemont, New York, holding 58.8% of total shares.
- **Employees:**
- **Worldwide Troops Covert**
12,000 150 12

Background: Zetatech is a typical up-and-coming high-tech company doing its best to grow and diversify. It has carved itself a small niche in the industry through the traditional methods: quality products, industrial espionage, and strategically applied violence. Having made it over the first hurdle, Zetatech is attempting to build a heavy name for itself by expanding overseas, the assured way toward success, and a high inflow of stable Eurodollars. This means encroaching on markets occupied by other companies, most of which are not inclined to share their profits. Zetatech's position as an established, growing, but small and relatively weak company make it a prime target for hostile takeover, and they must be continually on guard.

Equipment and Resources: Three AV-4 assault vehicles, three helicopters, one private jet based out of San Francisco International Airport. Each office has an emergency first aid infirmary, but only the San Francisco office has a surgery capable trauma center. The military hardware available to Zetatech is only of moderate power. High-tech personal arms, armor and vehicular weapons systems are readily available, but only limited amounts of heavier weapons are available, and usually they can not be obtained on short notice. Zetatech has no airlift capability of its own, but could arrange access to heavy lifting aircraft given enough time.

network news 54

Nationwide broadcasting service.

- **Headquarters:** New York.
- **Regional offices:** Atlanta, Chicago, New Orleans, Dallas, Indianapolis, Denver, Arizona, Portland, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Detroit, Washington, with subsidiary stations in most major cities.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Edwin R. Dreyer Foundation, under control of Michelle Dreyer. Located at Fifty Pines Ranch, near Santa Fe, New Mexico. The estate controls 27.9% of all shares.

- **Employees:**
- **Worldwide Troops Covert**
78,000 5,000 750

Background: Network News 54 is a wavelength monopolizer, operating on the same frequency across the country. Accordingly, no matter where you go in the country, Network News 54 is on Channel 54. Despite its name, News 54 offers many diversions in addition to news. Every regional office offers a slightly different schedule to its district, with syndicated series, non prime-time movies, independent local news programs. Certain elements of the broadcasting are universal nationwide, such as prime-time series and bi-hourly national and world news shows.

Equipment and Resources: Network News 54 owns 42 AV-4s, ostensibly used as mobile news gathering and broadcasting facilities. These vehicles also retain much of their combat function. News 54 also owns 30 helicopters for weather and traffic reporting at each of the network offices, as well as for shuttling company executives, and ten corporate jets and five Osprey II aircraft. The network has standard personal equipment for its troops, but little access to military weapons of a non man-portable nature, with the exception of a few vehicles. News 54 has no airlift capability of its own.

Orbital Air



Cargo and passenger transport to Earth orbit, and maintenance of commercial orbital facilities.

- **Headquarters:** Nairobi, Kenya.
- **Regional Offices:** Anchorage, Vancouver, Montreal, New York, Washington, Miami, Houston, St. Louis, Chicago, Denver, Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Mexico City, Rio De Janeiro, London, Paris, Madrid, Cairo, Sydney, Singapore, Tokyo, Honolulu and the Johnson Orbital Facility in low Earth orbit.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Antoine DuBois, Paris, holding 15.2% of total shares.
- **Employees:**

<u>Worldwide</u>	<u>Troops</u>	<u>Covert</u>
104,000	10,043	700

Background: Orbital Air holds a key position in the twenty-first century; with their large fleet of French-made Hermes space-planes they monopolize all orbital lifting capability, with the exception of a few governments, none of which offers comparable service. Many corporations rely on Orbital Air for transport of cargo out of the gravity well. The Euro-Space Agency's Crystal Tower L-5 colony, a massive orbital hotel complex for the ultra-rich, would be out of business without them. With all commercial space bound cargo dependent upon them, Orbital Air is in a lucrative position that it would like very much to maintain. A large part of OA's budget and covert resources is put to use ensuring that they remain the leader in orbital technology, and that the competition does not make it off the ground, literally or figuratively. Currently, their eye is on China, which is improving its commercial lift capability rapidly. Also, Euro-flight Corporation is expanding its operations, and expecting to bring orbital services online soon. This has OA worried about its monopoly. The Johnson Orbital Facility is a transfer station for passengers bound for the Crystal Tower, where they switch from the space-planes to space transport shuttles

assembled at the OA orbital workstations, or purchased from the Euro-Space Agency.

Equipment and Resources: 35 orbit capable Hermes Scramjet space-planes, 35 corporate jets, two helicopters per office, 70 AV-4 urban assault vehicles, 15 Boeing C-25 heavy cargo jets, and 30 Osprey II V-TOL aircraft. All major offices have surgery capable infirmaries. Orbital Air is well equipped, and has access to almost all levels of military equipment. It is primarily interested in space defense and air-superiority weaponry to protect its orbital and air-borne resources. In addition to the Johnson Facility, Orbital Air maintains two small maintenance and research workstations, and has a small fleet of orbital vehicles to transport crews between the facilities.

Microtech is worried not so much about acquiring proprietary data through espionage as protecting itself against such theft. This is where most of its covert and military resources go, as well as a sizable amount of its own computer power. Microtech must be vigilant for external threat as well, however, as there are several larger corporations who would like to acquire Microtech, or see it eliminated in order to further the success of their own products. Accordingly, Microtech is attempting to beef up both its financial and military security.

Equipment and Resources: Six AV-4 assault vehicles, ten helicopters, two Osprey IIs and three corporate jets are dispersed among the offices. Microtech has access to sophisticated military hardware on a fairly small scale, with good amounts of personal weaponry and armor, including man-portable heavy weapons. It has no heavy, mobile armored vehicles (such as tanks), and only limited access to other vehicularly based heavy weapons. With sufficient time, however, Microtech can usually acquire whatever equipment it needs. Only the Dallas office has a surgery-capable medical center, but all of the other offices have well staffed infirmaries capable of dealing with most non intensive care needs, including trauma and illness. Microtech has no orbital platform of its own, but it occasionally ships experiments up by Hermes space-plane if zero gravity is required.



Microtech

Ultra-sophisticated mainframes and workstations.

- **Headquarters:** Dallas, Texas.
- **Regional Offices:** Sunnyvale, California, Miami, London, Tokyo.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Stephen Lew and family, San Francisco, holding 55.5% of total shares.
- **Employees:**

<u>Worldwide</u>	<u>Troops</u>	<u>Covert</u>
52,340	1,000	52

Background: Microtech does one thing, and they do it well: build full-size computers. They concentrate all of their efforts into improving their mainframe computer systems, without dabbling in cybernetic computers or mini-computers. Indeed, they take pride in the fact that their mainframes and workstations are used by other companies to design those types of systems. They are to the 2000's what Cray was to the 1980's and '90's, but on a larger scale. Microtech is the industry standard. Defense agencies around the world rely on Microtech mainframes, and the Euro-Space Agency has several. With its hold on the specialized mainframe industry, Mi-

BioTechnica

Genetic engineering, microbiological and biochemical research.

- **Headquarters:** Rome.
- **Regional Offices:** London, Bonn, Paris, and La Jolla California.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Nicolo Loggagia, Monte Carlo, Monaco, holding 13.8% of total shares.
- **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
36,256	1,833	124

Background: When the fuel crisis really began to affect the industrialized community in the late 1990s, Biotechnica, then a small firm with only one office, came up with the answer: CHOOH2™ (pronounced 'chew two'). CHOOH2™ (not its actual chemical formula) is a complex grain alcohol produced by genetically engineered yeasts and wheat strains created by Biotechnica. The potential of CHOOH2™ was realized almost immediately after it was introduced, and within a few years all fuel burning vehicles and power plants had converted to the new fuel. Although Biotechnica held worldwide patents, it lacked the production facilities to meet worldwide demand, forcing it to license production to several large agribusinesses and petro-corporations. These deals made Biotechnica an extremely wealthy, but still not particularly large, company. It is currently expanding, and working on its next big biotechnical breakthrough.

Equipment and Resources: Biotechnica has ten AV-4 assault vehicles, five corporate jets, three Osprey II aircraft and one Boeing C-25 heavy cargo jet, moved as needed among its offices. In addition, each office maintains two helicopters and a surgery capable infirmary. Due to the worldwide importance of its developments, Biotechnica has a fair amount of power in the political community, and it can usually obtain whatever military equipment it needs, although some items may take more time to procure than others. Biotechnica has one orbital research workstation.

INFOCOMP

Corporate think-tank and information brokers.

- **Headquarters:** Los Angeles.
- **Regional Offices:** San Francisco, New York, Washington, Chicago, Denver, Vancouver, London, Honolulu.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Robert D. (Bob) Alvarez, Kapaa, Kauai holding 19.2% of total shares.
- **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
9,352	400	34

MERRILL, ASUKAGA & FINCH

Exclusive investment and financial counseling firm.

- **Headquarters:** New York.
- **Regional Offices:** San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Hong Kong, Tokyo, London, Paris, Munich, Rome.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Howard Merrill, New York, holding 22.0% of total shares.

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
21,926	100	10

World News Service™

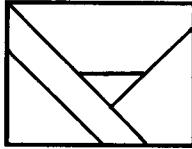
Worldwide news service.

- **Headquarters:** London.
 - **Regional Offices:** Anchorage, Seattle, Ottawa, New York, Washington, Miami, Dallas, St. Louis, Chicago, Denver, Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Mexico City, Caracas, Rio De Janeiro, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, London, Berlin, Jerusalem, Cairo, Tokyo, Honolulu, Tangier, Beijing, Shanghai, Crystal Tower.
 - **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Mahmet Al Hamedi, Riyadh, holding 31.6% of total shares.
 - **Employees:**
 - **Worldwide Troops Covert**
- | | | |
|---------|-------|-----|
| 215,000 | 7,005 | 644 |
|---------|-------|-----|

Background: WNS keeps tabs on the world, by any means possible. Newspapers and news stations around the world pay large amounts of money to receive WNS stories via the WorldSat Network. WNS has more offices than most corporations, but most of these offices are fairly small and limited in function, intended to serve only as bases of operations for the Operatives and reporters working in an area. WNS has at least a small office in almost every major city in the world, but these are sometimes no more than rooms with a few provisions, one resident agent and a Telecom-Terminal linked to the nearest regional office. Few competitors can match WNS' information gathering capabilities, and WNS ensures that it remains at the forefront, not only through legitimate means, but also through spying, espionage, sabotage and illegal snooping of all sorts. WNS does not run any stations of its own, choosing instead to broker its information to the highest bidder. There is no shortage of buyers, as ratings-hungry broadcasters will fork over millions for exclusive rights to an especially juicy story and the included multi-media presentation package containing WNS' videos, write-ups and commentaries.

Equipment and Resources: Dispersed among the regional offices as needed are

65 AV-4 urban assault vehicles, twenty-five Osprey II aircraft, twenty-five corporate jets, and five Boeing C-25 heavy cargo aircraft. Each regional office has two helicopters and an infirmary. Only the London, Los Angeles, New York, Paris, Tokyo and Seoul offices have surgical capability. WNS has access to moderate levels of military technology, including personal armor and weapons, light vehicles and aircraft.



PETROCHEM

Petrochemical products and agribusiness. World's largest CHOOH² producer.

- **Headquarters:** Dallas, Texas.
 - **Regional Offices:** New York, Washington, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco, Tokyo, London, Hamburg, Hong Kong, Paris, Rome. Oil fields in Canada, Texas, Alaska, California and Antarctica. Agricultural areas in California and the Midwest and Southeast.
 - **Name and Location of major shareholder:** Ellen Trieste, Crystal Tower orbital facility, holding 23.7% of total shares.
 - **Employees:**
 - **Worldwide Troops Covert**
- | | | |
|---------|--------|-------|
| 338,000 | 30,000 | 2,500 |
|---------|--------|-------|

Background: Petrochem Industries keeps the world running, literally. They are the world's largest producer of CHOOH², and control millions of acres of arable land across the United States. This land is used to grow the genetically altered wheat that is used to make CHOOH². (Surplus grain is shipped across the world as food.) Petrochem is also one of the largest remaining oil producers. With the oil supply dwindling, all remaining fossil fuels are used to make plastics and other synthetics. Petrochem has more fertile oilfields than any other company. All of these assets are huge, and accordingly hard to protect from other companies that would like to usurp Petrochem's wealth. As a result, Petrochem invests huge amounts

of money in protecting itself, maintaining an armed force worthy of a small country. Currently, all of the major petrochemical corporations are in a research race to come up with a viable artificial plastic base to entirely replace petroleum products. Consequently, industrial espionage is rife in the industry.

Equipment and Resources: Petrochem has vast interests to protect, and is thus fiercely armed. Dispersed among their major offices, oil fields and agricultural areas are 150 AV-4s, forty Osprey II aircraft, ten Boeing C-25 heavy cargo jets and fifteen corporate jets. Each office has three helicopters and a surgery capable infirmary. Petrochem has considerable access to the highest levels of military technology, due to their national and worldwide importance. They also have a large orbital research facility that is well protected, physically and electronically.

TRAUMA TEAM INTERNATIONAL

Ambulance and paramedical services

- **Headquarters:** Los Angeles.
- **Regional Offices:** Worldwide in all major Cities
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Carrie Lachanan of San Antonio, Texas, holding 33.3% of total shares.
- **Employees:**
- **Worldwide Troops Covert**

16,526	350	25
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Background: As one of the largest private medical firms in the world, Trauma Team provides ambulance services and paramedical support for a client base of at least fifteen million people. Equipped with top line AV type vehicles, Trauma Teams provide an essential service in the 2000's—recovering wounded clients from the field.

Equipment and Resources: Dispersed as needed among the offices are 1,305 AV-4 aerodyne vehicles, thirty corporate jets, twenty two Osprey II aircraft and four Boeing C-25 heavy cargo jets. Each office also has its own surgical-capable infirmary.

ALL THINGS DARK & CYBERPUNK

CORPORATE PROFILES



**WorldSat
Communications
Network**

*Satellite transmission and
communications.*

- **Headquarters:** Paris.
- **Regional Offices:** London, Rome, Madrid, Stockholm, Bonn, Cairo, Nairobi, Brasilia, Washington, Los Angeles, Toronto, Tokyo, Beijing, Hong Kong.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Raymond Rousseau, Menton, French Riviera, holding 15.5% of total shares.

• **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
51,625	7,444	658

Background: WorldSat has the monopoly on large-scale satellite communications, and is responsible for the transmission of phone, military, computer and commercial data. These communications are crucial worldwide, and their disruption could be disastrous. WorldSat invests a great deal in making sure this does not happen. The satellites are even shielded against electro-magnetic pulse, although no one is really sure how well this will work. Although it is illegal, it is also possible for WorldSat to monitor any of the communications it is transmitting.

Equipment and Resources: Dispersed as needed among the offices are thirty AV-4 assault vehicles, twelve Osprey II aircraft, five corporate jets and three Boeing C-25 heavy cargo jets. Each office also has two helicopters and a surgical infirmary. World Sat's satellites are crucial to many nation's communications. Consequently, most high-tech military hardware is available to them on short notice. WorldSat has a large, well protected orbital service facility.

ARASAKA

Corporate security, corporate police and various corporate suboperations.

- **Headquarters:** Tokyo.
- **Regional Offices:** Singapore, Hong Kong, Osaka, Kyoto, Bangkok, Baghdad, Sydney, London, Hamburg, Paris, Madrid, Rome, Geneva, Helsinki, The Hague, Rio de Janiero, Montreal, New York, Washington, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Honolulu. Suboffices throughout the world.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Saburo Arasaka, Tokyo, holding 19.9% of total shares.
- **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
1,000,000	100,000	5,000

Background: If you want it protected, these are the people to speak to. They maintain the largest armed force of any corporation, although they do not maintain a particularly large amount of on-hand military heavy weapons. These troops are mostly licensed out to other firms as corporate security guards, couriers and mercenaries. They are the best trained and hardest in the business, and will follow their client's orders second only to Arasaka's. To the Arasaka corporation, they are loyal to the point of death. Arasaka is more interested in fostering its own political goals than protecting other companies, and they use their position of trust with major corporations around the world to gain inside information, contacts and advantages that will help them to realize their ultimate goal of political and economic control of Japan.

Equipment and Resources: Dispersed among Arasaka's offices are 250 AV-4 assault vehicles, 250 Osprey II aircraft, eleven corporate jets and twenty Boeing C-25 heavy cargo jets. Each office also has two helicopters, and a surgical infirmary. Arasaka's wealth gives it access to almost all levels of military technology on fairly short notice. Arasaka has a secret training facility in Hokkaido, where it trains its security troops and Operatives.

MILITECH

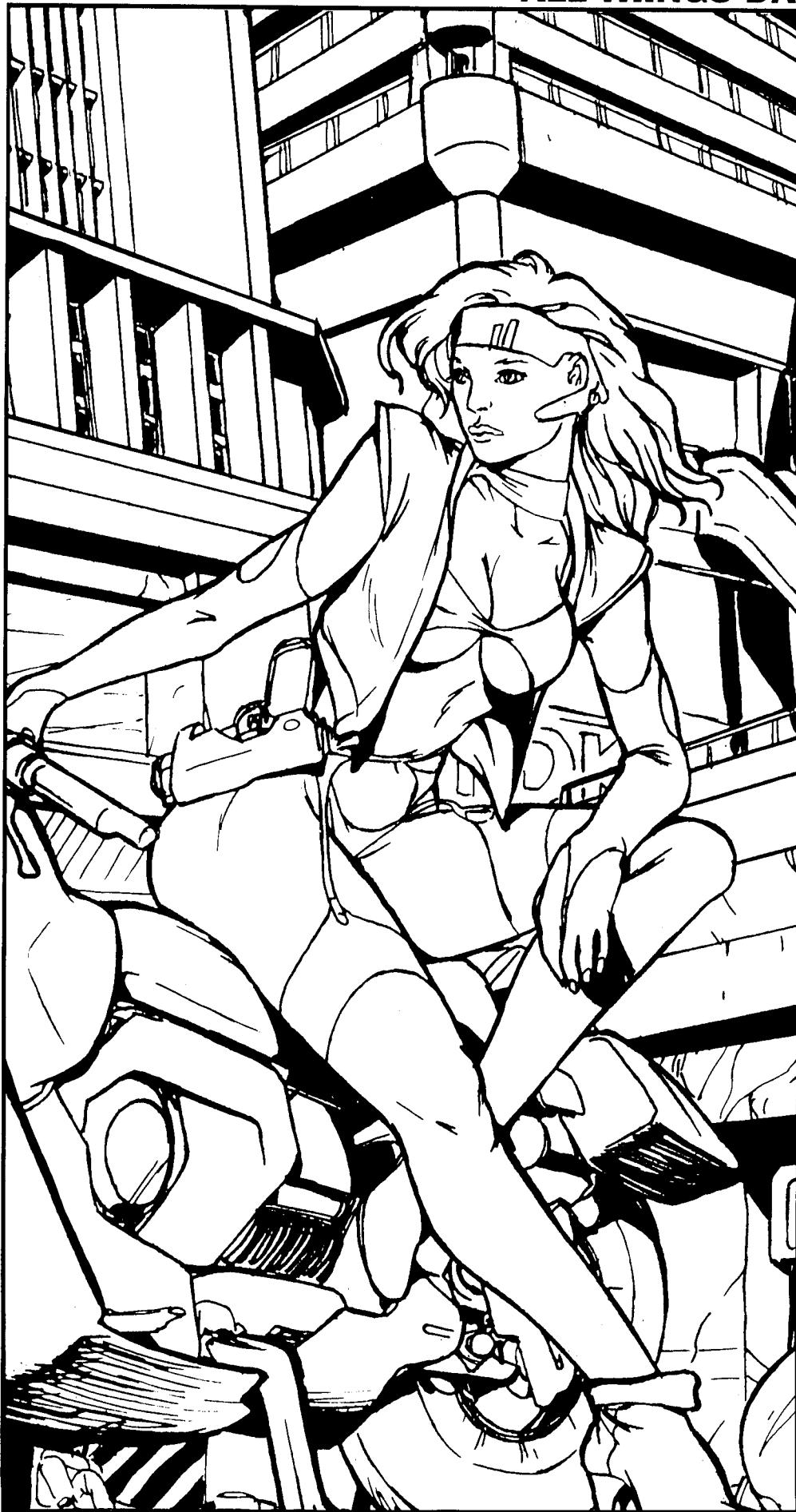
Arms manufacturing and distribution, mercenaries.

