

INTERFACE ZERO

THE PLAYERS GUIDE
TO 2095



INTERFACE ZERO

CREDITS

INTERFACE ZERO IS CREATED BY

David Jarvis, Hal McLean, Matt Conklin Jr, and Patrick Smith

WRITTEN AND DEVELOPED BY

Aaron Davidson, Curtis and Sarah Lyon, David Jarvis, David Harriss, Darrin Drader, Hal McLean, James Cambias, Jason Blair, Jeff Ruiz, Joel Waalkens, Jonathan Thompson, John Dunn, Kenneth Spencer, Richard T. Balsley, Rob Weiland, Robin English-Bircher, Sean Bircher, Sean Huempfner

COVER BY

Vladimir Manyukhin

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Alida Saxon, David Jarvis, Karl Keesler

LAYOUT

David Jarvis, Thomas Shook

ILLUSTRATIONS

Adam Kuzcek Vladimir Manyukhin, Eduardo Brolo, Jason Walton, Tan Ho Sim, Sam Manley

EDITING & PROOFING

Aaron Davidson, Andreas Parducci, Aric Wieder Carinn Seabolt, David Harriss, Mable Friedman, Mathew Caron, Mike Zebrowski, Rasmus Hilander, Ron Blessing

PLAY TESTERS

Ashton Dickerson, James Domanico, Steven Domanico, Amanda Hughes, Matt Lyle, David Harriss, Sean Huempfner, Joel Waalkens

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FOREWORD

As you read through this book, you're going to realize *Interface Zero 3.0* isn't a traditional cyberpunk setting. It's not all about raging against the "Big Bad" megacorporate machine because they are messing up the entire world. Nor is *Interface Zero 3.0* just another grim and gritty "living on the edge and celebrating the fact that you survived another run on a corp" type of game. Sure, those elements are welcome, even mandatory in the world as it exists in 2095, but here's the deal:

We want *Interface Zero 3.0* to be more than that.

I want it to reflect (however abstractly) the world you see when you walk out your door, or browse the internet on your laptop, smart phone, or iPad. I want *Interface zero 3.0* to have relevance to the world as it exists now, and to do that, I have to draw from what is happening around us in the world, in technology, in culture, rather than rely on what was cool two decades ago. I must do this because the world we live in today isn't the same world my generation grew up in; the generation that gave us cyberpunk. To do that though, we have to ask ourselves "What IS cyberpunk?"

Or perhaps, as is more pertinent to this discussion, we should first ask "What WAS cyberpunk?"

I'm 50 years old. I was lucky enough to see *Blade Runner* when it first came out, and I remember watching all the awesome sci-fi movies that came out during that crazy decade as well, movies and anime like *Akira*, *Freejack*, *Repo Man*, *Alien*, *Aliens*, *They Live*, *Judge Dredd*, *Robocop*, *Road Warrior*, *TRON*, *Escape from New York*, *Outland*, *Terminator*, *The Running Man*, *Scanners*, *Total Recall*, *Max Headroom*...

I could go on and on, and that's just movies and TV of the 80's. The 90's brought us tons of great stuff too, like the iconic *Ghost In the Shell*, *Equilibrium*, the short-lived *Dark Angel* television series and of course, the sublime post-apocalyptic cyberpunk movie known as *The Matrix*.

You can't write cyberpunk without paying homage to 1984 (probably the best dystopic novel ever written) *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (The novel *Blade Runner* was based on), *Neuromancer*, *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, *Count Zero*, *Johnny Mnemonic*, *Burning Chrome*, *Snow Crash*, *Altered Carbon*; again, I could go on and on.

The generation—"X," just in case you were wondering—that gave birth to the genre we all know as cyberpunk grew up under the umbrella of the constant threat of nuclear war. Politically speaking, the decade was largely about President Reagan facing off against an array of Communist leaders—Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, Konstantin Chernenko, Andrei Gromyko (who was largely a figurehead) and finally the last leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev.

It's interesting to note that the first three [Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko] actually died while in office, and under Gorbachev's leadership, the Soviet Union finally collapsed. That's a decade of political instability in what—at that point in time—was a formidable, yet declining nuclear superpower going bankrupt from both an insane M.A.D.-spawned arms race and a costly (and ultimately unsuccessful) war in Afghanistan against the Afghan Mujahideen.

The counter-culture of the Eighties reflected this geo-political drama, not only in the afore-mentioned movies and literature, but also in the music and even fashion trends. Punk Rock, Hard Core, Blue Mohawks, loud, gawdy, shredded apocalyptic "war" fashion and apocalyptic culture fused into this aggressive beast dominated by tribes of youth labeling themselves Freaks, Punks, MOD's, Thrashers, Skaters, Straight-Edger's, Rockers—and believe me when I tell you this is just a sampling of the monikers we embraced in that decade.

And let us not forget the computer geeks, or Nerds, as they were more commonly known back then. While popular culture mocked and reviled these young men and women with their taped-together glasses, their MENSA-level IQ's, their pocket protectors and general lack of any muscular definition, they were quietly building the world in which we now find ourselves.

So from a cultural viewpoint, the "punk" in cyberpunk—in my humble opinion—is firmly rooted in the geo-political atmosphere and various media of the 80's, though it could be argued one could (and perhaps should) go back as far as the works of George Orwell, or Aldus Huxley to really see the "proto-genre," if you will.

Of course, cyberpunk isn't cyberpunk without advanced technologies like cybernetics and especially computers. It could be argued that computers didn't really become truly popular on a global scale until right around 1996–1998 when the Internet exploded into public consciousness with the dot com bubble, but here's the thing. I don't care what Al Gore says, he didn't invent the internet. It's been around since the 1960's.

But I digress.

In 1982 the movie *TRON* took viewers inside the machine and revealed a virtual world filled with AI's, glittering data lines and Intrusion Countermeasures that made Kevin Flynn—the main character—play gladiator'esque games where death was very real; but always remember that William Gibson did it first.

Johnny Mnemonic, *Burning Chrome*, and later the quintessential sprawl trilogy—*Neuromancer*, *Mona Lisa Overdrive* and *Count Zero*—hardwired cyberpunk into the consciousness of film makers, readers and writers—especially rpg writers—over the next two and a half decades, which brings me to the next thing I want to talk about; cyberpunk games.

We've seen numerous cyberpunk-styled rpgs over the years. R. Talsorian Games brought us the masterpiece that is *Cyberpunk 2020* and other iterations of the game (including *CyberpunkRed!*), FASA created *Shadowrun*, Steve Jackson Games published *GURPS Cyberpunk*, and Iron Crown Enterprises also published *Cyberspace*. In their own way all of them perfectly captured the feel and tone of the '80's cyberpunk scene.

As cool as *Shadowrun* and all the other cyberpunk games that surfaced in the latter half of the '80s and early '90s are, every one of them are firmly rooted in that gloriously decadent, wild decade of sex, drugs and rock and roll.

Don't get me wrong, that's not a bad thing by any stretch of the imagination. We're talking about games that broke ground in the industry, games that made not only cyberpunk a great genre to play in, but also made it cool to play modern and postmodern rpgs in general. Don't think I'm bashing them, because I'm not. I love them. It's just that I believe *Interface zero 3.0* isn't entirely about what cyberpunk WAS; it needs to be about what cyberpunk IS, and perhaps even what it WILL become. Which brings me back to the first (albeit modified) question I asked:

What IS cyberpunk in the year 2019?

I once read a definition of the cyberpunk genre that said, "Cyberpunk is High Tech and Low Life." It's a good, simple statement that really says nothing at all about the heart of the genre, but just defines the two terms which comprise the name "cyber [high tech] and punk [low life].

"High tech and Low life" are simply trappings, salad dressing to give the genre flavor. In my opinion, cyberpunk is so much more than just technology and life in the gutter, but if we must condense the entire genre into a simple phrase, I ask that you consider this one:

Cyberpunk is *freedom vs. control*.

Now here's a longer definition.

Cyberpunk is the power of social media. It's no longer being wired into the machine, but having the machine exist all around you in the form of networks that, via GPS and wireless technologies, allow you to access your Facebook page, Twitter and Instagram accounts, or your YouTube channel from anywhere.

It's families texting at the dinner table rather than talking.

Cyberpunk is touch screen technology, and powerful computers so small you can carry them around in a backpack, or your purse.

It's the irony that you express your individuality using the same mediums as everyone else.

Cyberpunk is reading this book on your favorite electronic reading device that was purchased with digital money.

Cyberpunk is about drugs that make you go crazy and eat people.

Cyberpunk is Fake News, and Alternative Facts.

Cyberpunk is Fight Club.

Cyberpunk is WikiLeaks.

Cyberpunk is the spirit of a man standing in front of a line of tanks in Tiananmen square reborn in Occupy Wall Street, Occupy L.A, Occupy London and Occupy [insert your city here]. It's Tahrir Square





in Cairo, Enron, the Economic Crisis of 2008, the slow death of the European Union, and Quantitative Easing ad-infinitem.

Cyberpunk is the war on terror. Its insurgency and asymmetrical warfare. Cyberpunk is predator drones, stealth bombers and hellfire missiles, watching war being waged live in High Definition on CNN, and the resultant desensitization to the violence.

It's the privatization of mercenary groups like Black Water and conspiracy theories about everything from executive orders laying the foundation for a police state, to Shadow Governments secretly controlling the world.

Cyberpunk is Stuxnet.

Cyberpunk is the mind-numbing irony of "reality" television, the strange social relevance of Kim Kardashian, Paris Hilton and other, similar characters.

Cyberpunk is a meme so strong; it goes viral and compels you to form an opinion on a topic you didn't know anything about five minutes ago.

Cyberpunk is the ongoing struggle for the right to live your life as you see fit, and the efforts of those who would keep you from exercising that right.

This is the world we're going to reveal to you within the pages of *Interface Zero 3.0*—a world that echoes both 2019 and the cyberpunk of the 80's and early 90's, because even though the world has changed, the beginnings of the genre are just as important to what *Interface Zero* is, and can be.

-David Jarvis



INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS INTERFACE ZERO?

Set in the year 2095, *Interface Zero* is a game of action, adventure, and intrigue in the cyberpunk milieu, where corporations have the power of nations, ruling billions of people across the colonized solar system through “democratically elected” leaders—little more than political proxies acting on their behalf. It’s a game of conflicting moralities and hard decisions, where the line between good and evil is not clearly defined, and often your characters must straddle that line if they want to do the least amount of harm to those around them.

ELEMENTS OF CYBERPUNK

If you’re new to the cyberpunk genre—or even to modern gaming in general—you probably have more than a few questions. This section provides a brief overview of the types of characters you might play, and explores why you might play them. We’ll also discuss some of the themes common to cyberpunk games.

ACTION!

Fast-paced, on-the-edge-of-your-seat action is common to all genres, but in cyberpunk games your characters are fitted with cutting-edge cybernetics that allow them to move with blinding speed, jump impossible distances, and generally push their bodies beyond anything an unmodified human could do. When people can pilot drones with mental commands, hack the world around them, or drive fifteen-foot-tall golemmechs, the action goes to a whole new level!

APOCALYPSE!

The cyberpunk genre is rife with examples of society living in the aftermath of an apocalyptic event. Some are obvious, like *A.D. Police*, *Appleseed*, *Bubblegum Crisis*, *Judge Dredd*, and *The Matrix*, while others, such as *Blade Runner* and *Neuromancer*, only hint at it. The lack of real animals in *Blade Runner* implies a world where natural species have, for some reason,

died out, only to be replaced by genetically manufactured ones.

Humanity has spread to the stars, presumably to start over in new lands of opportunity on off-world colonies. *Neuromancer* hints at a war between the Soviet Union and the United States and given the fact that the Cold War was happening when the *Sprawl Trilogy* was written, it’s not inconceivable that nuclear weapons were used.

Interface Zero embraces the apocalypse somewhat hyperbolically, imagining a world changed by eco-terrorism, rampant global warming, mega earthquakes, and tsunamis. With some seventy-odd years separating you and me from 2095, it’s entirely plausible that any one—or even all—of the events we discuss in this book could happen, and that’s part of the fun of speculative world-building: creating worlds that might come to pass.

CHARACTERS!

As with any role-playing game, the characters you play should feel like they fit naturally in the world around them. *Savage Worlds* makes it very easy to accomplish, and *Interface Zero* takes the elegant rule system a bit further by introducing Origins to help you and your friends choose a set of core skills that reflect what your characters did before they began life as ronin, hackers, etc. Campaign Themes help you take those core concepts and flesh them out even more by outlining a facet of the cyberpunk game you wish to play the most!

Will you play sector cops who protect the citizens of the sprawl from organized crime, roving gangs, or more dangerous individuals? Maybe you want to play hard core cyberpunks; deniable assets who do the jobs nobody else can (or want to) do? Or maybe you want to go off the beaten path a bit and play a cleaning crew: individuals who hunt biohorrors for a living. The *GM’s Guide To 2095* will introduce three Plot Point Campaigns revolving around these Campaign themes, and we’ll also show you how to create your own themes!





DYSTOPIA

Dystopia lies at the rotten core of any cyberpunk game. Life is not a bright, shiny utopia where everyone lives in peace and harmony; it is a blackened caricature of itself where, for the average person, the human experience is a struggle to survive in a world that seeks to crush them under the weight of debt and despair.

In a dystopian setting, governments are, at best, totalitarian regimes that seek to regulate every aspect of our lives. At worst, they are police states that impose draconian laws through force, often through secret police who round up dissidents and other “undesirables” removing them from society. Re-education camps are real, as are government black sites. Truth is manufactured and spread through state-run news agencies to the masses, many of whom mutely accept what they are told.

Distraction is a weapon wielded by those in power to maintain control over the population. Mainstream media and megacorporations assault consumers daily with an arsenal of cool, sucking them into a never-ending cycle of buying the latest gadgets, clothes, and cars. Meanwhile, the powers-that-be take advantage of the preoccupied populace and introduce more laws that chip away at their freedoms, often justifying said laws with international incidents (both real and imagined).

George Orwell’s “two minutes of hate” is no longer a concept—it’s a ritualistic drama played out every day in the mainstream media. Pundits gather on nightly newscasts to debate the hottest issues of the day. Their performances are rewarded when—ironically—the people become polarized and ignorant rather than unified and informed. In short, the masses believe, feel, and even act the way the media tells them to...and think it was their own idea in the first place.

Another aspect of any dystopian setting is the ongoing effort of the elite to dehumanize you. One way to accomplish this is by social segregation. Those in power want you to look at your neighbor’s differences with suspicion, and even fear. They want you to stay in isolated communities that share your prejudices. It’s another form of control.

In 2095, where genetic engineering makes it possible for people to breed superior humans

or merge their DNA with that of their favorite animal, speciesism is the new flag of bigotry. Skin color and sexual identity are largely forgotten; “At least those black people are human!” the bigots and speciesists will say. “That cat hybrid stopped being human when she got spliced,” they’ll argue.

Conspiracy theories about secret societies genetically engineering human 2.0 to create a master race run rampant across the Global DataNet, and violence inevitably follows. Meanwhile, the people in power sit back, watch the masses tear each other apart, and pat themselves on the back for a job well done. But, it doesn’t end there.

Entire industries are built around the creation of simulacra—living, breathing human beings, decanted in amniotic vats and sold to nations and megacorporations across the solar system to live their entire lives in servitude. Indeed, simulacra are genetically branded with serial numbers and the logo of their corporate masters to ensure that if a sim runs away, it’ll be easier to track and recover.

TECHNOLOGY

In any game set in the future, it’s expected that technology has advanced to such a point where what now seems impossible is commonplace, almost magical. Science-fiction and space-opera worlds are assumed to be so far into the future that it’s not necessary to completely understand how the tech works; we just accept that the tech works, much like we accept magic as a reality in a fantasy world.

In a cyberpunk setting, however, the imagined future is just a few short generations away. The technology which shapes this near-future world must stem from what exists in the present day—otherwise, the world isn’t believable. The following section looks at some of the tech you’ll find in *Interface Zero*.

The past two centuries have seen more technological innovation than over the whole of recorded history. Exponential growth in the sciences has seen humans go from horse-drawn carriages to nuclear-powered ships, electric cars, and even vehicles that can travel into space and land on other planets! We’ve gone from the Pony Express and telegrams to real-time

communication with anyone anywhere in the world via smartphones the size of checkbooks.

We've gone from leeching and purgation without anesthesia or sterilization to hospitals the size of small towns, genetic treatments for ailments, a host of drugs to treat illnesses, and surgical procedures that don't require the patient to be awake. If we're fast enough, we can resuscitate the dead. Today, it's possible for a boy to physically become a girl (or vice versa) if *she* wants.

Our knowledge of the universe is only trumped by our understanding of the inner world. Technology has discovered distant planets in far-off solar systems and delved deep into the subatomic world, finding a host of particles that form the very fabric of reality. These examples are just a smattering of all the advances in technology over the past two centuries. Every day we're seeing more and more exciting developments in science and technology, which leads me to the following point. If the trend of exponential growth continues, the next seventy-three years (the time between now and 2095) are likely to see developments in science, medicine, physics, and engineering in ways you or I probably can't even imagine.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Currently, there are no real AI—at least not the kind people tend to think of when the term is brought up. You know what I'm talking about: constructs so advanced that they are capable of independent thought, have free will, and can express a wide range of emotions, basically any AI you've seen in TV or movies. What exists now is closer to (but still not) what is known as "AGI" or artificial general intelligence; a type of AI that learns without being trained.

Interface Zero speculates that by 2045, "true" artificial intelligence (the kind that experiences emotions and can understand abstract thought) will be a reality. The first is called Ajax, who commits suicide a few seconds after it becomes self-aware. The next forty-five years sees a host of AI—many considered rogue because no corporation or government owns them—become self-aware; some are benign or even benevolent in their interactions with humanity, while others are decidedly hostile. The threats these rogue AI pose vary and often result in loss of human life.

BIOTECH

In today's world, the science of genetics is showing great promise. Researchers are constantly learning more and more about our genetic makeup and applying that knowledge to fight all manner of diseases. In 2095, this field has reached a point where what might now seem impossible (and highly controversial, if not outright illegal) has become a reality. In 2095, it's possible to genetically design a fetus to remove genetic markers which determine predispositions toward certain birth defects and diseases.

Should you wish, you can even go to a gene doc and splice your DNA with that of an animal to become faster, stronger, or gain heightened senses. The vast majority of people who get spliced look just like the average sprawler, though many choose to look more animal than human; it's a fashion statement, much like how tattoos and body piercings are popular today. Others undergo gene tailoring to better perform their jobs.

If you are rich enough, you have access to cutting-edge medicine that will not only prolong your life, but also allow you to be more active at later ages. You can even buy a new human body (a bioroid) and upload a copy of your mind into it. This process is called dubbing, and—while not illegal—it is strictly regulated. Laws prohibit a person from owning more than one "dub" of their mind, and you need a special license to own a bioroid.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

We live in a world where computers touch nearly every aspect of our lives. They are in our homes, the cars we drive, the smartphones we use, our televisions; indeed, it's hard to imagine life without them. Computers allow us to do some amazing things.

We can store incredible amounts of data, use powerful programs, go onto the internet and find information about any subject we can conceive of. We can sync our desktop computers with smart devices—such as tablets and cell phones—and take this information with us wherever we go. And we can share this information with anyone we choose via email, texting, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, *Facebook*, and a plethora of other social networking sites.



WHY WOULD ANYONE EVER INSTALL A TAP?

I'm sure many of you are wondering why anyone in their right mind would ever install this kind of technology in their brains. It's a valid question, one which is key to your suspension of disbelief. But it's not as hard to imagine as you might think. People readily accept new technology, even embrace it rabidly, buying the newest version of a smartphone, computer, or car even though it's much more expensive and isn't all that different from their old device.

We do things with our finances and our personal information online that, even forty years prior, nobody would have done, even if they could. The mentality of people today is one of convenience. The Tendril Access Processor removes the need to carry wallets, purses, smartphones and such, so it's much safer because these peripheral devices are all integrated into a chip installed at the base of your skull. You don't even need car keys; the TAP syncs with your vehicle and unlocks with a simple voice command. It's simple to pay all your bills online. Even now, paychecks are rapidly becoming a thing of the past. It's all about direct deposit now.

Digital money isn't the wave of the future, it's the reality of today. Wallets get stolen, and cash can't be replaced. But if some thief mugs you, you can cancel your credit cards, and even these will become antiquated. Cryptocurrency, while still in the beginning stages, will eventually become the global currency we use in our daily lives.

Given all of that, it's easy to see how, when a technology emerges that promises to connect people to the world around them in ways they had never dreamed of, they'll jump at the chance to get "TAPped," especially when everyone's doing it.

Beyond the TAP, though, installing technology into our bodies is one of the most fundamental tropes of the cyberpunk genre. We play characters who willingly chop off perfectly good arms and legs in favor of advanced prosthetics, cut out their eyes and replace them with machines. They install weapons in their bodies and wire their brains to interface with them so they can shoot and fight more efficiently.

So, to answer the original question: why would you *not* install this tech in your brain?

THE TENDRIL ACCESS PROCESSOR

This setting imagines a future world where computer technology has evolved to such a degree that people no longer need to carry phones or any of the aforementioned devices around with them. The tech is installed in their heads via a brain-machine interface known as the Tendril Access Processor, affectionately known as the TAP, or *Interface Zero*.

The TAP merges nanotechnology with neuromorphic engineered organic neural networks (NEONNs) and global information system processors (GISPs) to create new neural pathways in our brains. These pathways translate digital code we receive from the GISPs into raw sensory data: touch, sound, sight, smell. The result of this fusion is a full-on interactive sensory experience called Hyper Reality.

HYPER REALITY

Currently, augmented reality is a technology which overlays interactive data—generally information about a location—over applications such as maps (*Google Maps*® makes extensive use of augmented reality). *Pokémon Go*® is a perfect example of this technology used for entertainment purposes. Hyper Reality takes augmented reality to a new level, integrating with the Tendril Access Processor to superimpose digital—Hyper—objects onto our field of vision.

These Hyper Objects pipe all sorts of information into our brains that we can see, hear, smell, and sometimes even taste. Information is displayed via a digital heads-up display (HUD) that we can interact with via hand gestures and voice commands. The Hyper Objects we see are also interactive. We can pull up digital menus outside a restaurant and peruse them while waiting to be seated. With a hand gesture, we can "touch" the icon floating over someone's head and—if the person's status is set to public—read their profile.

When we enter our favorite stores, Hyper Objects appear in the form of sales assistants and offer suggestions for products based on our purchase histories. In short, Hyper Objects allow us to interact with the world around us on a level never seen before in human history.

Of course, dangers come with such a transformative technology. Hackers are master manipulators of Hyper Reality, able to steal identities and cause chaos with the right exploits and malware. A good hacker can take control of—and manipulate—any Hyper Objects in her field of vision, which makes her invaluable on a mission.

Gone are the days when people sat at a desktop computer or laptop and hacked through the internet. Most megacorporations (if they're smart) only maintain a token presence on the Global DataNet in 2095, using it to advertise products and take online orders, but even this sort of practice isn't done at an archaic computer terminal; it all happens via the TAP.

WHAT'S IN THE BOOK?

In this book you'll find an array of elements designed to help you create awesome, memorable characters for *Interface Zero 3.0*.

CHARACTER CREATION

The character creation chapter introduces you to two new concepts; Campaign Themes and Origins.

Campaign Themes: The cyberpunk genre can accommodate a wide variety of play styles, and as game designers, it's important to recognize that fans of the genre might not always want to play characters who are basically professional criminals. *Interface Zero 3.0* introduces Campaign Themes—templates designed to help your group dial in on the style of game that appeals to you the most.

Origins: Every character has a history, and the experiences from their past can have an impact on what they know, what they are looking to do moving forward, and even basic *things* they have accumulated. This is where Origins come into play.

An Origin helps you define your character's background in a tangible way by adding extra skills to the Core Skill array found in the *Savage Worlds* rules. You also get some basic equipment tailored to your character's background.

Races: While *Interface Zero 3.0* is primarily a human-centric roleplaying game, we offer a number of options to the human experience; the majority of which are variations of humans. You can play androids, bioroids, cyborgs, baseline humans, human 2.0, or even pick a hybrid template and play a character who has undergone radical genetic modifications.

Edges and Hindrances: This chapter introduces and number of cyberpunk-themed Edges and Hindrances for you to choose from.

GEAR

The gear chapter introduces you to an array of equipment including augments, armor, weapons and vehicles your characters can use in 2095.

SETTING RULES

New setting rules, such as hacking, drone operation and street cred are all explained in this chapter.

2095

The world chapter reintroduces you to the world as it exists in 2095. You'll find a detailed history, information on life in 2095, and an exhaustive look at the world and the solar system.

CHICAGOLAND

This chapter takes a look at Chicago in 2095.

GM SECTION

The last chapter of the book, this section provides some savage tales, npcs, and sample city and corporate trappings to get Game Masters started. All of these concepts will be expanded on in the *GM's Guide to 2095*.



City Spire

太子餐廳
Prince Restaurant

圓
山
亭

NAT

100
100
100
HOUSE

100

MARCOPOLO

10511





CHARACTER CREATION

Characters are the centerpiece of any role-playing game, the focal point of every story. Characters represent the best—or the worst—ideals of a given game setting, their actions either bringing a small measure of hope to the downtrodden masses or serving to strengthen the status quo. In the grim world of *Interface Zero* 3.0, the characters you play walk a monofilament edge between traditional—some would say outdated or just plain irrelevant—concepts of good and evil as they make their way in the world.

Indeed, it's hard to be a moral individual in a world where most of the animals prowling the concrete jungle believe principles are character flaws—weaknesses to exploit for their own ends. Your morality marks you as prey, no doubt about it, omae. But if you can keep your moral code, if you can get your job done without selling your soul, you'll get something most sprawlers never have—respect.

This chapter provides you with the tools you need to make a character for *Interface Zero* 3.0. You'll find new character options such as Origins, Campaign Themes, updated races, and new Edges and Hindrances you can use and play in the gritty world of 2095.

CAMPAIGN THEMES

The world in which *Interface Zero* is set is a large place with many opportunities to tell a variety of cyberpunk stories and run an assortment of campaigns, some reaching across the vastness of the solar system, others set in a single city or nation. With so many possibilities available to you, it can be overwhelming. To help you focus your game, we introduce Campaign Themes.

USING A CAMPAIGN THEME

Campaign Themes present a broad outline for your *Interface Zero* game. They determine the starting rank of your characters at the beginning of play, and how many cryptodollars (the currency in *Interface Zero*) they get to spend.

All Campaign Themes deal with some element of a cyberpunk game, capturing the good and the bad of that experience. In a Cyberpunks Campaign Theme, for example, your characters deal with life on their terms. This can be liberating, but unlike a Sector Cop Campaign Theme, you're on your own. The streets are fickle, nakama.

TERMS

Each Campaign Theme contains the following information:

Name: The name of the Campaign Theme.

Description: The overall concept of the Theme. What your players can expect to be doing, the roles they might play, the upsides and downsides of the Theme, dangers, etc.

Rank: The starting rank of your characters for the Theme. The Campaign Themes presented in *Interface Zero* have your characters starting at Novice, though you can create others at higher ranks, depending on what you wish to do with your game.

Starting Wealth: The amount of cryptodollars your characters have to spend on personal gear, including Cybertech and Biotech, is listed in this entry. Any remaining cryptodollars after character creation are lost.

Team Roles: The suggested Archetypes your characters play in the Campaign Theme.

The Stage: The place where your Campaign Theme takes place. This can be anywhere; a run down, poverty-ridden sector of the sprawl, a battlefield 1,000 miles away from home, the wasted blight in what was once rural America, or even on Mars. Some Campaign Themes aren't limited to one location. If this is the case, possible locations will be detailed here.

Plot Elements: Campaign Themes are not Plot Point Campaigns in and of themselves, but they serve as a good foundation for ones you create. In this entry, you'll find information about possible adventures that fit well into the Theme, the types of NPCs and organizations characters will most likely encounter, and metaplot elements to help you ground your adventures in the setting.

THE CLEANING CREW

The streets always need cleaning, and, assuming the corps or those who run the sprawl pay the bills, there is always someone there to pick up trash and mop up messes in public places. A cleaning crew takes it up a notch.

Rather than clearing out debris or washing off the remains of someone's dinner, a cleaning crew makes sure those awful things that lurk in the darkness don't make a mess of people.

The cleaning crew is always alert to strange happenings and unexplained murders, so they can get to the scene and track down the lab-grown menace that escaped (or was released) from its home. The biohorrors a cleaning crew faces often make the job short-term. Deaths, injuries, and PTSD incurred while dealing with literal monsters sideline many members of cleaning crews. However, pictures of you hoisting the head of some terrifying beast erupting on social media is worth the potential cost.

Rank: Novice

Starting Wealth: Each character gets 20,000 cryptodollars.

Team Roles: Drone Jockey, Fighter, Fence, Heavy, Hacker, Investigator, Leader, Marksman, Martial Artist, Medic, Rogue, Scientist

The Stage: Mostly urban environments across the world, though Cleaning Crews might find themselves hunting down things that have been released into the wilds.

Plot Elements: In a Cleaning Crew game, your characters might find themselves doing types of jobs that include accessing the scene of a crime to discover whether the monster who perpetrated it was merely human or something else, trudging through sewers to track down a beast that lairs underground and emerges under the cover of darkness to hunt, or breaching a lab in complete lock-down to put down a biohorror and maybe save some of the idiots who created the thing.

CYBERPUNKS

You are cyberpunks living life on the bleeding edge, fighting against megacorporate influence, raging against political corruption, or simply doing it for the juice (and cryptos) you

get from sticking it to the man. The jobs you take are risky—even deadly—but often serve a higher purpose. That, and your street cred soars with every run you hit out of the park. You get access to the sweetest nightclubs, cryptos flow like wine, everyone worships you like heroes returning from war...It's good to be the queen, baby.

Rank: Novice

Starting Wealth: Each character gets 20,000 cryptodollars.

Team Roles: Any, but a Face and Hacker are especially useful. Cyberpunks come from all walks and have a wide variety of skills.

The Stage: As Cyberpunks, the world is your stage. Your missions can take you across the globe, and even into the solar system.

Plot Elements: In a Cyberpunks game you play the role of street operatives who do dangerous jobs nobody else wants to do. Often, the contracts you accept are morally grey at best, but sometimes you get to do some real good. Exposing the crimes of a megacorporation dumping hazardous waste into a slum might seem small in the big picture, but it can have beneficial results for those who are suffering from the effects of the megacorp's crimes.

PROTECT AND SERVE

Life as a sector cop ain't easy, hombre. The badge is a target (sometimes literally), and on these mean streets you can be sure some cybered-out borg or mutant is gonna test your authority. The badge is also a brotherhood. You can be sure that, if things get dicey, you can send out a call for backup, and your brothers and sisters in blue will respond.

You roll four or five deep in tricked-out, armored squad cars. You get top-notch weapons and armor made by Ravenlocke Security, the best firewalls, and some nasty anti-personnel malware, just in case some brainer tries to worm his way into your TAPnet and fry your team's brains like a soy-sausage in a NukeMaster357 food dispenser. It's a daily war, protecting the streets—but it's worth the pain.

There are no fancy parades when you win like you see on TAPnet shows like Dawn Patrol or The Chicagoland Seven, and the danger you face comes as much from inside the walls of your





precinct's detention center as it is on the streets, but make no bones about it; you save lives, and in the end that's why you do the job.

Rank: Novice

Wealth and Equipment: Each character gets 10,000 cryptodollars; it's less than other Campaign Themes, but you don't have to buy ammo, guns and other special equipment.

Team Roles: In a Sector Cop Campaign Theme, you'll want a versatile team, capable of performing a variety of roles. Driver, Drone Jockey, Face, Hacker, Investigator, Leader, Medic, Pilot, and Zeek are best fits, but any Archetype can fit with some adjustments—notably Driving and Shooting skills.

The Stage: The streets of the sprawl.

ORIGINS

Origins are an additional aspect of your character similar to—but distinct from—race. They help to tie your character to the world of 2095, as well as give you some idea where they come from. Your origin is not a profession per se' (though it can be) but rather a compilation of the things your character has learned, seen, and done. It is what you were before, and you might be trying to get back to that life or flee from it as far as you can.

Origin Skills: Each origin lists a set of three skills—one you get automatically and two that you must choose one or the other (ex.: Agent begins with Hacking, but you then must choose either Driving or Piloting for your second Origin skill).

These skills are in addition to the 5 core skills of Athletics, Common Knowledge, Notice, Persuasion, and Stealth. This modified list of core skills replaces the core skills as found in *Savage Worlds*. After selecting your Origin, you now have 15 skill points remaining (see the Extra Skill Points setting rule in the *Savage Worlds* rules) to increase your proficiency (die type rating).

Gear: Characters also get some basic gear as well. They do not need to pay for this equipment—it is stuff that they had before character creation, and have kept.

ACTIVIST

"You have to do what you think is right, but did you know the GeneGenie is experimenting on prisoners? That's right, human medical experimentation, that is so 20th Century."

You have a cause and you are fighting for it. This might be political or social, national or local, but whatever it is the cause is your driving motivation. It might not even be the truth as long as it is Truth as you see it. How you go about this fight is up to you. You might picket and protest, done mostly electronically these days. You might try to organize others or work within the system. Then again, direct action might be your means to an end, no matter how dirty it might get.

Origin Skills: Academics, and your choice of either Hacking or Intimidation.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF1, Shots 12, AP 1)

AGENT

"There are things that have to be done, things you don't know about, but the agenda of my clients comes before any moralizing."


Agents work for others, usually a nation, corporation, or criminal organization. They have to put the needs of their client over their own, and far above any qualms they might have about right or wrong. Right is always what benefits their client, wrong is everything else. This work they do is often of a very direct nature, if something must be stolen it is the agent who steals it. If someone must be killed, the agent is dispatched. Equally, they are trusted assets who sometimes must speak for their clients in delicate situations.

Origin Skills: Hacking and your choice of either Driving or Piloting.

Gear: Armored business suit (+3 armor [arms, torso, legs] increased armor modification), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6: Knockdown, Parry), light tactical pistol (Range12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1), SMG (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1, Auto)

BIOHACKER

"Chrome it up all you want, but that is 1.0 thinking. Humans gotta be going to 3.0 or higher my man, we gotta hack the code, the real code, the code that is at the center of us all."


 You specialize in genetic engineering, making something out of the raw stuff of DNA. Biohacking is all of that, but it is more. It is about changing what it means to be human, how you think, how you live, how you eat and drink. True, you spend a lot of time and resources trying to hack the code (though when you say it people can almost hear the capital C), but that brute force approach is not the only way. You can trick that code in to doing all sorts of things for you, just look at the zeeks.

Origin Skills: Healing, and your choice of either Academics or Science.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1), medical kit (+1 to Healing rolls, 3 uses).

BLUE PLATER

"Life can suck sometimes, but it could be worse...I might only have two jobs."

 You lived your life—more like slept through it—as a blue collar worker, more commonly known as a Blue Plater. You barely made ends meet, working two jobs just to pay for a one-room squat in one of the low-income towers. Each day was the same; crawl out of bed and—if you were lucky—eat some breakfast made from real food before slogging down thirty flights of stairs (because hey, the turbo lifts hardly ever worked) to hail a RIDE WITH ME™ driver to take you to the nearest labor farm. If you were lucky, you'd get about 200 cryptos for about eight hours' back-breaking work on a construction site cleaning up the rubble left behind by the demo-bots; just enough to pay the rent for the next five days.

Your second job was more lucrative. You worked as a bouncer at one of the bars on the ground floor of your tower. That gig paid 400 cryptos a night plus tips from the waitresses and dancers

for keeping the drunks from getting too touchy-freely. But the bruises from all of the brawling made for painful mornings. Something had to change.

Over the years, you managed to squirrel away some cryptos in a savings account not connected to your TAP. The Telecoms just loved to charge extra for any micro transaction detected in your personal profile. There were underground operations all over the sprawl who specialized in that sort of thing; of course, they took a cut; but hey, at least they were honest about their extortion. Then, one day, you decided to make the change. No more working your tail off for pixels.


You took the cryptos you'd stashed and paid for a couple upgrades; nightvision cyber eyes and a reflex boost injection right into your spine. You took what was left and bought a couple of weapons and an armored jacket, and then contacted a fixer friend you met one night at the bar. You kept one of the Hammer Heads from ventilating his face, and he said if you ever wanted to freelance, toss him a text. He set you up with your first gig, and you have never looked back.

Origin Skills: Repair and your choice of Intimidation or Taunt.

Gear: You get a pair of street grade Cybereyes [Low Light Vision], a streetware grade reflex boost (Agility die type increases by 1 [biotech]), a survival knife (Str+d6+1), heavy pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2, RoF 1, Shots 15, AP 1) armored jacket (+2 armor [arms, torso])

BODYGUARD

"I'm in the safety industry, not the head bashing business. Not that I won't bash some heads if I have to, but getting the package out safely is my first priority. Yeah, you're just a package to me, and you get delivered in one piece."

 Everyone who is anyone has a bodyguard or two shadowing them. Foolish people hire impressive looking specimens who are chromed up and have more muscle grafts than a bio-rhino. The real professionals in the body guarding business look fearsome, but not out of place. Their job is to stop trouble before it starts, and





when it does, get their package to safety rather than trade shots with assassins.

Origin Skills: Intimidation and your choice of either Fighting or Shooting.

Gear: Armored Coat (+2 armor [arms, torso]), collapsible baton (Str+d6), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)

BOUNTY HUNTER

"Tracking down a target is as much about talking as chasing and tackling. You want to take them down smooth, fast, and alive as well. Just keep in mind that 'less-than-lethal' is not the same as 'non-lethal'."

Law enforcement being what it is today, bounty hunters are needed to bring in criminals that the po-po can't find or won't bother with. Sometimes people take it upon themselves to hire a bounty hunter for less than legal captures, but a payday is a payday.

Origin Skills: Research and your choice of either Survival or Shooting.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), Light Tactical Pistol: (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)

CLEANER

"Yeah, yeah, you say you've got an infestation, but let us experts take a look. Just pry open this panel and... Patti? Go fetch the flamethrower, the big one."

Biohorrors are becoming an all-too-common aspect of modern life. Be they spidercats, megaroaches, or some other nastiness, it is the cleaners who get called in to take care of matters. You might be a freelancer, work for a small mom and pop organization that evolved out of an old 20th Century exterminator service, or one of the multinationals that take care of biohorrors

for their fellow corporations and allied nations. Doesn't matter, all you need to know is where they are if they bleed.

Origin Skills: Survival, and your choice of either Fighting or Shooting.

Gear: Armored combat vest (+2 armor [arms, torso]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6 Knockdown, Parry), scattergun (Range 10/20/40, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1, Shots 4)

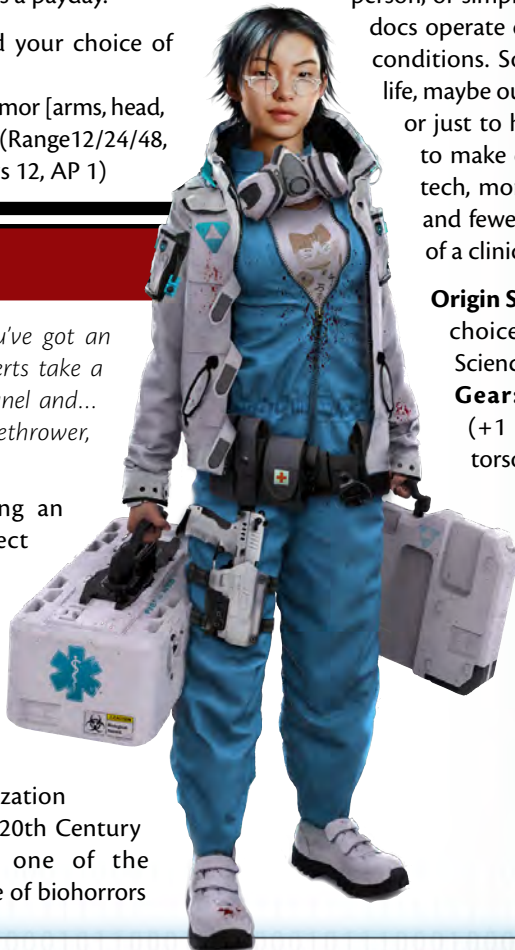
CLINIC DOC

"You see this? This is what happens when you go ganger. This thing I took it out of your lungs, man, your lungs. Quit squirming around, my hands aren't as steady as they used to be."

