



nanoChrome

Subtitle

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Abstract

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1 1 Introduction

2 2 nanoChrome

3 3 Characters

“I suppose that deep down,” he replied, “I want the same things as everyone else. Enough sense to stay out of trouble, enough money to buy what I want, enough time to enjoy it.

—R.J. Ellory, *Bad Star*

Note: There are many references to the concept of the cycle on the following pages. If you're eager to learn more, turn to page 102.

3.1 3.1 Creating a character

Follow these steps to create your character:

1. Choose an affiliation (corporatist, ganger, independent, or /C) and note how you can use your connection points.
2. Choose an occupation (wired, coder, middleman, or swordsman) and note its two abilities.
3. Divide the following ranks between your characteristics: +1, +1, +2, +2, +3, +3.
4. Note your starting equipment. You can sacrifice one skill or ability to get an extra ¥10 to buy equipment or catalogue options.
5. Establish your relationships.
6. Choose five skills and two additional abilities. You can replace any of these options with a cybernetic augmentation, with a maximum equal to your Constitution.
7. Note your health, connection, luck and defence points.
8. Choose a name for your character.

3.2 3.2 Affiliations

An affiliation indicates your culture of reference, the value system in which you were raised. Each affiliation has a small special ability that you can activate by spending a connection point (see page 100) [].

3.2.1 3.2.1 Corpo

You belong to the upper social strata of society. You have a good education, you have money saved up. You can use connection points to show off your privileges: blowing up a charge or a fine, passing a checkpoint, getting a table without a reservation or getting into the VIP area of a fashionable club (see page 218) [See intrusions](#).

3.2.2 3.2.2 Ganger

You grew up on the streets, left to your own devices, and found family and colour in a gang. You have a special relationship with your gang members, even if you are no longer part of them, and can spend connection points to, for example, receive help, find shelter or collect equipment (see page 156).

3.2.3 3.2.3 Independent

You blend into the interstices of the world, where no one seems to notice you. You are anonymous, a part of the scenery. Nothing flashy, nothing remarkable. You can use your connection points to cover your tracks, to blend in - practically, you get nothing, but you prevent others from getting things about you.

3.2.4 3.2.4 /C

You belong to one of the many counter-cultures that flourish here and there - altnernds, nomads, borgs, purists, immobile, neoniks, etc. Describe your /C to the leader and the other players; find details that put you a bit on the fringes of society and make you a bit weird. Each connection point you spend on an action gives you a +2 bonus to the roll.

In an age where social validation no longer necessarily depends on the opinions of your relatives, neighbours and the people in the village you'll never leave in your life, counter-cultures are flourishing around the world. All it takes is a few crazy people who meet at random in virtual lounges, somewhere in the vast cultural troll that floats in the matrix. From then on, dominant legitimacy becomes superfluous; one can live one's own way, with one's desires, ideas, whims, and traits of genius; one can create new habitus, new taboos, new norms that become dominant in a small but sufficient circle. This is what the /Cs are. Imagine what you want: cybersadhus crunching pills upon pills to achieve enlightenment? Fierce anti-government activists, paranoid no doubt but possessing some evidence that gives them some security? Fundamentalist peasants who abhor technology and the matrix? A cult worshipping an Akhashic guru who only appears in the virtual world? Tuning enthusiasts who are gradually transforming themselves into real experimental cyborgs?

3.3 3.3 Occupations

Each occupation indicates the specialisation you have chosen and the specific abilities you have learned (note your two abilities!). It is impossible to learn these abilities with experience.

3.3.1 3.3.1 Rigger

You are a special kind of coder, specialising in the use and piloting of vehicles and drones. You immerse yourself so deeply in the machines that you become one with them, their carcass becoming your body. Note that if you choose this occupation, you receive the Neuronic cybernetic augmentation for free (see page 72). For rules on drones and vehicles, see page 167.

- Starred abilities can be selected multiple times with experience.

DRONES *: You always have three specialised drones at your disposal, which you can ride on quickly. If they are destroyed, you get them back at the end of the cycle. If you take over this ability, you have an additional drone.

TRANSFER: When you connect to a vehicle, you become fully immersed in that vehicle with all of its abilities and possibilities, even if you are not directly on board.

3.3.2 3.3.2 Hacker

You are a matrix technician, able to manipulate data streams from your nexus - in a way that the system administrators don't like at all because of the illegal programs you constantly load onto the matrix. You can find the rules on the matrix on page 135.

CONNECTION: You are constantly connected to the matrix. You have 3 additional connection

points.

NERVES OF STEEL: By spending one point of luck, you can automatically succeed in a non-combat action as if you had rolled a triple-6.

3.3.3 3.3.3 Face

You are a charismatic individual with many contacts. Your main occupation is to pass information between the right people and to grow your own portfolio of knowledge and secrets. You will find the rules on relationships on pages 80 and 155.

IMPROVISATION: You can use your connection points as plan points (see page 216), even if you haven't really had time to prepare anything.

RELATIONSHIPS: You can create a temporary contact on the fly by giving them a name and an area of activity and service, then call on them by spending connection points.

3.3.4 3.3.4 Fighter

Bodyguard, mercenary, assassin, soldier, you are physically and mentally trained for war - conventional warfare, street fighting, guerrilla warfare and terrorism. You are likely to be enhanced with high-level cybernetics! Have a look at the catalogues at the end of the book...

TOUGH AS NAILS: you have accustomed your body to the most diverse exercises and pains. You have 15 extra life points.

MILITARY TRAINING *: you have a +2 bonus to all your attack and damage rolls in close combat or at a distance, as you wish. You can buy this ability again to finish your training.

3.4 3.4 Attributes

Your character is defined by six characteristics. Most people have a rank between +1 and +3 in each of these; but the characteristics of the really tough guys can be as high as +7. You use characteristics as a bonus to all your rolls; by the way, they are used to calculate several counters and derivatives, such as hit points or defence.

Strength

Add your rank for melee attacks and damage; all physical actions requiring power and energy.

Dexterity

Add your rank for ranged attacks and damage; all physical actions requiring flexibility, speed, hand skills and agility.

Constitution

Add your rank for all physical actions requiring stamina and endurance; resist poisons, toxins, diseases and hard knocks. Each rank of Constitution gives 5 hit points. You can install a maximum of one cybernetic augmentation (see page 72) per Constitution rank - beyond that, you are constantly on the verge of cyberpsychosis.

Intelligence

Add your rank for surfing the matrix for information; remembering knowledge and lore about all things in the world. Each Intelligence rank gives 1 point of connection. Intelligence also applies to initiative rolls.

Wisdom

Add your rank to stay alert, spot things, search a place. Each rank of Wisdom increases defence by 1 point.

Charisma

Add your rank for chatting, convincing, seducing, sensing emotions and lying. Each rank of Charisma gives you 1 luck point.

3.5 3.5 Equipment

3.5.1 3.5.1 IDC/IDO

Choose whether you have an ID number or nothing at all.

If you have an ID number, you can move between most areas of the city without too much trouble, without wasting time, and checks are limited - readers flash your nexus which acts as a real-time transponder. However, your identity, fingerprints and many biometric measurements are stored in government (IDC for civil identification) or corporate (IDO for orbital identification) databases - IDOs offer many more rights, but are extremely secure and monitored.

In the latter case, you are a second-class citizen, with no or extremely limited rights - but until you have been caught by the authorities and identified, you do not exist for anyone.

On page 98, you will find an ability that gives you a pirate IDC, if you wish to cheat gracefully.

3.5.2 3.5.2 Starting equipment

Choose your initial possessions from the three packs available: Action, Trick or Standing. Each option has its advantages and disadvantages. You can give up a skill or ability (or several) to add ¥10 to your account.

3.5.2.1 3.5.2.1 Action

- A basic nexus to connect you to the matrix
- A melee weapon
- A ranged weapon
- A tactical protection vest - giving a +3 bonus to defence
- A subscription to a coffin hotel in a secondary conurbation
- An account (or anonymous credits) with ¥24

3.5.2.2 3.5.2.2 BIDOUILLE

- A +3 nexus to connect to the matrix
- A melee weapon or a ranged weapon
- A light civil defence jacket - giving a +1 bonus to defence

- A workshop equipped to tinker in peace (+4 to all tinkering, repair and modification rolls, etc.)
- An account (or anonymous credits) with ¥22

3.5.2.3 3.5.2.3 **STANDING**

- A +1 nexus to connect to the matrix
- A melee weapon or a ranged weapon
- A civil defence jacket - giving a +2 bonus to defence
- A well-appointed and highly secure flat
- An account (or anonymous credits) with ¥20

3.5.3 3.5.3 **Nexus**

A nexus is an ultra-lightweight handheld console that allows you to connect to - and eventually hack into - the Matrix: it's the equivalent of a smartphone with a lot of extra features and power. Most nexuses contain an advanced expert system, incorrectly called AI by the general public. The bonuses indicate the number of extra connection points that the nexus grants each day. The following prices allow you to upgrade your hardware if you wish.

PRICE HARDWARE

4¥Basic Nexus

8¥Nexus +1

12¥Nexus +3

3.5.4 3.5.4 **Weapons and protection**

3.5.4.1 3.5.4.1 **Weapons and stealth**

There are four degrees of stealth for these sensitive items:

Obvious: It is impossible to conceal the weapon in any way. Worse than that, it attracts attention.

Visible: the weapon is clearly visible, although it is still possible to cover it under a coat, for example, to limit the risks - in which case it cannot be used.

Invisible: the weapon is not directly visible. The wearer must be searched for it or it must pass through electronic detection systems.

Concealed: the weapon is actively concealed and systems cover the risk of electronic tracking.

The Discreet option allows a weapon to be downgraded to a lower category.

Note: normal weapons are effective against physical defence; similarly, the protections given here are physical protections and do not protect against magical attacks (if you use this game option, see page 303).

Depending on your initial holdings, choose a ranged weapon from one of the following categories. Each additional weapon costs ¥8:

FIREARM	DAMAGE	VISIBILITY
Handgun	+0	Invisible
Assault rifle and shotgun	+3	Visible
Precision rifle	+3	Visible (mounted), invisible (disassembled)
Assault cannon and heavy machine gun	+5	Obvious

Choose a melee weapon from one of the one of the following categories. Each additional weapon costs ¥8:

MELEE WEAPON	DAMAGE	VISIBILITY
Short Nanoblade	+0	Invisible
Long Nanoblade	+3	Visible
Tonfa & Cestes	+3	Visible
Tasers	+0 (non-lethal/special)	Invisible

The protections have the following prices if you want to upgrade or change them:

PRICE	PROTECTIONS	VISIBILITY
4¥	Light civil protection vest +1	Invisible
8¥	Civilian Protective Vest +2	Invisible
12¥	Tactical Protective Vest +3	Visible

3.5.5 3.5.5 Augmentations

At character creation, you can replace a skill or ability with a cybernetic augmentation - as many times as you like. You cannot have more augmentations than your constitution rank - otherwise, you are in cyberpsychosis.

There are five types of augmentations. Each grants you a basic function, but you can buy options for ¥4 each (see page 340). After character creation, installing a new augmentation costs ¥12.

3.5.5.1 3.5.5.1 Neuronic

Neuronics take advantage of the growth and discoveries of neuro-medicine and neural nano-repairers to more or less completely rewire an individual's nervous system, to improve its overall functioning or to add new functions.

NEURAL PLUG: You can operate any equipment with a neural plug to improve its efficiency. Generally, you get a +2 bonus on all associated rolls (indicated on the equipment), but it can also be a simple prerequisite to operate the equipment.

3.5.5.2 3.5.5.2 Nanogenetic

The engineering sciences have come a long way. The first generations of modified babies will soon be entering school with better genes than their parents (or so we hope, for we must still make do with vague promises). But the occupants of this time and space are too old to have

enjoyed it. They are therefore content with the few genetic back-propagations that nanogenetics - the art of repairing cells from within - allows. These wealthy old men who are not finished with life are called immortals.

REGENERATION: by spending one luck point, you recover all your life points.

3.5.5.3 3.5.5.3 Panoptic

You have sensors all over your body.

ENHANCED SENSES: you have a +4 bonus to all perception rolls.

3.5.5.4 3.5.5.4 Prosthetic

Prosthetics involves replacing limbs, bones or skin with a mechanical equivalent made of synthetic materials or metal.

POWER: You have a +2 bonus to all Strength work, Endurance or Athletics checks, etc. In addition, choose a specific body replacement - Woven Skin, Lower Limb, Upper Limb, Bone Replacement - and note the associated bonus.

3.5.5.5 3.5.5.5 Reinforcement

You have been replaced, in bulk, with organs from the abdominal cavity and chest. This is more convenient and faster to operate.

STRENGTH: you have 10 extra life points.

3.5.5.6 3.5.5.6 Cosmetic

Cosmetic augmentations simply cost ¥2-4. There is no basic implant - it's the equivalent of an ancient piercing or tattoo. All you need is a good address, a little time and a lot of money, at least if you want quality. Chrome eyes, electroluminescent tattoos, living inks, variable breast implants, hair modifications and other fashionable effects are all yours.

OPTIONS	AUGMENTATION
RETINAL DISPLAY	Nexus connection pin for augmented reality retinal display. Extremely common - ¥2 in most cyber shops, installation in minutes and 24 hours of scheduled exercise.
CAPILLILUMES	Hair emits coloured lights
CAPILLITECH	The hair changes size and colour at will
CUSTOM HAIR	Options: feathers, fur, quills, leaves, metal, optical fibres...
PERFUME GLAND	Programs can be purchased from major cosmetic companies according to your wishes and tastes. Can contain from one to five programs depending on the model.
IMPLANT SYNTHETICS	Synthetics chip reader with fractal axon connections.
VARIABLE BREAST	Adjustable for all situations - love, sport, work, going out, etc.

OPTIONS	AUGMENTATION
IMPLANTS	
CHROMATIC LENSES	Change eye colour at will
NANO-GROOMS	Sweat contains nano-machines that clean the skin and clothes so that you always look your best.
CHROMATIC NAILS	Nails that change colour and length
GLOWING TATTOO	Luminous and moving dermal patterns

3.5.6 3.5.6 Vehicles

You can of course buy vehicles for yourself. For more information on vehicles, see page 167.

Price	Vehicle	Speed	Description
12¥	CPA CIVIL	Slow	Civilian self-contained personal suit - big mecha for young thrill-seekers or for power workers, express deliverymen and other urban workers.
4¥	URBAN TWO-WHEELS	Medium	Scooters and other small motorbikes.
8¥	FAST MOTORCYCLE	Fast	Racing motorbikes for messengers and gangsters.
8¥	URBAN ELECTRIC CAR	Slow	Two seats, no trunk, easy to park in the city's vertical car parks.
12¥	SUBURBAN CAR	Medium	Four-seater, tight, easy for drive-by-shooting and beach trips.
14¥	ROAD CAR	Fast	Five seats, powerful engine, aerodynamic bodywork.
18¥	DRIFT/FAST & FURIOUS CAR	Very fast	The colourful kind with extra nitro and excess testosterone.
16¥	SUV	Fast	Heavy, polluting, powerful, efficient, with plenty of room inside. For security officers and big bad guys with dark glasses. Baby seat optional.
15¥	VAN	Medium	Three seats in the front and a huge boot in the back. For kidnappings, stakeouts, setting up a workshop and, why not, removals.
25¥	TRUCK	Slow to medium	Big, heavy, with enough power to carry several tons of goods.
4¥	DRONES	Slow to fast	Small remote-controlled robots with various functions.

3.5.7 3.5.7 Options and other equipment

If you want to play fast, stick with the above. Choose your weapons and possibly some cybernetics.

Nevertheless, at the end of this book, you will find many additional options to improve your

equipment - be it weapons, protection or augmentations - but also new toys such as vehicles, mechas and drug... sorry, chems. Beware, these are catalogues, which means that players will waste time searching and choosing. Only give them these lists if you have the time or if you play in a campaign.

3.5.8 3.5.8 The ¥

Characters earn ¥ every time they do a job (see page 244), pick an opponent's pocket, negotiate the sale of recovered material, etc. It is always possible to create a fund for the sale of goods. It is always possible to create a common fund for all characters or to keep full possession of your ¥. You can either use the ¥ as you go along or keep them, for example by placing them in an account.

A job well done should never yield more than ¥2 or ¥3 per character (pooled amount), but characters are encouraged to scrape what they can whenever possible - after all, fences are not for dogs. On the other hand, if they start looting anything and everything, the aftermath can get very interesting, when the authorities get involved or a powerful person tries to get their property back the hard way (have you seen Guy Ritchie's films?).

Price Effect

- 1¥ You gain +10 XP (see page 102)
- 1¥ You buy a dose of accelerator (see page 372)
- 2¥ You regain one luck point (see page 101)
- 3¥ You find temporary equipment, such as a disposable weapon or nanodrones
- 4¥ You buy an option for a vehicle or a increase
- 6¥ AND MORE You find important information about the following of the adventure
- 8¥ You buy a weapon or medium protection
- 12¥ You buy a new cybernetic augmentation or a vehicle

Losing your equipment

Characters will gradually invest a lot of ¥ in their equipment. Generally speaking, consider that they don't lose it easily, that they find it in nearby cupboards when they have been captured by enemies or that they can replace it identically via their contacts. Nevertheless, make them understand that the loss of equipment is a possible sanction if they do something stupid or if you are in a bad mood. And there, it doesn't matter that they invested 50 ¥ in their Arcatech Grendel-6 to have all the options and the elephant ivory handle... And then, it can give rise to beautiful adventures when it will be necessary to go to recover the invaluable one at a big well protected villain.

3.6 3.6 Relationships

Your character is not alone in life. He has many contacts, perhaps a few friends and possibly intimates. You will find all the specific rules for managing relationships on page 155 (asking for a favour, creating extras) and page 246 (returning the favour).

You have five relationship points that you can distribute among the different extras that the host suggests (or that you have created as a group) - each point allows you to increase a relationship to the chosen rank.

Rank	1	2	3
RELATIONSHIP	Contact	Friend	Intimate

During the course of the game you will gain additional relationship ranks, either to open new contacts or to increase the rank of an existing relationship. The leader of the game distributes these ranks, taking into account your actual relationship, the way you behave, the help and services you provide to your contacts and friends, etc. A relationship may distance itself or disappear if you betray it or behave badly with it.

Usually, gaining a first rank is quite easy: just meet the person, spend some time with them, do them a favour or simply make a good initial contact. It is the equivalent of exchanging phone numbers or virtual contact details. It's likely that characters will quickly have a pretty impressive list of contacts - in fact, it's often enough to decide to write the person's name on the back of their character sheet - but that's perfectly normal: a good cyberpunk's first weapon is their nexus anyway. Once noted, it is often difficult to lose a contact.

Gaining the second rank is often a bit more difficult. The character needs to build trust and security with the relationship. They must have experienced things together, done favours for each other or shared common interests. This can happen quickly, and disappear just as quickly if the relationship is not maintained by regular contact that reinforces the impression of sharing a common living space. And at the slightest betrayal, things can fall apart.

Winning the third rank requires a very significant personal investment. We are talking about intimacy here, because a character is willing to entrust his or her most personal secrets, his or her very life, to the relationship. As it is a relationship that requires a lot of investment in time and affect, it is likely that the character will have no more than one or two relationships at this level: a childhood friend, a life partner, a close relative, a mentor... Beware, an intimate relationship is often very solid and can withstand most of the blows of fate, but when it breaks, it is usually permanent and with heavy consequences for everyone.

3.7 Skills

Your character may have one or more skills. Each skill gives you a +4 bonus to all rolls where it can be used.

3.7.1 Stats and old grunts

The +4 bonus on skills is huge. If you compare the 3d6 roll and the action difficulty scale (see page 111), it's a really big advantage that might seem to throw the game off balance. In reality, this is not the case.

On the one hand, the skills are highly specialised. You don't have Stealth, you have Hide in the Shadows, Blend in with the scenery or Move silently! The bonus only applies to very small slices of action.

On the other hand, the action success mechanic allows you to take advantage of very good successes to add "matrix" effects to the game (see Keeping the Show Going, page 115). And the opponents are not left out and benefit from the same advantages. Finally, let's be clear: when you're a player, you like to make big successes and explode everything, don't you? What

always limits this kind of fun in the game is the timidity of the game leader who simply doesn't dare let go of the power of the characters for fear of losing control. But in reality, if he inscribes this apparent over-power in his game process, the leader risks absolutely nothing apart from a few beautiful over-the-top scenes and frank smiles from his players (who will fall all the more over the top when the harsh reality of the stories they are living and the Cornelian choices they have to make come to their attention).

- Acting out
- Avoiding a nasty surprise
- Bargaining with your fellow man
- Be convincing
- Being brave
- Blend in with the background
- Caring for animals
- Climbing and climbing
- Coding and decoding
- Comforting and consoling
- Cook drugs
- Cooking and seasoning
- Deciphering an architect's plan
- Disarming security systems
- Disguise yourself skilfully
- Doing acrobatics
- Drawing and painting
- Driving a heavy vehicle
- Driving a light vehicle
- Evaluating an object
- Falsifying documents
- Filming and photographing
- Finding information
- Finding your way
- Fly a flying machine
- Flying a mecha
- Following a lead
- Haggle hard
- Healing and sewing
- Hiding in the shadows
- Hold the pain
- Interrogating and questioning
- Intimidating and driving a car
- Jumping high and far
- Know a neighbourhood like the back of your hand
- Knowing about biology
- Knowing maths and physics
- Knowing your rights and navigating the legal system
- Listening and hearing
- Locating an escape route
- Looking and spotting
- Mounting a guard

- Move silently
- Negotiating a contract
- Opening locks
- Picking pockets
- Playing an instrument
- Prescribing medicine
- Reading emotions
- Reading lips
- Resisting toxins
- Riding a horse
- Riding a two-wheeler
- Run fast and long
- Searching a place
- Seduce and simper
- Swimming and diving
- Tailgating
- Tinkering with an electrical network
- Tinkering with drones and mechas
- Tinkering with electronic things
- Tinkering with explosives
- Tinkering with mechanical devices
- Touching a bit in IT
- Working with plastec and carboconcrete
- Working with wood, concrete and metal
- Writing legible texts
- Yelling the loudest

3.8 3.8 Abilities

Your character has one or more abilities. Abilities marked with an * can be purchased more than once either to increase their power, or so that you can activate them more than once per cycle.

The damage dice offered by the abilities are never explosive.

ASSISTANCE: When you use a manoeuvre to help a comrade, you grant a bonus equal to your Wisdom instead of the simple +1.

RECOVERY INSURANCE: You have full life insurance. The company that insures you will come and get you wherever you are if your vital functions drop - for example when you remain at 0 life points for more than a few minutes in a row or when you suffer your third injury (you set the level of sensitivity of the alarm).

HEALTH INSURANCE *: Your insurance covers the hospital costs of one injury per cycle.

SNEAK ATTACK *: Once per battle, double the damage you inflict in close combat or at a distance (the result of the die plus the bonus). You can announce the use of this ability after making the attack roll.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL: This ability is permanent. When a security system goes off because

you weren't paying attention properly, roll 1d6: on 4 or more, you've spotted the system in time and it doesn't go off before you can do something about it.

AUTHORITY: You have a position of responsibility in an organisation - corporation, criminal organisation, NGO, security services, etc. You have all the prerogatives of an authority. You have all the prerogatives of an executive, but also the obligations to the hierarchy and internal rules.

INVISIBLE BULLET *: once per combat, you can fire a projectile at a hidden or invisible target, within sight (and therefore possibly beyond the range of the weapon). The projectile ignores obstacles (such as a door, wall or billboard).

TINKERER: You're always in your workshop tinkering with stuff and you never go out without a whole range of useful little gadgets. Spend a connection point to gain a +1 bonus on a roll that may involve the use of technology; to dig up a little something to trade for information or a service; or to quickly (and temporarily) repair a broken item.

CHIP BURNER: you spend your time modifying your nexus to make it more efficient. You get two extra connection points per day.

CELEBRITY : *You are famous. This allows you to earn 1d6 ¥ per* at the end of each cycle, thanks to advertising contracts. People recognise you on 1d6 if the result is equal to or less than the number of * - which can be an advantage in many situations.

INSOLENT LUCK: You have insolent luck. You get two extra luck points each round.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING: You are able to handle two weapons at the same time (e.g. pistol and/or blade). This gives you a +1 bonus to defence and a +3 bonus to damage - your attacks make enemies look down and you provide good group shots.

CONTACTS *: You have contacts in one of the following circles - security forces, administration, criminal organisations, health services, transport authorities, media and entertainment, corporations, magical orders. Once per cycle, you can call on a service or information in the environment for free, as if it were an intimate relationship - the rest of the time, spend connection points as normal for a single contact.

MULTIPLE DRONES *: If you are a wired person, you may simultaneously ride an additional drone for each ability you take. In all cases, you can only wire to one vehicle at a time, but with this ability, you can ride both a vehicle and one or more drones.

DESERTED PLACE: You have the keys to a quiet place, whether it's deserted or the people there don't care what you're up to. It can be abandoned warehouses, the underground vaults of the giant rainwater system, a slum under the bridges. You can solve all your problems there, invite people, hide things, store goods. As long as you don't leave a corpse behind, you're pretty much free to do whatever you want there - including making said corpses.

AKASHIK SPIRIT: You can choose an akashic spirit - a digital entity that hangs out in the matrix and follows, helps and sometimes protects you. However, it tends to require some regular service - simple suggestions, mind you, but from someone you feel obliged to oblige (see page 149).

FORTUNATE *: You have access to large amounts of money for specific expenditures, whether it be through a pension fund, loans from an overly kind grandmother, a helping hand from an underworld kingpin who has you on the hook... Once a cycle, you may make a very large expenditure - renting a race car, a small boat or a large luxury flat, hosting a large reception, buying a valuable present for someone, etc. What you buy or rent disappears at the end of the cycle.

WARDROBE: you always have the right clothes for every occasion - whether it's a dinner at the CEO's house of a big corporation or an expedition to the mountains in winter. You're never caught unprepared and when you take care of yourself, you get a +2 bonus to your rolls.

DEADLY GRACE: You add twice your Dexterity bonus to the damage you inflict at range.

BIG BULLY: Add twice your Strength bonus to the damage you deal in close combat.

MULTITOOL: You have a very useful universal tool. You have a +2 circumstantial bonus when the tool can be used - to fix something, tinker with a junction box, tamper with an engine or sabotage a machine.

NANODRONES: You have an army of nanodrones that you can unleash at any time to perform certain tasks: environmental analysis, beaconing, microcavity exploration, spying, etc. The results of their operations are left to your discretion. The outcome of their operations is left to the discretion of the game leader, who may or may not use the golden rule - there are too many variables and possible cases to attempt to write exhaustive rules here about these machines and the countermeasures that can be applied to them (EMP discharges, faraday cages and other nanodrones, for example).

NANOPRINTER: You have a portable 3D printer. You can create objects or tools with nanoparticles, if you already have the design or if you can scan a model. The printing time is usually quite short, but still counts in minutes. After each use, roll 1d6 - on a result of 1, you cannot use the nanoprinter until the end of the cycle, while it recharges.

ENHANCED NEXUS [attack]: when rolling to test an opponent's firewall, roll two dice instead of one and consider which one you want.

ENHANCED NEXUS [biomonitor]: You have 10 extra hit points.

ENHANCED NEXUS [environmental filters]: Your nexus allows you to analyse a scene or situation using a variety of filters - crime scene analysis, searching for details in a crowd, searching a location, etc. You have a +2 bonus to the environmental filter. You have a +2 bonus to Wisdom rolls.

ENHANCED NEXUS [firewall]*: Your nexus and wired systems are protected with a level 2 firewall. You can use this ability multiple times to increase your firewall by 1, to a maximum of 5.

ENHANCED NEXUS [hacker](#)*: Your nexus is equipped to hack systems. For one point of connection, you can decrease the value of an opposing firewall by 1. You can take this ability up to three times in total, allowing you to decrease the value of a firewall by 3 for one connection point.

ENHANCED NEXUS [facial recognition]: When facing someone you don't know, roll 1d6. On a

result of 4+, your nexus tells you some information available on social networks about them.

ENHANCED NEXUS [universal translator]: your nexus translates for you all conversations in languages you don't understand. It's not always pretty or even very accurate, but it gets you by.

PARKOUR: You have learned the secret arts of urban travel, the subtle way of dashing through streets and buildings using every obstacle to propel yourself and change direction. In dense urban environments, you move at the average speed of a civilian vehicle - this counts mainly for long journeys, thanks to the shortcuts you can afford to take. For short or tactical moves, double your movement speed.

LIGHT STEPS: This ability is permanent. You move with a light step. You are naturally quite quiet when you move; you can go where others who are heavier would never venture; you can walk or run longer with less fatigue...

CORPORATE PORTFOLIO : *You invest in the stock market. This allows you to earn ¥1d6 per* at the end of each cycle, thanks to your judicious investments and depending on the behaviour of the markets.

FIRST AID *: Spend one life point and heal two of your companions. This is not an action, but you must be by their side. Each time you buy this ability again, you heal two extra hit points for every one spent. If you have the Heal and Stitch skill, add 1d6 hit points to those you confer with this ability.

EMP PROTECTION *: Your entire electronic and cybernetic team is protected from one EMP discharge per cycle. When you suffer the effects of such an attack, it simply ceases to function until the end of the scene, with no further damage.

SAFE HAVEN: You have a safe haven where no one will ever come looking for you - a hideout in the depths of the slums, a flat in someone else's name in the middle of an enclave. It's up to you what you leave behind in terms of useful materials and resources, just in case. It's also up to you whether you leave a spare key with someone you trust or not.

STORAGE CACHE: you have a well-protected place where you can leave resources, unique equipment, valuable items - the kind of little things you don't leave lying around. It could be a trunk in the back of a drugstore, or it could be in the care of the foster uncle who raised you and won't tell anyone, or it could be in the trunk of a very specific wreck in the middle of a huge junkyard. What is certain is that you have several routes to and from it and that you have systems in place to prevent your cache from being discovered.

RETREAT: there's a place you go to rest, recharge, catch up with old friends who are outside your current life - a bar, a strip joint, a barber's waiting room, a bathhouse, your booty call's bedroom. When you can spend some time there, regain a point of luck.

VIRTUAL LIVING ROOM: you have a virtual living room on the matrix, well protected by the necessary means. You don't have to worry about being discovered or spied on. You can meet up with people via the matrix and discuss whatever you want in peace.

CONSULTANCY SERVICES *: you have access to a firm of specialists who can provide you with specific but pointed assistance, once a cycle, in any of the following areas: legal

representation, contract negotiations, close protection services, event organisation, documentary research, file analysis, transport logistics, etc.

PIRATE IDC *: You have a pirate IDC that transmits a false identity. Each time you are caught and this identity is compromised or destroyed, you must pay ¥4 to restore it at the end of the cycle. This ability works whether you already have an official IDC or IDO or not. It's not usually possible to make a fake IDO - but that can be an adventure in itself if you really need it, for example to go incognito in the moon islands...

LIGHT SLEEP: This power is permanent. You sleep with one eye open. No one can catch you sleeping and you are always fresh and alert when you wake up.

TOUGHNESS: If you fall to 0 hit points, you do not fall unconscious and can continue to act. However, each additional attack that hits you automatically inflicts a point of injury as long as you remain at 0 hit points or if you fall back to 0 hit points.

3.9 3.9 Hit points

Your character has 5 hit points plus 5 per Constitution rank. You recover all your hit points after each night of sleep.

Wounds: If you fall to 0 hit points, you take a hit point and fall unconscious until you recover (by healing, resting or spending a luck point). Each point of injury reduces your maximum hit points by 5. If you have no life points left because of your wounds, you are dead - or else you are forced to take a new, adapted cybernetic augmentation! (Installing a cybernetic augmentation clears all current wounds).

Wounds disappear:

- After a trip to the clinic at a cost of ¥4 each. Of course, characters can always try to negotiate the cost with their employers.
- When a cycle passes (see page 102), each character clears 1d3 wounds.

Healing: a character can always attempt an Intelligence roll, with the appropriate skill bonuses, against a difficulty of 15. The result of the coloured die indicates the number of hit points recovered. Each connection point spent on the roll increases this result by 2. Each ¥ increases the result by 5. A character cannot be healed more than once per day.