- **Headquarters:** Washington D.C.
- **Regional Offices:** New York, Miami, Chicago, Montreal, London, Rome, Zurich, Night City, Washington, Los Angeles, Toronto, Tokyo, Beijing, Hong Kong.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Gen. Donald Lundee, USMC (ret.), Annapolis, Maryland, holding 13.9% of total shares.
- **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
350,000	100,000	2,031

Equipment and Resources: Dispersed among its offices and mercenary forces as needed are 200 AV-4 urban assault vehicles, 150 Osprey II aircraft, twenty corporate jets and twenty Boeing C-25 heavy cargo aircraft. (Usually, 50-75% of this equipment is in the field at any given time.) Additionally, each office has two helicopters, and a surgical infirmary. Naturally, MTI has access to large amounts of the best military technology available. MTI maintains secret training camps in Texas, the Sierra-Nevada Mountains of California, and Florida.

Background: MTI is the world's largest producer and seller of military weapons of all kinds. From revolvers to tanks to jet fighters, MTI is a major military supplier to the United States, and the United States, in turn, is MTI's largest customer. MTI will deal worldwide with anyone who has money. MTI's mercenary forces and in-house supply of weaponry make it the most militarily powerful company in the world, if not the most economically. That will come later. . . .



*"I love this place.
On the other
hand, I've also
been accused of
being a
masochist."*

—Johnny Silverhand

*"Nobody ever
leaves Night City.
Except in a body
bag."*

—Bes Isis

*"The City of the
Fallen Angels.
Not to mention
the Legion, the
Chromers, the
Gilligans, the
Inquisitors..."*

—Lt. Strawberry
Morressey
NCPD

*"Night
City....Ahwoooo!"*

—Unknown

WELCOME TO NIGHT CITY

Night City is a modern urban environment, complete with dark streets, filthy alleys and rowdy clubs. Where is it located? What's its real name? Not important. Night City is any big city in the world—it could be yours—late night and up against the wall.

The important thing about Night City is the feel, not the substance. It should be a place that the Referee has an immediate grasp of, allowing him to give his descriptions the proper "you are there" ambience. Night City plays best when you use a city that the players are somewhat familiar with; the recognition of street names and places juxtaposed with Boostergangs and hovering assault vehicles will make the 21st century even stranger than fiction.

But we realize some of you don't live in a major urban area. For those of you who can't just use a map of your home town, here's our own Night City to begin your adventures in.

SECTION

15 NIGHT CITY

Night City: The Overview

Name: Night City

Founded: 1994

Population: 5,000,000

Businesses: Technical, light industry, trade, electronics.

Background

Night City is a moderately-sized city located on the west coast of the United States. It has a population of about five million in the Greater Night City Area, with the majority living in sprawling suburbs to the southwest. The city itself lies on a large bay, surrounded by several small suburbs and suburban communities (Westbrook, Heywood, Pacifica, South Night City).

Years of pollution, neglect and one of the most corrupt governments in the world have reduced most of these cities to cluttered, semi-deserted sprawls, with burned out homes, empty shopping malls and rampant street crime.

History

Night City was founded rather recently as cities go. Before 1994, the city was merely a clutter of unincorporated suburban sprawl between San Francisco and Los Angeles. During the Collapse, an enterprising land developer named Richard Night bought up the majority of what was later to become the Corporate Center and City Center areas. He proposed to start a new, safe, clean corporate city, free of crime and urban blight. By offering lucrative tax

packages to several major corporations (PetroChem, for example, had established drilling rights off the coast), he was able to establish a strong economic base as well as an instant population of corporate employees.

As planned, Night City was a clean, open community with rapid transit, and safe streets. Unfortunately, Night's plan went awry. In using his own advanced building techniques and materials, he excluded a number of established unions and construction firms, many of these controlled by organized crime syndicates. Four years after initial construction, the powerful gang bosses murdered Night and took over the Night City project.

Between selling contracts to their cronies, setting up drug and extortion rackets, and generally inviting the scum of the Collapse into the area, the gangs managed to turn a relatively clean, modern city into an embattled war zone. Crime, drugs, prostitution, random violence and cybernetic terrorism soon became the rule of law. By 2005, the name Night City had taken on a grim and deadly new meaning.

The Corporate Takeover: By 2009, the Corps decided they'd had enough. In lightning strikes, covert Solo squads eliminated most of the gang leaders and established a Corporation-controlled City Council. The newly elected Council, faced with chaos in the City, deputized Corporate security forces and allowed them full authority within the City limits. The Corporate and City centers were cleaned out and restored

to their pristine state. The old Harbor Mall (originally built in the 1980's), was demolished and the New Harbor Mall constructed.

The Present

Night City today is a rapidly growing urban region, still rife with urban violence and street crime, but with strong economic growth in the Corporate sector. It is the quintessential city of the Cyberpunk future—gritty, dangerous, but possessing an urban slick and stylish cool that makes it unique. As Bes Isis, Net 54 newcaster and one of Night City's most well known public figures puts it—

"Nobody ever leaves Night City. Except in a body bag."

Particulars

Political

The Night City Mayor's Office owes everything to the Corporations, and accordingly, the Corps can do anything they want in Night City. The current Mayor of Night City is Mbole Ebunike, a well-trained corporate puppet recently elected for his second term in 2020.

Public Services

Hospitals: There are two public hospitals (City Medical Center; Crisis Medical Center) in the Central Night City area, as well as another seven in the Greater Night City Area. There are at least four private medical centers in the City as well, mostly catering to cyberwear installation, bodybanking and biosculpture work.

Information: City information is provided for a nominal fee (1eb/min) via Data Term. Data Terms are located on the corners of most (60%) City Streets, and can be used to access information, computer services, fax-mail and Net input.

Law Enforcement: Although much of Night City has been brought under Corporate control (these areas are

known as the Corporate Zone and are heavily patrolled by hired security), pockets of urban blight still infest the Marina, Harbor and Lake Park districts. Crime in these Controlled Zones is kept in check by brutal security sweeps and constant surveillance. The South City is still a seedy ruin of cheap tract housing, spreading into an area so blighted, it is known as the Combat Zone.

City Police Services: Police in Night City are scattered, poorly equipped and badly managed. Cops can often be bribed or convinced that they just don't want to get involved. The most incorruptable people on the Force are in C-SWAT, the CyberPsycho Squad. Determined and dangerous, these mavericks and loners are just too crazy to care about being on the take.

Transportation

Public Transportation: The Night City Transit Corporation (NCTC) provides for bus service on most major city thoroughfares. Light lev-rail transport is provided by NCART (Night City Area Rapid Transit), a public corporation with some private (read: Corporate) funding.

Night City Metro: The local airport, handling both domestic and international flights. Night City is on the hourly San Francisco to LA commuter run, as well as daily flights to New York, Chicago, Atlanta and Washington.

Suborbital flights are available by taking the LA commuter flight, then transferring via Orbital Air maglev train to the Mojave Spaceport.

Freeways: Night City is on State Highway 828, which runs east to connect to I-5. Ground transit to San Francisco is about 4 hours (due to road gang activity and bad roads); to LA about 6 hours.

**FOR MORE ABOUT NIGHT CITY, CHECK OUT
RTG'S NIGHT CITY SUPPLEMENT (CP 3501)
AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL HOBBY STORE.**



"Sex. Drugs.
Rock and Roll.
Fully automatic
weapons with
grenade
launchers."

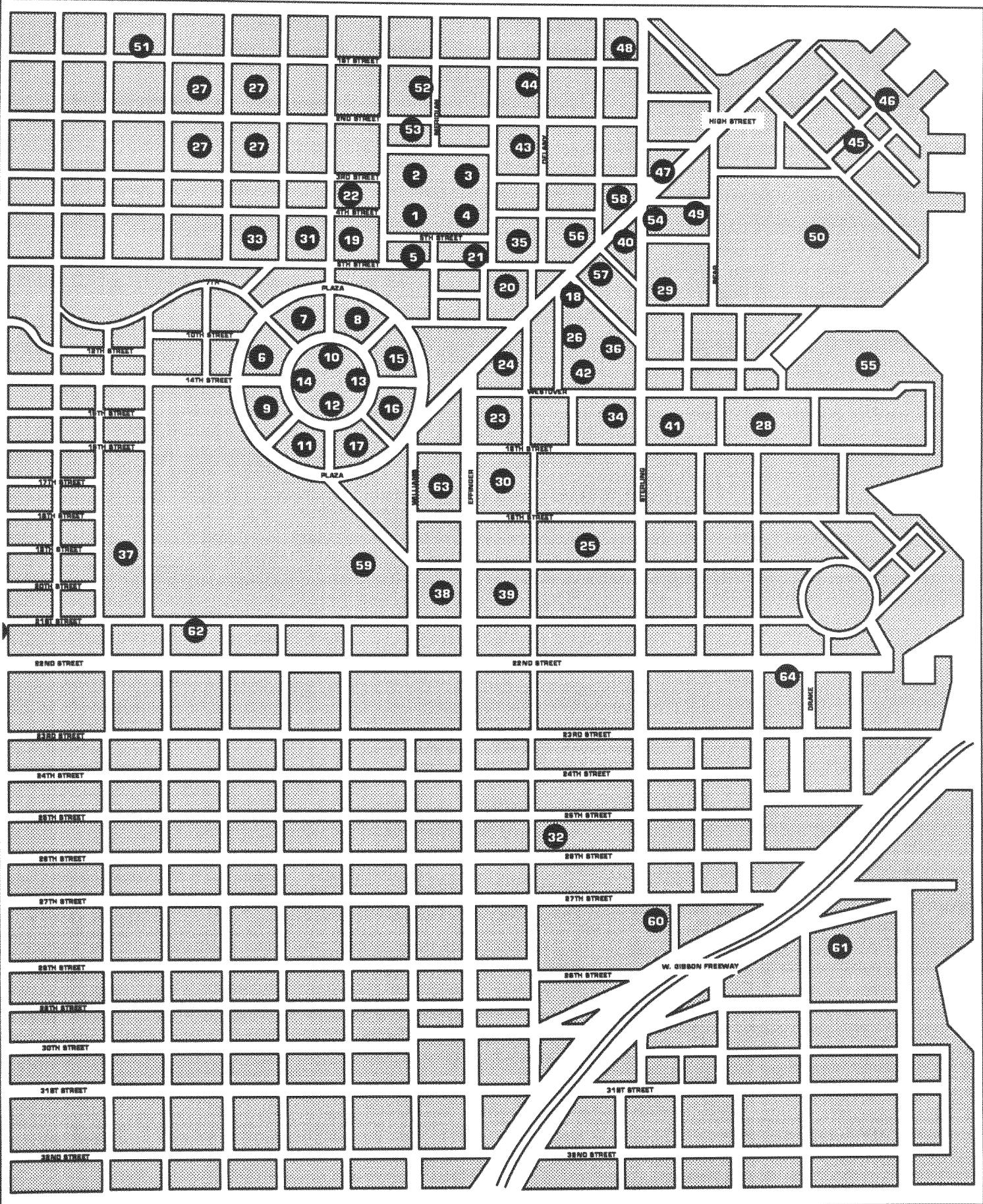
We got it all.
This is a modern
city..."

—Ripperjack

Places of Interest

Following are some of the major attractions and possibilities of Night City.

- 1 City Hall
- 2 City Library
- 3 City Museum
- 4 Hall of Justice
- 5 Marcini's: A large, expensive department store where you can find almost any luxury item.
- 6 Raven Microcyb
- 7 Microtech
- 8 Arasaka Tower
- 9 Eurobusiness Machines
- 10 Petrochem
- 11 Network 54 offices
- 12 Plaza Business Tower (96 stories of assorted businesses)
- 13 West City Tower (88 stories of assorted businesses)
- 14 Infocomp
- 15 WNS offices
- 16 Orbital Air Offices
- 17 Merrill, Asukaga & Finch
- 18 The Twilight Zone
- 19 1st Night CityBank
- 20 Euro-Worldbank
- 21 Grandmill's (large, expensive department store)
- 22 Totentanz: When the owner of this bar named his bar Deathdance, he didn't know how right he would be. A dance hall/bar housed on the top floor of an old skyscraper, this bar is well-known for a place to find Boostergangs. They all seem to congregate here, but they don't come to dance for the pleasure of it. It's considered a bad night if the body count is under twenty.
- 23 WorldSat Communications
- 24 Hotel Hamilton: A fairly modern hotel, known for its excellent security.
- 25 Highcourt Plaza Hotel: A very classy hotel featuring glass elevators, excellent service, and a 1920s decor.
- 26 Trauma Team™ Offices
- 27 Industrial Park
- 28 City Medical Center
- 29 REO Meatwagon (rival medical team) Offices
- 30 Atlantis: A classic "fern bar," known as a hangout for Corporates and Solos looking for jobs.
- 31 Jesse James' Non-Kosher Deli: While this may sound like an ideal place to eat, no food is ever served here. The Deli is a bar that was constructed in an old police station. Due to several unforeseen "accidents," you must register your personal weapons at the door and use the safe ones that are provided for you at the bar. There is a nightly contest to see who can get the highest body count in five minutes.
- 32 The Outer Limits (club)
- 33 Rainbow Nights: Rainbow Nights is more of a dance club than a bar. Its main attraction is a big dance floor that is almost always crowded. Every night there is a live band, usually a bunch of no names. They occasionally draw big acts like Johnny Silverhand and Kerry Eurodyne, but only under aliases.
- 34 Medical Technologies (a body bank)
- 35 City Police Precinct #1
- 36 Short Circuit: The Short Circuit is one of many bars in Night City. Like most of them, this bar has its regulars, who seem to mostly be Netrunners and Techies. Unbeknownst to most of the city, however, Livewire, one of the most reknowned Netrunners, has a shop in a back room of the bar where he buys and sells programs for use in the Net. In addition to his trading of programs, Livewire is also adept at creating his own programs, or ones that other people order.
- 37 City College
- 38 Savage Doc's (a Ripperdoc joint)
- 39 City Police Precinct #3
- 40 Night Owl: One of the few bars that is open all night. This is a heavy security, no-nonsense bar. You come here to drink when nothing else is open.
- 41 West City Bank
- 42 Crisis Medical Center: a no-questions-asked medical center for fast patchups.
- 43 Café Chrome: a favorite Rocker hangout, complete with 50's retro decor and jukebox.
- 44 MetalStorm: A dangerous Chromer bar
- 45 Warehouses
- 46 Warehouses
- 47 Medicross Preservation: an illicit body bank, not too particular about I.D.'s or death certificates.
- 48 The Slammer: Well-known among Boostergangs as a place to settle disputes peacefully. If that doesn't work, the arena is there to settle them violently. The owner, Suds Joliet, also runs betting booths and occasionally rents out the arena for other events.
- 49 Camden Court: High security condos favored by Solos, Corps. Rent is \$3,000.00 a month.
- 50 McCartney Field Stadium: Main concert venue and home of the Night City Rangers, the local football team.
- 51 City Police Precinct #2
- 52 Wing Chang: Exclusive chinese restaurant.
- 53 La Baguette: Very trendy French cuisine.
- 54 Hari Kiri: Sushi Bar
- 55 New Harbor Shopping Mall
- 56 Grand Illusion (dance club)
- 57 The Afterlife: This bar is located in an old mortuary in Night City. Consisting of three rooms, The Ante-Chamber, the Crypt, and Hades, this bar is a favorite among solos that are currently between jobs. If you need to find armed help, this is the place to go.
- 58 Night City Fire Station #1
- 59 Lake Park Bandstand
- 60 28th St. Park (contested Boostergang turf)
- 61 28th Street Underpass (a Boostergang meeting spot)
- 62 Night City Fire Station #2
- 63 Bodukkan Performance Center
- 64 Forlorn Hope (a Central American Vet bar)



NIGHT CITY ENCOUNTERS

Welcome to the mean streets of the City. These encounter tables are fast and nasty ways to keep your players moving, thinking and living Cyberpunk. Check the table for the time of day, then roll a percentage (two D10's, with one representing the 10's place) to determine the outcome. Feel free to alter the participants or the locale for extra variety.

DAYTIME ENCOUNTERS IN NIGHT CITY

1-2 **City Police:** One patrol officer, armed with AKR-20, armored in Kevlar vest. If you are wearing visible weapons or armor, he will stop you in a nice way and ask to see your identity papers. If you're argumentative, he will call for backup (3) officers to take you in.

3-8 **Corporate Guards:** Four corporate guards patrolling the area. Armored in vests & helmets, carrying Uzi's. If you're armed in a visible fashion, they will tell you to move on in a way that lets you know they're just itching to use those Uzis.

9-14 **Nomads:** Four Nomads from the Johansson Clan. Huge, rough-hewn blonde Vikings in flack vests and leather pants, carrying fighting knives and rifles. If there are attractive women in your group, they will whistle and make a general attempt at a pass. If not, they will move on.

15-20 **Boostergang:** Four low-level street punks in the colors of the Metal Warriors. They are armed with scratchers and wearing armor jackets. If your party is larger than theirs, they will avoid you. If of smaller or equal size, they will try to rough you up right on the street.

21-23 **Petty Criminal:** One pickpocket. His REF is 8, his pickpocket skill is +6. Armed with only a knife. If he's successful, you have lost your wallet (and all cash, cards, etc.). If he fails in the attempt, feel free to beat him to a pulp. It can only improve his technique.

24-29 **Solo Team:** Three Solos, armed in flack vest & pants, carrying a mix of assault weapons. If you are wearing a rival Corporate uniform or patch, they will: 1-5, look you over and move on; 6-10, they will pick a fight. If you are wearing their Corporate colors, they'll ask you to join them for a drink. Roll 1D10 and take your chances.

30-33 **Boostergang:** Six members of the Iron Sights gang, armed with automatic pistols and rippers. They will hassle any attractive men or women in the party (the gang is mixed sex), shake you down for money and generally be looking for a fight. Go ahead and give it to them.

34-39 **Techies:** Two Techies, without weapons or armor. If you are wearing any unusual weapons or cybertech, they will stop you and ask to look. If it's removable, they may offer to trade some Skill chipware (up to the Referee's discretion) in exchange.

40-42 **Culties:** The Inquisitors are out in force on the Street. Six of them, armed with hidden nunchaku, corner you to hand out literature. If you are wearing any visible cybertech (arms, eyes with logos, etc.), be prepared to be heavily harrassed and followed. If you use any violence, a minor riot may develop.

43-45 **Private Investigator:** You observe him/her shadowing you. The PI is armed with a heavy caliber revolver and wearing an armor jacket. If you rough the PI up a bit, you may discover that he/she thinks you are someone else.

46-51 **Corporates:** Two corporates from a middle level firm, headed for lunch. One is wearing an armor T-shirt under his/her suit. Neither are armed, but both carry cell phones. Roll 1D10.1-4, they are being followed by thugs intent on robbery—if you feel altruistic or just want to score a reward, here's your chance. 5-8, they are lost and will ask directions to the restaurant (you could lead them the wrong way and mug them in an alley). 9-10, they know you from a previous encounter and stop you on purpose. Not good, probably.

52-57 **Medias:** A camera and interviewer team, doing random "man-on-the-street" stories. The subject of the interview will vary widely, depending on recent events and what's considered controversial at the time. If you want to be well known, this will put your face on TV screens all over Night City. On the other hand, it may alert your worst enemies to the fact that you are still alive.

58-64 **Locals:** Young men or women (2 to 6 total). Roll 1D10. Will be friendly on 1-5, hostile on 6-8, abusive on 9-10. No weapons or armor. These guys must be crazy.

65-70 **Crazy:** Some bearded, wild-eyed freak in torn rags. Roll 1D10. On 1-5, he rants at you a while, then starts to rant at someone else. 6-8, he decides you are one of the space aliens from Venus, and follows you, screaming invective. 9-10, he starts to scream, passes out in front of you, and everyone around thinks you had something to do with it.

71-75 **Trauma Team:** Standard 5 man team on a lunch break. Their AV is parked at the end of the corner, while their Solos keep watch. This might be a good time to make friends and spread a little "insurance" Eurobucks around.

76-81 **Rockerboys:** A three man band on the way to practice. Carrying real guitars and wearing leathers, no less. Roll 1D10. On 1-4, they will invite you to their gig tonight.

82-90 **Posergang:** Five members of the well-known Kennedys Posergang. Two male members look like RFK, one looks like JFK, the two females look like Jackie. If your group says anything—anything—about their appearance, their boosted hearing will pick it up and they will immediately take offense. They are wearing armor Ts under their retro-style 60s clothing and carrying Hvy. Handguns. JFK has a cyber-chrome right arm.

91-96 **Security Guards:** You're treading too close to the tail of an important Corporate. These guys will come back and warn you off. Flack armor, Sternmeyer 35's, boosted Reflexes.