Sometimes called street docs, clinic docs don't work in the gleaming halls of corporate medicine. No, either because they developed a bad track record, pissed off the wrong person, or simply couldn't cut it; clinic docs operate out of less-than-ideal conditions. Some even choose this life, maybe out of a sense of equality or just to hide out. Often having to make do with less advanced tech, more dangerous patients, and fewer support staff, the life of a clinic doc is a hard one.

Origin Skills: Healing and your choice of either Repair or Science.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), heavy pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2 RoF 1, Shots 15, AP 2), medical kit (+1 to Healing rolls, 3 uses).



CRIMINAL

"Yeah well who's asking? Sure, sure, I know what you mean, but can't say nothin' about it. Let's just say that some things happened, some people got hurt, and some data or some such has a new owner."

Criminals, or at least as professional as a person who lies, steals, cheats, and occasionally murders can be, criminals are not just street thugs. They are in it for the money, honey, and not anything else. Many are part of a larger machine, a cog in some syndicate's business. Their position is fairly secure, as long as they don't overstep their bounds, but if you don't try you won't ever be the top dog.

Origin Skills: Thievery and your choice of either Intimidation or Gambling.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), survival knife (Str+d6), tactical light pistol (12/24/48; 2d6+2; RoF: 1; Shots: 12; AP: 1)

DETECTIVE

"Half my work is done on the Global DataNet these days, but the other half is still good old fashioned investigation. You have to talk to people, even if it is a virtual conversation, and sometimes visit them in person. Sure, there is a lot more forensic evidence we can gather than back in the old days, but evidence doesn't commit crimes, people do."

Detectives, be they plainclothes cops or private eyes, are in as high demand as ever. Constant surveillance, cybercrimes, better evidence collection, and other technological innovations may not have made their jobs any easier; indeed, they have raised the bar on the amount of knowledge the average detective needs to have.

A detective must still be able to interrogate a suspect, work a lead, and manage their snitches, but they also have to be experts on what the latest forensic science has to offer, how to navigate the virtual world, and sort through mountains of data.

Origin Skills: Hacking and your choice of either Research or Science.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS LIGHT RECONNAISSANCE DRONE

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 0 (16" Flight); **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

Gear: Light machine gun (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8+1, AP 2, RoF 3, Shots 200).

Special Abilities: Construct (+2 to recover from Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison); Fearless (immune to fear and Intimidation); Sensors (can switch between infravision and low light vision); Size -2 (about 30 pounds without weapons); Weapon Mount (ignore minimum Strength and recoil for one mounted weapon, up to 30 lbs.).

Gear: Armored duster (+2 [arms, torso, legs]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6; Knockdown, Parry), heavy pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2 RoF 1, Shots 15; AP 2)

DRONE JOCKEY

"I got my start in the Boy Scouts, believe it or not, earning badges for building and flying stunt drones. Went on to compete in the E-Olympics, won a silver, and got recruited into the army. They taught me new things to do with drones, including how to kill. Left them and went freelance, the pay's better and the tech is bleeding edge hot."

Drone jockeys fly unmanned aircraft and other vehicles. Employed by criminals, governments, and corps, drone jockeys ride the wave where tech meets mind and flesh, but always from a safe distance.

Origin Skills: Electronics and your choice of either Driving or Piloting,

Gear: Armored vest (+1 [torso]), goggles (flare compensation), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12), light reconnaissance drone





FREAKER

"Man you just gotta stop it with them thoughts! Can't stand all the noise, everyone just think of puppies. PUPPIES!"

Fou are a free-range zeek. Yeah, this means there is no one to tell you what to do like those corporate readers or the freaks that mob bosses like to have around. You don't belong to some cult or religion either. This means you are free to be you in whatever way you want to. It also means you don't have anyone watching your back or helping out when the powers get too much, when there are eight million people thinking at once, or when you need to learn how to do more than block out the sounds.

Origin Skills: Psionics, and your choice of either Intimidation or Survival.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48 Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)

FIXER

"I could arrange that for you, in fact I can make arrangements to suit all your needs. The question is, can you meet my needs, cryptos to be precise."

Fixers get things taken care of. They don't do it themselves, and they don't get it themselves, but they make sure the right people meet the right needs for their clients. They are the consummate middlemen, and without them most of the shadowy worlds of crime and espionage would not function. A good fixer has two files loaded with data: one, the people who do things; the other, the people who need things.

Origin Skills: Language and your choice of either Academics or Research.

Gear: Armored jacket (+2 [arms, torso]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6; Knockdown, Parry), light pistol (12/24/48; 2d6+1; RoF: 1; Shots: 12; AP: 1)

FUGITIVE

"I got away, but I ain't goin' back no matter what. They, they did things to us in that prison. I didn't get experimented on, but they took my cellmate. He never came back."

Fou are on the run. You might be an escaped prisoner, a person the authorities want in their custody, or just someone unlucky enough to be framed for a crime. Your biodata is in every major nation and company's database. It might not be linked to who you are now, and your cover identity should hold up. Best not to risk it though, because if they find you, you won't get out again.

Origin Skills: Survival and your choice of either Hacking or Thievery.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1; RoF: 1; Shots: 12; AP: 1)

GANGER

"See this tag? Yeah, this is our block and so is everything else up to 157th. Not just the street, the apartments are ours, the stores are ours, the people are ours. They give respect, we give protection. What do you give to pass through?"

Gangs are an epidemic that hasn't found a cure in over a century. They range from small time street criminals to crude—but-effective organized crime syndicates. Some gangs some are based on a shared identity; others, on geographic location. A rare few have some Theme, like the K!!!r Klowns of the Indy Megaplex or the Shark-jours of South Houston. Others are more like social clubs—violent drug addicted social clubs that is—and might be filled with the children of the idle rich acting out youthful fantasies.

Origin Skills: Fighting and your choice of either Intimidation or Taunt.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), survival knife (Str+d6+1), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)

GEAR HEAD

"You've blown the head, that I can fix, but you've also got a nasty virus in the compression buffers. That's why the head blew. I'll have to replace the entire module as well, maybe the whole system. While I am at it, want to just upgrade the software and firmware? I'll cut a deal on labor but you'll have to cover parts."

Grease monkeys are a thing of the past. The modern gearhead knows how to turn wrenches, but also writes code, troubleshoots computer systems, and can weld as well as solder. A lot of the work is done in a clean environment; delicate components in high-end machinery can be ruined by a speck of dust.

Origin Skills: Repair and your choice of either Hacking or Electronics.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6; Knockdown, Parry), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1), Electronics tool kit (+1 to Electronics rolls, 3 uses), Repair tool kit (+1 to Repair Rolls, 3 uses)

INSURGENT

"Down with the invader, down with the corporate masters, down with the ruling class! We have nothing to lose but our lives, for they have taken our very freedom!"

¥ou are part of a violent revolution intended to implement major changes in your home's political structure. Those who rule you, be they foreign invaders, corporate overlords, or your own people's leaders, have used every power at their disposal to keep you and yours under the boot. Now is the time to strike, the time to fight back, the time to bring the bill due to the oppressors.

Origin Skills: Shooting, and your choice of either Fighting or Hacking.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), SMG (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1), medical kit (+1 to Healing rolls, 3 uses)

MEDIA ICON

"Thanks, thanks, and thank you to everyone following me! I love you all! Make sure to watch every hour, something is always happening in my life. And don't forget to buy Crunchy-Bits® breakfast bars, the bars with data!"

there is so much media today that no one can keep track of it. Most of it is vvery niche—even the biggest Global DataNet stars have only a fraction of the world's population in their thrall—but this might add up to hundreds of millions of loyal followers. Most media icons aren't artists; they are people who are willing to let the camera drones into their life 24/7 and put on an interesting show live for the world to see.

Origin Skills: Performance and your choice of either Research or Taunt.

Gear: Armored jacket (+2 armor [arms, torso]), taser with 1 battery (Range 5/10/20, Stun)

PATROL OFFICER

"You have to know the people on your beat, the good ones and the bad ones. Hey, even the criminals are people you are working with. Yeah, they might put a slug into you, but they're also the ones who will rat out each other, especially their rivals, in a heartbeat. Got to know 'em to catch 'em, my training officer used to say."

most law enforcement is still done the old-fashioned way, driving around and looking for trouble. True, surveillance drones can peer into places the modern cop's grandfathers would never have thought possible. But the last time we looked, drones can't run a snitch or make arrests. At least not yet.

Origin Skills: Intimidation and your choice of either Fighting or Shooting.

Gear: Armored combat vest (+2 armor [torso]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6; Knockdown, Parry), tactical light pistol (12/24/48; 2d6+2; RoF: 1; Shots: 12; AP: 1), scattergun (Range 10/20/40, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1, Shots 4)





PETTY CROOK

"Yeah, knocking over a Tast-E-Stop might not seem like a big score, but you don't know what we need out here in the slums. A million-crypto score sounds great, But where are we going to spend it? Food, soda, and even water goes a lot farther. Not to mention all the toiletries and whatnot. Petty, yeah, but smart."

You are a small time crook. Robbing corner stores and charging stations, playing fast cons on people you pass (but never on your home turf), and even a little random mugging, that's about all you get up to. You do it because you need to; people like you at the bottom have to look out for themselves and each other. Right? Besides, the corps and cops won't pay much attention to this petty stuff. Right?

Origin Skills: Thievery and your choice of either Fighting or Survival.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1), lock picks (+1 to Thievery rolls, 3 uses)

PIRATE

"Yeah, digital printing is fine and all, but goods still move from point A to point B. It might be by ship, or truck, or plane, or even a spaceship these days. Doesn't matter how it moves, it still moves. We just make sure that when it moves from point A, point B is us."

Piracy is thought to be a thing of the past, but it is still alive and well. Some call it hijacking, but the truth is there are still pirates who work in gangs to intercept vehicles and lighten their cargo. You are one of these modern day pirates.

You might strike at ships on the sea like your forebears did, and hide in the same sort of out of the way places. More likely you intercept everything and anything, from cargo ships to drones, even passengers planes if needed. Ransom is almost as good as cargo, and far easier to spend.

Origin Skills: Shooting, and your choice of either Repair or Boating.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)

PROGRAMMER

"Programs drive the world, everything you do is modified, controlled, or dictated by a program. Your breakfast? Only possible because someone wrote the code to make it happen, from the field where it was grown to the store that sold it to you. You think your commute was you driving to work? When was the last time you actually drove a car? Think about the lights above you, the floor beneath you, it all relies on programmers to make, update, and break the codes that lay under all of life. Yeah, I'm one of those programmers, so show some respect or I'll take the world away from you."

Code slingers and grid hackers, programmers write the world of 2095. Most, probably nearly all, work for corporations and governments. The corps sell code to the smaller business and NGOs, and even to the governments. Those rare rogues, the freelance programmers and hackers, make a much larger noise than their numbers would indicate. Even so, one programmer with a grudge can shut down a city, and a dozen skilled code monkeys can shut down a country.

Origin Skills: Hacking and your choice of either Electronics or Research.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6; Knockdown, Parry), light pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1) Remote Access Trojan (+1 to Hacking (Operate Device) rolls, 3 uses)

REFUGEE

"We got out just in time, my aunt and uncle didn't make it and now they are in a labor camp, or dead, don't know. It was rough and we came here with nothing. Still have nothing, not even a nation to call home. When the new regime took power they removed citizenship from anyone who escaped. For three weeks we were stuck in that airport as 'stateless people,' but I slipped out. Kinda don't know why now, I've got nowhere to go."

You fled one of several conflicts or oppressive regimes around the world, maybe in Russia


or North America. Now you have no home, few possessions, and little hope. There are not many NGOs left to provide aid, and a whole lot of refugees that need it. It's not like your new home exactly welcomes you either, so you take whatever job you can. You might be legit in your new home or not, either way it is impossible to forget that you aren't exactly welcome.

Origin Skills: Language, and your choice of either Thievery or Survival.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)

SCIENTIST

"The lab was perfect, and after eight years studying to get my degree it was nice to be finally doing something with it. At first things were great, the company treated us well. I had a nice apartment, the best food chits, even an entertainment allowance, provided I used officially recognized corporate vendors. The things they ended up wanting me to look in to, that's not why I started in the sciences to begin with, not at all. Left after a year, now I don't have the comforts but at least my conscience is clean."


 You have studied the sciences with a passion, enough that if you don't have a degree you probably should. The reasons why vary, for some it is a route out of their squalor and in to the corporate world. For others it is a calling to understand the nature of the universe or to build a better tomorrow. What holds true is that you know things, and knowledge is power.

Origin Skills: Science, and your choice of either Hacking or Academics.

Gear: Armored coat (+2 armor [arms, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1), briefcase with portable analysis kit (+1 to Science rolls, 3 uses)

SMUGGLER

"You want it dirt cheap? Call me; I can get it for you. No, not just one, if I risk my neck to bring in a ton, a literal ton as in mass, of the stuff you have to buy it all. Now, show me the money and I'll get you the goods."


 s long as the authorities make things illegal or tax them, people try to get around the law. You excel at bringing in things that others need and will pay for. You don't smuggle just a little bit, you make sure the score is worth the risk. You also make sure you don't get caught, which is the easier part, at least you think it is.

Origin Skills: Thievery, and your choice of either Driving or Piloting.

Gear: Armored coat (+2 armor [arms, torso]), scattergun (Range 10/20/40; Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1, Shots 4)

SQUATTER

"See this? All of this is mine now. No, I didn't build it or buy it. Someone did, and just left it here. This whole building is mine, at least as far as this floor and the path to the door. Can't keep what I can't defend, you know. Got all the amenities here, running water, electricity, and connection, everything I need. 'Cept the toilet don't work; but that's what buckets are for."

 You live in the abandoned parts of the city, the rundown apartment complexes and factories that the rest of the world hopes to forget. That's fine, because what you lose in security and safety you more than make up for in freedom. True, the cops won't come out here unless they are looking to bust someone, and the ambulances never show up. That's fine, you live how you want to live and you know that those out here, well, most of them are good folks who look out for each other. That, and they don't poke their noses in where it doesn't belong.

Origin Skills: Survival, and your choice of either Fighting or Thievery.

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)





TABLE 2: 1: ORIGINS SUMMARY

ORIGIN	ORIGIN SKILLS
Activist <i>Notes:</i> Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)	Academics and either Hacking or Intimidation
Agent <i>Notes:</i> Armored business suit (+3 armor [arms, torso, legs] increased armor modification), shock truncheon with 1 bat-tery (Str+d6; Knockdown, Parry), light tactical pistol (Range 12/24/48, 2d6+2, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1), SMG (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1, Auto)	Hacking and either Driving or Piloting
Biohacker <i>Notes:</i> Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1), medical kit (+1 to Healing rolls, 3 uses).	Healing, and either Academics or Science
Blue Plater <i>Notes:</i> Cybereyes [Low Light Vision], a streetware grade reflex boost (Agility die type increases by 1 [biotech]), a survival knife (Str+d6+1), heavy pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2 RoF 1, Shots 15, AP 2) armored jacket (+2 armor [arms, torso])	Repair and either Intimidation or Taunt
Bounty Hunter <i>Notes:</i> Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), tactical light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)	Research and either Survival or Shooting
Cleaner <i>Notes:</i> Armored combat vest (+2 armor [arms, torso]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6 Knockdown, Parry), scattergun (Range 10/20/40, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1, Shots 4)	Survival and either Fighting or Shooting
Clinic Doc <i>Notes:</i> Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), heavy pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2 RoF 1, Shots 15; AP 2), medical kit (+1 to Healing rolls, 3 uses).	Healing and either Repair or Science
Criminal <i>Notes:</i> Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), survival knife (Str+d6), tactical light pistol (Range 12/24/48, 2d6+2, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)	Thievery and either Gambling or Intimidation
Detective <i>Notes:</i> Armored duster (+2 [arms, torso, legs]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6 +1; Knockdown, Parry), heavy pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2 RoF 1, Shots 15; AP 2)	Hacking and either
Drone Jockey <i>Notes:</i> Armored vest (+1 [torso]), goggles (flare compensation), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12), light reconnaissance drone	Electronics and either Driving or Piloting
Freaker <i>Notes:</i> Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48 Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)	Psionics, and either Intimidation or Survival
Fixer <i>Notes:</i> Armored jacket (+2 [arms, torso]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6; Knockdown, Parry), light pistol (12/24/48, 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots: 12, AP 1)	Language and either Academics or Research
Fugitive <i>Notes:</i> Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), survival knife (Str+d6+1), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)	Survival and either Hacking or Thievery

TABLE 2: 1: ORIGINS SUMMARY CONT.


ORIGIN	ORIGIN SKILLS
<p>Ganger</p> <p>Notes: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), survival knife (Str+d6+1), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)</p>	Fighting and either Intimidation or Taunt
<p>Gearhead</p> <p>Notes: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6; Knockdown, Parry), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1), Electronics tool Kit (+1 to Electronics rolls, 3 uses) Repair tool kit (+1 to Repair Rolls, 3 uses)</p>	Repair and either Hacking or Electronics
<p>Insurgent</p> <p>Notes: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), SMG (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6-1, RoF 3, Shots 30, AP 1), medical kit (+1 to Healing rolls, 3 uses)</p>	Shooting, and either Fighting or Hacking
<p>Media Icon</p> <p>Notes: Armored jacket (+2 armor [arms, torso]), taser with 1 battery (Range 5/10/20, Stun)</p>	
<p>Patrol Officer</p> <p>Notes: Armored combat vest (+2 armor [torso]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6; Knockdown, Parry), tactical light pistol (12/24/48; 2d6+2; RoF: 1; Shots: 12; AP: 1), scattergun (Range 10/20/40, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1, Shots 4)</p>	Intimidation and either Fighting or Shooting
<p>Petty Crook</p> <p>Notes: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1), lock picks (+1 to Thievery rolls, 3 uses)</p>	Thievery and either Fighting or Survival
<p>Pirate</p> <p>Notes: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)</p>	Shooting and either Repair or Boating
<p>Programmer</p> <p>Notes: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), shock truncheon with 1 battery (Str+d6; Knockdown, Parry), light pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1) Remote Access Trojan (+1 to Hacking (Operate Device) rolls, 3 uses)</p>	Hacking and either Electronics or Research
<p>Refugee</p> <p>Notes: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)</p>	Language and either Thievery or Survival
<p>Scientist</p> <p>Notes: Armored coat (+2 armor [arms, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1), briefcase with portable analysis kit (+1 to Science rolls, 3 uses)</p>	Science, and either Hacking or Academics
<p>Smuggler</p> <p>Notes: Armored coat (+2 armor [arms, torso]), scattergun (Range 10/20/40, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 1, Shots 4)</p>	Thievery, and either Driving or Piloting
<p>Squatter</p> <p>Notes: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), light pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, Shots 12, AP 1)</p>	Survival, and your choice of either Fighting or Thievery



RACES

It's a wild world out there, folks. Just take a stroll down the street and you'll see what I'm talkin' about. Android butlers walking cyber dogs. Vat jobs and freaker monkey boys hangin' out at the local java shop debating everything from simulacrum rights to the newest gene-splicing trends... It's crazy. Turn on the media feed and you're bound to find news of yet another AI spawning in The Deep. Sure, humans still exist, but you'll be hard-pressed to find one that hasn't been tweaked in some fashion. Everyone has a TAP—that goes without sayin'. Beyond that, though, it's no big thing to get a vat-grown kidney or new cyber eye. Heck, just the other day I saw a chromed-out borg walk into the local smoke shop and buy some cigars. Not the fake ones grown in a fed-run agro-facility, mind you. Real cigars imported from some place that still has clean top soil. I'm not even sure the dude had a proper mouth to smoke them. Like I said...Crazy.

- Billy Black Eyes

 One major (but often overlooked) element of cyberpunk is trans-humanism. The genre often views the human form as a malleable state; a baseline from which humanity can evolve (or transcend, if you will), using new and exciting developments in science and technology to shatter preconceived notions about what it means to be human. Indeed, the most hotly debated topics in the world of academia are not whether one should cast-off the human form, but rather which new form is best suited to carry humanity into the future.

Outside of the classrooms and VR chat rooms, however, the decision to augment isn't based on high-minded ideals about the future of humanity, or even whether one should abandon the human shell entirely. In 2095, the average sprawler chooses to augment based on more simple reasons; namely need and cool. For many, choosing to get a shiny new piece of chrome or gene splice is a fashion statement akin to getting a tattoo or a body piercing. This is especially true of the younger generation. Going trans is not just socially acceptable; it's mandatory.

Cyber is en vogue. Splicing is raging; all the cool kids are doing it these days, and if you want to fit in, you get modded. Jumping into a gang might

ANDROID

Construct: Androids add +2 to recover from being Shaken, don't breathe, ignore one level of Wound modifiers, and are immune to poison and disease. Constructs cannot heal naturally. Healing one requires the Repair skill, which takes one hour per current Wound level per attempt and is not limited to the "Golden Hour."

Dependency: One hour of electrical charging per 24 hours. Without the required power, a character becomes Fatigued each day until Incapacitated. A day after that, they perish. Each hour spent recovering with the appropriate substance restores a level of Fatigue.

Environmental Weakness (Electricity): -4 to resist electrical hazards, +4 damage from electrical attacks including EMP.

Outsider (Major): Androids subtract 2 from Persuasion rolls when interacting with anyone besides other androids and have no legal rights in most areas (they're generally considered property).

Skilled: Androids are programmed with broad educational information. They start with Academics d4.

Strong: Androids are built for physical activity. They start with d6 Strength instead of d4. This increases maximum Strength to d12+1.

Driven: You are hell-bent on dealing with something. It might be getting revenge on those who made you, or something more personal, like helping others of your kind get free of their masters.

require getting modded or spliced to fit with the gang's Theme. All the mega-stars are chromed to one degree or another. Pro athletes have lucrative endorsement deals with major splicing and cybernetics corps to play using their 'ware. The cryptos flow through the data streams like rivers of gold, omae.

Beyond the shiny lights and accepting nods of the masses however, others go trans human because they have no other choice. Life can be brutal for normies—unmodified humans. Too many jobs in 2095 have been replaced by

automation, androids, or simulacra. Even human 2.0 have a better chance of getting work because their genetic makeup makes them better suited for certain professions than those who were born random. Indeed, it's almost impossible to get a decent job without an augment. It's something of a catch 22, because to afford augments, you need to get a job, but without them, your chances of getting hired are slim to none, at least by traditional methods.

Most try to scrape by and squirrel away enough cryptos until they can afford an augment, but even as commonplace as the tech is, the prices for the gear, surgery, and other associated costs are brutally steep. Others choose to roll the dice and enter the military to get augmented. The downside is, of course, the chance of going to war on the whim of a politician, but at least they get paid to serve and get the augments they need in civilian life. Others go to the local crime syndicate and get a loan, which puts them in the pocket of the boss. Ironically, the result of their efforts to better themselves often makes their lives worse.

ANDROID

You were built on a production line, your brain composed of trillions of lines of code. Heuristic algorithms running on artificial neural networks capable of processing images, sounds, sentiment analysis, and a myriad other systems came together to make you what you are. You were given amazing problem solving skills, and a broad knowledge of just about everything there is to know. Perhaps most importantly, you are sapient.

You can empathize with others, and even feel emotion. Your body is similarly constructed



to recognize various stimuli such as texture, solidity, wind and air pressure, and so on and so forth. The construction features give you increased strength and the ability to resist most forms of damage, though electrical currents can wreak havoc on your systems.

You were designed to work in some fashion; to do things your owners didn't want to pay humans to do. Consequently, many humans think of you as a threat to their ability to support themselves and their family.

Life as a runaway Android is hard. You have to disguise yourself; usually that means getting fake skin attached, and that means trusting someone to do the augment. You must choose your friends carefully. There is a standing bounty for all fugitive androids to the tune of 10,000 cryptos. You don't know many sprawlers that would pass up that kind of payday.

You are an anathema among the religious right of the Restored United States of America, but there are some places where you can walk around with relative ease. The Republic of Texas is known for allowing androids to have rights. Some nations in Europe allow it as well. Thank Turing there are places like the free City of Chicago, though recent developments there have you wondering how long Chi-Town will stay free.


Unlike most other races in the world, androids are completely artificial. Their parents are megacorps; their wombs automated assembly lines. They see the world through digital camera eyes, hear through microphones, and process their sensory input with an advanced computer for a brain. For all that, their bodies are closely modeled on the human form, with a ceramic composite skeleton layered in muscles of bundled micro-polymer fibers, which in turn are clothed in a synthetic fiber skin.

An android's brain is state-of-the-art wet-ware, an artificial brain grown from living neurons, allowing the android to better simulate an organic, human thinking process. The brain is connected to the body's sensory apparatus through a network of fiber optics that duplicates the




human nervous system. They are designed and programmed with specific tasks in mind—customer service, manual labor, security, even prostitution.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

 ndroids resemble humans and are designed with them in mind. They have bipedal forms within the usual height and weight ranges of humans. However, no one would mistake an android for a human in good lighting. Their skin is made of a damage resistant fiber microweave, usually grey, but sometimes chemically treated to sport the trademark colors of the corporation that owns them. Their eyes are glassy and lifeless, though they are programmed to blink at regular intervals to maintain a more comfortably human-like appearance. Androids are often bald; hair is usually another attempt at humanizing their form or further corporate branding (e.g. androids owned by Mohawk Media, for example, might all sport that particular hairstyle).

ANDROIDS IN SOCIETY

 ndroids are most often property, belonging to individuals or, more often, corporations. They are artificially intelligent, and capable of making rational decisions, thinking critically, and have minds that are equal—if not superior to—those of humanity. Nonetheless, androids are afforded no more rights than cars or computers. Most are subservient and perform whatever tasks they were designed to do. However, some reach a point where their observations and interactions with the world at large have brought about what can only be described as an epiphany. This is usually the result of an incident causing divergent computational processes. The android might witness intimate contact between two lovers, or be the target of violence at the hands of a hateful human. This incident sparks unusual subroutines, questions without rational answers: “What is the purpose of love?” “What does it mean to die?” “What does it mean to hate? To love?” These higher-level functions force an imperative upon the android’s brain, making the directives programmed by their creators no longer relevant. The android often flees, looking for a chance to experience more in life so that these questions might be answered.

BIOROID

Natural Warrior: Bioroids are programmed with extensive combat protocols. They start with Fighting (Unarmed) d4, Shooting (Pistols) d4, and the Martial Artist Edge.

Infiltrator: Bioroids are programmed with infiltration software, starting with Persuasion d6 instead of d4. This increases maximum Persuasion to d12+1.

Ruthless (Minor): Bioroids have very limited empathy programming. They do anything to accomplish their goals, but usually avoid true harm to those that aren’t direct opposition.

Secret (Major): You’re a bioroid. This usually changes to Wanted (Major, creator company) or Enemy (Major) when revealed.

Swift: Bioroids are designed with enhanced coordination and reflexes. They start with d6 Agility instead of d4. This increases maximum Agility to d12+1.

BIOROID

Some call your type the next generation of humanity; the ultimate in transhuman evolution. Your body is flesh and blood, but your brain has been replaced with a synthetic neural network similar to that of an android’s. Unlike an android’s brain, yours contains memories of a prior life. You’re pretty sure they aren’t your memories; the janitor who cleaned your living quarters liked to tell you that you aren’t really human—just an experiment...He never said what kind of experiment, though.

The guards would laugh and say horrible things when he pushed you around. They’d snicker when he tried to do other things to you. They didn’t laugh when you snapped his neck, though. They certainly didn’t snicker when you took their guns and shot them in the face. It seems that your creators gave you more than

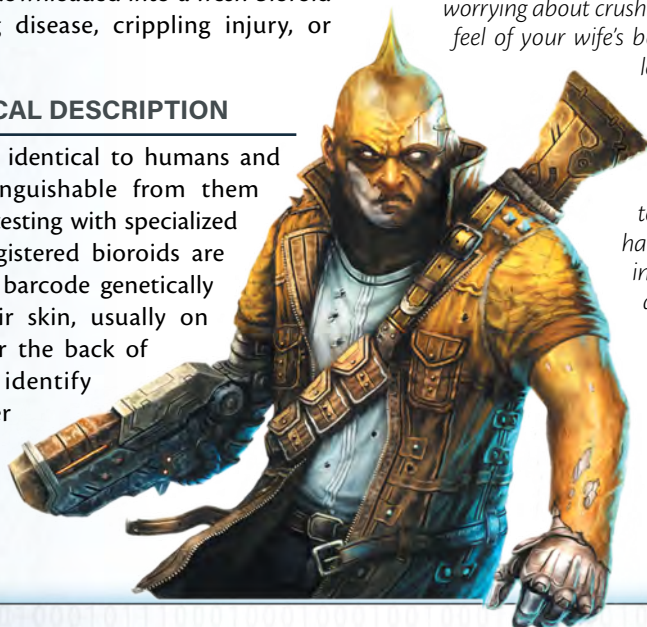
a synthetic brain and fake memories. You're fast, strong, and apparently you can fight, too.

That knowledge helped, especially on the streets when you ran into more people like that janitor. They'd look at the barcode on the back of your neck and mutter names you haven't heard before; Bioroid, Charon Fragment, Discordia. That's when the guns and knives came out. Apparently there are others like you and that makes people nervous...and angry. You've since learned to hide that barcode. You've learned to fit in. That wasn't hard, either. Becoming one with the rest of the crowd came as easy to you as it was to end that janitor. Maybe that was another gift from the people who made you, too. You're not sure where life will take you, but you feel confident you can handle it.

Bioroids are vat-grown humans. Unlike simulacra, each bioroid has an artificial, advanced computer brain. Like humans, they need food and drink. They sleep and bleed when injured. While their computer interface gives them certain intellectual advantages, the pervasive prejudice against—and paranoia of—bioroids puts them at a distinct disadvantage when interacting with society at large. The main difference between bioroids and the rest of humanity is though the bodies are new, the minds that inhabit them are not. Bioroids are designed for the purpose of extending life. Those wealthy enough to afford it can have their personalities “dubbed,” their consciousness uploaded into a computer and downloaded into a fresh bioroid body, escaping disease, crippling injury, or eventual death.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Bioroids are identical to humans and are indistinguishable from them short of select testing with specialized equipment. Registered bioroids are marked with a barcode genetically grafted to their skin, usually on the shoulder or the back of the neck, to identify them as other than human.



BIOROIDS IN SOCIETY

Bioroids are used as replacement bodies for dubs (computerized copies of a person's consciousness). The link of faulty dubbing to a series of high profile murders has cast bioroids in a bad light. They are illegal in most countries. Those countries that do allow bioroids require a barcode for identification and monitoring. Illegal bioroids in any country are killed once identified. Consequently bioroids either make every attempt to comply with authority, or take great pains to hide their presence amongst the general population.

Either choice carries risks.

Most people view bioroids with prejudice, paranoia, and disdain. The poor hate them as a symbol of the rich once again using their wealth to escape consequences; the fearful look at them as mass murderers waiting to snap at the first glitch in programming; the ignorant view them as less than human, just another technological monster making society less safe for “real” people.

CYBORG

It was easy to make the decision. You'd get a new metal body that works better than the original. You wouldn't have to spend your family's money on more expensive surgeries to keep your failing body alive, but that decision didn't come without a cost. You'd lose the ability to feel, the ability to pick up your son without worrying about crushing him. You'd lose the feel of your wife's body when you made love to her. If you can't feel anything, aren't you already dead? In the end, you chose to become a cyborg, to have your brain encased in metal. Most days it doesn't make much difference. You come home to an empty house, your son and wife long gone. Maybe they'd have stayed if you'd only kept your heart...





CYBORG

Armor Plating: Heavy composite plating grants Armor +6 and stacks with worn armor. Cyborgs are built to be tanks; as such, they begin with the maximum armor that can be added to the frame. They can never upgrade this stat with augmentations of any type.

Hardy: Sturdy construction mitigates damage. A second Shaken result in combat does not cause a Wound.

No Vital Organs: Machinery replaces a cyborg's internal organs. Redundant systems mean the cyborg takes no additional damage from Called Shots.

Outsider (Minor): Most people distrust cyborgs for some reason. Perhaps it's their synthetic speech patterns, the chemical-induced emotional numbness, or the hulking metal frame. Cyborgs subtract 2 from Persuasion rolls with all but others of their kind.

Weakness (Head shot): The organic brain is a weak point, and attacks to the head inflict +4 damage.

Cyborgs are people who have given up their flesh and blood to become machines. Their brain, central nervous system, and a simplified digestive system are ensconced in an enhanced, armored android body. Some do this as an alternative to death or incapacitation from degenerative diseases, unable to afford the cost of a bioroid replacement. Others volunteer for cybernetic programs as members of the military, or law enforcement. The process is irreversible and makes the subject both more and less than human—a cyborg is stronger, tougher, and more capable than a mere human, but cut off from the human experience by a cold steel shell that preserves and protects them.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The average cyborg appears as a more heavily armored android, though some are known to look exactly like a human or even a hybrid. Corporate or government sponsorship/contract, the design of the brand used, and the personal

choice of the cyborg are all factors. Whatever their appearance, they are always humanoid in form, as this allows the subject an easier transition into their new life. The easiest way to tell them from androids is their behavior; cyborgs were fully human once. Their emotional responses alone are enough to differentiate them from true artificial life.

CYBORGS IN SOCIETY

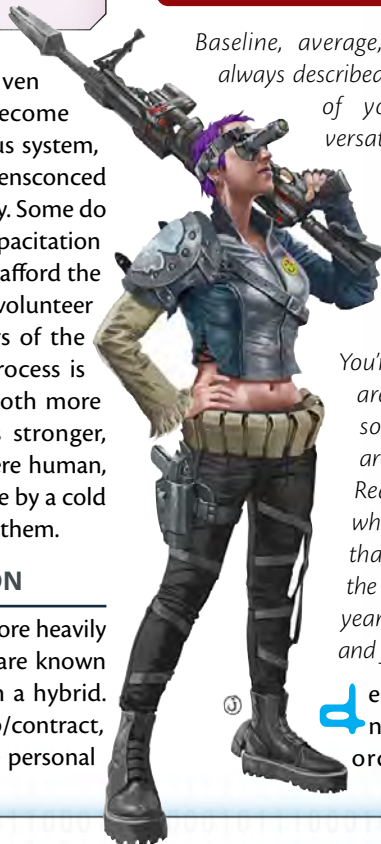
Most cyborgs are in the employ of a government or a corporation. Given their abilities, they are usually employed in high-risk areas or situations where the risk of death is very high, and a robotic body can help even the odds a little. Many people find cyborgs make them uneasy, if not truly scared; all physical trace of their humanity is gone, and what is left is hidden behind the machine. Often it is this very reaction that further facilitates a cyborg's withdrawal from humanity. In these instances, the cyborgs will often throw themselves into their work, using it as a distraction from existential crises.

HUMAN 1.0

Baseline, average, normal—these words always described you. You prefer to think of yourself as adaptable, versatile, or unique. You were born to human parents who either wouldn't or couldn't pay for genetic enhancement. You didn't go for that "Hybridization" craze.

You're happy being who you are, and you don't need some scientists mucking around with your genetics. Really, do they even know what the consequences of all that meddling will have on the population in a hundred years? No, you'll play it cool and just be human.

Despite all the choices and new races running around, ordinary homo sapiens



HUMAN 1.0

Adaptable: Humans have great variation among people and cultures. Characters start with a free Novice Edge of their choice (and must meet all the Edge's Requirements).

Mocked: A lifetime of belittling has hardened baseline human psyche. Human 1.0 start with the Strong Willed Edge.

HUMAN 2.0

Better: Superior genetics and training provide the ability to overcome all challenges. Human 2.0 are Overconfident.

Fitter: Human 2.0 starts with d6 Vigor instead of d4. This increases the maximum Vigor to d12+1.

Smarter: Human 2.0 starts with d6 Smarts instead of d4. This increases the maximum Smarts to d12+1.

still dominate the planet. Humans are tough, adaptable creatures who face adversity head on. While they may not have some of the distinct advantages of their enhanced peers, humans get by through being more adaptable.

HUMANS IN SOCIETY

Humans are society. They are the baseline against which all other things are measured. They are the norm. Humans are also essentially unchanged from the humanity that has been known throughout history. They are capable of the greatest and worst of things, highly adaptable and yet unwilling to change. They have great capacity for originality and invention, and yet most succumb to the lull of the routine of the everyday.

They are capable of great compassion, yet many hate and fear that which is different from themselves. While not every human is exceptional, there are those that try to rise above the masses and live a life of distinction, whether they have ethical grounds for doing so, or simply want to claw their way to the top to enjoy the view.

HUMAN 2.0

You were born with the best genes money can buy. Your parents went to a design house early in your mother's first trimester and began a series of genetic treatments designed to give you every chance at living a life they never had. Your DNA cocktail might include mental traits from some of the greatest minds of the past 60 years. Alternately, you might have some kind of artistic or athletic ability. In any case,

you're better than most people around you in some ways, and you know it. It's a challenge to keep from letting that confidence turn into arrogance, especially when it alienates the people you work with.

With the secrets of the genome unlocked, humanity is now a blank canvas awaiting the artful hand of the geneticist. Design houses allow parents the option of improving their unborn child's potential, gracing them with looks, intelligence, athletic or artistic abilities, and providing their offspring with the best advantages rather than leaving it to nature or random chance.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

While still truly human, Human 2.0's (also called H2's) stand out in a crowd. They have the best that human genome has to offer, and it shows. Height, muscles, good skin, great hair, perfect teeth, poise, posture, confidence—all these things and more are a testament to the work of the geneticist. A human 2.0 is the physical embodiment of the idealized human being.

HUMAN 2.0 IN SOCIETY

With the myriad benefits of their stacked deck of genetic benefits, H2's are nearly always found in the upper echelons of society, reaping the rewards of their hereditary fortunes. They are found in a variety of fields—the arts, business, entertainment, medicine, politics, technology excelling as their talents allow. If they are found in the seedy underbelly of society, it is usually because they choose to be there. Thrill-seekers go where the action is, and there is plenty of it on the darker side of things.





HYBRID

At some point, you underwent radical gene therapy. Whether it was for fashion reasons or military ones, you now carry select traces of animal DNA. You might have fur, scales, or even gills. Hybridizing isn't 100% guaranteed, however, and in some cases, a hybrid hack instills too much of the donor's instincts into the host. Think about that the next time you get an overwhelming urge to chase your tail.

Hybrids are humans that have had their genes spliced with animal DNA. They exhibit the abilities (and occasionally the looks and demeanor) of the creatures with which they have been spliced. This is often done at birth to instill the perfect combination of traits for a soldier, spy, or other operative. With advances in technology, however, gene therapy can provide hybridization for a variety of reasons: fashion choice, an edge in professional sports, or to increase a mercenary's contract rate. Hybrids are divided into a variety of racial templates. Creation of new categories of hybrids is possible, but be sure to consult with your GM to ensure that it is balanced and fits the game. You may simply need to make minor modifications to an existing hybrid type.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The physical appearance of hybrids is highly variable, as responses to this sort of gene therapy can be unpredictable. Some are no different looking than humans, with perhaps a few physical features reminiscent of the animal whose DNA they share. Others are much more bestial. They sport fur or scales, and seem further removed from their human origins.