3.10 3.10 Connection points

Your character has one connection point per Intelligence rank. You use them to run programs in the matrix, get services from your connections, get your hands on special equipment or get out of complicated situations. You get all your connection points back after a full night's sleep (when the matrix alerts die down and friends get some rest). If you drop to 0, you can't use any more programs or call on your connections - at least as long as you don't rest. However, you can also spend a luck point to get all your connection points back on the spot.

3.11 3.11 Defence

Defence indicates the difficulty of hitting you in combat, whether in close combat or at a distance. It is equal to 7 + your Wisdom rank + your protection bonus. Choose one of the equipment packs or buy armour to find out this (see pages 68 and 71).

3.12 3.12 Luck points

At creation and at the beginning of each cycle, your character receives one Luck Point per Charisma rank. You can spend these points whenever you want to get one of the following effects:

- Raise a failed roll.
- Undo an attack.
- Recover 5 hit points.
- Recover all your connection points.
- Invent a story element.
- Use an ability you have already used this cycle.

During the course of an adventure, your character can recover Luck Points in the following cases:

- For having a very good idea or an excellent intuition (at the discretion of the game leader).
- For performing a heroic and selfless action that put you in danger.
- For rolling a triple-6 or triple-1 on a roll.
- By spending ¥2.

3.13 3.13 Experience

3.13.1 3.13.1 Cycles

On the table, the rhythm of play is mechanically structured in cycles. A cycle represents a time interval of variable length - from a few hours to a few weeks. It is the players themselves who decide when they change the cycle and its actual duration in play and on the table is not so important in itself.

At the change of cycle:

- Characters gain 100 XP which they can spend immediately, as well as any bonuses granted by spending ¥.
- They regain all their connection points, luck points and hit points - as well as magic points if the option is activated.
- They clear 1d3 serious wounds.

However, the opposing factions and the Other take advantage of the respite the characters have given themselves to act. They advance their own plans and progress towards their objectives.

It is therefore a double-edged sword: a lull for the characters, who can breathe, heal, regroup and recover their resources; and a boon for the villain, who has who has plenty of time to act.

3.13.2 3.13.2 Spending your experience

Each time your character gains 100 experience points, you can choose one of the following progressions:

- Gain one characteristic point. You can gain a maximum of 4 ranks in any one characteristic. If you start with a +1 bonus, you will reach +5 at maximum, while a +3 characteristic at creation will allow you to reach the mythical +7 of true urban legends!
- Buy a new skill.
- Buy a new ability.

3.14 3.14 Small questions between friends

When the characters have been created, ask each player to ask one of the other players a question about their character. Depending on how much time you have available, go around the table several times and make sure that each character has answered at least once. A player can of course refuse a question, go around it or twist it if they think it doesn't fit their character's image.

- How did you get infected by the neosyph? Do you protect your partners?
- How did your parents die?
- How long have you been sober?
- How long have you been playing the tuba? Are you any good?
- Tell me the initials of your five closest friends. Where are they now?
- The mental health of your family members is often fragile. Who in your family has been interned? Aren't you afraid that this will happen to you?
- The colleague who taught you everything died of a heart attack at work. How did you take it? Do you still see his widow and children?
- Officially, you were dead for four minutes, before they could bring you back. But you know that you were in the matrix the whole time. What did you did you do or see? Did you encounter anything or someone?
- We grew up together in the same foster homes. Does that make us brothers and sisters?
- Where does your wife/husband live now? Did he/she leave with the dog?
- Why were you fired from your last job? How did it happen?
- Why did your first girlfriend/boyfriend end up in prison?
- Why did you do six months in juvenile detention for violence? Were you alone guilty?
- Why do you have all these scars on your arms?
- Why do you have a record with the cops?
- Why do you hate your sister?
- What are you planning for your girlfriend's/boyfriend's birthday next month?
- What does your neck tattoo represent? Is it a gang thing?
- What is the colour and name of your cat? Who looks after it when you're not around?
- What is the highest degree you have? Why did you stop there? Does it serve you?
- What is your favourite sport?
- What is your nickname? Who gave it to you?

- What is the make of your van?
- Who was driving the car your best friend died in?
- Who gave you that package wrapped in craft paper? Why you? How long do you have to keep it? Do you know what's in it?
- Your family used to be rich. Why did they go bankrupt? Is it your father's fault? How did you live afterwards?
- Your sister has cancer. Who will look after her children after she dies?
- Your brother hasn't been seen in a while, but he called you last night. What did he ask you? What's he running from?
- Your best mate is getting married to the girl you love secretly. Do you have a problem with that? You gonna tell him?
- Your little brother's been pulling some of shit and now he's made a real mess. Are you going to help him or have you been fed up for a long time?
- You have gunshot scars on your back. Who shot you? Under what conditions? How old were you?
- You disappeared for six months and never said what you did. Would you tell us now?
- You were mugged once and ended up in hospital. Do you remember anything? Were you the target or was it pure bad luck? What happened to your attackers?
- You were a juror once in a big trial. What happened to the defendant? What was he accused of?
- You were once paid to get information out of your job. What information? Who was asking you for it?
- You've lost a lot of money at the tables lately. How are you going to pay it back? And to whom?
- You're pregnant. Who's the father? Are you going to keep it?
- You are angry with your father. What does he blame you for? Or conversely, what do you blame him for?
- You saved my life once. Do you remember that story and what happened?
- You betrayed me once. I forgave you, but do you remember that story and what happened?
- You're involved in an organisation. What organisation? Why do you do it? What do you do?
- You never take your medallion off. Who gave it to you? When did you get it? Why do you want it?
- You come from another country. Why did you leave it?
- You have just been dumped. How do you deal with the the separation? How long were you two together?
- One of your brothers or sisters has become someone very important in a corporation. Do you still have a relationship? Do you ignore each other? What does he/she do?
- One of your school friends hates you. He/she now has a position of responsibility. What does he/she do? Why doesn't he/she like you?
- A girl is pregnant by you. Do you love her or is it just an accident? What about the baby?

4 4 Matrix

"Cyberspace. A consensual hallucination experienced daily and legally by tens of millions of operators, in all countries, by kids who are taught mathematical concepts ... A graphic representation of data extracted from the memories of all the computers in

the human system. An unthinkable complexity. Lines of light arranged in the non-space of the mind, clusters and constellations of data. Like the lights of cities in the distance...”

—William Gibson, Neuromancer

All characters have a nexus to connect to the Matrix and, through forbidden programs well hidden in the machine’s memories, to hack into it. To engage a program, you must spend one or more connection points - this is how you defeat the safeties and alarms of the matrix itself. When you run out of connection points, any use of a program will inexorably trigger an alarm if you decide to run it anyway.

You get all your connection points back after a night of rest, when the matrix stops being interested in you and your connection address has been reset.

Program or skill?

Most character actions in the matrix can take the form of a com skill, especially when you have to code a very specific program or do research to file information or to classify information or find it in the middle of a information or find it in the middle of a pile of material. The programs, on the other hand, are self-matizing routines that are launched by touching an icon in reality icon or by dragging it over the target object - For example, dragging the small icon of the Symbiose on a camera visible in its field of view of vision to receive all the images it captures live. that it captures. These are very specific things that require a live presence in the area, to manipulate the matrix or the connected objects live. At home, these programs are sometimes useful, but most coders do things by hand. This is the popular difference between spiders, which glide along the web lightly and turtles, which move forward heavily but with an iron will (the turtle also refers to the small cursor in LOGO programs that could be programmed to perform specific tasks).

4.1 4.1 Firewalls and alarms

4.1.1 4.1.1 Firewalls

Each time you attack a system with a firewall, roll 1d6. If the result is equal to or less than the level of the firewall, the program does not pass directly, but you must still spend the connection points.

1D6	EXAMPLES
------------	-----------------

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 0 | A nexus or completely unprotected machine |
| 1-2 | Most automated systems and consumer nexuses |
| 3-4 | The most common nexuses and corporate systems |
| 5 | The most secure nexuses and systems available for corporations and security services |
| 6 | The legendary corporate anti-zones impossible to hack |

4.1.2 4.1.2 Alarms

If a firewall blocks you, you can give up (and why not re-spend connection points to start again immediately) or you can choose to force your way through. Your program works, but you trigger an alarm and roll 1d6 in the following table. Depending on the area, the alarm die may receive a variable bonus - usually equal to half the local security level (see page 273). Some abilities or nexus modifications allow the alarm die to be reduced.

1D6 EFFECT

- 1 The alarm must sound in a vacuum somewhere. This is obviously the coffee break in the security office.
- 2 For the rest of the current cycle, all your connection costs are increased by 1 - the matrix is watching you without being able to find you.
- 3 No one seems to react, but it is best to consider that the Matrix is off limits for the rest of the current scene.
- 4 The Matrix is off limits to you for the rest of the cycle, unless you can find a way to change your login identity. If you stick around, you'll get hit.
Opposing programmes have indeed spotted you. The host can roll 1d6 (rounded down) to see how many connection points you can still use before you are fully identified. Then, anyway, you will be traced.
- 5
- 6 Corporate forces are in the area in 1d2 minutes. You are spotted and marked by the opposing programs who are tracking you.
- 7+ A counter-intrusion program is triggered which attacks you directly with somatic biofeedback loops.

4.1.3 4.1.3 Fighting in the Matrix!

Depending on the effects you want to achieve, we offer two ways to handle counter-intrusion programs that can attack an encoder in the matrix.

If you want something a little tense, set up a fight using the normal rules and the following characteristics for the programs. The coder fights using Intelligence as a guiding characteristic, both to attack and to inflict damage. The other characters can intervene in the matrix by spending a number of connection points equal to the power of the enemy program. The damage is real - neurons frying one after another.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- | | | |
|---|----------|---|
| 1 | Cerberus | Defence 9; hp 15; attack +2; initiative +1d6 |
| 2 | Droïdeka | Defence 12; hp 15; attack +2; damage +4 |
| 3 | Flamer | Defence 10; hp 25; attack +2; damage +3 (area); initiative +2d6 |
| 4 | Guivre | Defence 11; hp 30; attack +2; initiative +1d6; steals 1 connection point or 1d6 extra hp per attack (successful or not). |
| 5 | Golem | Defence 15; hp 40; attack +2; damage +4; each attack made steals one manoeuvre from the coder, to prevent him from fleeing while the security forces intervene. |
| 6 | Hydra | Defence 13; hp 30; attack +2; damage +4; initiative +4d6. A hydra gains 5 hit points for each point of connection spent by the coder or his allies. |

The other solution, quicker and more random, is to call for an intelligence saving throw from the coder. The coder can 'bet' connection points, before the roll, to increase the result of the roll - each point invested brings a +1 bonus. Difficulty varies - but you can start with 12 + 1d6 (the d6 representing the type of program being activated, from cerberus to hydra). If the saving throw is successful, all is well. If not, draw a random event from the table on the next page:

1D26 COUNTER-INTRUSION EFFECTS

- 1.1 The character is ejected from the matrix until the end of the scene, with or without an alternate identity.
- 1.2 The character suffers 1d6 (explosive) damage per power rank of the counter-intrusion program they are facing.
- 1.3 The character is ejected from the matrix until the end of the cycle, with or without an alternate identity.
- 1.4 The character loses 1d6 hit points.
- 1.5 The character loses all connection points.
The program follows the character's footsteps and monitors his every move for 1d6 cycles, immediately alerting the security forces or adding half its power to any firewalls attacked by the character.
- 2.1 The character suffers an EMP attack on any of his hardware (physical or cyber).
- 2.2 The character's nexus is completely hacked and all his data is recovered by local security (it remains to be seen what they will do with the information).
- 2.3 The character's nexus is destroyed (on 4+ on 1d6, the data is destroyed at the same time).
- 2.4 The character suffers an EMP attack on all his equipment (physical or cyber).
- 2.5 The character's nexus permanently loses one of its abilities.
- 2.6 The program inflicts 1d6 wounds in the form of neural damage.

4.2 4.2 Programs

You can run any of the following programs by spending a number of connection points equal to the level of the program. Using a program is an action.

4.2.1 4.2.1 Level 1

- **SECURITY SYSTEM CONTROL:** You take temporary control of a local security system (a door locked with an electronic lock, a detection portal, etc.).
- **EMERGENCY DISCONNECT:** If you need to trigger an alarm to force a program to run, you disconnect in time to avoid the consequences. The program runs and the alarm ignores you. Nevertheless, you lose all your remaining connection points.
- **DIVERSION OF COMMUNICATIONS:** You misuse a communication in such a way that you answer it yourself or do not complete it.
- **GEOLOCATION:** You divert the target's geolocation information so that you always know their location.
- **QUICK GLANCE:** You access a person's personal information recorded on their nexus. The amount of information naturally depends on the target's attitude towards his presence (or discretion) on the matrix.
- **METAMORPHOSIS:** You change your appearance in augmented reality - costume, appearance, size, gender, etc. The illusion only works for those who see the world in this

way. The program is passive and everyone is affected.

- SYMBIOSIS: You are piggybacking on the signals of another user or system. You cannot control what he does, but you receive all the data at the same time.

4.2.2 4.2.2 Level 2

- ACCREDITATION: You grant temporary accreditation to a specific person. This person can pass a checkpoint without any problems. Each person beyond the first one costs an additional connection point.
- ANONYMAT: You camouflage your identity in the crowd. Surveillance programs waste time tracking you down. The alarm roll receives a -1 modifier.
- CONTROL OF A MACHINE: You take control of a local machine (manipulator arm, vehicle, robot, etc.) to make it perform simple tasks.
- LISTEN: After hacking into the target's nexus, you can listen in on their live conversations as long as you are within range.
- ILLUSION: You change the perceptions of a person connected to the augmented reality to add or remove elements of the setting - the details must be minor and consistent.
- CAMERA PLAYBACK: You retrieve recent data from local cameras (up to hours earlier). The retrieval concerns cameras of all kinds present in an area not exceeding the size of a block.
- SECURITY RESET: You reboot your nexus at maximum speed to cancel all programs that target or affect you - you need a full turn during which you are no longer connected to the matrix.
- DECOY: You send false data to machines or cameras that get false information and act accordingly.
- TAMPERED SIGNAL: You add data to a communication signal.
- NETWORK MONITORING: You display in augmented reality the communication patterns between individuals and between individuals and machines, in order to identify functional groups. You need to be in the area and the links are displayed live in your field of view.

4.2.3 4.2.3 Level 3

- ANONYMISATION: An alarm roll receives a modifier of -3.
- JAMMING: You saturate or jam communications in the area, causing a mess. You automatically trigger an alarm (roll 1d6 with a -3 modifier).
- EMBEZZLEMENT: You transfer funds from one account to another. Beware, this is the kind of operation that is anything but discreet and leaves traces for other coders like you. Sound the alarm immediately.
- INVISIBILITY: You disappear from the target's augmented reality devices. The target has to switch back to normal vision, disconnect from the matrix or trigger specific monitoring programs to become aware of your real presence - but if they were unaware of your presence, they are unlikely to think about it.
- ACCESS RESTRICTED DATA: The programme allows you to access databases normally out of reach of the public - administrative files, corporate files, etc. Beware: the program grants you access but does not carry out searches for you (make a skill roll); moreover, this is always a time-consuming operation and can block you for several turns, minutes or even hours.
- HACKING OF INTERFACED SYSTEMS: You take control of an interfaced system at an

opponent's location. The target is forced to use this hardware until they can perform a reset (they only roll 2d6 for all related rolls).

4.2.4 4.2.4 Level 4

- **NETWORK CONTROL:** You take control of the network and can allow or disallow communications and data transfers according to the filters you set up. Roll 1d6 every minute below the number of minutes to see if you trigger an alarm.
- **DECRYPTAGE:** You decrypt passwords, encrypted files, etc. - the firewall of an opposing system has a -1 malus for the rest of the scene, allowing you to control it more easily. You can activate this program several times to cumulate its effects, including from several different consoles (if several characters act together).
- **PROTECTED IDENTITY:** In addition to its normal activation cost, this programme costs ¥5 each time it is activated. As long as the programme is activated (including over several successive cycles), you benefit from a secondary protected identity on the matrix. Any request for identification or data about you is directed to this secondary identity. If adversary programs identify you, they burn this identity and you escape prosecution - you will have to restart the program and pay for its use.
- **SATURATION:** You saturate a person's augmented reality receivers by drowning them in spam and attack ads. They must log out for the rest of the scene to reset their connection.

4.2.5 4.2.5 Level 5

- **COUNTERORDER:** You cancel an alarm that has just been triggered.
- **DESTRUCTION:** You operate a complete network collapse over an area equivalent to a block. All communications are interrupted and the secondary and alert management systems start up.
- **WORM:** You install a worm in a system. The worm performs one of the following tasks, defined during installation:
 - **BACKDOOR:** If you return to this system, the firewall is lowered by one level - even after several cycles. You should still activate your programs normally.
 - **SCREENING:** The worm installs itself on the passage of wealth and takes a tiny part of it and gives it back to you at the end of the cycle - in the form of 1d6 ¥. Beware: this worm is particularly visible and corporations always react extremely badly when they discover the theft.
 - **SUPERVISION:** The worm records all changes to the system files and sends a report at the end of each scene if necessary.

4.2.6 4.2.6 Special programs

CHANGING DATA: You change data in the memories of a system, either to erase it or to corrupt it. The cost depends on the type of data and the type of changes - from 2 to 5 connection points.

DATA FUNNEL: You run a program with specific instructions to sort and capture the most interesting data in a system. The cost is variable depending on the purpose of the searches. This program is often used in conjunction with Read Reserved Data.

4.3 4.3 Akashic spirits

A character with the appropriate ability (see page 90) can attach a special Akashic Spirit to themselves, a mentor who accompanies them everywhere and watches over them from the matrix, granting them special abilities and a disadvantage specific to their nature. You can ignore the effects of a disadvantage by spending a luck point.

4.3.1 4.3.1 The Artist

SPEND ONE POINT OF LUCK - you create a complex digital work in a short time - background music, painting, dress design or costume in virtual reality, etc. - you assess the value of a work and learn what there is to know about its author.

DISADVANTAGE You must practice an artistic activity every day, such as music or painting. You never turn down a concert, an exhibition or a museum visit.

4.3.2 4.3.2 The Assassin

SPEND ONE POINT OF LUCK - you erase all images of you on the surveillance systems. - you find a quick way out of a place without getting caught.

DISADVANTAGE You must not refuse to cause death when you have the opportunity to go through with it or when you could prevent it by some action.

4.3.3 4.3.3 The Investigator

SPEND ONE POINT OF LUCK - you access police or security databases to get useful information. - you record the entire crime scene in 3D to study it later.

DISADVANTAGE You must not leave a mystery unsolved.

4.3.4 4.3.4 The Officer

SPEND ONE POINT OF LUCK - you get the positions at that moment of all the security units on an area equivalent to a block. - you and your companions pass a security checkpoint by simply showing your identity

DISADVANTAGE You give orders and do not accept disobedience. Similarly, if a superior orders you to do something, you do it.

4.3.5 4.3.5 The Dilettante

SPEND ONE POINT OF LUCK - you create a complete virtual universe in a few moments to welcome visitors to the matrix. - you know enough about a particular subject to fool an expert in that field for a few moments.

DISADVANTAGE You have to try new things - culture, food, drink, sex, drugs, etc. - as often as possible and you do not resist such an offer.

4.3.6 4.3.6 The Businessman

SPEND ONE POINT OF LUCK - you get ¥2. - you completely conceal a financial transaction and prevent any possibility of a payment being discovered or tracked.

DISADVANTAGE You have to invest a significant part of your income in corporate interests - at the discretion of the game leader.

4.3.7 4.3.7 The Scientist

SPEND ONE LUCK POINT - you get a scientific assessment of a situation and insights. - you get a mathematical analysis of the data in your possession to infer useful information.

DISADVANTAGE You need to keep up to date with scientific information and spend a significant amount of time reading various journals and books.

4.3.8 4.3.8 The Seducer

SPEND ONE LUCK POINT - you get all the information available on the matrix about your target. - you control elements of your AR and physical environment - music, lights, advertisements, etc. - to favour or hinder competitors.

DISADVANTAGE You have to change partners regularly and organise days that are entirely dedicated to them (outings, restaurants, walks, shows, etc.)

4.3.9 4.3.9 The Thief

SPEND ONE LUCK POINT - you get the positions of all security systems in an area equivalent to a block. - You get contacts to fences to sell or buy goods or to get commissions for specific thefts.

DISADVANTAGE You have to steal a valuable object per cycle and sell it. What you do with you do with the ¥ is your own business.

4.3.10 4.3.10 The Traveller

SPEND ONE LUCK POINT - you get simultaneous translations of foreign languages. - you can organise public transport connections during a journey to shorten the journey or to lose pursuers.

DISADVANTAGE You must regularly travel to distant destinations - both within the city and destinations - within the city or out of town.

5 5 Vehicles

They would have us believe that the word pleasure only expresses the satisfaction of a primitive impulse and that with it we lower ourselves to the rank of the animal. But this pleasure is ennobled when it responds to the same impulse if it is deformed, legalised, channelled by the culture in place, that is to say by being taught as civil and honest behaviour. However, this behaviour is also bestial, because the animal is like us

capable of memory and learning. But a learned dog does not speak and therefore cannot find the excuse of value judgements to camouflage its unconscious automatisms.

—Henri Laborit, In Praise of Flight

Vehicles - civil and military, rolling or flying, drones or PSCs (Personal Assisted Combinations) - have several main functions:

- They are utilities designed to move or carry loads from one point to another;
- They are mobile tool platforms, carrying workshops, tools and sensors;
- They are targets and shelters.

5.1 5.1 Transportation

The main feature of a vehicle is its overall design - you immediately recognise the use and capabilities of a combat armour, a van, a motorbike or a spy drone. So there's no need to go into detail about the number of seats available or the amount of cargo you can carry - everyone knows you don't load a sofa into the back of a two-seat, truck-sized electric vehicle (although you can still use the roof if you have straps).

The second useful characteristic of a vehicle is its top speed - this determines how long it will take to get from one point to another, or whether it can escape a slower chaser. However, it is usually limited by traffic conditions, the nature of the roads or traffic regulations where they apply.

1. VERY SLOW: The speed of a running man, a trotting horse or a machine used for construction or maintenance.
2. SLOW: The speed of an electric city cart, a large tractor or a surveillance drone.
3. AVERAGE: The speed of a heavy road vehicle, a cargo truck or an entry-level civilian car.
4. FAST: The speed of a solidly powered road car or a good motorbike.
5. ULTRA-FAST: The speed of a fast and furious sports car, a civilian helicopter or a combat drone. Beyond that, it is not relevant to consider speed - we are talking about long journeys, in specialised vehicles (airliners, jets, combat aircraft, etc.).

In the case of a chase, it is usually sufficient to compare the relative speeds of the vehicles - unless the chase is through the narrow streets of an old medieval city full of tourists: then size will certainly win out.

5.2 5.2 Platform

The second function of a vehicle is to carry useful tools - sensors, weapons and other manipulator arms. See Vehicle Options (page 364) for more on this. Remember, though, that you can pack more stuff into a big truck than you can into a scooter, and that all of this can end up weighing a lot and therefore reducing the speed of a class.

However, we are not proposing hard and fast rules on the subject - common sense will always suffice: no, a crane on the roof of a Ferrari will not lift a full skip of rubble!

5.3 5.3 Target and shelter

The main problem a vehicle can face (apart from running out of fuel without a single petrol station in range - for breakdowns, consider the chapter on galleys, see page 237) is being targeted by another vehicle or any solid building in its path; or by gunfire or a missile dropped by a drone.

A vehicle can take from 1 to 5 wounds - as a general rule, those used by the characters always have at least three wounds. Each hit or shot inflicts a wound. When the total is reached, the vehicle is out of service until it is repaired - or even destroyed.

- **Collision:** a vehicle that collides with an obstacle suffers a number of wounds corresponding to its current speed (1 for slow to 4 for ultra-fast). If the collision is frontal, add 1; if it is from the rear, subtract 1.
- **Armour:** A vehicle may have 'natural' armour. Armour indicates the type of firearms allowed to inflict injury on vehicles and the damage reduction offered to characters inside or behind the vehicle - it does not take into account the possibility of a vehicle exploding with its occupants: for this, there is Interflora (to order flowers).

Armor	Damage reduction for passengers	Minimum caliber	Examples
None	0	All firearms and other projectiles	Motorbikes, scooters, convertibles
Slight	1d6	All firearms	Civilian vehicles
Medium	2d6	Assault rifles as a minimum	Security or heavy civilian vehicles
Heavy	3d6	Heavy guns, rockets and missiles	Military vehicles

- **Physical defence:** a vehicle has a physical defence of 7 when stationary and 11 when moving. If the vehicle is very fast, add 2 to the defence. If you are targeting passengers, add 4 to the defence, plus their own protection bonus - 15 to hit the driver of a fleeing vehicle!
- **Damage:** A hit to the target automatically inflicts injury to the vehicle - exploding tyres, bodywork with holes in it, engine losing hoses, etc. There is no calculation of damage. If it hits with enough calibre, it breaks stuff.

5.4 5.4 Driving

Generally speaking, driving a vehicle is a Dexterity or Intelligence roll (or even a Constitution roll to drive three days in a row through the desert landscape of the Great West). Only make rolls to avoid obstacles or problems that arise. A normal driver can only take one action per turn, with no extra manoeuvres or bonus actions due to initiative.

5.5 5.5 Interface

A character with a neural implant can wire directly to a machine or vehicle - CPAs, rolling and flying civilian and military vehicles, drones, etc. - in order to gain a +2 bonus to all their pilot rolls

and access to certain interfaced equipment.

5.6 5.6 Riggers

Rigger characters also have a unique ability, transfer: when they interface with a vehicle, they become the vehicle. Here are the specific rules:

- You act with the vehicle as if you were it - including fighting, moving, etc. You have one action and one manoeuvre per turn and get initiative bonuses.
- In combat, the vehicle has a number of hit points equal to your personal hit point total and can take an additional wound - a hit loses hit points before inflicting wounds. Alternatively, you can choose to take wounds instead of your vehicle if you are on board.

6 6 Catalogues

Because in our system, it is simply unthinkable! All we know is the accumulation of capital. You know how it works: the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. There is no word or expression in the language to describe the opposite process. Proof, if any were needed, of the emptiness of our imagination. Once or twice I have come across the expression 'De-accumulation of capital', but applied to some kind of accident or mistake, and that is not what I have in mind. I'm talking about a deliberate, positive action. I've tried to call it capital dispersion - scattering of capital... You see the problem. It sounds wrong, even in the language. Redistribution of profits... you see how all the terms at our disposal for this describe actions which come after the accumulation of capital. Dispersing capital at the precise moment of its creation - it sounds almost contradictory, actually, and in a way it is; in our system there is no word or theory to explain the dispersal of capital without obligation of some kind. Pre-emption of dividends? Usufruct? I leave it to the bloggers to look up, as an exercise, the most appropriate term."

—Kim Stanley Robinson, 60 Days Later.

6.1 6.1 Augmentations

You can spend ¥ to buy cybernetic augmentations: neuronc, nanogenetic, panoptic, prosthetic or reinforcement. The basic implant costs ¥12. Each additional option for a given augmentation costs ¥4. Some options require a [prerequisite] listed in its description.

You may not have more augmentations than your Constitution rank, but you may buy as many options as your Constitution rank. you may purchase as many options as you you wish.

Cyberpsychosis

The human mind is not hard-wired to handle major bodily changes - you quickly get used to your physical body. When you abuse cybernetics, beyond the natural limit set by your Constitution rank, you run the risk of permanently blowing a fuse. At any moment, the game leader can take control of your character - a bit like a galley, but worse (and without the XP). And then anything can happen: blackouts, memory loss,

ghost hacking, psychotic episodes, akashic hallucinations, irrepressible violent outbursts, amok, catatonia, etc. It's up to you if you want to end up like one of those shaking cyborgs, reduced to the state of trunk-men and stripped, for reasons of public safety, of all their cybernetics.

6.1.1 6.1.1 Neuronic

Neural Plug: You can operate any equipment with a neural plug to improve its efficiency. Generally, you get a +2 bonus on all associated rolls (indicated on the equipment), but it can also be a simple prerequisite to operate the equipment.

- **AFFINITY:** You mentally communicate with other people who have this option and whose identifiers you possess.
- **MATRIX WIRING *:** You gain 1 additional connection point (max 3).
- **SMART EXTERNAL CABLES:** The connection cables unroll and plug themselves in automatically.
- **EMOTION CONTROL:** You have hormonal suppressors that allow you to limit or suppress certain strong emotions.
- **TEMPORAL SHUNT:** You trigger ultra-fast temporal loops that allow you to make very complex decisions in a fraction of a second as if you had several minutes to do so. Once per cycle, spend 5 connection points and replay an entire conflict round – for you and your comrades.
- **PAIN INHIBITOR *:** You ignore injury penalties for one scene per cycle.
- **HIDDEN MEMORY:** You hide information and erase it from normal memory until a trigger restores it.
- **LOGIC PROCESSOR:** You have a +4 bonus to analyze documents or situations.
- **CORTICAL REDUNDANCY:** Certain areas of your brain have been duplicated to protect them in other parts of your body – if you are pulverized by a high-powered weapon or an explosion, roll 1d6. On a 4+, your brain is found intact.
- **STRESS REDUCER *:** Once per cycle, you automatically succeed on a social action of your choice.
- **WIRED REFLEXES:** You have a +1 bonus to defense and +1d6 to initiative.
- **EMOTIONAL STABILIZER *:** You have an additional luck point per cycle (max 3).

6.1.2 6.1.2 Nanogenetic

Regeneration: by spending one point of luck, you recover all your hit points.

- **TRAUMA DAMPER *:** You cancel one injury per cycle when you fall to 0 hit points.
- **HYDRA GENOBLASTS *:** Once per scene, recover 5 hit points.
- **TOTIPOTENT GENOBLASTS:** You have 5 additional hit points.
- **REJUVENATION:** You gain ten years of life expectancy per treatment.
 - **BODY ADJUSTMENT:** Allows modification of certain appearance elements within reasonable limits (hair color, eye color, height, general morphology, etc.).
 - **METABOLIC SCREEN:** Prevents excessive weight gain or loss.
 - **ONKOS SCREEN:** Protects the organism from tumors and cancerous cells and allows working in high-radiation environments.
 - **TRAUMA ERASER:** Erases scars, tattoos, and body marks.
 - **TOX CLEANSE:** Cleanses the organism of carcinogenic and biological toxins.
- **ENDOCRINE MODIFICATION:** You have additional endocrine glands that provide you

with special abilities. You always make an initiative roll even when surprised.

- EMPATHY: You have a +4 bonus to read emotions and detect lies.
- NANOCONDUCTOR: You are insensitive to the effects of electricity – your body conducts it without damage.
- PREMONITIONS: Your brain infers intuitive connections from sparse information. Once per cycle, ask the game master a question about an imminent event or determine it yourself at your convenience.
- PYROKINESIS: You develop pyro-kinetic epithelial cells capable of creating fire – as if you had a gas burner in the palm of your hand.

6.1.3 6.1.3 Panoptic

Enhanced senses: you have a +4 bonus to all perception rolls.

- SENSORY DAMPENERS: Dampens sudden violent noises (flashbang) or permanent ones (engines/reactors).
- LIGHT AMPLIFIER: Gives you night vision.
- SOUND AMPLIFIER: Increases the range and precision of hearing.
- CHEMICAL ANALYZER: You have a rudimentary analysis laboratory in your taste buds and nose.
- EXTENDED AUDITORY RANGE: You hear infrasound and ultrasound.
- RADIATION DETECTOR: So as not to be caught by surprise.
- SOUND EDITOR: You sort sound sources in real-time.
- BALANCE: You no longer suffer from motion sickness or vertigo...
- SYNESTHETIC RECORDER: You have sensors and detectors all over your body allowing for the complete recording of your sensations and environment for later playback as a synesthetic stream.
 - EMOTIONAL IMPLANT: Adds sensations and emotions to the recording.
 - SENSORY IMPLANT: Adds the senses of touch and smell to the recording.
- INFRARED: You see in the infrared spectrum.
- ELECTROMAGNETIC READER: You read and decrypt electromagnetic signals.
- PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY *: You record the details of one scene at a time in a specific limbic memory.
- DIRECTIONAL MICROPHONE: You have a long-range directional microphone.
- ISOTHERMAL PROBE: You perceive thermoclines in the environment.
- RADAR SENSOR: You perceive radar waves and analyze them.
- ULTRAVIOLET: You see in the ultraviolet spectrum.
- ZOOM: Vision magnification.
 - HIGH-DEFINITION VISION: You have enhanced vision to capture small details at a distance or see the microscopic.