97-00 **Media Star:** Famous media star. Roll 1D10. 1-6, will sign autographs if asked. 7-9, will be hostile and yell for a policeman or a bodyguard. On a 10,

he/she will take a liking to one member of the party and allow you to tag along.

EVENING ENCOUNTERS IN NIGHT CITY

1-5 **City Police:** Two patrol officers, armed with FN-RALS, armored in flack vests, pants. If you are wearing visible weapons or armor, they will stop you and demand identity papers. If you're argumentative, They will call for backup (3) officers to take you in. If you reach for a weapon, they'll shoot first, fill out the paperwork later.

6-11 **Corporate Guards:** Four corporate guards patrolling the area. Armored in flack vests & helmets, carrying Minami 10's. Unless you're a Corporate, they don't think you have any business running around their nice clean city at night. Move it, punk.

12-17 **Nomads:** A mixed group of six Nomads from the Roadrunners Pack. Wearing flack vests and leather pants, carrying fighting knives and rifles. Moderately drunk and looking for a fight. They will hassle any attractive looking men or women in your group. Face it; they want a fight. Give them one.

18-24 **Boostergang:** Five low-level street punks from the Piranhas boostergang. If you look like easy prey and have money, they'll rough you up. They are armed with Med. Handguns, knives and boosted reflexes.

25-30 **Street Punks:** Six Smash-heads, looking for credit to feed their habit. If you're not wearing Corporate or booster colors, they'll try to rush you right on the street. Armed with fighting knives; no armor.

31-36 **Solo Team:** Four Solos, armored in flack vest & pants, carrying smartgun chipped H&K MPSKs. Boosted reflexes, boosted hearing, cyberoptics with low light, IR and targeting. Obviously up to some grey operation. If you are wearing a rival Corporate uniform or patch, they will: 1-5, dodge you and move on; 6-10, decide you are a witness and ought to be totalled right now.

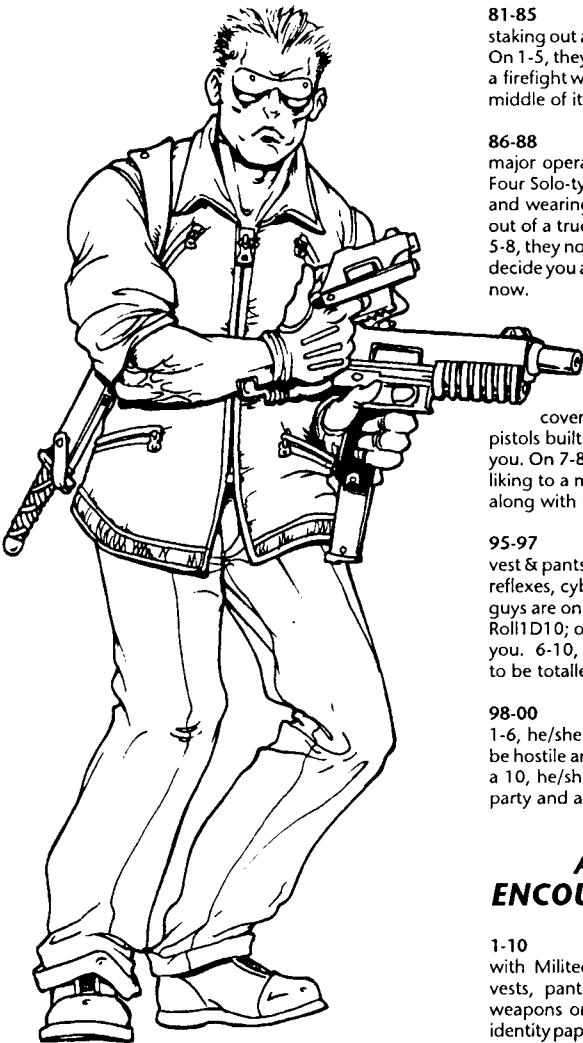
37-42 **Boostergang:** Six members of the Iron Sights gang, armed with automatic weapons, rippers, IR cyberoptics, boosted reflexes. They will hassle any attractive men or women in the party (the gang is mixed sex), shake you down for money and generally be looking for a fight. This might be tougher than the daylight crowd was.

43-44 **Techies:** Two Techies, with one Minami 10 submachinegun, wearing flack vests. Roll 1D10. 1-2, they are lugging a crate of tools into an AV-4. 3-5, they are working on a City system in your path. 6-10, they are walking toward you on their way to work.

45-50 **Culties:** The Inquisitors are out in maximum force. Six of them, armed openly with nunchaku, corner you for inspection. If you are wearing any visible cybertech (Arms, eyes with logos, etc.), they will proceed to beat you to a pulp.

51-54 **Private Investigator:** Roll 1D10. On 1-3, he/she is ahead of you, hassling an informant on the streetcorner concerning the whereabouts of a suspect. 4-7, he/she is shadowing someone ahead of you. 8-10, they will stop you and ask you whether you have seen the person they are following. The PI is armed with a heavy caliber revolver and wearing an armor jacket.

55-57 **Corporates:** Four corporates from a large firm, headed for the lev train station. Both are wearing armor T-shirts under their suits and carrying poly-



mer one shots. Roll 1D10. 1-4, they are being followed by thugs intent on robbery. 5-8, they think you're Boosters and will open fire at any provocation. 9-10, they not only think you're trouble, but will call for Corporate backup (see Corporate Guards, above).

58-64 Locals: Young man or woman. Roll 1D10. 1-5, they are being held up by two thugs from the Metal Warriors gang. 6-10, they are being beaten severely by the Inquisitors for the sin of having designer eyes.

65-70 Firefight: Great. You just walked into a major altercation between the *Bradi Bunch* (a high-level Posergang that all look like refugees from an old sitcom) and the *Red Chrome Legion* (a neo-fascist Boostergang). Both are wearing armor jackets and firing large caliber handguns. Rippers, cyberarm weapons and slice-n-dices are everywhere. Pick a side, or pick a target.

71-75 Trauma Team: The AV-4 hits the ground in the middle of a recent firefight. Roll 1D10. On a 1-5, the Team decides you're bystanders and ignores you. On 6-10, they figure you're part of the problem and the Solos open up with MAC10s.

76-80 Rockerboys: You overtake a four man band on the way to a gig, backed by their two Solo bodyguards and their Fixer manager. Roll 1D10. On 1-4, they will invite you to join them. 5-8, they will send the Solos to "deal with those guys who are following them." 9-10, they ignore you.

81-85 Medias: A camera and interviewer team, staking out a building on a hot assignment. Roll 1D10. On 1-5, they will be spotted by their story-subject and a firefight will ensue. You, of course, will be right in the middle of it.

86-88 Major Criminal: You've walked into a major operation of the notorious *Scagattalia Family*. Four Solo-type men armed with Med. & Heavy pistols and wearing flack vests, are unloading a drug cargo out of a truck. Roll 1D10. 1-4, they don't notice you. 5-8, they notice you and one warns you off. 9-10, they decide you are a witness and ought to be totalled right now.

89-94 Chromers: Four members of the *Steel Slaughter Slammers*. They are wearing armor Ts with metal spiked leathers. All have metal arms covered with chrome, with rippers and Med pistols built in. Roll 1D10—on a 1-6, they will go for you. On 7-8, they'll pass you by. On 9-10, they take a liking to a member of the party and invite you to tag along with them.

95-97 Solo team: Three Solos, armed in flack vest & pants, carrying smartgun chipped Uzis. Boosted reflexes, cyberoptics with low light, targeting. These guys are on a total black operation (an assassination). Roll 1D10; on a 1-5, if you ignore them, they'll ignore you. 6-10, they'll decide you are a witness and ought to be totalled right now.

98-00 Media Star: Famous media star. Roll 1D10. 1-6, he/she will sign autographs if asked. 7-9, will be hostile and yell for a policeman or a bodyguard. On a 10, he/she will take a liking to one member of the party and allow you to tag along.

AFTER-MIDNIGHT ENCOUNTERS IN NIGHT CITY

1-10 City Police: Two patrol officers, armed with Militech Ronin assault rifles, armored in flack vests, pants, helmets. If you are wearing visible weapons or armor, they will stop you and demand identity papers. You've got no business running around after midnight and they know it. They'll stop you and look for any pretext to make a bust. If you're wearing visible weapons, consider yourself detained. If you go for a weapon, they will shoot first and forget the paperwork.

11-22 Corporate Guards: Four corporate guards patrolling the area. Armored in flack vests & helmets, carrying FN-RALS. "What are you doing on the property after midnight? Can't have a good reason! Blam! Blam! Blam!"

23-30 Nomads: A mixed group of four Nomads from the *Wildman Pack*. Wearing flack vests, tatoos and leather pants, carrying fighting knives and rifles. As long as you stay clear of their bikes, they'll ignore you and concentrate on beating that family of Corporates to mush.

31-40 Boostergang: Five low-level street punks from the *Crazy Chicken* boostergang. They are armed with .45 automatics, knives and boosted reflexes. They're looking for 'Lacers or any other possible source of ready cash. Roll 1D10. On 1-7, you're it.

41-50 Street Punks: Four Lace addicts, looking for credit to feed their habit. Even if you're wearing Corporate or booster colors, they'll rush you. These guys don't care, and they don't feel pain. Armed with fighting knives, scratchers; no armor.

51-60 Solo Team: Two Solos, armed in flack vest & pants, carrying smartgun chipped H&K MPK-9. Boosted reflexes, boosted hearing, cyberoptics with

low light, IR and targeting. Obviously up to some grey operation. If you are wearing a rival Corporate uniform or patch, they will: 1-5, dodge you and move on; 6-10, decide you are a witness and ought to be totalled right now.

61-75 Boostergang: Six members of the *Blood Razors* gang, armed with automatic weapons, rippers, IR cyberoptics, boosted reflexes. Hassle you? Naw...they'll just torture you and listen to you scream. For fun. Afterwards, they'll sell the body to the Donor Center for cash.

76-80 Culties: It's Inquisition time! The *Inquisitors* are out in maximum force. Six of them, armed openly with nunchaku, handguns and whips corner you. "Only a servant of the Metal Demons would be abroad at this hour. Any decent citizen would be at home, asleep. Hack, slay and maim the heretic!"

81-82 Private Investigator: Roll 1D10. On 1-3, he/she is ahead of you, hassling an informant on the streetcorner concerning the whereabouts of a suspect. 4-7, he/she is shadowing someone ahead of you. 8-10, they will stop you and ask you whether you have seen the person they are following. The PI is armed with a heavy caliber revolver and wearing an armor jacket.

83-86 Chromers: Four members of the *Steel Slaughter Slammers*. They are wearing armor Ts with metal spiked leathers. All have metal arms covered with chrome, with rippers and .45 cals built in. Roll 1D10—on a 1-6, they will go for you. On 7-8, they'll pass you by. On 9-10, they take a liking to a member of the party and invite you to tag along with them.

87 Medias: A camera and interviewer team, looking for a story. Roll 1D10. On 1-5, they will be spotted by their story-subject and a firefight will ensue. You, of course, will be right in the middle of it. On a 6-10, they'll decide you're the story and follow you.

88-90 Locals: Young man or woman. Roll 1D10. 1-5, they are being beaten by four thugs from the *Blood Razors* gang. 6-10, they are being beaten severely by the *Inquisitors* for the sin of having designer eyes.

91-95 Firefight: Great. You just walked into a major altercation between the *Bradi Bunch* (a high-level Posergang that all look like refugees from an old sitcom) and the *Red Chrome Legion* (a neo-fascist Boostergang). Both are wearing armor jackets and firing large caliber handguns. Rippers, cyberarm weapons and slice-n-dices are everywhere. Pick a side, or pick a target.

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99 Major Criminal: You've walked into a major operation of the notorious *Scagattalia Family*. Four Solo-type men armed with Ingram MAC 14s and wearing flack vests are unloading a drug cargo out of a truck. Roll 1D10. 1-4, they don't notice you. 5-8, they notice you and one warns you off. 9-10, they decide you are a witness and ought to be totalled right now.

00 Solo team: Three Solos, armed in flack vest & pants, carrying smartgun chipped Uzis. Boosted reflexes, cyberoptics with low light, targeting. These guys are on a total black operation (an assassination). Roll 1D10; on a 1-5, if you ignore them, they'll ignore you. 6-10, they'll decide you are a witness and ought to be totalled right now.

SOME PERSONALITIES OF NIGHT CITY

Introducing a few people you're likely to meet at any time on the Streets of the City. These Personalities are designed to be played as general character classes.

Fireman (Fixer): Fireman is the most well known of the many local arms dealers. His main distinction comes from the fact that he supplies many of the legitimate businesses with security systems in addition to the weapons that their bouncers/hired solos use. Fireman was initially a cyber-soldier in the Nicaragua conflict, that used his contacts after leaving the service to supply his modest business. In addition to his arms dealing, Fireman is also involved in information dealing, something that makes him very popular with fixers in the city.

INT=6 TECH=5 REF=4 CL=6 LK=7
ATT=4 MA=5 EMP=6 BODY=5

Blacklist (Tech): A renegade chemical/cyber engineer from the Biotechnica Corporation, Blacklist makes his presence known in Night City in several ways. He is the man that Booster gangs see to get "personalized" cybernetics, the man that Corporations see to get viruses synthesized, and the man that the police talk to when they need help in identifying and analyzing chemicals used in crimes. Rumour has it that Biotechnica has a hit out on him for taking certain formulas that he developed with him when he left.

INT=6 TECH=8 REF=5 CL=8 LK=3
ATT=5 MA=5 EMP=4 BODY=5

Suds Joliet (Rockerboy): A retired Rockerboy who made his money on several classic 1990's albums, Suds now runs a speakeasy (specializing in his home brew) in an old warehouse. This speakeasy, known as *The Slam-*

mer

, is a central meeting place for many peace talks between gangs. This is primarily due to the fact that the rest of the warehouse has been converted into an arena by Suds for non-peaceful resolutions to gang disputes. On occasion, Suds has been known to pull out his axe and play for the crowd.

INT=6 TECH=3 REF=6 CL=9 LK=5
ATT=4 MA=6 EMP=8 BODY=8

David Whindam (Corporate): David Whindam is a typical corp brown-noser, always looking for a way to get to the top quicker than anyone else. Two years ago he formed his own personal hit squad of solos known on the streets as the *Lead Messengers*. After successfully removing several people that were in the way of his making president of the local division of Biotechnica, he realized that there was a lot of profit to be made in hiring out the *Messengers*. He now "loans" them to other corporate friends of his in order to help them gain power. He has the vision of total city control once he has all of his "friends" in power.

INT=8 TECH=3 REF=7 CL=9 LK=5
ATT=7 MA=5 EMP=3 BODY=7

Strawberry (Cop): Strawberry was given his name for his naturally red hair, an unusual sight in Night City (the fact that it's natural, not the color). Strawberry is a cop who has spent all of his fifteen years on the force walking the streets of Night City. Although he has sworn to uphold the law, he also knows when to look the other way. Strawberry is a rarity in the 2000's; he cares. Instead of busting someone who is doing drugs, he generally takes them to a detox clinic, with the hope that they will beat the habit. Although he is a cop, almost everyone on the streets will go out of their way to help him out in a pinch.

INT=6 TECH=3 REF=10 CL=7 LK=9
ATT=4 MA=7 EMP=10 BODY=9

Hypo (Nomad/Booster): No one knows where Hypo came from, but everyone agrees that he is crazy. He was given his name after he opened a detox clinic in the worst part of Night City. Unlike the major detox clinics, Hypo does not charge anything for his services except for a promise that his successes will try and help someone else by bringing them to his clinic.

INT=7 TECH=2 REF=8 CL=7 LK=8
ATT=6 MA=6 EMP=8 BODY=7

Livewire (Netrunner): Livewire is a Netrunner who used to be associated with a solo team known as the *Devil's Horde*, until the team disbanded in 2011 due to a mishap in an operation that killed off everyone except Livewire and one other member. These days Livewire can usually be found in a small shop that he runs out of the back room of the Short Circuit, a local bar. It is said that he has access to any program for the right price; and if he doesn't have it, he will make it.

INT=9 TECH=6 REF=10 CL=10 LK=9
ATT=8 MA=8 EMP=4 BODY=7

Lucifer (Solo): Lucifer is the founding member and only survivor of the *Devil's Horde* besides Livewire. Known for his vicious, no holds barred hand to hand combat style, Lucifer can be bought for the right price. He generally keeps to himself, but has been known to work with Livewire on occasion.

INT=6 TECH=3 REF=10 CL=9 LK=8
ATT=10 MA=9 EMP=4 BODY=8

Athena (Netrunner): Athena is the leader of an all-woman boostergang known as the *Valkyries*. She is often found in the company of two of her "soldiers", Artemis and Hera. Beside her activities as the *Valkyrie* leader, Athena also runs the Net for a Solo known on the streets as Kestral.

INT=6 TECH=6 REF=9 CL=10 LK=4
ATT=8 MA=6 EMP=6 BODY=8

Kestral (Solo): Like many Solos, Kestral gained her combat experience in the Central American conflict. What makes her different is the fact that she

fought for a corporation that backed the losing side. Near the end of the war, Kestral saw that her side was losing and arranged to be "killed in action". After faking her death, she paid her way into a corporate solo team that was soon sent out on a suicide mission. Only her knowledge of the opposition and the place they were going to hit allowed her to escape certain death. Today she hires herself out to individuals only, having long since lost any trust in corporations.

INT=7 TECH=4 REF=12 CL=9 LK=8
ATT=8 MA=10 EMP=5 BODY=7

White Lion (Fixer): The White Lion is one of Night City's most well known fixers. She has contacts into several of the main corporations as well as the underworld of Night City. Although most people have heard of her, very few know where to find her. She likes to keep her whereabouts a secret because she sold some information that lead to the downfall of a wealthy mob family, who then put a hit out on her. If someone tries to collect on this hit, they will find themselves in deep trouble as there are many people who owe their lives to the White Lion and are more than willing to protect her.

INT=10 TECH=3 REF=7 CL=5 LK=9
ATT=8 MA=7 EMP=7 BODY=7

Pythagoras (Netrunner): Pythagoras is a little bit of everything; Hacker, Netrunner, Techie. He is most well known for his abilities in adapting software that already exists, but he is not at all bad with creating his own. Although he tries to hide it, most people know that it was he that was solely responsible for the downfall of the Hiroshi Electronics Corporation after they threatened to set him up for refusing to work for them. It is this reputation that keeps other corporations from hiring his services.

INT=7 TECH=10 REF=9 CL=8 LK=5
ATT=7 MA=7 EMP=5 BODY=5

Watchmaker (Med Techie): Watchmaker is both a biotechnician and a cybertechnician, whose claim to fame

was her invention of the *Skinwatch*. After a few years of working in the corporate world, Watchmaker decided that she could make more money on her own. She now resides in Night City and does a fair amount of renegade surgery for boostergangs and corps alike.

INT=9 TECH=9 REF=7 CL=9 LK=7
ATT=9 MA=8 EMP=8 BODY=6

Nostradamus (Media): Unlike the Nostradamus of the 1400s, this one specializes not in the future, but in the past and present. He is somewhat of a recluse, living in a converted warehouse that has many defenses. Inside the warehouse lies the biggest collection of real books that are left in the City. Nostradamus uses these books along with a gigantic mainframe to compile all the information that he can. To facilitate this collection, he often hires Netrunners to acquire the saleable information that he is also known for brokering.

INT=10 TECH=2 REF=8 CL=9 LK=7
ATT=6 MA=5 EMP=4 BODY=7

Aries (Solo): Aries is the living example of a man who has been through hell and come back to tell about it. Many years ago, he was a commander for the CIA, closely associated with the Gang of Four. After the fall of the United States, he ran covert operations in Central America for a while, then surfaced in Night City in 2010 as a high priced Solo. Over the years his humanity slowly drained away until he went 'borg' about a year later. After his capture, which was well publicized by the media, he underwent the braindance and is now working for the Night City Police Force hunting down other 'borgs.'

INT=8 TECH=5 REF=12 CL=7 LK=5
ATT=5 MA=7 EMP=2 BODY=12

Bes Isis (Media): Bes Isis is a well known media who has a reputation for being slightly off-balance when it comes to scooping other medias. More than once, she has broken a few rules to get inside of some big story, sometimes at a cost. She now has one

chrome leg and a similar replacement for half of her chest. These replacements were necessary after she faked injury to get a story on "meat jumping."