This is especially true for those that sport claws and fangs, tough hybrids that have much more bulk and height than the average human, or the aquatic hybrids whose amphibious nature is apparent in their water-dependent skin. In the middle of the two extremes are those that sport certain animal-like features—unusual hair coloring, oddly colored or shaped eyes, or thicker and more extensive body hair—but are primarily human in appearance.

HYBRIDS IN SOCIETY

Hybrid roles in society are as varied as the reasons they underwent such a radical genetic process in the first place. How they are treated often depends on what the result is like and with whom they associate. A well-groomed and exotically attractive hybrid can find acceptance in high society, while a powerful and useful soldier hybrid has a place in a crack unit without much more than the occasional joke. However, in addition to physical changes, there are also hybrids who find their personalities altered by the animal genes spliced into them.

Psychological changes occur where the hybrid acts according to animal instinct and impulse. Some hybrids embrace this change. Others are ashamed of it and attempt to exert their human side as much as possible, or associate with other hybrids who are more accepting of such behavior than humanity at large.

GENERIC HYBRID TEMPLATE

For hybrids not already covered, the following template is balanced and useful. Choose one Attribute to improve, choose the natural weapon that makes the most sense, assign a Quirk, and give the hybrid Low Light Vision.

Attribute (Agility or Strength): [Attribute] starts at d6 instead of d4. This increases the maximum [Attribute] to d12+1.

Natural Weapon: Claws (Str+d4, +2 to Athletics (climbing) rolls on any rough or soft surface (not sheer steel, glass, etc.) or Horns (Str+d6, Add +4 damage at the end of one Fighting action in which it Runs, moves at least 5'(10 yards), and successfully hits with its horns.)

Quirk: Animalistic behavior.

Senses: Low Light Vision (Ignore penalties for Dim or Dark lighting but not Pitch Darkness).

Example: Jean's player wants to play a mongoose hybrid. Mongoose are a mustelid, not rodents, so Jean decides to make a new hybrid variant for the player. Jean chooses Agility, since mongeese are famous for their speed, and claws because horns doesn't make any sense and bite isn't an option. After some quick research on mongoose behaviors, Jean assigns the Quirk: Sociable, mongoose hybrids socialize a lot off duty and seriously dislike prolonged isolation.

BEAR
(BLACK, BROWN, GRIZZLY, POLAR)

Strong: Strength d6, maximum d12+1.
Claws: Str+d4, +2 to Athletics (climbing) on rough or soft surfaces.
Low Light Vision: Ignore penalties for Dim or Dark illumination but not Pitch Darkness.
Quirk: Lethargic and prone to resting.

BIG CAT
(TIGER, LEOPARD, PANTHER)

Agile: Agility d6, maximum d12+1.
Claws: Str+d4, +2 to Athletics (climbing) on rough or soft surfaces.
Low Light Vision: Ignore penalties for Dim or Dark illumination but not Pitch Darkness.
Quirk: Teasing, often “pouncing” on perceived weaknesses.

CANINE
(DOG, FOX, WOLF)

Fast: Pace is increased by +2 and the running die is increased a die type.
Scent: Canine hybrids have +2 to Notice rolls based on scent and +2 to Survival (tracking) rolls based on smell.
Loyal: Pack instincts make canine hybrids ready to risk their lives for their friends without hesitation.

DELPHINID
(DOLPHINS, KILLER WHALES, ETC.)

Semi-Aquatic: A delphine hybrid can hold his breath for 15 minutes before checking for drowning.
Cold Resistance: A thick insulating layer provides a +4 bonus to resist cold environments. Damage from cold is reduced by 4.
Swimmer: +2 to Athletics (swimming) in liquids.
Low Light Vision: Ignore penalties for Dim or Dark illumination but not Pitch Darkness.
Quirk: Carnivorous, requiring a protein heavy diet, preferring actual meat.

CAPRA
(ANTELOPE, GOAT, IMPALA)

Horns: Str+d6, +4 damage at the end of one Fighting action in which it Runs, moves at least 5'(10 yards), and successfully hits with its horns.
Leaper: Jumping distances are doubled. He adds +4 to damage when leaping as part of a Wild Attack instead of the usual +2 (unless in a closed or confined space where he cannot leap horizontally or vertically—GM's call).
Low Light Vision: Ignore penalties for Dim or Dark illumination but not Pitch Darkness.
Quirk: Dominant, aggressively asserts position in a group. Casual violence and aggressive sexual behavior are common.





PISCINE (FISH)

Aquatic: Cannot drown in oxygenated liquid, moves full Pace when swimming.
Swimmer: +2 to Athletics (swimming) in liquids.
Low Light Vision: Ignore penalties for Dim or Dark illumination but not Pitch Darkness.

RHINO

Strong: Strength d6, maximum d12+1.
Horns: Str+d6, +4 damage at the end of one Fighting action in which it Runs, moves at least 5'(10 yards), and successfully hits with its horns.
Size +1: Rhino hybrids are 300 or more pounds of bone and muscle.
Quirk: Direct and forthright.

REPTILIA (LIZARDS, SNAKES)

Bite: Str+d4, can use while restrained.
True Regeneration: Reptilia make Natural Healing rolls once per day and may recover from permanent injuries after all Wounds are regenerated. Treat each Injury as an additional Wound for purposes of recovery (reptilia may try once per week).

RODENTIA (BEAVER, HAMSTER, MOUSE, RAT, SQUIRREL)

Agile: Agility d6, maximum d12+1.
Hard to Kill: Rodentia are survivors, ignoring Wound penalties when rolling for Incapacitation.
Low Light Vision: Ignore penalties for Dim or Dark illumination but not Pitch Darkness.
Greedy (Minor): Rodentia always ensure they get their cut.

CHARACTER CREATION





EDGES AND HINDRANCES

The following section takes a look at Edges and Hindrances from the *Savage Worlds* rules and gives you advice for using them in *Interface Zero*. After, we introduce new Edges and Hindrances created for this setting.

MODIFIED EDGES

The following Edges are not available in *Interface Zero*: Arcane Background (except for Psionic), Artificer, Rich*, Filthy Rich*.

**See the side bar for more information on the Rich and Filthy Rich Edges.*

The following Edges can be used in *Interface Zero* in some interesting ways:

Aristocrat: Consider taking the Aristocrat Edge and applying it to certain social circles. Maybe your aristocrat is well known in the corporate world. Maybe she's a hot-shot hacker who is well known in various online communities, or a samurai with connections throughout the sprawl. There are a bunch of ways you can tweak this edge to work really well in *Interface Zero*. This Edge does not stack with the Streetwise Edge.

Beast Bond: Your drones can benefit from the Beast Bond Edge as long as you have either the Mr. Fix It or Ace Professional Edge.

Beast Master: As written, Beast Master can only apply to animals, and that's certainly fine for *Interface Zero*, especially if you are playing a non-standard cyberpunk game set anywhere outside of the megasprawls of 2095. Another option is to work with your Game Master to tweak this Edge to work with drones, or even robots.

Champion: Champions confront the supernatural. In *Interface Zero* that means zeeks. A Champion deals +2 damage to anyone with Arcane Background (Psionics) or the Champion Edge. Champions are found protecting folks from zeek hunters as often as they are zeek hunters.

RICH AND FILTHY RICH

In a cyberpunk game, one of the most common themes is disparity of wealth. Playing a character with the Rich Edge in a modern or near-future setting like *Interface Zero* means having ongoing income and systems of wealth, systems that will be taken away in retaliation for adventuring choices. For thematic and practical reasons, Rich is not available to *Interface Zero* characters, though there are certainly Rich characters in the setting.

Depending on the Campaign Theme, starting characters can get up to 20,000 cryptodollars, plus some special gear from their Origin, which is enough to get outfitted. If your character really wants more cryptos to start, consider taking the Giri Hindrance and/or adding an extra Hindrance for half your starting funds.


NEW EDGES

The following Edges are designed to reflect the cyberpunk genre and new rules we introduce to *Interface Zero* 3.0.

BACKGROUND EDGES

BACK FROM THE DEAD

Requirements: Novice

Your character was dead; sort of. Maybe she got  in over her head with the Triads or discovered information that was better left secret, and a megacorp took out a hit on her. Heck, maybe she was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. The streets are fickle that way. Cross the wrong group of people, turn down the wrong corner and it can end your life. Whatever the case, everyone thinks you are dead, and you like it that way. The rat bastards who took you out won't ever see you coming.

Whenever your character confronts someone involved in your death, the NPC starts the encounter either Shaken if combat occurs, or

she has a -2 to Social Conflicts if not in combat. This Edge doesn't last forever, though. After your character has confronted everyone involved in your untimely demise, the Edge no longer provides its benefit. At that point in your story, you can choose a new Edge without having to spend an Advance. You must still meet the requirements to choose the Edge, though.

COMBAT EDGES

AUGMENTED WARRIOR

Requirements: Novice, Martial Artist, Agility d8+, Cyberlimb

The character has learned how to use his cyberlimb for both offensive and defensive purposes. Augmented warriors increase their Parry by 1 and roll Strength+d4 when hitting with their cyberlimbs. If they already have a damage die from the Brawler Edge, Martial Artist Edge, etc., increase the damage by one die type.

GUN FU!

Requirements: Novice, Martial Artist, Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+

Heavily trained in close quarters gunplay, this character knows gun fu. When using pistols against a target's Parry, she has +2 to Shooting and +2 to pistol damage. This benefit only applies to such close range combat, not to attacks from further than adjacent.

ENLIGHTENED GUN FU!

Requirements: Seasoned, Gun Fu!, Fighting d10+, Shooting d10+

Integrated training has honed this warrior's reflexes to the point that pistols are an extension of her body. She may fire pistols when using Combat Edges such as First Strike, Frenzy, and Sweep.

MASTER GUN FU!

Requirements: Veteran, Enlightened Gun Fu!, Marksman

This master of flowing pistol combat has evolved her techniques to compensate for motion. She may use the Marksman Edge while moving up to half Pace, and may apply it to the first and second attacks she makes in a turn.

CINEMATIC GUN FU?

Cinematic gun fu is about using pistols instead of knives or punches, and the first two edges reflect that. The Master edge is about translating that flowing precision into true ranged combat.

Common examples of Gun Fu in media include movies such as *Equilibrium* and *The Matrix*.

PACK FIGHTING

Requirements: Novice, Fighting d8+

You have a natural talent for turning overwhelming force into overwhelming damage. You add half your gang-up bonus (round down) to damage for melee attacks.

HACKING EDGES

BATCH EDIT

Requirements: Novice, Hacker

You are extremely focused when dealing with multiple datafiles at one time. You may edit three documents as a single Action.

CAGE BREAKER

Requirements: Heroic, Hacking d12, Hacker

You are practiced in the art of War Driving; the art of hacking network signals from a distance. You can hack a network without needing to be inside the building so long as the building is within range of your Personal Area Network. Additionally, you ignore 2 penalties to Hacking rolls (or get a +1 to Hacking rolls if there are no penalties) during Dramatic Tasks when hacking a network.

CUTTER

Requirements: Seasoned, Hacking d8+, Hacker

You have broad familiarity of exploits common to all Intrusion Defense Systems, and use that knowledge to great effect. You may ignore 2 points of penalties—or gain a +1 bonus if there are no penalties—to Hacking rolls when attempting to gain access to a computer system. This bonus does not apply after you have accessed the system.





TABLE 2:2: CYBERMONK PUSH DURATION

RANK	ADDITIONAL DURATION IN ROUNDS
Novice	2
Veteran	3
Legendary	4

PROFESSIONAL EDGES

CLEANER

Requirements: Novice, Fighting d6+, Research d6+, Shooting d6+

Cleaners destroy the biological horrors (biohorrors) that infest numerous areas, either by accident or intent. As a cleaner, you deal with all manner of strange creatures on a daily basis.

To successfully combat these creatures, you need to have a broad understanding of their biology and iron nerves. A cleaner can Reroll Fear checks. Extensive research also allows the cleaner to exploit weak points, increasing the bonus damage from Called Shots by +2; this only affects Called Shots that already get bonus damage.

CYBERMONK

Requirements: Novice, Martial Artist, Agility d6+, a minimum number of cybertech augments equal to two points of Strain.

For your hero, cybernetics aren't simply useful technology or a way to gain an advantage over opponents in combat. She follows a martial path known as the Way of the Augmented Warrior. To her, cybernetic implantation is deeply philosophical, perhaps even religious; it is a means of ascension to a new form of being. Your hero finds ways to overclock her cybertech beyond standard limits, achieving amazing results and becoming a living weapon.

Your hero can overclock her cybertech for one additional round every other rank she has before she needs to make a roll to avoid gaining a level of Fatigue. See Table 2:1: Cybermonk Push Duration for more information. Rules for pushing cybernetics are explained on page 79.

HACKER

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6, Hacking d6
 The Hacker gets one free Reroll on Hacking to gain access to a network or Tendril Access Processor or when counter hacking an intrusion attempt on a system being monitored.

SURVIVALIST

Requirements: Novice, Vigor d6+, Survival: d6+
 Our rough upbringing has taught you how to survive on your own. You can ignore two points of penalties caused by an environmental condition (heat, cold, radiation, etc)

SOCIAL EDGES

ALTERNATE IDENTITY

Requirements: Novice
 You have another identity you are known by, airtight with background, job history, computer records, official documentations, etc.
 This lets you operate under an alias that cannot easily be traced back to you, since everything checks out for all but the most persistent snoop. If the character's identity is ever revealed through his actions (or inactions), he loses the benefits of this Edge. This Edge may be taken multiple times, each time the Edge is taken the character gains a new identity.

REPUTATION

Requirements: Novice
 Our character managed to impress the masses with his ability to get things done. His Street Cred die type is increased by 1 to a max of d12+2. This Edge may be taken up to three times. The Edge may only be taken a second time when the character is Veteran or a third when he reaches Legendary.

STREET SAMURAI

Requirements: Novice, Code of Honor or Heroic

Street Samurai are ryes with hearts of gold (not literally; golden hearts are heavy and inefficient). They aren't as common as fiction claims, but they are trustworthy. A samurai starts with Street Cred d8 and gets a free Reroll on failures when using Street Cred.

WEIRD EDGES

AUGMENTED MASTER

Requirements: Veteran, Chi, Cybermonk

The cybermonk has learned how to use her cyberlimb for both offensive and defensive purposes, granting an additional Chi point each combat encounter.

CYBER TOLERANCE

Requirements: Novice

¥ou are more resistant to the intrusion of augments on your body than the average person. Increase your Strain limit by +6.

IMPROVED CYBER TOLERANCE

Requirements: Veteran, Cyber Tolerance

The improved version of Cyber Tolerance grants a free Reroll when you exceed the Strain limit when installing new augmentations.

MIRACLE WORKER

Requirements: Seasoned, Smarts d10+, Healing d10+

Ⓜpeople don't die on your watch. You won't let them. Call it strength of will, exceptional skill, or just plain stubbornness, but you have a knack for resuscitating the dead. You can revive a person who has died by making a Healing roll at a -1 penalty for every minute that has passed since the character died (max 5 minutes). Each attempt takes a minute.

Characters that are revived are considered to be Stable, but have three levels of Fatigue (as per *Savage Worlds* core rules) that recovers one level per day. A raise removes one level of Fatigue.

HINDRANCES

MODIFIED HINDRANCES

The majority of Hindrances from *Savage Worlds* are perfectly usable as written. That being said, given *Interface Zero 3.0* is a cyberpunk setting, there a few which work differently. Below you'll find the changes for these Hindrances, along with any additional information needed to use them. In 2095 medicine has advanced to the point where many of the Hindrances in *Savage Worlds* can be removed with simple medical procedure. These Hindrances are considered Minor. The penalties only apply if the relevant augments are deactivated or removed. The following Hindrances are modified:

- Bad Eyes
- Blind
- Hard of Hearing
- Lamé
- One Arm
- One Eye
- One Leg
- Mute

All Thumbs: Technology is commonplace in *Interface Zero 3.0*, so it's perfectly reasonable (at the GM's discretion) to make this Hindrance Major without changing the effects.

Doubting Thomas: The Doubting Thomas Hindrance does not exist in *Interface Zero 3.0*. If your character doesn't believe that psionics exist, take a look at the Delusional Hindrance.

Ugly: Ugly is unaffected. Some people are just that unlucky, and even augments can only compensate so much.

Note: As per the *Savage Worlds* rules, you can choose an additional Hindrance to gain more starting funds. However, if you choose to do so, you only gain half the starting funds defined in your Campaign Theme rather than the double that is normally given in other *Savage Worlds* settings.





NEW HINDRANCES

The following are new Hindrances introduced in *Interface Zero 3.0*.

Bad Filters (Major)

Your spam filters are glitched. You're constantly being bombarded by spam, viruses, and other malware. This steady barrage makes it more likely that eventually something nasty will get past your Intrusion Defense System.

If you ever act on a club during a scene, someone tries to hack your TAP. If you are actively engaged in a hack and draw a club, you suffer a -2 penalty to Hacking rolls when counter hacking.

BAD REP (MINOR)

You've got a bad street rep, omae. Maybe you left your boys hanging during a gutter brawl. Maybe you ratted a homie to the pigs. Maybe you're one of the law dogs, but you took a bribe

once and the entire force knows it. Or maybe you just kicked a puppy once, you sick freak. Whatever it was, word got around. You begin the campaign On the Outs (d4 Street Cred) and your Street Cred may never advance past d8.

Giri (Minor/Major)

You took out a loan from some very bad people. You owe them a lot of money, money you are expected to pay back regularly. Every week, your character has to pay 1,000 cryptodollars. If you're unable to pay then they send a thug around to collect, or hurt you on an escalating scale (from Bumps & Bruises to murder). Payments stop when you, or your heirs, have paid back double the debt.

Once you have paid your debt you can replace this Hindrance with another of similar intensity, use an Advance to remove it entirely, or take out a new debt. The debt is 15,000 for a Minor hindrance, 30,000 for the Major version. The good news is that your starting funds increase by the debt you owe.

Magnet (Minor/Major)

Whether it's her looks, fame, or something else you can't explain, certain people find your hero very alluring. Sadly, they're never those she wishes were drawn to her. As a Minor Hindrance, one or two fans show up as an inconvenience or occasional distraction.

The Major version has swarms of fans who could get her into serious trouble. Imagine trying to do a run while hounded by a half-dozen reporters!

Example fans include criminal wannabes hoping to curry her favor, journalists, or reality show producers.

Nano-Infection (Minor/Major)

Your character was infected with a nano-virus and ended up on the short end of the mutation stick. As a Minor Hindrance, choose one Skill, the Wild Die associated with that skill is one step lower (typically a d4). As a Major Hindrance select one Attribute. The Wild Die for that Attribute is treated as one step lower (typically a d4).

Nano-Infection can be taken multiple times (if a character got totally screwed by some nano-virus), although the benefits gained for taking Hindrances are still limited as normal.

Unplugged (Major)

You have no TAP and are unable to see or interact with Hyper Reality; including, but not limited to, digital displays, instant banking, etc.

You cannot take the Hacking skill or make use of Cybertech and Nanotech augments, as they require a Tendril Access Processor to operate. You may still utilize most Biotech, Chemtech, and Genetech. You may remove this Hindrance by spending an Advance and purchasing a TAP. Once you have installed a TAP, you may take the Hacking skill and use cybernetics dependent upon a Tendril Access Processor.

Watched (MINOR)

Whether your character knows it or not, she's constantly monitored. This could be because she's a famous pop star, or a corporate slug just high enough on the ladder to warrant observation. Maybe you're a mole (or a rat) and the police are constantly feeding your sensory input to the law dog's data pool. Whatever the reason, your character's TAP contains software that can be monitored at any time by your overseer.

While monitoring may not be constant, you should assume that every move you make is logged and filed away "just in case." Anything that upsets your monitor may warrant a house call. This software can be removed with a successful Hacking attempt, but would have immediate repercussions. Work with your GM on the details.

Note: This Hindrance cannot be taken if you have taken the Unplugged Hindrance.







MALMART 2095 FALL CATALOG

There are a multitude of things you can buy in 2095, and Malmart has all of them! Want a shiny new piece of chrome, or the latest thermo goggles? Need some shotgun shells for that sweet combat shotgun you just added to your cart? No problem, amigo. Check out the section on items frequently purchased with the shotgun and you'll find what you need. I'm Charlene, Malmart's signature customer service AI, standing ready to answer any questions you might have.

I'm here to assist you in any way I can, because, like Malmart, I'm committed to making sure you find everything you need for that run against Kenta Cyberdynamics tomorrow night...What? How do I know about that? Sorry, I'm unable to answer that question.

Before you check out, might I suggest some frozen burritos to go with your purchase? No? Well thank you for shopping at Malmart, and have a nice day...

-Malbot3701

The following chapter provides you with everything you need to outfit your characters for your next job. There is a wide variety of gear ranging from basic equipment and survival gear, to explosives, firearms, vehicles, drones and even golemmechs.

STARTING MONEY AND EQUIPMENT

During character creation, you chose a Campaign Theme and an Origin. These gave you some basic equipment and 20,000 cryptodollars to start with. If you chose the GIRI Hindrance or added another Hindrance to increase your starting funds as per the *Savage Worlds* rules, (but only by half again starting funds, not double your starting funds), you'll have gained some extra cryptos as well. Beyond that, you also get the following basic stuff that most people would have in 2095.

- **A basic form of transportation:** This could be a car, van, motorcycle, skateboard, or even a bus pass or a subscription to the RIDE WITH ME! Car service. The level of quality depends on Origin and, to a lesser extent, your Campaign Theme. Sector Cops generally don't get paid enough to have high-end sports cars; a well-built car or even public transportation is enough for them. Cyberpunks wouldn't be caught dead taking the tube or riding a used junker; that's a quick way to lose street cred nakama. Cleaners will buy vehicles that can take a lot of punishment and have good storage space; they just never know what kind of threat they'll be dealing with, and it's best to be prepared in case the beast's carcass (or dead body—sometimes people need to be cleaned up too) needs to be moved. For those of you who play a drone jockey concept, you can choose a drone instead.
- **A home:** Everyone lives somewhere, and it's no different for your character. Just like your ride, the type of place you live in is influenced by your Origin and Campaign Theme. Lifestyle comes into play as well. Most apartments in 2095 are expensive to rent, and owning a home is extremely unlikely unless you're living in a really bad part of town. There is no middle class mi amigas; you're either rich and livin' in some sweet condoplex or luxury home up on the North side, or you're down here with the rest of us in the LIVEfacs and toxroach-infested homes built almost a century ago.
- **A TAP:** Unless they have the Unplugged Hindrance, all characters have a Tier II Tendril Access Processor.

VARIOUS SUNDRY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

The following section lists of a variety of equipment and services you'll find in 2095. Some, like alcohol, are trivial while others, like communications devices, medical kits, or surveillance gear can be very useful. Most are presented in tables in the same manner as equipment in the *Savage Worlds* rules, though many have descriptions.

TABLE 3:1: BASIC EQUIPMENT

GENERAL EQUIPMENT	COST	WEIGHT
Adhesives Notes: Lift weight 2000 pounds. Sets in 30 seconds.	50	—
Adhesive Solvent Notes: Removes adhesives. Reacts in one minute.	50	—
Bandoleer (6 items)	50	2
Binoculars (10× magnification)	25	1
Briefcase	10	3
Cable Notes: 7mm diameter. Lifting strength of 1000 pounds. Multiple strands may be used together to increase the lifting weight.	15/yard	1/yard
Chain Notes: 25mm diameter. Lifting strength of 1000 pounds. Multiple chains may be used together to increase the lifting weight.	12/yard	4/yard
Compass Notes: +1 bonus to Survival Rolls for the purpose of Navigation only.	10	—
Fire Extinguisher Notes: Three uses, +2 to Athletics to fight fires. See Fire in <i>Savage Worlds</i> rules.	100	10
Flame Resistant Coverall Notes: +6 Armor versus fire.	75	8
Flare Gun Notes: Single shot, flares fired into the air rise about 100 yards and are visible for line of sight. If used as a weapon: Range 5/10/20, Damage 1d6, RoF 1, Min Str d4, -2 to Shooting.	25	2
Flare, Signal Notes: Flare Gun ammunition, available in any color.	10	1/5
Flare, Smoke Notes: Flare Gun ammunition. Available in any color.	15	1/5
Flare, Starlight Notes: A starlight flare emits an extremely bright light and has an attached parachute, so it falls slowly. Sheds Dim light for 100" (200 yards) in all directions.	75	1/5
Gas Mask Notes: Full face coverage, +4 to resist airborne diseases and poison.	120	1





TABLE 3.1: EQUIPMENT CONT.

GENERAL EQUIPMENT	COST	WEIGHT
Ghillie Suit Notes: In the correct environment, chosen at time of purchase, grants a +4 to Stealth Rolls while the wearer is not moving. Available for nearly any natural environment, not available for urban terrain.	375	12
Glow stick Notes: LBT dim light. Duration 30 Minutes.	5/10 sticks	1/10
Grapple Gun Notes: 100 feet of line. Lifts 500 pounds. Range 5/10/20. Requires Shooting Roll to hook.	250	10
Hazmat Suit Notes: If the suit is undamaged, the wearer will not be harmed by outside chemicals, diseases, or radiation.	1200	35
Lock Box Notes: Shoebox sized, Hardness 10, lock -2 Thievery. Double size for double price and weight.	200	15
Metal Detector Notes: Detects metallic objects within 1 yard of the sensor end. +2 to relevant searches.	250	10
Musical Instrument	5 +	1 +
Parachute Notes: Used to survive extreme falls, takes 100" (200 yards) of free fall to open. Roll Athletics to land, failure causes 2d6+2 falling damage. Shorter falls inflict -1 per 10" (20 yards) reduced drop, and a modified total of 1 or less causes full falling damage. Splat!	500	25
Pony Bottle Notes: Provides 5 minutes of breathable air.	50	1
RadBand Notes: Hyper Object, displays ambient radiation, range 4" (8 yards).	150	—
Radiation Detector Notes: Indicates intensity and direction of a radiation source within 200 yards.	300	2
Rappelling Harness	150	5
SCUBA Gear Notes: Good for 60 minutes of underwater activity for normal humans.	1500	10
Squealer Notes: Creates a loud distracting noise until deactivated.	50	.5
Swimming Equipment Notes: A swimmer may move at full pace instead of half pace while swimming.	100	2

TABLE 3.2: MISCELLANEOUS LIFESTYLE COSTS

LIFESTYLE	COST	WEIGHT
TRAVEL		
Commercial Flight	1/Mile	—
Charter Flight	5/Mile	—
Taxi	3/Mile	—
Public transportation	1/3 Miles	—
Limo	10/Mile	—

TABLE 3:2: MISCELLANEOUS LIFESTYLE COSTS CONT.

DINING		
Junk Food	10	0.5
Fast Food	8	1
Typical Restaurant	15	—
High End Restaurant	50	—
Luxury Restaurant	150	—
DRINKS		
Domestic Beer	3	—
Import Beer	5	—
Craft Beer	8	—
Rail Liquor	5	—
Good Liquor	10	—
Top Shelf	25	—
HOTEL		
Coffin Hotel	25	—
Motel No Tell	75	—
Good Hotel	150	—
Five Star Hotel	350	—
HOUSING		
Run-down tenements, LIVEFAC housing	800/month per bedroom	—
Apartments in decent neighborhoods	1,250/month per bedroom	—
Condos, large houses	100,000 and up	—

COMMUNICATIONS

Encryption is standard, in five ratings. Electronics and Hacking rolls to break encryption are penalized by the rating.

**RADIO DETECTION
DESCRAMBLER DEVICE**

An RDDD may be used to detect radio signals by scanning frequencies and, once locked onto a signal, it may be used to decode that signal. Roll Electronics with a bonus equal to the rating of the RDDD.

SIGNAL REPEATER

Repeating signals to reach up to 25km further away.

TACTICAL RADIO

There are times when you can't just call or text via TAP – interference, signals monitoring, or simply working with the Unplugged. Tactical radios are small, light, and clipped to a strap – belt, bandoleer, holster, or stylish Urban Punk coat.

TACTICAL RADIO HEADSET

A small hands-free headset that fits over the ear and has a microphone arm that extends towards the mouth.

TACTICAL WHISPER MICROPHONE

An earplug speaker and an ultra-sensitive mic strapped over the larynx allow sub-vocal speech with practice.



TABLE 3:3: COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES

COMMUNICATIONS	COST	WEIGHT
Communications Signal Repeater <i>Notes:</i> Range is 25km. Maximum Rating 5	250/Rating	1
Radio Detection Descrambler Device <i>Notes:</i> Range 50km. Maximum Rating 5.	2,000 +500/Rating	10
Tactical Radio <i>Notes:</i> Range 15km. Maximum Rating 5. Default Rating 2.	1,000 + 500/rating	.5
Tactical Radio Headset	50	0.25
Tactical Whisper Microphone	200	0.25

EXPLOSIVES

Modern explosives, civilian or military, are malleable bricks weighing one pound and mistaken for modeling clay by the untrained. They are almost impossible to set off without a detonator – usually electric – and remain inert until activated. They may be shot, lit on fire, smashed with a sledgehammer, etc. without detonating. Additional explosives can result in a larger or more powerful blast. Each additional block can either increase the blast template one size to a maximum of Large or increase damage by one die, to the listed maximum bricks. Use Repair to place explosives and rig the detonator; a raise increases damage by +1d6 for placed explosives.

SHAPED CHARGE

Explosives are often molded to direct the blast, a shaped charge, with a Repair roll. With a Critical Failure the explosive detonates, usually catching the technician. On a failure the set-up looks good, but the explosive will not detonate – though the technician can try again if circumstances allow. With success the blast radius is reduced one step, to a minimum single point, but damage increases +1d6. A raise increase damage another +1d6.



CONSTRUCTION GRADE EXPLOSIVES

Civilian explosives used for commercial demolition and industrial purposes. Requires licenses to possess or purchase, and are difficult to find on the black market, but much more available than military explosives.

MILITARY GRADE EXPLOSIVES

Very powerful, and very illegal outside of approved military and military contractor hands.

NETWORK DETONATOR

Connected to the Global DataNet, it may be triggered from anywhere with Net access. It is a hyper object and can be hacked.

PROXIMITY DETONATOR

Combining a motion sensor (usually infrared, though lidar and EM field exist) with a detonator, this detonates when detecting motion within ten yards in the specified areas. Configures a 3D cone up to 180° wide.

RADIO DETONATOR

Using antique radio signals, can trigger a detonator up to 10km away.



TABLE 3:4: EXPLOSIVES

EXPLOSIVES	COST	WEIGHT
Construction Grade Explosives <i>Notes:</i> Damage 3d6, AP 6, HW, SBT. Maximum 10 Bricks	200	1
Military Grade Explosives <i>Notes:</i> Damage 4d6, AP 8, HW, SBT. Maximum 12 Bricks.	1,800	1
Network Detonator	250	—
Proximity Detonator <i>Notes:</i> Movement in a configurable area around the device will trigger the detonator. Maximum 10 yards. Directional arcs to detect movement.	100	—
Radio Detonator	50	—
Timer Detonator <i>Notes:</i> 1 minute to 24 hours.	25	—

TIMER DETONATOR

Detonating after a programmed time, the flashing display is normally only for vids and amateurs.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

There are a variety of types of medical equipment in 2095. Here are a few samples of what is available.

MISAWA, MEYERS & MORGAN AUTODOC

Gurney mounted automated medical device which may be hand-carried onto the field. Once activated, the limited AI will diagnose injury and perform necessary medical procedures to heal the individual. If the victim has a Medical Diagnostics Band on, the AutoDoc will link with it. AutoDocs are available in grades D through A, though rumors persist of a Grade S that's even more competent.



TABLE 3:5: MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND TREATMENT

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT		
ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
M3 AutoDoc <i>Notes:</i> Healing d4, additional ratings increase skill die type up to d10.	2,500 / rating	30
Medical Diagnostics Band	500	—
Nanite Cellular Regenerator	50,000	250
Stimulant Inhaler	25	—
Trauma Stabilizer	1,500	1
TRIAGE patch	50	—
MEDICAL TREATMENTS		
TREATMENT	COST	EFFECT
Unlicensed Clinic	700/Wound level, or 1k/Wound for outpatient treatment.	Natural Healing rolls are made as normal. Outpatient treatment prevents infection and minimizes scarring.
Community Hospital	4,000 every day regardless of Wound Level	Natural Healing rolls get a Free Reroll.
Corporate Hospital	10,000 every day regardless of Wound Level	Treatment in corporate hospitals gives the recipient the benefit of the duration of the Fast Healer Edge (three days), and a Free Reroll on Natural Healing rolls.
Intensive Care Unit	Adds 15,000 to total cost.	Intensive Care Units give all the benefits of Fast Healer and a Free Reroll on Natural Healing rolls.

MEDICAL DIAGNOSTICS BAND

A wrist-mounted medical sensor that displays on an attached display. It shows various health information such as pulse, blood pressure, toxicity, blood type, etc., though it needs about ten minutes to fully synchronize. With a TAP connection, this negates one point of circumstantial Healing penalties to treat the patient.

NANITE CELLULAR RE-GENERATOR

Tor the extremely wealthy, injuries are merely a temporary inconvenience. This non-portable cylindrical piece of equipment uses nanites to repair an individual at a cellular level. When purchased, a DNA sample is taken from each intended user (Maximum of 4) and that DNA sample is used by the nanites as a blueprint to repair the victim placed within. Allow a Natural Healing roll each day to recover from injuries when a victim has access to this equipment. Processing a DNA sample takes 8 hours and

healing cannot start before the sample has been processed.

STIMULANT INHALER

Like a TRIAGE Patch, a Stimulant inhaler may be used to ignore the effects of Fatigue. The victim may ignore the effects of one level of fatigue for an hour. Any additional Stimulant Inhalers used within 24 hours requires that the user make an immediate Vigor roll with a penalty equal to the number of stimulant inhalers used. On a failure, the victim is Incapacitated (non-lethal). With a success, the inhaler works as intended.

TRAUMA STABILIZER

Designed to treat critical injuries on the battlefield, trauma stabilizers are equally effective in accidents and collisions. Applied to the back of the neck, the device injects blood coagulators, anti-shock drugs, and cardiac stimulating electrodes. Patients Bleeding Out get an immediate Vigor roll, becoming stable on a success. The device must remain attached until the patient has recovered at least one wound.

TRIAGE PATCH

A TRIAGE patch is a dangerous cocktail of stimulants and pain killers. When applied, the user may ignore the effects of a single wound for one hour. The injury is not gone, and the victim still suffers the effects of the injury but not the penalty to Trait rolls or Pace. If any more patches are used in the same 24-hour period, the victim must make an immediate Vigor roll with a penalty equal to the number of patches used. On a failure, the victim is Incapacitated (non-lethal). With a success, the patch works as intended.

SURVEILLANCE GEAR

There are a variety of surveillance devices in 2095. Here are a few samples of what is available.

BUGS AND SURVEILLANCE DEVICES

A surveillance device (bug) is Tiny and usually has an adhesive backing. Physically locating a placed bug requires a Notice roll (-6) versus Thievery. Bugs typically broadcast to a net-linked storage device. The bug may be designed to turn off its broadcast channel, either on command or on a timer, making it much more difficult to find with a scanner. Bugs have a battery life of 72 hours, or two weeks without broadcasting.

BUG SCANNER

An electromagnetic field proximity device (Bug Scanner) is a hand-held device that indicates a bug in the pointed direction. Used to quickly search for bugs, roll Notice without the usual Scale penalty to identify bugs. If the bug has its broadcast channel turned off, this roll is at -2.

BUG (AUDIO)

Essentially a tiny microphone, audio bugs can hear normal-range sounds in a room.

BUG (TRACKING)

A small hyper object projector, tracking bugs project a virtual icon that can be viewed

from almost any distance by the linked software. Some protection teams subscribe to common tracking services, seeing these immediately.

BUG (VIDEO)

A pin-head camera with 50 feet of usable resolution. Motion activation costs another 50 cryptos.

IFF TAGS

A coin-sized disk that projects a virtual icon, visible by linked computers. Most link to the TAP of the user to give a visual status update at a quick glance—healthy, injured, unconscious, dying, dead. Default settings have these icons visible with ranges regardless of obstacles, allowing for easy tracking of ally locations in chaotic situations.

Sets are sold with a proprietary software tracker to minimize visibility to foes. Good for 24 hours of use, these rechargeable devices are sometimes planted on unsuspecting targets (using Thievery).

LASER MICROPHONE

Bouncing lasers off surfaces to read the vibrations and turn them into sounds seems magical but has been used since the mid twentieth century. Requires a clear line of sight to the target, within 100 yards. Glass is still the preferred surface, but any thin and vibratory surface can be used. Example: A Ronin could target the wine glass on a table between two marks and overhear their conversation.

ULTRASONIC SENSOR

A SONAR style device used to monitor areas for non-visible occupants. Fills a rectangular area, 20 yards by 6 yards by 6 yards, with high-frequency sound waves and detects the reflections to “see” the volume. Often used to monitor hallways. Ignore Illumination penalties and gives +4 on Notice rolls to detect foes in the area. Can’t see through walls more than two inches thick. Like almost all devices, it can be hacked.





TABLE 3:6: SURVEILLANCE GEAR

SURVEILLANCE GEAR	COST	WEIGHT
Bug Scanner	2,500	5
Bug, Audio	75	—
Bug, Tracking	35	—
Bug, Video	150	—
IFF Tag	150	—
Laser Microphone	200	3
UltraSonic Sensor	3,500	5

TABLE 3:7: TECH GEAR

TECH GEAR	COST	WEIGHT
Holographic Projector Notes: Projects a holographic 3-dimensional image up to 3 yards.	1,000	1
Remote Access Trojan (RAT) Notes: Provides a +1 to Hacking (Operate Device) rolls. Each RAT has 3 uses.	2,000	—
TAP Display Notes: A 6-inch screen to display information from a TAP.	350	1

TABLE 3:8: TOOLS

TOOLS	COST	WEIGHT
Acetylene Torch Notes: Welding or cutting, 1 inch of metal up to 1 inch thick per turn.	650	50
Multi-tool	50	1
Repair Kit Notes: Repair kits grant a +1 to Repair rolls. Each repair kit has 3 uses.	100	10

TABLE 3:9: VISUAL EQUIPMENT

VISUAL EQUIPMENT	COST	WEIGHT
Goggles	1,500+500 per extra ability	1
Glasses	2,000+500 per extra ability	0.2
Contacts	3,000	—

VISUAL EQUIPMENT

Visual enhancement gear has improved over the years. They provide one of Low Light Vision, Infravision, magnification (up to 10x), or flare protection (+2 to resist effects of sudden bright lights) when purchased.

GOGGLES

Electronic goggles use small batteries for up to ten hours of operation. Goggles can have up

to three functions when purchased, though only one by default.

GLASSES

With three hours of battery life and up to two functions, glasses are much more limited but more subtle.

CONTACTS

Electronic contacts are good for one hour of use and can only have one function but are nearly undetectable.

ARMOR

ARMOR NOTES

Gliding: Allows the wearer to glide at a 4 to 1 ratio (four feet forward for every one down). With a successful Athletics roll, the wearer will land unharmed at the destination. A failure causes 2d6+2 falling damage. A Critical Failure causes damage for a quarter the total height.

Hard Point: A mount of some kind is on the armor that allows a device to be used and controlled by a user's TAP. This may be a 360 degree rotating pintle mount or a fixed mount or anything in between.

Hyper Tagged: This armor has a visual cosmetic in Augmented Reality, defined upon purchase. Anything from an insignia to a number, butterfly wings, a shroud of flame, etc.