6.1.4 6.1.4 Prosthetic

Power: You have a +2 bonus to all strength work, endurance or athletics tests, etc. Choose a specific body replacement - Woven Skin, Lower Limbs, Upper Limbs, Bone Replacement - and note the associated bonus.

- WOVEN SKIN: You have a +1 bonus to defense.
- DERMAL DISPLAY: [Woven Skin] Allows displaying messages or videos on the skin.
- THERMO-OPTICAL CAMOUFLAGE: [Woven Skin] Chameleon-like, but nude.

- MOTION SENSORS: [Woven Skin] Like fish or certain snakes over a few meters.
- DERMAL PAINT: [Woven Skin] Change skin color at will.
- FLASHDERM *: [Woven Skin] A portion of the skin (usually in the palm of the hand or on the forehead) emits a high-power light flash, once per cycle, equivalent to a flash grenade.
- NICTITATING MEMBRANE: [Woven Skin] Transparent membrane that protects the eyes against external aggressions (dust, acids, toxins, tear gas, etc.).
- PHOTODERM: [Woven Skin] A portion of the skin (usually in the palm of the hand or on the forehead) emits a directional light equivalent to that of a high-power flashlight.
- DERMAL PLATES: [Woven Skin] You have a +1 bonus to defense.
- SUBDERMAL POUCH: [Woven Skin] You possess a flat storage compartment with a waterproof seal.
- ANTI-RADIATION PROTECTION: [Woven Skin] Protects against radiation for several tens of minutes.
- SOLAR REGULATION: [Woven Skin] To avoid sunburn by adapting the amount of melanin.
- THERMAL REGULATION: [Woven Skin] Withstands very low and very high temperatures for several tens of minutes.
- PROTECTIVE SEALS: [Woven Skin] Seals bodily orifices in case of emergency.
- HEIGHTENED TACTILE SENSITIVITY: [Woven Skin] You have a +4 bonus to all specific tests.
- AUTOMATIC SUTURES: [Woven Skin] Automatically closes wounds and compresses limbs in case of hemorrhage. Once per cycle, when you fall to 0 hit points, you immediately regain 5.
- SPECIAL TEXTURES: [Woven Skin] Fur, feathers, or scales option.
- LOWER LIMBS: Your lower limbs are cybernetic prosthetics. You have a +1d6 bonus to initiative.
- ACCELERATION: [Lower Limbs] You have a +1 bonus to defense in melee combat.
- JUMP ABSORBERS: [Lower Limbs] You can absorb falls from up to six meters in height.
- KINETIC ASSISTANCE: [Lower Limbs] You run faster and leap farther than a normal human.
- HIDDEN COMPARTMENT: You possess a compartment for storing small objects.
- ANCHORING HOOKS: [Lower Limbs] Hooks spring from the heel and sole of the feet to anchor securely in the ground, considerably increasing grip strength.
- FLIPPERS: [Lower Limbs] You have a +4 bonus to swim.
- UPPER LIMBS: Your upper limbs are cybernetic prosthetics. You have a +2 bonus to all Strength rolls outside of combat.
- INTEGRATED FIREARM: [Upper Limbs] A firearm is integrated into the forearm or shoulder. You can spend cybernetic option points to improve it.
- ELECTRIC SHOCK *: [Upper Limbs] Once per combat, you deliver an electric shock on touch, adding 1d6 to the damage of a melee attack.
- IMPACTORS: [Upper Limbs] You have a +2 bonus to melee damage.
- BLADES: [Upper Limbs] A melee weapon is integrated into the forearm or shoulder. You can spend cybernetic option points to improve it.
- FRACTAL HAND: [Upper Limbs] The epidermis of the fingers unfolds in a fractal form, considerably increasing the precision of gestures and granting a +2 bonus to all rolls requiring fine manipulation.
- TOOL HAND: [Upper Limbs] The hand or fingers can transform into various common

tools useful for all repairs or equipment maintenance.

- **SPECIALIZED TOOL HAND:** [Upper Limbs] The hand possesses specialized tools in a field – medicine, electrotechnical maintenance, mechanics, etc. – giving a +4 bonus to all rolls in that field.
- **PILLOW:** [Upper Limbs] An inflatable pillow in the arm, for sleeping in complete comfort.
- **SUPERIOR STRENGTH:** [Upper Limbs] You have an additional +2 bonus for all Strength actions.
- **REINFORCEMENTS:** [Upper Limbs] You can parry melee attacks with your arm and gain a +1 bonus to defense in melee.
- **BONE REPLACEMENT:** You have 5 additional hit points.
- **REINFORCED SPINE:** [Bone Replacement] To resist shocks, whiplash, and other more or less involuntary torsions.
- **CERAMIC TEETH:** [Bone Replacement] You can cut almost any material with your teeth.
- **SONAR IMPLANT:** [Bone Replacement] You use your skeleton to receive sonar waves and analyze them.
- **INVISIBILITY (SKELETAL):** [Bone Replacement] The skeleton is invisible to X-rays, radar, and other magnetic resonance detection.
- **MANDIBLES:** [Bone Replacement] Addition of prehensile mandibles on each side of the mouth.
- **DYNAMIC FACIAL MODIFICATIONS:** [Bone Replacement] Programmable and painful change of facial shape (one injury per use).
- **DIAMOND NAILS:** [Bone Replacement] Cut glass and most synthetic materials.
- **TAIL:** [Bone Replacement] To run faster and maintain balance – you have a +2 bonus when appropriate.
- **PREHENSILE TAIL:** [Bone Replacement] You can manipulate objects.

6.1.5 6.1.5 Reinforcement

Toughness: You have 10 extra hit points.

- **ELECTRIC SHOCK ABSORBER:** Avoids untimely fibrillations in case of electric shock.
- **ANTI-PATHOGEN BARRIER:** To avoid poisoning linked to immersion in polluted waters.
- **GILLS:** Allows breathing underwater.
- **HIDDEN COMPARTMENT:** A compartment for storing things.
- **METABOLISM CONTROL:** To survive with less food and water or, conversely, to absorb enormous quantities of food without issue.
- **EMETIC CONTROL:** Prevents nausea and vomiting reflexes (seasickness, space sickness, etc.) or induces them (in case of poisoning, for example).
- **ADAPTIVE DIGESTION:** To consume non-human food (raw meat, woody plants, strange berries, etc.).
- **DOUBLE HEART:** A backup heart, located in the iliac fossa, which compensates for the deficiencies of the first. You have 5 additional hit points.
- **NASAL FILTERS:** Filters toxic gases and fumes.
- **BLOOD FILTERS:** Filters poisons.
- **AUTOMATIC PLEURAL REPAIR:** Repairs pneumothoraxes. You have a +1 bonus to defense against ranged attacks.
- **OXYGEN RESERVE:** Cells slowly release oxygen into the lungs when it is impossible to breathe otherwise, allowing you to last for several tens of minutes.

- RESERVES: To survive without food or water.
- SEALS: To completely close the digestive tract at both ends.
- AUTOMATIC STIMULATION: Allows restarting the heart when it stops. Once per cycle, when you fall to 0 hit points, you immediately regain 5.
- SEXUAL ORGANS: You have complete contraceptive control as well as the most common anti-STD filters. Most sexual options can be activated and deactivated at will.
- CASTRATION: [Sexual Organs] Complete neutralization of the area and disappearance of sexual tensions.
- COBRA: [Sexual Organs] Articulated weapon concealed in the penis or vagina, for a surprise melee attack.
- ERECTION CONTROL: [Sexual Organs] Complete control of erection and ejaculation, as well as optimal sex organ size based on partner's responses.
- EXPLOSIVE GONADS: [Sexual Organs] Replacement of a testicle with explosives.
- VARIANT HERMAPHRODITE: [Sexual Organs] Allows switching from one sex to another in a few minutes (sometimes a bit painful). Each sex is fully functional.
- LIQUID PHEROMONES: [Sexual Organs] Released during sexual intercourse to increase the partner's pleasure.
- HEIGHTENED URGES: [Sexual Organs] Increased needs. +2 bonus to all seduction rolls in pursuit/seduction circumstances.
- CONTROLLED URGES: [Sexual Organs] Decreased needs. +4 bonus to resist seduction or manipulation attempts.

6.2 6.2 Weapons

You and I both know that violence is like a drug. You come back for a shot and you regret it immediately. But you can't help it, can you?

—Maxime Chattam, The Primal Conjunction

You can modify your weapons and armour to give them special abilities. In addition, there are several types of projectiles for weapons - for the record, the vast majority of weapons now use caseless ammunition and electric firing systems that allow for a higher rate of fire.

6.2.1 6.2.1 Firearms

Each option costs ¥4. Options marked with an * can be taken more than once.

- TARGET LOCK: The character must aim for a full turn, without being hindered or having to move. The weapon records up to three targets in its aiming memory. On the following turn, the character can make up to three successive shots.
- VERSATILE CHAMBERING: The weapon accepts special ammunition of all types.
- DISCREET: The weapon is particularly discreet and reduces its discretion category by one level.
- IFF: If the character's allies have an IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) interface on their protection, it is impossible to target them by mistake. The weapon automatically blocks the shot, even during a burst fire.
- IMPACT *: You have a +1 bonus to damage (maximum +3).
- INTERFACED: [Neuronic](#) The weapon is interfaced with the character's neural wiring. Attack +2.

- **LONG RANGE:** You have no attack penalty at long distance.
- **MENACING:** You have a +2 bonus to intimidation against people who only understand force.
- **VOCAL MULTI-LOADER:** [Versatile Chambering] This option allows firing different ammunition types within the same turn. Vocal sensitivity is adjustable for infiltration missions and only reacts to your voice signature.
- **PRECISION:** You have a +2 bonus to attack.
- **SECURED:** Only people whose genetic code is registered and encoded in the grip can activate the weapon.
- **SILENCED:** Firing this weapon does not get you spotted when no one is too close to the detonation or, conversely, when there is a lot of noise around.
- **BURST FIRE:** You can engage multiple opponents within range in the same action. The defense of the strongest target is increased by +1 per additional target. All hit targets suffer the same damage.
- **RAPID FIRE:** [Interfaced] You can make an additional shot in the turn by spending one connection point.
- **LASER SIGHT:** The weapon has a laser sight. Precision +1. This option is useless if the weapon is interfaced.

6.2.2 6.2.2 Ammunition

Special ammunition costs connection points which you spend for each combat. However, once the cost is paid, you can use the ammunition for the duration of the fight.

AMMUNITION		COST	EFFECTS
SELF-GUIDED	2		These are actually self-propelled micro-missiles that the weapon guides to the target or that are locked on by geolocation (via the matrix), infrared signal, or laser pointing by an ally in position. Accuracy +2 or +0 against targets hidden behind obstacles.
			This non-lethal ammunition cannot kill its target but only render it powerless.
SHOCK	1		Electromagnetic discharges are waves that disrupt or destroy electronic equipment. Security services are often armed with EMP pistols to stop coders, cyborgs, and terrorists of all kinds. EMP ammunition is quite terrifying and therefore highly controlled. It is quite difficult to obtain because it can very easily bring very expensive equipment to its
EMP	7		

AMMUNITION	COST	EFFECTS
EXPANDING	1	knees. Apply the EMP effects based on the damage die as explained below. Expanding ammunition is particularly useful against unprotected targets (damage +2) and objects.
DARTS	3	Darts can contain doses of toxins that can cause specific effects. Apply the effects of the darts based on the damage die as explained below.
ARMOR-PIERCING	2	This ammunition ignores the defense bonuses from protections, but inflicts -3 damage.

EMP ammunition or darts do not deal damage to hit points. You simply read the result of the damage die, with any bonuses, and apply the effects shown in the table opposite.

DAMAGE EMP		DART (TRANQUILIZER)
1	The discharge causes no real damage to the equipment, apart from a very temporary minor overheating.	The dart catches on clothing and does nothing.
2 - 3	The equipment stops working for one turn. If the equipment is vital, the character falls to the ground and cannot act.	The target is stunned. They have a -2 penalty on all their actions until they can rest.
4	The equipment stops working for the rest of the scene or until it can be restarted.	The target is nauseous. They only roll two dice for all their actions until they can rest.
5	The equipment stops working for the rest of the cycle and it will cost at least 4 ¥ to repair everything.	Same.
6 or more	The equipment is permanently destroyed and stops functioning. The destruction of vital equipment (cybernetic enhancements, for example) can lead to death. In any case, everything must be replaced at full price.	The target falls unconscious.

Caseless ammunition

The principle of caseless ammunition is to eliminate the casing that contains the primer, the explosive, and the bullet. These three elements are now held together by a binding agent. Most caseless ammunition, intended for electric weapons, has even replaced the primer and the explosive with a chemical propellant agent.

While weapons with traditional chambered ammunition still exist, most armies, security

services, and corporate forces now use caseless ammunition. The logistics, shape, and use of caseless weapons have considerably changed the habits of shooters.

After the first unsuccessful tests at the end of the 20th century by the firm H&K in Germany, several companies took an interest in caseless ammunition until they obtained a stable formula that largely eliminated the flaws of the early models. It is the descendants of this ammunition that you now use in nanoChrome.

Caseless ammunition has multiple advantages—and most of the disadvantages have been corrected. With the casing gone, there is no longer a need to eject it. Weapons therefore only have five mechanical operations to perform to load and fire, instead of seven for classic weapons. The rate of fire has thus been able to increase significantly. Furthermore, the weapons can be sealed against humidity, mold, and dust. Finally, they are now available for left-handed and right-handed users without additional modifications—which used to increase production and design costs. Caseless ammunition is particularly valued for vehicle-mounted weapons.

Lighter and cheaper to manufacture, caseless ammunition has undeniable advantages for armed forces: more can be carried for the same weight, allowing for longer missions and less substantial supply lines. Moreover, their rectangular shape (which can be surprising) allows them to be stored more efficiently, to avoid friction problems in magazines, and to obtain more powerful propellant charges in more limited sizes.

The problems of recoil (compression gases were poorly eliminated), heat (the casings carried away part of the heat upon their ejection), and durability (the first ammunition models handled the stress of combat and extreme conditions poorly) have been successfully resolved over the last thirty years. To claim that a caseless weapon is less reliable than a classic weapon is today the same kind of myth as the one that made people prefer revolvers over pistols at the end of the 20th century.

Nevertheless, two different designs compete: on one hand, weapons that rely on a mechanical system with ammunition comprising a primer and an explosive; on the other hand, weapons that rely on an electrical system with chemical ammunition.

Many believe the former are still the most reliable. Mechanical systems no longer jam since the casings were eliminated from the equation. They are, however, a little heavier and slower than their electrical competitors.

The latter have a bad reputation due to several incidents of insufficient charge that have been costly for unprepared individuals. Nevertheless, they are lighter and faster and often have much more interesting looks, with comprehensive options for aiming and ballistic tracking.

And looks count, don't they?

6.2.3 6.2.3 Melee

Each option costs ¥4. Options marked with * can be taken more than once.

- ELECTRIC SHOCK *: Once per combat, when you make a melee attack, add 1d6 to the

damage you inflict.

- VIBROBLADE: The blade can generate an ultrasonic vibration that destroys physical structures or destabilises them.
- DISCREET: The weapon is particularly discreet and reduces its discretion category by one level.
- IMPACT *: You have a +2 bonus to damage (maximum +6).
- INTERFACED: [Neuronic](#) The weapon is interfaced with the character's neural wiring. Attack +2.
- SHAPE MEMORY: The nanomachines that constitute the blade retract into a reservoir located in the hilt, for reduced encumbrance. The nano-blade has no sheath and is easily stored in a coat or bag. However, it takes a full turn for the blade to deploy completely.
- MENACING: You have a +2 bonus to intimidation against people who only understand force.
- PRECISION: You have a +2 bonus to attack.
- PRESTIGIOUS: You have a +2 bonus for social relations with people who admire style – provided the weapon is visible.
- SECURED: Only people whose genetic code is registered and encoded in the grip can activate the weapon.

6.3 6.3 Armour

There are two types of personal protection:

- Civilian protections are invisible, easy to put on and maintain. And above all, they are allowed everywhere.
- Tactical protection is much heavier and more visible, with attachments for weapons and equipment. Without the appropriate credentials, carrying around tactical armour is the best way to end up at the station for a thorough check.

Each option costs ¥4. Options marked with an * can be taken more than once.

- AUTO-INJECTOR *: Once per cycle, if you fall to 0 hit points, you immediately regain 5.
- ELECTRIC SHOCK *: Once per combat, when you make a melee attack, add 1d6 to the damage you inflict.
- DISCREET: The protection (armour) is particularly discreet and reduces its discretion category by one level.
- IFF: Your armour has an IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) system. If activated, your allies cannot shoot you, voluntarily or by mistake.
- INTERFACED: [Neuronic](#) The armour is interfaced. You permanently receive information about your health status and your environment. You have a +2 bonus to perception.
- SHAPE MEMORY: The armour is particularly adapted to your physiognomy. You have a +1 bonus to defence.
- REINFORCEMENTS: You have 5 additional hit points. You cannot choose the Discreet option.
- VITAL SUPPORT *: Pressure point systems and automatic ligatures cancel one injury per cycle (max 3).

6.4 6.4 Vehicles

6.4.1 6.4.1 CPA (PERSONAL POWER SUIT)

CPAs are powered armour, mechas about three metres high, controlled by a pilot in an inner cockpit and possibly interfaced to the aircraft. Each CPA also has an autonomous nexus that assists and advises the pilot in his tasks, while making all the necessary micro-adjustments in real time - these assistants often end up with a unique name and personality, which makes them stand out to their owners.

You can act inside a CPA in the same way as if you were on foot - including fighting, running, jumping, etc. Of course, the size and mass of the craft gives you some advantages or disadvantages depending on the circumstances.

A basic APC grants a +2 bonus to defence, grants a +5 bonus to damage from all attacks and can take three wounds.

Unarmed and unarmoured APCs are considered civilian or work vehicles and are therefore perfectly legal. Combat APCs are reserved for security services.

Each option costs ¥4. Options marked with an * can be taken more than once.

- **ACCELERATION ***: The CPA can move at higher speeds. Factory-standard, a CPA is very slow. Each rank of acceleration allows it to change category (slow, medium, fast, ultra-fast).
- **ANTI-SHOCK**: The CPA ignores the effects of injuries. If it is “killed,” the CPA is simply immobilized for the rest of the combat and can be repaired. Without this option, the CPA is destroyed and good for scrap.
- **ARMAMENT**: The CPA has a weapon. Refer to the weapon lists (melee and ranged) to choose specific options.
- **PILOTING ASSISTANCE ***: You have a +2 bonus for all movements with a CPA.
- **ARMOR PLATING ***: The factory-standard CPA has no armour plating. Each option allows gaining an armour rank (light, medium, heavy) – be aware, medium and heavy armour plating are generally subject to authorisation and considered military equipment (see page 171).
- **EMP PROTECTION ***: Each protection option allows you to cancel one EMP effect per cycle.
- **JUMPS**: The CPA has thrusters allowing it to make jumps of several tens of meters.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL SEALS ***: The cockpit protects the pilot against extreme external conditions (vacuum, cold, heat, toxins, radiation, etc) for 12 hours. You can take this option multiple times to increase the duration by 6 hours.
- **SENSORS**: Each sensor point allows acquiring a specific system: thermographic vision, X-ray vision, night vision, motion detector, range increase, etc) Refer to the panoptic list (cybernetics) to choose specific options.
- **SOLIDITY ***: The CPA can withstand an additional injury.
- **SUPERIOR POWER**: The CPA gives a +4 bonus to all raw power actions. It can lift considerable masses.

6.4.2 6.4.2 Civilian vehicles

You have a civilian vehicle with all the necessary authorisations to pass corporate checkpoints.

A vehicle operated by a character can take up to 3 wounds before being destroyed. Other vehicles can usually take 1-5 wounds depending on their size and strength.

Each option costs ¥4. Options marked with an * can be taken more than once.

- ACCELERATION *: Each rank of acceleration allows the vehicle to change category (slow, medium, fast, very fast).
- ARMAMENT: The vehicle has a weapon. Refer to the ranged weapon lists to choose specific options.
- CONCEALED ARMAMENT: [Armament] The weapon is concealed when not activated.
- MEDICAL ASSISTANCE: The vehicle has a few medical injectors that restore 5 hit points, once per cycle, if you fall out of combat at the controls.
- AUTOPILOT: The vehicle is equipped with a nexus capable of piloting itself under normal conditions.
- REINFORCED ARMOR *: Vehicles generally have light armour or no particular armour. Each time you take this option, increase the armour by one rank (light, medium, heavy) – be aware, medium and heavy armour are generally subject to authorisation and considered military equipment (see page 171).
- STEALTHY: The vehicle is discreet and offers a +2 bonus to avoid electronic detection.
- NANOCAMOUFLAGE: The vehicle can change colour and visual identification in real-time, according to patterns stored in its memory.
- EMP PROTECTION *: The equipment is protected against EMP discharges once per cycle.
- ENVIRONMENTAL SEALS *: The cockpit protects the pilot against extreme external conditions (vacuum, cold, heat, toxins, radiation, etc) for 12 hours. You can take this option multiple times to increase the duration by 6 hours.
- CARGO HOLD *: You have a bit more space to store equipment or goods. The number of cargo holds you choose can have a significant effect on the vehicle's shape and size.
- STYLISH: The vehicle has style. You have a +2 bonus when dealing with urban tribes or vehicle enthusiasts when you are within range.

6.4.3 6.4.3 Drones

Drones are small autonomous modules of varying size, capable of performing multiple useful tasks depending on their specificity and controlled via the matrix (or, more rarely, by radio control). You can add various options to them for ¥4. Options marked with * can be taken more than once.

- ACCELERATION *: Each rank of acceleration allows the drone to change category (slow, medium, fast, very fast).
- ARMAMENT: The drone has a weapon. Refer to the ranged weapon lists to choose specific options.
- CONCEALED ARMAMENT: [Armament] The weapon is concealed when not activated.
- AUTOPILOT: The drone is equipped with a nexus capable of piloting itself under normal conditions.
- REINFORCED ARMOR *: Drones generally have light armour or no particular armour.

Each time you take this option, increase the armour by one rank (light, medium, heavy) – be aware, medium and heavy armour are generally subject to authorisation and considered military equipment (see page 171).

- **STEALTHY:** The drone is discreet and offers a +2 bonus to avoid electronic detection.
- **MOVEMENT MODE *:** The drone adds a type of movement in addition to the one initially planned (aerial, terrestrial, amphibious). It takes one action to switch from one locomotion mode to another.
- **NANOCAMOUFLAGE:** The drone can change colour and visual identification in real-time, according to patterns stored in its memory.
- **EMP PROTECTION *:** The equipment is protected against EMP discharges once per cycle.
- **SENSORS:** Each sensor point allows acquiring a specific system: thermographic vision, X-ray vision, night vision, motion detector, range increase, etc) Refer to the panoptic list (cybernetics) to choose specific options.
- **SOLIDITY:** The drone can withstand an additional injury.

Table 6.1: Drone types

DRONE TYPE	SPEED	WOUNDS	FUNCTIONS
COMBATANT	Flight/ Fast	3	The combatant is an agile drone armed with ranged weapons. By default, it carries the equivalent of an assault rifle and offers a +2 defense bonus to a wired individual.
SPY	Flight/ Very Slow	1	The spy is a minuscule drone, transparent to most detection systems (concealed, +4 bonus to stealth) and equipped with multiple panoptic options (microphones and cameras primarily). However, due to its size, it is slow and fragile.
MANIPULATOR	Flight/ Slow	4	Very solid and resistant, the manipulator is equipped with multiple tools and manipulator arms, including a fractal hand for fine remote operations. It is a rather imposing and heavy drone.
PATROLLER	Flight/ Medium	2	The patroller is a versatile surveillance drone, generally used for area reconnaissance (+4 bonus to perception and vigilance).
TRANSPORTER	Flight/ Fast	2	The transporter is designed for carrying more or less heavy goods in an armoured and secure compartment. Practical for bringing equipment to a team in difficulty.

6.5 6.5 Accelerators

“Drug abuse is not a disease; it is a decision, just like driving down the street in front of a speeding car. It is not called a disease, but an error in judgment.”

—Philip K. Dick, *Dead Substance*

Accelerators are combat nanodrugs that have fallen into the public domain by force of circumstance. They are not particularly recreational drugs, although they can sometimes get you high, but tools that techmercs use and abuse. Fortunately, the problems of addiction are mainly psychological.

You cannot combine the effects of two different accelerators at the same time.

A character can consume accelerators at will without spending ¥, but suffers the negative side effects. If he chooses to spend ¥1 to buy a dose of accelerator, he can ignore the side effects - he knows the right addresses and has access to good stuff.

Beware: some corporations prohibit the use of drugs by their employees and operate frequent controls. Also, while you can walk around with a dose or two on you, the police take a very dim view of suitcases full of drugs...

CAROLINE SAYS: Drugs kill all the emotions you might feel. You become cold as death, insensitive to love, hate, anger, joy or sadness. You gain a +2 bonus to all rolls requiring concentration and detachment, including holding a target in its scope. On the other hand, you have an equivalent penalty on all rolls involving social interaction.

CHELSEA GIRL: You begin to see life in a slightly different light. Each of your eyes adapts to a different vision: one sees virtual reality, the other unvarnished reality. You mix the two perceptions for three hours and fifteen minutes. Afterwards, you may note an injury to yourself - the human mind is not designed to withstand such an ordeal.

DIRTY BOULEVARD: This is pure high. You turn your head upside down and forget your worries and the darkness of the world. You with a general malus of -4 to all actions throughout the day and night - you stammer and drool like an incomprehensible acid-addled pithecanthrope. During the next day, once you've come to your senses, clear-headed and cleansed, you benefit from a special acuity: whenever you have to roll dice, place one of them (not the damage die) on the side of your choice and roll the others. Each time you use this ability, roll 1d6: on 6+, the accelerator stops working.

FEMME FATALE: You become devilishly seductive and exude powerful sexual nanormones. You have a +4 bonus to all social relationships for several hours. But you begin to have trouble managing your own desires, and when the accelerator stops working, you begin to hate yourself and have a -1 Charisma penalty for the rest of the cycle.

GOOD FORTUNE: You float on your own cloud and escape into your own world. Nothing can go wrong. You don't care about anything, including difficulties. There is nothing you cannot achieve. You have a +1 bonus to all your actions until the end of the cycle, but you cannot gain any experience bonus by spending ¥.

HALLOWEEN PARADE: You begin to glow, literally, with good health - your skin seems to glow slightly and draws admiring glances. Your beauty is heightened. No matter how much accreditation is required for a party or social event, you are let in with no problem. A little buoyant, a little giddy with intoxication and bubbly, you nevertheless have a -2 malus to all physical actions or combat for the rest of the night.

LADY DAY: Your mind comes to grips with the deeper nature of the matrix. You begin to sense and see the spirits of the matrix, the legendary AIs that live in the interstices of virtual reality. You can ask them for a major service related to the matrix. Once the spirits are gone, you are completely cut off from the matrix for 1d6 days, too busy to get out of the self-destructive spiral that makes you hate your body and everything that makes you a mere mortal.

MIRROR: You become a mirror of your contemporaries and your general empathy increases considerably. You instinctively understand their desires and motivations. While you are under the effect of the accelerator, you are unable to use the matrix.

PERFECT DAY: This recreational drug clears your mind of the dark clouds that accumulate in it. You feel like you're drinking sangria at the zoo, toes out, for hours and hours. In reality, the feel-good flash lasts only a few seconds and can be enough to shake you up. When you're down to 0 hit points, you can use this accelerator to get back up to 5 hit points immediately.

RUN RUN RUN: Using this accelerator as a catalyst, you can take two different accelerators and mix up their effects (and their descent). If you don't pay for the Run Run Run, you are forced to suffer the downslides of the other accelerators, even if you have paid for them.

SAD SONG: You are in the midst of a spleen and are contemplating your life in a state of advanced dissociation, trying to take stock. You can't socialise with anyone for a whole day because you are so deep in the dark. The next day you have a +4 bonus to all your negotiation and diplomacy rolls.

SATELLITE OF LOVE: This nanodrug allows you to share a special affinity with the matrix. You leave your body (be careful where you leave it) and walk around as if you were an Akashic spirit. You gain 1d6+3 points of connection and can run programs directly as a fully functioning nexus. The walk lasts one hour per Intelligence point. You are then cut off from the matrix for twenty-four hours.

SISTER RAY: This experimental nanodrug is just starting to hit the streets. It explodes your psyche into eight different personalities (calm, angry, cold, empath, autistic, victim, killer, lover). You can switch from one to the other according to your needs. Each personality functions as a skill. It's a bit of a rough ride when you put the pieces back together: you have a -4 penalty to all your social actions for the rest of the cycle.

SWEET JANE: Tell the host when you ingest this drug. At any time up to the end of the cycle, you can declare that everything that happened in the interim was a dream, a sketch of a possible future, a sort of psychometric vision of your desires. Replay all the scenes. Everything.

VENUS IN FUR: Pain becomes distant, vaguely exotic information. Physical torture does not work on you. Until the end of the cycle, ignore the effects of wound malus (though you continue to register it normally). At the end of the cycle, you lose one Constitution rank or one Wisdom rank for a full cycle. You have a slight tendency to be hypersensitive and cry over nothing.

VICIOUS: This accelerator exacerbates your violent impulses - you turn into a vicious, instinctive beast, reacting to the slightest stimulus and provocation. You have a +2 bonus to attack and melee damage, but the host can force you to react physically to frustration and anger.

WHITE HEAT: The nanophets found on the street are slightly less powerful than their military counterparts, but they also drain a lot less. You don't need to sleep for a full night. You do get a bit paranoid though, and you experience some lapses in your usual social relationships.

WHITE LIGHT: You inject yourself with combat nanophets. You can stop sleeping for the rest of the cycle if you wish. However, you definitely lose one Constitution rank at the end of it.

7 7 Magic

As he dug, Cal thought about how many times the Fugue and its inhabitants had foiled his preconceptions. Here he was on his knees, digging a grave with a bunch of laughing kids: not the kind of situation his dreams had prepared him for. But this situation was, in its own way, more real than he had dared to hope for - dirt under his fingernails and a snotty child happily devouring a worm beside him. It was not a dream, but an awakening.

—Clive Barker, *Kingdom of the Diviners*

The next chapter, which is completely optional, offers you the chance to add a little magic and fantasy to your cyberpunk. This is not a new idea, we agree - there are plenty of Urban Fantasy worlds, but very few with a cyberpunk setting. Nevertheless, what we wouldn't do for a little exoticism?

See what your players think of the idea and if everyone agrees, go for it. Beware though, the appearance of magic does not mean that the world will be all pastel, unicorns and rainbows. Magic can be a nasty thing and no one can trust a dragon!

7.1 7.1 Magic

Add the following fundamental to the first three given in the first chapter (page 13).

It had to happen sometime. By dint of playing with ever longer subatomic racetracks to observe Higgs bosons and tobacco pot gluons, researchers blew it up. One chance in a million, they said.

What happened? A coiled dimension suddenly unfolded - physicists know that extra dimensions (beyond the first four) do exist, in the form of microscopic toroids that were formed just after the Big Bang. What was not known was that the dimension in question had an existence of its own and that it was home to particular energies and fauna.

In short, overnight this new dimension was imposed on the world - so that we had to deal with the three physical dimensions, a fourth time dimension and a fifth, very real dimension, which was soon called the Æther.