INT=8 TECH=4 REF=9 CL=10 LK=8
ATT=10 MA=7 EMP=7 BODY=6

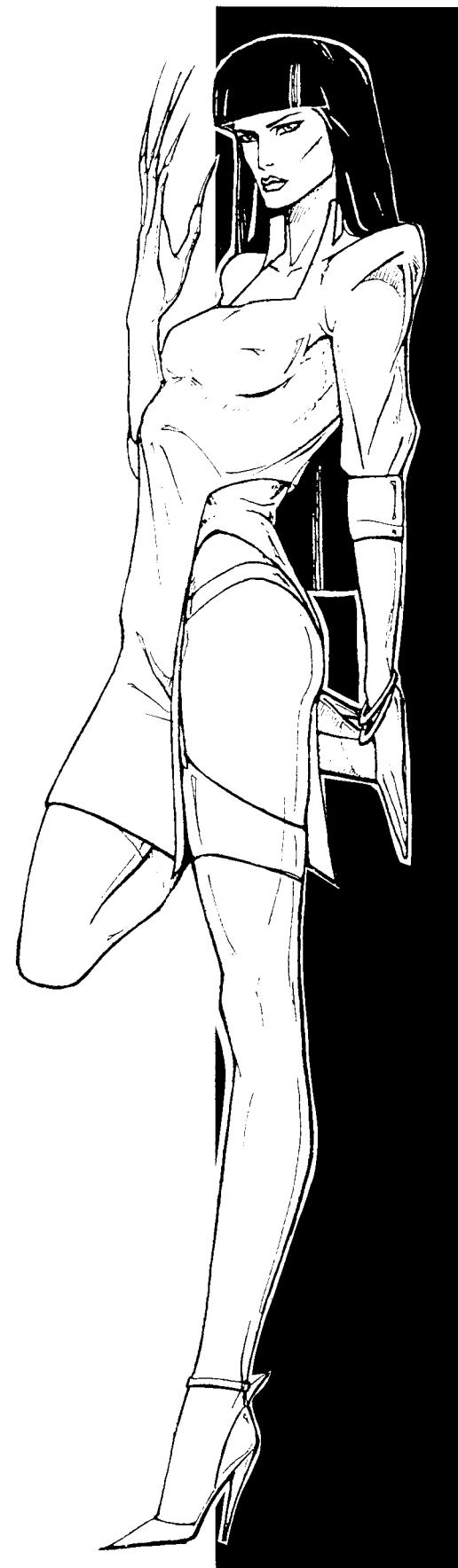
Music Man (Rockerboy): Music Man is the equivalent of Night City's wandering minstrel. He has no set home, but plays for his lodging at various bars. In addition to his music, Music Man also sells information.

INT=5 TECH=6 REF=7 CL=9 LK=5
ATT=6 MA=6 EMP=7 BODY=7

Bag Lady (Fixer): No one knows where she came from, but one day she appeared in Night City with a burlap bag over one shoulder that was full of sundry items, all of which were stolen. It has been said that she is the last person that people go to when they need something, yet she always seems to have it.

INT=8 TECH=2 REF=7 CL=6 LK=8
ATT=2 MA=4 EMP=7 BODY=2





Just another Friday night.

You pay your two bucks at the door and walk in. Over at the bar there are the usual lines, so you decide to skip the bar-front action. Feeling on top of the world, you go out to the main floor, for another night of the club life.

At first glance, the club seems like a mixing place of all types of people. Then you realize that they're all segregated. Posers at the back, trying to get noticed, your average punks in the middle, acting oblivious to their surroundings. There are Chromers bashing their heads against the walls on one side, while the Boosters are on the other, looking for trouble.

And last but not least there are the 'dorph-heads, slamming into each other at the front, next to the stage where the band of the night blares out hits of today and of the past.

They say people like Johnny Silverhand and Kerry Eurodyne got their start in clubs just like this one, but you think it's just hype. After all, people like Johnny Silverhand didn't need the clubs to make them larger than life, they were born that way. It's only Rock N' Roll, right?

Out on the Streets of Night City, there's stories going on—Street history being made. Whether it's Boosters in the alleys, Nomads on the Road, or Rockers in the clubs, there's action and trouble, everywhere you look. And the Trauma Team hovers overhead, waitin' to pick up the pieces—for a price.

Here comes a taste of the City. In your face.

"A Cool Metal Fire": Silverhand Still Can Rock

**Reprinted
From
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in rock and roll. With his latest release, A Cool Metal Fire, Johnny Silverhand is making his push to become a legend.

The album opens up as all of his solo albums have, with a rip roaring instrumental, "Dancing With My Axe," that is guaranteed to set your stereo on fire. This fast paced, no holds barred, display of guitar work is so hot that you'll want to listen to it twice.

And if that isn't enough in itself, you come to track two, "Chippin' In." This piece, like the first, is another fast paced lightning bolt of pure rock and roll. It also asks a question about today's society that cannot be ignored: If we continue the current trend of

From his humble beginnings in the group *Samurai*, to his first five solo albums, Johnny Silverhand has become the household word

replacing our body parts with metal, what will we have left in the end?

The rest of the album is almost typical Silverhand, with its energetic guitar playing and thought provoking

"The album takes us to the heart of our culture and allows us to monitor its pulse.."

lyrics. He does, however come up with three other songs that really stand out. The first two, "(Out of) The City" and "Flashing Lights," go so well together, both thematically and musically, that they almost seem to be one song in totality instead of two individual ones. These two songs bring out the ethereal vision of today from a non-partisan outsider that is innocent of our ways. It leaves the listener with a new way of looking at his own life,

even as it passes by at the speed of light.

The last song on the album, "Never Fade Away," departs from the mainstream sound of Johnny Silverhand and brings him into a new dimension musically. The basic rhythm is both simplistic and concise. This song makes no pretenses at being a song about today, but doesn't leave you with a gritty metal aftertaste like most of its peers. Although I'm not sure that this song really belongs with the others on the album because of its departure musically, I do know that it should have been recorded somewhere, so A Cool Metal Fire is as good a place as any.

Overall, I found A Cool Metal Fire to be more than just your ordinary, everyday record. With its driving beat and spellbinding lyrics, the album takes us to the heart of our culture and allows us to monitor it's pulse.

SILVERHAND UPDATE: CLONE TOUR BEGINS:

After six months of seclusion following an unsuccessful assassination attempt, Rockerboy Johnny Silverhand has re-entered the music scene to promote his new LP. The album, *Clone Wars*, deals with recent cloning breakthroughs and the idea of bioengineered humans being created for military and industrial purposes.

Interviewed in his Night City studio, Silverhand commented, "I needed a few months to let the heat die down over the last disk. *Clone Wars* was pretty intense, and a lot of people, particularly the Biotechnica guys, didn't like the slavery implications I wrote into it. I won't say they fronted the hit on me, but hey, you've got a brain, right?"

Pretentious or Political? Seattle's Cutthroat.

Review by Jeff Daniel

"The audience seems to consist of the mindless, overpainted, underdressed children that you would find at most Chromatic Metal concerts. Each one of them is so wrapped up in their own image that they often don't seem to even know who the band they are seeing is. Tonight is a night that they will always remember though, because Cutthroat is about to hit the stage."

So reads the back cover of Slashing Steel, the new live album by *Cutthroat*. Some people think that these kings of Chrome are getting a little too preten-

tious when referring to themselves, but I had a chance to talk to Knifeedge, the lead singer and bassist for the band, who thinks otherwise.

Jeff Daniel: People often say that you guys are just a little pretentious when talking about yourselves. Why do you think that this is?

Knifeedge: That's easy. Unlike most Chromatic bands today, we take our roots from the old punk bands of the late 1970s and early '80s. It's not the blazing style that used to be called Speed Metal, though we do use that a lot. Politics is the driving force behind our band. It's because we are so political, that we force ourselves onto our listeners. If that is pretentious, then I guess we are.

JD: When you say you are a political band, what do you mean?

K: We view ourselves as messengers. It is our job to open the eyes of our

listeners with our music. The best eye-opening messages are in political issues and stories.

JD: Like the song "Kalakari"?

K: Exactly. Most people today don't even remember the name Hiram Kalakari, and they certainly don't remember what he did. It's songs about things that have shaped our lives that we play. We try and tell the truth as we see it, not what the public wants to hear.

JD: Then how do you explain the success of "Kalakari"? As of today it is currently number four on the EuroRadio top ten.

K: You got me. If we had known that it would be such a hit, well, I don't know. Maybe we would have done something different to promote the album. Though I suppose it's really not going to matter since I still think that the average person is not going to know who the f**k Kalakari was.

JD: Getting back to your political motivation, how do you justify "Ginsu Lover" as being political?

K: Easy, I said we had our background in politics, not our entire lives motivated by it. But if you listen very closely, you will find out that it is a political song of sorts. "Ginsu Lover" is not about a sexual lover, but rather a member of a Boostergang who is overenthusiastic about using his Rippers. It's guys like the Ginsu Lover who make our streets unsafe to walk at night.

JD: What's next for Cutthroat? Slashing Steel is being called a new innovation in the music industry, how do you intend to follow it up?

K: You got me. When we released a live album of entirely new material, we expected to have our diehard fans buy it and that was it. Now the damn thing's gone and sold over two million copies. I expect we'll decide what's next for us after we tour.

—JD

DESTINY: STILL ON THE EDGE, STILL FIGHTING THE WAR

"Fifty years gone by / Since we heard our nation's cry / Fifty years gone by / Since we all watched you die"

It is lyrics like these that make *Destiny* one of the most provoking bands of our time.



Jessie Moore of Destiny

Their new hit, "Song for John (Fifty Years)," is not only filled with political rhetoric, but also reminds us of a time when America was still great.

Since their debut album, "Walking the Skies", *Destiny* has consistently provided the listening public with songs that hit close to home. Bandleader Jessie Moore explains, "We didn't always used to be political. In fact, I didn't even care about anything other than making money until ten years ago. All I wanted was the fame, and all the benefits that came with it. Now times are different. It seems all I want now is to get my messages across."

But fame and fortune did elude them for many years until they got their big break opening for the now defunct *Cowboy Panzer*. It was on that tour that the audience really started to notice their music.

"I think it was the fact that *Cowboy Panzer* was so big and political. I found out that we were going to open for them on the tour and all of a sudden I knew that our music had to change. I must have written thirty songs on that tour, some of which were eventually worked into our set."

Despite the growing interest that

Jesse was showing in political issues, the band continued to produce other songs as well.

"I can remember the first time we went into the studio after the C.P. tour. I had all these songs that I wanted to record, but the group started right in on this bubblegum tune called, 'Input Out.' I was furious. I mean, here I was with this great message to sing and all these guys wanted to do was talk about bad relationships."

"It was about then when I threatened to quit. Thinking back on it now, I can understand why the band didn't think I was serious. I must have threatened to quit six times in the first nine months of our existence. And all the time I was using those threats so I could get my own way. I really was a spoiled brat.

"It took me about five months before I convinced them that I was serious. By then we had all ready recorded "My Baby Left Me For A Short Circuit". Pleading with the band, I convinced them to start over, using the stuff I had written on the tour, instead of stuff like, "Input Out". When it was all over, some ten months after we trashed the stuff from "My Baby", we had recorded, "Dinner With Himmler".

It was that album that attracted so much attention from the critics. They called it the new political feeling of the 2000's. The fame and fortune that *Destiny* had been looking forward to had been found.

Their second album after the *Cowboy Panzertour* gained them even more notoriety. So much that they were able to tour as a headliner instead of a backup band. *Destiny* drummer, Timemaster, recalls:

"It was a big change. I mean one

day your opening for some big name group. Then you're a big name group. I can still remember the difference in the fans. One day you're slogging through an old number, listening to the fans yawning, and the next the fans are going wild.

"I remember this one gig we did on the *Cheyenne Mountain* tour when this sleek looking Chromer comes up to me and offers to jack in. This type of thing never happened as an opening band."

After the release of *Cheyenne Mountain* the band drew some flack from the Europeans. In fact, the album was banned for a while in several countries overseas.

"I can remember that", says Timemaster. "Jessie was crushed. She was so into her new political mood that she got depressed that the entire world wasn't hearing her message. But it wasn't the Europeans we had to worry about. Back here in the United States we had several corporations, who shall remain nameless, who wanted our heads on worldwide news.

"More than once on that tour we had our backstage crew and roadies, which included a couple guys who used to be professional wrestlers back in the '90's, toss some people out who wanted to do something other than give us praise."

The band still has some problems with fans. Two times on the last tour there were fans arrested for trying to break into the tour bus. And on more than one occasion there have been young women claiming to have been attacked by band members.

"Yeah, I know all that stuff. But what really gets me is that all our real fans know that the two posers arrested were 'dorphed out and looking for a place to recycle. As for those "rape" attempts, those are just corporations trying as best they can to get us out of the spotlight. Our true fans know that we are all involved in permanent interfaces."

Destiny. A band fighting for the truth. In a struggle against corporations that don't want to hear the truth, all they can do is hope to survive.

NOMADS: TWO VIEWS FROM THE ROAD BY JAMES NERDWELL

The McCains: Farmers on the Run

Bud and Martha McCain tried to hold onto their land, but the Agri-Corps were determined to remove them. Even after the Agri-Corps bought the local bank so they could foreclose on their property, the McCains were steadfast in their resolve to remain on the land that had been in their family for generations. Then came the "bad luck"—their eldest son perished in a car "accident", their daughter made an addict by Corporate drug lords.

Then came the plague. Within twelve hours, all of the cattle and the poultry were dead; the crops, withered husks. The McCains left their land, promising to someday retake what was rightfully theirs. It was a dream they shared with many others.

Over years, the McCains have formed a new family, a family of the homeless and the dispossessed. They

came on foot, on motorcycles, in fleets of R.V.s. Under the leadership of Bud McCain, they formed a roving community, known as the Huskers to outsiders due to their Corn Belt roots. Travelling the roadways of America, finding work where they can, setting up camp when they are able, moving on when the locals can no longer tolerate them, the Huskers have a common goal—to someday retake their land.

Labeled as terrorists for their bold strikes against the industries which have rendered them homeless, the McCains prefer to think of themselves as honest folk turned freedom fighters. The Huskers have long memories. Those who befriend them have an ally for life, those who anger them have a dangerous foe. Will the McCains retake their stolen homeland? Time will tell. But with every new atrocity committed by the Agri-Corps, their numbers grow.

The Crazy Quilts: Mercenary Brotherhood

The Central American Wars were hard on the soldiers who fought in them. Harder still was coming home. The cities were urban wastelands, unsuited for raising a family. Homes, towns, whole cities had disappeared off of the maps, victims of progress.

These young soldiers returned to an America in which nothing was sacred, and everything was for sale. Many found that they were unwelcome relics of the past. With nothing else to turn to, many of these dispossessed combat men and women turned to the only support network they had, each other; and the only profession they knew, soldiering.

Recruited from all over the country, the Crazy Quilts are one such group. Together, they formed one of the many offshoots of Nomad culture, the mer-

enary brotherhood. Named for their colorful uniforms, a ragtag collection of fabric scraps roughly forming a camouflage pattern, they sell the one commodity they have left in a ruined world; their honor and fighting skills.

The Crazy Quilts hire themselves out, whether singly or in small battalions. Many act as bodyguards, others hire out as freelance mercs, corporate extraction forces, or as hit men and assassins. The Crazy Quilts place honor above all else. You can be certain that they will never turn upon their employers, never sell out, never back down, and never desert a comrade.

The Crazy Quilts consider themselves the last bastion of professional integrity in an otherwise chaotic society. It is this uncompromising reputation which has made the Crazy Quilts a powerful and respected force in this Cyberpunk world.

NIGHT CITY TODAY

December 17, 2020

Volume CCVI, No. 46

REPORT

Walter Pickering's Night City
Streets

Street Direct With The Blood Razors

Dateline Night City—The City's never really dark, not for those who live and die in it. A relentless neon circuit of steel and glass. Night in Night City is a hot pulsing thing. You feel it coursing through the wacked out veins of drugged up dorph heads, high on Lace and Slam. See it in the cookie cutter stares of pale faced posers, just out from under the knife. But no matter what your kick is, you're probably not experiencing it alone. You belong in the City, or you die. People congealing together like spattered blood, moving to a thousand different songs.

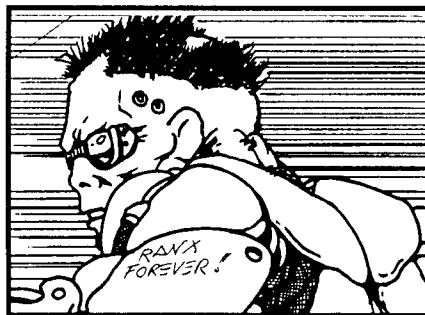
You hear the Blood Razor's song only once, and you never forget. I'll never know why a group of Boosters like the Razors let me run a night with their pack; maybe I caught Hack Man, the Booster chieftan in a good mood. It was party time: Hack's kid brother was getting his claws.

Just a short brief for you folks out there in the burbs; you've probably never heard of these Booster boys before. Here in the City, they're as common as crud on the sidewalk. Gangs like the Razors have fused cyberwear and violence into a deadly form of street fashion that has been claiming the

Cont. Pg. 219

BOOSTERGANGS: No Street is Safe

A Special Report



By Mikuru Ponsumisu

There's a fire on the Street, engulfing your neighborhood. Fueled by cheap designer drugs, cheap cyberwear, and cheaper automatic weapons, the fire of gangsterism once again threatens to annihilate Night City.

In the past two weeks, random shootings have escalated by fifty percent; yesterday, two innocent bystanders were gunned down in a hail of weapon fire as they walked down to the corner FoodMart. Their crime: walking through a section of *Crazy Chicken* turf during a gang dispute.

Gangs. They're your neighbors. They're your kids. You need to know these guys and be ready for them. Because in Night City, no street is safe:

Bradi Bunch: The *Bunch* is an extended family gang which protects runaway children. A few older "adults" run the gang and protect the turf, while the younger members steal, and deal for family support. Extended families are territorial and fiercely protective of their members.

Red Chrome Legion: The Legion is a *skinhead* gang; young males united around a certain hate group ideology. Uniforms, flags and militaristic slogans are the rule. The Red Chromers

will attack anything that they think isn't "right" (read: just like them).

Steel Slaughter Slammers: A typical *chromatic metal* gang. Chromer gangs like centering activities around their favorite rock bands, interpreting song lyrics as orders from their heroes. Chromatic rock gangs are into totally senseless, random acts of violence as a means of expression.

The Gilligans: The *Gilligans* are a typical *self defense* gang; in this case, militant gays who are tired of being attacked by groups like the *Red Chrome Legion*. They are relatively peaceful, as long as you stay off their turf (the Marina district), and leave them alone.

The Kennedys: The *Kennedys* are a typical *posergang*. Posers adopt the clone look for protection (one Kennedy looks just like another), identification and impact (twenty JFKs are a pretty scary sight). These gangs center on recreating their own bizarre interpretations of their heroes; for example, the *Kennedy's Hyannisport Weekends*, where all four hundred members descend on a location for a week-long orgy of destruction.

Metal Warriors: The *Metal Warriors* are a *combat gang*, with their activities centering around a type of "warrior's code". Elaborate combat rituals, ranks, and body armor are all part of the mystique. Combat gangs are dangerous, because once they declare a war on someone, they never give up.

Piranhas: The *Piranhas* are a typical *party gang*. They party, drink Smash, take (and deal drugs), and mug people, all as part of a "just because" lifestyle. To these guys, the Party is everything.

Inquisitors: The *Inquisitors* are a *cultie gang*; like the hate gangs, they center on a specific ideology, in this case, religious. The *Inquisitors* think cyberwear is blasphemous, and think nothing of tearing it right out of your body. They consider this "saving" your soul.

From Pg. 218

lives of more than forty citizens a week. The average Booster is an amoral technophile. Hardware and Wetware are the meat and drink of the Booster, and they'll do anything to get it. Arson, robbery, muggings, assassinations. If there's money in it, enough for another small boost at a blackmarket clinic, the Booster will take to it like chrome on a pair of mirrorshades. It's easier every time, they say. As more and more hardware's grafted, sockets drilled, and chips implanted, the Booster sinks further into his psychoworld machine-altered chaos. The best of them become the ring leaders, the worst are killing machines, riding on the edge of cyberpsychosis, ready to flatline themselves and everyone around them for that last big score.

Worst of all, Boosters travel in packs.

Maybe it was my arm, the one I lost in Lima, that endeared me to the Razors' top brass. It was an old model, military, and the dull steel and chipped plastic put me on their level. They had shacked themselves in an old warehouse, off of the main sprawl. In twos and threes they filtered in, screaming and shouting over deafening hardcore street rock. A few grabbed oiled rags and started cleaning their claws, fresh blood from a bunch of posers looking for action. Hack Man sat on his plastic throne, staring out through gunmetal eyes at the graffiti-covered walls of the nest. Dorphed up, he wasn't in the mood to answer questions. Only when his brother staggered in was there a flicker from behind the stone cut face. Metal arms crossed over armored chest, he popped his claws. A signal for the rest.