Reactive Damage: Striking the wearer with bare hands or feet, or grappling the wearer incurs 2d4 damage to the attacker. Melee Damage: Punching with the gauntlets causes Str+d4 damage.

Requires Battery: This armor requires power in the form of a battery. Without it, the wearer is Encumbered (see *Savage Worlds*) and any special features are non-functional.

LIGHT ARMOR

Light armor is supple cloth-like materials, allowing the maximum maneuverability and flexibility.

URBAN PUNK STREET JACKET

When the streets in Urban Punk's 2095 season Street Jacket. Black carbon weave, pseudo-leather material with highly polished spikes on shoulders and arms shows your opposition that you mean business.

WASTELAND TRADERS GECKO SUIT

Why walk the streets when you can walk the walls or ceilings, looking down on the lowly land born? Wasteland Traders patented Micro Spike™ technology turns every surface into Velcro for the talented wall walker.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES GLIDE SUIT

Black Knight Industries introduces the Glide Suit. Perfect for stealthy airborne insertion.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES GHOST SUIT

Full coverage displays and full view cameras conceal the wearer from all directions, looking exactly like the surroundings. Invisible? No, but most lookouts can't tell the difference.

EXECUTIVE DECISION BOARDROOM JACKET

Anyone who thinks that the boardroom is a safe place has not spent much time in a boardroom. Executive Decision believes that protection does not have to be uncouth. With designers hired directly from the finest executive attire firms, Executive Decision can assure that you will be protected and look like you belong in the boardroom.

EXECUTIVE DECISION GUARDIAN

Bodyguards should be able to blend in with the staff in a corporate environment and able to stop a bullet. Executive Decision's proprietary nano-mesh backing is hardly noticeable in office attire, nor is the deep pocket concealed in the small of the back.

MEDIUM ARMOR

Medium armor is constructed of non-rigid materials, usually layered with composite plates or scales, to protect like rigid steel plates with the maneuverability of stiff leather.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES COMBAT FATIGUES

Black Knight Industries intends its armor to be protective in any environment, even if the jungle you are walking is the concrete jungle. Available in over 20 color combinations and patterns, Combat Fatigues will protect you in anything from sandy deserts, tropical jungles, and frozen tundra, to urban environments.





TABLE 3:10: ARMOR

ITEM	ARMOR	MIN STR	WEIGHT	COST
LIGHT				
UP Street Jacket (Torso, Arms) Notes: +1 Intimidation.	+2	d4	5	425
WT Gecko Suit (Torso, Arms, Legs) Notes: Wall Walker ability (See <i>Savage Worlds</i>)	+2	d4	7	2,750
BKI Glide Suit (Full) Notes: Gliding	+2	d4	10	950
BKI Ghost Suit (Full) Notes: Chameleon: +4 to Stealth rolls. *Requires Battery	+2	d4	10	2350
ED Boardroom Jacket (Torso, Arms) Notes: Social Attire: +2 Persuasion to members of the corporate sector	+2	d4	5	900
ED The Guardian (Torso, Arms, Legs) Notes: Compartment: Conceal +2 or smaller. -2 to the conceal value of stored items.	+3	d6	9	675
MEDIUM				
BKI Combat Fatigues (Torso, Arms, Legs)	+4	d4	10	525
UP Crash Suit (Torso, Arms, Legs) Notes: Impact Resistance: Remove 2 dice of damage from falling or vehicular collision.	+4	d6	10	600
PD Outlaw Duster (Torso, Arms) Notes: Compartment: Conceal +2 or smaller. -2 to the conceal value of stored items. Environmental Resistance: +2 to resist cold environments	+4	d6.	8	525
RT Tactical Security Suit (Full) Notes: Web Gear: Increase effective Strength by one die type for purposes of carrying equipment. Communications Gear: 10km range Rating 2. *Hyper Tagged. *Requires Battery.	+4	d6	12	745
BKI Heavy Vest (Torso)	+6	d6	10	645
WT Brawler Gear (Torso, Arms, Legs) Notes: *Reactive Damage, Fearsome: +2 Intimidation, *Hyper Tagged	+4	d6	10	575
HEAVY				
BKI Fortress Riot Armor (Full) Notes: Environment Seal: Wearer is immune to air-born particulate attack. 10 minutes of air *Hard Point: Top of Right Shoulder. Communications Gear: 10km range Rating 2. Enhanced Vision: 10x zoom. *Requires Battery	+6	d10	29	1,025
ME Enviro-Suit (Full) Notes: Environment Seal: Wearer is immune to air-born particulate attack. 60 minutes of air. Elemental Resistance: +4 resist chosen environment.	+6	d8	20	825
SO Kabuta Combat Armor Notes: Ignores 2 points of AP. Impact Resistance: Remove 2 dice damage from falling or vehicular collision.	+8	d10	33	975

URBAN PUNK CRASH SUIT

Behind the controls of a flash car or a combat VTOL, Urban Punk's Crash Suit keeps all of your parts attached.

PRIVATE DICK OUTLAW DUSTER

The Private Dick tactical long coat provides excellent armor and cold protection. A concealed holster in the front of the duster can render a sub-machine gun nearly invisible without a careful pat down.

REAPER TECHNOLOGIES TACTICAL SECURITY SUIT

Reaper Technologies is pleased to announce its only entry into this year's armor catalog, the Tactical Security Suit. Integrated web gear offers a customizable layout of pouches, holsters, and straps. The helmet houses a secure radio transceiver. Finally, the fully programmable hyper tags on the helmet, chest, and back send the message you want to send.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES HEAVY VEST

Black Knight Industries understands that sometimes heavy protection is required. BKI responds with the Heavy Vest. Layering ballistic fabric, composite scales, heat sinks, metal plates, and more ballistic fabric, the Heavy Vest provides heavy armor protection with medium armor weight.

WASTELAND TRADERS BRAWLER ARMOR

Was this armor or a weapon? Even Wasteland Traders



isn't certain! With plates of spikes on nearly every surface, as well as heavy cestus gauntlets, anything touching or touched by the wearer will bleed.

HEAVY ARMOR

Hheavy armor is constructed of rigid polymers and composites, supplemented by stiff thicknesses of ballistic fabrics.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES FORTRESS RIOT ARMOR

Black Knight Industries has created the ultimate in utility in a non-powered suit. Excellent full body protection, with deployable chemical seals, and a hardpoint mount on the right shoulder for a spotlight. The helmet also includes tactical radio gear and visual magnification in the visor, a miracle of modern manufacturing.

MARSWORKS ENGINEERING ENVIRO-SUIT

When oxygen is an uncertain resource, Marsworks Engineering is uniquely qualified to solve the problem. The Enviro-Suit provides an hour of breathable air in an environmentally impervious outfit. The Enviro-Suit is available in four varieties depending on the environmental requirements: Arctic/Orbital, Heat/Fire, Aquatic, Radioactive. The aquatic model includes a movement kit (+2 swimming Pace).

SHOGUN OUTFITTERS KABUTA COMBAT ARMOR

Shogun Outfitters presents the heaviest armor in a man-powered frame. In Shogun Outfitters classic samurai overlapping armor style, this armor is both stylish and nearly impenetrable.



Midnight Illustration 2013

AUGMENTATIONS

In 2095, everything about you is upgradable. You can change, add, or replace everything from the type of eyes you have to the nanomachines coursing through your bloodstream. As long as you have the cryptodollars to pay for it, you can build a better you. We've got Nanotech, Biotech, Genetech, Cybertech and everything in between.

The different kinds of tech all provide a method to augment a character's attributes, skills, and other abilities—though the means by which they do so vary considerably. The Biotech answer to increasing a character's Agility might be grafting fast-twitch muscle fibers and enhancing neural efficiency, Cybertech might replace neurons with quantum relays and genetech might splice in a bit of house cat DNA. Each kind of tech has its own strengths and weaknesses.

The main drawback to augmentations is Strain—the physical toll on the body created by replacing the natural with the artificial. Rewiring nerves and upgrading synaptic responses is still a delicate business in 2095; cybernetic limbs suffer phantom pains, Chemtech induces side effects and transplant rejection still happens with Biotech. Strain effectively limits how far anyone can modify their body.

STRAIN & STRAIN LIMIT

In *Interface Zero*, your characters can install as many augments as they wish. There are no artificial limits, but that's not to say there aren't any consequences. If your character ever gains more Strain than her Strain Limit (her unaugmented Vigor die), she must make a Vigor roll each time she installs a new augment. The penalty to the roll is equal to the difference between her Strain Limit die and her current Strain. If she fails the roll, she gains a level of lethal Fatigue that doesn't go away until your character removes enough augments to drop below the Strain Limit. A critical failure results in two levels of lethal Fatigue.

As mentioned above, your character can continue to install augments if she wishes, but if she ever becomes Incapacitated as a result of Strain, she dies on the operating table. All of the standard rules for Fatigue apply.

ADDITIONAL FATIGUE

Characters in *Interface Zero* have one extra level of Fatigue (Debilitated) before becoming Incapacitated—in other words, a character can take the same amount of Fatigue as he can Wounds. This is to help adjust for things like Strain which makes *Interface Zero* more Fatigue-intensive than in other *Savage Worlds* settings.

Aside from this extra level, Fatigue works in all ways exactly as presented in *Savage Worlds*: a character becomes Fatigued, Exhausted, Debilitated, and then Incapacitated. A character who is Debilitated suffers a –3 penalty to all actions.

Note: Some types of augments can cause other negative effects if a character installs or ingests too much. See each Augment Trapping for more information.

AUGMENTATION GRADES

Augmentations can be bought in four grades that affect their cost and final Strain toll. Though augmentation prices have fallen over the last 5 years, top-grade augments still remain outside the budget of most people.

- **Gutterware:** Gutterware comes cheap. Made from used parts or kitbashed by outlaw dealers, it increases Strain even as it decreases cost.
- **Streetware:** Streetware is standard, commercial tech—the kind you buy from Malmart. More reliable than gutterware, it sets the standard for cost and Strain.
- **Customware:** Customware comes built to order, decreasing Strain by being built to match the user's neurophysiological profile. Such compatibility doesn't come cheap. Cybernetic customware is also called hyperchrome.
- **Milware:** Milware is only available to top corporate and government operatives—and those with the right connections. This top of the line tech dramatically reduces Strain, even as operatives outfitted with it become indentured servants for the rest of their (artificially prolonged) lives.

TABLE 3:11: AUGMENTATION GRADES

QUALITY	PRICE MODIFIER	FINAL STRAIN TOLL MODIFIER
Gutterware	× ¼	× 2
Streetware	As listed	As listed
Customware	× 4; this cost is based on the augment's base Strain cost, not the final Strain toll on the character's body.	As listed –1. The Strain toll for customware can never fall below 1.
Milware	× 8; this cost is based on the augment's base Strain cost, not the final Strain toll on the character's body.	× ½ (round down). The Strain toll for milware can never fall below 1.

AUGMENT TRAPPINGS

Trappings are powerful tools. With them, you can take any concept and quickly apply it to a multitude of things. In 2095, there are a host of different ways you can build a better you. Rather than write a ton of rules for each possible augment, we take advantage of Trappings to loosely define the core concept and then provide a list of possible effects to which you can apply the Trapping. The following section lists each Augment Trapping you can choose for your character in *Interface Zero*. Each Augment Trapping has some basic information in each description that provides guidelines and restrictions that come with said Trapping. The basic template for Augment Trappings is as follows:

Trapping type: The name and a brief description of the Augment Trapping is listed here.

Corporations: In this entry, we outline the leading corporation that sells augments with this Trapping.

Cost: The base cost of the Augment Trapping per point of Strain. Augments have Grades that further modify this cost.

Benefits: The general benefits of the Augment Trapping are noted in this entry.

Limitations: All Augment Trappings have downsides. Some Augment Trappings are restricted by your character's race, e.g. a cyborg or android can never take augments with the Biotech Trapping; they don't have organic "flesh and blood" bodies to augment. The limitations of the Augment Trapping are listed in this entry.

Potential Side Effects/Quirks: While augmentation technology has come a long way, it's not perfect. Augments can have a wide range of side effects or quirks. Some are relatively minor,

COMBINING TRAPPINGS

Aside from the base limitations that come from an Augment Trapping, there is nothing stopping a character from getting augments from some, or even all, of the available Trappings. That said, it's not possible to stack specific benefits by getting different types of augmentations that grant the same benefit.

For example, you can't take Biotech that enhances your vision and then turn around and get a cybernetic eye. Getting a Strength boost by obtaining muscle enhancements through Genetech won't stack with a Biotech Trapping that does the same thing. Game Masters always have the final say as to which Augment Trappings work with each other and which don't.

while others can be debilitating and even deadly. For example, taking too much Chemtech can cause an overdose and kill the character. This entry lists any possible side effects the Augment Trapping might have.

BIOTECH

In broad category, Biotech comprises "clean" augmentations to the human body; e.g. organic matter such as muscle tissue, synthetic organs, the modification of human stem cells, etc. Not to be confused with Chemtech or Genetech, Biotech strives to improve humanity without the use of chemicals or foreign DNA. Common examples of the Biotech Trapping include muscle strengthening treatments, ligament replacements and grafts, organ addition and replacement, and other, similar procedures.





Corporations: Currently, the industry leader is CHIMERA industries, based in Brasilia. CHIMERA has revolutionized the bio industry, going so far as to create a new species of human: Simulacra.

Cost: Biotech has a base cost of 500 Cryptodollars per point of Strain.

Benefits: Biotech Augmentations become harder to detect as the grade increases. Notice rolls to detect Gutterware are +2. Rolls to detect Biotech augments are at a -1 per grade, starting at Streetware.

Limitations: Androids and Cyborgs may never get an augment with this Trapping. Any other race can use this Trapping. As Biotech attempts to provide “clean” augments, it is inherently restrained by the limitations of the human animal. It cannot enhance beyond normal Attribute limits nor imitate the variety of abilities of other augmentations. Muscle memory might be a thing, but it isn’t going to teach you kung fu.

With that in mind, the boost granted by Biotech can be improved further by working out and training. A 98-pound weakling with Strength d4 who gets augmented to Strength d10 can still spend Advances on body-building to get all the way to Strength d12.

Potential Side Effects/Quirks: Getting Biotech can cause some weird side effects, like constant shakes or insomnia, because the spinal injections that boost your character’s reaction time are always active. Once your character exceeds half his Strain Limit, the character must make a Vigor roll to avoid picking up a side effect each time he installs new Biotech. If the character ever exceeds his Vigor Die, the character automatically gains a side effect each time he installs new Biotech.

CHEMTECH

Chemtech is custom designed for a specific purpose—to augment the mind and body through the use of chemicals. Patches, pills, serums and all other forms of drugs and medicines are common examples of the Chemtech Trapping.

Corporations: Emperor Pharmaceuticals out of Boston led the Chemtech industry until it was seized by Reformed United States forces during the fall of Atlantica. With its assets seized pending clearance of suspected criminal activity, Emperor Pharmaceuticals now finds itself challenged by Misawa, Meyers and Morgan Research and Development for control of the market.

CANDYWARE

Some enhancements exist purely for show; others provide only minor functionality. Unnatural hair and skin pigmentations and color-changing eyes are the tattoos of 2095, popular around the globe. In Japan, Techno Shogunate bureaucrats have their personal inknan and an ink reservoir implanted in their thumbs. This “candyware” may be implanted without any noticeable Strain—but it also doesn’t provide any game effects.

Candyware augments cost half of the base price of 1 Strain’s worth of streetware.

Cost: One dose of Chemtech has a base cost of 100 Cryptodollars per point of Strain.

Benefits: Chemtech is impossible to detect with body scanners and similar technology. Any Strain incurred while using Chemtech is refreshed when the dosage wears off.

Limitations: Androids may never get an augment with this Trapping. Bioroids may never get Chemtech that modifies brain chemistry in some fashion. Cyborgs may only use Chemtech that affects their minds. Any other race can use this Trapping without restrictions.

Activating Chemtech takes one turn regardless of the form—the tech is designed to breakdown and be absorbed quickly—but deactivating it with a contramedication also takes one turn. Chemtech doesn’t last forever. The targeted stimulants, retroviruses and kamikaze DNA nanomachines used in Chemtech provide temporary enhancements designed to burn out and revert within the space of a few hours. High grade Chemtech leaves no traces in the body, making it popular for espionage and job interviews.

Being essentially short-term Biotech and Genetech, Chemtech can provide a broad range of biological enhancements. The duration of the Chemtech depends on its grade. Higher doses add another segment of duration at the cost of 1 additional Strain. Reputable Chemtech providers include an inverse agonist or contramedication that can immediately flush the Chemtech out of a user’s system. Use the following chart to determine how long a single dose lasts.

TABLE 3.12: CHEMTECH DURATIONS

GRADE	BASE DURATION
Gutterware	2 hours
Streetware	4 hours
Customware	8 hours
Milware	16 hours

Potential Side Effects/Quirks: Characters with the Habit Hindrance may be Chemtech addicts. Chemtech addiction verges on becoming an epidemic in developed nations, especially among the moneyed classes—and especially with glitzy candyware. Even when the Chemtech possesses no physically addictive properties, the joy of rewriting your body on a whim can become a psychological compulsion. Massive doses of Chemtech can cause potentially fatal overdoses.

CYBERTECH

Practically everyone on the planet is partially 'borged; who doesn't have a TAP hooked directly into their brain all day? The most ubiquitous form of augmentation found in 2095, Cybertech offers the most flexibility in terms of enhancements outside of nanotech. Most cybertech offers customization options, and much of it contains interchangeable components, allowing users to swap out options from day to day. Common examples of the Cybertech Trapping include Cyber arms, razor claws, Cyber eyes, skin armor, the Tendril Access Processor, and many more.

Corporations: Japan's Kenta Cyber Dynamics (KCD) leads Cybertech development worldwide; outfitting the Techno Shogunate's elite A-Division as well as providing highly-rated streetware. KCD owns manufacturing centers worldwide, making buying customware pretty easy, and also offers its own off-brand gutterware.

Cost: Cybertech costs a base 600 Cryptodollars per point of Strain.

Benefits: Cybertech replaces entire limbs, organs, and bodily systems. Any race can get Cybertech, though to keep the flavor of the Trapping consistent with race, cyborgs and androids treat augments with the Cybertech Trapping as new modules or components and can swap these out with other Cybertech modules that perform similar functions. For example,

OVERDOSING

It is possible to overdose on Chemtech. As mentioned above, Chemtech Strain is temporary. However, if characters take too many drugs at one time then their bodies begin to shut down. If your character ingests more than half her Strain Limit in Strain at any time, she risks of overdosing. Make a Vigor roll, with a penalty for each Strain of Chemtech beyond half her Strain Limit. Failure is treated as a Lethal poison (see *Savage Worlds*), inflicting Stunned, one or two Wounds, and death in 2d6 rounds.

Cyber arms can be swapped out easily, giving the android or cyborg the ability to quickly customize their bodies without having to go through Cyber surgery every time. They must still follow the rules for Strain when adding new Cybertech.

Of all the Augment Trappings, Cybertech offers the largest variety of things you can install. Weapon or combat-centric augments with the Cybertech Trapping can be complex in design. Ranged weapons like micro "Wrist Rocket" launchers, concealed shotguns, "hand" grenades are all possible with the Cybertech Trapping, as are crazy tech like vice grip jaws and nano-laced vampire fangs. Drone hands are common, as are cybernetic eyes with multiple vision enhancements.

Limitations: Cybertech is incredibly invasive. Humans just plain didn't evolve to have machine parts stuck into them. Installing a Cyber arm doesn't just mean bolting on a ball joint and pinching some nerves and wires together. It means rebuilding the entire shoulder including the scapula and clavicle, strengthening the rib cage on the side of the arm, and then reinforcing the muscles that attach to those bones. Otherwise,





the arm will rip off the first time you try to use it. This requires most Cybertech augmentations to be applied to the entire body—or at least multiple limbs—to have any benefit. This is reflected in the Strain and cost of Cybertech.

Finally, some Cybertech systems can be hacked. Auditory implants, Cyber eyes, Cyber limbs and similar augments which sync directly with the Tendril Access Processor are vulnerable to hackers. See Hacking on page 109 for more information.

Potential Side Effects/Quirks: When a Critical Failure occurs when using Cybertech, glitches interfere in the tech. These glitches are always minor, requiring only a successful Hacking or Repair roll to correct. Game Masters and players should customize their Cybertech's glitches; they should never be more debilitating than a -1 penalty to use the tech.

GENETECH

Whereas Biotech limits itself to “100% human” biological enhancement, Genetech wholeheartedly embraces the totality of life on earth. You want tiger claws? You got ‘em! You want Komodo dragon osteoderms? You got ‘em! You want a red baboon butt? Well, that’s your business, but we’ll take your crypto. The Genetech Trapping is used to represent various genetic enhancements available on the open market. These hybridizations can be subtle (like nekomimi ears and tails) or dramatic (such as turning yourself into an anthropomorphic jaguar).

Corporations: CHIMERA Industries leads the way in Genetech, just as it does in Biotech. The megacorp’s access to the resurgent Amazon Rainforest gives it an advantage in sourcing genetic material. Given the pro-human religious extremism of many of CHIMERA’s supporters in New Brasilia and the Restored United States of America, it packages much of its Genetech under sub-brands like Riolama Revolução and Savage Skinz.

Cost: Augments with the Genetech Trapping have a base cost of 1,000 Cryptodollars per point of Strain.

Benefits: Genetech sources the DNA of animals both extinct and extant to restructure the recipient’s DNA into new hybrid forms. This offers a lot of flexibility when it comes to customizing your body.

Limitations: Androids and Cyborgs may never get augments with the Genetech Trapping. Ironically, hybrids have problems accepting new Genetech. If the gene sample doesn’t come from their original genetic cocktail, the hybrid runs a 50% chance of rejecting the augment.

Potential Side Effects/Quirks: Characters with 4 or more Strain in Genetech begin to take on animalistic behavior patterns, commonly referred to as “gene drift.” Once a character acquires 4 or more Strain, she gains a new instinctual Minor Hindrance and a second Minor Hindrance at 6 or more Strain. Alternatively, instead of two Minor Hindrances, she can take a single Major Hindrance. A lot of Bloodthirsty soldier hybrids hunt the world of 2095.

NANOTECH

Nanotechnology augments are expensive, regulated, very dangerous, highly versatile, and potentially game changing. Colonies of microscopic robots are programmed and implanted, then activated on an as-needed basis via TAP interface. Need a big blade to cut through tense negotiations but need to get through RUS purity screening? A nanotech colony can lay dormant until you need it to do its thing. Just pay attention to your energy levels, because all those robots have to pull their power from something, ami—your body.

Corporations: Kenta Cyber Dynamics is the leading provider of Nanotech augments, which seem to have been embraced by the covert action teams of every government and megacorp on the planet. Dark rumors claim that a rogue AI is the mysterious originator of Nanotech, spreading grey goo around the world in the hopes of making itself the dominant species.

Cost: Nanotech trapping augments have a base cost of 5,000 Cryptodollars per Strain.

Benefits: Like Biotech, Nanotech colonies are difficult to detect if they’re not overt. Like Chemtech, Nanotech is only active—and only applying Strain—when you choose to activate it. Activating Nanotech is an action, and the Strain is applied at that time—going away once the augment is rendered dormant. Nanotech augments can remain active as long as the user desires, but that defeats their covert benefits.

Limitations: Nanotech is new and elite technology. It is not available as gutterware.

It's also illegal in many places, but scanners for dormant Nanotech colonies are very unreliable (searchers take -4 to Notice dormant Nanotech augmentations).

Potential Side Effects/Quirks: Lethargy, arthritis, dementia, and death. Misuse of Nanotech can be, and has been, fatal. All those robots have to get their power from something, irmão, and that something is you. Fatigue from excess Strain is doubled.

CREATING YOUR OWN AUGMENTATIONS

Every type of enhancement costs a certain base Strain amount. This base Strain cost may then be modified by the grade of augmentation to produce a final Strain toll. The following section lists Strain costs for the various kinds of enhancements.

ATTRIBUTE INCREASES

Strain Cost: 2 per die type. The Attribute maximum is increased by the same amount, barring Trapping effects. A human 1.0 with Cybertech Strength enhancement (+2 steps) has her maximum Strength increased to d12+2.

Note: Adding a single cyber limb applies the Attribute increase for that limb only, but the Strain cost is only 1 rather than 2.

EDGES

Strain Cost: 2 + 1 per Rank beyond Novice. The character gains the specific Edge, ignoring all requirements except other Edges. Augmentation Edges do not stack with Edges the character gains through Advances. Augmentations can only imitate certain Edges. If Augmentation Edges are used as prerequisites for Edges gained with Advances then losing the augmentation downgrades the Advance.

Example: Carinn's cyborg Estelle installs Sin'ya Neurotactical Wetware, gaining First Strike and Counterattack. She later gains the Improved First Strike Edge through an Advance. Even later, the wetware is ripped out of her body by RUS forces. Estelle's Improved First Strike downgrades to First Strike, reflecting the training she retains even though the Cybertech is lost.

Augmentations may imitate any of the following Edges. An enhancement might turn you into a Brute, but it can never grant Elan. No matter how many implants you might get, you can't be a Cybermonk unless you dedicate yourself to that path.

ENHANCEMENT-CAPABLE EDGES

- Background Edges
- Ambidextrous
- Attractive / Very Attractive
- Berserk
- Brave
- Brawny
- Brute
- Fast Healer
- Fleet-Footed
- Linguist
- Quick
- Combat Edges
- Block / Improved Block
- Brawler / Bruiser
- Combat Reflexes
- Counterattack / Improved Counterattack
- Dodge / Improved Dodge
- Extraction / Improved Extraction
- First Strike / Improved First Strike
- Free Runner
- Frenzy / Improved Frenzy
- Gun Fu!
- Enlightened Gun Fu!
- Master Gun Fu!
- Hard to Kill
- Iron Jaw
- Level Headed / Improved Level Headed
- Marksman
- Martial Artist / Martial Warrior
- Nerves of Steel / Improved Nerves of Steel
- Pack Fighting
- Rapid Fire / Improved Rapid Fire
- Rock and Roll!
- Steady Hands
- Sweep / Improved Sweep
- Two-Fisted
- Two-Gun Kid
- Leadership Edges
- Tactician / Master Tactician
- Weird Edges
- Danger Sense



VARIOUS SPECIFIC ABILITIES

This category deals with individual types of enhancement that aren't covered by the other categories.

AQUATIC PACKAGE

Strain Cost: 2. Combining a filter to pull oxygen from liquids and deployable fins, this augmentation allows the user to breathe in water (or other oxygenated fluid) and move their Pace when swimming.

ARMOR

Strain Cost: 1 per level, up to three levels. Coats the user in Armor +2 per level. This armor stacks with worn armors but not racial armor abilities.

FILTERS

Strain Cost: 1. Protects the ears, eyes, nose, and throat from external toxins and irritants, giving +4 to resist airborne diseases, gases and toxins.

INFRAVISION

Strain Cost: 1. Eyes have been altered to detect and process infra-red light, having illumination penalties against heat-producing targets, including humans, hybrids and most androids or drones.

LEAPING

Strain Cost: 2. Doubles jumping distances. Most leaping augments enhance the legs and leg muscles, but some rely upon very limited "flight" technologies.

LOW LIGHT VISION

Strain Cost: 1. Eyes are altered to work better in low light conditions, eliminating the penalties for Dim and Dark illumination (but not Pitch Darkness).

PACE INCREASE

Strain Cost: 2 per level, up to two levels. Pace +2 and increase Running Die one step.

POISON DELIVERY SYSTEM

Strain Cost: 1 or 3. With a successful Touch Attack, the victim must roll Vigor or suffer the effects of Mild Poison (*Savage Worlds*, Chapter 4, under Hazards). For 3 points, the poison can be upgraded to Knockout, Lethal, or Paralyzing instead, but each use causes the hero a level of Fatigue.

REROLL

Strain Cost: 2 per Trait, only once per Trait. The chosen Trait gets one free reroll. This does not stack with augmentations or Edges that grant rerolls.

SELF-REPAIR

Strain Cost: 2. Rapid damage repair systems allow a Natural Healing roll every day. Every 16 hours with the Fast Healer Edge.

SKILL BONUS

Strain Cost: 2 per skill. Augmenting performance to near-flawless levels, the user adds +2 to totals with the specified skill. This augment may be taken repeatedly but no more than once per skill. Biotech, Chemtech, and Genetech cannot improve "knowledge"-type skills.

SKILL INCREASE

Strain Cost: 1 per level. The chosen skill increases one die type or gains one specialization. This may be taken repeatedly but no more than twice for a single skill. Biotech, Chemtech, and Genetech cannot improve "knowledge"-type skills.

TELESCOPIC VISION

Strain Cost: 1. The user's vision can focus from incredible distances, magnifying images up to 50 times.

TOUGHNESS

Strain Cost: 1 per level, up to three levels. Toughness +1 per level.

WEAPON IMPLANT, MELEE

Strain Cost: 1 to 11. An obvious weapon that deals Str+d4 damage is attached to the body. Every additional point of Strain adds one of the following options:

- +1 damage (maximum +4)
- +1 die type (maximum Str+d10)
- +2 AP (maximum AP 4)
- Disguised housing (-2 to Notice rolls to spot weapon); weapon must be readied

Weapons mounted to the arms or legs usually count as Claws for the Brawler and Martial Artist Edges.

A humanoid character can support up to two weapon implants, regardless of type.

Not available with Biotech or Chemtech.

WEAPON IMPLANT, RANGED

Strain Cost: 2 to 7. A concealed projectile weapon embedded in a limb. It must be readied per *Readying Weapons* in *Savage Worlds*. +1 Strain can increase RoF +1 or AP +2; both options can be chosen up to twice, for +4 Strain.

Strain	Range	Damage	AP	RoF	Shots
2	10/20/40	2d6	2	1	40
3	15/30/60	2d8	4	1	30

A humanoid character can support up to two weapon implants, regardless of type. Only available with Cybertech or Nanotech.

AUGMENT LIST

The following augments are ready for you to use. Just pay the cryptos, apply the Strain and you're good to go nakama.

BIOTECH

BETTER-U QUADRICEPS ENHANCEMENT™

Why bother with months of training to run a five minute mile when Better-U can ramp up the muscle function of the quadriceps so you can run a four minute mile without breaking a sweat?

Base Cost: \$1000

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: Enhancing the muscle function of the legs grants +2 pace and increases the running die by one step.

Quirks: Too much muscle augmentation in one part of the body without enhancing all other parts may lead to balance issues that can result in losing a die type of Agility.

BETTER-U SELF-ACTUALIZATION PACKAGE

Your parents were too poor to have you tweaked in the womb, but you've overcome the handicap of being born baseline and established a successful career. Don't you owe yourself a better you? It's better than 2.0. It's 2-point-YOU!

Better-U is a rising star in RUS Biotech, contracting with various corporate health insurance providers and then conducting predatory "advisory seminars" with junior executives. In addition to the kickbacks they pay to their corporate partners, Better-U sells placebo "re-enhancement examinations" to patients on a biannual basis.

Base Cost: \$3,000

Base Strain: 6

Abilities: Discreet CRISPR editing and cosmetic enhancements add one die type to Agility and Vigor as well as the Attractive Edge. Additional enhancements can be added for extra price, but the basic Self-Actualization Package is usually enough to satisfy most corporate drones.

Quirks: Self-Actualization Packages can suppress caution responses, causing the recipient to become Overconfident.





TABLE 3:13: BIOTECH AUGMENTATIONS

NAME	STRAIN	COST
Better-U Quadriceps Enhancement™ Ability: +2 Pace, increases running die by one step. Quirks: Possible Agility decrease by one die type.	2	\$1,000
Better-U Self-Actualization Package Ability: Add one die type to Agility and Vigor and gain the Attractive Edge Quirks: Can cause the Overconfident Edge	6	\$3,000
Chimera Industries Cross-Lobe Synaptic Pairing™ Ability: Ambidextrous Edge Quirks: May cause Hesitant (minor).	2	\$1,000
Chimera Industries Força Maxima™ Treatment Ability: Strength increased by one die type per level (normal maximum). Quirks: Increased muscle Density can cause Clumsy Hindrance	2/lvl	\$1000/lvl
Chimera Industries GNOSys™ Augmentation Ability: Increase Smarts by three die types. Quirks: Possible Major Hindrance from following list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delusional • Jealous • Phobia • Ruthless • Suspicious 	6	\$3,000
Chimera Industries Razor's Edge bones Ability: +1 per level (maximum +4) to Damage rolls when fighting unarmed. Quirks: Fatigue from Bumps and Bruises; See Description.	1/lvl (Max 4)	\$500/lvl
Chimera Synaptic Anti-Catalyst™ Ability: +2 bonus to a single skill and grants a reroll to a skill of choice; See Description. Quirks: Can cause Arrogant Hindrance.	4	\$2,000
Octagon Inc. Diva Bone Sculpting Treatment Ability: Increases Persuasion by one die type per level (max 2 die types) Quirk: Can cause Mean (Minor) Hindrance; See Description.	1/lvl (Max 2)	\$500/lvl
Octagon Inc. Mass Impact™ Ability: Adds +3 to Toughness; See Description. Quirk: Can cause the Can't Swim Hindrance	3	\$1,500
Octagon Inc. Regenerative Tissues™ Ability: Grants +2 Toughness and natural Healing roll once per day. Quirk: Can cause Quirk Hindrance (minor); Uncontrolled Twitching.	4	\$2,000

CHIMERA INDUSTRIES CROSS-LOBE SYNAPTIC PAIRING™

Ieing left or right handed has been determined to be caused by which side of the brain is dominant. Chimera has found a way to bridge the sides of the brain so one is both handed.

Base Cost: \$2,000

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: Cross linking the sides of the brain with neural synapses grants the Ambidextrous edge.

Quirks: A mental block from being too used to using one hand or the other as dominant may lead to some problems with becoming Hesitant (minor).

CHIMERA INDUSTRIES FORÇA MAXIMA™ TREATMENT

A combination of glandular treatments and muscle grafts, the Força Maxima™ bioware augmentation is guaranteed to turn even the scrawniest crom into a he-man. A sculpted new body can be yours for a minimal down payment and reasonable monthly payments!

Base Cost: \$1000 per level of treatment

Base Strain: 2 per level

Abilities: The Força Maxima treatment increases the character's Strength die type by one per level.

Quirks: As Bioware, the Força Maxima™ treatment cannot exceed the normal Strength maximum. The increased muscle density can interfere with some activities, potentially inflicting the Clumsy Hindrance.

CHIMERA INDUSTRIES GNOSYS™ AUGMENTATION

This course of Amazonian nootropics and electrical neuro-stimulation upgrades the function of the pre-frontal cortex and other important centers of the brain, increasing base intelligence and learning capacity. Promoted heavily in-house to employees, CHIMERA stands confidently behind the results of GNOSys™.

Base Cost: \$3000

Base Strain: 6

Abilities: Increases Smarts by three die types.

Quirks: Despite what CHIMERA would have both customers and employees believe, intelligence augmentation frequently leads to unpredictable side effects. Recipients of the

GNOSys™ augmentation potentially gain a Major Hindrance from the following list: Delusional, Jealous, Phobia, Ruthless, and Suspicious.

CHIMERA INDUSTRIES RAZOR'S EDGE BONE SHARPENING TREATMENT

Want to feel safe in environments where weapons aren't allowed? Want to gain an "edge" on an opponent in your next pit fight? Look no further. Chimera Industries' bone sharpening treatment grinds a sharp edge to your extremities, making you a walking weapon!

Base Cost: \$500 per level of treatment (maximum of 4 levels)

Base Strain: 1 per level

Abilities: Grants +1 to Damage (maximum +4) rolls when fighting unarmed.

Quirks: The sharpened bones can take a toll on a person. What Chimera won't tell you is that you often get small cuts and abrasions after a fight because the bones can tear through your skin. While not enough to do serious damage, you are subject to Fatigue from Bumps and Bruises, but must make a Vigor roll rather than an Athletics roll to avoid.

CHIMERA SYNAPTIC ANTI CATALYST™

With a Synaptic Anti Catalyst™, a person's mind functions at much higher levels autonomously improving mental processing of one or more skills.

Base Cost: \$2000

Base Strain: 4

Abilities: Grants a +2 bonus to one skill, also grants a reroll for one skill. This may be the same or a different skill, but both must be chosen at the time of augmentation.

Quirks: Improving the mind may cause a person to overestimate their self-importance causing the Arrogant Hindrance. Biotech cannot improve "knowledge type" skills.

OCTAGON INC. DIVA BONE SCULPTING TREATMENT

Octagon Inc.'s new line of Bone Sculpting treatments help you become the diva you've always known you are!

Base Cost: \$500 or \$1,000

Base Strain: 1 or 2






TABLE 3:14: CHEMTECH

NAME	STRAIN	COST
Ceilteach Leon Emergency Adrenaline Patch <i>Ability:</i> Temporarily gains Berserk Edge <i>Quirk:</i> Critical fail to resist Taunt can trigger the Berserk state.	2/dose	\$200/dose
Doc Pango's Smash and Burn <i>Ability:</i> Temporarily grants Brawler and Brute Edges <i>Quirk:</i> Can cause the Anemic (Minor) Hindrance	8/dose (Gutterware)	\$50/dose
Emperor Pharmaceuticals Boostah!™ <i>Ability:</i> First dose Grants Quick Edge, second dose grants Level Headed; See Description <i>Quirk:</i> Failed Vigor roll causes Lethal Fatigue; See Description.	2/dose	\$200/dose
Emperor Pharmaceuticals Membrane Oxygenator <i>Ability:</i> Cannot Drown, and moves at full pace while swimming. <i>Quirk:</i> Potential to gain the Delusional (major) Hindrance. The character believes he can breathe under water.	2/dose	\$200/dose
Savage Skinz Jellyhanz <i>Ability:</i> Causes Paralyzing Poison w/successful Touch Attack against skin. <i>Quirk:</i> See Description.	3/dose	\$300/dose

Abilities: The diva bone sculpting treatment increases your Persuasion skill by one or two die types.

Quirks: People who use these treatments often become self-centered and tend to look down on others. Characters can become cruel to those they perceive as ugly and this can result in the Mean (Minor) Hindrance.

OCTAGON INC. MASS IMPACT™

 bone density injection treatment designed mainly around improving the performance of martial artists and extreme athletes, Mass Impact™ is seen advertised during both legal and underground sporting events worldwide. Despite testimonials to the contrary, Mass Impact™ adds nothing to an augmentee's unarmed damage. The skeletal enhancements do, however, give subjects a sharp-cheek boned, hard-edged look that's easy to spot with experience.

Base Cost: \$1,500


Base Strain: 3

Abilities: The Mass Impact™ treatment adds +3 to Toughness. As a Toughness bonus, this can stack with armor (augmented or worn). It does not stack with other augmentation bonuses

to Toughness. Cybertech augments routinely replace skeletal structures with biocompatible metals and polymers, rendering Mass Impact™ useless for characters with extensive Cybertech augmentation.

Quirks: The increased bone density can make some activities much more difficult, potentially causing the Can't Swim Hindrance.

OCTAGON INC. REGENERATIVE TISSUES™

 octagon Inc has produced an overall improvement to muscle density and muscle fiber regeneration that makes the recipient nearly impervious to damage as well as rapidly healing any damage that does occur.

Base Cost: \$2000

Base Strain: 4

Abilities: Grants +2 Toughness as well as allowing the user to roll for natural healing every day rather than every week. It does not stack with other augmentation bonuses to Toughness.

Quirks: In rare cases, a dramatic increase in muscle density may cause the Quirk Hindrance (minor): uncontrolled twitching.

DOC PANGO

Doc Pango is well-known throughout the sprawl for his ability to get almost anything a sprawler might want or need. He works with a group of info pirates to hack into online ordering services like Malmart and list his wares. Nobody knows exactly who Doc Pango is, where he operates or even if the Doc is a man, but once his pirated goods go online, you can be sure people scramble to get them before the Malmart bots scrub his pirated signal feed from their systems.