The Æther caused some major upheavals in the world:

- First, people started practicing magic - not silly Las Vegas-style prestidigitation - but real magic. Of course, in the beginning it was complicated and there were many accidents. But from learning came mastery, and from mastery came the traditions that are now well known.
- Then strange people appeared - gnomes, ogres, sidhes, but also trolls, goblins, mandrakes and ulfurs. It wasn't easy to make a place for them in the world and people were very afraid of them at first (and still are); but, as generations passed, everything was more or less settled...
- Finally, other, much more dangerous creatures arrived: the dragons. Believe me, these are quite a few, rare but powerful, and they quickly understood the interest they had in

getting involved in human affairs to build up their fortunes.

7.2 7.2 Races of the Æther

In addition to your affiliation, choose a race.

RACE	DESCRIPTION	ADVANTAGES
GNOME	Gnomes are telluric creatures, slow and tireless.	You have 10 additional hit points and you see in the dark.
GOBLIN	Goblins are small, industrious, and cunning.	You have an additional point of Intelligence (which will allow you to reach +8 one day in this characteristic) and you see in the dark.
HUMAN	The people of the original land, mixed with other humans who are sometimes a bit strange.	You have two additional skills.
MANDRAKE	The root people have surprisingly adapted to immense human megacities, but they still dislike fire.	You have an additional point of Charisma (which will allow you to reach +8 one day in this characteristic) and you see in the dark.
OGRE	Ogres are immense and very strong, wrathful and uncontrollable like fire.	You have 2 additional luck points and one point of Strength (which will allow you to reach +8 one day in this characteristic).
SIDHE	Sidhe are aerial, light, haughty, and indifferent to material possessions.	You have 2 additional magic points and you see in the dark.
TROLL	Trolls are hirsute and fierce, proud of their independence and savagery.	You have one skill and 10 additional hit points.
ULFUR	These enormous and powerful wolves live in nomadic, territorial, and aggressive packs. They can only use tools and weapons if they are interfaced – but they are often effective wired individuals.	You have an additional point of Wisdom (which will allow you to reach +8 one day in this characteristic) and a +1d6 bonus to melee damage when you use your claws and teeth.

7.3 7.3 New classes

7.3.1 7.3.1 Alchemist

Alchemists tinker with very powerful magic drugs and inject them into themselves to give themselves considerable powers. It's a long, painful apprenticeship to master the strange effects of these alchemical potions, but what one wouldn't do to achieve perfection.

ACCELERATION: By spending one point of magic, you can perform a superhuman physical act - move faster, lift a heavy load, jump high and far, etc.

FORTRESS: For one magic point, you ignore 1d6 points of damage. You can spend as many

magic points as you like on the same hit.

7.3.2 7.3.2 Hermetic

Hermetics study magic and its effects with a scientific, pragmatic eye. It is a physical science, nothing more, a derivative of the laws of thermodynamics - what happens when you change mass into energy and back again.

FOCUS: You have a magical focus - staff, talisman, ring - which gives you 3 extra magic points.

MAGIC: You can cast spells and summon spirits. You can also project your perception into the Æther.

7.3.3 7.3.3 Orphist

For the Orphists, the appearance of the Æther marks the beginning of the great reunification of the world. They seek to break the cycle of creation/destruction, birth/death, that humans experience, so that time and all dimensions become one.

GUIDE: A spirit of the Æther accompanies you wherever you go and gives you considerable magical powers. Choose your guide from the list provided.

MAGIC: You can cast spells and summon spirits. You can also project your perception into the Æther.

7.4 7.4 Additional rules

7.4.1 7.4.1 Magic points

If you are an alchemist, hermeticist or orphist, you have a number of magic points equal to your Constitution rank. This total is reduced for each item of cybernetics you wear, including cosmetic prosthetics, and for each wound you suffer. The use of magic is limited by pain and all things that tie the body to its own sensations. You recover all your magic points after a full night's sleep.

7.4.2 7.4.2 Physical and magical defences

There are two different defences - physical and magical - which are calculated in the same way (Wisdom + 7). However, physical protections do not increase magical defence and conversely, magical protections have no effect against physical attacks. When a wizard casts an Ethereal Barrier spell, for example, he must choose whether to affect one or the other defence, but he can cast the spell twice to cover all options.

Similarly, some creatures have only one magical defence. It is impossible to hit them with physical attacks. Conversely, physical objects have no magical defence and magical attacks have no effect on them.

7.4.3 7.4.3 New abilities

MYSTIC ADEPT: You must be an alchemist to choose this ability. You can cast spells like

hermeticists and orphists. However, you have two limitations: you can only cast spells whose level is equal to or lower than your Intelligence rank; you cannot summon spirits.

ÆTHERIC AFFINITY: You have two extra magic points per day.

SPEED: You must be an alchemist to choose this ability. Add twice your Dexterity rank to your initiative. It does not cost any magic points. You can gain 1d6 extra initiative points for each magic point you invest.

CONTROL: You must be an alchemist to choose this ability. You can impose major deprivations on your body by spending magic points: one point per minute to stop breathing, one per hour to remain completely immobile, two per night to not sleep (but you don't get any magic or life points back in the morning), etc. You can go several days without eating and drinking very little.

MAGIC FORTRESS: you must be an alchemist to choose this ability. The resistances and defences you gain also apply to your magic defence.

RAPID HEALING: You must be an alchemist to choose this ability. You regain 1d6 hit points for every hour of rest or quiet activity. In addition, you recover 2d3 wounds each round instead of 1d3.

MAGE OF HERMES: If you are a hermeticist, you belong to the Order of Hermes and can use its facilities and libraries.

BATTLE MAGE: Add 1d6 to all damage you inflict with magic.

INSTINCTIVE MAGE: If you are a hermeticist or orphist, you can make magical attacks without spending any magic. Make an Intelligence roll to hit, against the target's (magical) defence, and calculate the damage normally.

LODGE MEMBER: You belong to a major Orphic lodge and can use its facilities and libraries.

POWER: You must be an alchemist to choose this ability. Add 1d6 (explosive) to all damage you deal in close combat. This does not cost a magic point. You can add 1d6 (non-explosive) damage for each point of magic you invest in the move.

RAMPART: You must be an alchemist to choose this ability. Add your Constitution to your defence. This does not cost any magic points. You can gain +1 defence for the round for each magic point you invest.

SAIL: You must be an alchemist to choose this ability. For 1 magic point, you go unnoticed and people ignore you.

7.5 7.5 Magic powers

Hermetics and Orphists both possess the ability to cast spells and summon ethereal spirits.

7.5.1 7.5.1 Spells

The magic still works and you do not have to make any rolls. Use an action and spend one

magic point per spell level. If you do not have enough magic points, the spell does not work.

Generally speaking, the effects of spells are instantaneous (or very short) or end with the next dawn or dusk. Most spells work on contact (including all spells intended to aid one's allies) or on sight; a few spells, such as Message, work beyond the normal range of perception.

If a creature can make a saving throw to escape one of your spells, the difficulty of the saving throw is equal to 10 + your Wisdom. If you are wearing a magical focuser (staff, magic symbol, etc), add the bonus of that to the difficulty.

7.5.1.1 7.5.1.1 Level 1

- ASSISTANCE: You grant a +4 bonus to a roll that you or a companion must make. This bonus does not stack with the use of a skill.
- MINOR ILLUSION: You create a small auditory or visual illusion within sight. Onlookers can make a saving throw to ignore the illusion, but only if they suspect it is something abnormal.
- LIGHT: A bright light appears that follows you everywhere and illuminates like a beautiful lamp until you extinguish it. You can concentrate it to give it the appearance and use of a high-power directional flash-light.
- MESSAGE: You send a short message to a person you know.
- ÆTHERIC PERCEPTION: You detect magic and see into the Æther up to your Intelligence in meters. You can also use this spell to analyse a scene from a magical point of view.

7.5.1.2 7.5.1.2 Level 2

- ÆTHERIC BARRIER: You grant a +1 defence bonus to yourself or a companion for the duration of one combat. Each person can only receive one Ætheric barrier of a specific type at a time, but you can cast it on multiple people if you have enough magic points. You must choose whether the barrier applies to physical defence or magical defence.
- MAGIC SHOCK: One of your opponents loses their next action.
- MANIPULATION: You can activate any mechanical system at close range and within sight – locks, switches, levers, etc.
- MAGIC MISSILE: You inflict 1d6 + Wisdom damage points on a target within sight. You automatically hit without a saving throw.
- MINOR HEALING: You restore 1d6 + Wisdom hit points to an ally within sight.

7.5.1.3 7.5.1.3 Level 3

- MAGIC AUGMENTATION: You grant a +1 bonus to all actions of your allies for the duration of one combat.
- ANTIDOTE: You cancel the effects of a pathogen, toxin, or nanodrug, including accelerators.
- INFLUENCE: A person of your choice finds you very likeable, even if they did not like you before. They will do you a service, but will not put their life in danger for you. The target can make a saving throw to cancel the spell's effects.
- INVISIBILITY: You remain invisible (including on video monitors not protected against magic) as long as you perform no other action than moving.

- **MAGIC MECHANICS:** You temporarily enchant electronic equipment so that it works even against magic (for example, a pistol that can hit an Ætheric spirit or a motion detector that works on the Æther). Nevertheless, it simultaneously gains a magical defence and becomes sensitive to magical attacks.

7.5.1.4 7.5.1.4 Level 4

- **ÆTHERIC SEAL:** You mark the lintel of a door or an opening with an invisible sign that prohibits Ætheric creatures from passing through for the entire current cycle.
- **MAGIC EXPLOSION:** You inflict 3d6 + Wisdom damage points on all people present within a radius equal to your Intelligence rank in meters, originating from the centre of the effect which must be in sight. The damage affects everyone, including yourself or your companions if you are in the area. Everyone can make a saving throw to halve the damage.
- **SPIRIT FORM:** You can take the form of an animal of your choice and benefit from its natural abilities.
- **LEVITATION:** You fly a few meters above the ground and move at a maximum speed close to running. If you were falling, you recover without damage a few decimetres from the ground.
- **SURVIVAL:** You resist the heat of a blaze, the cold of a blizzard, the pressure of a landslide, asphyxiation underwater or in foul air, etc.

7.5.1.5 7.5.1.5 Level 5

- **COUNTERMAGIC:** You immediately cancel a spell or magical effect. You cannot send back an Ætheric spirit this way.
- **INVOCATION:** You summon a hermetic or orphic spirit (according to your tradition) that you can control for a time. Alchemists can never cast this spell.
- **COMBAT TELEPORTATION:** You instantly teleport to a clear area that you can see live, including by electronic means.
- **MANA STORM:** You inflict 2d6 + Wisdom damage points on a number of enemies equal to 1d6 + Intelligence present on the battlefield – they can make a saving throw to halve the damage. Your companions are not affected.
- **ÆTHERIC TRAVEL:** You leave your body, which falls inanimate, and you go wandering in the Æther. You perceive the real world within a 10-meter radius per rank of Wisdom, and no physical barrier can stop you from passing, unless it is a force field or an Ætheric seal. Nevertheless, while you float slightly, you cannot fly and you remain unconsciously bound to physically possible movements (you do not climb walls unless you use a ladder or proper handholds).

7.5.2 7.5.2 Summoning

With the level 5 Convocation spell, magicians can summon particular etheric spirits - hermetic or orphic. When performing the short ritual to summon the spirit, you must decide its power - from 1 to 5, but it can never be greater than your Intelligence. The more powerful a spirit is, the greater its abilities and services, but the harder it is to control.

A summoned spirit stays until its summoner sends it away, until it has completed all its services or until the next dawn or dusk - whichever comes first.

7.5.2.1 7.5.2.1 Controlling a spirit

When the spirit appears, make an Intelligence (Knowing Spirits) roll against a difficulty equal to 5 + 5 per level of the spirit's power - the difficulty of controlling a level 5 spirit is thus equal to 30! You can invest additional magic points, on a 1:1 basis, to increase the result of your roll.

If you succeed in controlling the spirit, it owes you a number of services equal to its level plus the result of the coloured die. If you fail to control the spirit, it may, at the discretion of the host:

- Return immediately to the Æther.
- Attack you, because it did not like being disturbed.
- Agree to discuss and negotiate one or more services in exchange for something.
Generally, the more powerful a spirit is, the more willing it is to negotiate. Payment can be magic points, physical offerings (with a variable cost in ¥) or one or more services in exchange.

7.5.2.2 7.5.2.2 Services

Spirits can perform several types of service. Each use of a service decreases the level of control - when all services have been used, the spirit disappears into the Æther.

- **PERFORM A PHYSICAL ACTION:** The spirit performs a physical action related to its nature. A fire spirit can burn something; a mountain spirit can carry a heavy load; a desert spirit can protect from the sun...
- **ACT AT A DISTANCE:** The spirit agrees to perform a task entrusted to it by the hermetic or orphist and to leave for that purpose. It will do everything possible to accomplish its task before the end of its presence in the physical world, undoubtedly in a somewhat stubborn manner. Once this task is completed, the spirit disappears even if it had services left to perform.
- **FIGHT:** The spirit fights alongside the hermetic or orphist to the best of its abilities and until it is banished or the combat ends.
- **CAST A SPELL:** The spirit can authorise the character to cast a particular spell from the spirit's list by normally spending the character's magic points.

7.5.2.3 7.5.2.3 Minor spirits

Hermetics and orphists can summon, without great constraint, those simple spirits that populate the edges of the Æther. A minor spirit is always of power 1. They can perform the following services:

- **ALARM:** The spirit monitors or patrols a specific section of the Æther and warns a specific person in case of intrusion.
- **ESPIONNAGE:** The spirit can follow and spy on someone from the Æther and return to report to the summoner. It is limited by Ætheric seals and other magical protections.
- **HARASSMENT:** In combat, a watchful spirit inflicts a malus of -1 to the physical and magical defences of a specific target. The target must be specified each round by the summoner.
- **MESSAGE:** The spirit carries a message to a known person from the summoner and brings back a response if necessary.
- **TRACKING Ætheric:** The spirit attempts to find an object, person or a place, in the

Æther or on the physical world. It must be given a precise image or impression of what it is looking for.

7.5.2.4 7.5.2.4 The Hermetic Spirits

Only Hermeticists can summon these ætheric spirits. The wizard must be near a significant source of raw material for the summoning to work properly - if not, the host may deem the action impossible or increase the number of magic points needed to cast the spell.

7.5.2.4.1 7.5.2.4.1 Air Spirit

LIGHTNESS (1): You or an ally gain an additional 1d6 initiative points.

SILENCE (2): You spread an aura of silence around you. You can act normally, speak inside the bubble and even hear what is being said outside, but no one will hear you outside the area.

ALTERED SENSES (3): You alter your senses to hear whispers from a great distance or to see silhouettes through a stone wall.

BREATH (4): You enter into silent communication (questions and answers) with a number of people equal to your Charisma rank. They must be present when you cast the spell, but may separate afterwards.

BOUCLIER OF WIND (5): You and all your allies gain a +2 bonus to physical defence. This spell does not stack with a Physical Ethereal Barrier.

7.5.2.4.2 7.5.2.4.2 Water Spirit

ENCHANT (1): You enchant a melee weapon or a clip of projectiles by dipping them in water. The weapon becomes magical until the next short rest and allows you to hit creatures immune to physical attacks.

DISGUISE (2): You quickly change your general appearance and silhouette, changing the shape or colour of your clothes, your stature, or your gait. Disguise does not deceive close examination, but also affects Augmented Reality.

WALL (3): You raise a wall of water sufficient to obscure the doors to a room and its windows. Bullets are very strongly slowed down and deflected, sounds are distorted, infrared perceptions blurred...

SLEEP (4): By placing your hands on a person, you put him/her into a deep sleep for several hours. This only works on physical creatures whose power is equal to or less than your Wisdom.

TRICK (5): You automatically win at games of chance or you get a triple-6 on a roll of your choice - you do not gain a Heroic point for this one.

7.5.2.4.3 7.5.2.4.3 Earth Spirit

LAY ON HANDS (1): For each additional magic point you spend, you heal 2 + Wisdom life points by laying on your hands. You can spend multiple magic points on the same action.

BLINDING (2): By placing your hand on a wall (wall, door, etc.), you grant it the ability to resist any projectile, including armour piercing or anti-tank. The ability ceases as soon as you remove your hand.

FORTIFICATIONS (3): You build earthen embankments and ditches in a few minutes, providing good protection against projectiles and a tactically favourable position for some fighters (defence increased by the magician's Intelligence for Wisdom fighters).

STONE SKIN (4): You can place, on touch, a number of stone skins equal to your Intelligence rank on one or more targets. Each stone skin negates a subsequent successful attack with a loud bang. You cannot reroll this spell as long as one or more stone skins remain active.

PASS-WALL (5): You can physically pass through any wall made of stone, concrete, or brick, up to one metre thickness per rank of Wisdom. The passage is impossible if the wall is lined with metal or protected by an etheric seal.

7.5.2.4.4 7.5.2.4.4 Fire Spirit

COMFORT (1): You extend an aura of comfort around you that warms or cools a room, calms fears and anxieties, soothes nerves, or keeps you awake.

KINETIC RECOVERY (2): Every attack on you - whether it hits or not - causes you to regain one point of magic.

FLAMING WHIP (3): You create a flaming whip that can be used in close combat or at a distance, against physical or magical creatures. Choose the characteristic you use to wield it.

FUGUE (4): You and all your companions immediately gain 1d6 initiative points.

CONCEALMENT (5): You burn a combustible object of your choice, of a reasonable size (say, the equivalent of a large chest). At the moment of your choice, later on, light a fire and take the object out of the fire, perfectly intact (with a smell of smoke).

7.5.2.5 7.5.2.5 The Orphic Spirits

Only orphists can summon spirits of this type, which are deeply connected to the oneness of the world. You must be in a suitable environment to perform the summoning - if not, the host may deem the action impossible or increase the number of magic points needed to cast the spell. A suitable environment can be purely symbolic: the top of a tower for a mountain spirit, in a public park for a woodland spirit, in a UV cabin for a desert spirit...

7.5.2.5.1 7.5.2.5.1 City Spirit

PASS FAST (1): You take the fastest streets and lanes, the least crowded or safest for you, to get where you need to go, speeding up your travel time considerably.

RESCUE (2): If you are in a complicated situation, get out of it quickly - it's easy to find a way out, even if it means breaking the law or taking physical risks.

CAMOUFLAGE (3): You blend in with the background or the crowd, becoming unseen or

unknown. No one pays any attention to you. For every extra point of magic you invest, you can extend the effects to another person.

PASS THROUGH SHADOWS (4): You use shadows to slip from one person to another, to another place in sight.

RUMOUR (5): Ask the host a question about the adventure. He will answer you simply and without lying.

7.5.2.5.2 7.5.2.5.2 Mountain Spirit

BRUTE STRENGTH (1): You or an ally deal an additional 1d6 melee damage in close combat for the duration of a fight.

ABRI (2): If you are within four walls, no one can enter the room you are protecting, nor send missiles of any kind into it, unless you allow it. You must cast the spell a second time for the same limits to apply to the Æther.

OBSERVATION (3): You split your vision by placing part of your perceptions up to several metres away, or by placing part of your perception up to several tens of metres above you to observe a scene from the sky.

STONE CROCS (4): All people present in an Intelligence radius around you at the time you cast the spell must give up moving or take 1d6 damage per manoeuvre. Vehicle tyres don't like this at all either.

CHAIN REACTION (5): You cause a chain reaction of coincidences and chance events that serve your immediate purposes. Describe how things happen - the leader will be happy to add to it.

7.5.2.5.3 7.5.2.5.3 Wood Spirit

PASS WITHOUT TRACE (1): You leave no trace behind you - smells, DNA, fingerprints, RFID identification, etc. The spell only works for a limited geographical area: a room, a piece of pavement, etc. You can cast it before or after acting on it, depending on your needs. You must cast it a second time to protect yourself from detection.

SPINES (2): Opponents engaged in hand-to-hand combat with you take 1d6 damage (minus their protection value) at the start of their turn.

POTION (3): You can prepare a magic potion with the effect of your choice. The operation takes a day's work and a night's rest; on the other hand, it is likely that you will have to spend ¥1 or more on ingredients. The potion can be used until the end of the cycle.

SPEAK WITH ANIMALS (4): You speak to vertebrate creatures and make yourself understood by them. They can respond to the extent of their intelligence and abilities.

ANIMATE PLANTS (5): You control the natural movement of plants to move brambles and bushes, make grasses cling to boots, and have nettles and sumac whip exposed skin. Your enemies suffer in many ways - loss of time and manoeuvres, damage, etc. Choose a different effect and target each turn.

7.5.2.5.4 7.5.2.5.4 Spirit of the Rivers and Seas

IMMERSION (1): When you immerse yourself in a body of water, you breathe perfectly and swim like a fish. Alternatively, you can even metamorphose into a fish.

SMOKE (2): You deposit a certain undetectable smell on an object or person. You can follow this smell until the next dawn or dusk, even through a crowd or a complicated environment.

TRANSPORT (3): You use rivers to travel from one point in their course to another, upstream or downstream. The journey is not instantaneous, but it is extremely fast.

MAJOR CARE (4): By immersing yourself for several hours in a natural body of water, you heal a wound.

PUPPET (5): You take possession of the water that makes up an individual and you make them perform the actions of your choice for a number of minutes equal to your Intelligence. For each action that is contrary to their interests, the subject may make a saving throw to resist.

7.5.2.5.5 7.5.2.5.5 Desert Spirit

PURIFY (1): You purify a supply of food or water, removing toxins and dangerous pathogens.

FARSIGHT (2): You expand your vision at will, as if you were using a pair of binoculars at high magnification or a microscope.

MOUNT (3): You call to you a spirit that takes the form of a horse and can carry you away at the speed of a motor vehicle.

DUST (4): Your body (and everything you wear) becomes a cloud of intangible dust. You can no longer interact with the physical world and vice versa. You can slip into narrow gaps.

TORNADO (5): You deal 1d6 damage to all enemies in the area. In addition, they are pushed back several metres and fall to the ground.

7.5.3 7.5.3 Guide

The orphist who awakens to magic understands that he is one with the universe and, at the heart of this universe, he finds a kindred spirit who will guide him and help him on the long initiatory path that will lead him to absolute unification, granting him special abilities and a disadvantage specific to his nature. You can ignore the effects of a disadvantage by spending a point of luck. If you are playing an orphist, choose a guide from the following list:

Guide	Advantage	Disadvantage
ANANKÉ	You have a +4 bonus to resist poisons and diseases. Spend a luck point, you suddenly disappear, even before the eyes of witnesses.	You systematically avoid all conflicts and fights. You flee or find shelter. You only fight if your back is against the wall.
ASCLÉPIOS	You have a +4 bonus to heal people. Spend a luck point, you restore all hit points to a person you touch.	You enter a terrible rage when you, or a person you are protecting, fall to 0 hit points

Guide	Advantage	Disadvantage
		and suffer an injury. You then attack without regard for the consequences.
ATÉ	You have a +4 bonus to sweet-talk/con people. By spending a luck point, you can palm, make disappear, and steal any object that fits in a pocket or bag, right under the noses of everyone who can see you.	Every time you see an opportunity to make fun of someone or play a trick on them, even if it's a friend or to the detriment of your interests, you go for it.
BIA	You have a +2 bonus to all attack and damage rolls in melee or at a distance. Spend a luck point, you inevitably have a useful item on you that you need immediately.	You have a taste for blood and you don't let go of prey until it is on the ground. Permanently.
CRATOS	You have a +4 bonus to intimidate. Spend a luck point, you provoke a primal, irrational fear in a person.	You leave no insult unpunished and you attack people when you feel offended.
ÉROS	You have a +4 bonus in seduction. Spend a luck point, a person sexually attracted to you agrees to do you a favor. Any favor... or almost.	You do not resist the temptation to indulge your vices and pleasures – drugs, sex, alcohol – whenever you have the opportunity.
FIDÈS	You have a +4 bonus to your willpower rolls. You can spend a luck point and designate a person of your choice. You take all damage in their place for as long as you wish – furthermore, subtract 1d6 from the damage for each attack suffered this way.	You are stubbornly loyal, faithful to your friends. You cannot abandon or betray anyone, nor let someone sacrifice themselves in your place.
GAÏA	You have a +4 bonus to all your perception rolls. You can spend a luck point to make a technological object inoperative for a few seconds or minutes – it simply stops working.	You are slightly allergic to atmospheric pollutants and easily get asthma when traffic peaks – which diminishes your athletic abilities.
MNÉMOSYNE	You have a +4 bonus to lie and hide information. By spending a luck point, you know what you have to do to find ¥ quickly – all you have to do is get moving.	You don't like to negotiate. Things are your way or not at all. And that's it.
MOÏRA	You have a +4 bonus in empathy. Spend a luck point, you cancel any attack against one of your allies, and the attacker immediately takes 1d6 damage.	You refuse to participate in any physical combat, but you stay to help and protect those who are attacked.
NÉMÉSIS	You have a +2 bonus to all attack and damage rolls in melee or at a distance. Spend a luck point, you know everything about your opponent, their strengths and weaknesses, and you can take advantage of it.	You do not commit any dishonorable acts nor behave in a way that attracts opprobrium.
NIKÉ	You have a +2 bonus to all attack and damage rolls in melee or at a distance. Spend a luck	You never break a promise, by choice or accident, without

Guide	Advantage	Disadvantage
	point, all your allies get a +4 bonus to their next roll.	paying a heavy price – you immediately suffer 1d3 injuries.
NYX	You have a +4 bonus to read people's emotions. By spending a luck point, you immediately gain 2 ¥.	Every time you see an opportunity to exploit a situation or a person who shows the slightest weakness, you go for it.
OURANOS	You have a +4 bonus to resist spells of all kinds. Spend a luck point, you automatically succeed on a die roll outside of combat.	Once a decision has been made, you stick to it no matter what. No improvising, ever!
PANDORE	You have a +4 bonus in negotiation. Spend a luck point, you know the superficial thoughts of your interlocutor.	You do not resist curiosity and the need to know, regardless of the risks.
PROMÉTHÉE	You have a +4 bonus to tinker and repair things. Spend a luck point, you completely renovate a broken object by blowing gently on it – the pieces repair or stick back together on their own.	When you embrace a cause, you go all the way and are ready to sacrifice your life. Choose a cause.
SOPHIA	You have a +4 bonus to all your stealth rolls. If you spend a luck point, Sophia can whisper a little secret in your ear concerning one of your interlocutors.	As long as you have not suffered direct damage, you do not attack your opponents, but you use various means to hinder, distract, divert them, etc.
THANATOS	You have a +4 bonus to all erudition (lore/ knowledge) rolls. Spend a luck point, you ask a question to a corpse deceased for less than a day, and it answers you.	You are fragile. When an opponent rolls a 1 on the damage die, they can reroll the die and keep the new result.
ZÉLOS	You have a +2 bonus to all attack and damage rolls in melee or at a distance. By spending a luck point, you instantly regain all your hit points.	You never retreat and you never refuse a fight.

8 8 Rules of the game

We started IFT to change the world. Our suits are much better tailored today, our spirits finer. We've changed, but the world is still the same. If we don't do anything, someone else will.

—Nathan Ingram, Person of Interest, S02E14

8.1 8.1 The Golden Rule

Sometimes the playmaker doesn't know or doesn't want to answer a question - Is the corporate executive at his desk right now? Is there any ammunition left in the storeroom? Did the fire in their squat destroy the characters' equipment? Does the corporate security officer in pursuit

recognise the characters in the lobby of the skyscraper?

Whenever you are faced with a question that may be important for the rest of the adventure, but whose answer is not directly relevant to you, roll 1d6. On a result of 4 or more, the answer to the question is yes. On a result of 3 or less, the answer is no.

Note: a triple-6 on the dice is always a success and earns one point of luck. A triple-1 is always a failure and yields not only one point of luck but also a bunch of extra complications!

8.2 8.2 Roll the dice

To play, you need 3d6, one of which is a different colour from the others.

When you want to achieve a goal and something or someone gets in the way, roll the 3d6, add up the results and add the rank of an appropriate characteristic - for example Dexterity to blow out a lock with a knife blade or Wisdom to locate the drug stash under a floorboard. Don't forget any bonuses - such as a skill bonus.

To succeed, the total must be equal to or greater than a difficulty or an opposing roll made by an opponent or competitor who does not want you to succeed - in which case they roll 3d6 + Attribute (see page 295) and the results are compared. For a fixed difficulty, see the following table:

Target number Difficulty

9	Simple
12	Difficult
15	Difficult
18	Very hard
21	Extremely difficult
24	Almost impossible

8.2.1 8.2.1 The delicate art of dice rolling

The principle of a roll is to confront a character's abilities with the possibility that they may fail to achieve their goals; the purpose of the roll is certainly not to punish them or prevent them from moving forward, but only to tell how the story is progressing. If it is a success, then the character succeeds and the story moves in the direction he wants; on a failure, the story takes an unexpected turn. And we continue to move forward: the player indicates what his character does in the new circumstances and the leader determines how it happens, with a description, a choice to be made and possibly a new dice roll.

8.2.1.1 8.2.1.1 The dice are useless...

If there is nothing in the character's way, or if it doesn't matter, there is no need to roll - it is automatically successful. And, of course, if the task is simply impossible to accomplish, it is automatically failed. More generally, if you don't have a good reason to invoke a random bifurcation of history, don't ask for a roll - ideally, you should have at least a vague idea of the different legs of the trousers of time that you might put on depending on the circumstances.

8.2.1.2 8.2.1.2 ...yet you can't do without them

If something or someone complicates the task, opposes the character, or makes things very complicated, you have to roll the dice. The game leader must then assess the difficulty: there are two schools of thought.

- a. The first is to choose an objective difficulty. The action is more or less difficult because the circumstances or the task itself require it: try to imagine the scene, compare the action to your own knowledge or to what you have seen in films or read in novels. Generally, the more technical the task, the more circumstances beyond the control of a single human beast, the more random the general conditions, the more difficult it is.
- b. The second school is to determine the difficulty in terms of the story. If the task can change the story and the world profoundly, then the difficulty is huge; if it's just an incidental and peripheral perk, then the difficulty is ridiculous. It's a hair more complicated to deal with and anything but objective - plus, players can quickly realise that a difficulty of 24 to tail an extra in a trendy nightclub indicates that he's a super-important big bad next!

And, of course, you can happily mix and match approaches depending on when you play. The important thing is to be consistent with yourself, the world and the story.

8.2.2 8.2.2 The secret ingredient

You know how to manage the difficulty of an action in an opposition - for example, two characters racing. In this case, the difficulty of the roll is the opponent's roll ($3d6 + \text{Power}$ for an extra). What's to stop you doing the same for a static difficulty: instead of saying "it's a 15 difficulty", the difficulty to pick the lock is then equal to $3d6 + 4$. Maybe the lock is a hair easier or a hair harder than you expected. This is handy when you don't know what to do or want to go fast. Just assume that chaos will make the decision for you...

8.2.3 8.2.3 Ensure the show

Once the roll has been made, it's time to announce the consequences. If it's a success, the character achieves his immediate goal, as the player might expect under the best of circumstances. If the roll is really good - a result well above the difficulty, at least a five or six point margin - add a matrix effect: the character runs around bouncing off obstacles and street furniture while chasing a bad guy; the computer quickly spits out all the info it can and gives access to hidden backdoors to go even further; the checkpoint passage is so smooth that the character is suddenly the most innocent guy in the world. Give them a little advantage in this form: it's time saved, it's stealth, it's downright impressed witnesses, it's extra ¥, it's clues or additional information, etc.

8.2.4 8.2.4 Ensure that the game continues

What if it fails? The biggest danger you face then is driving your story into a dead end. The character aims for a goal and misses it: now what? If it's just "no", the story can't develop. So it is very important that you see all failures not as a punishment, but as an opportunity, a way to bounce back and offer unexpected developments. Also, be careful that a failure is not immediately forgotten: there is nothing more frustrating than attempting an action that serves no

purpose, even and especially by failing - as a feeling of uselessness and futility for the player.