They came at Hack Man's bro from all sides, animal cries tearing from their throats as claws popped from housings in fingers. Steel and flesh monsters, pushed on by drugs music, hardware, and each other. The kid bared his teeth as the first pair made their pass, striking home, rending bloody tears in his flesh with a sur-

geon's skill. He didn't fight, didn't run, didn't cry out. Soon his arms, legs, chest were covered with thin lacerations. Knees buckling, he fell to the floor. I watched with fascinated horror as the pack pounced on their prey, kicking and biting. In minutes, it was over. They dragged the broken kid before his older bro, throwing him before their chieftain's feet.

"Get up," the Hack Man snarled.

The kid pushed himself up to his knees, stared out into nowhere. "It hurts," he muttered through swollen lips.

The kick sent him sprawling across the floor of the nest. "Life hurts," said Hack Man over the jeers of his gang brothers. "You were born into a world of pain. If you don't like it, just leave now. Go outside in the gutter. Curl up and die. We welcome pain. We are pain. But we armor ourselves. Look around you. We are the city. Use your claws to hurt. Be one of us and pain won't touch you. You become the pain." He rose from his chair. "Are you ready to become the pain?"

He forced himself to stand, blood painting the floor a greasy red. He turned to the nearest Razor and struck him in the jaw with a leather gloved fist. The Boosters roared their approval. The answer was yes.

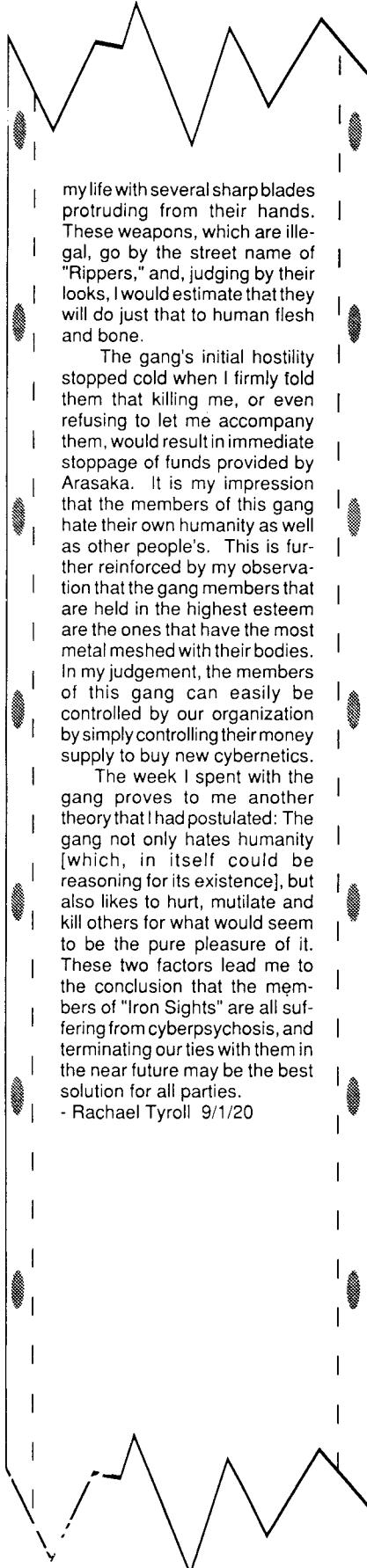
They stormed out of the building, claws exposed. They carried the kid on their shoulders. They would work their way across their city, heading towards a waiting ripperdoc, slashing and burning everything in their path. The cops stayed far away; no overtime bonus is worth messing with a Blood Razor initiation.

The hospitals would report thirteen casualties from the mayhem that night, all so that a fifteen-year-old kid could get his claws and join with his brothers. Before I left the nest, the Hack Man, cooling his jets with Smash, asked me what I thought of his family.

I popped the cassette out of my arm and stowed it in my bag. He could read about it on the Net, just like the rest of you.

—Walter Pickering, News 54





my life with several sharp blades protruding from their hands. These weapons, which are illegal, go by the street name of "Rippers," and, judging by their looks, I would estimate that they will do just that to human flesh and bone.

The gang's initial hostility stopped cold when I firmly told them that killing me, or even refusing to let me accompany them, would result in immediate stoppage of funds provided by Arasaka. It is my impression that the members of this gang hate their own humanity as well as other people's. This is further reinforced by my observation that the gang members that are held in the highest esteem are the ones that have the most metal meshed with their bodies. In my judgement, the members of this gang can easily be controlled by our organization by simply controlling their money supply to buy new cybernetics.

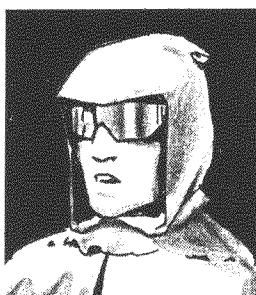
The week I spent with the gang proves to me another theory that I had postulated: The gang not only hates humanity [which, in itself could be reasoning for its existence], but also likes to hurt, mutilate and kill others for what would seem to be the pure pleasure of it. These two factors lead me to the conclusion that the members of "Iron Sights" are all suffering from cybersanity, and terminating our ties with them in the near future may be the best solution for all parties.

- Rachael Tyroll 9/1/20

GANG VIOLENCE ERUPTS ON NIGHT CITY STREETS

By Bes Isis

In the early morning hours seventeen youths were killed in yet another Boostergang confrontation. Street sources say that a group of the Iron Sights gang were gathered at a bar known as Rainbow Nights when they were confronted by the red-robed Inquisitors. After a brief argument, fighting started, and when it was all over there were seven dead Inquisitors and ten dead members of the Iron Sights.



When we finally were able to reach the leader of the Inquisitors, who has asked that his name be withheld, he had several things to say about today's and other related incidents.

"In the midnight hour, when the sound of footsteps on the pavement strikes fear within your heart, the Inquisitors will be there to judge you. Tonight's example, the attack on the heretics known as the Iron Sights, is just the start of a new order that is coming to be. A new order that will be led by the Inquisitors.

"I stand here before the public not to preach of impending doom, but rather of judgment. Judgment that will be rendered by the Inquisitors. For most of the public, they have nothing to fear, but there are some out there that should think about their sins, and how they will soon be punished for them.

"To further the impact of this statement, I need only point out the case of the heretical members of the Iron Sights. They, like anyone else who has molded unnatural machinery into their God-given flesh, will be struck down to the last person by the Inquisitors. If that is not clear enough, then let me rephrase it: if you have no metal infused with your body, you are safe. If you have voluntarily undergone such blasphemous melding, then beware. The Inquisitors are here to judge you."

Although he would not reveal his identity to the public, the head of the Inquisitors is thought to have some older, no longer believed, religious background, which can be seen as the cause for his slightly different views on today's society. Whatever his reason may be, the head of the Inquisitors has given his warning to the people of Night City.

On an ending note, it must be pointed out that the chief of police for Night City was reluctant to answer questions regarding his plans for controlling the Inquisitors, and other gangs that threaten the citizens of this city. In fact the only thing we could get out of him was, "No comment."

Sound familiar?

First Person

One Night with the TRAUMA TEAM

Rich "Meatball" Cramer M.D., Dispatcher for Lifeline Trauma Inc., Night City Branch #23

Transport: P&W modified A.V. 4E Impact rated to threat level 7
Crew: 5: 2 Med, 2 Solos, Driver/Gunner

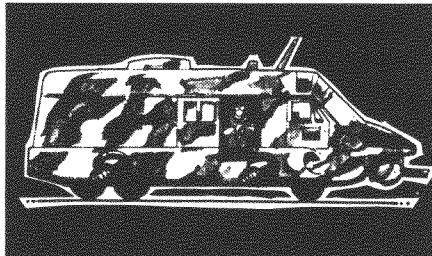
6:30 : Early call. Responded to warehouse district. Patient victim of Booster skirmish. Open chest. Trauma to liver, pancreas. Two collapsed lungs. Blood PH four over norm. Patient flatlined. Unable to revive. Removed model K-100 cyber-arm with combat options for compensation. Suggest placing half of resale into company Christmas fund as per norm.

9:47 : Broken card alert at Hari Kiri Sushi restaurant. Corp patient found choking on piece of squid. Administered swift slap to back and dislodged foreign object. Read patient list of response charges. Patient became hostile and threatened lawsuit. Added surcharges. Patient pulled firearm, forcing Solo to fire in self defense. Patient revived and brought to Med Center. Suggest cancelling account after payment of bills.

11:23 : Solo down on grounds of Raven Microcyb Inc. Corp security became hostile and refused to allow extraction procedures of patient, claiming first rights due to Corporate Espionage Act of 2009. No one in team had ever heard of the Act, and in accordance with standard procedure, we continued with extraction. Raven Inc's. lawyers should be in contact concerning deaths of six security personnel who were in path of

AV-4 upon departure. Patient revived and charged extra for ammo costs and company lawyers fees.

14:15 : Firefight in inner city. Two



broken cards. Upon arrival discovered a team from R.E.O. Meatwagon Inc. in process of loading carded patients onto their unit. Following company policy on "meat jumping", we warned them off over loudspeaker. R.E.O. team opened up with small arms fire. Team R.N. Chestly Whitestone took the initiative and released napalm canisters. Resulting explosion cost lives of both the patients and the R.E.O. team. However, Nurse Whitestone's quick thinking saved company's and team's reputations. Suggest that we sue R.E.O. Meatwagon for costs of patient accounts and munitions expenses.

15:55 : Broken card call at Grand Illusion Dance Hall and Bar. Subject patient one Rockerboy, Kerry Eurodyne. Patient was in good health, but was under assault of young female fans. Dispensed teargas and waded into the fold. The grateful Mr. Eurodyne billed the cost of extraction and a new set of clothes to his studio's account and gave us a healthy tip. Since the teenyboppers seemed to enjoy the free-spirited chaos, I doubt the company need worry about lawsuits from irate parents.

16:30 : Team members attacked in bar during rest break between calls; shotgun-wielding Booster attempted robbery. Criminal was dispatched by team security leader, Jazz Tobias. Criminal flatlined from small arms fire and set off cyberspace Lifeline response. Unable to revive. Suggest forfeiture of advance fees on account along with all personal effects. Due to amount of cyberware on patient, it is possible that she was in first stages of cyber psychosis.

17:40 : Net call to alley behind Night City chapter of Elks Lodge. Patient identified as DMS Vid actress Samantha Horn. Apparent overdose on mixture of 'Dorph and Slam. Patient revived. Dispatcher instructions followed to return patient to DMS studios. Team ambushed while on approach vector to DMS pad by three AV-4s bearing R.E.O. Meatwagon markings. Took evasive action. Main stabilizers holed during fire exchange. DMS anti-air defenses opened up at range of 300 yards scattering R.E.O. vehicles, one of which crashed over the financial district during retreat. Patient delivered after payment of hazardous duty fees and the promise of a night on the town with the chief surgeon. Have taken the liberty of placing all Lifeline teams on Class I alert. Counter all R.E.O. personnel and vehicles "with extreme prejudice". See supplemental report on incident and vehicle damage.

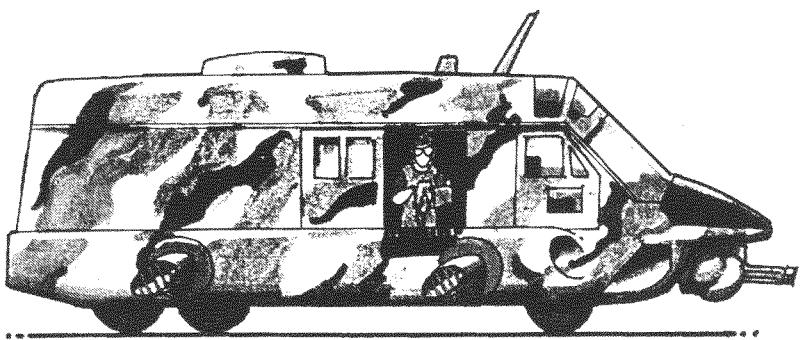
19:00 : Finished shift and returned vehicle to pool. Overtime and hazard duty pay logged with dispatcher. Team placed on two day paid layover while repair of vehicle in progress. Heavy weapons issued from Lifeline armory. Fixers contacted to deal with R.E.O. personnel. Team will remain together until incident blows over. For emergencies, contact team via Net passcode "Stitch In Time". End of Report. End of Report.

SCREAMSHEETS

IN THE 21ST CENTURY, THERE'S A LOT OF WAYS TO GET THE WORD. BUT THE BEST IS FROM A SCREAMSHEET— A COMBINATION FAX-NEWSPAPER, DIRECT LINKED TO THE DATABASES OF THE WORLD MEDIACORPS.

SOMETIMES A SCREAMSHEET IS JUST INFORMATION; A CHEAP THRILL FOR THE BRAINBURNED. BUT SOMETIMES, THERE'S ANOTHER STORY; A DEEPER MEANING LURKING LIKE A SHARK JUST UNDER THE SURFACE; A SCRAP OF DATA THAT LEADS TO A NEW ADVENTURE, JUST AROUND THE TURN OF A PAGE.

HERE ARE TEN VISIONS OF THE EDGE.



SCREAMSHEETS

WRITTEN BY: MIKE BLUM

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DATABASE: WORLD NETWORK NEWS & NETWORK 54

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NIGHT CITY TODAY

SEPTEMBER 29, 2020
VOLUME CCVI, No. 28

PETROCHEM REACTS TO BIOTECHNICA PGE ANNOUNCEMENT

Dallas, TX – An unnamed spokesperson for Petrochem provided a dramatic statement for reporters and industry analysts subsequent to Biotechnica's disclosure of the new PGE enzyme. "We believe that 6 months is not enough time for proper tests to be done on this engineering product. The possible biohazard is enormous, especially considering that the Russians produce 10% of the world's wheat and corn. If some unexpected side effect were to diminish or eliminate their agricultural output, massive famines could result."

MIDWEST ROAD CONDITIONS TODAY

SPONSORED BY PETROCHEM

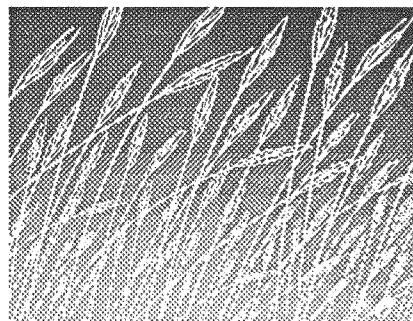
*"Without Petrochemicals, life as we know it would be impossible..."
[excerpts]*

...Interstate 40 eastbound closed near Fort Smith, Arkansas for bridge repairs...traffic on Interstate 35 is slowed by a southbound nomad convoy in Lyon county, Kansas...U.S. 81 near Enid, Oklahoma has been closed due to a toxic waste spill-route not likely to be opened today...up to one hour delays on eastbound Interstate 44 near Tulsa due to road work...slow going on the Indian Nation Turnpike south of Henryetta due to smoke from a fire at a tire dump...severe flooding reported in several Gulf states, and along the Mississippi River...acid hail reported around Omaha...highway sniper incidents ongoing at Fort Worth have halted traffic...drifts of migrating mutant catfish reported on roads west of Shreveport...

BIOTECHNICA ANNOUNCES IMPROVED PLANT GROWTH ENZYME

La Jolla, CA – In a dramatic announcement today, officials of Biotechnica revealed the development of a new plant growth enzyme (PGE), which promises to boost production of grains and cereals by 10%. The enzyme, developed by researchers working here at the Biotechnica Research Facility, will be undergoing formal tests by the USDA soon. Biotechnica expects the PGE to be in distribution by next year.

Stock analysts expect Biotechnica to rapidly gain in value; agriculture giant Petrochem is expected to drop, (see page C-30)

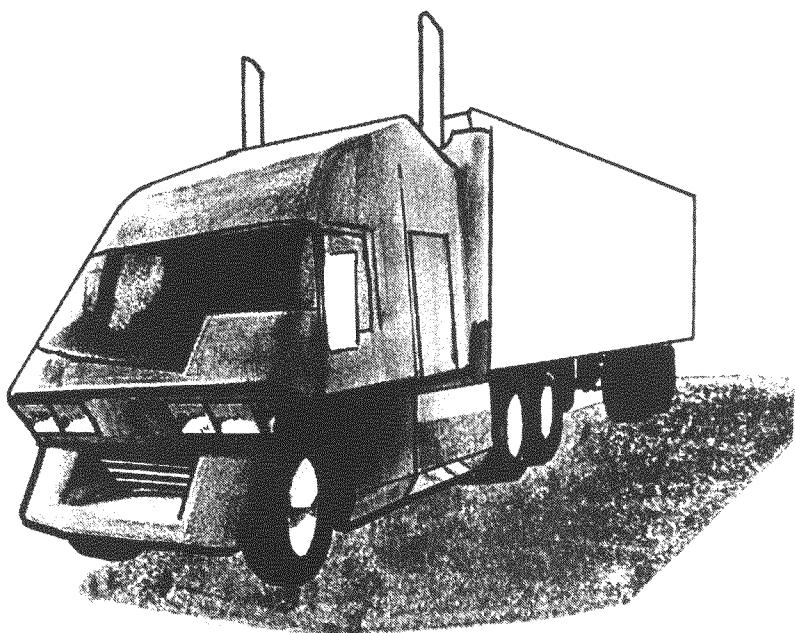


EYE ON THE MARKET:

Night City Today Examines
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Equipment.

Today: The Yakurichi-Ural BR70 Heavy Transporter

With: Full Cyber interface •
Nav System with NAVSTAR®
Guidance Package • Radar •
CB Radio • Sleeper cab for
two • Powerplant: Rolls Royce
CB40V • 5,800 HP • 110
highway/130 boosted.



Scenario 1:

Open Highway

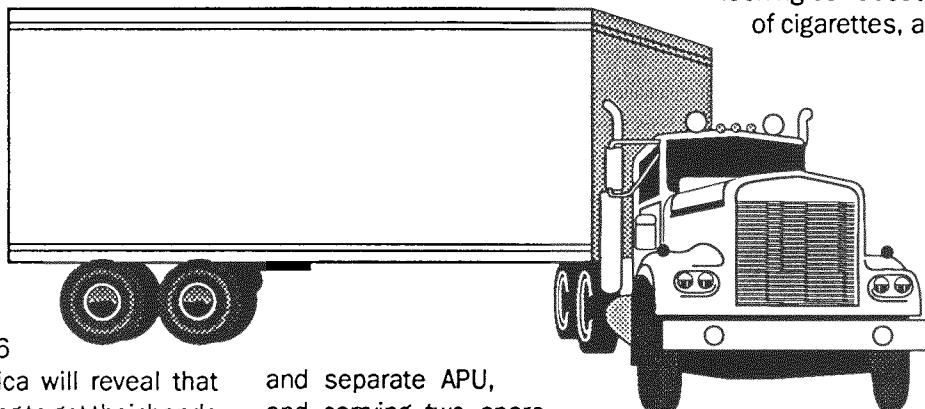
Players' information

The players, while on the West Coast, are approached by Biotechnica about driving and escorting a tractor-trailer rig loaded with PGE and test items from their site at La Jolla, to a USDA facility in near Nashville, TN. The team would be required to cover 1900 miles in 36 hours.

Biotechnica will reveal that Petrochem is trying to get their hands on some of the PGE, and the team should expect trouble. In the Midwestern states, where Petrochem owns vast pieces of the landscape, the corporation can pretty much do what it wants.

The tractor is a Yakurichi-Ural BR70, with a cyber interface, nav system, CB radio, radar warning receiver, 2 zero/zero ejection seats, automatic fire extinguishers, road surface sonar for the active suspension, hazard warning/auto braking radar in the grille, air conditioning, stereo system, sleeper cab, winch, and 70 SP kevlar fibreglas body, with 30 SP polycarb windows. The power plant is a Rolls-Royce CB40v turbo-compound 64 liter V-12 variable geometry free piston engine acting as gas generator for 4 modified Teledyne CAE J402 turbojets, burning a mixture of nitro-doped high octane gasoline, meta-alcohol, ether, and acetone; a tank of inhibited red fuming nitric acid is available as a boost oxidant, for up to 25 minutes. Max rated (unboosted) at 5,800 shaft horsepower; normal fuel capacity 1200 liters.