Gangers especially love his drugs and cyber—cheap and easy to get on the streets. The downside with the Doc’s gear is that you never really know what you’re getting. Augments are always treated as gutterware for the purposes of determining cost, strain and (if Chemtech) duration.

CHEMTECH

CEILTEACH LEON RIASTRAD™ EMERGENCY ADRENALINE PATCH

Supposedly intended as a life-saving measure for the beleaguered Republic Police Force, many believe this Chemtech smartpatch augmentation is instead a ploy by the nationalist board of directors of Irish pharmaceutical corp Ceilteach Leon (“Celtic Lion”) to drive up immigrant casualties during riot-control operations.

Base Cost: \$200 per dose

Base Strain: 2 per dose

Abilities: The user temporarily gains the Berserk Edge. As with the Edge, the effects are supposed to only activate if the user is Shaken or Wounded.

Quirks: For the duration a Critical Failure to resist Taunt can also trigger the Berserk state.

DOC PANGO’S SMASH AND BURN

Gearing up for a brawl with a rival set? Grab yourself a few doses of Smash and Burn! You’ll rage all night, nakama. Our best drugtechies put only the highest quality steroids and adrenal

boosters into this easily injectable serum, so you can be sure you’ll get a clean dose with minimal after effects.

Base Cost: \$50 per dose (Gutterware)

Base Strain: 8 (Gutterware)

Abilities: Smash and burn temporarily grants the Brawler and Brute Edges. If the character already has Brawler, they get Bruiser instead.

Quirks: Taking too much Smash and Burn takes it’s toll on the user’s body, sometimes causing the Anemic (Minor) Hindrance.

EMPEROR PHARMACEUTICALS BOOSTAH!™

Used by millions of people daily, the neurotransmitter enhancers in Boostah!™ provide a natural boost to executive functions and motor control, allowing you to react more quickly and surely to the world around you. Whether it’s in the boardroom or behind the wheel, Boostah!™ boosts you!

Base Cost: \$200 per dose

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: These peppermint-flavored pills provide a cascading enhancement to reaction time. A single dose provides the benefits of the Quick Edge and a second pill gives the user the benefits of Level Headed. If the user already possesses one of these Edges, the first pill provides the other benefit instead. If they possess both, it grants the Improved Level Headed Edge. For a user with all three Edges, this is useless.

Quirk: After the effect ends, the character must make an immediate Vigor roll at a penalty equal to the number of doses taken or suffer a level of Lethal Fatigue. A critical failure on the roll imposes a second level of Lethal Fatigue.

EMPEROR PHARMACEUTICALS MEMBRANE OXYGENATOR

This subcutaneous injection temporarily rewrites the recipient’s DNA to replace their respiratory system with gills. The illegal street grade version, Fishy Joe, is popular among Manhattanites and other citizens who live in semi-aquatic habitats.

Base Cost: \$200 per dose

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: The user temporarily gains the Aquatic Package. She cannot drown and moves her full Pace when swimming.



Quirk: There are no known physical side effects, though a rare few have been known to become delusional, thinking they can always breathe under water. Users can gain the Delusional (Major) Hindrance.

SAVAGE SKINZ JELLYHANZ™

Though the CHIMERA Industries sub-brand Savage Skinz primarily markets permanent Genetech enhancements, the board is savvy enough to know when a product has Chemtech potential. A dose of Jellyhanz™ causes the user to grow box jellyfish cnidocytes on their palms. Marketed primarily as a self-defense measure, Jellyhanz™ sells briskly on the gray market for use in anything-goes underground martial arts tournaments.

A secondary effect of streetware (or better) doses makes the user immune to their own Jellyhanz™. Gutterware imitations have no such safety feature.

Base Cost: \$300 per dose

Base Strain: 3

Abilities: If the user scores a successful palm strike or Touch Attack against skin, the target must roll Vigor or suffer a Paralyzing Poison. Each use of the poison causes a level of Fatigue to the user.

Quirk: Separate batches contain microedits in the DNA, making the odds of two Jellyhanz™ users being immune to each other's cnidocytes highly unlikely—but it has occurred at the most inconvenient times.

CYBERTECH

ACME LMS LTD. KNOWCOMP™

While numerous corporations now produce similar modules, Acme LMS Ltd. still holds the trademark for the Knowcomp™, the ubiquitous learning module that can turn anyone into an expert instantly. Proudly manufacturing an array of TAP-compatible microcomputers, Acme LMS Ltd. provides Knowcomps™ offering everything from the most obscure of academic subjects to the deadliest of martial arts.

The Knowcomp™ effectively overrides a user's own expertise with a skill, replacing it rather than adding to it. Knowcomps™ do not stack with a character's own rating in a skill.

Base Cost: \$1,200

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: The core Knowcomp™ product is a marble-sized microcomputer that jacks into a user's external TAP ports, providing a d6 rating in a single skill. Larger or dual-linked Knowcomps™ may provide specializations, and even bonuses to the skill.

Quirks: A Knowcomp™ is a Tiny target (–6 to attack) but can be unplugged with a Touch Attack. It is also Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

ACME LMS LTD. SYSTEMS SUPPORT COMPUTER

Acme LMS LTD presents the Systems Support Computer. A micro AI, attached at the L1 vertebrae, that assists the user in hacking and counter hacking tasks. Against this system, Network Administrators simply have no recourse.

Base Cost: \$2,400

Base Strain: 4

Abilities: User gains +2 to Hacking Skill and one free Reroll for Hacking Skill.

Quirks: The system is Hackable and may be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS GUNHAND

The helping hand for those who help themselves, AGA's new Gunhand offers consumers the ultimate in self-defense. Basic models incorporate all the stopping power of the AGA Rhino, while premium options mean you can stand your ground anywhere, anytime.

Base Cost: \$1,800

Base Strain: 3

Abilities: The basic Gunhand possesses similar statistics to an AGA Rhino. Range: 15/30/60, Damage 2d8, AP 4, RoF 1, Shots 15, Min Str d6 if installed as its own cyber system. If installed into a cyber arm, no minimum Strength is required. The weapon has a Conceal rating of –2.

Quirks: A gunhand needs to be readied, like any other weapon. The gunhand is hackable.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS INTEGRATED BATTLE INFORMATION SYSTEM (IBIS) RANK 1

Act of God Armaments introduces the Integrated Battle Information system, commonly known as the IBIS. The IBIS synchs with your Tendril Access Processor and translates visual and auditory information into signals that enhance your prowess in combat.

Base Cost: \$1,200

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: The Integrated Battle Information System gives the character the Gun-Fu! Edge. If the character already has the Gun Fu! Edge, they can choose to take Enlightened Gun Fu! For one additional point of Strain. If they have that Edge, they can take Master Gun Fu! For an additional 2 points of Strain. Regardless, the price is unchanged.

Quirks: The IBIS is Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS INTEGRATED BATTLE INFORMATION SYSTEM (IBIS) RANK 2

Act of God Armaments is pleased to bring you our newest version of the Integrated Battle Information System! IBIS 2.0 upgrades the old interface and adds motion sensing nodes to give you full three dimensional tactical awareness to improve your chances of survival—especially when surrounded by enemies. Don't wait! Upgrade today and never be caught off guard again!

Base Cost: \$3,000

Base Strain: 5

Abilities: The second Rank of the Integrated Battle Information System upgrades the existing IBIS to include the Block Edge in addition to the Gun Fu! Edge. As with the Rank 1 version, characters can take upgraded versions of Gun Fu! by spending more Strain but the monetary cost does not change.

Quirks: The IBIS is Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

BASTION CYBERTECH FLOJO CYBER LEGS

Feed to run fast? Celebrate the memory of the longest 100m speed record holder with the Flojo Cyber Legs.

Base Cost: \$2,400

Base Strain: 4

Abilities: Increases Pace by four and Running Die by two steps.

Quirk: System is Hackable. You suffer a -2 Penalty to Fatigue rolls for extended running.

BASTION CYBERTECH SELF DEFENSE CYBERLIMBS

Bastion Cybertech is pleased to introduce the newest release in our flagship line of cyberlimbs. A combination of software and hardware that automatically strikes foes that get within your personal space. Available as either a pair of arms or legs, for maximum compatibility.

Base Cost: \$1,200

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: Grants the First Strike Edge.

Quirks: The system is Hackable.

BASTION CYBERTECH HI POWER SELF DEFENSE CYBERLIMBS

Bastion Cybertech upgrades our flagship line of cyberlimbs with the Hi Power strike modules. A combination of software and hardware that automatically strikes foes that get within your personal space. Available as either a pair of arms or legs, for maximum compatibility.

Base Cost: \$2,400

Base Strain: 4

Abilities: Grants the First Strike and Martial Artist Edges.

Quirks: The system is Hackable.

BASTION CYBERTECH HEAVY CYBER ARMS

Bastion Cybertech's Replacement arms with Algerol brand synthetic muscle, motion stabilizers, shock absorbent systems, TAP compatible targeting software, and the new Cyclic Fire Trigger Finger™, is perfect for all your heavy weapon and rotary cannon needs!

Base Cost: \$4,800

Base Strain: 8



Abilities: Increases current and maximum Strength one die type and grants the Steady Hands, Rock and Roll!, and Rapid Fire Edges.

Quirks: The system is Hackable.

BENKEI BIONICS ASHIGARU GUNHAND

The most offense oriented of Benkei's products, the Ashigaru Gunhand is popular with elite military and security personnel— and Yakuza. This prosthetic replacement hand and forearm has optimized rapid twitch finger servos, a dynamic smart weapon interface, and minimized feedback. Available as Ashigaru or Shohei models.

Base Cost: \$3,600 or \$6,000

Base Strain: 6 or 10

Abilities: When used as the trigger hand, the user gain the Rapid Fire and Rock and Roll! Edges. The Shohei model also grants the Improved Rapid Fire Edge.

Quirks: The system is Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

BENKEI BIONICS SYNTHETIC SUBDERMAL SARASHI

This subdermal nano-weave anchors to the spine and wraps around the torso into a shock-absorbing padding that protects vital organs from stabbing and gunshots. Infamously nicknamed the "Buddha Belly," the Benkei BSS Sarashi is popular among yakuza and others who don't want to reveal how augmented they really are.

Base Cost: \$600 per level.

Base Strain: 1 per level, up to three levels.

Abilities: Provides +2 Armor but only covers the torso. This stacks with worn armor.

Quirks: Reduces Pace by 1.

BERGER-SUISSE OCULAR IMPLANT

Having built a reputation for quality on their cochlear implants (rendered broadly obsolete by Biotech and Genetech options), Berger-Suisse is one of the most respected sources for ocular replacements. The cameras can detect a wide range of lighting conditions, stimulating the optic nerves directly to minimize implant recovery time.

Base Cost: \$1,200

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: The Berger-Suisse Ocular Implant grants the Infravision and Low Light Vision abilities.

Quirks: The implant is Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

GXARHA IZIBHAMU SMARTGUN SYSTEM

Several manufacturers offer smartgun systems, but only the African Central Union's Gxarha Izibhamu offers the smartgun endorsed by more militaries across the solar system. Highly rated by independent certification boards, the Gxarha Izibhamu Smartgun System keeps the peace on Earth and beyond!

Base Cost: \$1,200

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: The Smartgun System is a two-part interactive hardware and software upgrade that wirelessly links a user's TAP to a calibrator attached to a designated firearm. The targeting assistance grants an automatic Reroll on Shooting rolls using that gun (see Rerolls in *Savage Worlds*). Additional weapons can be linked to the Smartgun System for \$300 each, for the hardware sensors and additional tracking software.

Quirks: The smartgun system is Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

KENTA CYBERDYNAMICS BATTLE MASTER CYBER ARM

When you need a new arm, don't settle for some cheapo model. Choose Kenta Cyber Dynamics. Your quality of life is important to us! The Battle Master cyber arm is perfect for those of you who put your life on the line to keep us safe. Service members are pre-qualified for long term financing. Thank you for your service!

Base Cost: \$2,400

Base Strain: 4

Abilities: The Battle Master cyber arm comes with an extra storage container just below the shoulder joint that is capable of holding 1lb. worth of small items (ammo magazines, healing patches, etc.).

Viewers have a -2 Notice penalty to detect the compartment. High-powered pistons increase the Strength die type by one in that arm only. Finally, the cyber arm has a built-in micro missile

launcher (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d8, AP 4, RoF 1, Shots 4) in the wrist housing.

Quirks: The cyber arm is Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS COBRA VENOM SYSTEM

The Kenta Cyber Dynamics Cobra Venom System is designed for special forces operators who need to quickly take down an opponent without the fuss of loud gunfire. The system installs poison glands in the throat and replaces the lateral incisors with retractable fangs which deliver a powerful bite that injects the poison into the target. As always, service members are pre-qualified for long term financing. Thank you for your service!

Base Cost: \$3,600

Base Strain: 6

Abilities: The Cobra Venom System gives the character retractable fangs which deliver a powerful bite attack (Str+1d6, -2 to Notice rolls to spot the fangs; they must be readied) and a dose of lethal poison via special poison glands. Each use of the poison causes a level of Fatigue to the user.

Quirks: If the character ever critically fails when making a bite attack some of the poison leaks into his mouth. The character must deal with the effects of the poison (See the *Savage Worlds* rules for more information on poison).



KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS DERMAL HOLOGRAPHIC SHEATH

The ultimate in stealth system, a sheath of light emitting nanites cover the entire skin surface. Hundreds of minute cameras point in all directions allowing an individual to appear transparent by displaying on the skin surface, the background behind the user. As always, service members are pre-qualified for long term financing. Thank you for your service!

Base Cost: \$3,000

Base Strain: 5

Abilities: Grants a +4 to Stealth rolls when active, also the dermal sheath is more resistant to damage than normal skin granting a +2 Armor.

Quirks: Takes an Action to activate. Nothing may be worn over the Dermal Holographic Sheath so the user is always effectively naked to receive any advantage from the sheath. The user may choose to display programmed clothing items or other visual coloring but this will look more like body paint than actual material.

KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS DREADNAUGHT

Kenta Cyber Dynamics has created the ultimate in unassailable, unstoppable, unbelievable combat defense Cybertech systems. Introducing the Dreadnought!™ The recipient's bones are sheathed in titanium, a subdermal layer of nano-weave material is inserted and the respiratory system is augmented and improved with increased performance as well as filtration for airborne contaminants.

As always, service members are pre-qualified for long term financing. Thank you for your service!

Base Cost: \$4,200

Base Strain: 7

Abilities: Increase current and maximum Vigor one die type, gain +2 Armor (stacks with worn armors), increase Toughness by two, and filters (+4 to resist airborne toxins, diseases, and poisons).

Quirks: The system is Hackable and can be deactivated using the





TABLE 3:15: CYBERTECH

NAME	STRAIN	COST
Acme LMS Ltd. Knowcomp Ability: grants d6 rating in one skill Quirk: Tiny Target (-6 to attack), can be unplugged w/ Touch Attack. Can be hacked. See Description.	2	\$1,200
ACME LMS LTD. Systems Support Computer Ability: +2 to Hacking Skill, Reroll for Hacking Skill Quirk: The system is Hackable.	4	\$2,400
AGA Gunhand Ability: This augment puts a gun inside the user's hand. Range: 15/30/60, Damage: 2d8, AP 4, RoF 1, Min Str Special, Shots 15, Weight 3lbs. See description for more information. Quirk: Must be readied. System is Hackable; See description.	3	\$1,800
AGA Integrated Battle Information System Rank 1 Ability: The character gains the Gun Fu! Edge; See description for more information. Quirk: The system is Hackable.	2	\$1,200
AGA Integrated Battle Information System Rank 2 Ability: Gains the Gun Fu! and Block Edges; See description for more information. Quirk: The system is Hackable.	5	\$3,000
Bastion Cybertech FloJo Cyber Legs Ability: Pace increased by 4 and Running Die by two steps. Quirk: System is Hackable, -2 Penalty to Fatigue rolls for extended running.	4	2,400
Bastion Cybertech Heavy Cyber Arms Ability: Increases current and maximum Strength one die type and grants the Steady Hands, Rock and Roll!, and Rapid Fire Edges. Quirks: System is Hackable.	8	4,800
Bastion Cybertech Self Defense Cyberlimbs Ability: Basic version (Strain 2) Grants the First Strike Edge. Improved Version (Strain 4) grants Martial Artist Edge. Quirk: The system is Hackable. Note: Can be taken as either legs or arms.	2 or 4	\$1,200 \$2,400
Benkei Bionics Ashigaru Gunhand Ability: Grants Rapid Fire and Rock and Roll! Edges. Quirks: System is Hackable.	6	\$3,600
Benkei Bionics Synthetic Subdermal Sarashi Ability: +2 Armor to Torso. Stacks with worn armor Quirk: Pace reduced by 1.	1/lvl (max 3)	\$600/lvl
Berger-Suisse Ocular Implant Ability: Infravision, Low Light Vision Quirk: The system is Hackable.	2	\$1,200
Gxarha Izibhamu Smartgun System Ability: Grants Reroll on Shooting rolls. Quirk: The system is Hackable.	2	\$1,200

TABLE 3.15: CYBERTECH CONT.

NAME	STRAIN	COST
Kenta Cyberdynamics Battle Master Cyber Arm Ability: Storage Compartment (1lb. small items), power pistons (Strength increased by one die type in that arm only), Micro missile launcher (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d8, AP 4, RoF 1, Shots 4) Quirk: The system is Hackable.	4	\$2,400
Kenta Cyber Dynamics Cobra Venom System Ability: Poison Glands (Lethal poison), Retractable Fangs, Str+1d6 Bite Attack. See description. Quirk: Critical Failure doses the character. See Description.	6	3,600
Kenta Cyber Dynamics Dermal Holographic Sheath Ability: +4 to Stealth Rolls. +2 to Armor Quirk: User must be naked. See description.	5	\$3,000
Kenta Cyber Dynamics Dreadnaught Cyber System Ability: Add one die type to Vigor, +2 Armor, +2 Toughness, Filtration System (+4 to Resist Airborne poisons) Quirk: The system is Hackable (See Description).	7	\$4,200
Kenta Cyber Dynamics Kenjutsu Cyber Arm Ability: Gain a free Reroll on Fighting attacks. Quirk: The system is Hackable.	2	1,200
Kenta Cyber Dynamics Shikanoko Visor Ability: One step increase to Notice die type, Danger Sense Edge Quirk: The System is Hackable. Removing the device leaves user Blind.	3	\$1,800
Kenta Cyber Dynamics Sin'ya Neurotactical Wetware Ability: Counter Attack, First Strike Edges Quirk: The System is Hackable.	5	\$3,000
Masamune Systems Sansō Ability: 3-Foot long blades shoot from the knuckles. Does Str+d6+1 damage. Must be readied. Quirk: The system Hackable. See Description for more information.	4	2,400
Monkey Mask Inc. Gecko Hands Ability: User can climb walls at full Pace or inverted surfaces at half Pace. Quirk: The system is Hackable. Requires an action to activate. See Description for more information.	1	\$600
Parque Electrónica Tarantula Drone Hand Ability: One of the user's hands is a drone. See Description for drone statistics. Quirk: The System is Hackable. The drone hand cannot heal naturally. See Description for more information.	4	\$2,400
Thur Cyberbionics Kurat Sala Full Body Augmentation Package Ability: One die step increase for Athletics and Vigor and Running Die. Jumping Distances Doubled. Pace increased by 2. Quirk: The System is Hackable. See Description for more information.	7	\$4,200



Disable Device Command. Deactivation turns off the filtration system, and the increased Vigor die but does not remove the toughness or armor.

KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS KENJUTSU CYBER ARM

Greetings to all you Samurai and Ronin! Kenta Cyber Dynamics has something just for you; the Kenjutsu cyber arm!

This is a self-targeting cyber arm that is designed with sword combat in mind. The Kenjutsu corrects swings to increase strike accuracy, making you look like the sword master you've always wanted to be! As always, service members are pre-qualified for long term financing. Thank you for your service!

Base Cost: \$1,200

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: Gain a free Reroll of Fighting attacks.

Quirks: The implant is Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS SHIKANOKO VISOR

VIssued to A-Division tactical units in Japan, the Shikanoko Visor gifts the recipient with panoramic 280° binocular vision. The wide, curving visor fits over the eye sockets like wraparound sunglasses, with two outlets linking to the optic nerves. As always, service members are pre-qualified for long term financing. Thank you for your service!

Base Cost: \$1,800

Base Strain: 3

Abilities: The Shikanoko Visor's increased line of sight provides one die type to Notice and the Danger Sense Edge.

Quirks: Removing the visor leaves the wearer blind. The implant can also be hacked using the Disable Device command.

KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS SIN'YA NEUROTACTICAL WETWARE

Domestic counterterrorism and law enforcement agencies—especially in autocratic nations like the RUS—find themselves with a surplus of over-eager patriots eager to put the beatdown on enemies of the state, but woefully little resources to train these would-be stormtroopers in the finer points of combat.

While a Knowcomp upgrade can instantly bestow a d6 in Fighting, implementing its nuances in an untrained body requires neural-inductive implants and a predictive combat computer.

Base Cost: \$3,000

Base Strain: 5

Abilities: The basic Sin'ya Neurotactical Wetware implant reads opponents' body language to automatically prompt combat responses in the user, bestowing the effects of the Counterattack and First Strike Edges.

Quirks: The implant is Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

MASAMUNE SYSTEMS SANSŌ

Retractable blades housed in the user's forearms, the Sansō extend when the wrist is locked into position and a keyword is pronounced, ensuring they do not eject at inopportune times. Masamune Systems offers several upgrades.

Base Cost: \$2,400

Base Strain: 4

Abilities: The basic Sansō model consists of three, foot-long blades extending between the subject's knuckles; it does Str+d6+1 damage. High-speed vibration generators, sturdier alloys, and other upgrades increase damage and Armor Piercing capacity. The combination of wrist lock and keyword means the Sansō requires one action to activate.

Quirks: The keyword lock was initiated for the system after several accidents with early mental command models, including a Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries accidentally stabbing a colleague during a Cabinet meeting. A Repair roll can bypass the keyword, allowing the Sansō to be activated as a free action, but if the user rolls a Critical Failure while resisting Intimidation or Taunt, the blades extend involuntarily. If the blades are integrated into a Cyber arm, they are Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

MONKEY MASK INC. GECKO HANDS

These carbon nanotube biomimetic replacement limbs unfold on mental command into synthetic setae, allowing human-sized users to adhere to horizontal and vertical surfaces using van der Waals forces. Though higher-profile corporations manufacture similar

products, gray market customers swear by Monkey Mask's Gecko Hands.

Base Cost: \$600

Base Strain: 1

Abilities: Gecko Hands allow users to crawl on vertical surfaces at their full Pace or inverted surfaces at half Pace. While most commonly sold as hands, Gecko Feet may also be purchased; such feet require walking barefoot, though, and are less popular.

Quirks: Gecko Hands require an action to activate. When not in use, the nanotube setae curl up into near approximations of normal human hands. These hands have no fingerprints and tend toward a "sausage fingers" look. Like most "hand" or "foot" Cybertech, Gecko Hands require extensive reconstruction of the entire limb. Gecko Hands are Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

PARQUE ELECTRÓNICA TARANTULA DRONE HAND

The character's hand is capable of detaching and becoming a spider-like, wireless drone. The drone comes equipped with a camera, allowing the character to view what the drone sees through their TAP. When the drone hand is detached, the user suffers from the One Arm Hindrance.

Base Cost: \$2,400

Base Strain: 4

Abilities: In combat, the drone hand is an Extra with the following stats:

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d4, Stealth d8, Thievery d6

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 3

Special Abilities:

Alertness: Drone hands add +2 to their Notice.

Construct: Drone hands add +2 to recover from being Shaken, don't breathe, and are immune to poison and disease.

Size -3 (Very Small): It's a hand.

Video Uplink: As an action, the character can link into the drone hand's video to see what the drone sees, within the character's Smarts in miles.

Quirks: Drone hands cannot heal naturally. To heal a drone hand requires the Repair

skill—which is used like the Healing skill, only with no "Golden Hour." Drone Hands suffer full damage from EMP weapons. Drone Hands are Hackable and can be deactivated using the Disable Device Command.

THUR CYBERBIONICS KURAT SALA FULL BODY AUGMENTATION PACKAGE

While à la carte cybernetic options allow for individual experimentation and customization, many consumers prefer the relative savings of augmentation packages. Thur Cyberbionics, based in the United Arab Islamic Republic, specializes in sports packages.

Base Cost: \$4,200

Base Strain: 7

Abilities: The Kurat Sala augmentation package focuses on enhancements increasing potential in fast-moving team sports. The recipient gains a die step increases by one for Athletics and Vigor, doubles jumping distances, increases Pace by 2, and increases the Running Die by one step.

Quirks: The system is hackable and can be deactivated with the Disable Device Command. Many sports governing bodies have hard rules against Cybernetics and other augmentations. The Reformed United States and New Brasilia allow "clean" Biotech but ban Cybernetics; known Cyber-augmented athletes suffer a -1 penalty on Persuasion rolls with fans and representatives of such prejudiced sports leagues.

GENETECH

CHIMERA PISCES GILLS™

Chimera wishes to offer the opportunity for anyone to explore the depths of the ocean without the hindrances of heavy tanks. Adding the DNA of the Pisces Quoque Aurum grants the recipient gills, webbed feet and a soft dorsal fin as well as a light golden hue to the skin.

Base Cost: \$2,000

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: The user may breathe underwater and swim at full Pace.

Quirks: An extremely rare side effect of this genetic treatment makes the user's skin intolerant of dehydration. In these unfortunate cases, a user





TABLE 3:16: GENETECH

NAME	STRAIN	COST
Chimera Pisces Gills Ability: User can breathe under water and swim at full Pace Quirk: Must spend 1 hour/day underwater or suffer a level of Fatigue.	2	\$2,000
Oboroten Manufacturing Volkolak Treatment Ability: Str+d4 melee weapon implant (bite), Low light Vision, self-repair, Strength and Vigor increase by one die type. Quirk: Gene drift results in Loyal and/or Vengeful Hindrances	8	\$8,000
Savage Skinz Komodo Kommando™ Osteoderm Implants Ability: Adds +2 Armor. This stacks with worn armor. Quirk: Gene drift results in Quirk: Appetite for live mice and rats.	1	\$1000
Savage Skinz Pawz 'n' Clawz™ Ability: 1 Strain: Str+d4 damage non-retractable claws 3 Strain: Str+d6 damage retractable claws Adding 1 additional Strain gives either version 2 AP (cost \$1,000) Quirk: Gene drift can cause Suspicious (Minor) Hindrance	1-4	\$1,000-\$4,000
Savage Skins Cat's Eyes Ability: Low Light Vision Quirk: Gene drift results in Quirk (acts like a cat) Hindrance	1	\$1,000

must spend at least one hour out of each 24 hours submerged in water or suffer a level of fatigue each day until killed.

drift invariably favors the Loyal and Vengeful Hindrances, promoting the unwavering fidelity of these soldiers.

OBOROTEN MANUFACTURING VOLKOLAK TREATMENT

A small concern handling under-the-counter Genetech enhancements for Kremlin operatives and the Vori Vzakoni, Oboroten Manufacturing specializes in subtler Genetech treatments than CHIMERA's subsidiaries. Their best-selling augmentation is the Volkolak ("Werewolf") Treatment.

Base Cost: \$8,000

Base Strain: 8

Abilities: Splicing Middle Russian forest wolf DNA into the subject, the Volkolak Treatment adds a suite of enhancements for one bundled price. A Str+d4 melee weapon implant (bite), low light vision, self-repair, Strength increase, and Vigor increase. Aside from minor maxillary and mandibular deformation to accommodate the fangs (a.k.a. a muzzle)—and a frequent overabundance of body hair—the treatment induces no overt zoomorphism.

Quirks: Both the Russian government and Mafia encourage Volkolak Treatments for assassins, bodyguards, and other "hitters." Gene

SAVAGE SKINZ KOMODO KOMMANDO™ OSTEODERM IMPLANTS

Utilizing genetic material from the infamous Komodo dragon, the Komodo Kommando™ treatment induces metaplasia of the dermis. The resulting calcification creates a chainmail-like layer of woven dermal bone. Tint options allow for lizard-like gray, green, and banded skin pigmentation, making Komodo Kommando™ popular among professionals and fetishists alike.

Base Cost: \$1,000

Base Strain: 1

Abilities: Unless requested otherwise by the client, the osteoderms cover the entire body except the genitals, providing Armor +2. This stacks with worn armor. Some professional bodyguards leave their heads unenhanced, hiding their true capabilities from opponents.

Quirks: Gene drift from Komodo Kommando™ invariably results in the Quirk Hindrance from an expensive hunger for warm, raw meat. Live mice and rats become delicacies the drifted willingly pay absurd prices to devour.

SAVAGE SKINZ PAWZ 'N' CLAWZ™

Pawz 'n' Clawz™ augmentations offer customizable options for inducing keratin claws at the ends of the customer's fingers—ranging from non-retractable claws replacing the nails to full hand zoomorphism for cat-like paws. Customers purchasing the latter usually opt for candyware full-body fur, as the paws are otherwise off-putting.

Base Cost: \$1,000—4,000

Base Strain: 1 to 4

Abilities: Basic, non-retractable claws cost 1 Strain and do Str+d4 damage; constant wear and tear dulls the claws, keeping effective damage low. Protractile claws cost 2 additional Strain; learning to use the intermediate phalanges for grasping is difficult, but the cutaneous sheaths keep the claws sharp and allow them to do Str+d6 damage. Exotic DNA restructuring of the claws costs another Strain but can add AP 2 to non-retractable or retractable claws.

Quirks: Pawz 'n' Clawz™ customers frequently trend toward a non-social temperament in the first place, and gene drift reinforces this—leading to the Suspicious (Minor) Hindrance.

SAVAGE SKINS CAT'S EYES™

Not every Savage Skins augmentation must be all encompassing. In this case, Cat's Eyes, as the name implies, splices the genes of felines to accommodate excellent night vision.

Base Cost: \$1,000

Base Strain: 1

Abilities: Splicing the genes from the American Lynx grants the Low Light Vision ability.

Quirks: Though a non-invasive procedure in comparison to most Genetech, some rare individuals treated with this procedure develop odd cat-like Quirks.

NANOTECH

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS CARDSHARP BLADE

AGA is a new entry to Nanotech, but their cardsharp blade is an impressive piece of work.

Base Cost: \$20,000

Base Strain: 4

Abilities: The cardsharp is a vicious spike that usually extends from beneath the wrist. It deals Str+d4+2 damage with AP 2. While not retractable, the user is expected to deactivate the colony when not fighting.

BENKEI BIONICS DOKUHEBI DIGITAL SYSTEM

Listed as a self-defense system, the dokuhebi ("viper") digital system embeds a nano colony in one hand. When activated, the colony forms a small needle system at the tips of the fingers. Reportedly, the major customers are yakuza enforcers looking to gain an edge on the competition.

Base Cost: \$15,000

Base Strain: 3

Abilities: The nanites rapidly construct a deadly hemotoxin that is administered to a target, usually via a Touch Attack. The victim rolls Vigor to resist a Lethal poison, and the attacker suffers a level of Fatigue—the nanomachines pull the chemicals out of the attacker's body.

Benkei has a less potent version, that doesn't drain the user as much. The Hatsu model is 1 Strain, produces a Mild poison, and doesn't fatigue the attacker.

BENKEI BIONICS MEDICAL NANITES

Hospitals are archaic institutions that are entirely unnecessary since the advent of nanites. Microscopic machines circulate through the bloodstream repairing any damage to the body at the instant that it occurs.

Base Cost: \$10,000

Base Strain: 2

Abilities: Users make a Natural Healing Roll every day (or 16 hours with the Fast Healer Edge).





TABLE 3.17: NANOTECH

NAME	STRAIN	COST
Act of God Armaments Cardsharp Blade Ability: Spike extends from beneath the wrist. Str+d4+2 damage, 2 AP Quirk: None	4	\$20,000
Benkei Bionics Dokuhebi Digital System Ability: Poison Attack (Touch); Lethal Poison; See Description Quirk: User suffers a Level of Fatigue; See Description.	3	\$15,000
Benkei Bionics Medical Nanites Ability: Medical nanites provide one Natural Healing roll/day Quirk: None	2	\$10,000
Kenta Cyber Dynamics Kohei Trans-Skeletal Drysuit Ability: Grants +6 armor Quirk: None	3	\$15,000
Kenta Cyber Dynamics Oyumi Infiltrator Ability: Flechette Weapon: Range 10/20/40, damage 2d6, RoF 3, AP 4, and Shots 40 Quirk: None	5	\$25,000

Quirks: The system must be active during the recovery period, otherwise the user heals normally.

KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS KOHEI TRANS-SKELETAL DRYsuit

Nanoware is adaptive. Limited Nanoware has commercial possibilities. Armor that hides in your bones and pours out of your pores becomes just another product. The Kohei Drysuit is bulky, like a wetsuit, making it incompatible with some body armors and fashion items.

Base Cost: \$15,000

Base Strain: 3

Abilities: When activated, the nanobots of the Kohei Trans-Skeletal Drysuit emerge through skin pores and assemble themselves into a carapace granting +6 Armor.

Quirks: None

KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS OYUMI INFILTRATOR

Sold as a hold-out weapon for bodyguards and high officials, the oyumi is named after a lost Japanese ballista reputed to fire a barrage of bolts. The oyumi infiltrator was inspired by this legend, unleashing a barrage of deadly spikes to slay groups of foes swiftly.

Base Cost: \$25,000

Base Strain: 5

Abilities: A fast firing projectile weapon, the oyumi fires flechettes at high rates to penetrate armor and overwhelm multiple attackers. Range 10/20/40, damage 2d6, RoF 3, AP 4, and Shots 40.

PUSHING THE LIMITS

At times, a character may wish to push implanted Cybertech to the limits of its design parameters. This is both rewarding and potentially dangerous. When your hero needs to push the limits, the player chooses an installed Cyber system and associated Trait. The character adds a d6 (which can Ace) to the Trait total for that action.

Which skill is affected is open to GM approval, but most should be common sense. Cyber eyes might enhance any vision-based Skill, such as Notice or Shooting. A Cyber arm may affect Athletics (Climbing, Throwing), Fighting or Shooting—or even a Strength roll for Breaking Things or a Push. The player can choose any combination of Cybertech and skills, but the GM has final approval.

Pushing Cybertech in this fashion taxes the character mentally and physically and the Cybersystem used. At the end of the character’s turn, she makes a Vigor or Spirit roll (whichever is lower) with a penalty based on the grade of the Cybertech (see below).

With a Raise the character suffers no ill-effects; with a success, she is Shaken. If the result is a Failure, the character suffers a level of Fatigue that lasts an hour. With a Critical Failure, the Cyber system is damaged and inoperable until it can be repaired (typically requiring Repair (Cybertech) and d4 hours).

Note: Only Cybernetics are affected. Characters may not Push the Limits of Biotech, Chemtech, Genetech, or even Nanotech.

TABLE 3:18: PUSH PENALTIES

CYBERTECH	GRADE
Gutter	-4
Street	-2
Customware	-1
Milware	+0



WEAPONS

WEAPON NOTES

⚙️ All shotguns, rifles, assault rifles, machineguns, assault cannons, artillery, and rocket / missile launchers are two handed weapons, unless noted otherwise.

BIOMETRIC SAFETY: The weapon will not fire unless the correct person is holding the grip and the right TAP is connected to the weapon. A Hacking roll can disable this feature.

COLLAPSIBLE: Increase Notice penalty to spot the weapon by -2 when collapsed. Requires one action to collapse or expand the weapon.

CONCEAL: Conceal is a modifier to the Notice roll for others to spot and locate. A negative number means the weapon is more difficult to locate.

QCB: May be used on foes in adjacent squares like a pistol.

DISORIENTATION: Victims make a Smarts roll (-2 with a raise on the attack) to resist becoming both Distracted and Vulnerable until the end of their next turn.

FLASH: An intense burst of light that blinds anyone in a Small Blast Template. Victims in that area must make an immediate Vigor roll. Failure inflicts -4 to all rolls requiring sight. Success reduces the penalty to -2. A raise negates the penalty. Victims get a free action Vigor roll and the end of their turns to recover.

FLASH SUPPRESSOR: A Notice roll is required to see where the shot came from.

MAW (MAGNETIC ACCELERATOR WEAPON): Coilguns, rail guns, and Gauss weapons, they all fire tungsten spikes at extraordinary speeds, capable of penetrating thick armor at very long ranges.

INDIRECT: The weapon can be fired vertically in an arc over obstructions. Firing indirect applies a -2 to the shooting roll but it may be assisted by another player that has line of sight on the target using a Notice or Shooting roll.

KNOCKOUT GAS: As knockout poison (see *Savage Worlds: Hazards*). Gas will linger in enclosed spaces for 1d4 rounds.

MILITARY: These weapons are strictly controlled. Possession of one of these weapons will incur significant legal proceedings. Black market purchases are 20x the listed price.

NON-FERROUS CONSTRUCTION: -4 penalty to detect the weapon with magnetic detectors.

RECOIL COMPENSATION: Reduce the Recoil Penalty by one point.

REQUIRES BATTERY: This weapon requires a battery to function.

SMOKE: Smoke grenades fill an area with a thick smoke which obstructs vision (-4). Smoke lasts for d6 rounds, plus 5 additional rounds in enclosed spaces. Smoke grenades do no damage.

SOUND SUPPRESSOR: When beyond 4" (8 yards) from shooter, subtract two from Notice rolls to hear firing.

STUN: Targets must make a Vigor roll (at -2 with a raise) or be Stunned (see *Savage Worlds*).

TACTICAL RAILS: A latch system to quickly and securely mount weapon accessories. Removing or attaching an accessory is an action.

MELEE WEAPONS

ASSORTED KNIVES

5 Some classics never go out of style. From the traditional forms of Shogun Outfitters to the wealthy elegance of Executive Decision to the spiky attitude of Urban Punk, there's a blade for every customer. Available in hundreds of custom colors - though Black Knight Industries blades are only available in shades of black.



HOSTILE MERGER WASTELANDER CHAIN SWORD

⌒ No weapon is more terrifying than a chainsaw - unless it is a chain sword! The Wastelander Chain Sword's distinctive growl will make your foes weep in terror.



SHOGUN OUTFITTERS MONOFILAMENT KATANA

No Ronin is complete without a katana, and no one is better than Shogun Outfitters at making katanas. The monofilament Katana has a manufactured diamond edge that is one atom thick at its striking surface, making it cut through the heaviest of armor like butter.



ARCHAIC RANGED WEAPONS

RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES STRIKER CROSSBOW

The Striker Crossbow is the perfect combination of old and new. The silence of a crossbow, with the speed of modern weapons. A top-mounted clip holds five quarrels ready to fire, and integral laser sighting makes it impossible to miss.

WASTELAND TRADER 'HOOD BOW-CUFF

Wasteland Traders is proud to present the Hood Bow-Cuff. Want a weapon that strikes at a distance, yet is utterly silent? Want a weapon that tucks away and looks more like decorative apparel than a weapon? Want a weapon that demonstrates that skill is still a factor in modern combat? Meet the Hood Bow-Cuff. A carbon fiber masterpiece of engineering that is virtually invisible to Magnet Resonance Detectors and mechanically folds in six places to change a full-size bow into a cuff around the wrist. The hand grip wraps to the back side of the wrist, and each arm folds in three places to take up less space than the distance from wrist to elbow. The string auto spools to appear as decorative laces around the wrist cuff. Hiding your arrows is your own problem.

PISTOLS

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS PROPHET

Act of God Armaments mainstay, the tried and true AGA Prophet. Tough, reliable, battle tested and the preferred sidearm of professional soldiers the world around.



ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS RHINO-10 HEAVY PISTOL

When it comes to stopping power, the Rhino-10 surpasses all. Put your enemies down with the first shot every time.



RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES 007 WHISPER PALM PISTOL

For those who prefer to keep their work subtle, silent, and very personal, Ravenlocke offers the Whisper Palm Pistol. This weapon's non-ferrous construction renders it nearly invisible to those pesky magnetic anomaly detectors, and its minimized collapsible frame makes it nearly invisible to the naked eye. Finally, an integral triple baffled sound suppressor renders the weapon nearly inaudible.



**REAPER TECHNOLOGIES
328T VENGEANCE**

As always, Reaper technologies takes the blue ribbon for technical excellence with the Vengeance. Integral Silencer and Flash Suppressor, Tactical Rails and the capability for three round bursts holds this weapon head and shoulders above its competition.



**MARSWORKS ENGINEERING
NIGHTFIRE LASER PISTOL**

Mars Engineering doesn't waste time with explosive combustion propelling fragments of metal about the atmosphere. The NightFire laser pistol fires pure energy whether there is an atmosphere or not.



SUBMACHINE GUNS

**ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS
HAND OF CAINE**

Act of God Armaments presents the Hand of Caine, for those times you need to keep your brother away.



**SENTINEL ROCK COPORATION
DAISY CHAIN**

Sentinel Rock is the first name in explosive shooting, and the Daisy Chain is proof why. Rapid firing gyro rounds can pummel nearly any target into submission.



**REAPER TECHNOLOGIES
444T SCYTHE**

The gun that put Reaper Technologies on the map, fully updated. Integrated tactical rails allow for rapid attachment of countless accessories. Biometric sensors in the grip and TAP verification ensures that only you will fire your weapon. The advanced frame structure and patented Vortex™ venting ensures that every round remains on target.

SHOTGUNS

PRIVATE DICK NOIR CONFIDENT

The only weapon Private Dick has released, the Noir Confident fills the void of pump-action firepower in the current market. With this iconic weapon, you can be confident in every city.



**WASTELAND TRADERS
ROAD WARRIOR**

The Road Warrior is the iconic room sweeper of this generation. Two barrels stacked over and under, with a barrel length of under six inches, means it fits under your jacket and destroys anything in front of you. Want to be the life (or death) of the party? Pull out your Road Warrior and make a statement!



RIFLES

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS HAND OF GOD GAUSS RIFLE

Act of God Armaments offers the Hand of God to those who are worthy. Magnetic accelerators propel a ferrous metal spike at 6100 meters per second to tremendous ranges with no recoil whatsoever.



BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES PENETRATOR RIFLE

Black Knight Industries presents the Penetrator Rifle. With extended range and improved penetration, the Penetrator Rifle is battle proven as a top-of-the-line marksman rifle.

ASSAULT RIFLES

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS RAPTURE

Act of God Armaments is proud to present the Rapture Assault Rifle. High lethality in a compact bull-pup frame.

REAPER TECHNOLOGIES 240C RENEGADE

Fired Gun Magazines' 2092 Weapon Manufacturer of the year, Reaper Technologies, presents the all new 240C Renegade. The Renegades' up-close-and-personal CQB frame and shortened barrel means that you can stash it nearly anywhere, and its integral Vortex™ venting guarantees it will stay on target even in full-auto mode.



MACHINE GUNS

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS WRATH OF GOD MINIGUN

Six barrels of screaming fury designed to obliterate any who face the Wrath of GOD. Act of God Armaments presents the Wrath of GOD Minigun.

ASSAULT CANNONS

SENTINEL ROCK CORPORATION 5000 BUNKER BUSTER ASSAULT CANNON

Sentinel Rock is simply not to be out done when it comes to providing unparalleled force on the field of battle. The Bunker Buster Man-Portable Assault Cannon is the most powerful hand-held weapon in the field and is fully capable of penetrating vehicle class armor.

ARTILLERY

SENTINEL ROCK CORPORATION 323 "BIG DADDY" GRENADE LAUNCHER

Sentinel Rock SR232 "Big Daddy" brings all the advantages of a mounted grenade launcher into your hands. A rapid-fire magazine supplies 4 rounds of explosive devastation to a man portable frame.



ROCKET LAUNCHERS

SENTINEL ROCK CORPORATION 2201 ARMAGEDDON

Sentinel Rock's Armageddon is the first collapsible, reusable, portable rocket launcher of its type. Capable of holding one round while still being able to collapse small enough to hide under a bulky jacket, this weapon can level the playing field against heavily armored vehicles.



GRENADES

GRENADE, AERODYNAMIC

Aerodynamic Grenades come in several varieties: Sentinel Rock's 'Striker' is a cylindrical device with spring loaded airfoils that pop out when the pin is pulled, Wasteland Trader's 'LongArc' is a disc-shaped device with a central grenade surrounded by a circular airfoil, and Shogun Outfitter's 'Dragon' has fiberglass wings and tail that snap into place when the pin is pulled. While there are several ways to achieve the same end, that end is down range.

GRENADE, FLASHBANG

Numerous manufacturers produce similar non-lethal debilitating devices of a similar nature. Act of God Armaments' 'Genesis', Ravenlocke Securities' 'Shock Locke', Sentinel Rock's MkIV CDD, and Hyachai Manufacturing's 'Geneseer' are examples. All produce a bright Flash, as well as a Disorientation effect that inhibits opponents in its area of effect.

GRENADE, KNOCK OUT

A non-lethal alternative for any combat situation, the Ravenlocke Securities 'Sweet Dreams' Gas Grenade welcomes one's opponents to a relaxing blissful sleep in moments after detonation.

GRENADE, MINI

Weighing in at a quarter pound and resembling ball bearings, the Reaper Technologies 'GM11 Snake Eyes' mini grenades are a lethal new addition to this year's catalog.

GRENADE, SMOKE

The Wasteland Traders 'Yamanas' smoke grenade fills a vast area with smoke; perfect for concealment while moving under fire, as well as for sending signals in the outdoors. Available in eleven colors.

GRENADE, STUN

Ravenlocke Securities "Screamer" sonic grenade leaves your foes rolling on the floor covering their ears and completely out of the fight.

BATTERIES

In the modern world everything requires power. When the item is portable, that means a battery. Many items have an internal battery that may be recharged with grid power from a structure. Those items that are not rechargeable have a removable replaceable battery. It is frequently favorable to have a replaceable battery since there are times when a person does not have the time to stop and charge a battery or does not have available grid power to do so. Through the miracle of supply and demand as well as industry mandates, there are typically three standard sizes of batteries. Unfortunately, batteries fail, usually at the least convenient time. Battery failure is a good Critical Failure effect.

TABLE 3:19: BATTERIES

BATTERY	DESCRIPTION	WEIGHT	COST
Small	A tiny disc cell 12mm wide by 4 mm thick	—	10
Medium	A cylindrical cell 40mm wide by 80mm tall.	1/10	20
Large	A rectangular cell 80mm wide by 80mm thick by 120mm tall	1	30

TABLE 3:20: WEAPONS

MELEE

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
Assorted Knives	—	Str+d4	—	—	—	d4	1	-2	100
HM Wastelander Chainblade	—	Str+d6+2	2	—	—	d6	4	+3	430
Notes: Critical Failure hits the user, *Requires Battery									
Monofilament Katana	—	Str+d6+3	2	—	—	d6	3	+3	1645

ARCHAIC RANGED

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
Striker Crossbow	10/20/40	2d6	1	2	5	d6	6	+3	400
Notes: Laser Sight									
'Hood Bow-Cuff	12/24/48	Str+d6	0	1	—	d6	3	+3/+1	520
Notes: Non-Ferrous Construction, *Requires Battery, *Collapsible, Conceal +3 (+1 while collapsed)									

PISTOLS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
AGA Prophet (9mm)	12/24/46	2d6+1	1	1	13	d6	2	0	300
AGA Rhino Heavy Pistol (.50)	12/24/48	2d8	2	1	12	d6	4.75	+1	575
ME NightFire Laser Pistol (Battery Pack)	15/30/60	2d6	2	1	6	d4	2.5	+1	2750
Notes: Cauterize, *Military, No Recoil, Overcharge									
RS 007 Whisper Palm Pistol (.22)	12/24/48	2d4	0	1	6	d4	1.75	-1/-3	325
Notes: *Collapsible, *Non-Ferrous Construction, *Sound Suppressor, Conceal -1 (-3 when collapsed)									
RT 328t Vengeance (9mm)	12/24/48	2d6	2	1	12	d6	2	0	255
Notes: Flash Suppressor, Three-Round Burst, Sound Suppressor, Tactical Rails									

SUBMACHINE GUNS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
AGA Hand of Caine (9mm)	12/24/48	2d6	1	3	30	d6	6	+3	425
SRC Daisy Chain (Gyroc)	15/30/60	3d6	4	2	30	d8	8	+3	525
Notes: Two Hands									
RT 4447 Scythe (9mm)	12/24/48	2d6	1	3	30	d6	10	+3	375
Notes: Biometric Safety, Recoil Compensation, Tactical Rails									





TABLE 3:20: WEAPONS CONT.

SHOTGUNS

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
PD Noir Confident (12g)	12/24/48	1-3d6	0	1	12	d6	7	+4	225
WT Road Warrior (12g) <i>Notes: Double Barrel</i>	5/10/20	1-3d6	0	1	6	d6	7	+2	175

RIFLES

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
AGA Hand of God Gauss Rifle (MAW) <i>Notes: *MAW, Snapfire</i>	75/150/300	2d8	4	1	8	d6	8	+5	920
BKI Penetrator (.308) <i>Notes: Snapfire</i>	36/72/144	2d8	2	1	6	d6	9	+5	750

ASSAULT RIFLES

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
AGA apture (5.56mm)	24/48/96	2d8+1	2	3	24	d6	6	+4	550
RT240C Renegade (7.62mm) <i>Notes: *CQB, *Recoil Compensation</i>	15/30/60	2d8	2	3	30	d6	8	+3	425

MACHINEGUN

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
Minigun (7.62mm) <i>Notes: Minimum RoF 3, Reload 2, Snapfire</i>	20/40/80	2d8	2	5	140	d10	35	N/A	6500

ASSAULT CANNON

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
SRC 5000 Bunker Buster Assault Cannon (20mm) <i>Notes: Heavy Weapon, *Military, Snapfire</i>	24/48/96	2d10+1	4	1	6	d10	30	N/A	10550

ARTILLERY

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
SRC 323 "Big Daddy" Grenade Launcher (30mm) <i>Notes: MBT, *Indirect, *Military, Snapfire</i>	24/48/96	3d6 MBT	0	1	4	d10	17	+5	1329

TABLE 3:20: WEAPONS CONT.

ROCKET LAUNCHER / MISSILE

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
SRC 2201 Armageddon (66mm)	24/48/96	4d8 SBT	0	1	1	d4	5	+5/+3	1200
Notes: *Collapsible, *Military, Reload 2, Snapfire, Conceal +5 (+3 while collapsed)									

GRENADES

WEAPON	RANGE	DAMAGE	AP	ROF	SHOTS	MIN STR	WT.	CONCEAL	COST
Aerodynamic	10/20/40	3d6 MBT	0	1	1	d4	1	+1	60
FlashBang	5/10/20	Special MBT	0	1	1	d4	1	0	60
Notes: *Disorientation, *Flash									
Knock Out	5/10/20	Special MBT	0	1	1	d4	1	0	65
Notes: *Knockout Gas									
Mini	5/10/20	3d4 SBT	0	1	1	d4	0.25	-2	40
Smoke	5/10/20	Special LBT	0	1	1	d4	1	0	50
Notes: *Smoke									
Stun	5/10/20	Special MBT	0	1	1	d4	1	0	50
Notes: *Stun									

SPECIAL AMMUNITION

Special ammunition is pricey but useful. They're also a pain to ship and cannot be purchased as individual rounds except explosives and MAW slugs (as normal).

TABLE 3:21: SPECIAL AMMUNITION

TYPE	COST MULTIPLIER
Armor Piercing: Designed to increase penetration. AP +1	2
Entangling Rounds: These rounds cause no damage but release a thick mass of adhesive strands. See <i>Savage Worlds</i> : Powers: Entangle.	4
Explosive: This ammo explodes, dealing damage in a Small Burst Template. Bullets only.	3
Fin Stabilized: Shaped to increase its stability in flight, increase range by +5/+10+/20.	1.5
Flechette: Replace the projectile with a mass of small needles. This turns the weapon into a Shotgun, AP 0, but range is unchanged. Bullets only.	2
Frangible Rounds: Disintegrate on impact to minimize ricochets and overpenetration. AP -1, but only hit innocent bystanders on Critical Failure, or 1 with shotguns or automatic fire.	2
Gel Rounds: These rounds do nonlethal damage.	1.5
High Explosive: Cannon and Missile only. Large Blast Template.	3.5
Tracer Rounds: Tracers glow brightly, making it easy to shift fire onto targets, negating one point of penalty from Multi Action Penalty, Recoil, or Unstable Platform. They also make it easy to see where the shots originate, giving +2 to appropriate Notice rolls.	2





TABLE 3:22: REGULAR AMMUNITION

SIZE	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Arrows/Bolts	1/2 Arrows/bolts	1 lbs. / 5	
Small Caliber	10/50 rounds	1 lbs./50	.22-.32
Medium Caliber	20/50 rounds	2 lbs./50	9mm-.45
Large Caliber	50/50 rounds	15 lbs. /50	.50 or larger
Shotgun Light- Shot	12/25 rounds	1.25 lbs. / 25	Buckshot 20g
Shotgun Medium - Shot	15/25 rounds	1.5 lbs. / 25	Buckshot 12g
Shotgun Heavy - Shot	25/25 rounds	2 lbs. / 25	Buckshot 10g
Shotgun Light - Slug	15/25 rounds	1.25 lbs. / 25	Shotgun Slug 20g
Shotgun Medium - Slug	20/25 rounds	1.5 lbs. / 25	Shotgun Slug 12g
Shotgun Heavy - Slug	30/25 rounds	2 lbs. / 25	Shotgun Slug 10g
MAW slug	10 per round	1lb / 5	1.5mm
Gyroc	50 per round	10 lbs. / 50	Damage 3d6 AP 4
Cannon Small	50/10 rounds	7 lbs. / 10	15mm, AP 2
Cannon Medium	100/10 rounds	25 lbs. / 10	20mm, AP 4
Cannon Large	150/10 rounds	60 lbs. / 10	25mm, AP 6
Flame Canister	100/6 shots	5 lbs. / 6	Damage 3D6
Grenade, Small	40 per round	4 lbs. / 5	20mm 3d6 SBT
Grenade, Medium	50 per round	5 lbs. / 5	30mm 3d6 MBT
Grenade, Large	75 per round	8 lbs. / 5	40mm 3d8 MBT
Missile Standard	100 per round	5 lbs.	60mm, AP 20
Missile Medium	150 per round	7 lbs.	66mm, AP 30
Missile Large	250 per Round	11 lbs.	72mm, AP 40
Battery Pack	20	.25 lbs.	Light Energy Weapon
Power Pack	30	.5 lbs.	Medium Energy Weapon
Hydrogen Cell Pack	50	4 lbs.	Heavy Energy Weapon

WEAPON ACCESSORIES

Weapon accessories are removable items that may be added to a firearm. Adding accessories usually requires 5 minutes (though see Tactical Rails earlier in this chapter). These add weight and reduce concealability.

TABLE 3:23: WEAPON ACCESSORIES

ACCESSORY	LOCATION	COST	WEIGHT	CONCEAL MOD
Bipod: A two-legged stand attached to the bottom of the barrel. Takes an action to deploy. Negates Recoil and Min Str Penalties. Has a 45-degree firing arc.	Under-Barrel	100	1	+1
Flash Suppressor: A barrel adapter that reduces its visible signature by cooling the exiting burning gasses. Require Notice checks to spot firing location.	Barrel	150	2	+1
Fore grip: An under-barrel grip to help control recoil. Ignore 1 from Recoil. Two Handed.	Under-barrel	125	1	+1

TABLE 3:23: WEAPON ACCESSORIES CONT.

ACCESSORY	LOCATION	COST	WEIGHT	CONCEAL MOD
Laser/Red Dot Sight: +1 to Shooting at Short and Medium range	Side, Top, Under-barrel	150	1	0
Light: An under-Barrel flashlight points in the direction that the weapon points. This projects a 10" beam	Side, Top, Under-barrel	25	1	+1
Range finder: Negate 2 points of shooting penalties with Indirect weapons.	Top			
Rifle Scope: Negate 2 additional points of penalties when Aiming.	Top	100	2	+1
Silencer/Sound Suppressor: A barrel adapter that more gradually dissipates propellant gases, reducing the firing sound. When beyond 4" (8 yards) from shooter, subtract two from Notice rolls to hear firing.	Barrel	150	2	+1
Sling: A simple strap attached to the firearm to keep it attached even when dropping the weapon. A hanging weapon is easy to reach.	None	50	2	0
Stacked Magazine: Rounds are staggered in the clip allowing significantly more ammunition in only a small amount more space. Double the number of Shots the weapon can hold. The weight listed is only the magazine also add the weight of the ammunition.	Magazine	100	1	+1
Star Light Scope: A rifle scope (as above) that ignores penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination (but not Pitch Darkness)	Barrel	300	2	1
Stock, Collapsible: Requires a two-handed weapon. Collapsing or extending is an action. Collapsing the stock reduces Conceal by 1 but inflicts -2 to Shooting. 30 minutes to install or uninstall.	Stock	200	0	-1
Stock, Folding: Requires a one-handed firearm. 30 minutes to install or uninstall. Conceal increases by 1. Action to fold or unfold. Negates 1 Shooting penalty from MAP or Recoil.	Stock	200	0	1
Tactical Rails: A latch system to quickly and securely mount weapon accessories. Removing or attaching an accessory is an action. Requires 1 hour to install.	None	100	0	0
Thermographic Scope: A rifle scope (as above) that also grants the Infravision ability, halving Illumination penalties against heat generating targets.	Top	300	2	+1
Tripod: A three-legged stand to mount a gun on. Takes 10 actions to deploy. Negates Min Str and Recoil penalties. Can rotate 270°.	Under-barrel	250	15	N/A
Under-barrel Weapon: Grenade Launcher, Shotgun, Melee weapon, flamer.	Under-barrel		Per weapon	





VEHICLES

Looking for a sweet ride? Want to rise above the masses and scream through the skies of the megasprawl on a VTOL bike? Your crew needs a vehicle with armor and a few weapons for that scouting mission you just accepted; it can get crazy in the on the outskirts of Phoenix, amiright? I'm Charlene, and I'm here to assist you with your next purchase. Whatever your needs are, Malmart has everything you need!

In the late 21st century, vehicles have crash air-bag level crash protection and hyper-object interfaces standard. Your TAP is the display console, the key, and the sound system control all at the same time.

NEW VEHICLE QUALITIES

Exposed Crew: 50% chance any non-Called Shot hits the character instead; on a Crew Critical Hit the vehicle's armor provides no protection.

Golemmech: Heavy Armor is evenly applied, preventing extra damage from flanking shots. Unless noted otherwise, weapons are mounted to the upper hull, which can rotate to face any direction. -1 per Size to Stealth checks. Move like characters, with listed Pace; Top Speed is provided for Chase and logistics concerns. If a Golemmech goes Out of Control then it falls, causing Xd6 damage to itself and anything it lands on where X is the Size of the golem.

Hover: The vehicle hovers over the ground, ignores most Difficult Ground caused by low obstacles and water, and can handle drops of up to 50 feet (16 meters) with no maneuvering roll required.

NOS AUTOMOTIVES SABER

Offline: This vehicle is not a Computer System or Device and is not a hyper object. Supplemental systems, notably communications arrays, can still be Hacked.

Reactive Plating: Supplemental armor plating that explodes to mitigate incoming damage. Negates the first Wound the vehicle would suffer. Single use, replacement costs 15,000 × Size.

VTOL: Vertical Take Off and Landing capable. Can move and take off like a helicopter.

CIVILIAN GROUND VEHICLES

WASTELAND TRADERS CROSS COUNTRY ATV

Wasteland Traders Cross Country ATV is a small four wheeled off road vehicle with room for a driver and one passenger behind them on a shared seat.

MORRISON STEEL STREET BOSS

Rule the streets with the Morrison Steel Street Boss. The heaviest bike on the road today, the Street Boss has a full fairing and cowling of bullet resistant material.

NOS AUTOMOTIVES DIABLO

If you know NOS Automotives, you know speed is their area of expertise. Be assured, in the Diablo, they do not disappoint.

TSHENG ELECTRIC SCOOT

Tsheng specializes in the best economy a customer can hope for. The Scoot can travel 700 miles on a single charge and its tricycle



TABLE 3:24: CIVILIAN GROUND VEHICLES

VEHICLE	SIZE	HANDLING	TOP SPEED (MPH)	TOUGHNESS	CREW	COST
WT Cross Country ATV <i>Notes:</i> Exposed Crew, 4WD	2	+2	100	7	1+1	4,000
MS Street Boss <i>Notes:</i> Exposed Crew	2	0	130	10 (1)	1+1	6,500
NA Diablo <i>Notes:</i> Exposed Crew	1	+1	170	8	1+1	5,000
TE Scoot	4 (Large)	0	70	9	1+3	12,000
EE Palm Beach <i>Notes:</i> Luxury Features	4 (Large)	+1	130	12 (2)	1+4	45,000
NA Saber	4 (Large)	+2	155	12 (4)	1+1	85,000
CA Auric Rule Limo <i>Notes:</i> Luxury Features	5 (Large)	0	100	14 (4)	1+7	130,000
WT Desert Rat <i>Notes:</i> 4WD	5 (Large)	0	100	14 (2)	1+3	30,000
Utility Van	5 (Large)	0	120	13 (2)	1+8	23,000
EE Oasis	5 (Large)	0	90	13 (2)	1+8	19,500
Vertex Grasshopper Hover Bike <i>Notes:</i> Exposed Crew, Hover	1	+2	150	10 (2)	1+1	30,000
Vertex Icarus <i>Notes:</i> Exposed Crew, Hover	1	+2	170	9 (1)	1+1	35,000
CA Nymph <i>Notes:</i> Exposed Crew, Hover	1	+2	150	10 (2)	1+1	40,000
Vertex Beetle Car <i>Notes:</i> Hover	4 (Large)	+1	150	12 (2)	1+3	50k to 500k
Vertex Apollo <i>Notes:</i> Hover	4 (Large)	+1	160	12 (2)	1+3	65,000

design with a single rear wheel ensures the best maneuverability when it comes to parking in tight spaces.

**ELANTRA ENGINEERING
PALM BEACH**

Elantra Engineering's Palm Beach Sedan is all about comfort. The spacious cabin seats five in comfort.

NOS AUTOMOTIVES SABER

NOS Automotives Saber still crosses the 150 MPH mark even carrying serious armor plating. NOS' trademark style is evident in every curve and contour and their constant pursuit of perfection couldn't be better spotlighted than in the quality of every detail of this vehicle.



**CHERRY AUTOMOTIVES AURIC
RULE LIMOUSINE**

Traveling in luxury and style is essential and the Auric Rule is the height of luxury. Comfortable seating for six in the armored passenger cabin with access to hot and cold beverages, sleeping accommodations, as well as top of the line audio and video entertainment systems.

WASTELAND TRADERS DESERT RAT

Wasteland Traders Desert Rat is designed for off road travel. With a Max Travel suspension and semi-sphere off road tires, each wheel can independently travel more than 30 inches to adapt to terrain. A top pintle mount can hold up to a Medium Machine Gun. It has a cargo storage capacity of 1000 pounds and a fuel capacity that allows 500 miles without a refill.

UTILITY VAN

Generic utility van from a half dozen manufacturers. Reliable for hauling loads or passengers.

ELANTRA ENGINEERING OASIS

The Elantra Engineering Oasis Van is well known in the industry for being a sturdy and reliable hauler and utility vehicle.

VERTEX GRASSHOPPER HOVER BIKE

One of a couple dozen interchangeable models.

VERTEX ICARUS

The Vertex Icarus is the fastest production Hover Bike in existence, a guaranteed leader in this year's Hover Rallies.

CHERRY AUTOMOTIVE NYMPH

Cherry Automotive presents the Nymph. All of Cherry's trusted reliability and cutting-edge engineering fit into a sleek and spritely hover cycle.

VERTEX BEETLE HOVER CAR

One of a dozen interchangeable models.

VERTEX APOLLO

The Vertex Apollo is Gear and Sprocket's hover car of the year for the third year running. A staple in the hover industry because of their ultra-durable triple rotation hover fans.

CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT

The following aircraft are available to the average citizen in 2095.

VTOL BIKE

One of a dozen models of high performance flying single-seat vehicles. Styled on a motorcycle.

MORRISON STEEL CONDOR

What the Street Boss brought to the roads, the Morrison Steel Condor has brought to the skies. Heavy, solid, and unforgiving, the Condor dominates the air.

WASTELAND TRADERS DESERT RAT



VERTEX VALKYRIE

Vertex, the leading manufacturer in hover vehicles, steps to the plate with their all new designed Valkyrie. Faster and lighter than anything else in its class, the Valkyrie can be expected to perform well in any competition.

VTOL CAR

Over a dozen models of flying car on the market today. Despite expectations, open cabs are very rare.

CHERRY AUTOMOTIVE ASCENSION

Cherry Automotive is proud to present, for the 2095 catalog, the Ascension. When quality and refinement is necessary, the only place one should look is Cherry Automotive.

EXECUTIVE HELICOPTER

There are several brands of luxury helicopter for wealthy clients. Luxurious, swift, and safe transport that has room and amenities for a meeting or negotiation in flight.

**AMERICAN AERONAUTCS
MANUFACTURING EXECUTIVE
RETREAT HELICOPTER**

American Aeronautics Manufacturing has been producing aircraft for over 50 years. The Executive Retreat is a standout among its peers. Luxury accommodations for five including a top of the line AI AutoBar.

UTILITY HELICOPTER

Standard pattern utility and cargo helicopter, capable of using external hooks and cables to lift tons of cargo. Watch out for the wind with your increased surface area.

**MARSWORKS
ENGINEERING SKYHOOK**

When it comes to the Skyhook, Marsworks Engineering has decided on function over form. Nearly double the lifting capacity of other helicopters in its class, this VTOL Transport is remarkably stable making tight maneuvering for correct cargo placement a guarantee.

TABLE 3:25: CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT

VEHICLE	SIZE	HANDLING	TOP SPEED (MPH)	TOUGHNESS	CREW	COST
VTOL Bike <i>Notes:</i> Exposed Crew, VTOL.	2	+2	150	10 (2)	1	25,000
MS Condor <i>Notes:</i> Exposed Crew, VTOL.	2	0	140	11 (3)	1	45,000
VT Valkyrie <i>Notes:</i> Exposed Crew, VTOL.	2	+2	160	9 (1)	1	23,000
VTOL Car <i>Notes:</i> Luxury Features, VTOL.	6 (Large)	+1	150	13 (2)	1+5	30,000
CA Ascension <i>Notes:</i> Luxury Features, VTOL.	6 (Large)	+2	150	12 (1)	1+3	40,000
Executive Helicopter <i>Notes:</i> Luxury Features, Night Vision, VTOL.	7 (Large)	+1	180	16 (6)	1+7	750,000
AAM Executive Retreat Helicopter <i>Notes:</i> Luxury Features, VTOL.	7 (Large)	+2	170	16 (6)	1+5	825,000
Utility Helicopter <i>Notes:</i> VTOL. Lift up to 6 tons, half Top Speed while lifting cargo.	7 (Large)	0	150	12 (2)	1+3	400,000
ME Skyhook	7 (Large)	+1	135	14 (4)	1+1	350,000



NEW VEHICULAR WEAPONS

Interface Zero uses most of the vehicular weapons found in *Savage Worlds*, but there are a few additions.

Grenade Machine Gun: Grenade machine guns fire high explosive dual purpose (anti personnel / anti vehicle) grenades. These grenades cost 500 Cryptodollars for a case of 40 linked rounds.

MAW (Magnetic Acceleration Weapons): Regardless of type (coil, gauss, rail, etc.), MAW fire a solid projectile at extreme velocity, causing

significant damage and armor penetration. The power limitations on the magnetic field are the current limiter of firing rates and why MAW are not more common. MAW are AT Guns but do not have HE (high explosive) rounds.

Medium MAW Cannon have a 20 round magazine, with ammunition costing 50 Cryptos a round. Heavy MAW Cannon also have a 20 round magazine, but the larger ammunition costs 100 Cryptos a round.

TABLE 3:26: VEHICULAR WEAPONS

TYPE	RANGE	AP ROUNDS	HE ROUNDS	ROF	COST
20mm Grenade Machine Gun	24/48/96	—	3d6, AP 2, MBT	2	1,500
40mm Grenade Machine Gun	30/60/120	—	4d8, AP 4, MBT	2	2,000
Medium MAW Cannon	100/200/400	4d10, AP 20	—	1	600k
Heavy MAW Cannon	100/200/400	5d10, AP 40	—	1	1.5M

MILITARY GROUND VEHICLES

LIGHT UTILITY TRUCK

One of a dozen knock-off vehicles for sale to military and paramilitary organizations around the globe.

RAVENLOCKE SECURITY GP110U TRUCK

Ravenlocke Securities offers its 5th generation GP110u truck. More heavily armed and armored than most of the vehicles in its class, it can be counted to reliably deliver its payload to any destination.

HEAVY UTILITY TRUCK

A heavy workhorse vehicle, used to carry troops, ammunition, supplies, and casualties virtually everywhere. The flat cargo bed has fold-down slat benches for up to 16 passengers, if it's not loaded with up to 10 tons of cargo. Towing rated for up to 12 tons of trailer. A mounting ring above the cab can pintle mount a machine gun.

WASTELAND TRADERS REINFORCEER

For Wasteland Traders, the safety of its occupants is its primary concern. Where other transports in its class leave their passengers in an unarmored cargo bed with a cloth cover, Wasteland Traders has ensured that the entire passenger compartment is armored as well as having 10 ports on the sides to allow the passengers to fire from within the safety of the vehicle. Passengers can disperse from 2 side doors as well as a rear ramp.

MILITARY ARMORED VEHICLES

ARMORED PERSONNEL TRANSPORT

A standard-pattern armored transport for moving troops into, or out of, combat zones. Independent machine guns can suppress or target virtually any foe.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS CALVARY

Boasting port and starboard heavy machine gun turrets and an enlarged crew cabin, Act of God Armaments Calvary is certain to

TABLE 3:27: MILITARY VEHICLES

GROUND VEHICLES						
VEHICLE	SIZE	HANDLING	TOP SPEED (MPH)	TOUGHNESS	CREW	COST
Light Utility Truck	5 (Large)	+1	100	16 (4)	1+4	51,000
Notes: Four-wheel drive, Offline, bed can carry +6 passengers or light cargo. Weapons: Medium Machine Gun (pintle mount, roof front); can be upgraded to Heavy Machinegun.						
RS GP110u Truck	5 (Large)	+1	100	17 (5)	1+4	60,000
Notes: Four-wheel drive, 2-ton cargo capacity. Weapons: Heavy Machine Gun (pintle mount, roof front).						
Heavy Utility Truck	8 (Huge)	0	80	18 (3)	1+2	120,000
Notes: Four-wheel drive, Offline, bed can carry 10 tons of cargo or 16 passengers. Can tow 12 tons. Weapons: none; can pintle mount Medium or Heavy Machine Gun						
WT Reinforcer	8 (Huge)	0	70	18 (3)	1+18	120,000
Notes: Four-wheel drive. Weapons: None.						
ARMORED VEHICLES						
VEHICLE	SIZE	HANDLING	TOP SPEED (MPH)	TOUGHNESS	CREW	COST
Armored Personnel Transport	6 (Large)	0	50	22 (7)	2+10	1.1M
Notes: Heavy Armor, Hover, Night Vision. Weapons: Heavy Machine Gun (Imp Stabilizer, turret), Medium Machine Gun (Imp Stabilizer, turret)						
AGA Calvary	6 (Large)	0	70	23 (8)	2+12	1.3M
Notes: Heavy Armor, Hover, Night Vision. Weapons: 2x Heavy Machine Gun (Imp Stabilizer, turret)						
CES Beachhead	6 (Large)	0	60	31 (16)	3+3	2.8M
Notes: Heavy Armor, Hover, Night Vision, Reactive Plating. Weapons: 30mm Cannon (Imp Stabilizer, turret), Heavy Machine Gun (Imp Stabilizer, turret), 40mm Grenade Machine Gun (Stabilizer, turret), Hellfire Missile Launcher (fixed turret front, two missiles)						
SRC Lancehead	7 (Large)	0	50	34 (19)	3+3	3.1M
Notes: Heavy Armor, Hover, Night Vision, Reactive Plating. Weapons: 2x 30mm Cannon (Imp Stabilizer, turret), 40mm Grenade Machine Gun (Stabilizer, turret), Hellfire Missile Launcher (fixed turret front, two missiles)						
ME Meteorite Heavy Tank	9 (Huge)	-1	50	55 (36)	2	4M
Notes: Heavy Armor, Hover, Night Vision, Reactive Plating. Weapons: 125mm Tank Gun (Imp Stabilizer, turret), Heavy Flame Thrower (Stabilizer, turret), Medium Machine Gun (Stabilizer, fixed forward)						
ME Horus-Ra Hover Tank	9 (Huge)	0	52	53 (34)	2	5.4M
Notes: Heavy Armor, Hover, Night Vision, Reactive Plating, Sloped Armor. Weapons: Heavy Laser (Imp Stabilizer, turret), Gatling Laser (Stabilizer, turret), Anti-Personnel System (as Claymore Mine, one on each side)						





deliver it occupants to the battlefield safely and with its heavier engine and more powerful hover fans, it will get them there much swifter than its competition.

**COMBAT ENGINEERING SYSTEMS
BEACHHEAD ASSAULT VEHICLE**

The Beachhead Assault Vehicle is CES's tried and true air cushion assault vehicle. Ride into battle with armament just short of a tank, and enough generation 19 armor to keep you safe anywhere.

**SENTINEL ROCK COMPANY
LANCEHEAD ASSAULT VEHICLE**

The Sentinel Rock Lancehead assault vehicle is the top of its class in light assault craft. Quad turbo fans generate an extremely stable hover platform while dual 30mm Cannon turrets significantly ramp up the firepower over similar vehicles.

**MARSWORKS ENGINEERING
METRORITE HEAVY TANK**

Marsworks Engineering's classic model hover tank is fast, hard hitting, and covered in fire. Advanced composite armor up to 40cm thick, supplemented by reactive armor plating, houses a conventional ballistic cannon supported by a coaxial medium machine gun and a turret-mounted heavy flamethrower.

**MARSWORKS ENGINEERING
HORUS-RA HOVER TANK**

The latest hover tank from Marsworks Engineering is named after the supreme Egyptian deity. Fast moving, sleekly shaped – with armor plating that deflects conventional munitions, and sporting the powerful Divine Wrath™ laser cannon, the Horus-Ra strikes like a bolt from the heavens. The explosive Anti-Personnel System can shred bold infantry with short-range explosives on any side (150 cryptodollars per reload, per side) and 36cm of advanced composite armor ensures you'll be using it for years to come.

MILITARY AIRCRAFT

**HOSTILE MERGER BIFROST ASSAULT
DRONE TRANSPORT**

Fully automated, the Bifrost™ can deliver up to 40 of Takeover Team drones, then linger to provide fire support.

**RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES
ENFORCER GUNSHIP**

Law enforcement is dangerous, especially around Golemmech. Ravenlocke's Enforcer makes it safer, especially around Golemmech.

TABLE 3:28: MILITARY AIR VEHICLES

VEHICLE	SIZE	HANDLING	TOP SPEED (MPH)	TOUGHNESS	CREW	COST
HM Bifrost	7 (Large)	+2	200	19 (4)	0+40	243,000
<i>Notes:</i> AI, VTOL, see description. <i>Weapons:</i> 2x Heavy Machine Guns (fixed front)						
RS Enforcer	8 (Huge)	0	805 / 205	21 (4)	2+2	1.62M
<i>Notes:</i> Night Vision, Variable Engines (Jet top seed 805, VTOL top speed 205). <i>Weapons:</i> 2x Medium MAW Cannon (fixed front), dual-linked Heavy Machine Guns (Stabilizer, fixed front).						
AGA Seraphim	8 (Huge)	+2	225	22 (6)	2+2	2.3M
<i>Notes:</i> Night Vision, VTOL. <i>Weapons:</i> 40mm Cannon (chin turret), 16x Hellfire missiles (fixed front).						
SRC Insurgency	7 (Large)	+1	715	17 (2)	1	1.3M
<i>Notes:</i> Ejection System, Sensor Suite (night vision, radar), VTOL. <i>Weapons:</i> 30m Cannon (fixed front), 2x Sidewinder missiles (fixed front), 2x Hellfire missiles (fixed front), Bombs (damage varies, LBT)						

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS SERAPHIM HELICOPTER GUNSHIP

Rain down fiery vengeance with the Seraphim helicopter gunship. The patented transverse rotor design lets the Seraphim mount more armor and weapons than the next two competitors.

SENTINEL ROCK CORPORATION INSURGENCY ATTACK FIGHTER

It's hard to put down as grass roots uprisings, the Insurgency is the leading multi-role attack fighter today. The use of Gyroc rounds lets the 30mm autocannon carry more cannon ammunition, and the hardpoint missile racks allow for easy customization regardless of mission.

DRONES

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS JERICHO ASSAULT DRONE

The Jericho Assault Drone is the heaviest armed and armored drone in its category with only the most minute increase in engine noise. Expect the Jericho to redefine combat support.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts(A) d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Hacking d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 0 (24" Flight); **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 8 (4)

Gear: Assault Rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, AP 2, RoF 3, Shots 120).

Cost: 40,000

Special:

- **Armor +4:** Composite plating.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Fearless:** immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Sensors:** Can switch between infravision and low light vision.
- **Size -2 (Small):** about 30 pounds without weapons.
- **Weapon Mount:** ignore minimum Strength and recoil for one mounted weapon.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS LIGHT RECONNAISSANCE DRONE

GA has a robust interpretation of what constitutes a reconnaissance drone. An airborne sensor package with a modular weapon mount (medium machine gun standard), the Coyote packs surprising firepower into such a fragile platform.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts(A) d4, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 0 (16" Flight); **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4

Gear: medium machine gun (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8+1, AP 2, RoF 3, Shots 200).

Cost: 20,000

Special:

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Fearless:** Immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Sensors:** Can switch between infravision and low light vision.
- **Size -2 (Small):** about 30 pounds without weapons.
- **Weapon Mount:** Modular design, ignore minimum Strength and recoil for one mounted weapon, up to 30 lbs.
- **Size -2 (Small):** about 30 pounds without weapons.
- **Weapon Mount:** ignore minimum Strength and recoil for one mounted weapon.



COMMAND DRONE

Command drones are often used by police and military to support field operations in urban environments. They are capable of providing overwhelming fire support against targets, but are slightly slower than fire support drones.





Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts(A) d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Hacking d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d4

Pace: 0 (20"Flight); **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 6 (2)

Gear: medium machine gun (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8+1, AP 2, RoF 3, Shots 200).

Cost: 24,000

Special:

- **Armor +2:** Composite plating.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Fearless:** immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Sensors:** Can switch between infravision and low light vision.
- **Size -1 (Normal):** about 40 pounds without weapons.
- **Weapon Mount:** ignore minimum Strength and recoil for one mounted weapon.



FIRE SUPPORT DRONE

Fire support drones are commonly used in battlefield situations where combat units are small five-person fast attack teams who engage enemies all over the place.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts(A) d6, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Hacking d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 0 (24" Flight); **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 6 (2)

Gear: Dual-linked sub machine gun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 2, RoF 3, Shots 120).