How do you do it? The quickest way is to grant a success but demand something in return: the character gets hurt, compromises himself, loses time, material, money, has to agree to do a service, etc. Be imaginative and hit where you feel the player will cringe. Very important: the player can always choose to fail so that they don't have to agree to pay to succeed! The easiest way to do this is often to tap into resources: lose life points, luck points, connection points, etc. But it is always more interesting to find original ideas. In reality, the purpose of such an exchange is to push the player to choose between the plague and the cholera: succeed with a cost or simply fail? Don't make it too simple, but demand a quick answer.

The second way is to take advantage of a failure to complicate things and put new obstacles in the character's way. Not a wall, but a closed door. Not a bottomless precipice, but an unstable ledge from which it is difficult to escape. Not a cut bridge, but a long diversions. Not the loss of all one's money, but debts that must be repaid one day. Not an outright capture, but a price on your head. In short, continue to ruin the character's life and prevent him from seeing the sun. Accumulate the problems.

Or, more foolishly, require the player to play with his brain and find alternative and more subtle solutions...

8.2.5 8.2.5 Describe, there will always be something left

One of the best ways to always have something to say to bounce back from a failure or bring in new twists is to describe the scenes all over the place! Think of sights, sounds, smells, textures, weather, materials, the shape of places, decorative details, lights and shadows - anything you can think of. Not only does this immerse the players in the appropriate atmosphere and give them plenty of relevant (or irrelevant) information to make decisions and describe the actions of their characters, but it's also great for giving you, the player, a head start. Use your own descriptions, on the fly, to create play and set up the twists and turns the dice are designed to provide.

8.3 8.3 Cooperation

When one character helps another, he gives them a +1 bonus to their roll.

When the whole group must perform the same action - climbing a wall or advancing discreetly - the characters all seem to succeed if at least half of them succeed in their roll.

8.4 8.4 Saves

In the course of adventures, your adventurer will certainly find himself in delicate and dangerous situations, facing multiple dangers: fire, falls, diseases, poisons, traps, etc.

A saving throw is a characteristic throw requested by the game leader to check whether the character manages to protect himself, at least in part, from a sudden danger or a vital threat. It is always a reaction and not something that comes from the character's will (even when the character has voluntarily swallowed the contents of a bottle of poison). The characteristic used depends on the type of danger and there are a few skills that should help you.

The difficulty depends on the circumstances, but mostly on what the player wants to achieve:

- Easy or hard (9/12): you want to scare them.
- Difficult to hard (15/18): you want to tap into the characters' resources to weaken them.
- Complicated or impossible (21/24): you ask for a saving throw to make the characters think they have a chance, but in fact they don't. It's not expected that they'll make it (even if there are some pleasant surprises).

If the character fails the roll, the effects of the danger apply. If he succeeds, the effects may be completely nullified or only limited (he does not die on the spot, but still suffers damage or injury, for example).

There are far too many possible hazards to list - from electric fences to terrifying corporate interface lockout programs, from combat gases to sudden explosions. Just try to think about the maximum consequences of the hazard (injury, death, unconsciousness, damage, etc.) and what can happen if the character succeeds in the saving throw.

8.5 8.5 Combat

Action and Manoeuvre - Combat is turn-based - each opponent can perform an action (cast a spell, make an attack, use a skill) and a manoeuvre (move a few metres, take cover, aim, charge, help an ally, etc.). - A manoeuvre used in support of an action brings a +1 bonus to the action). It is always possible to use an action to perform a manoeuvre, but never vice versa.

Movement: if you need to calculate the exact distance a character has moved during a turn, ask for a Strength (all power) or Dexterity (all flexibility) roll. The result directly indicates the distance in metres.

Initiative - Once at the start of a fight, all combatants can make an Intelligence roll (or Power roll for extras) to determine the order of the action, from highest initiative to lowest. If, at any time, your initiative is 20 or more, you gain an extra action at the end of the turn (at your initiative minus 20). If one group surprises another, all members of the group get a +1d6 bonus to initiative.

If you don't want the players to see the transition between the story being told informally and the start of a fight, don't say anything and roll the initiative in secret. Then simply distribute the word. Ideally, you should get the initiative bonus for each character and make several draws in advance, before the game starts. Then you simply refer to your notes when you need them. Don't forget to note the initiative increases and decreases due to feats and risks.

Attacks and damage - The difficulty of an attack roll is equal to your opponent's defence. If you hit, the damage is equal to the value of the different coloured die + your Strength or Dexterity rank, depending on the weapon you are using (melee or ranged). The damage is subtracted from the target's hit points. The coloured die is always an explosive die for calculating damage: if you roll a 6, roll the die again and add the new result. Continue as long as you get 6's. You can always distribute the damage to one or more opponents whose defence is equal to or less than that of the main target.

Special rules: there are dozens of specific cases that can arise in combat - whether the

opponent is under cover or not, whether it is possible to disengage without taking a hit, whether it is possible to block a path so that only one opponent at a time can attack, whether I can shoot into the fray while my companions are engaged in fierce hand-to-hand combat, etc. In fact, every battle should bring up new issues and new tactics. But it is impossible (and pointless) to list them all and give a specific rule for each. In truth, this is the fundamental job of the game leader, the moment when he must fully assume his role: to referee, to make decisions, to use the golden rule, to make the players happy or on the contrary to increase the difficulties. If you make a bad decision once, it means you will make two very good ones later - so don't worry. The rules are simple enough that you have nothing to worry about. Trust your common sense and just follow the directions given to you by the story and the adventure.

8.5.1 8.5.1 Feats and Risks

Each round of combat, you can choose a feat. The host rolls the risk you take in exchange... If a risk seems directly opposite to the feat you are choosing, ignore the risk and apply the feat.

FEAT

VIOLENT HIT: You add 1d6 to your physical damage. This damage is non-explosive and does not apply to spells.

PRECISE STRIKE: You seek to break through the opponent's armour.

You have a +2 bonus to attack.

CASCADE: You perform an additional manoeuvre at the same time as your action.

CAUTION: You are careful. You have a bonus of +1 in defence for the turn.

VIVACITY: You gain 1d6 initiative points.

TACTICS: You give a +2 bonus to one of your companions.

1D6 RISK

1 **DEFLECTED HIT:** You do not count the coloured die in your damage, only the applicable modifiers, or (at your discretion) you take damage yourself equal to the smallest die you rolled.

2 **DISADVANTAGE:** You have a -2 malus to attack or you lose a connection point.

3 **BLUNDER:** If you fail your attack, things get very complicated: you lose your weapon, you fall, etc.

4 **HAZARD:** You are not paying attention. You have -1 in defence for the turn.

5 **DELAY:** You lose 1d6 initiative points.

6 **NONE:** You are not hindered this turn and your feat applies without compensation.

8.5.2 8.5.2 Staging a fight

Here are some tips to help you stage a fight (or a physical chase-type conflict).

8.5.2.1 8.5.2.1 General process

By following these steps, you should be fine in all situations.

1. On his own initiative, the player indicates what he wants to do according to the situation and his tactical options. Everything is possible and he should not let himself be limited by technique. Eventually, he can choose a feat.
2. The leader chooses the most appropriate way to handle what the player is asking for. This may be a characteristic roll (the most common is the attack roll, for example) or a

simple description. You should not be impressed by even the strangest requests. For example, let's say the character wants to push an enemy away with his shoulder and throw him through a window - it's not written in black and white in the rules, but you can consider it a Strength roll. The damage rolled on the coloured die (with the Strength bonus) is not actually inflicted, but can be compared, for example, to the sum of the enemy's hit points and those of the window. If they are higher, the window shatters and the man falls through - and if they are lower, ask the victim for a saving throw! In fact, everything can be solved in a very simple way - whether it's disarming an opponent or shoving them into a hole, with attack rolls against the defence. Is the character making a feint to divert attention? Use Charisma to attack. He wants to drive his opponent over a weak floor? Use Intelligence to attack. Damage is a general indication of the effect of the attack - which you can turn into a difficulty for a saving throw quite simply (for example, with a difficulty of 7 + damage).

3. The player rolls if necessary.
4. The leader describes the consequences, says what happens, deals damage if necessary or bounces the action. Then he passes to the next player. Of course, this is exactly the same process for the characters' opponents (but the leader is on his own to decide things).

8.5.2.2 8.5.2.2 Three important points of combat

8.5.2.2.1 8.5.2.2.1 I. Stakes:

A fight is not something you engage in to pass the time. It is a high point in the story - the characters will risk their resources or their lives, perhaps worse. Even their opponents take the matter very seriously - after all, they are likely to lose their lives. In fact, in most situations, one does not go into battle without strong needs or clear objectives. In some cases, it is the characters who will have to define these objectives; in other cases, they will simply defend themselves against opponents who themselves have goals to achieve. The important point is to always ask what is at stake in a fight: why are we fighting? Do we have to go as far as the physical elimination of the opponent? Is it not enough to wound, stun, chase, intimidate or coerce? What if the enemy flees? Do you chase them to the finish or are you magnanimous? Fighting in a role-playing game is then also a lesson in humanity... Conversely, what do the characters risk? What are they willing to risk? It's pretty obvious that they will be victorious most of the time, after all aren't they the heroes of the story... But to win without glory is to triumph without danger (or something like that). Also, a fight must be able to cost: time, allies, wounds, equipment, information, reputation... The players know, deep down, that the death of their character is not a real possibility as they have so many ways to get out of it (by spending luck points or simply because they are not alone). Also, it is very important that other elements emerge that make the fight "dangerous" for their mission or adventure: most of the time, it is about seeing their objective escape. Also, play their opponents intelligently: they are not cannon fodder who die stupidly. If the characters want something, their enemies will do whatever it takes to get it out of their hands, and sometimes that means dodging the fight, running away or creating diversions.

8.5.2.2.2 8.5.2.2.2 II. Descriptions:

A fight is first of all a series of important choices grouped together in a very short period of time. There is an objective to fulfil and you have to do everything (or almost everything) to achieve it -

free prisoners, steal or break an object, get through a defended area, flee in good order. It's rarely a case of slaughtering all your enemies, but rather a specific target. To make these choices, you need to be informed and it is the job of the game leader to inform his players: describe the terrain, the circumstances, the actions, the reactions, the twists and turns, the audience, the surprises, the equipment, the physical and emotional state of the opponents, etc. In fact, the more detail you can provide, the easier it will be to manage the actions of the characters (the little 2 and 4 above) and the easier it will be for the players to make decisions quickly (the little 1 above). This doesn't mean going off on a tangent or being fussy, just giving all the relevant tactical information. Two last important points: on the one hand, the players must be told, in a clear and unambiguous way, "You can win this fight" or "Run away, you fools! The players can't guess whether the opposition they are facing is up to them or not. You need to send clear and unambiguous messages, without telling them head-on (which would pull them out of the immersion). This means using appropriate descriptions and multiple clues, including alternative ways out. On the other hand, the players must be able to participate in the descriptions and thus establish facts that are verified. Before an ambush, for example, if they ask what the terrain is like, ask them to tell you what they want it to be like: after all, they are the ones setting up the ambush and therefore they are the ones choosing the location. And then, in the course of the fight, they can find places to hide, to slip away, to corner the opponent. Let them announce that they are hiding behind a table that didn't exist a few moments before - in truth, nobody paid any attention to it. Now you too can use this table in the descriptions.

8.5.2.2.3 8.5.2.2.3 III. Pacing:

Try to keep the flow of speech relatively even. This sometimes means cutting off a character's action, on a cliffhanger, to focus on another part of the battlefield and another character. Push your players to react quickly, to pass the word, to listen to each other - there's nothing worse than a player who looks up in the middle of a fight and says "Yeah, wait, here, go ahead, tell me again what's going on, where am I?" There's no point in punishing stupid actions or unfortunate initiatives. But inattention can be worth losing your turn! On your side, be careful not to push your players into inattention because you are spending too much time on a technicality or reviewing your notes or the rules. Make decisions when you don't know. At worst, roll the golden rule die. No one will replay the game or judge your refereeing mistakes; and if you think you've misjudged a situation or wronged a character, you'll make up for it the next time (by giving them a small bonus or a point of luck back). Pacing is also about technique. Have clear notes in front of you, with the life points, defence and initiative of the opponents; also, draw a square representing the game table. Arrange the names of the characters in the place of their players, and indicate their defence and initiative. When you hand out the floor, call out the players by their character's name. Make quick rolls for the opponents, compare to the defence, announce the result and how the conflict continues. A solid organisation of your post-it notes and numbers can help you speed up the manoeuvre. Ah. Still, a tip not to be overlooked: just as you write down the names of the characters so you only use those and not the players', write down the names or descriptions of the opponents - the Little Fat Guy, the Big Skinny Guy, the Scarfed Guy, Studded Armour, Big Hair, Big Mouth, etc. This will help you to immerse your players. On the other hand, if you're not going to tell your players that the strange shadow that's attacking them is The Priest, a techno-villain who's behind a spate of horrific murders, don't write down The Priest, just Strange Shadow. Because if you don't, there will always be a moment when, after reading the paper, you'll spill the beans and your players will look at you with a big smile: "Ah, of course it's The Priest! The guy we've been looking for everywhere!"

9 9 Running the game

The night of our cities no longer resembles that clamour of the dogs of Latin darkness, nor to the bat of the Middle Ages, nor to that image of pain that is the night of the Renaissance. It is an immense monster of sheet metal, pierced a thousand times by knives.

—Louis Aragon, *Le Paysan de Paris*

The following chapter is more specifically reserved for the game leader. You will find additional tools and tips for running a game of nanoChrome. Gather the elements that interest you and that will serve you in the game; be inspired by the proposals and the mechanics. The important thing is that it gives you ways to bounce back quickly when you improvise or write your stories.

- **The Other:** at the heart of any good cyberpunk campaign is a particular organisation, ambivalent and mysterious, to which all the threads of the stories, however tenuous, seem to connect. It is the characters' nemesis, their main adversary, but also an occasional ally and a source of information, missions and resources. This section invites you to create this organisation, called 'The Other' in these pages, and explains how to use it in-game.
- **Managing Cycles:** It is often useful to structure campaigns to give players and characters breathing space in the tense flow of adventures - especially when you can't directly refer to clear, precise story endings and the events are relentless. By giving the players control over the cycles, you allow them to move at their own pace and manage these breaks, but you don't stand still: use the cycles to change the world and alter the setting and cast!
- In the first chapter of this book, we offer three different approaches to playing nanoChrome: techmercs, corporates and Panopticom journalists. Let's explore these different options and see what you can do with them.
- **Investigate:** Because of the 'detective' heritage of cyberpunk, the characters are likely to be involved in many investigations. But it's one thing to watch well-paced, well-crafted whodunits on TV; it's quite another to pull off the same tricks at a gaming table. But there are a few tricks you can use.
- **Plans and intrusions:** paramilitary operations and criminal coups often form the second part of an adventure, after the investigations needed to gather information and know where to strike. But it's not the players who make the plans, and it's certainly not the players who go out into the field and risk their lives: it's their characters.
- **Rumours and events:** Chrome City is not still and dead, frozen in place waiting for the characters to get out of their homes. This isn't the Truman Show, for crying out loud! People are still loving and hating each other, shooting at each other and making out with each other as the characters snooze or go about their own business.
- **Newsflash:** a handy little tool to punctuate the hours of play, newsflashes, on the matrix and the major news networks, will give you plenty of opportunities to rave and, why not, slip in relevant information to the players, without seeming to touch it.
- **Trouble:** in a good cyberpunk, *Real Life*™ should be able to come to the table and spoil the best-laid plans. A little flu? Mum coming round when the flat isn't tidy? The car at the impound lot on the morning of the heist? The funny thing is that the players themselves will have fun spoiling each other.
- **The odd jobs:** the characters never have enough ¥, always sticking their tongues out to

buy bullets, replace weapons seized by the police, pay off their debts or invest in new cyber implants. So they take the smallest job that allows them to earn three francs six pennies...

- If you think that the characters' relations are waiting nicely by their phone for a call, you're in deep trouble. They too have lives; they too have troubles; and they too need help from time to time. A good way to strengthen the links and to give thickness to some too anonymous figures.
- Describe a corporation: Corporations, big and small, are an essential part of the cyberpunk landscape. But what exactly is a corporation, apart from large luxurious offices, crowded open spaces, exhausted employees and contemptuous executives?
- Describe a gang: the opposite of corporations, but not so different, are gangs. They rule the anarzone; they are responsible for more than half of Chrome City's violent crime; they fear nothing; they are numerous and well armed. So what?
- The law in Chrome City: the last actor the characters will probably have to deal with often is the police. Or the police, if we take into account the security services of the corporations. What are their means and objectives? Can we really escape them?

9.1 9.1 The Other

This story told him that people were the stupidest thing on earth. It told him that people who fight a losing battle are even more stupid than the others. She told him that to be on the side of power and authority, and that you had to stay there. Nobody gave a damn about the people of this town. Nobody gave a damn about the fact that it was their homes, the place where they had hoped to live forever. No, nobody gave a damn. All that mattered was money, power and control. That's what mattered, that's what you had to have. Money, power, control. And you had to have as much of it as you could.

—R.J. Ellory, *Bad Star*

The Other is an organisation, usually a large one, that dominates the political, economic, moral landscape of the place where you play. It's not necessarily the biggest or most powerful organisation, but it's clearly the one that sets the pace of events. It's almost always an organisation with a high profile and respectability.

The Other is ambivalent: it is both the big bad of the story and an ally of the characters. He has his fingers in every jam jar around here, but not always for the wrong reasons. His motivations are complex and we can even agree with his arguments without denying his soul.

The Other is multiple: there is not just one person at its head, but many factions and groups with divergent and personal interests who agree on only one thing: The Other must survive all storms, whatever the means used.

The Other is at the heart of events: almost every story you tell will have some connection, however remote, with The Other. Whether it's something that concerns him directly or whether it concerns a distant cousin of a junior executive in the legal department on the tenth floor. The important thing is to draw connections that make the players wonder and consider the worst. Even if, in the end, it has nothing to do with it. But in fact it does... Or not.

The Other is secret, but visible: of course, everything about The Other is secret or subject to concealment and appearances. And we know that behind appearances there are other

appearances. The Other is only discovered little by little in the course of the adventures. It must therefore have a public face that is perfectly clear to all the characters (and their players): this is its nature, its purpose, its public positions, etc. Openly, The Other is unambiguous about his social benevolence and his constructive contribution to the community. And it knows how to protect this image.

9.1.1 9.1.1 Name the Other

Find a snappy name that is easy to pronounce and remember - an acronym perhaps, or a name with many allegorical meanings. The important thing is that you use this one name from now on to refer to The Other. The Other does not exist; The Other is just a facility, a code name for this section of the book. At your table, The Other must become the centre of attention.

9.1.2 9.1.2 Describe the Other

Here are a few different tables to help you picture The Other.

1D6 NATURE OF THE OTHER

- 1 A local corporation
- 2 An orbital corporation
- 3 An NGO
- 4 A criminal organisation
- 5 A governmental organisation
- 6 A secret society or cult

1D6 THE OTHER'S FACADE

- 1 Friendly and sympathetic
- 2 Charitable and benevolent
- 3 Discreet and cold
- 4 Mysterious
- 5 Respectable and serious
- 6 Scandalous and media-friendly

1D6 THE OTHER'S SECRET MEANS

- 1 Money, lots of it
- 2 Fast and efficient henchmen
- 3 Effective political and judicial influence
- 4 Unprecedented and secret technological means
- 5 Accurate and comprehensive intelligence
- 6 Unshakeable public image

1D6 WEAKNESSES OF THE OTHER

- 1 A lot of indecision and delay
- 2 Too much infighting
- 3 Ambitions without the means
- 4 Cruelty, baby, cruelty
- 5 Very poor public image
- 6 Too much self-confidence

1D6 THE OTHER'S REAL GOALS

CONTROL: The Other wants power in one (or all) areas. It is about control and mastery.

- 1 This can easily turn into fascism when The Other also wants to 'create' the conditions for an ideal society on its terms.

CONVEY: The Other covets something. It may be power or wealth, or something simpler like an absolute monopoly on a particular technology. All his manoeuvres consist of
2 creating the conditions for his success by eliminating competitors or by seeking the object of desire.

- CREATION: The Other has a great idea and wants to implement it, even if people don't agree. It may be something physical (developing innovative energy systems that will put all
3 oil workers out of work, creating a race of super soldiers) or something more conceptual (establishing perfect security in a fully Christianised world). Generally, it's not without trial, error and escaped laboratory creatures.

- DESTRUCTION: The ultimate goal of The Other is to destroy something - the social order, enemies, an ethnic group, a political faction, trade unionists, polluters, orbiters, earthlings,
4 etc. - and to make it a reality. The Other has embarked on a complex and far-reaching plan, spanning several years or decades, to ensure the success of the enterprise.

- EXPANSION: The Other wants to expand or extend its influence throughout a community, city or region. This can be about gaining market share or putting key people in important
5 positions. This is the crude application of the concept: Grow or Lose.

- PROTECTION: The Other wants to protect something or someone. This may be to protect a community from a threat, to protect the threat itself, to defend against outsiders, to
6 protect a way of life or customs. Usually, this is not without cruel decisions and extreme actions.

The Other may react in very different ways to perceived threats. Some reactions are brutal, others subtle. The following table gives you some examples of threats and possible reactions:

IN CASE OF...	1D26 THE REACTION IS...
Attack	1.1 Hand over to the authorities
Departure or resignation	1.2 Corrupt
Disappearance	1.3 Destroy credibility
Elimination	1.4 Eliminate
Espionage	1.5 Cover up
Extraction	1.6 Intercept
Leakage	2.1 Leave it alone or ignore
Intrusion	2.2 Manipulating opinion
Threats	2.3 Threatening
Public disclosure	2.4 Entrapment
Surveillance	2.5 Bringing to court
Theft	2.6 Surveillance

9.1.3 9.1.3 Divide and Conquer

You are left to divide The Other into factions that support, fight or ignore each other. Some factions are well known; others operate in the shadows. Some are well-resourced, with complex networks; others have only a few highly motivated people.

Most of the time, you will need at least three factions within The Other:

- An old, entrenched, brutal but sleepy ruling faction, which personifies the traditional broad directions of The Other. The old faction is conservative, powerful, stable, and well-organised, though no longer as vigilant. The goals of the members of this faction are often the same as those of The Other, to which can be added, in many cases, a thirst for power and a bit of welcome greed. The old faction is always very careful about its reputation and the reputation of The Other; it wants to keep up appearances and if it can make clear and quick decisions, it will not easily engage in actions that are too... messy, preferring to use subtle and legal means of coercion to achieve its ends: it is easier to ruin someone or to take away the slightest reason to live than to kill them directly.
- A younger faction, extremely dynamic, really bad, for whom the end justifies the means (all means). This faction has teeth that scratch the floor and wants the old faction's place, unless it is to take advantage of The Other's means to achieve completely different goals. This faction is a parasite, a tumour, but it is run by people who are smart enough not to let it show. On the other hand, it's not a problem for them to get their hands dirty - a large part of their resources are mobilised by the need to clean up after themselves, including eliminating compromised agents and assets, but at least they achieve their goals with some speed.
- And an even younger faction, poorly settled, ill at ease with itself, which may help the characters if it realises that the other factions are evil, or which will fight them ferociously, out of sheer solidarity, if they alienate its goodwill through outright aggression. This faction is the most ambivalent of all; it is certainly idealistic, in its own way, and does not conceive of the use of extreme means. But there is nothing to say that it will not become radicalised if given no choice. And then she could become the most dangerous thing in Chrome City.

If The Other is some kind of anonymous, awesome monolith, it's important that the factions are led by real people (or possibly akhashic spirits, of course). Write down names; establish simple relational networks between faction members - who likes whom and why? Who hates whom and why? Who is under influence? Who owes favours? Who will betray? Who sleeps with whom? Who has skeletons in their wardrobe, debts, dark secrets?

Make general plans for each faction, short and medium term goals according to their motivations.

1D6 FACTION MOTIVATIONS

- 1 Greed
- 2 Lust
- 3 Hatred
- 4 Power
- 5 Vision
- 6 Revenge

9.2 9.2 Managing cycles

There is a time for everything under the heavens: a time to be silent and a time to speak; a time to love and a time to hate; a time for war and a time for peace.

—Qoheleth 3:1

For the game leader, managing the cycles is like playing 1, 2, 3, Sun!

As long as the characters are acting, within a cycle, the various factions and the main figures do not move. As soon as the players announce a cycle change, they rush to their objectives and activate their means of action. What does this mean in practice?

- When a cycle begins, the factions are in a defined initial position. Their agents are engaged here or there (although some may be available); their attention is focused on specific issues; they act according to their needs.
- As the cycle progresses, the factions can react if they are directly attacked by characters or events, but they do not have the ability to redistribute their resources or change their general conformation - the extras are, in a sense, 'frozen' in space. If the characters learn that a particular extra is in a particular place, he or she will be there for the rest of the cycle. "This does not mean that they do not move, but that they are assigned to tasks or missions and will only leave if there are emergencies that affect them directly. An agent may be investigating a gang or trying to exfiltrate a scientist from another corpo: he will move and act within the scope of his mission, but will not "move" unless the characters interfere.
- On the other hand, when the cycle changes, the factions can change everything, reorganise everything. The extras can eventually move, recall forces, sound alarms, beg on the characters, take action against their loved ones, etc. In short, there is a good chance that at the beginning of the next cycle, the characters' information will no longer be completely up to date. The leader of a faction was in his country house where the characters could come and kidnap him? He either took his helicopter away or increased his security by hiring threatening techmercs.
- Of course, don't change everything all the time, because you can. The factions have very elaborate plans and only change their protocols if the characters get their attention. Nevertheless, be consistent, logical and ruthless, brutal if you must or can be. Changing the cycle has enormous benefits for the characters, but the players should feel the pinch every time!

Finally, remember that factions have goals and if given time, will achieve them. You can assume, for example, that it will take two, three, five cycles for a faction to fully achieve one of its goals if the characters do nothing to stop it. The consequences will simply be front page news at the beginning of the next cycle...

9.3 9.3 Campaign focus

9.3.1 9.3.1 Techmercs

In these deaf and cowardly battles for money where the weak are quietly disembowelled, there are no more ties, no more kinship, no more friendship: it is the atrocious law of the strong, those who eat in order not to be eaten.

—Émile Zola, Money

Playing techmercs is the basis of the cyberpunk game. You play as guys who will do anything to eat and burn. You like money and adrenaline, in any order you like. You show off for the gallery

under the guise of rebellious misfits, but in reality, you're waiting for the big score that will buy you a deserted island in the Pacific or a way to get back at someone. Draw or choose a motivation for each character.

1D6 TECHMERC MOTIVATION

- 1 To help a family member who is in big trouble
- 2 Change the world or change the world
- 3 Make a big score to pay off all your debts and finally see the sun
- 4 Find a way to get your kid back from being stolen by dirty corpos
- 5 Be loyal to the mentor who taught you and your family everything who's been protecting you all your life
- 6 Get revenge for a dirty trick that left you stranded once upon a time

With techmercs, you can have one adventure after another without bothering too much with The Other at first. Just make him appear gradually and establish a race to see who will achieve their goals first: the characters or The Other?

The adventures almost always have a similar structure: the Client meets the characters, gives them a mission and promises them payment. The mission is more complicated than it seems; objectives and secondary factions collide and compete; there is betrayal or misinformation; the bad guys need scapegoats. If the characters make it out alive - they know they're just pawns in the corporate wars - they still have to pay for it and suffer the retribution of those who lost.

Of course, as a campaign progresses, the characters will have more resources, political support, connections, information to use. And more enemies and more problems with the authorities. And they will be identified and locked out by The Other.

1D6 WHO IS THE CLIENT?

- 1 An elderly corporatist executive, his eyes burnt out by all he has already seen and done.
- 2 A young guy with big teeth, full of accelerants accelerators, excited as a flea and rather expansive.
- 3 A sharp and jovial O.G. with a sharp mind as his body blades.
- 4 A retired former techmerc, a bit off at times, but still on the ball.
- 5 A pretty, discreet and cold young woman who keeps the characters at a distance and does not respond to any of their their direct requests.
- 6 A presence on the matrix - no doubt an akashic spirit, but who can really know?

1D6 WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE CLIENT?

- 1 It is a simple intermediary, a transmission belt. Nothing personal, one way or the other.
- 2 Calm and resigned to the darkness of his job, he organises things as best he can and puts oil in the wheels so that everyone gets through.
He is deadly serious when it comes to business. We're not here to fraternise, but the job must be done at all costs and he's always available. Just remember that he doesn't like excuses.
The Client always has advice to give, checks on the progress of operations every five minutes, sometimes intervenes in the field without being asked. Who said "Pain in the ass"?
- 5 The Client is warm, patient and understanding. Always.

1D6 WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE CLIENT?

- 6 The Client is passive-aggressive and never gives satisfaction. He always has something to reproach the characters with and will recriminate at the slightest request.

1D6 WHAT IS THE CLIENT'S POSITION?

- 1 He is a front man for a secret power.
- 2 He is an undercover government agent.
- 3 He is another techmerc who subcontracts some of his missions.
- 4 He is an employee of the Other.
- 5 He is a freelancer who works for himself and has a lot of money.
- 6 He is a freelance intermediary.

1D6 WHAT IS THE CLIENT'S MOTIVATION?

- 1 It's a job like any other. Tomorrow, the Client may be assigned to the marketing department of his company.
- 2 There's always stuff to skim - money, information, stuff to sell. There's no reason not to make a little extra on the backs of the characters.
- 3 The Client has a complicated personal history, a score to settle or an intimate investigation to unravel. And every assignment he gives has a little extra to it that only concerns him. The Client would have liked to become a techmerc. But he has a degree and he doesn't like violence, so he might as well settle for a more comfortable and better-paid position. But still, he would have liked to be a techmerc too...
- 4 The Client is, secretly or not, connected to the characters and tries to protect or guide them.
- 5 Someone is putting pressure on the Client with convincing arguments - intimidation, vital resources, information, blackmail...
- 6

At the end of a job for the Client, you may wish to choose or draw an item from the next table - without any obligation. Something goes wrong and the characters may be surprised by the outcome of their mission...

1D6 THE END OF A MISSION

- 1 The operation receives full media coverage (thanks Panopticom!).
- 2 The operation has not gone unnoticed and the Other has all the details in hand.
- 3 The target of the contract takes revenge on the characters or their or their relatives, unless they ask for a 'voluntary' service to wipe the slate clean.
- 4 The Client does not like to leave a trail of operations and a team is assigned to eliminate the characters.
- 5 The Client is not who he seems and in the end, he screws everyone over.
- 6 You don't get the full amount promised, if you only get paid.

9.3.2 9.3.2 Corporates

Above the state and behind the facades of apparent power, in the maze of multiple departments, underlying all shifts of authority and in the chaos of inefficiency, lies the core of power in the country: the hyper-efficient and hyper-competent secret police.

—Hannah Arendt

Well, it's not complicated: you work for The Other, in one of its security services no doubt, doing intelligence or counter-intelligence, or research why not.

This mode of play is perhaps a little more difficult to set up for the game leader: he does not benefit from a wide variety of hooks for adventures and the characters can legitimately have access to important means and discreet but effective support. Moreover, he has to put The Other into action very quickly and involve the various factions involved: the rumours of corridors, office intrigues and internal affairs take up a lot of game time and you have to improvise on a complex social canvas.

Nevertheless, the characters have clear and identifiable objectives: to protect the employer's assets and to be accountable. And they are immediately involved in the secrets of The Other.

Another advantage is that the characters' mission is simply to bring the factions' plans to fruition - you only have to write one scenario!

In the meantime, between or during missions, add a little spice to the characters' hard working lives.

1D36 INTERNAL LIFE OR A FEW MINUTES AT THE COFFEE MACHINE

- 1.1 Change of management
- 1.2 Catfight
- 1.3 Jokes that go wrong
- 1.4 Colleagues who are a bit too free
- 1.5 Work all over the place
- 1.6 Jealousy drama
- 2.1 Nervous exhaustion
- 2.2 Political wrangling
- 2.3 Waste and mismanagement
- 2.4 Moral harassment
- 2.5 The age of individual evaluations
- 2.6 Shortage of drawing pins and paper clips
- 3.1 Office romance
- 3.2 Bitch-talk night
- 3.3 A crow leaves messages on the intranet
- 3.4 A bet in progress
- 3.5 A bit too much water at the farewell party
- 3.6 A medical alert

9.3.3 9.3.3 Panopticom

It's not a crime, not a trick, not a dirty trick, not a swindle, not a vice that does not endure without the secrecy that surrounds it. Expose these facts in the open, describe them, attack them, ridicule them in the press and sooner or later public opinion will drive them out. Publicity may not be the only thing necessary but it is one thing without which all other efforts will be in vain.