Top speed is 110 mph on highway (130 boosted), 40 mph off-road (50 boosted). Length 8m, width 3m, height 3.1 m. Four extra saddle tanks provide about 2100 miles range total. Total cost, if you want one, is about 120,000 eb. The trailer is a Freyhilf armored van body (90 AP), with an alarm system, airconditioning



and separate APU, and carrying two spare tires (which will also fit the truck). Various repair tools are in workboxes on the tractor. A hatch has been installed on the top of the sleeper cab.

The team will also have the use of two anonymous Toyo-Chevrolet sedans as scout/escort vehicles. Each of these has been fitted with a CB radio and "police interceptor" performance options (treat as 'sportscars'). However, neither is armored.

The cargo consists of 20 plastic drums of plant growth enzyme, 280 sacks of hi-yield fertilizer, and 2 crates of test instruments.

The team members will receive 1000 eb each at the destination if the cargo is delivered intact.

Ref's notes:

Biotechnica is using the players' team as a decoy. The PGE in their truck is actually an early experimental version that went subtly wrong. Biotechnica is hoping that Petrochem will a) be diverted away from the real

shipment, and b) if the fake PGE is stolen, Petrochem will waste a few months figuring out what it is. To further this goal, Biotechnica has fitted the tractor with a satellite transponder, and will leak the location of the truck (through independent netrunners and cutouts) to Petrochem once or twice during the run. The transponder is an anonymous-looking box about the size of a pack of cigarettes, attached under the dashboard. Thus, the characters can expect to be intercepted a couple of times by cars, helicopters, roadblocks, corporate troops, etc.

If the armor over the fuel tanks on the Yakurichi-Ural tractor is penetrated, the remaining fuel in that tank may self-ignite. Five of the tanks contain the gasoline/alcohol/ether/acetone portion of the fuel, 300 liters each tank; the sixth tank contains 300 liters of red fuming nitric acid.

The real shipment is being sent by entirely different methods and routes, guarded by Arasaka hired mercs.

Biotechnica will grudgingly pay the characters if they successfully reach Nashville, however. Nobody wants a reputation for shafting solos, after all.

NIGHT CITY TODAY

October 6, 2020
VOLUME CCVI, No. 29

>CRIME
>NIGHT CITY STALKER
>RECENT: 3 WEEKS : NIGHT CITY

BRIGHTMAN RELEASED FROM PRISON

Night City, CA – After spending 17 years in prison, Joshua Brightman was released yesterday at the end of his sentence. Suspected of being the "Night City Stalker," Brightman was never convicted of any of the 32 murders committed by the Stalker. He was imprisoned for kidnapping and attempted murder, after a widely-publicized trial. Many believe, however, that Brightman is indeed the Stalker. The former electronics store manager is now 39 years old.

Threats against Brightman's life have already been received, and his stated intent of returning to Night City has already alarmed citizens' groups. Police spokespersons, however, were unconcerned, stating, "We deal with cyberpsychos every day who make the Stalker look like Santa Claus. I expect Mr. Brightman will find the streets are a bit tougher than he remembers."

In related news, Federal prosecutor Mel de Costa verified that charges will not be brought against Brightman under various Federal firearms statutes, as the statute of limitations has expired. Brightman was found in possession of a sizable arsenal at the time of his arrest, but charges were not pressed at that time. "The

State of California dropped the ball on the prosecution of Brightman," said de Costa. "We were assured at the time that he would be convicted of multiple murder charges with special circumstances, and so did not go ahead with the weapons charges. By the time the trial ended, our resources were spread pretty thin in various Central American "International Drug-Lord Statute" prosecutions, and so a case was never made."

>BRIGHTMAN
>RECENT: 2 WEEKS : NIGHT CITY

SUSPECTED "STALKER" BUYS CYBERLIMBS

Night City, CA – This reporter has learned that Joshua Brightman, recently released from prison, and suspected of being the "Night City Stalker," has undergone extensive cybernetic replacement surgery in the last few days. The exact nature of his enhancements are unknown, but he has spent over \$3000 on hardware alone.

Night City police spokesperson Claude Maxwell would only com-

WANTED: persons with experience in archaeology for work on a corporate research project. Preference given to specialists in early British Megalithic sites. Top \$\$\$\$. Contact Hudson Assoc. 1-212-555-6798

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ment, "As long as Brightman doesn't purchase any illegal cybertech, we can't touch him." When asked if the NCPD planned to monitor Brightman's cyberware purchases, Maxwell replied, "No comment."

>CRIME
>MURDER
>NIGHT CITY
>CURRENT : CURRENT :

CRIME BEAT

The consolidated crime report for last week reads as follows: 72 murders, up 2 from the same week last year; 190 attempted murders, down 6; 590 felony assaults, up 12; 15 kidnaps, up 1; (see page C-6)



**WATCH NEWS 54 WITH
DON DRE WHITFIELD
8:00 ON CHANNEL 54.
THE
MAXIMUM
INFORMATION
CHANNEL**

Scenario 2:

Back from the Penalty Box

Players' information

The characters are approached by Carole Medina, a small time fixer, who needs protection. She has recently gained some evidence which would prove that Joshua Brightman is indeed the Night City Stalker. She is trying to get Network News 54 and the World News Service to bid on this evidence, but this will take a day or two for the deal to go down. In the meantime, she is worried about both of the corporations trying to get something for nothing, and also worried about getting a visit from the Stalker. She will pay 500 eb each for up to 6 characters to keep her safe for two days. The characters can choose where to set up their "safe house," as long as it is within either the Downtown, South City, or Charter Hill areas. Each of the news corps will want to send someone around to inspect the evidence before bidding.

Medina herself is armed with a short-barrelled .357 Magnum revolver.

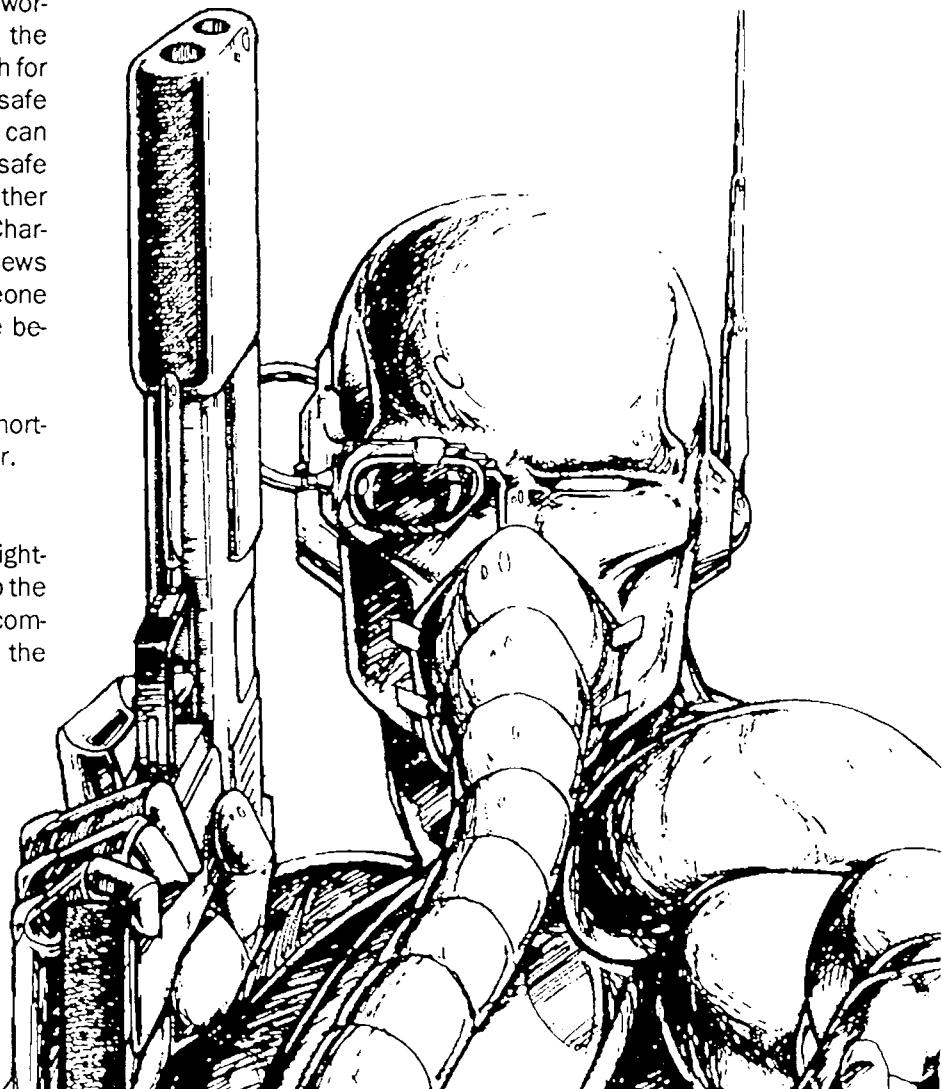
Ref's notes:

Brightman is sure enough the Night-stalker. He has already armed to the teeth and then some, and has committed a couple of murders in the

past week. He was a tech freak before he went to prison, and has followed the development of cyberware with a calculating intensity. He has gone all-out on cyberware purchases: body plating, cyberlimbs, pretty much every kind of legal and illegal cybertech. He does not suffer from cyberpsychosis, as such: he was a psycho long before cyberware was available. Brightman is preternaturally stealthy, and delights in "spooking" his victims before he finishes them. He has a very good knowledge of electronics of the more simple kind: phone and power lines, for example. As the Stalker, he carries a good supply of big guns and knives, and wears black coveralls and a balaclava.

The two news corporations will each send, at different times, an investigator over to view the evidence Medina has gathered (a shoebox full of gruesome photographs). For the next 18 hours or so, the two corporations bid and maneuver. Eventually, late in the evening of the second day, one corporation will put up the winning bid; an executive for the other, in a fit of spite, will call Brightman and tell him where Medina is, and why he should pay her a call.

Six hours will pass while payment details are arranged and the corporation sends over a team to collect the evidence. During that time, Brightman will strike...



NIGHT CITY TODAY

October 13, 2020
VOLUME CCVI, No. 30

REPORT

MEDIA: DMS CRACKS DOWN ON COMPETITORS

Los Angeles, CA — In the wake of FCC's "La Rosita" ruling, Diverse Media Systems has gone after unlicensed competitors with vigor. Lawsuits, jamming, ECM, and physical harassment have all been employed in an aggressive effort to counter the 'independents' programming. Other mediacorps have also taken advantage of the new loosened rules, but only DMS has gone to the acceptable limits...some would say past them.

In this article, we will examine the latest actions by DMS, and try to uncover the reasons (cont'd page C-2)

>KRAB

>RECENT : CURRENT : LOS ANGELES

JOSH CARBONELL MAKES WAVES IN THE OCEAN

Media renegade Josh Carbonell is tweaking the nose of the corporate bigwigs at DMS again! His pirate station KRAB, operating off of an old

oil platform in the San Pedro Channel, has broken several major stories lately; two of those stories showed DMS's own reporters in a very bad light. In the "Imperial Valley Genetic Scandal" series, KRAB reporter Julian Morales revealed that DMS's own investigators were involved in the coverup of a major biohazard waste site. In his own "A Deeper Look" series, Josh himself has done follow-ups on stories run by DMS and Network 54; DMS particularly came out looking foolish. KRAB has also become a fan favorite music station in LA, as well.

Josh attributes his success to "sex, drugs, and the worst taste in music west of the Rockies. I let my DJs do their own programming, and expect my reporters to kick (cont'd page C-15)

>MORE :

CHIPPING AWAY

Since the summer of 2011, Elay residents have been exposed to dangerous radiation — specifically, the transmissions of pirate radio station KRAB. The station produces a signal strong enough to reach 37 million Angelenos — though it has also been off the air for intervals of up to a week. The wild and wooly mix of political rock, "unconventional" news, and other unexpected programming elements have made this station the street box favorite. DJs Montjoy Singh, Renee Dillon, and (see page C-15)

>CALHUA-MEXICA
>RECENT : 2 WEEKS : LOS ANGELES

BOOSTERGANG TRASHES INDEPENDENT RADIO STATION; 3 KILLED

Early this morning, a local boostergang raided a small pirate radio station, operating as Radio Free Burbank, and destroyed their studio and mobile units. Three people, including the station's owner, Mark Springfield, were killed. The station, which had been operating on various FM channels, was noted for its unique musical choices, and hardhitting investigative reporting. Local police had no comment as yet on the attack.

The station had been broadcasting by stealing airtime on corporate station transmitters, using sophisticated computer infiltration techniques. They had no transmitter of their own.

The boostergang, identified as the Calhua-Mexica gang, has been linked in the past with the DMS mediacorp. However, corporate spokespeople denied any knowledge of such a link. Representatives of the Calhua-Mexica gang, when contacted by this reporter, gave a rambling statement which seemed to indicate they felt generally insulted by Radio Free Burbank, and had decided to take action on their own.

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Scenario #3:

Pirate Radio

Players' Information:

The characters are recruited by KRAB's Josh Carbonell to guard his studios and staff from DMS and their thugs. He fully expects to receive a visit from the Calhua-Mexica gang in the near future. He will pay 100 eb a day, each day, plus room and board, for at least a month's work. You also get to pal around and get stoned (off duty) with a bunch of cool DJs, underground media personalities, and visiting musicians.

The actual KRAB studio is on a barge, several kilometers from the old oil rig which carries the KRAB transmitter. There is a tight beam microwave link from the barge to the oil rig, and all of the KRAB correspondents use cell-phones to call in their stories. Josh does not have a lot of faith in this system keeping DMS from finding his studio.

The barge is in the middle of a raft-city, covering nearly 50 square miles, which floats just off the shores of Los Angeles. The residents are poor, homeless, ethnically disadvantaged, undocumented, and/or avoiding the law. Nearly 120,000 people live out here, on old barges, small ships, pontoons, jury-rigged rafts, and just about anything else that floats. There are twisting, narrow "canals" of open water running through the raft city. The Coast Guard has long ago given up trying to disperse this mess, and content themselves with keeping the rafts out of the sea lanes and harbor. The Rafters are essentially another variety of "Nomads" for *Cyberpunk* game purposes, though the raft-city does not wander around.

At any time, there will be at least a dozen NPCs on the KRAB barge: Josh, 3 Techs who maintain the massive kluge of radio gear at the station, a couple of Medias who act

as producers/writers/sound engineers for the station, a Rafter cook, a couple of DJs or reporters (more Medias, or possibly Rockerboys), and some underground media/music personality here for an interview (or possibly to help Josh defend the place), along with his or her band (and possibly a groupie). Most of these people will be armed with various light pistols.

The Techs have mounted a couple of low-light cameras on the barge mast. A warren of rooms has been created out of sheet steel in and on the barge; the decor is best described as "funky."

A couple of speedboats and a 'utility' outboard owned by the station are normally available for travelling around in the raft-city, or to Los Angeles.

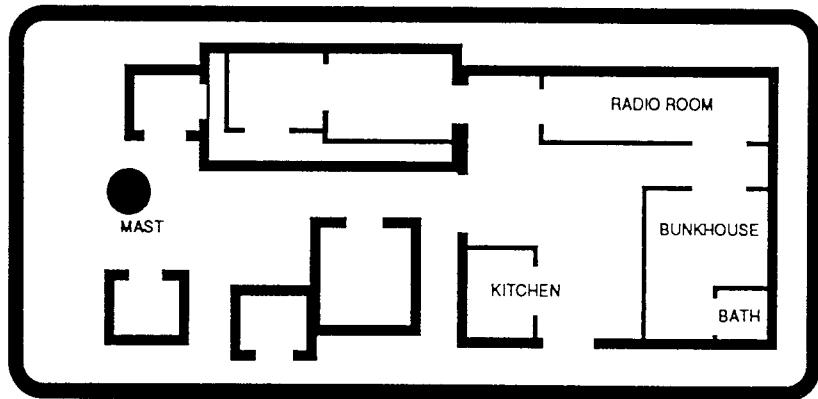
The Techs, Josh, and some of the Media-types normally play lots of poker at night.

Ref's Notes:

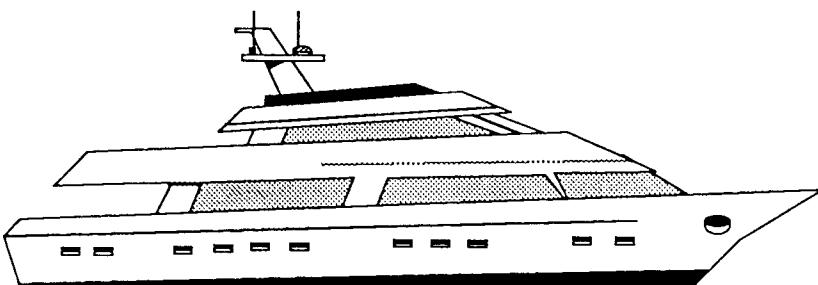
DMS will indeed find the actual location of the studio within a few days, and will send their goons the Calhua-Mexica gang out to destroy it. They will arrive in 6 stolen speedboats, and a stolen Bell-15 Airogyro. Each boat will be carrying 3 boosters, the Airogyro only 1. Lots of automatic weapons, a couple of grenade launchers, and a few Molotov cocktails will round out the bad guys weaponry. The booster in the gyro will play 'bomber.' All of them have reflex boosters and smart guns, at least; other cyberware is certain to be installed.

The Rafters around the barge may join in and help the players, if things seem to be going poorly; they have no love for the boosters, and Josh has been a good neighbor.

If the players manage to repel the assault, Josh will offer them occasional employment as 'backups' for his reporters.



THE BARGE



NIGHT CITY TODAY

October 20, 2020
VOLUME CCVI, No. 31

BOOBYTRAPPED CYBERWARE ON THE STREETS!

Night City – In a bizarre twist on the problem of black market cyberwear, this reporter learned today of a flood of sabotaged cyberware which has been unleashed in this city. Apparently sold to unsuspecting boosters, these prosthetics contain chips programmed to cause violent incidents.

No pattern has yet been detected to the reason for these incidents. Several boosters have strangled themselves with their own cyberarms; others have fired on police cars or patrol officers (with less reason than usual). Some have been driven into cyberpsychosis with alarming speed, and others found dead with no apparent cause. Few of these incidents have been investigated fully by the police until recently.

Few boosters have survived their rebellious cyberware; none were willing to talk to this reporter. It is believed that the cyberware involved was purchased on the street, and outwardly at least resembles various cheap popular brands.

REWARD FOR BRINGING DOWN SABOTAGE CHIPWEAR DEALER!

Night City (AP) – In an unprecedented announcement, the Night City PD, the heads of three major boostergangs, and an association of local street clinics revealed a

reward fund for "bringing to justice" the persons responsible for the sabotage cyberware being sold in Night City. The fund, standing currently at 5000 eb, was contributed to by the Police Benevolent Association, the major boostergangs, and several street clinics. Detective Arnold Heller, speaking for the PBA, said, "The patrol officers feel there are enough risks to working the Combat Zone, without these human time bombs on the street. We are hoping some responsible citizens can help us put an end to this problem. Of course, people should be aware that this is a hazardous situation, and act accordingly." Representatives for the clinics and gangs endorsed Detective Heller's comments; "Razorface," head of the Grimmers, added, "Yeah, what s——d said, goes for us, double."

Night City DA Bernard Moon, when asked about this apparent invitation to "vigilante justice" by the Night City PD, said, "Naturally, we have to carefully enforce any laws broken by anyone, even while doing a public service. However, it is also true that there is considerable leeway for my office to decide which cases to prosecute. Our caseloads are already staggering! Without committing myself to anything, I can certainly say that any mitigating circumstances would be taken into account before a decision was made on whether to file charges.

"As for the reward offer, there are certainly precedents at both the state and federal level for such action."



BERNARD MOON

GANG VIOLENCE ON RISE IN NIGHT CITY

Several major battles have taken place between Night City boostergangs, all related to the sabotage chipware being sold in the streets. Some of the battles were caused by accusations of complicity in the distribution of the corrupt cyberware; others were apparently provoked by the cyberware itself. So far, 27 gang members, 8 bystanders, and 3 Night City policemen have been killed in these incidents.

In response to this violence, the anti-prosthetics group, the Inquisitors, has been staging protests at City Hall Plaza, calling for stricter enforcement of black-market cyberware laws.

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NETWORK 54

BODY IMAGE

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Scenario #4:

Armed & Dangerous

Players' Information:

Here is a chance for the players to make some bucks, without an employer watching over their shoulder. The reward offer seems legit, and the characters would stand to gain some friends in the gangs, on the police force, and in the small clinics: not the worst friends to have.

Of course, first you have to find the dealers.