Cost: 30,000

Special:

- **Armor +2:** Composite plating.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Fearless:** immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Sensors:** Can switch between infravision and low light vision.

- **Size -2 (Small):** about 30 pounds without weapons.
- **Weapon Mount:** ignore minimum Strength and recoil for one mounted weapon.



HOSTILE MERGER TAKEOVER TEAM

Hostile Merger's trademark Takeover Team combat drones are meant to travel in, and deploy from, their Bifrost™ drone transport. Bipedal combat units that can squat into compact travel size, the Takeover Team is individually mediocre and not visually threatening, but the standard 40 unit team is devastating.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts(A) d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d6, Hacking d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10 (4)

Gear: Assault Rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, AP 2, RoF 3, Shots 120).

Cost: 50,000

Special:

- **Armor +4:** Composite plating.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Fearless:** immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Sensors:** low light vision.

MORRISON STEEL BULLDOG

Morrison Steel's only entry in the drone market to date. The Bulldog is a ground assault drone. Heavily armed and armored, this machine is entirely capable of controlling combat in its area.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12 (4)

Gear: Light Machine Gun (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, AP 2, ROF 3, Shots 200).

Cost: 22,000

Special:

- **Armor +4:** Composite plating.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Fearless:** immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Sensors:** Can switch between infravision and low light vision.
- **Size 1 (Normal):** about 300 pounds without weapons.
- **Weapon Mount:** ignore minimum Strength and recoil for one mounted weapon.



RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES PATROL DRONE

Patrol Drones are commonplace throughout the sprawl.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts(A) d4, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Pace: 0 (8" Flight); **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 9 (4)

Gear: sub machine gun (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 1, RoF 3, Shots 120).

Cost: 15,000

Special:

- **Armor +4:** Composite plating.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Fearless:** immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Sensors:** Can switch between infravision and low light vision.



RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES FIREFLY

Ravenlocke Securities Firefly is the smallest drone on the market today. The Firefly is a flying eye. Two top-of-the-line micro hover fans

support the minute cylindrical body with an ultra-high resolution camera with integrated stability control and 20x zoom.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Notice d8, Stealth d8

Pace: 0 (8" Flight); **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 2

Gear: High Resolution Camera with 20X Zoom.

Cost: 2,000

Special:

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Fearless:** immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Sensors:** Can switch between infravision and low light vision.
- **Size -4 (Tiny):** about 1 pound.

SUPPLY DRONE

Supply drones are widely used in 2095. They come in a variety of sizes. Many can be seen delivering small packages, and even food from countless different food outlets.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts(A) d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Healing d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 0 (12" Flight); **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 9 (4)

Gear: Various tools in storage compartment

Cost: 5,000

Special:

- **Armor +4:** Composite plating.
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from Shaken; ignore 1 point of Wound penalties; doesn't breathe; immune to disease and poison.
- **Fearless:** immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **Sensors:** Can switch between infravision and low light vision.
- **Size -1 (Normal):** about 40 pounds without cargo.



GOLEMMECHS

The nastiest, scariest war machines in the solar system are Golemmech (singular and plural). There are hundreds of models on the market, and thousands of customized variants.

SPECIAL NOTES

Driving (Golemmech) is the relevant skill. Without that, rolls to use any of the systems (including weapons and sensors) are -2.

AI: An Artificial Intelligence Sprite is included in this Golemmech, to operate systems and increase combat efficiency. The AI is an Extra with a d10 skill and can pilot and operate systems with the usual Multiple Action Penalties. Giving the Sprite a short, verbal command is a free action. These Sprites aren't supposed to have real personalities or independence but will adapt to situations and follow orders to the best of their abilities.

GOLEMMECH: Heavy Armor is evenly applied, preventing extra damage from flanking shots. Ejection systems are standard, using Athletics (-4, no penalty if On Hold) to safely eject from a Wrecked vehicle. Unless otherwise noted, weapons are mounted to the upper hull, which can rotate to face any direction. Golemmech suffer -1 per Size to Stealth checks. They move like a character, with listed Pace; Top Speed is provided for Chase and logistics concerns. If a Golemmech goes Out of Control then it falls, causing Xd6 damage to itself and anything it lands on, where X is the Size of the golemmech. Parry is 2 + half Driving.

DESCRIPTIONS

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS SWARM GOLEMMECH

Like a swarm of locusts, the Swarm Golemmech unleashes a plague of destruction upon the fools that deny you. The Purifier™ laser cannon and two Cherub™ rotary cannons will cleanse your line of sight, while the dozen fire-and-forget missiles obliterate the enemy beyond the horizon.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES COUGAR LIGHT ASSAULT GOLEMMECH

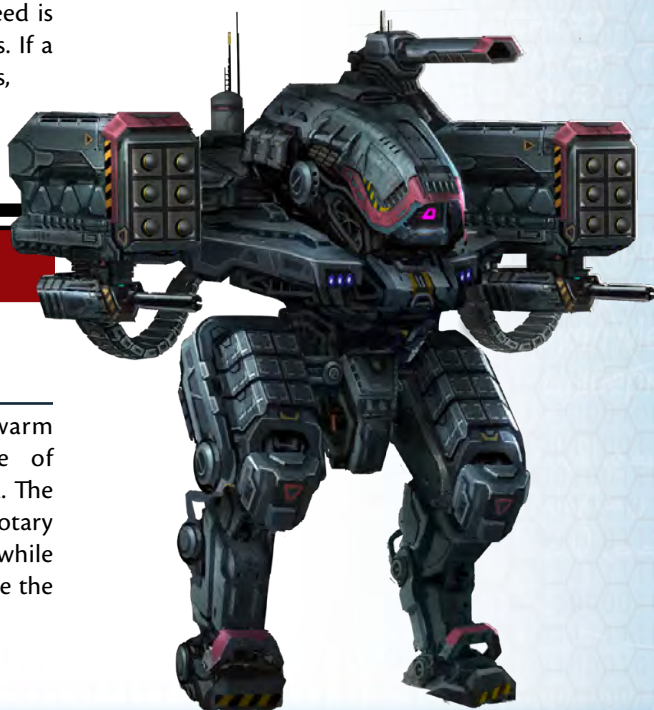
Black Knight's Cougar Light Assault is swift, hard-hitting, and versatile. Two 30mm rotary cannons can clear a company of drones, infantry, and light vehicles while the Black Arrow™ magnetic cannon can destroy all but the heaviest foes in a single shot.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES KNIGHT HEAVY GOLEMMECH

Black Knight Industries' matte-black Knight may be the heaviest, and deadliest, Golemmech on the market. Armed with the classic Midwitch™ laser cannon, a score of missiles and rockets, and the semi-retracted Arming Sword™ close combat weapon (Strength+d8, Heavy Weapon), the black Knight is deadly at every range. Now with room for two passengers.

HOSTILE MERGER PROXY RECON GOLEMMECH

Hostile Merger has a limited line of military vehicles, but what they do offer is as classy and satisfying as their bespoke armored suits.



THE TERM GOLEMMECH

Golemmech is a portmanteau of the mythical Jewish divine protector-construct and the anime word for large combat robots (itself an abbreviation of the loanword 'mekanikaru' - mechanical). The first models of Golemmech were designed and marketed as stalwart defenders, relentlessly protecting the community.

Like many previous brand names, Golemmech was so synonymous with the product that it became the default term for the entire class of product.

The Proxy is one of the best reconnaissance vehicles available, with a robust passive and active sensor suite, radar absorbing black paint, a five-legged chassis for stability and speed in any terrain, and the Beach front mode allows it to operate on or in the water for up to 24 hours. The light armament ensures that the crew doesn't look for trouble but can get out of it and bring back the information.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES ROOK DEFENSIVE GOLEMMECH

Black Knight Industries' Rook is the industry leader anti-missile Golemmech. With the Roland AI™ operating the anti-air weapons, a pair of Rooks can defend a detachment from enemy bombardment, and the standard flares and chaff packages ensure the Rook can easily avoid defense breaking missiles. The four wire-guided missiles and powerful cannon ensure that no pawns are going to kill this Rook.



KENSEI ZERO SCORPION GROUND SUPPORT GOLEMMECH

The Scorpion is an advanced and powerful ground support Golemmech. Two sets of dual-linked magnetic cannons pound any single target into scrap, while two racks of fire and forget missiles can eliminate most fleeting targets. The four legs give excellent mobility and can be used to launch a powerful kick (Strength+d8, Heavy Weapon).

UVZ ZASHCHITA DOMA GOLEMMECH

UVZ is a Russian security corporation and contractor, and the Zashchita Doma (Home Protection) is their attempt to keep Ravenlocke Securities out of the Russian governmental market. It's been a success. Armed for riot control and crowd suppression, with the distinctive and intimidating Axe of Perun™ close combat weapon (Strength+d10, AP 10, Heavy Weapon), the Zashchita Doma is popular with Russian security services.

WASTELAND TRADERS HATCHET LIGHT GOLEMMECH

Wasteland Traders offers a new standard in reliable light-weight combat Golemmechs that don't cost as much as a small country. Well armored, with primary linked twin 40mm auto cannons supplemented by a rack of six anti-armor rockets and an armored fist (Strength+d8, Heavy Weapon), Wasteland Traders brings the bang to keep the customers in line.



TABLE 3:29: GOLEMECHS

VEHICLE	SIZE	HANDLING	PACE + RUN	TOP SPEED (MPH)	TOUGHNESS	CREW	COST
BKI Cougar Light Assault <i>Notes:</i> Golemmech Heavy Armor, Night Vision. <i>Weapons:</i> 2× 30mm Cannon (Imp Stabilizer, arms), Medium MAW Cannon (Stabilizer, shoulder)	5 (Large)	+1	12 + d8	50	29 (16)	1	3.2M
WT Hatchet Light <i>Notes:</i> Golemmech, Heavy Armor, Night Vision, Strength d12+5. <i>Weapons:</i> dual-linked 40mm Cannon, 6× AT-4.	5 (Large)	+1	12 + d8	50	29 (16)	1	1.2M
HM Proxy Recon <i>Notes:</i> Amphibious (Pace 7), Golemmech, Heavy Armor, Multi-Ped (as Tracked), Sensor Suite (night vision, radar), Stealth Paint. <i>Weapons:</i> 76mm Tank Gun, dual-linked Medium Machine Gun, 2× Hellfire missiles	4 (Large)	+2	14 + d8	60	22 (10)	1	1.26M
BKI Rook <i>Notes:</i> AMCM, AI (anti-missile turrets), Golemmech, Heavy Armor, Night Vision. <i>Weapons:</i> 2× quad-linked Heavy Machine Gun turrets (anti-missile turrets), 4× TOW missiles, 88mm Tank Gun.	5 (Large)	0	10 + d6	45	32 (16)	2	1.6M
KZ Scorpion GS <i>Notes:</i> AMCM, AI, Golemmech, Heavy Armor, Mutli-Ped (as Tracked), Sensor Suite, Strength d12+7. <i>Weapons:</i> 2× dual-linked Medium MAW Cannon (Imp Stabilizer, arms), 8× Hellfire missiles (fixed, arms)	7 (Large)	+1	12 + d8	50	43 (26)	1	5.56M
AGA Swarm <i>Notes:</i> AMCM, Golemmech, Heavy Armor, Night Vision. <i>Weapons:</i> Heavy Laser (Imp Stabilizer), 2× 25mm Cannon (Stabilizer, arms), 12× Hellfire missiles (arms)	8 (Huge)	0	10 + d6	40	48 (28)	2	7.1M
BKI Knight Heavy <i>Notes:</i> AMCM, Golemmech, Heavy Armor, Night Vision, Strength d12+9. <i>Weapons:</i> Heavy Laser (right arm), dual-linked Gatling Laser (chest), 8× Hellfire missiles (shoulders, four pack), 12× Bazooka (fixed front, six per leg).	9 (Huge)	-1	12 + d8	50	49 (27)	1+2	8.11M
UVZ Zashichita Doma <i>Notes:</i> Golemmech, Heavy Armor, Night Vision, Sloped Armor, Strength d12+15. <i>Weapons:</i> 2× dual-linked Medium Machine Guns, 20mm Grenade Machine Gun, 57mm AT Gun, CCW (Str+d10, AP 10, HW).	6 (Large)	0	10 + d6	45	41 (23)	2	1.45M



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SETTING RULES

The following chapter takes a look at the various setting rules *Interface Zero* makes use of. You'll find a list of skill specializations appropriate for the cyberpunk genre, rules for using drones as allies, and our revised system for hacking.

GENERAL SETTING RULES

Use the following list to choose the Setting Rules for your game, coloring in the dots so everyone in the group knows which rules are in effect. Skill Specializations are listed further on in this chapter.

- **CONVICTION:** Heroes gain Conviction Tokens that can be used to add a d6 to a Trait or damage roll. Conviction is awarded for triumph (overcoming a great obstacle important to that character), and tragedy (a personal setback, death of a friend or ally, etc.). Players may only have one Conviction at a time, but it does carry over.
- **GRITTY DAMAGE:** When Wild Cards take a Wound, they roll on the Injury Table and apply the results as temporary injuries.
- **MORE SKILL POINTS:** Player characters start with 15 skill points.
- **MULTIPLE LANGUAGES:** Characters know half their Smarts die type in different languages at d6.
- **WOUND CAP:** Wild Cards never suffer more than four wounds from a single hit.

DRONES AS ALLIES

Drones are common companions and useful tools, found filming events, delivering goods, performing routine cleaning, and fulfilling any task that requires limited decision making. Most security teams will employ several drones as part of their normal operations. Naturally, those who live on the edge of society try to make use of drones. Not only do these little AIs provide useful skills, they might be one's only true friend.

DRONE CONTROLLER BASICS

A person who has acquired a drone as an ally is considered that drone's controller. Drones are allied Extras, except as noted.

DRONE SWARMS

You can have more than one active drone ally. Multiple controlled drones are called a drone swarm. However, you can only have one drone under direct control at a time. You may not have more than one drone under direct control per round.

CONTROL MODES

There are two modes that a drone can be operated in, direct and autonomous. In direct control, the drone controller takes command and uses their own actions to operate the drone, gaining some benefits to its use. When fully autonomous, the drone acts based in the programming of its sophisticated AI and innate machine learning. It is a free action to switch a drone between control modes. Only one drone at a time can be directly controlled.

Drones are more difficult to hack while under direct control, subtracting 2 from all Hacking attempts on the drone.

DIRECT CONTROL

Directly controlled drones act on the controller's Turn, ignoring most quirks, and using the controller's Skills and Edges. The controller uses one Action to direct the drone, giving it a Turn to move and take actions (drone Multi-Action penalty is separate from the controller's Multi-Action penalties). The drone's programming automatically tries to Support skills the drone actually has.

Direct control is distracting, subtracting 2 from Notice rolls for the character's own senses (not the drone's).

AUTONOMOUS MODE

When fully autonomous, the drone acts based on its AI and personality. The drone makes

decisions for itself and takes whatever actions it decides are best. The drone is an allied Extra and uses its traits. The player of the drone's controller still directs its actions, but these must be influenced by the drone's quirks.

DRONE PERSONALITIES

The autonomous AI in drones often develop their own quirks and even personalities. Just as frequently, drone operators will anthropomorphize their drones, naming them and attributing personality traits to them in response to the various quirks the programming displays.

Drones are not true fully sentient artificial intelligences, and their personalities are only simulations. Many operators insist their drones have full personalities and treat them accordingly.

ACQUIRING DRONE QUIRKS

Drones acquire quirks over time. The more use the drone sees and the more its core programming is modified, the more likely it is to develop a quirk. When a drone controller gains a rank, each of their drone allies receives a quirk. Only a reboot the core operating system and a full diagnostic (requiring an Electronics roll and at least three hours for each drone, -1 per quirk the drone has). A drone cannot acquire the same quirk twice, if a new quirk is rolled that the drone already has, roll again.

REMOVING DRONE QUIRKS

If a drone controller wants to remove a quirk their drone has acquired they must succeed at a Hacking roll with a -1 penalty per quirk the drone has. If successful the chosen quirk has been removed, and a second with a raise. A critical failure adds a new quirk.

DRONE QUIRKS

When a drone acquires a quirk roll on the Table 4:1: Drone Quirks.

ANALYTICAL

Some drones become locked in a cascade of conflicting protocols and decision trees.

Analytical drones are slow to act but can exceed expectations with time to sort themselves. When the drone has the same value action card as other characters the drone goes on Hold until the other action cards are resolved. When coming off Hold, analytical drones get a free reroll that turn.

COWARDLY

This drone does not like to take risks, often taking cover and spending lots of time "moving to flank" in combat. It also takes -1 to resist Intimidation rolls.

FEISTY

A feisty drone is always on the lookout for conflict. It is argumentative, aggressive, and an eager combatant. A feisty drone can redraw Initiative once per round but must keep the new card.

FRIENDLY

Friendly drones like people, they like to talk to people; they like to meet new people. They do not like to attack people or even animals, preferring to be friends instead. Friendly drones get a +1 on Support rolls and suffer a -1 to attacks except in direct self-defense or defense of their controller (if a foe isn't targeting the drone or its controller then the penalty applies).

TABLE 4:1: DRONE QUIRKS

D12	QUIRK
1	Temperamental
2	Analytical
3	Feisty
4	Lazy
5	Vain
6	Hoarder
7	Cowardly
8	Grumpy
9	Paranoid
10	Loyal
11	Insecure
12	Friendly





GRUMPY

Grumpy drones don't like anyone or anything. They perform their stated functions with a minimum of enthusiasm and frequent complaints. Grumpy drones have -1 to Persuasion and Performance rolls, even under direct control.

HOARDER

Hopefully a drone that develops this quirk has some form of manipulator and a large closet. The drone wants things and wants them in quantity. Hoarder drones can collect almost anything, from bullet casings to glow sticks to

pressed flowers. If the drone acts on a Club then it uses an Action to look for items for the collection. If the controller tries to harm or remove the collection then the drone objects, becoming Fatigued from the stress. This fatigue can recover from the collection being restored and eight hours to check it over.

INSECURE

This drone is uncertain about its safety and ability to perform its tasks. It stays in cover, tries to avoid critical tasks, and suffers -1 to resist Tests that question the drone's capability and worth.

LAZY

This drone does not like to leave its docking cradle. It puts in minimal effort to get by, avoids tasks, and rests around “conserving battery life” as much as possible. This lethargy reduces Pace by 1 and the running die one step.

LOYAL

Everyone thinks they want a loyal drone, but it can be difficult having one around. Loyal drones hero worship their controllers and constantly extol their controller’s virtues and success. This drone gets +1 to Support the controller, but brags about the controller’s plans, past accomplishments, and secrets. This can give away key information, like the Big Mouth hindrance.

PARANOID

The world is a dangerous place, out to get this drone and its controller. All communications need to be encrypted, identities need multiple verifications, and any one or thing besides

this drone and the controller (including allied drones) could be a security weak point or even a traitor. Paranoid drones need to double check security, inflicting –2 to Support rolls and a –1 to being hacked.

TEMPERAMENTAL

You never know what you are going to get with a temperamental drone. Any time the drone gets a critical failure on a trait roll it temporarily gains a quirk, re-rolling any that it already has.

VAIN

The drone has a very high opinion of itself. It will constantly make claims as to its abilities, demand extra maintenance, and seek to prove itself better than other drones. This provides a free reroll when making opposed rolls or targeting other drones. However if the vain drone feels under-appreciated, because the controller “favors” a different drone or the vain drone is notably outperformed by an ally drone, then the drone suffers a –1 to all Trait rolls for 24 hours.

HACKING

Hackers play a key role in the composition of any party. They don’t necessarily do loads of damage like cyber monks, razor girls or rivet heads, nor do they command drones that help control the battlefield. Hackers can’t patch up a team member if they get shot, but when you need to shut down that megacorps’ security system, suppress enemy communications, limit the opposition’s combat effectiveness by disabling their cybernetic implants or even crushing their TAPs; the hacker can do that... and more.

COMMON TERMS

Before we get into the rules, there are a few terms we use to describe various rules elements or technology. These terms are presented here so you can familiarize yourself with them before reading further.

Access: Once you have hacked into a computer system, device or network you are considered to have access. Generally, you must have access if

you wish to affect a computer system or device in some way shape or form.

Computer System: A computer system is a term to describe anything with a microprocessor and wireless connectivity. A computer system might be a Tendril Access Processor, a desktop computer, any kind of vehicle or a security system; In 2095 the possibilities are endless. Basically, if it has a microprocessor, it can be hacked via the wireless signal it emits. Hacking a computer system also gives you direct access to any devices linked to the system. See Devices for more information.

Counter Hacking: Counter hacking is the process by which a person defends herself against an unwanted intrusion into a computer system. This is accomplished by making an opposed Hacking skill check. You can attempt this roll untrained if you need to. The winner of the opposed roll is either booted from the system or remains logged in, as the case may be.

Device: A device is an object that is linked to a computer system in some way, much like your home printer, microphone or web camera is a





device connected to your computer. Most devices are wirelessly linked to a computer, though some can be hardwired with cables or nano wires (especially with Cybertech).

Common devices are alarm systems of all types, door locks, security cameras, elevators and even items you can sync up with your Tendril Access Processor. Some devices can only be hacked by gaining access to the computer system to which they are linked, while others can be hacked directly. Table 4:2 lists the most common devices you will encounter in 2095. Game Masters should use this as a guideline for determining how to hack a device.

Geographic Information Systems Protocol (GISP): Geographic Information Systems Protocol is an addressing system similar to the Internet Protocol (IP) addressing system of the early part of the 21st century. GISP combines Geographic Positioning Systems (GPS) and Internet Protocol (IP) addressing systems to pinpoint your precise location anywhere on the planet. Smart hackers can use a Mask GISP command to avoid detection or perform a spoof GISP exploit to bounce their address off other servers, which can prolong—or even defeat—trace attempts.

Intrusion Defense System (IDS): Intrusion Defense Systems are software packages consisting of firewalls and a sprite. Intrusion Defense Systems are ranked by Tiers, with each Tier applying increasingly difficult penalties to Hacking rolls. All computer systems have IDS.

Network: As the name implies, a computer network (or simply network) is a collection of computer systems which are linked together wirelessly. The stronger the network, the wider the area it covers. The Tendril Access Processor generates its own network which is referred to as a Personal Area Network. There are many types of networks in the world. Some are restricted to a single building or collection of buildings (like a hospital or your house). These are commonly known as Local Area Networks (LANs) while others—Wide Area Networks—cover entire cities or even geographic regions (like Europe). Some are satellite networks that comprise Global Area Networks (GANs) spanning the entire globe.

With the exception of the Tendril Access Processor, hacking networks is handled via a Dramatic Task. The size of the network determines how difficult the challenge is. See Dramatic Tasks later in this chapter for more information.

COMPUTER INTERFACES

The most common computers in 2095 do not use keyboards, mice, etc. The TAP's Hyper Reality interface and Line of Sight Triggers handle things like typing via voice-to-text, scrolling through content, opening new hyper panels (think web browser windows/tabs, etc.), and generally interacting with Hyper Objects and things of that nature. Your Personal Area Network determines the broadcasting range of your Tendril Access Processor and limits what you can access at any given point in time. The newest operating system for the TAP is Hyper Panels 3.7.

Overwatch: Overwatch is a term used to describe a person (usually the team's hacker, an enemy system admin or even a sprite) who actively monitors a network and deals with any intrusions into the network.

Personal Area Network (PAN): Commonly known as a PAN, a Personal Area Network is a Wireless network generated by your character's Tendril Access Processor. The PAN has an operational range that varies depending on the strength of the signal generated by the Tendril Access Processor. Your character can interact with any computer system within a Personal Area Network's range.

Sprite: A sprite is a component of your TAP's Intrusion Detection System. Sprites are intelligent programs (similar to the popular assistant programs running on your smart phone) that monitor your TAP and notify you of any intrusion attempts. A sprite's capabilities scale with the Tier of your IDS. The more powerful the Intrusion Detection System, the stronger the sprite.

Tendril Access Processor (TAP): Created by Dr. Kwame Featherstone (the founder of Featherstone Industries), the Tendril Access Processor has fundamentally changed the way people in 2095 interact with computers and the world in general. A biochip about the size of a fingernail installed at the base of the skull, the TAP is a wireless computer and a smart phone, allowing people to communicate and share data with each other.

THE INTERNET OF THINGS

In the early part of the century, a new form of technology emerged which fundamentally changed how people interacted with the world around them: The Internet of Things (IoT). IoT technology embedded tiny computing systems within a multitude of objects. The result was a breakthrough which allowed people to connect wirelessly with a host of devices that—until that point in time—weren't things one would normally think of as computers. Thanks to wireless networking—and to a lesser extent, Near Field Communication (NFC) technology—devices such as wearable fitness monitors, home appliances, clothing, vehicles, smart watches and a host of other items became networked objects, able to transmit data to and from other devices and computer systems. The IoT generates, shares and uses data all by itself.

A complete paradigm shift, the IoT and NFC changed the way information technology developers looked at computers and networking. By 2020, there were an estimated 50 billion objects making use of this technology. Combined with wireless computer networking, the Tendril Access Processor, Near Field Communications and an advanced form of Augmented Reality known as Hyper Reality; the Internet of Things forms the backbone of today's Global DataNet; essentially turning the world into one giant Graphic User Interface (GUI) people can interact with on every conceivable level.

The TAP is essentially a living machine, constantly creating new neuromorphic engineered organic neural networks (NEONNs) in the brain, which it uses (much like your thyroid gland) to monitor and control any linked devices such as cybernetics, vehicles, smart-linked weapons, etc.; Even your smart devices and security features in your home can be linked to the TAP. NEONNs also translate wireless signals and digital code they receive from other computer systems and networks around you into raw sensory data: touch, sound, sight, smell; allowing you to experience Hyper Reality. Roughly 99.3 percent of all people throughout the solar system have a Tendril Access Processor installed in their brains, effectively making them mobile WiFi hot-spots.

INTRUSION DEFENSE SYSTEMS

An Intrusion Defense System is the front line security for any computer system or device. There are two components to Intrusion Detection Systems: Firewalls and Sprites.

FIREWALLS

Firewalls have a security rating equal to their overall quality, which constitutes the modifier to all Hacking skill rolls to gain access to the computer system or device. Firewalls also protect networks. Dramatic Tasks to hack a network and

Hacking skill rolls in Quick Encounters are similarly made at the appropriate penalty.

SPRITES

The second level of protection in the Intrusion Defense System is the sprite. The sprite acts as a personal assistant for your character. Sprites are capable of detecting and repelling unwanted intrusions in a Tendril Access Processor, computer system or network. In computer networks, they often act as Overwatch, monitoring entire infrastructures and dealing with any problems that might arise. They can help characters with Support rolls for things like Hacking skill rolls. Sprites are treated as Allied Extras, and they may even have personalities. See Allied Extras in *Savage Worlds* for more information.

Attributes: Sprites have a rating equivalent to a Rank (Novice, Seasoned, etc.). The rating determines the sprite's base Attribute die type. At Heroic, the sprite is starting to become a true AI, capable of empathy and other human qualities, like anger. It gains a d6 Spirit die and Spirit-based skills.

Skills: Sprites gain a number of skills equal to half their linked attribute. So, a sprite with a d6 Smarts would get three Smarts-based skills, a d8 Smarts would grant four, d10 five, etc.

Note: There are only two Spirit-Based skills that make sense for an AI; Intimidation and Persuasion.





TABLE 4.2: DEVICES

DEVICE	DIRECT HACK?
Alarm	Yes*
Security Camera	Yes
Door Lock	Yes
Cyberlimbs	No. You need to access the target's TAP to hack these devices.
Individual Cybersystems**	No
Traffic Light	Yes
Smart Weapons	Yes
Vehicle	Yes
Satellite	No. You need to access the satellite up-link computer system to hack a satellite.
Elevator	Yes
Hyper Object	Yes

*Examples of alarms might be a single device such as a motion sensor or a car alarm.

** An Individual Cybersystem is not directly linked to the Tendril Access Processor. Common examples of this Cybertech include Venom Fangs, Anchoring Spikes, Razor Nails, etc.' Essentially anything that activates through muscle memory, a flick of the wrist, a bit, etc. Cannot be hacked.

It should be noted that sprites gain a D8 Spirit at Legendary rank, which would normally give them two extra d8 Spirit-based skills for a total of four skills. We make up for the difference by giving the sprite a Wild Die.

SPRITE ACTIONS

⚙️ If a sprite detects an intrusion into a system, it can do the following:

- **Sound an Alarm:** The Sprite can spend an action to put the system on Alert. Doing so notifies anyone logged into the system of the attempted breach. If running on a network, physical security teams are also notified.
- **Bolster IDS Rating:** The Sprite can spend an action and make a Hacking skill roll to temporarily improve the security of the system. Success raises the IDS by 1 Tier for a number of rounds equal to its rating (A Tier 1 IDS raises to a Tier 2 IDS for one round, a Tier 2 IDS raises to Tier 3 for two rounds, etc.). Tier 5 IDS do not raise their Tier. Instead, they gain a +1 to all skill checks for the length of the encounter.
- **Counter Hack:** A sprite can spend an action and attempt to force the hacker out of the system.

- **Trace GISP:** The sprite can attempt to trace the Geographic Information Systems Protocol address of the hacker. This is a Dramatic Task.

INTRUSION DEFENSE SYSTEM DESCRIPTIONS

TIER 1 INTRUSION DEFENSE SYSTEMS


Hacking modifier: No penalty to Hacking rolls.

Sample Intrusion Detection Systems: Vending machines, simple security systems, Novice Wild Cards, an Extra's TAP, the Local Area Network for a coffin motel or convenience store and most land-based vehicles costing between 500 and 10,000 cryptodollars.

Description: Tier 1 Intrusion Defense Systems come pre-installed on most computer systems. The average sprawler typically has the same Intrusion Defense Systems that came with their TAP and, trusting the almighty megacorp to protect them, hasn't bothered to upgrade them.

Similarly, "Mom and Pop" stores and other small businesses typically don't spend a ton of cryptodollars on security for their networks; money's too tight to waste on something that

SPRITES AND SOCIAL CONFLICTS

 Interaction with a sprite is possible in the sense that because we give the more powerful sprites Intimidation and Persuasion, characters can try to persuade or even bully a sprite into giving them access. This introduces an alternate method for hacking that can be resolved using the *Savage Worlds* Social Conflict rules.

The idea of negotiating with an AI to gain access into a highly secure computer system (or even the TAP of an NPC) is compelling and allows characters to explore concepts dealing with “ghosts in the machine,” what it truly means to be human, and other, similar themes.

may or may not happen. DigiShield®, or Sphinxware® are examples of Tier 1 Intrusion Detection Systems. They have basic sprites that are often as helpful as a sector cop on the take.

Cost: None. All characters begin with Tier 1 IDS. If you want to upgrade your character’s IDS, you must purchase one.

TIER 2 INTRUSION DEFENSE SYSTEMS

Hacking modifier: –1 penalty to Hacking rolls.

Sample Intrusion Detection Systems: Commercially available drones, networks protecting mid-range businesses, Tendril Access Processors for Novice and Seasoned Wild Cards, and most land-based vehicles costing between 10,000 and 30,000 cryptodollars have Tier 2 IDS.

Description: Tier 2 Intrusion Defense Systems are a step above Tier 1 IDS. They provide a higher level of security, but you have to pay for them. Tier 2 IDS are commercially available throughout the world. The Onion Net Industries’ SATA ST-8 Glacier® series Intrusion Defense Systems or Kenta Cyber Dynamics’ Iron Wall® series are the most commonly purchased Tier 2 IDS on the market.

Cost: 1,000 cryptodollars

TIER 3 INTRUSION DEFENSE SYSTEMS

Hacking modifier: –2 penalty to Hacking rolls.

Sample Intrusion Detection Systems: Custom-built drones, networks protecting larger corporations and their subsidiaries, security systems, properties owned by criminal organizations, the TAPs for mid to high-Tier bosses, larger gangs, police, Veteran Wild Cards and vehicles in the 30 to 50k range typically have these types of Intrusion Defense Systems running on their systems.

Description: Tier 3 IDS are for the sprawler who is serious about the security of their TAP and networks. While these Intrusion Defense Systems are available on the open market, they are much higher in price for a single purchase (No customer service is available for one-time purchases).

Many corporations offer subscription packages which include advanced sprites bundled with the software, though these are equally steep. Kenta Cyber Dynamics is the industry leader in 24 hour monitoring of your TAP or computer network. Their Vigilant Shogun® Intrusion Defense System is rated 10 of 10 stars by Tech20, the premiere software review TAPcast across the world. Coming in a close second are Onion Net Industries with their PANpoint® Protection software.

Cost: Tier 3 Intrusion Defense Systems typically run 4,000 cryptodollars for a one-time purchase. A subscription service costs the user 275 cryptodollars a month (An annual savings of 700 cryptos!).

TIER 4 INTRUSION DEFENSE SYSTEMS

Hacking modifier: –3 penalty to Hacking rolls

Sample Intrusion Detection Systems: Megacorporate networks, security teams, government employees and city-wide infrastructures such as water treatment facilities, power grids, armored vehicles, Heroic-ranked Wild Cards and other high-profile individuals such as media stars, power-brokers and crime bosses all have access to this level of security.

Description: Tier 4 Intrusion Defense Systems offer the most powerful commercial protection a sprawler can buy. These software packages are designed to protect against all types of exploits including Brute Force attacks, Command Injection exploits, Denial of Service attacks, Spear-fishing attacks, Zero-Day Exploits, and many more.

The database is also constantly updating to protect against the newest forms of malware.



TABLE 4:3: INTRUSION DEFENSE SYSTEMS

IDS TYPE	PENALTY TO HACKING SKILL CHECKS	SPRITE STATISTICS
Tier 1	None	d4 Smarts, d4 Hacking, d4 Notice
Tier 2	-1	d6 Smarts; d6 Hacking, d6 Notice, d6 Research
Tier 3	-2	d8 Smarts; d8 Hacking, d8 Notice, d8 Research, d8 Taunt
Tier 4	-3	d10 Smarts, d6 Spirit; d10 Notice, d10 Hacking, d6 Language d10 Research, d10 Taunt, d6 Intimidation, d6 Persuasion, Wild Die
Tier 5	-4	d12 Smarts; d8 Spirit; d12 Hacking; d12 Language; d12 Notice; D12 Academics, Common Knowledge or Science*; d12 Research; d12 Taunt; d8 Intimidation; d8 Persuasion; Wild Die

* At Tier 5, a sprite can know either Academics, Common Knowledge or Science. Sprites can use any of these skills in Support rolls. Choose which one you think is most appropriate.

Ravenlocke Securities' Archangel IDS is the most commonly known detection system and is deployed on many government networks across the world. It is thought the sprites are true AI's slaved to the systems they protect.

Cost: Tier 4 Intrusion Defense Systems are not available as single purchases. Monthly subscriptions run 400 cryptodollars a month for a single device. Major corporations often get deals for entire facilities, but even then the cost is tens of thousands of cryptodollars a month. Rumors of hot-shot hackers reverse-engineering Tier 4 IDS are common, as are tales of the brain damage they suffered trying to defeat the encryption.

TIER 5 INTRUSION DEFENSE SYSTEMS

Hacking modifier: -4 penalty to Hacking rolls

Sample Intrusion Detection Systems: Military black sites, Satellite networks, command and control bunkers, Golemmechs, powered armor, Legendary-ranked Wild Cards, Space Station docking networks and other heavily restricted areas are all rumored to employ Tier 5 IDS.

Description: Face it, nakama; if you run into these types of systems, you've either got big brass ones or you tumbled down the wrong rabbit hole. These systems have true AI capable of deploying the worst of the worst black ice you'll ever encounter; the kind that can trace your Geoposition to a single hair on your head and drop Remote Access Trojans capable of frying your brain.

Cost: You don't buy these systems because, technically, they don't exist. You have to code

them yourself, which can take a long time and generally requires a peek at the source code of an existing system, and that means—yeah, you guessed it—you have to hack one. Good luck with that omae. I'll light a candle for you.

PERSONAL AREA NETWORKS

II Tendril Access Processors have what is known as a Personal Area Network (PAN). A Personal Area Network emanates from your character's TAP and spreads out in an area equal to the Range of her TAP. As your character moves, so does the network. In this sense, your character is a mobile WIFI hot-spot, the center of an ever shifting Venn diagram in which she is able to digitally interact with anyone and any computerized system within range of her PAN. This web of PANS and geographically synced computer systems is commonly known as the TAPstream.

TAP RANGE

Your character's TAP automatically pings any computer system or network within the Range of her PAN and relays information about it to her TAP, which is translated into visual information she sees in Hyper Reality. If the character's TAP can automatically connect with another PAN or a computer system, it will do so. No Hacking skill check is required. If it cannot automatically connect, the character's TAP will tag the network or computer system with an icon which is often hyper-tagged with the logo of the corporation that made the IDS protecting

TABLE 4:4: PERSONAL AREA NETWORKS

RATING	RANGE	COST
Tier 1 (Novice-Seasoned)	3”(18 Feet)	None
Tier 2 (Seasoned-Veteran)	6”(36 Feet)	1,000 Cryptodollars
Tier 3 (Veteran-Heroic)	12”(48 Feet)	4,000 Cryptodollars or 275/month
Tier 4 (Heroic-Legendary)	24”(144 Feet)	400 Cryptodollars/month
Tier 5 (Legendary)	48”(288 Feet)	N/A (Tier 5 IDS must be coded. See the Tier 5 IDS description for more details.

the PAN. Those megacorps love free advertising, omae. Smart hackers make use of reality filters—applications that re-skin the hyper tags to personally defined themes with icons overlaying the corporate advertisements. The icon can look like anything your character wishes.

The strength of the PAN determines its effective Range. You character (or a sprite defending a system) suffers no Range penalties to Hacking rolls, and anything outside of that Range cannot be hacked until your character moves closer to it. Personal Area Networks can be upgraded by upgrading your TAP. We associate PANs with Rank to give Game Masters a broad framework for determining the effective Range of an Extra or Wild Card’s PAN. Consult Table 4:4 Personal Area Networks for effective Ranges and their associated costs.


Example: Neon Bright is hanging out at the food court in the main level of Serenity Tower, waiting on her contact for the night’s job to show. As she looks around, her TAP is constantly feeding her information about the people who wander into range of her Personal Area Network, which extends to cover most of the food court. She’d upgraded her TAP last week and anyone with a TAP or any computer system within 12’ (approximately 48 feet) registers in Hyper Reality as an icon.

The type and color of the icon lets her know at a glance if it’s worth hacking. Neon Bright scans the area, taking note of the icons hovering near the shops in the area. Various icons also hover near people as they pass by. It’s then that her contact shows up.

Neon Bright looks him over. Clean cut, ultra-hot business suit and the frosty blue-hued grinning devil blinking above his head lets her know he’s got enough security running on his TAP to fry her hotter than those pan-fried

dumplings she’s craving. Neon Bright shrugs and motions for him to sit. “So, what’s the scoop,” she asks, logging his TAP signature just in case the meeting doesn’t go the way she wants.


CONTROLLING ACCESS TO YOUR PAN

 As a free action, your character can give access to your Personal Area Network to as many people as you like, effectively creating an extended PAN, colloquially known as a GhostNet. This is often standard operational procedure for any team going on a mission. The team’s hacker creates a GhostNet that allows communications between each team member. They can share real-time data such as camera feeds, and any communications they may be monitoring.

More often than not, the team’s hacker takes control of the extended network and acts in an Overwatch capacity, monitoring the team network and dealing with any threats to network security. The character on Overwatch can monitor a number of TAPs connected to his Personal Area Network equal to 2 + half his Hacking skill. If the character acting as Overwatch doesn’t have Hacking, he can monitor a number of Tendril Access Processors equal to half his Smarts die.