—Joseph Pulitzer

Panopticom is an investigative feature programme. It broadcasts a new issue every few weeks, featuring one or more stories provided by Panopticom cells.

The programme takes its name from the theories of panoptic architecture: “the surveillance of all by all”. For that is the purpose of its existence: to monitor and denounce from within the walls, in an active position and not as mere witnesses falsely hiding behind the corrupt status of journalist.

Panopticom cells are independent of each other, inserted into society. Anyone can join - there is no press card, no registration, no official existence. Those who make up a cell are truth resisters and act as such, in the shadows, spying, monitoring, exposing, tracking down weaknesses.

A few cells wallow in sensationalism, in gonzo people; but most deal with hot topics, social problems, corruption, health scandals, political prevarications, small arrangements between the powerful that have an impact on the whole of society. They highlight the individual responsibilities in all the decisions that affect us all: no more hiding behind the secrets of deliberations or supposed orders from the hierarchy. No more buying, cheating, corrupting those who report. No more leverage - money, prestige, position, reputation, vanity. Only anonymous truth.

Panopticom’s hope is to create a virtuous society because everyone will take responsibility with full knowledge of the facts. Is this fascism? No. It’s about transforming man in depth. Is it humanism? It is forcing civilisation to progress despite the conservative brakes and privileges that are defended tooth and nail.

Regularly, at the passage of cycles, when they are ready, the Panopticom cells return their reports. These are accepted or not by the programme’s anonymous producers according to objective criteria, insofar as they are reliable. A report that is too weak, poorly researched or incomplete is likely to be rejected.

If the information is inaccurate or untrue, the public and the mass media will pick up on this after the broadcast - and the reputation of the unit will suffer terribly. A good reputation increases the likelihood that the cell’s stories will be accepted, even with lower standards; a bad reputation allows mistrust to set in, even when all the standards are met. A cell with a destroyed reputation will have the greatest difficulty in continuing to provide reports: truthfulness, evidence and verification are the main concerns of most cells.

Especially since an anonymous crowdfunding system allows the cells with the best reputations to receive larger budgets the more popular and followed their reports are.

Each story that is accepted and delivered earns 5¥ and an additional 100 XP per character.

9.3.3.1 9.3.3.1 Criteria

The ten criteria are both a roadmap for the characters - to help them organise and structure their investigations and research - and quantifiable objectives. When a report is handed in, the leader rolls 2d6. If the result is higher than the number of criteria met, the story is rejected - it can be resubmitted later if at least one other criterion has been met. The 2d6 roll is modified by the reputation of the cell.

Players are given several criteria sheets and fill them in as they go along - one for each case in progress. This serves as a note sheet for information, a status bar for the investigation, and a tracking sheet so they always know what to do. A story is only acceptable if the sheet is carefully filled in (and legible).

1. The issue, the angle of approach: the characters discuss why and how they take on a story and note their initial intentions, a priori, and then, when the story starts to take shape, the way they want to treat it in the report.
2. The basic facts: who what where when how why. This is the initial framework for getting as much factual information as possible.
3. Causes and consequences: the events leading up to the case and its discovery and the impact the case has on the people involved.
4. The deeper facts: what lies behind or beyond; possible ramifications, implications at other levels.
5. The impact in society: how the story resonates in the city, the practical implications of the story before and after it is revealed; the opinion of the circles of power (political, economic, religious, etc.)
6. Evidence: what can be brought forward as solid evidence to support the story - this would allow the case to go to court and be heard in summary proceedings.
7. Pictures: to make a good and interesting story to follow on the matrix.
8. Confrontation: to confront the actors and perpetrators, to get their opinion on the story and the facts presented. This step is very important to get last minute information or insights.
9. The involvement of The Other: The Other is always involved. Always. You just have to find the links, direct or indirect.
10. Ethics: this criterion is ticked, or not, by the leader. It is the conscience of the characters - did they do their job sincerely and professionally? Did they hide facts or lie? Did they leave out things that should be brought to people's attention? It's really a Jiminy Cricket thing. No value or moral judgement, just questioning the path taken from the characters' point of view. They may have been misled and therefore give false information - and yet tick this criterion because they have done their best.

9.3.3.2 9.3.3.2 Reputation

The cells that work for Panopticom have a good or bad reputation, both from the public and from the press campaigns of those involved. This is a tricky thing for the game leader to manage, but very important:

- On the one hand, he has to judge objectively whether the story holds up or not, whether the characters have missed information that will be revealed later and may destroy or support their case.
- On the other hand, he has to manage the public and media returns of the revelations. Do people follow or not? Do the people involved defend themselves well or not?

These two elements should allow you to vary the reputation of the cell after each broadcast (or even later). Each report can vary the reputation by 1 point up or down, with extremes from -3 to +3.

Apply reputation to the 2d6 roll for acceptance of the story, but also to the ¥ the characters receive.

9.4 9.4 Conducting an investigation

“Woe! He’s building a city on blood! He founds a city on crime!”

—Habakkuk 2, 12

An investigation is a puzzle where the leader knows the answer(s) and the players try to guess the solution by asking questions.

It is a complicated exercise, both for the game leader and for the players. The players like puzzles. Most of the time they like to play with their brains and crack seemingly unsolvable problems, especially when they want to prove to you that they are much smarter than you (the fools!). But, if they are not stupid, remember that they are groping their way through the fog and darkness. What may seem perfectly logical and coherent to you, because you know the ins and outs, may not make sense to them because they lack the elements to make connections between different clues.

The leader must be consistent and logical in his answers; he must not leave anything out, and yet he cannot rely on the players to follow exactly the path he has imagined in his mind: sometimes they have incredible insights that make them skip several steps at once; other times they are blind and deaf and bang their heads against walls for hours.

So it’s always a balancing act: keeping the mystery alive and not boring the players, making them think without making the problem unsolvable...

Here are a few tips and tools to stage a good investigation that satisfies everyone, a whudonit that will not frustrate anyone and that will have as much rhythm as a good TV series.

First of all, remember that the game leader has two main missions, which at first glance seem contradictory and yet must absolutely complement each other:

- The players must be forced to rack their brains so that there is challenge and difficulty.
- The players must have fun and frustration must never outweigh the pleasure.

9.4.1 9.4.1 Questions and answers

An investigation is about finding information to make a decision: Who committed this crime? Where are the secret laboratories of the corporation? Who is behind the chain of events that is shaking the city and why?

Generally, this information is not particularly secret or hidden and it just takes time: finding building plans, accessing financial information, building a biographical file on someone from their presence on the matrix... A simple Intelligence roll to solve a document search can be enough. The difficulty, in reality, is knowing where to look and asking the right questions.

When the characters have to deal with a crime, a conspiracy or secret corporate manoeuvres, things get more complicated, but basically, it’s always the same process:

- The characters need information.
- They take the necessary actions to obtain that information.

- They use this information to make a decision: to seek new information or to act on the information they have already accumulated.

Sometimes the search is very specific - the characters have a name, for example, and look for anything related to it. Other times the search is more open-ended: examining a crime scene, going through papers without knowing what they might find, interviewing people in the hope of getting a description.

The rule for the game leader is very simple: when the players ask a question, you have to give them an answer!

The players are not there to wander around in the dark, blind, for hours. A role-playing game is not real life, where investigators can run into walls for months or years, or even never find the culprit of heinous crimes. Here, as in a TV series, the investigation has to be completed in a relatively short time and therefore every question must be answered.

Sometimes it can be a simple “You’re burning up” or “You’re freezing your butt off” - in an appropriate form: “You’ve been through the documents and found nothing. They really don’t seem to be related to your case.

The rest of the time, they are pieces of the puzzle that should force the characters to undertake new research or new actions.

9.4.2 9.4.2 Critical path

There are two types of information:

- Information that is strictly necessary to continue the investigation. This information must always be given, at some point, if the players ask the right questions - and sometimes, even if they don’t do the right things: all it takes is for a witness to come to them spontaneously!
- Bonus information, which provides additional insight or leads to interesting secondary leads. This bonus information can sometimes speed up an investigation by giving the characters enough momentum to skip several steps or link the pieces of the puzzle together more easily. They can only be unearthed if the players ask specific questions or if their characters make particularly good skill rolls. Eventually, they may come later in the investigation, in the form of pieces needed to move forward: for example, crime scene findings that speed up the first few hours of the investigation, but which should arrive the next day anyway when all the lab work has been done.

This is where the game leader’s job is particularly tricky: he or she has to determine which clues and information are available and how they lead to the solution. You should be very wary of things that are too constructed and too written down.

Trust yourself: you know the end of the investigation, where it should end up. So you must be able, at any moment and without difficulty, to trace a path between this end and the stage where the characters are. Improvisation in an investigation is never difficult. Let yourself be carried along by the plot itself, since you don’t need to bounce off the players’ actions to change the world, but only expose to them, snippet by snippet, in order or disorder, all the aspects of a story already written. This is the easiest thing to do in improvisation.

- What remains to be discovered?
- What are the obstacles that remain before we get to the end of the story?
- What do the characters need to move forward?
- How do the target(s) of the investigation protect or hide themselves?
- What actions do they take that may leave new clues (according to the Locard principle)?

All of these questions translate into various pieces of information that you should dispense gradually. What you must absolutely avoid is determining in advance that such and such a clue is in the hands of such and such a person, member of such and such a gang in such and such a neighbourhood. If the characters never set foot in the area, they will never have the information. On the other hand, you can decide that only gangsters or criminals can give this information: use the characters' relations and contacts; wait for them to go to someone who fits your needs or, at worst, someone who tells them that they should go to gangsters (and gives them a contact, why not).

There are two things that should guide the way you slip information in:

- The coherence of your story - just link directly to the circumstances of the crime, its chronological development, the personalities or means of the bad guys.
- The opportunities the players give you - answer their questions, always.

9.4.3 9.4.3 What's the point?

Why do you need to make your investigators' lives easier and give them answers? Simple: the investigation itself is not the most important part of the story. What really matters is what the characters do with it at the end.

They have information; they have all the pieces of the puzzle. They still have to put them together in the right order and without misunderstandings, and most importantly, they now have to act!

And if you've done your job well, it won't be easy for them: the culprit may have excellent reasons and his victims were bastards; the culprit is untouchable, protected by powerful supporters; if it's possible to know he's guilty, it's impossible to prove it; nobody believes the characters or the story interests anyone; someone is confiscating all the work of the characters and making the evidence, the victims and the culprits disappear...

The important thing is that the characters have something to do with the results of their investigation, that they are forced to make choices or take action based on this information.

1D36 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- 1.1 Official records
- 1.2 Personal files
- 1.3 Medical records
- 1.4 Relatives
- 1.5 Relationships or associates of the target
- 1.6 The police
- 2.1 Financial analyst
- 2.2 Newspaper article

1D36 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- 2.3 Interested client
- 2.4 Confidential informant
- 2.5 A forensic laboratory
- 2.6 A cooperative witness
- 3.1 A reluctant witness
- 3.2 An anonymous tip
- 3.3 A press conference
- 3.4 A hunch
- 3.5 A search on the matrix
- 3.6 A rumour in the street

1D26 ATTITUDES OF WITNESSES

- 1.1 Unclear, uncertain, hesitant
- 1.2 Categorical, confident
- 1.3 Too many irrelevant details
- 1.4 Evasive, reluctant, obstinate, distrustful
- 1.5 Unfriendly, aggressive, uncooperative
- 1.6 Inquisitive, curious, answers questions
- 2.1 Hides something, conceals, lies
- 2.2 Wants something out of it, greedy, interested
- 2.3 Already contacted by others, threatened, coerced
- 2.4 Inventive, mythomaniac, manipulative
- 2.5 Scared, won't say anything, doesn't want to talk
- 2.6 In a hurry, late, not now

1D36 TYPE OF INFORMATION

- 1.1 DNA fingerprints
- 1.2 Computer files
- 1.3 Bundles of paper
- 1.4 Chemicals
- 1.5 Footprints or tyre tracks
- 1.6 Blood
- 2.1 A serial number
- 2.2 An object
- 2.3 An appointment
- 2.4 A network or known links
- 2.5 An address in the matrix
- 2.6 A physical address
- 3.1 A weapon
- 3.2 A chronology
- 3.3 A physical description
- 3.4 Ancient history
- 3.5 Real-time location
- 3.6 A note on the back of a matchbox

9.5 9.5 A note on the back of a matchbox

I was trying to work out exactly how, when and where I should act and, most importantly, what I was going to do if it went wrong. Once the target had been chosen, the outline of a kidnapping is almost always the same. One, reconnaissance; two, abduction; three, detention; four, negotiations; five, payment of ransom; and finally, release - although sometimes this does not happen. My job was to prepare and execute the first three steps; the rest was not my concern.

—Andy McNab, Operation Firewall

Before you go on an intrusion mission, you may want to prepare a plan. Let's be clear: it's up to the characters to make the plan, not the players. The players are not in the field, and it's well known that operational agents always get screwed when it's the analysts who do the planning.

Before a mission, each character can spend ¥2 to regain a number of connection points equal to the rank of the characteristic of his choice. This corresponds to how well he prepares: Strength or Constitution to do some heavy lifting like modifying a vehicle or arranging for destructive equipment, Dexterity or Intelligence to retrieve data or fiddle with electronics, Wisdom or Charisma to get information from the right people.

You don't need to list exactly what you prepare or get. The character is considered to be doing the right thing in their chosen field.

You can use these connection points (and the rest of your stash) in the usual way - to hack the matrix or activate relationships - but in the context of a specific intrusion or mission, you can also spend them on inventing ways to get out of trouble when things start going wrong. Every time the leader throws up an obstacle, an unpleasant surprise, a twist, you can pretend that you had planned it. Spend connection points (possibly pooling them) and explain how you are too strong: the security guard was bribed to let you through; you fingerprinted the executive to turn on his secure office console; you have a key to a back staircase allowing you to leave the floor while avoiding the SWAT team, etc.

Connection points	Effects
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1	Remove a minor obstacle that you could obviously pass easily, but which would then take you a few minutes when you only have a few seconds.
3	Escape a major hazard or remove an embarrassing obstacle that you could not get past if you had not provided the equipment, skills or information.
5+	Clearing a major obstacle or escaping immediate and deadly danger, by absolutely cheating the odds and virtually changing the leader's descriptions.

Multiple uses of connection points

When you play the basic game, connection points are only used for one thing: hacking and manipulating the live matrix. Intermediaries have a special rule for summoning connections and asking them for services. Then, swordsmen (in particular) learn that they can spend connection points to make certain special ammunition available. And finally, these connection points are also used to manipulate the scenes. This gets

seriously complicated. In reality, connection points are a “mystical” resource - the equivalent of magic points in Pocket Dragon. They indicate how you can cheat the rules to get special effects, to act like the heroes in the movies (they have the writers on their side) and get out of the worst situations with a spin. Notice how the actors always have a pool of water under their feet when they accidentally go out the window? But it’s a resource you have to manage - sure, it replenishes itself every day and you can even spend luck points to recharge it during the adventure, but if the game’s leader gets a bit carried away with his adventures, you’ll soon run out.

9.6 9.6 Intrusions

So, shovel in one hand, gun in the other, we leap from hole to hole, ready to pounce again when our breath has returned and our hearts have calmed down a bit. The heavy artillery has set up one hell of a barrage. From the forest huge white flames emerge and the trees are falling as if under a gigantic scythe. We see the Russians cowering behind their dead corpses, since a corpse is as effective a protection as a sandbag; as for sensitivity, there is no room for it at the front. Don’t blame the unfortunate soldiers, but the criminals who provoke wars!

—Sven Hassel, I saw them die

There are times when you need to speed things up and structure the elements of your adventure a little better: for example, when you have to break into an archaeology to extract someone and implant a virus in their neurotronic systems, or when you have to traverse a district of the anarzone in the middle of a civil war while planting spy nanodrones and looting a gang’s accelerator supply.

There are three ways to do this:

- You plan in advance all the game elements you want to place and recite your lesson as rigorously as possible.
- The players roll one or two times and it’s hit or miss.
- You use the intrusion rules presented here.

An intrusion is the generic name given to a mission with one or more specific, pre-planned tactical objectives - usually one to three. The intrusion is completed when all objectives have been met.

The players determine the number of objectives to be completed and the order in which they are completed. The first objective earns 5 XP per character; the second earns 10 XP, the third 15 and so on. It is not possible to take a rest while there are still objectives to complete, unless you give up and the mission is interrupted.

The game leader has a little preparation to do before launching his players into intrusion. Don’t worry, it’s not much.

Fill out a small table for each objective to be accomplished. The table usually has 6 items numbered from 1 to 6 (but if you have the right stuff on hand, you can vary the die used from d4 to d10 to represent the difficulty or length of the operation). The 1 is always “goal achieved” (at least, the characters are able to do what they need to do now to achieve it). For the other

elements, you can pick and choose from the following suggestions according to your needs and desires. Try to put the things you consider most dangerous at the top of the die and the things that are more favourable to the characters at the bottom of the table. By choosing the items on each table, the leader can really guide the moods he wants to set for events, even if he doesn't ultimately decide exactly what they are.

1D6 EXAMPLE OF HOW DANGEROUS THE EVENTS ARE

- 1 The characters achieve their objective
- 2 The adventure is annoying and wastes the characters' time characters, but does not put the mission back into play.
- 3 The incident is a real puzzle, difficult to solve, but the characters have some time.
- 4 Things suddenly speed up. It's not deadly, but it is explosive.
- 5 It's a pretty dangerous ride, but the characters have a few moments' notice.
- 6 The situation is extremely dangerous and things jump out at the characters without them having had time to prepare.

OPPOSITION

- At gunpoint
- Watch out! Behind you!
- Contact! Contact!
- Unexpected face to face
- There are too many of them!
- Alarms are sounding...
- Muted threat approaching...
- Changing of the guard
- A new competitor

OBSTACLE

- Where is the exit again?
- The timing couldn't be worse!
- Sentinels keeping watch
- Esclandre!
- Head against the wall...
- Glass wall...
- Forceful passage
- Too many choices
- A diversion that is much too long...

DANGER

- Take cover!!!
- It's a trap!
- It'll blow up in your face!
- Suspicious smells
- Shouldn't you have turned left?
- Up to your neck!
- The noose is tightening...

- Point of no return
- Chain reaction!

SURPRISE

- Much ado about nothing!
- Good information, bad interpretation...
- Unfortunate coincidences
- Ambush!
- I didn't see it coming...
- The fear of your life!
- The dust settles...
- Stunned and shaken
- Betrayal!

MEETING

- Angel or demon?
- Blackmail and pressure
- Defection!
- Attentive and discreet people
- Diversion
- I've got just what you need
- Misunderstanding and misunderstanding
- A really weird guy
- Small staff

RECEPTION

- It can't hurt...
- Where is everyone?
- Nobody...
- Little help?
- Stockpile of materials
- Care and repair
- A teasing smile
- A comfortable cache
- Information perhaps?

MYSTERY

- How does this thing work?
- In the dark suddenly!
- Strange and disturbing noises...
- Non-Euclidean geometry
- Uncertain identification
- The lens has disappeared!
- Tractations...
- A detail you all missed...
- A moment of hesitation...

CATASTROPHE

- Fatal blow!
- Sudden disappearance
- Collateral damage
- Checkmate!
- And it's an explosion!
- Flee, you fools!
- Fire in the belly
- Poisoning
- We are going to be separated!

Now it's up to the players. Each player in turn draws a die. Write down the title of the story on a post-it note. It's up to him to invent an adventure, a twist, an obstacle, a threat, a danger. He takes the lead, lays the foundations of the situation, imagines some interesting elements and then hands over control to you when, naturally, you ask the question "What are you doing?"

Then play the scene as normal, integrate the proposed elements into the narrative and the rest of the story, bounce around, add your own ingredients and let the players work it out - remember they still have a few plan points to spend just in case (at least if they've been careful to prepare).

When the players get the long-awaited 1, the objective is revealed, it is within reach. Don't forget to play the scene: they still have to win the thing.

When the last objective is reached, you can play a final episode if the extraction is not too complicated or plan a final scene - on 1, the characters are finally safe!

Note

Sometimes the characters find relevant information, quick shortcuts or have dazzling intuitions. In this case, reduce the dice (e.g. roll 1d3 instead of 1d6) while the advantage remains - this helps to achieve the objective more quickly. Similarly, you may or may not feel that the same number cannot be rolled twice; conversely, you can have fun, if the players land on the same number, giving them a different title the second time around...

9.6.1 9.6.1 An example

The characters must infiltrate a corporate marina, find a specific yacht, plant clues that compromise a specific frame and copy the memories of the onboard computer. That's two objectives: 1. enter the marina and find the yacht; 2. plant the clues and access the computer. Of course, there are guards everywhere, security systems and the yacht is really big (and busy).

The leader should therefore prepare two small adventure tables:

1D6 EVENTS: THE MARINA

- 1 Objective achieved: The characters are in front of
- 2 Misunderstanding and misunderstanding
- 3 Shouldn't you have turned right?

1D6 EVENTS: THE MARINA

- 4 Surprise visit
- 5 Attentive and discreet people
- 6 Unexpected face to face

1D6 ADVENTURES: THE YACHT

- 1 Objective achieved: the characters access the
- 2 Cupboards full of things...
- 3 Strange and disturbing noises...
- 4 Midnight swim!
- 5 Unfortunate coincidences
- 6 Alarm bells ringing...

9.7 9.7 Events and rumours

But if there is a greater lesson to be learned from what happened in the clearing, it is the simple fact that the real gladiators of the world gladiators of the world are of such humble origin and so commonplace in appearance that if you stand in line behind them in a grocery shop, you can't guess how much the fire of their souls can light up the darkness.

—James Lee Burke, Swan Lake

A nanoChrome campaign can be played in a sandbox style. The game leader sets events and mysteries and lets the players deal with them. The success criteria of the stories and missions provide sufficient guidance so that the players always know where to go and what to do: they just have to act in such a way as to find the answers to the questions. From then on, the leader can let himself be carried along by events.

To get the action going again, you have several tools at your disposal:

- Start a new story line or mission request: the town doesn't stop spinning because the characters are investigating a case or working on a mission. In fact, it's much more interesting when they find themselves drowning in the need to investigate three or four different leads at once. As they close cases and send in their reports or respond to their employers, you can add game material. Load up the boat, let them chase every bone you throw them and insist on more. They will hate you and yet love the story.
- Get The Other to act: The Other does not sit still. It has its own goals and it sets them in motion at its own pace. This is how the world gradually evolves. Normally you have to wait for a cycle to pass, but if the characters don't take the initiative, too bad for them...
- Ask the players to invent rumours or events in the town: you can use the table below as a guide to trigger or inspire these rumours - or leave it to the players. Ideally, ask for one rumour a day - when the characters get up. Players can take turns answering. Rumours can be about things that have happened, are happening, or are likely to happen later.

1D6 WHEN?

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1-2 | What happened in the previous days (the previous cycle) |
| 3-4 | What is happening today (this cycle) |
| 5-6 | What will happen in the next few days (the next cycle or even the one after that) |

1D36 RUMOURS/ EVENTS

KEYWORDS

- 1.1 AT WORK Unemployment - strikes - wage negotiations - industrial accident - economic crisis - modification of the labour code - trade union action - counter-insurgency and jaunts - employer pressure - repression...
- 1.2 PARTIES AND Block party - traditional celebrations - concert - art - happening - Zeuf, EVENTS Kabukirock and Takodub - Blitzball match - student party - excellent mega party - stars and celebrities - social event and cocktail party...
- 1.3 ANARZONE Abandonment - on the wrong side of the checkpoints - violent gangs - territoriality - resignation - revolt - protest - charity work - black market and smuggling - no future - ruins - hope...
- 1.4 THE OTHER Press conference - media announcements - unverified rumours - suppressed scandal - trial - defeated opponents...
- 1.5 CRIMINALITY Grisly murder - drug trafficking - corruption - grand theft - score-settling - serial killer - gang warfare - drive-by shooting - human trafficking - cyber-recovery - akhashic crime...
- 1.6 THE Works - local codes - council decisions - scandal - press conference - MUNICIPALITY security - firm opposition - deals and compromises - public pressure - shady deals...
- 2.1 POLITICS Authoritarianism - utopia - social movements - protests - indecisions - violence - unnatural agreements and alliances - nationalism and identity-based withdrawal - internationalism - elections - militants - scandal - prevarications and abuses...
- 2.2 THE WORLD World news - ongoing wars - ecological disasters - devastating accidents - pacts and alliances - commodity prices - new technologies...
- 2.3 THE FLOATING Gamblers and bouncers - bars and cabarets - shows - music scene - WORLD prostitution - gambling - code of conduct - drunkenness - predators and victims - drugs - gangers - trafficking - cop patrols - nightclubs - snitches...
- 2.4 THE Traders - residents - entrepreneurs - suppliers - friends - neighbours - NEIGHBORHOOD thugs - parasites - profiteers - exploited - accident - drama - joy - party...
- 2.5 THE SQUAT Passages - meetings - feelings - quarrels - logistics - celebrations - mourning - work - exclusions - newcomers - mysteries - black market...
- 2.6 THE WEATHER Storms - strong winds - heavy rain - heat waves - floods - extreme cold - power cuts - accidents...
- 3.1 THE CONURBS Football match - quiet life - unpredictable drama - fire - building work - monster traffic jams - problems on public transport - perversions - buried secrets - mowing the lawn and putting your head down...
- 3.2 CORPORATIONS Orbitals - price wars - industrial management - hedonism - scandal - board of directors - wealth - power - internal struggles - careers and jobs - managers and employees...
- 3.3 THE ENCLAVES Archologies - enhanced security - press conference - marketing and CORPORATISTS aggressive advertising - sales - antizone on fire terrorist attack - munificence and abuse...

1D36 RUMOURS/ EVENTS

KEYWORDS

- 3.4 THE ORBITALS Corporatist Council - lift orbital elevator - moon islands - Kwaza barge - interventionism - the twelve orbitals - UN - secret war - space accident - bombings - above the mass...
- 3.5 MY PRIVATE LIFE Simple meeting - tragic accident - anecdote - important meeting - discovery - secret to share - stupidity - humour - dark thoughts - love at first sight break-up - evening with friends - too many things to do to do - bills to pay...
- 3.6 ON THE MATRIX Special communications - news streaming - hackers and coders - akhashic minds - lost connection - virtual reality - persistent worlds - digital economy - blackmail and control - denial of service - concerted attacks - akhashic flashmob...

9.8 9.8 Flash-infos

When you see people getting richer by bribing and extortion than by working, and that your laws do not protect you against them, but protect them against you, when you see that corruption is rewarded and honesty has become abnegation, you know that your society is doomed.

—Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged

If you like, you can also use the newsflash table: draw from each column and throw out a news item in less than thirty seconds in the form of a flash headline heard on the radio. If the players are hooked or want to know more, you can then expand on the story as you see fit. By punctuating the game sessions in this way, you'll set the pace and find yourself making up lots of interesting stuff on the fly - all the goodness of automatic writing, in a hurry, without thinking...

1D66 WHAT?

WHO?

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1.1 Accident | The federal government |
| 1.2 Economic news | Local government |
| 1.3 Foreign news | The Other |
| 1.4 Political news | Police |
| 1.5 Social news | Organised crime |
| 1.6 Social agenda | Big crime |
| 2.1 Robbery | Panopticom |
| 2.2 Weather report | An adversary |
| 2.3 Pink notebooks | A corporate executive |
| 2.4 Catastrophe | An akashic shaman |
| 2.5 Sensational crime | A coder |
| 2.6 Culture | A diplomat |
| 3.1 Drama | An akhashic mind |
| 3.2 Riot | A media expert |
| 3.3 Espionage | A street gang |
| 3.4 Absurd fact | A politician |
| 3.5 Criminal mischief | An immortal |

1D66WHAT?

3.6 War	A stranger
4.1 Justice and trial	An intermediary
4.2 The Matrix	An inventor
4.3 Manifestations	A messenger
4.4 Murder	A nomad
4.5 Military operations	An oligarch
4.6 Police operations	A cleric
5.1 People	An orbital national
5.2 Religion	A swordsman
5.3 International meeting	A scientist
5.4 Health	A recognized specialist
5.5 Political and financial scandal	A sportsman
5.6 Sexual scandal	A trafficker
6.1 Science and discovery	A celebrity
6.2 Sports - results	An orbital corporation
6.3 Sports - scandals and stories	An escort
6.4 Technology	A faction of the game
6.5 Terrorism	A relationship
6.6 Urban violence	A cult

WHO?

1D26WHERE?

- 1.1 Abroad (anarzone)
- 1.2 Abroad (conurb)
- 1.3 Abroad (corporatist enclave)
- 1.4 In facilities belonging to The Other
- 1.5 In an antizone
- 1.6 In orbit
- 2.1 Here (anarzone)
- 2.2 Here (conurb)
- 2.3 Here (corporatist enclave)
- 2.4 Another city (anarzone)
- 2.5 Another city (conurb)
- 2.6 Another city (corporatist enclave)

9.9 9.9 THE GALLERIES

Strange thing, almost all men of action incline to fatality, just as most thinkers incline to Providence.

—Honoré de Balzac, The Human Comedy

To fill in the dead time or bounce the action in unexpected directions, don't hesitate to get the characters into trouble by sending them into a gallery. A crisis is just a bad moment, an additional complication in an already complicated life. It usually concerns only one character, but he can of course drag his companions into the mess.

When a problem has been solved, it yields 20 XP and 3 connection points.

You can also give the list to the players: each one chooses one in secret at the beginning of the adventure. They can play it whenever they want on themselves or on one of their little friends. For the sake of mischief and to the delight of the rest of the table. What can be funny is when all the galleys fall on the same unfortunate person (who ends up accumulating some XP in the story).

1D66 Name	Description
1.1 ACCIDENT	You are involved in an accident – whether you are responsible or not. There's damage and lots of complications to manage, both material and human.
1.2 BUREAUCRACY	You're being given administrative grief – reminder letters, lost files, debts, and bizarre bills... It's becoming urgent to deal with it, and it's going to keep you busy for a while.
1.3 CELEBRATION	You're invited to a party, but it's really bad timing. You're not in the mood, and everyone is going to drink way too much. It's going to be a long night...
1.4 SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE	You mistakenly received and opened a strange package not addressed to you. It contained something dangerous – for you and the recipient – far too much money, drugs, illegal equipment, threats, a bomb, or even a bloody ear or head.
1.5 STROKE OF LUCK	You're really lucky today. You've won a lot of ¥. But money doesn't buy happiness, as you well know. And this money is going to burn a hole in your pocket.
1.6 CHASE	You've just been robbed. Surprised at first, you are now chasing the thug. It's not necessarily bad luck; you might have been the target of the setup.
2.1 DEBT	Someone close to you owes money to dangerous people. Gambling debt, unofficial loan, illegal service... They need help and are already roughed up. You can't leave them like this.
2.2 LOCAL DIPLOMACY	Your squat has some problems with troublesome neighbors, and you're in charge of dealing with it. You'll need a good dose of patience and diplomacy, unless you opt for the punch-in-the-face method...
2.3 MISSING PERSON	A buddy, a brother, or an acquaintance is nowhere to be found. What kind of mess has he gotten himself into this time? He might have left you a worried message, and no one has seen him since.
2.4 MISTAKEN IDENTITY	You're mistaken for someone else, and of course, it's not to give you flowers or congratulate you. These people won't let you go because of a few protests, and they are dangerous.
2.5 OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE	You witness an outbreak of violence that will leave physical or emotional scars, or even involve you more than you'd like.
2.6 FRUSTRATION	Sometimes, the cup is full. You explode angrily. For now, people are just afraid of you. But tomorrow, you'll have to deal with the stares and complaints.
3.1 GROUPIE	After a brilliant act, someone is obsessed with you. For now, they're harmless, but with this kind of crackpot, you never know what might happen.