Ref's notes:

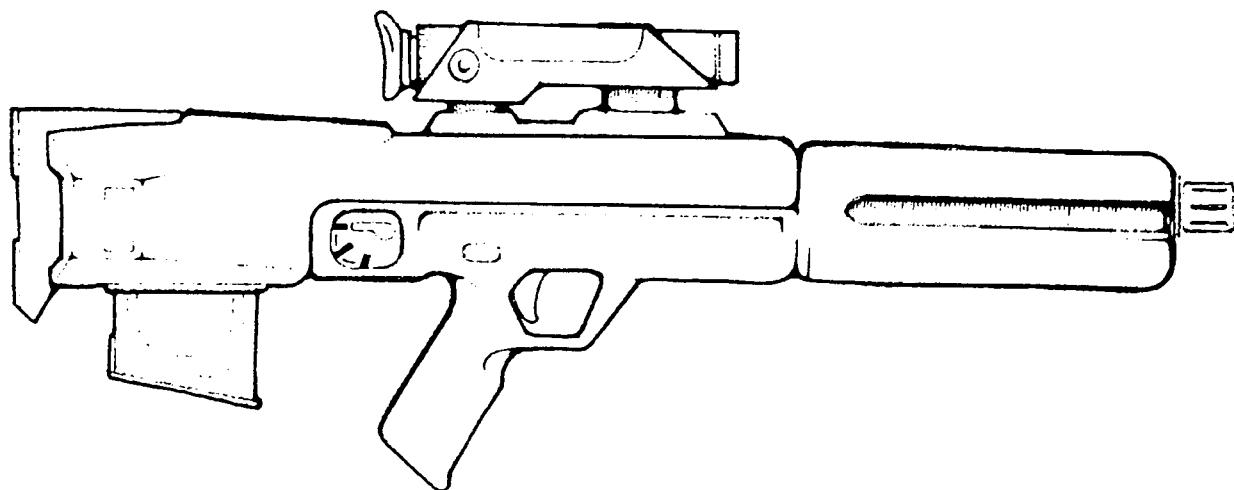
For most of this scenario, the players will be using lots of Stealth, Shadowing, Human Perception, and lots and lots of Streetwise.

The sabotage chips are being made overseas, installed in standard cheap cyberware, and brought into Night City by the Inquisitors. They then sell the cyberware (at a loss) to boosters, who do most of the actual "retail" distribution. The boosters involved, mostly members of the

"Barons," have realized what is going on; but being particularly nasty boosters, don't really care as long as they don't get caught.

Eventually, the characters should be able to get the time and place of a meeting, where some of the "Barons" will meet their mysterious suppliers, and hand over cash for cyberware. The characters may want to bust up the party right there, in which case several of the suppliers will turn out to be Inquisitors in mufti. Or, they can follow the suppliers around, and catch them with their unsavory pals at whatever dive the Inquisitors call home. Either way, lots of heavily armed people will be mad at them for a short while; some will have lots and lots of cyberware, some will have none at all. 10,000 eb in cash and 10,000 eb worth of black market cyberware are being traded; most of the cyberware is sabotaged, but the money is fine.

Once the police and boostergangs have been informed of who is really responsible for the problems, the characters' troubles will be over. For the "Barons" and the Inquisitors, the troubles will be just beginning . .



NIGHT CITY TODAY

October 20, 2020
VOLUME CCVI, No. 32

NETWORK 54 ANNOUNCES CABLE AMNESTY PROGRAM TO END SOON

New York — Network News 54 announced today that, at the end of their 60 day amnesty program, they would be taking "harsh measures" to deal with illegal hookups. When asked about what these measures might be, company spokesperson Andrea Kugel replied:

"We will go after these people using every legal tactic available to



ANDREA KUGLE OF NET 54

us. These people are not paying their share; their neighbors should realize that. We estimate that if all of the current illegal hookups were converted to legal, paying hookups, rates to consumers could be decreased by as much as 12%!

"Our amnesty program is very simple. You just pay the standard 50

eurobuck connection fee—that's it. Our installers are certainly under no pressure to disconnect — we would rather have happy paying customers. But if we have no other recourse, we will disconnect illegal or delinquent hookups as fast as we can.

"If you don't want to reduce your rates, all you have to do is sit there. But if you want the possibility of lower rates, call our toll-free number 1-700-555-3465."

REPORT

MEDIA: CAN NETWORK 54 DEAL WITH CABLE HIJACKING?

By Ed Andersen

In the wake of the announcement by Network News 54 of the upcoming end of their amnesty program, we have uncovered some interesting statistics. In a similar program undertaken last year by the City of New York, which owns its own cable system, the cost of the program exceeded the new income brought in by formerly illegal subscribers. In addition, 18 city cable employees were killed while disconnecting homes from the cable net; 3 persons were killed by cable employees returning fire. 20% of the disconnects were later discovered to be legitimate, paid in full cable accounts.

As most of these disconnects occur in poor neighborhoods, the disconnection teams are exposed to great risk to life and limb from gang activity in those areas as well.

In light of this, can Network News 54 really claim that our neighborhoods will benefit from this program? In our opinion, an extended amnesty program would better suit the public interest, and (cont'd page C-14)

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Full Skin Job, with up to two
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Cable Employee Killed By Video Pirate

Night City, CA — An employee of Night City Cable, a local subsidiary of Network News 54, was killed yesterday while trying to disconnect an apartment in the South City district. The employee, Renee Wong, was pronounced dead on arrival at City Medical Center, having suffered multiple gunshot and stab wounds. The three other members of her disconnect team were also admitted to the hospital; one remains in intensive care, while the other two are in "fair" condition. Police have a suspect, Charlton Ompa, age 30, in custody. Mr. Ompa, an unemployed theater usher and a veteran of the Central American Wars, has plead not guilty to the charges of murder with special circumstances, attempted murder, possession of unregistered firearms, possession of explosive devices, assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm, possession of illegal cyberware, and resisting arrest.

Apparently Mr. Ompa objected to the Night City Cable team cutting his illegal hookup while he was watching the National Laser League playoffs.

BODY IMAGE
When only the Best will do...
1-417-555-8900

Scenario #5:

Giving the Public What They Want

Player Information:

The characters, in need of money, have been hired as a disconnect team, and must clear illegal and delinquent taps off of the cable net. They will be paid \$25 for each connection which is "legalized," that is to say the customer starts paying, and \$10 for each connection dropped from the net.

The cable net is an optical fiber network installed originally in the 2000s. It carries video, high-rate computer data, and screamsheet pages. Fibres range in size from 1-1/2" diameter armored cables under the street, to 1/10" diameter risers entering the customers' homes. Taps may be present anywhere, but the likeliest taps are found along the shortest route from the tapper's TV set to the nearest legal cable.

There are six basic methods for locating illegal hookups:

- 1) calls to the "fink" line at Night City Cable; the characters will be provided with printouts listing all information gained from these calls;
- 2) electro-optical cable load meters, which can be clamped to the fiber optic cable to find transmission losses;
- 3) netrunning — against computer hookups;
- 4) physically tracing cables;
- 5) paying bribes, persuasion, intimidation, or other 'street' tactics; and
- 6) con games, such as going door to door with a "Viewer Marketing Survey."

The characters are issued Night City Cable ID cards, and are legally al-

lowed access to all cable company property — which is to say, the cables themselves. Of course, not everybody agrees 100% with this.

And then there is that violent minority — who, when their hookup is cut, or if they see someone just sneaking around, whip out a 12 gauge. And of course, poking around in the basement of big apartment buildings is a lovely way to meet boosters and worse.

The only legally sanctioned reply to this is "self-defense." Of course, from the company's point of view, public opinion is a whole lot more important than the law.

Ref's notes:

Most of the people who have rigged illegal hookups are not going to give the characters any trouble — a few will even go for the amnesty program. On the other hand, a boostergang which loses their cable

signal just before the Big Game, a netrunner who loses his high baud line while making a dangerous run against a corporate mainframe, or a psycho who can't see his "Mayberry RFD" reruns, can all give the characters a hard time. Basically, nobody will be happy to see the characters.

On the other hand, Techs and Netrunners might welcome an opportunity to squirrel around in the cable company's computers, and rig their own little surprises on the net.



NIGHT CITY TODAY

October 27, 2020
VOLUME CCVI, No. 33

>NOMAD BBS
>DUSTVILLE CAMP
>RECENT:CURRENT:

CORPS HARASS FAMILIES AT DUSTVILLE

Well friends, the megacorps are at it again! A truckload of their goons came by the Dustville camp yesterday and tore into the folks there — trying to scare them off. The goons weren't giving out names, but it seems a friend of ours ran the Net: and she figures them for Petrochem's own brand of slime.

Now most of you already know from personal experience all about Petrochem, but just in case there are a couple of new folks on-line, I'll lay out the down and dirty about the kind of game these guys will be playing in Crow Canyon. Back about 15 years ago (see page C-2)

>PETROCHEM
>DUSTVILLE CAMP
>RECENT:CURRENT:

PETROCHEM RESPONDS TO RUMORS ABOUT DUSTVILLE "CLEANUP"

Dallas, TX — When questioned today about Petrochem's actions concerning the so-called "Dustville" camp in Ventura County, California, spokesperson Alan Valentine replied,

"The property in question is corporate property. We will enforce our property rights to the limit of the law. No further comment."

Petrochem has a reputation for fierce, some would say savage, responses to squatters and trespassers on its corporate farms in this country. While the "Dustville" camp is on apparently worthless property, the corporation seems unlikely to cede any property rights in this case. Another confrontation between Petrochem and the nomads is shaping up...

>DUSTVILLE CAMP
>AS PROPERTY
>SINCE 2000:10 YEARS:

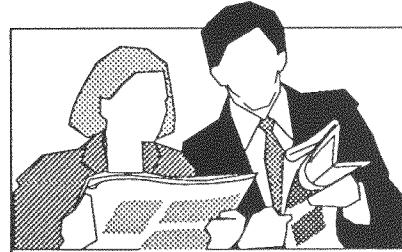
Crow Canyon Refinery Will Not Be Built

Ventura County, CA — In the wake of the merger between Western States Oil, Elf Aquitaine, Chevron, BP, and Royal Dutch Shell, several



major projects have been cut in order to pay bond fees associated with Ms. Ellen Trieste's takeover. Locally, this means that the Crow Canyon Refinery project will not go through — even though Western States Oil has already purchased 1800 acres of land.

Tonight at 8PM on DMS: see
HOGG COUNTY, TX
"A Laff Riot!!" — Jevens Hence



CORPORATE REPORT

As of last download...EBM acquires Consolidated Factions by unfriendly takeover, analysts concerned...Leon H. Morgan III named VP of International sales for Genma Corp...WestTech stock falls due to chemical scare in South Indian Ocean...Petrochem under fire for alleged dumping in Texas facility...MetaLogical (pg. F-27)

CRIME BEAT

The consolidated crime report for last week reads as follows: 106 murders, up 5 from the same week last year; 121 attempted murders, up 16; 42 felony assaults, down 25; 3 kidnaps, down 3; 24 rapes, down 18, burglaries 41 (see page C-11)



**WATCH NEWS 54 WITH DONDRE WHITFIELD 8:00 ON CHANNEL 54.
THE MAXIMUM INFORMATION CHANNEL**

Scenario #6:

Camping Out

Player Information:

The characters are contacted by their nomad friends (what, you say you haven't got any nomad friends? Every group has someone who has nomad friends!). The nomads need help protecting their camp in Crow Canyon from corporate harassment. They can pay \$30 a day, plus meals; but would really appreciate any characters who helped out of the goodness of their hearts.

About 200 people live in the camp, named "Dustville." Of these, 80 are children, and another 40 are too old or disabled to do much useful work. There are half a dozen old school buses, and a couple dozen beat-up old cars, pickups, RVs, and motorcycles at the camp. Several of the buses are in need of major repairs.

Every day, about 100 of the Nomads drive down the unpaved road which leads to town, looking for ways to get money, food, and water for the camp. The small creek in Crow Canyon is dry in the summer, and the valley is very dusty (hence the name "Dustville"). A friendly local has promised to loan the nomads an old well drilling truck for a day or two, so they won't have to carry water into Crown Canyon.

The nomads have enough weapons to arm 50 people with pump shot-guns, lever action carbines, and pistols. Body armor is very scarce.

Ref's notes:

In 2008, Petrochem wanted to expand a business park being developed in San Bernardino County, about 100 miles east of Crow Canyon. Unfortunately, the area they wanted to expand into held a toxic waste dump, built in the early 1980s. Petrochem worked out a deal with the county and state to move the dump contents to a "better" storage

site out of state; but instead, moved 70,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil to the Crow Canyon property. At Crow Canyon, the waste was covered by a couple of feet of local topsoil.

Petrochem pretty much ignored Crow Canyon after that — until recently. Some bright boy in the local office realized that "Dustville" was located on a nasty corporate secret, and has decided to move them off before they stir things up better left buried.

Petrochem is keeping an eye on what happens in the valley with a couple of remote surveillance drones flying at high altitudes. They are both very small and quiet.

Toxic waste laws have been relaxed quite a bit since the 20th century, but this dump is such a horrid mess that even Petrochem would be embarrassed. Proper disposal costs for the waste materials involved would run into the tens of millions of dollars.

A few of the people in the camp have been having headaches and feeling nauseous — this is nothing yet. So far, the Nomads have had "barely any" exposure.

As soon as the well drilling begins, the bit will hit something big and hard. A little shovelling will reveal a broken concrete block, originally some 10' on a side. 4" tall letters set into the concrete read:

DANGER
HEXACHLOROCYCLOPENTADIENE
POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYL
POLYVALENT CHROMIUM
NITRIC ACID

TOXIC MATERIAL DISPOSAL STRUCTURE
300' X 300' VAULT
LOCATED 50' NORTH OF THIS MARKER
SITE 480 — ESTABLISHED 1982

This stuff is bad, boys and girls! If further drilling is attempted, a pungent oily yellow liquid will be found permeating the soil a few feet down, along with the crushed and rusted remains of 55 gallon drums. Everyone in the camp will get headaches immediately just by exposing this glop.

The yellow soup is toxic, mutagenic, carcinogenic, teratogenic, and generally dangerous. Symptoms for increasing exposure include nausea, hemorrhage, and death.

A trivial amount of research will discover that Site 480 was supposed to have been moved out of state from San Bernardino County by Petrochem.

Once Petrochem figures out (from the RPV cameras) that the Nomads are digging up the toxic waste, they will scramble to eliminate the Nomads. Within 20 minutes, 10 AV-4s, each carrying a 10-man assault squad, will converge on Crow Canyon. They will attempt to block the road, and massacre the Nomads.

The unpaved road into town is about 3 miles long — anyone who reaches town can be considered safe for the moment. Note that the Nomads do not currently have nearly enough transport for everyone at the camp to ride a vehicle.



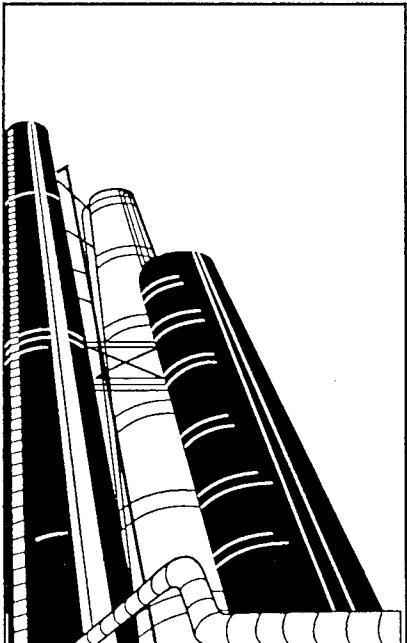
NIGHT CITY TODAY

November 3, 2020
VOLUME CCVI, No. 34

ATTACK ON HIBERNIA OILFIELD

Nearly 20 Killed

St. Johns, Newfoundland – The "Hibernia" oil production platform, located 200 miles southeast of this Canadian city, was heavily damaged



today by a missile attack. 17 people are confirmed dead, and another 10 are missing. No estimate of the monetary damage was available. The platform is at the center of a network of underwater satellite wells which last year produced 30% of the crude oil brought to the surface in North America. Petrochem, which operates

the platform for a consortium of major energy corps, is sending security and investigation teams to the platform.

The "Hibernia" platform was constructed in the 1990s at a cost of some 20 billion eb. No immediate reason for the attack is known.

RED FLAG ARMY TAKES CREDIT FOR HIBERNIA ATTACK

Night City (AP) – A news release from the Red Flag Army, a terrorist organization, has taken credit for the missile attack on the "Hibernia" production platform earlier today. A detailed description of the methods and equipment used to conduct the attack seems to leave no doubt that this shadowy group was responsible.

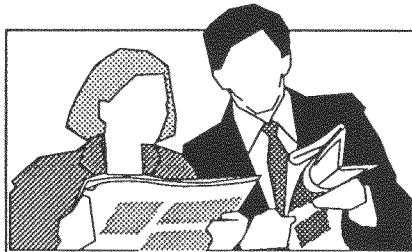
Petrochem officials had no comment on the Red Flag press release.

There have been persistent rumors that the Red Flag Army, while posing as a radical left terror group, is actually a mercenary corporate strike force.

AMERICAN AND CANADIAN MANHUNT FOR HIBERNIA ATTACKERS

St Johns, Newfoundland – A joint American-Canadian law enforcement task force has been formed in the wake of the "Hibernia" platform attack today. Officials from the RCMP and the FBI announced the task force at a press conference in St. Johns, Newfoundland earlier this evening. Spokesperson Milton McCollum said, "Every resource will be brought to bear in order to find the perpetrators of this sneak attack. We already have solid evidence leading us to persons involved in the planning of the attack, and arrests are expected soon." When asked about the participation of the Red

Flag Army in the attack, McCollum said, "Everyone knows that the Red Flag Army is just a cover for various corporate schemes. I doubt this is any different."



CORPORATE REPORT

As of last download...EBM acquires Consolidated Factions by unfriendly takeover, analysts concerned...Leon H. Morgan III named VP of International sales for Genma Corp...WestTech stock falls due to chemical scare in South Indian Ocean...Petrochem under fire for alleged dumping in Texas facility...MetaLogical (pg. F-27)

Entertainment AT CLUB RETRO



FOR THE BEST IN BIOSCUT RECREATION AND CABARET. NOW APPEARING, "MORRISON LIVES!"

142 S.DELANY, NIGHT CITY

Scenario #7:

Stalking Horses

Player Information:

One fine day, one of the characters finds 1500 eb in an envelope with his or her name on it, left in his or her apartment, or in his or her car. No note, no explanation; must be someone who owes you money... yeah, that must be it.

A little later that day, you see a news scream about a bombing at the Hibernia oilfield — this means nothing to you (yet).

That evening, Federal, state, local, and Canadian cops are busting down your door, chasing your car, harassing your friends, and generally after you — they want to know what you had to do with the "Hibernia" platform bombing! It seems they "know" that a member of your group did the technical planning or research for the attack. You'd better be able to prove differently before they grab you and throw you into braindance.

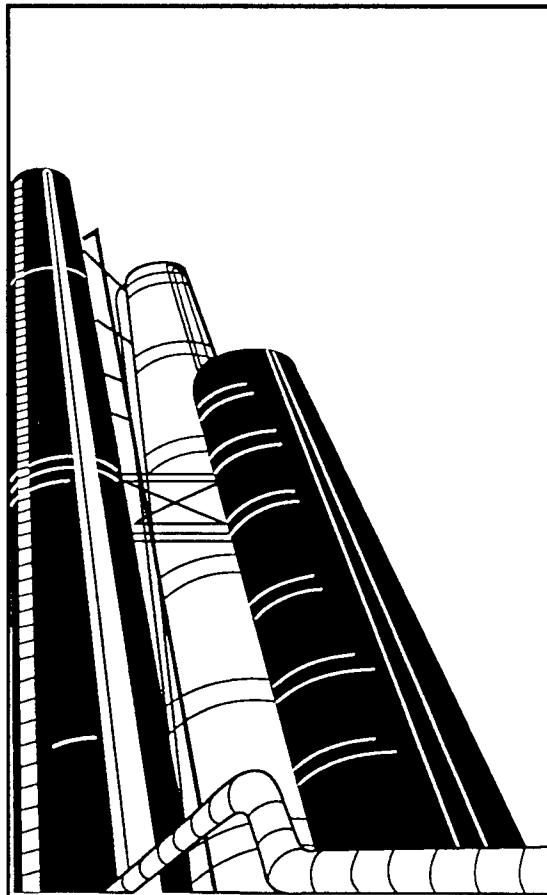
Of course, that assumes that none of you *did* take part in the attack: how well do you know each other, anyway?