1D66 Name	Description
3.2 HANGOVER	Here come those rough mornings when you can't remember how you ended up there, when the slightest noise gives you a migraine that would knock out a COPA. What happened last night?
3.3 LOVE STORY	You're in love, but couple life is sometimes complicated, whether the story is in full swing or you're settled into a routine.
3.4 FESTIVAL DAY	You don't like festivals. Impossible to get around, do errands, or reach your contacts. Nothing seems to work normally.
3.5 THE HEAT	Those corporate security jerks are overzealous tonight. Insults, beatings? Either you're at the station for more thorough "verifications," or you're on the run with half the corpo cops on your tail.
3.6 BURYING THE HATCHET	You made the wrong joke to the wrong person. Everyone had a good laugh, but you saw it in their eyes: war is declared. It's not going to end there... oh no!
4.1 MURPHY'S LAW	Today is a bad day, and it's only just begun. Whatever you do today, it's going to turn into a nightmare.
4.2 THE EXES	An ex comes back into your life: they need a favor from you, or vice versa; it's pure chance working things out (or not); it's a pleasant surprise (or not)...
4.3 ILLNESS	Someone is sick. Maybe you. You'll have to run around everywhere to find increasingly rare and expensive medications.
4.4 BAD IDEA	You're dragged into a bad plan, a first-class mess. You're not responsible for your friends, family, or clients, but when their problems start to concern you, it's already too late.
4.5 BAD PRESS	The media is cruel, and you find yourself their target without quite understanding why. Does the journalist think they have a scoop, or are they pursuing you with some sort of personal hatred? Unless they were paid to destroy you.
4.6 LONG FUSE	Your past comes back to haunt you. You made some mistakes back in the day, and now it's time to pay the bill.
5.1 SUDDEN DEATH	Someone has died. This death may or may not affect you emotionally, but it certainly forces you to reconsider your plans for the day.
5.2 IMPROVISED NANNY	You've inherited a kid for the day – the mother thrust them into your arms and bolted, claiming urgent matters. You'll quickly realize this is far from a little angel!
5.3 PERSONAL PAGE	Someone has tampered with your personal page on the WakuWaku social network. It pisses you off, for sure, but it's not without consequences.
5.4 BREAKDOWN	Something breaks down at the worst possible moment, and guess who has to fix the problem. And in the meantime, you'll have to do the work by hand since the machine has given up the ghost.
5.5 APPOINTMENT	You have an important appointment, the kind you can't miss, and it falls right in the middle of something else equally crucial. You'll have to find a solution.
5.6 REVELATIONS	Someone close trusts you enough to make very personal, very disturbing, or downright bizarre revelations to you. Except it's much more than you can handle.

1D66 Name	Description
6.1 RIPPED OFF	You had a contract, but the other party didn't honor their commitments – shoddy or undelivered equipment, false information. You'll have to kick some asses, and something tells you your night isn't over yet.
6.2 ABSENT-MINDED	Today you're tired, in love, or obsessed with your problems. You don't retain anything you're told, and you forget half of what you're asked to do.
6.3 A DEMANDING JOB	There are problems at the squat, and the caretaker has summoned you. He's furious, overwhelmed, stressed, and this needs to be sorted out before anything else... You're not going to be idle!
6.4 A SMALL FAVOR	You're asked for a favor you can't refuse. You said yes reflexively, without thinking about the real consequences of your answer, and now you're stuck.
6.5 FAMILY VISIT	Members of your family are coming to visit - but as often, nothing is simple. They're very nice, but really cumbersome and tiring.
6.6 VOLUNTEER	You have something to do for the squat, a thankless job for which you can expect no recognition, but someone has to do it. And of course, it's on a day when everything is complicated.

9.10 9.10 Gigs

It's strange that some people commit when there are so many perfectly legal ways to be dishonest.

—Georges Courteline

Do the characters need ¥ quickly? No problem. All they have to do is go to work, instead of waiting for their corpo girlfriends.

Generally speaking, a small job keeps a character busy for a large part of the day or night - and never during the tense ellipses, that would be too easy. You can skip over these sequences or play them in their entirety depending on your mood and the time available. A small job consists of putting your abilities and skills at the service of people who have immediate needs in marginal areas: delivering a package of accelerators somewhere, guarding a cyber chop shop for the time of a sensitive intervention for a local kingpin, using your CPA to go and unload contraband in a remote cove, going to collect money from a Shylock's debtors, etc. In short, nothing but legal and unpaid work. In short, nothing but the legal and the shiny...

Depending on your inspiration, things can either go well or go seriously wrong. If you have no idea, use the golden rule.

At the end of a job, you get 1d3 ¥, plus 1d3 if you have a really interesting skill or ability for the job.

1D36 Gig

- 1.1 Accompaniment
- 1.2 Administration
- 1.3 Assistance

1D36 Gig

- 1.4 On-call
- 1.5 Accounting
- 1.6 Driving
- 2.1 Construction
- 2.2 Manufacturing
- 2.3 Custodial
- 2.4 Structural work
- 2.5 Delivery
- 2.6 Maintenance
- 3.1 Handling
- 3.2 Cleaning
- 3.3 Protection
- 3.4 Service
- 3.5 Surveillance
- 3.6 Tour

9.11 9.11 Returning the favour

“And the problem with love,” he added, is that you can’t force anyone. It is natural to want those you love to do what you want, or what you think is good for them, but you but you have to let things happen. happen. We can no more intervene in the lives of those we love the lives of those we love any more than we can intervene in the lives of people we don’t know. you don’t know. And it’s hard,” he says, because very often you want to intervene - you want to be the one who calls the shots.

“It’s hard to want to protect someone and not be able to,” Ange observed.

“You can’t protect people, kid,” Wally replied. “All you can do is love them.”

—John Irving, God’s work, the devil’s share

What if the characters helped their relationships a little instead of always being hung up on them? From time to time, friends and acquaintances need a hand too.

Just figure out what it is and how the characters are involved, then go for it. You can complicate things or even make it the start of a whole adventure.

When all is well, the characters involved gain 3 connection points and, more importantly, a freebie to ask for later - say, up to a value of 3 connection points. But, if the referral is really important, it can also be a connection point to spend to increase the character’s relationship with the contact.

1D36	TRIGGER	REQUEST
1.1	It’s a job like any other	Helping a friend in trouble
1.2	“Friends” ask for it	Breaking kneecaps
1.3	In the middle of something else	Defending your lair

1D36	TRIGGER	REQUEST
1.4	A knock on the door...	Delivering a message
1.5	By the family	Giving a hand to move
1.6	By a third party	Eliminating a threat
2.1	During a lunch in town	Preventing her murder
2.2	During a drunken night out	Preventing a dirty trick
2.3	Suddenly, with direct involvement	Intercepting sensitive information
2.4	An article in the media	Participating in negotiations
2.5	A challenge	Protecting a cover
2.6	A message from a faction	Recovering something valuable
3.1	A message about the matrix	Finding a lost object
3.2	A paper slipped under the door	Finding a person
3.3	A clandestine meeting	Finding out about someone
3.4	Long-distance communication	Acting as a diplomatic intermediary
3.5	A rumour	Monitoring a person or group
3.6	An emergency	Finding sensitive sensitive information

9.12 9.12 Corporations

But Brian was not fooled. In the face of competition from global markets, sovereign states could do little to stem the pressures of finance and global trade, or else they would alienate investors and threaten their GDP: the role of states was now confined to maintaining order and security in the midst the new global disorder led by centrifugal, extraterritorial forces, elusive forces. No one believed in progress any more: the world had become uncertain, precarious, but most decision-makers agreed that the world had become uncertain, precarious, but most decision-makers of this phantom system, while waiting for the end of the catastrophe. The excluded were pushed to the outskirts of the megacities, reserved for the winners of an anthropophagous game where television, sport and the pipolisation of the void channelled individual frustrations, in the absence of collective perspectives.

—Caryl Férey, Zulu

In nanoChrome, the characters have a lot to do with corporations - whether they work for them, attack them or spy on them, whether they plunder them or render them meaningful services.

Corporation: a catch-all term for any company or business, profit-making or not, that has a logo, a name, a front on the matrix and possibly offices somewhere (which isn't even a requirement any more). Of course, people tend to imagine that all corporations are transnationals or even orbitals, with hundreds of thousands of employees. In reality, most are small - even if they are all owned, through cross-holdings, holdings, pension funds and other capital managers, by only a few people in the world.

But a corporation is a more or less complicated organisation, and it's people who work more or less together, with their good and bad sides. In short, it's a microcosm that you have to make live, in all its diversity, so that all corporations don't end up looking the same.

So here are a few different tables that should inspire you...

To begin with, you may want to compose a vague organisation chart of the corporation. At the top, you have the board of directors and the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) who is the managing director. Then you have lots of COs (CFO, COO, CSO, CBO...) with various titles to put around them. In good French, this means Human Resources Director, Financial Director, Administrative Director, Compliance Director, etc.

Underneath all this fine laundry, organise departments. The bigger the company, the more departments it has; the more different areas it deals with, the more departments it has. You will almost always find certain departments: general services, accounting, human resources. For the rest, have fun building something funny and impossible to understand. Put some names for the known managers and add some stories.

1D666 DEPARTMENTS AND SERVICES

1.1.1 Reception and representation

1.1.2 Procurement

1.1.3 General administration

1.1.4 Akashic

1.1.5 Archives

1.1.6 Insurance

1.2.1 Internal audit

1.2.2 Social benefits

1.2.3 Trainee's office

1.2.4 Clients

1.2.5 Accounting

1.2.6 Consumption

1.3.1 External contracts

1.3.2 Counter-espionage

1.3.3 Cost control

1.3.4 Mail

1.3.5 Creative

1.3.6 Design

1.4.1 Retail

1.4.2 Development

1.4.3 Local management

1.4.4 Product division

1.4.5 Warehouses and stocks

1.4.6 Environment

1.5.1 Evaluation and estimates

1.5.2 Manufacturing

1.5.3 Billing

1.5.4 Finance

1.5.5 Charitable foundation

1.5.6 Continuing education

1.6.1 Health and safety

1.6.2 Industrial

1.6.3 IT

1.6.4 Engineering

1D666 DEPARTMENTS AND SERVICES

- 1.6.5 Investment
- 1.6.6 Legal
- 2.1.1 Litigation
- 2.1.2 Logistics
- 2.1.3 Maintenance
- 2.1.4 Marketing
- 2.1.5 Trademarks and patents
- 2.1.6 Packaging
- 2.2.1 Vehicle fleet
- 2.2.2 Internal complaints
- 2.2.3 Planning
- 2.2.4 Promotion and media
- 2.2.5 Cleanliness
- 2.2.6 Prospects
- 2.3.1 Management protection
- 2.3.2 Psychological
- 2.3.3 Quality
- 2.3.4 Research
- 2.3.5 Recruitment
- 2.3.6 Public relations
- 2.4.1 Intelligence
- 2.4.2 Human Resources
- 2.4.3 Risks
- 2.4.4 Health and occupational health
- 2.4.5 Executive Secretariat
- 2.4.6 General Secretariat
- 2.5.1 Security
- 2.5.2 Tour Operator Service
- 2.5.3 Domestic Services
- 2.5.4 General Services
- 2.5.5 Subcontracting
- 2.5.6 Switchboard
- 2.6.1 Statistics
- 2.6.2 Technical
- 2.6.3 Transport
- 2.6.4 Economic intelligence
- 2.6.5 Legal and compliance monitoring
- 2.6.6 Technology watch
- 3.x.x **Reroll**
- 4.x.x **Reroll**
- 5.x.x **Reroll**
- 6.x.x **Reroll**

You need to populate the corporation with employees with different profiles, complex

expectations and ambivalent attitudes. Each time the characters meet someone, try to give them some depth - their attitude is what they project, their nature is more secret but influences their short and long term motivations.

1D26 JOB POSITION

- | | | |
|-----|------------------|--------------|
| 1.1 | Junior Executive | Former |
| 1.2 | Senior Manager | In the know |
| 1.3 | Creative | Client |
| 1.4 | Director | Freewheeling |
| 1.5 | Expert | Eccentric |
| 1.6 | Engineer | Mistreated |
| 2.1 | Janitor | Newcomer |
| 2.2 | Hidden | Stuck |
| 2.3 | Replacement | Placarded |
| 2.4 | Secretary | Leaving |
| 2.5 | Security | Guarded |
| 2.6 | Temporary | Technician |

1D26 ATTITUDE NATURE

- | | | |
|-----|---------------|-------------|
| 1.1 | Aggressive | Ambitious |
| 1.2 | Condescending | Plotter |
| 1.3 | Out of phase | Curious |
| 1.4 | Unpleasant | Dangerous |
| 1.5 | Enthusiastic | Incompetent |
| 1.6 | Invasive | Mysterious |
| 2.1 | Cold | Naïve |
| 2.2 | Unlucky | Profiteer |
| 2.3 | Unfortunate | Rebellious |
| 2.4 | Lost | Secret |
| 2.5 | Helpful | Seducer |
| 2.6 | Sympathetic | Sociopath |

1D26 LOCATION

- | | |
|-----|-------------------|
| 1.1 | Library |
| 1.2 | Offices |
| 1.3 | Canteen/cafeteria |
| 1.4 | Data centre |
| 1.5 | Open spaces |
| 1.6 | Laboratories |
| 2.1 | Technical room |
| 2.2 | Coffee machine |
| 2.3 | Gymnasium |
| 2.4 | Meeting rooms |
| 2.5 | Reception rooms |
| 2.6 | Toilets |

OFFICE STORIES

- | |
|---|
| Administrative brutality |
| Personal drama |
| Self-destructive dynamics |
| Moral and/or sexual harassment |
| Calculated incompetence |
| Service jealousy |
| Management by fear |
| Unattainable goals and enormous pressure |
| Fraudulent transactions and abuse of company assets |
| Peters' principle in action |
| Soothing and mind-numbing routine |
| Suspicion and mistrust |

9.13 9.13 Gangs

“Straight outta Compton, crazy motherfucker named Ice Cube
From the gang called Niggaz With Attitudes
When I’m called off, I got a sawed off
Squeeze the trigger, and bodies are hauled off
You too, boy, if ya fuck with me”

—N.W.A., Straight outta Compton

The anarzones are full of gangs. But so are the conurbs, and even the enclaves. A gang is a bunch of guys and gals, all born somewhere and never left - at least in their heads. As a matter of principle, they all engage in diverse and wide-ranging criminal activities - it’s really a way of life - and employ violence with a readiness that can sometimes be surprising, against other gangs of course but also against just about anything they consider a threat or an insult. When confronted with gangsters, it’s best to have a big gun and be prepared to use it mercilessly - or look down, hand over your wallet and move on.

Let’s be clear: gangsters are stupid to the last degree, who communicate only through violence, and who don’t even bother to conceal their activities or their crimes any more. If they are caught, they go to jail: it’s good for their reputation in the group, like a virginity that must be lost to gain respect. If they die, it doesn’t matter: they are dead.

And the little ones they leave behind pick up the torch. To some extent, gangsters are the goblins of cyberpunk! You can of course, and rightly so, blame economic conditions, endemic poverty, lack of education - and frankly, hang the city planners with the politicians’ guts - but the situation has been going on for so long now in nanoChrome (a century or two probably - some of the oldest gangs have been around since before World War II!) that there’s not much you can do about it...

In nanoChrome, you absolutely have to play the gangs seriously. They are fools, but armed, dangerous, determined fools, who are not afraid of anything (so foolish). Their violence is relentless, sudden, absurd, impulsive. They don’t always react with the logic one would expect from a human being normed by society. Their standards are really too foreign for that...

- Gangs are directly responsible for two-thirds of Chrome City’s violent crime - murders, assaults, robberies, rapes, etc.
- They are mainly territorial, but they have managed to organise themselves into networks of franchises to facilitate their various trades: drugs, weapons, slaves, organs, blood... The most important gangs are now transnational (and perhaps orbital...)
- A gang is not a small group of ten or so individuals stuck in a street. Gangs range from several thousand to tens of thousands of members. One can consider that 1% or more of the total population of Chrome City belongs to a gang (these are perfectly realistic figures!). They are therefore dangerous gangs and it is not enough to be called Charles Bronson to eliminate them all after a good fight. Hence the constant danger of getting involved with them - revenge is not an empty word. Nevertheless, gangs are very often divided into smaller cliques, a few dozen individuals in a neighbourhood.
- Gangs are, for the most part, ethnic and cultural. One joins a gang that shares religious values, cultural celebrations, eating habits, and the language of one’s childhood. Nevertheless, many gangs are relatively open as long as the ganger adopts the culture

of reference.

- Violence and cruelty are one of the main markers of gang definition. Assault, rape, murder, torture, mutilation are normal. You shoot a guy for revenge and cut up his family in the bathtub to make a point. You aim at a guy on a bus and decapitate all the passengers. You have to kill the teacher at your school to get into the gang. A pretty girl is taken, tattooed (to mark the property) and raped. You do something stupid? The whole gang beats you up until you fall. Do two things wrong? They stick one in the back of your head. That's normal. A guy looks at you the wrong way? You smoke him - and his girl will have a great time in your arms.

In short: gangsters are not carefree.

To finish with these happy thoughts, don't forget that the various mafia groups are gangs in their own right - just a bit more established: the difference between a cult and a church... And then add to this the fact that the various mafia groups are also gangs. And then throw in bikers, survivalists, neo-Nazis, some 'religious' sects and you've got some good opportunities to shake up your characters with some very scary threats.

1D6 GANG RELATIONSHIP

- 1 PROTECTION Families and relatives providing support to gang members without being part of the gang.
- 2 AT RISK Kids in the neighbourhood who do favours and will eventually join the gang.
- 3 ASSOCIATES Uninitiated teenage members who gravitate to the gang, consider themselves part of it and learn the ropes.
- 4 MEMBERS who only associate with other members and are fully initiated. Responsible for daily activities and protection.
- 5 VETERANS are fully invested in the gang and have no other cultural background. They usually have good prison experience.
- 6 LEADER Usually the oldest and the one with the lightest criminal record. In contact with the other gang leaders.

1D26 GANG COLOURS (ROLL TWO OR THREE TIMES)

- 1.1 Silver
- 1.2 White
- 1.3 Light blue
- 1.4 Dark blue
- 1.5 Grey
- 1.6 Yellow
- 2.1 Black
- 2.2 Gold
- 2.3 Orange
- 2.4 Purple
- 2.5 Red
- 2.6 Green

1D26 GANG-RELATED LOCATIONS

- 1.1 Sweatshop
- 1.2 Sleazy brothel
- 1.3 Cache (drugs, weapons...)

1D26 GANG-RELATED LOCATIONS

- 1.4 Hideout (people, slaves...)
- 1.5 Street corner
- 1.6 Drug packing lab
- 2.1 Drug manufacturing lab
- 2.2 Family house
- 2.3 Public park
- 2.4 Safe house
- 2.5 Cash reserve
- 2.6 Social club - Strip club

9.14 9.14 Serve and protect

Robbin' people with a six-gun
I fought the law and the law won
I fought the law and the law won
I lost my girl and I lost my fun
I fought the law and the law won
I fought the law and the law won

—The Clash

The police are the first regalian power. They are the repository of legitimate violence. In short, they are a gang like any other, but this one is in the service of the powerful. In nanoChrome, the powers are varied - corporations, nations, cities, etc. - And they'll be up the asses of the characters in the game. And they'll be on the characters' asses at one point or another.

9.14.1 9.14.1 General organisation

The police have three main functions:

- Administrative police: to prevent disturbances, ensure the tranquillity, safety and health of the city's inhabitants - especially those in charge. People will have to deal with the police when they are loitering in guarded areas for no reason or when they need to obtain papers, authorisations and other important documents.
- Judicial police: bringing criminals to justice. As soon as the characters cross the line of the law - for example, by opening fire outside the anarzones or dealing accelerants with a few known gangsters - they'll have investigators on their tail. This is the fun part of your job as a leader...
- Political police: monitor, coerce and eliminate opponents of a certain social and moral order. These are far more dangerous than criminals and gangsters... It is obvious that those who harm the interests of corporations fall into this category and the Panopticom cells in particular. Remember that political police officers rarely bother with legality, judgements and other human rights. They have special prisons, interrogation centres, well-concealed cesspools and vast anonymous cemeteries.

9.14.2 9.14.2 Municipal police (ConUrbs)

This police department, based on an “American-style” model, is organised into four divisions under the authority of the Office of the Chief of Police. Each division is headed by a Deputy Chief.

9.14.2.1 9.14.2.1 THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

- The Chief of Police (COP) is appointed by the highest authority in the city - the Mayor. The Chief of Police (COP) is appointed by the city's highest authority - the mayor and is responsible for the overall management of the police department.
- The administrative secretariat coordinates and supports the daily activities of the COP - mail management, organisation of staff meetings, handling of complaints and requests from officers and the public, research and development of special projects...
- The Quality Office is under the direct responsibility of the COP. They are the internal services of the police department: they investigate all complaints concerning the conduct of officers and enforce discipline.
- Public Relations is the front of the Police Department and liaises with the community and journalists, providing all relevant information. PR organizes commemorations, award ceremonies, memorials, funerals, etc. and advises the OPC and his deputies on communication matters.

9.14.2.2 9.14.2.2 Field division

- The Field Division is the largest of the divisions. It deals with uniform patrols, assigned to areas divided into sectors. Its officers are in direct contact with the population and have the mission of enforcing the laws and protecting the inhabitants. It is essentially an administrative police force: it intervenes to prevent crimes and offences from being committed. The characters will have to deal with the officers of the Field Division whenever they have a suspicious behaviour. Equality, justice, professionalism and rigour do not prevent racial profiling - quite the contrary.
- Each zone is under the command of a major who is responsible for its administration and reports to the Deputy Head of the Division. The zone captains act as a link between the major and the sergeants and take over the major's duties when he is absent. Zone Lieutenants ensure that the rotas are working properly; they prepare the daily assignments, monitor discipline, manage the working time of the teams, evaluate the performance of the officers and sergeants and develop local action plans to fight crime. Administrative sergeants take roll call, manage schedules, investigate discipline problems and accidents. Sector sergeants supervise the operations of patrol officers, evaluate their work, review reports for clarification and completion, and supervise special activities.
- Several specialists are assigned to each area: a criminal analyst checks the M.O. of criminals, enters information into databases, receives victims, and maintains an up-to-date daily crime bulletin; an akashic analyst is responsible for processing real-time matrix searches for patrol officers; security inspectors monitor community-related criminal cases, arrange meetings with the public, and conduct interviews; field investigators investigate robberies, narcotics cases, misdemeanors, and simple crimes as assigned by the zone commanders.
- The Field Division also oversees the special operations department: special and normal

event monitoring, drone surveillance and response, checkpoints, hit-and-run, Red Dog Units, SWAT, CPA patrols, K-9 units, bomb disposal, etc. Special operations officers are called in to reinforce their colleagues when needed, to manage hostage situations and bomb threats, to organise and monitor vehicle pursuits in the event of a hit-and-run, to identify and clear abandoned vehicles, to impose a visible and powerful presence in the most sensitive areas and to manage all the checkpoints set up at the entrances to the anarzones.

9.14.2.3 9.14.2.3 Criminal investigation division

- The Investigation Division is made up of several independent units, spread throughout the city. They are responsible for the investigation and follow-up of criminal cases involving people or property. All major investigations are conducted by detectives and inspectors assigned to this division.
- The most prestigious unit in the Division is the Homicide Squad, but there are also several special and independent units: Youth and Family Protection Unit; Special Investigations Unit; and a section attached to the Prosecutor's Office.
- This Division is also responsible for the forensic resources: analysis and trace laboratories, coroner's services, ballistics, genetic laboratory, nanodrones in the field, etc.; as well as the Akashic Investigation Department, which deals specifically with matrix crimes and special operations in this field.

9.14.2.4 9.14.2.4 Technical services division

- This division provides the communication and technical means for the other divisions. It is made up of several offices: Communications; IT; General Services; Records and Archives; Seals; Mechanical and Fleet Services; and Impound.

9.14.2.5 9.14.2.5 Administrative division

- This division provides administrative and logistical support to all other divisions. It is responsible for the initial recruitment, vetting and training of applicants; manages budgets and schedules; manages the department's property and possessions, including seizures; and researches, tests and purchases equipment provided to officers, including vehicles, weapons, uniforms and toilet paper...

9.14.3 9.14.3 Corporate security (enclaves)

Corporatist security services do not have quite the same goals and duties as street cops. They serve and protect the interests of their bosses and shareholders, not the public. Strangely, however, they have almost more difficulty in doing their job.

First of all, let's differentiate here between the standard security services and the operational corporatist agents that the characters may face. The latter rarely respond to the security services - they are much more often employed in the team of their direct sponsor (as special secretaries, for example). The security services are under the direction of a Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) and have much more general duties. The characters will have to deal with the corporate agents if they get noticed by the wrong people; but they will have to manage the security services to avoid being noticed...

The problem with corporatist security services is that they are a hindrance. They never facilitate the smooth running of business and reduce the speed at which projects develop. In any case, this is how they are perceived by all the other departments: it has to be said that badging a door twenty times a day or submitting to random searches tends to irritate employees; and managers find it hard to fill in endless papers and notes for the slightest trip or meeting... As a result, their greatest enemies are sometimes the employees themselves, who do things half-heartedly or recriminate at the slightest constraints.

And then, the bosses - the board of directors, the shareholders - sometimes ask that the departments be a little more flexible. It's all about the smooth running of the business!

Depending on the needs, security services can be centralised - fully attached to the parent company's offices and managing all operations - or decentralised - each corporate unit has its own services adapted to local needs. Or a mixture of both.

The list of tasks for the security services is quite impressive (and probably not exhaustive), but it gives an idea of what the characters may have to face if they seek to harm a corpo - their analysts are prepared for all eventualities...

- Forensic analysis
- Economic and industrial counter-espionage
- Continuous monitoring of personnel (drug tests, surprise searches, bank investigations...)
- Recruitment control
- Strategic development
- Internal investigations
- Access management and identity control
- Insurance management and legal compliance
- Event management and security
- Anti-fraud and accounting monitoring
- Business continuity and accident/disaster management
- Implementation of internal regulations, maintenance of discipline
- Data protection
- Respect for privacy
- Akashic security
- Security of premises and possessions
- Security of tools and applications
- Network security
- Security and electronic countermeasures
- Security and control of subcontractors
- Physical security of managers and employees
- Threat monitoring and vulnerability assessment

9.14.4 9.14.4 On the wrong side of investigations

All this leads to the fun part of this chapter. Most of the time, the characters commit a lot of crimes and, if they are not caught in the act (just to start a good fight), the game leader rarely follows up... Except that investigators don't let go of their prey easily if they have something to chase!

The general principle of this tool is as follows: the investigators can make skill rolls to find the characters if they have committed a crime or an offence. The difficulty depends on the crime and the clues the characters may have left behind - at the discretion of the leader who will use the following tables. If the roll is successful, the investigators find them; if not, it's a dead end (until new information is found).

We have chosen not to give precise figures so as not to scare you: the lists are, like all the lists in this book, invitations and inspirations. But, as a general rule, start from a given difficulty level (18 for example). Add +2 when circumstances are favourable to the characters and -2 when circumstances are unfavourable, for each of the items you may find appropriate. In the end, you will probably have a long list of + and -'s that will partly cancel each other out, but not totally.

Generally, the Investigation roll is made on the next cycle after the crime or misdemeanour; if it is successful, the characters will probably have trouble in the next cycle; if it is unsuccessful, the investigators can roll again in the next cycle with a substantial increase in difficulty.

9.14.4.1 9.14.4.1 On patrol

Do the characters get spotted by a patrol while going about their business? You can use the characters' Stealth roll (in cooperation) to set the difficulty of the cops' skill roll and adjust it according to several factors:

- Are the characters in a group? In pairs? Alone and isolated?
- Are the characters behaving suspiciously? Suspicious appearance (for the neighbourhood)? Suspicious material? Do they run or try to hide awkwardly?
- Are the characters known to the police? Are they wanted? Is their description broadcast? Is it accurate, vague or erroneous?
- Is the street deserted or is it crowded? What is the neighbourhood? Abandoned alleys? The underside of a motorway bridge? A street lined with villas? A square between corporate buildings?
- Is it dark? Dark night? Is it sunny?
- Do the cops have drones in the air? Dogs on the ground? Do the characters have akashic programs activated?
- What is the level of security in the neighbourhood?

9.14.4.2 9.14.4.2 Investigations

Once the crime has been committed, how do the characters get out of it? The initial difficulty depends, globally, on the actions of the characters and the nature of the crime. The more important, spectacular, bloody, or involving influential victims the crime is, the lower the initial difficulty - the cops go to great lengths to get to the bottom of it.

- Are the characters caught red-handed? In the immediate vicinity? Are they in possession of stolen goods?
- Are there any witnesses? Physical? Akashic? Electronic?
- Have the characters spoken? Exchanged names? Used a known modus operandi? Adopted significant behaviours? Were they in disguise?
- Were the characters violent? Intimidating? Discreet? Invisible?
- Did the characters leave any traces? Fingerprints? Tools? DNA? Materials from their hideout or from their normal life (Locard principle)? Did they use nanodrones for cover?

- Is there a financial trail that can be followed?
- Does the crime have a recognisable motive? Is it possible to understand the motives of the characters?
- Is there an akashic trail?
- Do the characters have accomplices? Did they tell anyone about their crime? Did they need help before or after? Can anyone sell the characters out or turn them in? Do they try to pass on stolen goods?
- Are the characters already known to the police? Are they registered? Are they wanted?
- Do they have an alibi? Do they have a good reputation? Are they protected?
- Are there signs that a crime has been committed (theft, body, signs of a struggle, etc.)?
- Can the police easily investigate? Corporate blockades? Hostile anarzone?
- Do the cops have a personal interest in going through with it? Can they be broken? Do they have too much work to do? Do they take the victim in sympathy or antipathy?
- Can the cops do searches? Can the cops search? Can the cops search the characters? Question their relatives?

9.14.4.3 9.14.4.3 Suspects

Once the investigation is successful, the cops will come down on the characters. But first there will probably be surveillance (physical, electronic, akashic), stakeouts, tailing, searches.

And arrest.

Remember that cops will prefer to arrest characters separately, at the same time, with maximum security: the quiet middleman will have two detectives coming to him as he leaves the restaurant; the ultra-violent swordsman will be picked off in the middle of the night by a SWAT team and reinforcements outside.

If it's corporatist agents who intervene, let's just say things might not be as calm: how do your players behave when they're the ones on the right side of the gun? Do the same. A bullet in the head, direct, or subtle negotiations: it's up to them...

Note

urban zones have their own security level, rated from 0 for anarzones to 10 for the most secure anti-zones, passing by 1 to 3 for conurbs and 4 to 7 for enclaves. Add this level of security to the difficulties of the jets in chatting to the authorities, hiding, camouflaging weapons, etc.

10 10 Relationships

It was in sexual relationships that things things started to get strange, that I realised that I might not have the upper hand, shall we say, on this that I might not have control, shall we say, over what I might feel. I now knew everything that Elaine liked and everything that she didn't like. I wasn't trying anything different, nothing that would make me imagine that she was someone else or anything like that. It was more perverse than that. I just remember feeling that Elaine was wearing some kind of mask that night, a mask that she couldn't take off, and that the mask was her own face.

Characters have one or more relationships (see page 80) and can spend their connection points to activate them, in order to get their help. You can, of course, modulate the spending of connection points according to the circumstances: have the characters helped the relationship lately or done it a favour? Is the service a little more or less important than expected, etc.? If the request is directly related to the services offered by the contact (see page 158), feel free to lower the price a notch.

RELATIONSHIP INTERVENTION

Contacts Friends Intimate

A minor service, such as a trivial (but important) information important for the characters) or a material help that does not require effort.	2	0	0
An important service, such as crucial information or time-consuming material help.	5	2	0
A major service, which puts the relationship at odds with people they otherwise know.	10	4	2
A unique service, which puts the relationship at great personal risk - whether it is providing strategic information or showing up in the field at the risk of exposing oneself to all one's enemies.	-	8	5

10.1 10.1 Building relationships

Print and cut out the portraits of the extras at the end of this booklet.

When creating the group (see page 21), the leader divides these portraits among the players present. Each player eliminates a figure that he or she does not like, and then distributes his or her cards among his or her neighbours in order to repeat the elimination process. When each player has only two portraits left, the leader shuffles them and deals them out again.

The players then write down a trait for each portrait - it is best to use a post-it note. A line can be an adjective, an opinion, a complete sentence, a quote, etc. The idea is to characterise as best you can what the portrait inspires. When each picture has received a first trait, the players distribute the cards between their neighbours (one card to the right, one card to the left) and then define new traits for the figures they have chosen. new lines for the figures they have received.

When all portraits have received two strokes, they are placed in the middle of the table. The players take each figure one after the other and, together, give it a name, an occupation, a short story, psychological traits and the reason why the characters might know it. You can also associate between one and three services with him, specifying his areas of activity and intervention in a specific way, in order to link them to the activities of the characters (see the following table).

It is very funny, before starting to define each relationship together, to mix up the post-it notes bearing the traits and reassign them at random. Very often, the players' choices are based very heavily on the appearance of the portrait. By mixing the post-it notes and therefore the proposed traits, we end up with things that are much more exciting, amusing and interesting, and that open up the perspectives even more.

The game leader can then complete these portraits on his own, on the spot or at rest, by developing a history of the relationship - its secrets, its motivations, its links with other extras, its allegiances to certain factions, its short or long term objectives, etc. He can then give the additional information that he wants to know about the relationship. He can then give the players any additional information he wishes or keep it to himself.

BLACK MARKET: The relationship can supply or sell materials to the characters - illicit materials, discounted prices, usually specialising in one or two specific areas, but the black market as a whole remains accessible.

ENTRANCES: The relationship has entrances to all the important places in the city and can lead you there - a backstage pass, a corporate luncheon, a meeting at the town hall...

INFORMATION: The relationship may provide information in one or more areas - it may be technical information or news about news about factions or neighbourhoods.

INTERVENTION: The relationship is ready to give you a hand in the field, even if it means getting a little dirty. The more dangerous it is, the more compensation it will demand, but it knows how to behave and knows a few useful tricks.

TRANSPORT: The relationship can transport characters from one point to another in various conditions, whether it is to go fast or to be discreet. It can also transport equipment, messages and cargo. It has, of course, specialities that influence its preparation or its prices.

MATRIX: The relationship works in the matrix from home - or a secure location. If you don't have a coder in the team or if you want to support them, the programmer can do the work remotely, unless you give them a more specific job.

FENCE: The relationship can buy back material from characters - weapons, vehicles, jewellery, credit card laundering, etc. Fences are rarely fussy, but they will pay more in areas they are good at and less in areas where their costs will rise quickly due to lack of quick and easy outlets.

REFUGE: The relationship can provide you with a safe haven for a variable amount of time, with all the comforts if you are wealthy enough and even medical facilities in case of major concern. As long as you are under his protection, no one will find you unless he betrays you.

CONNECTIONS: The relationship is a node in a complex and extensive social network. His job is to connect people with each other, either on his own or on request. If you want to meet a particular person, that's who you should go to.

ADVICE: The relationship is a mentor and protector for the characters.

10.2 10.2 Spiel and eloquence

Role-playing is a dialectic game, even a maieutic one, since the entire table gives birth to a story that no one knows what it will be a priori. It is a game in which language, speech, plays a decisive role. This is not without its paradoxes. Indeed, one rarely expects a player playing the role of a knight armed to the teeth to know how to handle a sword and lead a horse into battle - he describes his attacks verbally and it is the dice that decide the final result. But what about

when the action in play, such as chatting up a security guard, can also be an action around the table, with the player speaking through his character's mouth to bamboozle the guard, and thus performing the manoeuvre himself - the player is of course in charge of the content of the chat, but it is the character who is the medium in play: he is the one who has the body language, the ability to lie straight to his face, etc.

This is an extremely thorny issue that has occupied pages and pages of discussion since the origin of role-playing. Everyone has their own opinions, solutions and practices. In fact, there is one specific term, which sums up all these discussions: it is roleplay - and, of course, no one agrees on its exact definition but everyone uses it to describe their ideal way of playing.

It is not our intention to resolve these paradoxes or even to give a definitive opinion, just to draw your attention to a few concerns you may have in play and to sketch out some answers that you can take hold of.

10.2.1 10.2.1 The Player and The Character

The first paradox of roleplay is that the player both directs and embodies his character. He directs it by indicating to the game leader all his actions; he embodies it by speaking through his mouth. In the first case, it is the character's abilities and the result of the dice that indicate how things are done; in the second case, it is often the player's own oratory abilities that count. But what if a shy or less articulate player wants to play a barrister capable of great oratory? What do you do when a player with a highly-developed oratory skills plays an illiterate bullhead who is unable to chat? Certainly not forbidding it; and you will probably find it very difficult to compensate for natural tendencies.

Nevertheless, there are several possibilities: the first is to listen first and foremost to the arguments put forward and not to the way they are said. Sometimes a simple, decisive word or phrase is enough to turn a discussion on its head; conversely, beware of tautology, bluster and obvious sophistry.

The second is to index the rolls (the character's abilities) to the roleplay (the player's words). Basically, if a player has glibness, take the difficulty of the rolls down a notch - a good player can eventually make up for his character's crass incompetence, but that won't do it. And don't forget that a simple argument at the right moment sometimes counts for more than a very impressive one-man show.

10.2.2 10.2.2 Nature of social conflict

Where it gets tricky is that not all social situations are equal in terms of storytelling, and not all have the same stakes. The situations are extremely varied - from buying something on the black market to a 'legal' tussle in front of a yakuza oyabun, with the risk of having one's little finger rolled in the sand, if not one's head.

10.2.3 10.2.3 Go fast, don't play everything

Not every situation is worth five minutes of show and tell that will involve one or two players and leave the rest idle. Bribing a guard to get into the museum just before closing time, convincing the intern at the hotel desk to show you the bad guy's room, or getting hired as a bodyguard to watch over the backstage area of a mega-concert only requires a quick roll and sometimes no

roll at all. These are actions that just indicate the direction the story is taking: you either get into the museum or not, you either get the location of the room or not, you either get hired or not. Of course, if you're having fun, play the whole scene - sometimes that's even the best thing to do (we told you it was sometimes paradoxical) - but frankly, don't waste time.

10.2.4 10.2.4 Small talk

At the other end of the spectrum are all the exchanges that absolutely must be played in full to achieve their purpose: what information is actually being dropped by each party? What do we learn from a slip of the tongue or a clever innuendo? What do they reveal that they wanted to keep secret? These informal conversations have an unparalleled evocative power - the impression for the players that the world is truly alive, deep. Nevertheless, the game leader has to pay attention to several things: What does the person he is playing know and what does he not know during the conversation? What are his personal objectives, his fears, his desires, the means of compelling or seducing him? What is his real social power, his networks, his supports, his safeguards, his own means of pressure or seduction? What does he know about the characters and how does he view them? As dangerous adversaries? As mere transients who can take the blame for his own misdeeds? Likely allies whom it is good policy to support for the moment? During these conversations, feel free to put the rest of the world on stage around them - the servants coming and going, the children and family bustling about nearby, the staff taking notes and nodding knowingly, the little glances exchanged backstage, etc.

10.2.5 10.2.5 Between dog and wolf

There are still circumstances in which the conversation and the throw are equally important. Here you have to find the right balance. There are no precise rules like those of combat to manage social conflicts which must decide between two speakers - first and foremost because the player's word counts and he will never be satisfied with a "And now it's my turn to throw my argument in his face, 7 points of damage with the sarcastic smile bonus!

So how do you do it? You can manage everything in a Charisma roll, with a variable bonus or malus depending on the social or political position of each party, on the arguments put forward, on the weapons present, on the number of allies in the room, etc. You can make several rolls - the best of three or five rounds, for example. You can bring in outside referees - an influential corporatist, an ambitious gang leader, a well-connected cop - who listen to no one and push their own agenda. Use white and black tokens to count the arguments. Involve the crowd. Ask someone from outside the game table to sit in on the discussion and make a decision.

There is no single solution because there is no single social situation. Where combat always involves the use of weapons and well-defined physical tactical objectives, social conflict is highly subjective and therefore subject to all kinds of arbitration - so the game leader must always consider whether or not an extra is sensitive to arguments without stopping to consider whether or not he or she, as an individual, is sensitive to them.

11 11 Adventures

"Once," she mused sullenly, "there was a purpose to all this." Her life had a wider perspective, a definite aim. A direction, upwards, out of the gravity well, plunging upwards, out of the gravity well, plunging into the black purity of the void of space. But

now, the perspective has narrowed. The only thing that remains is the only imperative: to survive the Present Moment. The past hardly matters; the future, we shall see, day by day, as it comes. Every second, a new burden, a new application of the of the imperative.

—Walter Jon Williams, *Wired*

Whether you're playing on the go or in the countryside, you'll need stories to keep your players busy. Use the following tips to develop your own adventures.

These can be missions for techmercs or corporates, or simply hooks to start investigations for Panopticom.

11.1 11.1 Improvisation

Much of the fun in nanoChrome comes from the constant improvisation that the game leader must engage in. The secret is that a good improvisation must be prepared: imagination works all the better when it is subject to important constraints. If you have a few general ideas before you start, it will be easier afterwards to bounce from element to element, to add things and to connect the dots.

Have you taken lots of notes during the world creation phase with the players? Now it's time to put them into shape. From all this material:

- choose six important events, things that all your stories will revolve around (at least all your first stories). Add two or three points of detail that you think are interesting, secrets that the characters can't know, and weave invisible links between two or more seemingly unrelated events.
- Choose six names of people or factions that have emerged during the discussions. You can - must - tap into the relationships the players have created from the portraits (see page 157) and use these resources to build new stories and involve them in previous events.
- Make a list of six objects, six locations, six upcoming events, to use as McGuffins when you need them.
- Make a list of six threats, six things that will go very wrong in the future if no one is careful. These can be people who will do bad things (intentionally or accidentally) or multiple coincidences that will build up to the final explosion.
- Finally, try to post some links that point to The Other.

The most important thing to remember when improvising is that nothing you write down or plan is set in stone. Stay flexible: as long as you haven't given the players any information, you can change everything all the time, imagine more coherent solutions or twists, work on your extras, your locations, your events to adapt them to the stories that have already emerged. Be confident, adapt to the circumstances and not the other way around. Don't impose anything that might break the dynamics of the game just because it's what you've written down. Things evolve, change. The only thing that cannot change is what has been played at the table and experienced by the characters. Everything else is just potential.

11.2 11.2 Creating an adventure

To create an adventure, make four draws from the following tables.

- The first draw is how the story begins...
- The second draw is the mission the characters (or villains) are given.
- The third draw is the location where most of the adventure will take place.
- The final draw indicates the main opponent they will ultimately face.

The way it starts, the introduction, the hook: this is how you start the adventure. It can be a simple announcement, but you can also set the scene for the whole event and make it more complicated or more fun for the players. Most often, it will be the Client who arrives with a problem to solve and some ¥ to entice the characters to accept the contract; but it can also be information gleaned from the matrix or events that happen to the characters. The hook can be either before the mission order (and triggers the adventure) or after (and is where it all begins).

The mission order: this gives you the theme of the story you are telling. It's a simple objective that the characters will have to meet in order to succeed. From there, your job as game leader will be to set up obstacles and mysteries, place formidable opponents and turn the game into a sort of endless rollercoaster ride of twists, surprises and revelations. The mission order can also be given to other people - these are the people that a Panopticom team can investigate after the mission has been completed.

The location of the adventure: this is the main place where everything will happen in the end. Of course, if you're not lazy, you can pull in an extra location or two to add more places to visit, but normally you should have plenty to do with this one location. In any case, as soon as they know enough to go there, ask them what they know. This could be rumours they have picked up on the matrix, things they have learned on previous visits, information they have read or heard. Go round the table a couple of times: each player has to give one piece of information. This can be true or false, or just inaccurate. Use these elements to dress up the scene, add twists, dangers or obstacles.

The main adversary: The last die point indicates the main adversary of the characters, the one who is going to get in their way or who is directly competing with them for the mission. If you've already drawn this opponent in previous adventures, that's fine: it's the return of the son of vengeance. A good recurring extra is always good to have. If he's been eliminated before, don't worry: he's back with a nice scar and a heightened desire for revenge, unless it's his son, his brother or another relative.

1D66 HOW THE STORY BEGINS...

- 1.1 In a shopping centre
- 1.2 In a drunk tank
- 1.3 In a waiting room
- 1.4 Fights between gangsters
- 1.5 Talks with other techmercs
- 1.6 Strange and visible tags
- 2.1 In a nightclub
- 2.2 In the WakuWaku open space

1D66 HOW THE STORY BEGINS...

- 2.3 In the middle of a car chase
- 2.4 People in the neighbourhood are scared
- 2.5 Naked and handcuffed to a chair
- 2.6 A few words dropped by a shopkeeper
- 3.1 Who carries the body?
- 3.2 An industrial accident
- 3.3 A call for help
- 3.4 Carnage in a flat
- 3.5 A lunch at Dinner
- 3.6 A brutal climatic event
- 4.1 An Akashic spirit leaves a message
- 4.2 A newsflash about the matrix
- 4.3 A secret meeting with masked people
- 4.4 A guy was killed in cold blood
- 4.5 A press conference
- 4.6 An official summons
- 5.1 A suspicious disappearance
- 5.2 A Panopticom broadcast
- 5.3 A wild shootout
- 5.4 A strange icon to click on in his field of vision
- 5.5 A brutal arrest in the early morning
- 5.6 A classified ad
- 6.1 A cheeky provocation
- 6.2 A bizarre virtual reality advertisement
- 6.3 A strange meeting
- 6.4 A meeting in a virtual lounge
- 6.5 A rumour in the squat
- 6.6 A series of suspicious overdoses

1D66 THE MISSION...

- 1.1 Helping a person or persons (remove from the
- 1.2 Arrest a criminal
- 1.3 Rob a corporate enclave
- 1.4 Convince someone to keep their agreements
- 1.5 Convince a person or a valuable object
- 1.6 Thwart a criminal or corporatist conspiracy
- 2.1 Release a prisoner
- 2.2 Destroy data or an industrial prototype
- 2.3 Eliminate someone
- 2.4 Prevent an assassination
- 2.5 Explore a location in the anarzone
- 2.6 Extract a corporate executive and his family
- 3.1 Discreetly make a corporatist executive talk
- 3.2 Make evidence disappear
- 3.3 Infiltrate a corporation to extract R&D data

1D66 THE MISSION...

- 3.4 Play bodyguard and nanny for a few days
- 3.5 Deliver a shipment
- 3.6 Investigate a problem or crime
- 4.1 Build a surveillance and intelligence case
- 4.2 Negotiating with very dangerous criminals
- 4.3 Hosting and protecting a party
- 4.4 Entering an anti-zone
- 4.5 Strike a blow against corporate assets
- 4.6 Carry a confidential written message
- 5.1 Protect a building
- 5.2 Recover a particular item from the black market
- 5.3 Relocate wanted persons
- 5.4 Find a missing person
- 5.5 Sabotage facilities
- 5.6 Guaranteeing a sensitive meeting
- 6.1 Tracking down a dangerous criminal
- 6.2 Tracking down an Akashic spirit
- 6.3 Finding unique and confidential information
- 6.4 Finding a gift for an important person
- 6.5 Find a hidden or protected place
- 6.6 Steal a valuable object

1D66 THE PLACES...

- 1.1 Abandoned warehouses behind Central Station
- 1.2 The paediatric wing of Sacred Hearth Hospital
- 1.3 The VIP floor of a corporate building
- 1.4 Mr Frost's shop in a souk in the Anarzone
- 1.5 The Egyptian collection at the Walberg Institute
- 1.6 The Symphonia Express gay bar
- 2.1 The Apple, Strawberry and Apple hookah bar
- 2.2 The nomadic camp of the Five Elements tribe in
- 2.3 Rescue centre No. 78 on the edge of the Anarzone
- 2.4 The construction site of the new World Food tower
- 2.5 St John Nepomuk Cemetery
- 2.6 Afrodyke & Herakles gym club
- 3.1 The International Financial Credit lobby
- 3.2 The control room of a distributed power plant
- 3.3 The Indian restaurant Le Pondichéry mon amour
- 3.4 The surroundings of the penitentiary centre n°5
- 3.5 The aisles of the Paradise Tower Mall
- 3.6 The private flats of a corporate executive
- 4.1 The cold rooms of the northern abattoirs
- 4.2 Backstage at Club 221BS on a concert night
- 4.3 The corridors of the Morgue
- 4.4 The underground technical corridors of a

1D66 THE PLACES...

- 4.5 The mixed dormitories of a second-rate university
- 4.6 The attics of Madame Charles' brothel
- 5.1 The changing rooms of the Dagobah Arena Blitzball
- 5.2 By the Nelson Mandela Park water feature
- 5.3 A discreet housing estate in a corpo enclave
- 5.4 A coffin hotel from the DeadNight chain
- 5.5 A White Light production lab in a conurbation
- 5.6 A nanobiotech R&D lab
- 6.1 An anonymous underground lounge behind the wind
- 6.2 A squat frequented by an Aryan fraternity
- 6.3 An Arcatech shooting range
- 6.4 A ghost village housing members of the Sons of
- 6.5 A maquiladora under high protection on the border
- 6.6 A disused metro station

1D66 THE OPPONENT...

- 1.1 The leader of a gang
- 1.2 The board of directors of a corporation
- 1.3 The guru of a criminal cult
- 1.4 The godfather of an ethnic mafia clan
- 1.5 The boss of a network
- 1.6 The Client
- 2.1 Three racist and aggressive strippers
- 2.2 A bloodthirsty /C
- 2.3 A corporatist agent on a mission
- 2.4 A clandestine SR agent
- 2.5 An orbital agent
- 2.6 A panicked corporatist executive
- 3.1 A sociopathic corporatist executive
- 3.2 An Akashic Shaman
- 3.3 An independent contractor
- 3.4 A cyberpsychotic
- 3.5 A manipulated UN diplomat
- 3.6 An Akashic spirit
- 4.1 A rotten cop
- 4.2 A bored immortal
- 4.3 A normal guy who wasn't given a choice
- 4.4 A guy chased by bad guys
- 4.5 A doctor with no morals
- 4.6 A retired corporatist officer
- 5.1 A fifteen year old genius
- 5.2 A mad scientist
- 5.3 An arms dealer
- 5.4 A lonely hitman
- 5.5 A guy who hears voices in his head

1D66 THE OPPONENT...

- 5.6 A guy who has come a long way for revenge
- 6.1 A ruthless, ambitious thug
- 6.2 A cabal of powerful guys
- 6.3 A high-flying escort
- 6.4 An escaped engineering experiment
- 6.5 A sadistic madam
- 6.6 A tribe /C in need

11.3 11.3 Complications

Once you have drawn the first four points of the adventure, you need to flesh it out and provide some additional elements. To do this, simply answer the following questions. You can answer all of them or just some - you can even add to the sheet during the course of the adventure depending on the actions of the characters.

11.3.1 11.3.1 1. What can go wrong?

A mission is rarely fun. When the circumstances are against the characters, everything becomes more complicated.

1D26 SOME UNWELCOME COMPLICATIONS

- 1.1 Difficult material circumstances
- 1.2 Complicated personal events
- 1.3 Missing relevant information
- 1.4 Very specific material (or a single object) is
- 1.5 The mission order is a fake or has been changed
- 1.6 It's a trap!
- 2.1 You have to find and use a specific means of
- 2.2 You have to convince someone to go with you first
- 2.3 There is breakage and things to fix
- 2.4 Political, economic, personal conditions are
- 2.5 An urgent secondary mission must be accomplished
- 2.6 Complex and potentially dramatic local events

11.3.2 11.3.2 2. Who opposes the characters and why?

The characters are not the only ones on the case. We're not talking about the mission's opponent here. We're talking about competition. There are other people hanging around. Why are they here?

1D6 WHAT THEY WANT

- 1 They are just annoying the characters to annoy their
- 2 They immediately need the characters for something
- 3 Their story has absolutely nothing to do with the
- 4 Their objectives are completely different but target

1D6 WHAT THEY WANT

- 5 Their objectives are directly opposed
- 6 Their objectives are the same but for different

These antagonists should start to appear early on in the story, in the early stages. At first from a distance, as annoying little annoyances, then more and more head-on - until an agreement emerges or it ends in a good fight.

1D26 OPPONENTS OR COMPETITORS

- 1.1 Other techmerchs
- 1.2 Allies or enemies of the main opponent
- 1.3 Local residents
- 1.4 Civil authorities
- 1.5 A corporation's security forces
- 1.6 An ally of the characters
- 2.1 A corporate executive
- 2.2 A gang
- 2.3 A strange guy
- 2.4 A powerful and very rich oligarch with big money
- 2.5 An orbital
- 2.6 A lone swordsman

11.3.3 11.3.3 3. Would the characters have a good reason to abandon the mission or change its terms?

Characters are not always able to complete their mission - unless they perform extraordinary feats (but that is what is expected of them). Sometimes they have to choose between their safety and that of their allies, between their lives and their ideals. What will their choice be?

1D6 A GOOD REASON TO GIVE UP

- 1 Appearances are deceptive; the mission is reversed
- 2 Characters face major legal risks or risk doing something very stupid
- 3 The characters will have to deny their honour or commit a terrible act (such as causing the death of a child)
- 4 The characters will lose something important (their weapon of choice, a close person, an alliance...)
- 5 A second story, something huge appears; a choice has to be made between two objectives
- 6 Too much opposition

11.3.4 11.3.4 4. Do I want to put down an important element of the universe or the story I am telling?

You must have an idea in the back of your mind about what is happening in your part of the world. Sooner or later you will start to develop bits of story and you will want to place them. Use this adventure to do so: the mission will allow the characters to discover some very important secrets. What are they? How will they find out? What will be the consequences of their

discoveries?

11.3.5 11.3.5 5. Is there an extra, a setting, an event that I really want to stage?

Come on, there must be a scene you have in mind. A really hot situation. Something that's going to make the players go wild. Special effects, unique descriptions that you've been inspired by dreams or by trolling the illustration sites on the internet. Go for it. Throw the sauce, think big, don't skimp on the means - they don't cost you anything. Do it right and do it big! No regrets!

11.4 11.4 Stages of the adventure

Add one or more stages to the adventure.

Each stage is an intermediate objective - give the relevant information so that the players know where to go and what to do to complete that stage. Then move on to the next. The final objective may be revealed at the start of the mission or it may only become clear along the way after several stages. As the mission progresses, drop clues to the players as to how to complete the final objective:

- Important information: how to get into the opponent's domain, where the defences are, who is really in charge of this story, etc.
- Useful material: the code to enter the opponent's house or the security keys, a weapon capable of shooting his bodyguard in CPA, a packet of ¥ to pay a middleman, etc.
- A secondary objective to be completed at the same time: unmask the traitor in the entourage of the leader of an allied faction, free prisoners, find an important object or destroy it, etc.

1D26 STEPS

- 1.1 Confronting someone (in a duel, on the street, in a drinking contest...)
- 1.2 Fighting a threat (a gang, corporate agents, a hitman...)
- 1.3 Bypass an obstacle (a checkpoint, a booby-trapped no-man's land...)
- 1.4 Destroy (a reputation, an object, prevent information from spreading...)
- 1.5 Explore mysterious or dangerous places
- 1.6 Obtaining information (by trickery, searching the matrix, stealing papers, interviewing informants in squats...)
- 2.1 Enter or escape from a place (a corporatist enclave, a prison, an anti-zone...)
- 2.2 Retrieve a key (an object or a password for example)
- 2.3 Meet someone important or get permission to pass
- 2.4 Solve a riddle (a puzzle, a mystery, a code...)
- 2.5 Seducing, convincing or coaxing (a corpo executive, a tribal council /C, the waitress at the local Shawarma...)
- 2.6 Finding a route (coordinates, secret passage, guidebook...)

11.5 11.5 Conclusion

The last step is almost always the mission itself - at least, the outcome. But if you're feeling playful, you can also decide to play out the consequences of the mission. After all, the mission

may just be the beginning of the trouble. Imagine that the characters quickly foil the assassination attempt they have been instructed to prevent. What happens next? What does the victim do? What if they disappear or go on the hunt for those who want them dead? The mission itself may be just a stage before the big finale, much later. Feel free to vary the approaches and lengthen the stories.

12 12 Enemies and NPCs

“They’re vampires, Cowboy. They suck the blood of the Earth because that’s what keeps them alive, but they don’t know what it is to live for.”

—Walter Jon Williams, *Wired*

nanoChrome offers you to play in a relatively coherent world. So don’t try to balance the opposites, but put the right things in the right places and let the players be intrepid. If a place has to be guarded by a real army, so be it. If the gangers are really lousy, so much the better. Characters will alternately be prey and predator depending on what they want to accomplish.

Use the archetypes for each as needed, mixing a type, a profile and an equipment pack. You can add any skills and abilities you think make sense.

Note

It was the /Cs who gave nicknames to the norms, corresponding to their place in society. The terms have since passed into common parlance...

12.1 12.1 NPC archetypes

DESCRIPTION	CHANCE CONN.	
ZOMBIES are anyone who leads a perfectly normal life - metro, work, sleep. They hang out on public transport, roam the anarzone, forget themselves in corpos leather lounges or float in the persistent worlds of the matrix.	0	1
SKELETONS are the zombies who have a gun and a uniform. They are responsible for guarding the herd and preventing the deviants from chewing their cud in peace. But apart from that, they don’t differ much from the previous ones.	0	3
GHOULS are enhanced zombies, who have understood that they can feed on the masses. They are all the neighbourhood bullies, the ambitious and sadistic corpos executives, the functional sociopaths who parasitise society.	1	5
VAMPIRES stand out from the crowd. They rule or give the illusion of ruling. They have great powers and very little responsibility, but they are not untouchable. Generally, they are ghouls who have risen from seed and hope to become liches.	3	10
LICHES are out of reach. They are the real masters of the world, the ones who decide for everyone. Unfortunately, they are sometimes so far away that they can no longer see the details and a few deviant zombies can still play nasty tricks on them.	7	15

12.2 12.2 NPC profiles

1D6	PROFILE	POWER	HP	DEFENCE
1	HALF-SALT	+0	5	8
2	BIG MAN	+1	10	9
3	STRONG	+2	15	10
4	BIG SHOT	+3	20	11
5	BIG OX	+4	25	12
6	WE SAY "SIR"	+5	30	13

12.3 12.3 NPC equipment

D26	ENEMY	WEAPONS	MODIFIERS	CYBERNETICS
1.1	CORPORATE AGENT	FIST WEAPON [attack +2; damage +1; Interfaced, Secure, Silent, Impact, Versatile multitool, Voice Multicharger] CIVIL PROTECTION [Interfaced, Discreet] MELEE WEAPON [attack +2; damage +0; Accuracy, Discrete] CIVIL PROTECTION [Discrete]	HP +10 Defence +4 Initiative +1d6	NEURONIC [Retinal display, Emotional control, Stress reducer, Wired reflexes] PANOPTIC [Photographic memory, Light amplifier], REINFORCEMENTS [Automatic stimulation, Double heart, Blood filter]
1.2	CORPORATE GUARD	ASSAULT RIFLE [Attack +2; Damage +4; Interfaced, Secure, Impact, Multipurpose Chambering, Voice Multicharger] TACTICAL PROTECTION [Reinforcements, IFF, Auto-injectors]. LONG NANOBLADE [attack +4; damage +9; Impact, Accuracy, Interfaced]	HP +0 Defence +1 Initiative +0	NANOGENETIC [Rejuvenation]
1.3	CORPORATE COMMANDO	FIST WEAPON [attack +4; damage +6; Impact, Interfaced] LONG NANOBLADE [attack +4; damage +5; Impact, Accuracy, initiative	HP +20 Defence +6 Initiative +1d6	NEURONIC [Retinal display, Wired reflexes] PROSTHETIC [Woven skin, Bone replacement, Nictitating membrane] STRENGTHENING [Automatic stimulation, Double heart]
1.4	CORPORATE CPA		HP +0 Defence +6 Initiative +1d6	NEURONIC [Wired Reflexes] CPA [Acceleration, Anti-shock, Armor, Armor x2, EMP Protection]
1.5	COMBAT CYBORG		HP +15 Défense +4 initiative	NEURONIQUE [Inhibiteur de douleur, Réflexes câblés] NANOGENÉTIQUE [Amortisseur

D26 ENEMY	WEAPONS	MODIFIERS	CYBERNETICS
			traumatique, Modification endocrinienne, Pyrokynésie]
	Interfaced]	+1d6	PANOPTIQUE [Équilibre] PROSTHÉTIQUE [Peau tissée, Plaques dermiques, Sutures automatiques, Membres inférieurs, Amortisseurs de saut, Assistance cinétique, Membres supérieurs, Impacteurs, Remplacement osseux] RENFORCEMENTS [Double coeur]
1.6 GANGER	ASSAULT RIFLE [attaque +2; dégâts +4; Précision, Impact]	HP +0 Défense +0 — Initiative +0	
2.1 CORPORATE GUARD	ASSAULT RIFLE [attack +2; damage +4; Precision, Impact] TACTICAL PROTECTION [Reinforcements, IFF, Auto-injectors]	HP +0 Defense +6 Initiative +0	PROSTHETICS [Woven skin, dermal plates]
2.2 HENCHMAN	HANDGUN [attack +4; damage +0; Precision, Discreet, Interfaced] CIVILIAN PROTECTION [Discreet]	HP +5 Defense +4 Initiative +1d6	NEURONICS [Wired reflexes] NANOGENETICS [Hydra genoblasts, Totipotent genoblasts]
2.3 FIELD JOURNALIST	HANDGUN [attack +2; damage +0; Precision, Discreet] CIVILIAN PROTECTION [Discreet]	HP +0 Defense +2 Initiative +0	PANOPTIC [Sound editor, SSP recorder, Sensory implant, Photographic memory, Micro-cannon, Zoom, High-definition vision]
2.4 EVERYMAN	—	HP +0 Defense +0 — Initiative +0	
2.5 CORPORATE OFFICER	HANDGUN [attack +4; damage +1; Precision, Interfaced, Secured] CIVILIAN PROTECTION [Interfaced, Discreet]	HP +5 Defense +4 Initiative +1d6	NEURONICS [Retinal display, Emotion control, Stress reducer, Wired reflexes, Hidden memory, Logic processors] NANOGENETICS [Rejuvenation, Hydra genoblasts, Totipotent genoblasts]
2.6 STREETNINJA	SHORT NANOBLADE [attack +4; damage +1; Impact, Precision, Interfaced]	HP +0 Defense +4 Initiative +1d6	NEURONICS [Wired reflexes] PROSTHETICS [Woven skin, Thermo-optic camouflage, Dermal plates, Subdermal pocket, Thermal regulation, Flash-dermis]

A Appendix A – Character sheet

This is a character sheet for nanoChrome².

B Appendix B – Credits

Texts and illustrations

Le Grümph

Corrections

Le Surcapitaine, Myrkvid, Matthieu Chalaux, Stéphane Treille, Nadège Debray, Frédéric 'Danilo' Toutain

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JdR programme p.5: Jérôme 'Brand' Larré

Inspirations

Wired (Walter Jon Williams); Mediapart; the Greg Mandel trilogy (Peter F. Hamilton); the Kovacs trilogy (Richard Morgan); Dark Angel (James Cameron); Cyberpunk 2013 and 2020 (Michael Pondsmith); A Thousand Billion Dollars (Henri Verneuil); Person of Interest (Jonathan Nolan); No Ordinary Family (Greg Berlanti); Strange Days (Katheryn Bigelow); Suits (Aaron Korsh)...

Playlist

The Velvet Underground, Lou Reed, The Cure, The Prodigy, Massive Attack, Joy Division, The Hidden Orchestra, LCD Soundsystem, Justice, Jefferson Airplane, Archive, Ladytron, The Doors, She Wants Revenge, Enslaved, Meshugga, Public Enemy, NWA, Escape from New York OST (John Carpenter)...