Ref's notes:

The Red Flag Army was paid by SovOil to take the blame for the attack on the "Hibernia" platform. Red Flag turned around and spread the blame around a bit, by creating a 'scenario' for the attack. Choose one of the characters to be the "patsy" — preferably a Netrunner or Tech, possibly a Solo with a good leadership record or good reputation. This person was given the part of "the guy who checked their defenses/found and rigged the missile/planned the attack for us," depending on the Role of the character. Various faked physical and electronic evidence has been

created to incriminate the character; depending on how careful and paranoid the character is, there may even be bits of wire, missile manuals, or flight path diagrams among his or her possessions.

The characters should have enough warning about the first "visit" by the cops to get away screaming AV-6s,



In order to clear their names, the characters will have to find members of the Red Flag Army and lean on them, or follow them around to their "cell" bases, or some such. In the meantime banks will be shutting down the characters' accounts, desk clerks at any but the cheapest hotels will have pictures of them taped behind the counters, and every slimeball on the street is being leaned on for information by undercover cops.

Engaging in shootouts with the cops is a good way to ensure your ticket gets punched, whether you find Red Flag or not.

Alternate version: would any of the characters be interested in checking the defenses/finding and rigging a missile/planning the attack for the Red Flag Army? They would have paid 1000 to 2000 eb for this kind of help. Of course, when you end up being chased by the cops later, because Red Flag ratted on you, there isn't that glow of injured innocence about you.

howling sirens, bullhorns, cops going "hup, hup, hup." It should be played for major overkill by the ref. The cops are looking for the "patsy," but will also pick up any other of his or her friends they can find.

There will be a continuing massive manhunt by uniformed cops for all of the characters; this, however, should not be too hard to avoid. The plain-clothes detectives on their trail should be more of a worry.

NIGHT CITY TODAY

November 10, 2020
VOLUME CCVI, No. 35

PEAK & DERRERA ANNOUNCES INCREASE IN PALLADIUM INVENTORY

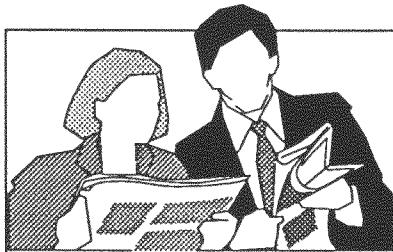
Night City (AP) – In a startling announcement, Peak & Derrera announced today that they are expanding their palladium inventory to record highs, despite the recent slump in prices. Corporate spokesperson Jane Bean said, “We are confident that the latest catalyzed cold fusion experiments will result in breakeven energy production. When that happens, we expect palladium to be in great demand.”

P&D expects to receive the final shipments of palladium at their New York facility today, bringing their total inventory to over 110,000 troy ounces. Palladium for immediate delivery closed at 330 eb per troy ounce yesterday, down 2 eb; prices today are rising in reaction to the P&D announcement.

Worst Winter In Over a Century In New York City *180 Deaths Reported*

New York – Massive snowfalls, and several nights where temperatures have dropped to 20° below zero, have created havoc in New York City. Nearly 3 feet of snow is on the ground, including 6" in the last 24 hours. Deaths directly attributable to the weather number 180, and city

officials privately expect to find many homeless people frozen to death in drifts. National Guard troops have been sent into the city to help with emergency services and maintain order. Traffic on all but a few major streets has come to a halt. All local airports have been closed, and the only aircraft moving are vectored thrust craft. Further snows are expected, and high winds of up to (cont'd page C-20).



CORPORATE REPORT

PEAK & DERRERA

Precious materials brokers

Main office: Baltimore, MD; **Regional Offices:** New York, Los Angeles, Geneva, London, Tokyo
Stock: 111,500,760 shares;

Available on Market: 760,000 shares;

Major Shareholders: Penstone Equities, 8%; InterMutual Fund, 7%; Mr. Maxwell Orvis, 6%

Troops: 150 combat ready, all assigned as guards to offices or for shipments. **Covert Operatives:** 5

Equipment and Resources: P&D has some of the world's tightest security at their offices, and their Netrunners are top-notch. Valuable shipments are moved in convoys of at least 4 armed AV-6s, of which the company owns 30. Each office also has a corporate jet and helicopter for VIP transport. For long distance shipments, the company charters scramjets from various sources.

BODY IMAGE
When only the Best will do...
1-417-555-8900

NEW BANK CLEARING CENTER NEARLY FINISHED

Night City – Construction of the new North American bank payment clearing center is almost completed, officials announced today. The CHIPS-II facility (Clearing House Interbank Payment System) will house computers to electronically move hundreds of trillions of eurobucks being transferred between banks each day. The computers, built by Cal Digital, will be among the largest and fastest ever installed in commercial service.

The facility is expected to begin testing in 6 months, and should be in full operation by next summer. The building itself is being constructed by Perkins/Worldwide Contractors.

BANKING LOSSES TO ELECTRONIC THEFT REACH ALL TIME HIGH

Washington – Federal Reserve officials revealed today that last year American banks lost over 400 million eurobucks to computer infiltration and electronic credit fraud. This represents a real increase, adjusted for inflation, of 5% over 2012. The Federal government has identified interbank payment procedures, customer identification, and corporate indifference as major problems (continued on page C-49)

HELP WANTED: CONCRETE PUDLERS, MIXER OPERATORS, SHEET METAL WORKERS, ELECTRICAL INSTALLERS, AND ALL CONSTRUCTION TRADES WORKERS:

Perkins/Worldwide Contractors has several major projects underway in NYC, and we need qualified craftsmen to do the job. Wages are competitive with union jobs, and unmatched benefit package assures you of on-the-job protection. Call 1-910-555-1900 for an application. PERKINS/WORLDWIDE NEEDS YOUR SKILLS!

Scenario #8: **Things Done Proper**

Player Information:

The team has been recruited to take part in a big-time crime: robbing the Peak & Derrera vaults in New York City.

Your boss is a fixer named John "Sonny" Altaro, and seems to have lots of contacts with "traditional" organized crime figures. The way the cut goes is this: 40% to the guys fencing the metal, 20% to Altaro, 10% to bribes for some unnamed P&D personnel providing assistance, and the other 30% to the team. Altaro has detailed maps of the physical and electronic security of the P&D building, and a few of the less important passwords. Altaro can also obtain all sorts of illegal equipment at cost. Up to 200,000 eb can be spent ahead of time to get this mission off the ground.

The actual recruitment occurs about 1 week before the palladium hits the vaults. The upcoming lousy weather is being predicted quite accurately at that point. Once the palladium is in the vaults, the company will wait till after the foul weather is over to disperse the metal to all of its other offices. Thus, the team will have a window of three to five days to do the job.

As a possible useful piece of information, snowmobiles cost about 2500 eb, can carry two people, and can tow a sledge carrying 250 kg at 25 mph. Unloaded, the snowmobiles can hit 45 mph.

Ref's notes:

This should be run like a "crime thriller/bank heist" movie. People in coveralls with hands-off microphones crouched over equipment in back of unmarked vehicles, surveillance

teams in parkas placing remote cameras on adjacent rooftops, techs disguised as phone company employees sneaking into the local exchanges, and a lot of thorough planning.

The palladium itself is kept in a large vault in the basement of the P&D building; an elevator big enough to hold an AV-6 leads from the roof to the basement, stopping directly in front of the vault door. There are half a dozen electric forklifts in the basement; each can lift 500 kg. The palladium is in locked metal boxes sitting on the floor of the vault, 4000 troy ounces to a box. It is easily identified. All other precious metals in the vault are stored in locked, armored trays along the walls; blowing all of these would be very time consuming, and is probably not worth the trouble.

If the team picks the right day, even vectored thrust vehicles should have difficulty flying.

There are 10 armed and armored guards on duty at any time, and 10 sleeping out of armor in a small bunkroom in the basement. Only 2 other employees, a company exec and a secretary to answer phones, are here during the 2 worst days of the storm. Routine phone traffic is being routed to the company head office in Baltimore.

If an alarm signal reaches the police, a few squad cars will come sliding along the street within 5 or 10 minutes; it will take 20 minutes for the Tactical Squad to get here.

Scenario #9: **Spy Wednesday**

Player Information:

The characters are approached by a well-known netrunner (well known to other netrunners, anyway). He will offer them 2000 eb a month to get jobs at the CHIPS-II site and install a few little "black boxes" for him. Most can be embedded in concrete with just their antenna "tails" near the outer surface; some he would like more obtrusively placed, in ductwork or on phone lines. A couple of these boxes a week, for a month or two, that's all he needs to get a handle on the national money markets.

Ref's notes:

Security is pretty tight at the CHIPS-II jobsite, and a couple of the higher-ups in security remember what happened to the new American Embassy in Moscow in the 1980s. Characters on the job will not be wearing body armor, or carrying any but the smallest of weapons; the guards, on the other hand, wear armor vests, helmets, and carry shotguns.



NIGHT CITY TODAY

November 17, 2020
VOLUME CCVI, No. 36

>CRIME

>WALLENSTEIN:CURRENT:DENVER

TOP INFOCOMP RESEARCHER GONE MISSING

Dr. Harold N. Wallenstein, a prominent information theory researcher employed by Infocomp, is currently the object of a massive search being undertaken by Infocomp and various police agencies. Dr. Wallenstein, age 40, disappeared 3 days ago during a fire at the Infocomp facility in Denver where he is employed. Arson investigators believe the fire to have been set deliberately.

Wallenstein, in his six years employment with Infocomp, has contributed greatly to the efficiency with which the corporate data base is (continued page C-22)

>BUSINESS

>EBM

>DATA/RESEARCH

>RECENT:CURRENT:

HAMBURG/MARSEILLES

EBM Announces New Data Facility

Marseilles - Euro Business Machines Corp. issued a press release describing a new corporate data management center at Marseilles, France. Spokesperson Andrew Fenner said the center had been constructed at a cost of 150 million eb. "EBM has gone to great lengths to build and equip this facility, and we intend to challenge Infocomp, Rand, and NipponData for the corpo-

rate data base market. Top-flight researchers, using EBM's cutting-edge hardware, will be able to (cont'd pg. C-2)

>EBMFACILITIES

>MOUNTAIN STATES

>RECENT:2 WEEKS:

LAS VEGAS NM

EBM EXERCISES TO BE HELD AT SANGER LABS

Las Vega - Sanger Labs, a local subsidiary of EBM, is conducting a test of their defensive arrangements for the next three weeks or so. Corporate spokespersons emphasized that all of the training would take place within the boundaries of the 2400 acre facility, and that there would be no danger to the public. "Realistic tests and training are necessary in order to be defensively prepared for possible sabotage or infiltration attempts," said a spokesperson.

Sanger Labs employs nearly 200 people, of whom about 20 have been hired in this county. County officials, when contacted about the corporate live fire exercise, had no comment.

>SANGER LABS

>DEFENSE:2 YEARS:

LAS VEGAS NM

FEDS APPROVE LAB DEFENSES

The BATF today issued a license to Sanger Labs for their proposed defensive armament. The decision, while not unexpected, did not please the San Miguel county board of supervisors, who had contested Sanger's application. Board president Tyler Powell announced that an appeal would immediately be filed with the Justice Department.

The BATF decision allows Sanger to post up to 30 heavily armed guards, and 2 armed scout helicopters. "Non-lethal" defenses, such as electrified barbed tape, sensors, and tripflares are already in place at the facility, located east of Las Vegas at the former Rocking R Ranch.

>LAS VEGAS NM
>WEATHER
>CURRENT:CURRENT:

WEATHER TODAY

Heavy overcast and low temperatures are predicted for northern New Mexico this weekend. Temperatures should range from daytime highs in the 40s, to nighttime lows in the 30s. Expect more snow at higher elevations. Pollutants index stands at 380: no special protection needed.

Next week promises better weather, with clearing skies and higher temperatures.

Heavy hail was reported Wednesday at Durango, CO; some damage to property (continued on pg. C-4)

>UH-90

>PERFORMANCE SUMMARY:

EYE ON THE MARKET:

Night City Today
Examines the Best in Available Equipment
Today: the UH-90

Utility/squad transport helicopter, powered by Allison T800 turboshaft; fully integrated cockpit with inertial/GPS worldwide nav capability, all-weather and thermal imaging systems, NOE capable autopilot (supported by APQ-800 terrain following radar), radar warning receivers, infra-red jammer, hardened avionics, TI "pilot's assistant" expert flight management system. Cruise speed 280 kph, top speed 325 kph, endurance 7 hours, max. range 2000 km (with ferry tanks), rate of climb 2.5 m/sec; 2 pilots' positions, 6 crashworthy troop seats, can carry 8 total passengers. Interior can be sealed; complete NBC filters are provided. Empty weight 1400 kg, max. loaded weight 3800 kg, max. internal fuel 2000 liters; can mount two 350 liter external tanks for ferry flights. Three armament fixture points are provided: nose, and port/starboard side pylon mounts.

For our performance tests, we took the UH-90 to China Lake, in the Mojave Desert. There, we put the craft through (cont'd on page C-9)

BODY IMAGE
When only the Best will do...
1-417-555-8900

Scenario #10: **Deniably Plausible Strike**

Player Information:

Infocomp is looking for a team to attempt a counter-extraction. They believe Dr. Harold Wallenstein, an information theory specialist, was extracted from their Denver office by an EBM team, and is currently at Sanger Labs, east of Las Vegas, New Mexico, being prepared (with bodysculpting and other techniques) for an imminent reappearance (under another name, of course) at EBM's new Marseilles facility. Within a couple of days EBM will probably fly Wallenstein by AV-4 to Albuquerque, and then by corporate scramjet to France.

Infocomp is offering 15,000 eb up front for the recovery, plus a success bonus of 15,000 eb. These figures cover the whole team. If the team wants more up front for expenses, they will have to convince Infocomp that they have a viable plan, and justify any extra equipment. Dr. Wallenstein should be delivered alive and reasonably healthy to the Infocomp facility in Denver.

At least one member of the team should have a good Med-Tech skill, and be equipped to keep Dr. Wallenstein alive in case he is wounded, or (possibly) booby trapped. Otherwise team composition is unimportant.

Orbital imaging of the Sanger Labs site shows a main building, 3 stories tall, covering 10,000 square meters of ground; a hangar/garage, covering 1,000 square meters of ground, and a lot of corporate landscaping in the immediate area; all covered by a few inches of snow. The perimeter of the site is a rough rectangle about 3000 meters on a side. There are a few trees and bushes in the landscaped area; other than that, low scrub and bare flat ground predominate. The nearest hills are to the north and south, respectively 5000 meters and 3000 meters away from the center of the site. The two lane, paved access road leads west towards Las Vegas. There has been no traffic on this road for the past two days.

Intrusion sensors have been scattered about the site by EBM; their capabilities are unknown.

Foot patrols are being conducted on the site, by guards in pairs. They are in constant radio communication, using secure channels, with the security office in the main building. Usually 2 pairs of guards will have this duty. IR imaging gear is almost certainly being worn by these guards.

It is known that 2 helicopters are present at the site; one is kept in the hangar, and the other on pad alert with the crew aboard. After observing several reaction flights from orbit, it has been determined that no more than 15 seconds elapse between the issuance of flight orders from the security office and the launch of the chopper. The choppers are UH-90s, armed with nose-mounted 25mm chain guns. At least one 4-man security squad is kept ready to ride in the choppers on occasion.

It is believed that the Sanger Labs site is operating under "security lockdown" conditions at the moment. Several locally-hired employees, who normally do custodial and maintenance work at the labs, have been called and told to take a paid vacation for a week or two. These persons, if contacted, might be able to provide information about the internal layout of the labs, and their security procedures.

The Sanger Labs facility has almost certainly been equipped with NBC filters and sensors, to prevent intruders from spreading gas agents through the ductwork.

Infocomp will provide materials to identify Dr. Wallenstein, if his appearance has not changed too much.

Ref's notes:

This is going to be a tough one. The 30 heavily armed guards, triplares, sensors, and helicopters are all there, just like the screamsheet says. In addition, a top Eurosolo, Marc Dumouline, has been sent to "supervise" the whole affair. In three days, Dr. Wallenstein will be flown to France.

Normally, 4 of the guards are patrolling outside, 4 are in full kit as a "reaction force," 1 is on duty at the entrance lobby, 1 stands guard out-

side Dr. Wallenstein's room, and another 5 patrol the main building. The other 30 are off-duty, but Dumouline insists they sleep in combat gear and keep their weapons handy. The hangar contains another UH-90 (which would take 30 seconds to prepare for flight), and two vans.

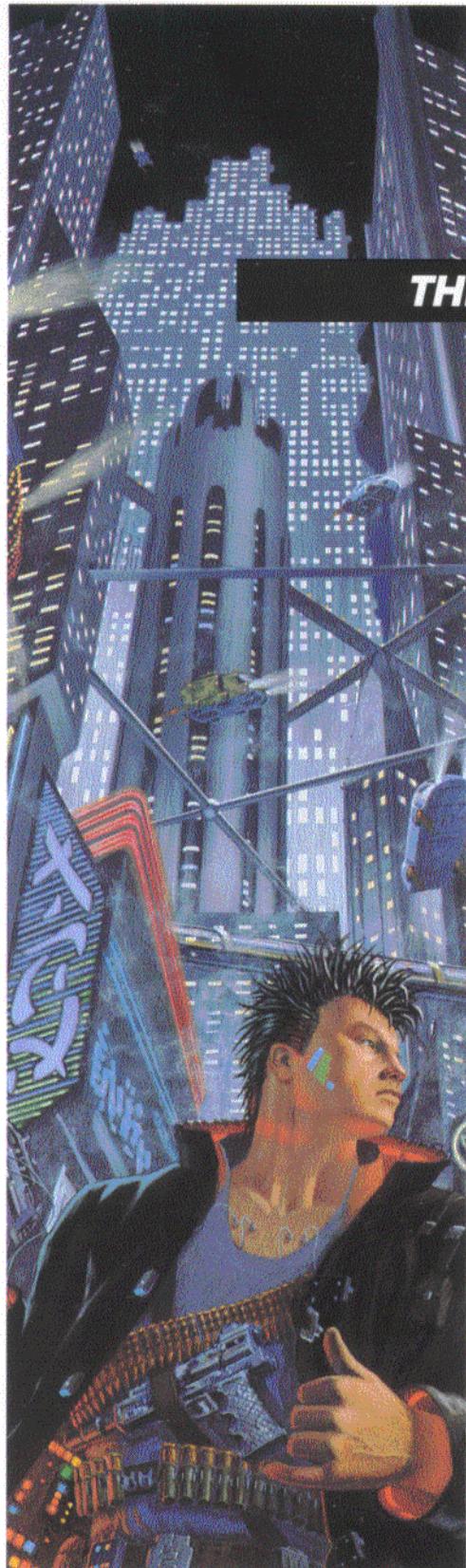
In the security office 7 techs monitor cameras and alarms, while a netrunner, Seagull, monitors the EBM System 1300 computer which the lab uses. Dumouline will always be in the security office, unless the players' team is detected in or near the main building, in which case he will proceed to the med section.

A single Stinger-POST III shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missile launcher (75% chance to hit within 5000 meters, IR and optically seeking) is available to the defenders.

Dr. Wallenstein is in the medical section on the second floor, and is recovering from cosmetic surgery. He is the only patient in the med section (so identifying him should be no problem, despite his new face and fingerprints). He is in no condition to move, being heavily sedated. He is a bit overweight (105 kg). There are, however, a wheelchair and gurneys immediately available in the med section. He has not been booby-trapped (unless the referee is being unusually cruel).

The other 150 or so people in the building have no interest in being involved in combat. If persuaded or intimidated to talk before the mission, several of the locally hired janitors (currently at loose ends) can sketch rough maps of the site, and describe ordinary (pre-Dr. Wallenstein) security procedures. None of these people have seen Dumouline.

The day Dr. Wallenstein is to leave, an EBM corporate scramjet, 4 armed AV-4s, and several vans with a total of 25 EBM troops will arrive at the Albuquerque airport early in the morning. Three of the AV-4s will then fly to the Sanger Lab facility, pick up Dr. Wallenstein and Dumouline, and return to the airport. The AV-4s take about 20 minutes to get from Albuquerque to the lab site, and one of them will spend about 60 seconds on the ground at the lab.



Cyberpunk

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME OF THE DARK FUTURE

The Corporations control the world from their skyscraper fortresses, enforcing their rule with armies of cyborg assassins. On the Street, Boostergangs roam a shattered urban wilderness, killing and looting. The rest of the world is a perpetual party, as fashion-model beautiful techies rub biosculpt jobs with battle armored roadwarriors in the hottest clubs, sleaziest bars and meanest streets this side of the Postholocaust. The Future never looked so bad.

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