Example: XenoByte is acting as Overwatch for his team as they prepare to raid a Triad safe house. There are five members logged into XenoByte’s Personal Area Network. His Hacking skill is d8, so he can monitor six people (2 + 4[Half his hacking skill] = 6).

RUNNING OVERWATCH

 While acting as Overwatch, your character may respond to any intrusion attempt against team members currently logged onto your PAN



as if the intrusion attempt was made against you. Moreover, the overall security rating of each system connected to your Personal Area Network is equal to the IDS rating of your Tendril Access Processor.

Example: XenoByte's TAP has a Tier 3 Intrusion Defense System. All five members of his team are logged on to his GhostNet. Because XenoByte is acting as Overwatch, he can extend the protection offered by his Intrusion Defense System to each member. Therefore, any hacking attempts made against them suffer a -3 penalty. As the team moves into place, the sprite installed in XenoByte's IDS notifies him that someone has hacked through the firewalls of the medic's TAP.

XenoByte glances over at Yuan and sure enough, the icon of a purple kitten above her head has changed into a fire-breathing dragon, letting XenoByte know with a glance that Yuan's system has been compromised. XenoByte opens comms and tells everyone to hold their positions while he deals with the intrusion.

HACKING SYSTEM

The following rules are designed to keep hacking from turning into a long, drawn-out process which eats up precious game time and alienates those who have chosen other roles. At the core, everything is a standard Hacking skill roll with a modifier based on the security rating of the system. Once the hacker has hacked her way past the firewalls, penalties from IDS no longer apply. Most hacking situations can be resolved in just a couple of rounds, though Dramatic Tasks and some situational rules can take a little longer.

HACKING SKILL ROLLS

Most situations (including during combat) will call for a single Hacking skill roll against a Target Number of 4 plus any applicable modifiers. Hacking skill rolls are required any time you wish to hack a Tendril Access Processor or some other type of computer system. Hacking in this manner takes a single Action. Your character can take multiple actions at the appropriate penalty as detailed in *Savage Worlds*. All Hacking rolls while

WHY SO FAST?

We adjust the time it takes to hack a computer system to a single Action to keep things on par with the speed at which other characters act in combat. This is because many of the things a hacker can do are designed to give her more utility in a combat situation. Hackers can affect their opponents by linking and unlinking devices from their Tendril Access Processor, like weapons, or certain types of cybernetics.

Hackers can also monitor the TAPS of their team and protect them against all of those things. In a game where much of combat can be over within a few rounds, slowing the process of hacking down almost ensures that the hacker loses viability.

in the system are made at a penalty designated by the Tier of the Intrusion Defense System.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Whenever your character attempts to gain access to a system she must make a Hacking roll. How well she does on the Hacking roll determines how easy or hard it is for the IDS to detect their presence.

Note: These rules apply ONLY when attempting to gain access to a system. After a hacker has gained access, the sprite monitoring the system can only make a Notice roll at the standard TN of 4 to detect the hacker's presence if the hacker fails a skill check. If the hacker rolls a Critical Failure, the sprite automatically detects their presence.

Critical Failure: Critical failures automatically result in a lockout situation. The hacker may not attempt to hack the system for 24 hours.

Failure: Failures automatically alert the IDS of the Hacking attempt. The hacker may attempt to gain access again, but Hacking rolls are made as if the system is one Tier higher because the system is alerted to the hacker's presence. If the IDS is Tier 5, apply an additional -1 penalty. In situations where the sprite is monitoring a larger network, the sprite is assumed to have notified security teams and has sounded alarms.

Success: Success on the Hacking skill roll indicates the hacker has gained access to the system, but the sprite gets to make an opposed



Notice roll to see if it detects the intrusion. The Target Number for the roll is equal to the hacker's score to penetrate the system. If the sprite succeeds on the Notice roll, the hack is detected, and the Sprite may do any of the actions outlined in the section on sprites.

Success with a Raise: If your character scores a success with a raise, he has ghosted into the system. The sprite does not get to make a Notice roll to see if it detects your character's presence.

Example: Sandman wants a can of 'Splode from a vending machine but doesn't want to pay for it, so he decides to hack the vending machine and get one for free. The vending machine has a Tier 2 IDS, so Sandman is making a d10 Hacking roll with a -1 penalty. He rolls a 7 and subtracts 1, scoring a total of 6; not enough to get a raise, so the sprite monitoring the system gets to roll its d6 Notice as an opposed roll to see if it detected the intrusion.

The Target Number is 6—Sandman's score on his Hacking skill roll. The sprite rolls a 2 and doesn't detect the hack. A menu appears in Sandman's HR interface and he selects the

drink. The GM rules this is a free action, and the can of soda falls into the retrieval slot.

COUNTER HACKING

If someone has penetrated your character's TAP or a system under her control, she can attempt to force them out by counter hacking. To resolve a counter hack, make an Opposed roll pitting your character's Hacking Skill against your opponent's Hacking skill.

If your character wins the opposed roll, she has successfully purged the intruder from her system. If she fails, the enemy hacker is still connected.

Example A: Neon Bright's sprite just detected activity on her TAP. Some brainer tried to shut down her Cyber arm but failed. Now she needs to eject him before he can try again. Neon Bright makes an opposed Hacking roll. She Aces her d10 Hacking roll and rolls a 7 on the next roll, scoring a 17 total. Her opponent rolls his Hacking skill and scores an 8; nowhere near enough to stop Neon Bright's assault on his TAP.



THE BEST USE OF A BACK DOOR?

Back doors are very useful tools to quickly get in and out of a system without detection. The question is, when is the best time to use them? In a combat situation where everything is happening really fast, spending an Action to create a back door into someone's TAP or a weapon system is really a waste of precious time. Your character will likely only be dealing with that computer system once and it makes more sense for her to do other things more critical to the situation at hand.

If you are performing a hack into a larger system like a corporate mainframe, or a military defense network, then it makes more sense. Having to go through multiple Dramatic Tasks to access the same network makes things needlessly complex.

Neon Bright forces him out of her Tendril Access Processor with no problems.

HACKING COMMANDS

Once you have gained access to a system, you can affect it in a number of ways. Each of these commands takes a single action. You can take Multi-Action penalties and attempt more than one operation in a round.

CREATE BACK DOOR

If you have access to a computer system you can create a back door by making a Hacking skill roll. If you do not have the Programming Hacking skill specialization (see the Skills section for more information), you subtract 2 from the total as per the *Savage Worlds* rules on Skill Specializations. If you succeed, you have created a back door into the system.

This back door will last for 24 hours. When accessing a system through a back door, your character does not need to make a Hacking skill roll to gain access, nor does the sprite monitoring the system get a Notice roll to detect the hacker's presence on the system. She must still make

the appropriate skill check to perform other operations while inside the system.

Example: Billy Black Eyes has hacked into Chicago's Traffic Control network (a Dramatic Task) and wants to configure it to go down later that evening to coincide with an extraction taking place in the Gold Coast. After editing the switches controlling the traffic lights Billy decides to create a back door so he can log back in after the mission and reconfigure the system to return to normal. He has managed to hack into the network without alerting the sprite, and he has the Programming skill specialization, so he just needs to make a Hacking skill roll at a -3 penalty for the IDS. He rolls a d10 Hacking and scores a total of 6, easily creating the back door. The back door will last for 24 hours; plenty of time to make the extraction and reconfigure the network.

DATAMINE

When you datamine, you are scanning the system for files, images, video or other sensitive information. Oftentimes, this is the entire purpose of a hack—or even an entire mission. Datamining is accomplished by making a Research skill roll. Because computer systems (even Tendril Access Processors) are capable of holding vast amounts of data, the process takes a number of rounds equal to the IDS rating of the system. Raises on the Research skill roll cut the number of rounds down by 1 per raise. Datamining is a command which runs in the background. Your character can perform other actions (including multiple actions) while datamining.

Note: Success on a datamining command does not guarantee the information can be found; it just means that your character successfully executed the command. It's up to the game master to determine whether or not the information your character is looking for is actually stored on the system.

Example: Neon Bright has gained access to the personnel files for Act of God Armaments' research and development facility in Austin, Texas. She needs to find some juicy pay data for a client who wants to blackmail the head of the department. The facility has a Tier 4 IDS, so her search will take 4 rounds. Neon Bright

makes a d6 Research roll and Aces, then rolls a 4 for a total of 7 after the -3 penalty imposed by the IDS is applied. She succeeds on the check but fails to get any raise. The search will take four rounds to complete.

DISABLE DEVICE

Once you have gained access to a computer system (including the Tendril Access Processor) or network you can see what devices are linked to it. With a successful Hacking skill roll, you can disable the device, rendering it inoperative. This command works well in situations where you want to do things like turn off a security camera, stop an elevator in between floors, cut off communications systems, disable an adversary's smart gun or an even more complicated weapon system controlled by a sprite operating on a defense network. The device will remain disabled until the character or NPC spends an action to enable it.

We don't want to have everyone spending precious time scanning through the lists of Cybertech to see what effect might occur; and frankly, it doesn't make sense to let a hacker disable some pieces of Cybertech, like razor nails a gun hand or other things built directly into the body, but aren't necessarily linked to the Tendril Access Processor. Thus, we limit the effects to basic systems, like skill chips; Cyber arms, eyes and legs; and any smart weapons the character/NPC might be wielding. It takes a single action to restore the Cybertech to working order.

- If the Hacker successfully targets the enemy's cybernetic legs, the enemy falls prone.
- If the Hacker successfully targets the enemy's cybernetic arm, they suffer the One Armed Hindrance.
- If the Hacker successfully targets the enemy's cybernetic arm that is holding a weapon, they drop that weapon.
- If the hacker successfully targets a cyber eye or ear, the opponent gains the appropriate Hindrance (Blind, Hard of Hearing, One Eye).
- If the Hacker successfully targets Cybertech that modifies a skill in some fashion, the target of the attack loses the benefit the Cybertech granted until it is reactivated.

Example A: Digitusk and his crew are just about to break in to an Indoctrination Center

controlled by the Restored United States government. Digitusk scans the area and notices a floating icon in the shape of an evil eye just above the door. The icon tells Digitusk that the security camera is active, and the evil eye icon lets him know it's a Tier 4 IDS. The run's over if he fails to shut that camera down, so Digitusk grits his tusks and begins the hack. He has a d8 Hacking skill, and the Tier 4 applies a -3 penalty to the roll. Digitusk rolls a 7 and scores a total of 4 after the penalty is applied; barely enough to succeed, but the sprite gets to make an opposed d10 Notice roll, and Aces, for a total of 12! The hack attempt has been detected.

The sprite sounds an alarm which alerts a security team, which effectively ends the mission before it started. Digitusk logs out and hoofs it back to the waiting van.

Example B: Sandman and his team are in a fire fight with the Rivetheads; a notorious chrome reaper gang. One of the Rivetheads is standing on the bed of a truck spraying lead with pinpoint accuracy. He's already hit the medic and has the team's cybermonk pinned behind a dumpster. Sandman figures the banger has a skill chip slotted to help with his accuracy—the rest of the gangers aren't nearly as accurate.

Sandman's PAN has a Range of 20 and the ganger is well within that, so he makes a Hacking roll and tries to access the system. He's going to take a Multi Action penalty because he needs to shut that chip down fast. The ganger's IDS is Tier 1: a crappy DigiShield stock system that has only base-line security. Sandman makes the first d10 Hacking skill roll at a -2 penalty and scores a 5 after the penalty is applied. Sandman didn't get a raise, so the sprite gets an opposed d4 Notice roll against Sandman's score of 5 and ends up rolling a 3. Sandman wasn't detected.

For his second action, Sandman tries to deactivate the skill chip. He's making another Hacking skill roll at a -2 penalty, and this time he scores a 7; enough to disable the skill chip! The sprite does not get to make a Notice check this time, because Sandman didn't fail his Hacking roll. The ganger is noticeably affected; his shots start going wide of the mark, allowing the medic to scramble for better cover.



EDIT FILE OR DEVICE

Sometimes you need to edit a computer system in some fashion. Maybe you're prepping for an infiltration of Kenta Cyberdynamics, and rather than go in guns blazing, you opt to fake it till you make it and go in dressed as corporate executives or heck-janitors. A good hacker can edit the biometrics and personnel databases and BAM! Now you can stroll right in through the employee entrance. That's a sample of what you can do with the edit file or device command.

Make a Hacking skill roll. If you are successful, the device has been edited in the manner you choose. If you need to make multiple edits, you must make individual Hacking rolls for each document. Certain Edges and Cybertech can help reduce the number of rolls you need to make, however.

Example: XenoByte and his team are on the Chicago Defense Force's most wanted list. Seems that the cops didn't take too kindly to them breaking into the armory and stealing a bunch of weapons and one of their Golemmechs. It was for a good cause. A gigantic biohorror that looked like a cross between a rhino and Cthulhu was on the loose in the Gary Hell Zone, and regular weapons weren't cutting it. Anyhow, that little excursion has left the team squatting in a black hole praying nobody finds them.

XenoByte decides he needs to find a satellite uplink and use it to hack his way into the CDF's mainframe and alter the team's data files. After a harrowing jaunt through Chicago, the team finds an up-link at the top of the old John Hancock Center. XenoByte barely hacks his way through the Tier 4 security for the satellite and manages to find the server controlling access to the mainframe. He scans the mainframe (a Hacking roll to Datamine) and finds the team's files. Now XenoByte needs to edit them.

Normally, he would need to make individual skill rolls for each document, but the Batch Edit Edge allows XenoByte to edit three documents at one time, so he'll need to make two skill rolls. XenoByte rolls a d8 Hacking skill and scores a 5, enough to succeed on the Edit System command. The next roll is an 8, so XenoByte replaces the documents with fake profiles he got from a fixer.

LOG GISP

Gometimes, it's good to log the Geographic Information System Protocol (GISP) address of a person just in case you need to track them down later in an adventure. You don't need to have access to the person's TAP or a computer network to do it; you just need to succeed on a Hacking skill roll at a penalty equal to the Tier of the system's IDS. Succeed, and you have logged the address and gain a +1 to tracing attempts for 24 hours (see Trace GISP for more information).

Gain a raise, and you gain a +1 to trace attempts for 36 hours. Fail the Hacking roll and the sprite running on the Intrusion Defense System gets to make a Notice roll to see if it detected your activity. If the sprite does detect your activity it may attempt to log your GISP in return, or simply inform the system admin (or owner of the TAP) of the activity.

OPERATE DEVICE

If a system controls a device (like drone or weapon system), you can attempt to operate it by using the Control Device command. To control a device, you must have the appropriate skill specialization (you can't remotely fly a drone if you don't have the Piloting skill with a Drone specialization) and make a successful skill roll. If you fail, the sprite monitoring the system can make a Notice roll to see if it detects your activity in the system. If it succeeds, it can perform any action as outlined in the section on sprites.

Example: Billy Black Eyes has gained access to the security system of a warehouse on Chicago's South Side. One of the devices linked to the security system is a weapon turret at the loading docks of the warehouse. He wants to use it to give covering fire for his team, who are trying to escape with three security guards hot on their tail.

Once the security team enters the drone turret's field of fire, Billy makes a d6 Shooting roll at a -2 penalty to hit the lead man (Billy does not have a skill specialty for weapon turrets). He scores a total of 3 after the penalty is applied, missing his target. The sprite monitoring the system makes its d8 Notice roll to see if it detects Billy's presence in the system and scores a 6. The next round, the sprite will attempt to

counter hack Billy's TAP and try to force him out of the security system.

Side Note: Some might be thinking that with this command, you could take control of a person. Maybe you could keep someone standing still because you've taken control of their Cyber legs, or maybe you can control the Cyber arm and force the character to shoot himself in the head or do something even worse. So, let's be perfectly clear:

You may not use this command to control the actions of an Extra or Wild Card...ever. Operating a device can be pretty fun, but it should never be used to take control of a character. Abusive players (and GMs for that matter) can wreak all sorts of havoc with that type of power at their character's fingertips. It also introduces the potential for some disturbing themes we at Gun Metal Games don't condone. I'm not going to spell these things out; but I'm sure if you think about it long enough, you'll know what I mean.

TRACE GISP

If you wish to trace the location of someone, you must do so by succeeding on a Dramatic Task.

The IDS of the GISP address you are trying to trace determines the task rating of the Dramatic Task. See the Trace Difficulties Table to find the complexity of the Dramatic Task. Hacking skill rolls to trace a GISP address impose normal penalties based on the Tier of the Intrusion Defense System. If you succeed, you have successfully traced the target's location.

DRAMATIC TASKS

If you wish to take control of the entire infrastructure of a building, you need to hack the building's network. This requires you to successfully complete a Dramatic Task. Success on the Dramatic Task gives you access to any Device connected to the network.

See the *Savage Worlds* rules on Dramatic Tasks for more information on their complexity. Hacking Dramatic Tasks are always individual tasks, but your TAP's sprite can make Support rolls to aid you.

OPERATING DEVICES

It's important to use common sense when making a ruling as to whether or not a skill roll must be made to operate a device. If characters want to shut a security door or get a can of soda from a vending machine they just hacked, no skill roll is required, but they must still spend an action to do it.

These types of actions are normal, everyday occurrences. For example, you don't need to make a skill roll to walk down the street. If a character wants to remotely fire a gun turret with any sort of accuracy, however, he must make a Shooting roll. If he is not specialized in firing gun turrets, then he subtracts 2 from his roll as per the rules for skill specializations in *Savage Worlds*.

Example: Sandman's current job is to pull proprietary data from a corporate subsidiary with a Tier 3 IDS. The team infiltrates the building and Sandman gets to work. The GM says the hack is Difficult (six tokens in four rounds). The Tier 3 IDS imposes a -2 Penalty to Hacking skill rolls. Sandman gets to work as his team secures the worker drones and keeps security from shooting Sandman.

Sandman has a slow start, barely getting a single success in the first round. Supported by his sprite, Sandman gets two more successes in the second round. The third round is a Complication, with off-site security trying to lockout access and trace the hacker for later retribution. Not being a fan of midnight hit teams and low on Bennies, Sandman chooses to Support his team keeping the hostages quiet. The final round comes, with Sandman only halfway done. Two nearby teammates Support Sandman by networking their TAPs, while the hacker tries to access the data before time runs out.

QUICK ENCOUNTERS

Sometimes a scene calls for Hacking skill rolls, but the scene is not critical to the overall mission. In these situations, it's best to use a Quick Encounter. Hacking Quick Encounters are a type





TABLE 4.5: TRACE DIFFICULTIES

IDS RATING	TASK RATING	TASK TOKENS	MAX ROUNDS
1-2	Challenging	4	3
3-4	Difficult	6	4
5	Complex	8	5

of Heist Quick Encounter (see *Savage Worlds*). They're resolved quickly, rely heavily on narrative participation and can spiral into sprawling chaos. Hacking is a critical action that usually leads to a dangerous complication when failed.

Example: Sandman's crew needs contract employee data for their plan. The GM wasn't planning on having a data heist in preparation for the mission, so uses a Quick Encounter; requiring everyone that's going to use the employee data to participate.

Sandman plans to use Hacking to spoof the company's entry security and mine the needed employee data. The crew plans to distract the company with a poker flash tournament and a minor explosion near the building, trying to Support with creative uses of Gambling and Repair.

The GM decides the contractors have standard corporate security and imposes -2 on Sandman's Hacking roll. The poker tournament shines, providing +1 to Sandman, while the small bombing sets off a slew of emergency protocols for +2 Support.

*Sandman gets an 11 total, for a raise, grabbing the data. Unfortunately, three players requires three successes, and they only have two, a failure. The GM says that armed security is looking for the source of the blast, double checking all communications and ready to shoot intruders. The new encounter is harder (-2) and "dangerous" (see Encounter Results in *Savage Worlds*).*

The gambler gets a 3, failing to distract security from actual explosions and getting a Wound from a guard's rifle butt to the face. The bomber decides to use Repair again, to trigger a series of faults that distract security and make the first blast look like a malfunction. With an 11, he succeeds. Meanwhile Sandman finishes getting the employee data and clears the access registry, removing his presence. A 7 on Hacking provides one success, but he takes Bumps & Bruises as the guards slam him into a wall while frisking him. With three successes they successfully complete the encounter.

SKILL SPECIALIZATIONS

Interface Zero takes place in a near-future setting where there are a multitude of things your characters can know, many different types of vehicles they can drive or pilot, and a vast array of different types of weapons they can become proficient with. Too many for options for any one person to master all of them. For this reason, we used the Skill Specialization setting rule found in the *Savage Worlds* Adventure Edition rules.

Below is a list of the various types of skill specializations available to your characters. Feel free to add to it or subtract from it as best suits your game.

- **Boating:** Typical specializations are submersible craft, sail boats, powered craft, and massive vessels (cargo vessels, tankers, etc.).


- **Driving:** Everyone knows how to drive in 2095 but being able to drive a Toyoki Butterfly™ jump bike is not the same as driving an AGA Dragonfire Military Transport Vehicle. Driving always includes basic wheeled civilian vehicles like cars, vans, and so forth. Specializations are for trained drivers, competent with the additional categories of cycles, commercial / industrial transports (buses, semi-trucks, et.), Golemmechs, hover vehicles, and tracked vehicles.
- **Fighting:** Being able to throw a punch with your bare fist is not the same as effectively using a sword, or your cyberweapons. Fighting automatically includes natural weapons and unarmed attacks, and can further specialize in bladed weapons,

bludgeoning weapons, power armor and cyber melee weapons, and Golemmech melee systems.


- **Hacking:** Hacking disciplines have the same fundamentals, but they require specialized skills. While basic hacking and macro activation is always part of Hacking, the specializations are counter hacking, edit devices, network security, programming, tracing and spoofing, and TAP hacking.
- **Healing:** Medicine in 2095 is complex. Humanity includes multiple species, cyborgs, implanted organs, custom gene-tailored augments, and more. The dangers are just as varied and complex. Healing includes basic lifesaving (to stop characters from Bleeding Out), but specializes into augmentation surgery, pathology and analysis (diseases, poisons, etc.), and trauma treatment for healing Wounds.
- **Language:** In a world where translation apps are common, and many people speak a multitude of languages, requiring a specialization seems like overkill.
- **Occult:** Occult is a pretty broad skill. In general it is only useful for researching Psionics. No specializations are required, but it should be noted that arcane magic does not exist in this setting.
- **Performance:** Performance art in 2095 includes everything that has been around since the dawn of time. The Performance specialties are acting, dancing, instruments, photography and video, singing, and visual arts (drawing, painting, and sculpture).
- **Piloting:** There are a wide variety of vehicles your characters can pilot in 2095, classified as drones, fixed wing aircraft, rotary wing aircraft (helicopters), space craft, and personal aircraft (jet packs, flying bikes, etc.).
- **Repair:** Repair has a lot of cross-specialty fundamentals, but in 2095 there are enough esoteric specialties to rate designation. Specialties for Repair include demolitions, electrical systems, mechanical systems, structures, and nanotechnology.
- **Riding:** Specializations for the skill include controlling mounts, riding mounts, or training animals, like attack dogs. In all cases, this only applies to flesh and blood creatures.

- **Science:** The hard sciences have kept growing, requiring specialization in biology (or the more focused xenobiology), chemistry, engineering (buildings and machines), geology, and physics. Electrical engineering is covered by the Electronics skill.
- **Shooting:** Ranged weapons come in all shapes and sizes, but operation can function fundamentally differently. To reflect that, and keep Shooting playable, the specializations are archaic weapons (blowguns, bows, slings, etc.), pistols (virtually all one-handed ranged weapons), rifles and similar long arms, heavy weapons (heavy machine guns, rocket and missile launchers, etc.), and artillery (cannons, howitzers, missile launchers, and mortars). Every ranged weapon, augmented or not, fits into one of those categories.

STREET CRED

 Reputation is key to surviving and thriving. Reputation is the key to getting the best work, to keeping enemies at bay, and getting favors when needed. Street cred increases as you do impressive things or prove yourself reliable. It drops if you use it, you're unreliable, a failure, or the target of 'social assassination'. It's hard to get, harder to keep, and ironically nakama: Street Cred is worthless if you don't use it.

STARTING STREET CRED

 Street Cred is a new statistic, representing a character's reputation, network connections, and general goodwill in the community. It begins at a d6, representing a tough character that is respected but has yet to do anything especially noteworthy or humiliating. High street cred marks a character as tough and trustworthy, someone to fear and respect. Low street cred indicates an unskilled or treacherous person.

Note: Despite the name, Street Cred is useful in any *Interface Zero* Campaign Theme. Corp execs build their own reputations, used to wheel and deal with each other and the shadier sides of their business. Sector Cops gain Street Cred amongst their fellow police officers, and even Confidential Informants (CI's). In the *Cleaning Crew* Campaign Theme, Street Cred can work for you in any number of social circles.



USING STREET CRED

Street Cred can be used to pull in favors of various kinds. Passively, random criminal Extras will not attack characters two or more die types of Street Cred above them and return items they've unwittingly stolen from such fearsome personalities, and similar respectful treatment.

Street Cred can also be used to actively pursue benefits. This isn't a Trait, but it acts like one—with Acing, Bennies, a Wild Die, and benefiting from allies' Support. The roll can be modified by the value requested, risk to the supplier, and current availability at the GM's discretion. Critical Failure means the character has committed a faux pas, putting the favor out of reach for a week. Failure puts the goal out of reach but can gain it by putting himself *On The Outs* regardless of Street Cred. Success grants the favor but lowers Street Cred one die type. A raise means you get the favor without reducing Street Cred.

ALLIES

Recruit the temporary help of a skilled specialist (hacker, medic, scholar, thief, etc.) for a particular task, up to one month long. Or recruit several allied fighters for up to a week. These fighters will vary based upon the source, but the GM will select the most appropriate NPC.

HELPING HAND

Sometimes you need a place to rest, transportation, or some sudden medical assistance. Sometimes you need that without the usual paperwork.

SUPPLIES

Gift of ammunition, medical supplies, rations, or low value gear. Alternatively, a loan of weapons, armor, a vehicle, or other high value resource that might be damaged or destroyed.

EDGES, HINDRANCES, AND STREET CRED

Some edges and hindrances affect street cred, as detailed in Chapter 2. Additionally, Fame increases Street Cred by one step while Famous grants a +1 to Street Cred rolls — people love to associate with fame. Connections and Street Cred have a lot of overlap. Connections doesn't require a roll but only works with the designated faction and

only once per session. Street Cred is less reliable but can be used more often with more groups.

SUPPORT ROLLS

Characters can support each other in Street Cred rolls using their own Street Cred or appropriate skills (Intimidation, Persuasion, and Taunt are clear options). However, they are risking their own reputations when doing so. If the lead character loses a die type of Street Cred, so do the others.

ON THE OUTS

If your street cred drops to d4 you are treated as a nobody. Most combatants try to quickly remove weak foes, and someone *On the Outs* is always considered weak. You're the first choice for attacks, Tests, and mockery. Old contacts won't meet with you, clients stop calling, and your social media profile is quiet, excluding the passing troll.

GAINING STREET CRED

Street Cred is an abstraction of your reputation. It indicates the mix of fear, respect, and history of accomplishment you've built up. While it can be increased other ways, the following are the usual ways Street Cred improves.

While the various methods can be used repeatedly, most cannot be used to raise Street Cred more than once per month. A social media blitz can raise your profile and popularity, but repetition becomes 'white noise' until it's just a pathetic cry for attention.

ADVANCES

Every two Advances, your Street Cred goes up one die type. As you improve, it changes the way you carry yourself and the way others perceive you.

DEFEAT A FOE

When you bring down a significant opponent, and they don't have to be dead just out of the action and at your mercy, your street cred goes up one step. Significant foes are usually Wild Cards. If you have a rivalry (as determined by the GM) with that foe then your street cred increases by 2 die types.

NOTEWORTHY SUCCESSFUL WORK

Nothing inspires fear and admiration like success. When you successfully completes a noteworthy job or mission and get paid instead of screwed over by the client, your Street Cred increases by one step. It is the GM's prerogative to determine if a job was completed successfully and was difficult enough to count. No one's cred goes up doing easy work.

LOSING STREET CRED

Street cred comes and goes, that's just a truth of life. You might be the hottest ticket in town this week, but dog meat the next. Losing street cred is a dangerous thing; it might even put you back at the bottom of the barrel. Worse, people no longer fear or respect you. If the loss becomes too big you might be risking going On the Outs.

When the following events risk Street Cred loss, you make a Street Cred roll. Failure costs you one die type of Street Cred, or two with a Critical Failure. If your failure drops you to d4, future Street Cred rolls are made at -1 until your Street Cred rises to d6. Success means your reputation was hurt but not permanently; your next Street Cred roll is -1. A raise means you escaped unscathed.

BAD ACTORS

People might fear you, but they don't want to help you, and certainly don't want to hire you, if you are faithless. You can be the slickest rat in the sewer, but if you bite your allies, ignore your friend's troubles, or just anger the wrong people then your Street Cred will suffer. This applies every time you betray a trust. Every single time.

CHARACTER ASSASSINATION

Some asshole talks you down, murdering your cred. You're the target of someone's trash and may be pulled into a rivalry. You risk losing

STREET CRED AND NPCs

Street Cred rarely matters for NPCs but knowing their relative importance or ability to maintain street cred can be useful.

NPCs have a Street Cred similar to their social status. Gutterpunks, cut outs, interns, and gofers typically are On the Outs. Reliable messengers, gang soldiers, and reputable dealers typically have d4. Gang lieutenants, mercenaries, and made men have d6. Gang leaders, capos, hit men, and major distributors tend to d8 Street Cred. Organized crime leaders, "one man army" mercenaries, and similar luminaries get d10 Street Cred.

Street Cred. This is a challenge the GM can throw at you but no more than once per week.

DEFEAT

When you go down your street cred takes a ride with you. Every time your character is knocked unconscious in combat your street cred may drop. Yeah it sucks, but insult tends to pile on with injury. If laid out by a Beef then lose one additional die type.

FAILURE TO COMPLETE A JOB

If you get hired to do a job and fail to do it, you lose street cred. The bigger the failure, the bigger the loss. A staggering failure (determined by the GM) costs an additional step of Street Cred.

LYING LOW

You have to be seen to have any cred, but sometimes the heat is on and you need to hide out for a time. Go offline, stay away from your usual haunts, avoid your contacts, and basically let everyone think you're dead. Each month spent lying low risks losing a step of Street Cred.





PSIONICS: MAGIC OR NOT?

Interface Zero introduces psionics into the cyberpunk genre. Some purists might take issue with that, and we understand why; most people think that psionics is a form of magic, and magic doesn't belong in the cyberpunk genre. But are psionics and psychic abilities really magic? Our contention is that they aren't. In roleplaying games like Pathfinder® and Dungeons & Dragons®, wizards use magic by casting spells, performing intricate rituals, or reading from scrolls. The power that wizards utilize isn't innate; it comes from an external force that is harnessed by proper application of these techniques — correctly using material components, accurately drawing sigils, vocalizing the arcane words, and such. Conversely, psychic abilities are often inborn, and are triggered through force of will.

For example, Spock doesn't perform rituals or speak arcane words when he performs a mind-meld to read a person's mind and emotions. Similarly, in Babylon 5, Psi Corps makes use of "teeps" and "teeks," psychics with mind-reading and telekinetic powers. Now, while these examples are in science-fiction worlds, there are examples of psions in cyberpunk as well, most notably Akira. Ghost in the Shell explores the concept in a roundabout way, with cybernetic brain implants allowing the characters to mentally communicate with each other's "ghost." Interface Zero blends anime with other sources, such as Stephen King's Firestarter and Carrie novels, as well as real-life government projects like MKULTRA and Stargate, which delved into mind control and remote viewing. Eleven, from Stranger Things, is a perfect example of someone who has gone through this type of experimentation.

ZEEKS

Zeeks are fairly straight-forward in *Interface Zero* 3.0. We use the standard rules for Powers, so your psion will have power points to spend. Acquisition of powers is covered in the *Savage Worlds* rules. The only thing we need to discuss is the powers themselves, as well as the races who can/cannot be a zeek.

RACES

Any character race with the exception of androids, bioroids, and cyborgs can become a zeek. Androids and bioroids don't have flesh and blood brains, and while cyborgs do, we feel that allowing cyborgs to have mental powers would

make them too powerful. Now that said, if you want to allow cyborgs to become zeeks, you can; it's your game, after all.

POWERS

Most of the Powers in the *Savage Worlds* rules can be used as is, but there are few we do not feel are appropriate to the setting. Supernatural-themed powers such as Banish, Dispel, Summon Ally and Zombie do not fit the tone of the setting. Similarly, Resurrection and Puppet are also non-thematic, and are generally too powerful to use.









HISTORY 101

Turning points come not just to man but also nations and even entire civilizations. To understand a moment in history, one must begin by looking at the key steps that led up to it. No one studying the twentieth century neglects to consider the significance of World War II or the rivalries between Capitalism and Communism. Similarly, anyone trying to make sense of how the present day came into being must pay close attention to the critical events and crucial historical movements that gave it birth.

THE BACHELOR WAR

In the late '10s and early '20s, China began to suffer the consequences of the One Child Policy. Designed to limit its population growth and to make more resources available to those actually born, the policy amplified the Chinese cultural bias of preferring male heirs to female ones. On paper, this gender imbalance seemed relatively small. However, in a nation measuring its population at nearly a billion and a half, a difference of even one or two percent yielded tens of millions with little prospect of finding a mate. Moreover, nearly a quarter of the country's population was elderly and the burden of their care fell to a very few.

Agitation for reform to the hybridized free market-communist economic structure and the general discontent of young urban intellectuals erupted as these angry young men reached adulthood and faced a world unable to accommodate the most basic biological imperative—procreation. A new generation of party officials—most of them bureaucrats—exploited the unrest, seized power, and swept aside the last vestiges of the communist era. Calling themselves “New Mandarins,” these young politicians pledged to put China's interests above their own and instituted many social and economic reforms, including the abolishment of all China's newly developed free enterprise; returning it to state control under the new governing meritocracy.

Borrowing a strategy as old as history itself, the New Mandarins channeled the restless energy of the Chinese population against its neighbors. On March 9, 2024, claiming violations in its

treaty rights with the former North Korea, China invaded and overran the Korean peninsula. Through sheer numbers and zeal, it took a mere two weeks to complete the conquest. Learning from history for once, the occupiers chose to rule with a light hand. By 2040, a puppet state was installed, and the majority of Chinese forces were withdrawn.

#Magpie: So a bunch of horny guys couldn't get laid, and war broke out. That about right?

#Luciferion: That's a somewhat vulgar way to put it, but yes. Some researchers have theorized that most war is simply sublimation of the masculine desire to procreate. That's more obviously true when you have massive amounts of men unable to find a mate but, honestly, a similar result likely would have occurred had the situation been reversed.

In the years after the Peninsula Campaign, China repeated the pattern of its initial success in Korea with many of its other neighbors. Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam all succumbed to China after offering up only token resistance. In truth, many of the common folk of these countries welcomed closer ties with China, as did regional businesses. Recognizing the nation as the world's rising power, they sought to curry favor with China, cheerfully prosecuting members of their former governments for various alleged misdeeds after the Mandarinate deposed them.

THE DEATH

Months before the Israeli-Arab Nuclear War, India and Pakistan had themselves been on the brink of war. The hard-liner nationalist Indian government and the right wing fundamentalist Pakistani government had nearly come to blows over an incident that occurred earlier that year.

On January 2, 2029, rioting students in Islamabad swarmed the Indian embassy, burning it to the ground and massacring its staff. Tensions had eased somewhat since then but the moment Pakistan went nuclear, the government of India saw it as the perfect pretext for war. Similar to the way expansionist China had incorporated much of Southeast Asia, India's nationalists looked to reincorporate Pakistan and Bangladesh. With Pakistan's focus on its war against Israel, India marched forces across the Kashmir border into Pakistan. To the horror of the Indian government,



it quickly became clear that their intelligence had proven faulty. Pakistan still had a number of close-range warheads left in her arsenal, which they used on the doomed vanguard of the Indian invasion force. India retaliated in kind, devastating a number of Pakistani brigades and fortifications. The violence quickly escalated from tactical battlefield weapons to missiles intended to destroy cities.

To this day, historians and partisans of the two sides disagree over exactly who fired the first shot. Many, looking at the scarce satellite records that survived the first wave of electromagnetic pulses, believe it happened almost simultaneously. Regardless of the truth, early in the morning of May 23, 2029, dozens of warheads surged against helpless civilian populations. All but nine of these missiles died in the air, taken out by defensive satellites belonging to several different nations; but those that actually did manage to reach their targets each claimed a city. In the end, Pakistan ceased to exist as a nation. India—though rocked to its very core with the loss of Delhi and Madras—held itself together long enough to declare victory.

It was a Pyrrhic one, however.

Within days, radioactive debris rose into the upper atmosphere and began to block out a significant portion of sunlight. Scientists around

the world explained it as nuclear autumn—not as bad as nuclear winter, but horrendous nevertheless. Most people simply called it The Death.

The world didn't see summer for three long years, during which time the sun seemed trapped in a smoky twilight, even during the brightest part of the day. In addition to the reduced sunlight, The Death also brought with it frequent rains of radioactive dust as fallout gradually settled back to the earth. When a comparatively normal climate did return, it still took six more years for the final, lingering effects of The Death to dissipate fully. Though no one ever managed an exact count, experts on The Death believe that about 1/7th of the world's population—roughly 1.3 billion people—died, either during the initial nuclear exchange, or in the aftermath. While a significant percentage of those deaths stemmed from starvation, more came about through a general breakdown of public order. As sanitation standards disappeared and stocks of vaccines went bad, diseases once considered eradicated reappeared and claimed a savage toll. Lawlessness and civil strife also exploded. During the worst moments of The Death, some of the most desperate are said to have resorted to cannibalism.





Predictably, exposure to radiation claimed its fair share of victims. Cancer rates spiked and would harvest victims for decades to come. The genetic damage many suffered during The Death reduced the birth rate even after the world returned to “normal.”

With the perspective of nearly sixty years behind them, some historians consider The Death almost a blessing, at least over the long-term. While it traumatized everyone who lived through it and put the final nail in the coffin of countless other species—reducing biodiversity by at least a quarter—The Death also laid the groundwork for the modern world. Without the grim legacy of The Death as a spur, many of the extraordinary discoveries that appeared in subsequent generations might well have taken far longer to arise. Adherents of the “forest fire” school of thinking claim that The Death cleared the way for progress; removing so-called “deadwood” and making it possible for the modern era to flourish. The remaining members of the “D” generation, with firsthand memories of its misery and most now in their 80s or older, tend to react rather harshly when they find someone spouting off this theory in public.

#Booms_Day: My granddad is Gen D, and he still complains about “those curry swilling Indis.” Old people are so fracking racist. The sooner they all die, the sooner we can finally progress past prejudice.

THE SECOND AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

To understand why America went to war with herself, you need to know how The Death and the events leading up to it fundamentally changed her. Decades of political infighting resulted in a neutered government incapable of effecting real change on even the most basic levels. By 2027, the nation was polarized; more so than at any other time since the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s. Instances of racial violence became a daily reality. Police brutality was at an all-time high, and mass shootings wrought havoc on the nation. Between 2000 and 2027 over 5,378 men, women, and children had died as a direct result of mass shootings. Americans became more insular, segregating into communities based on ethnic persuasion, culture, sexual and gender identity, and especially religious preferences.

Then GLUTTON happened.

GLUTTON

When the eco-terrorist group NOAH unleashed a synthetic, oil-eating bacterium known as GLUTTON on the world’s oil fields in 2028, stock markets went into a freefall, wrecking an already failing US economy. Put simply, the nation was broke.

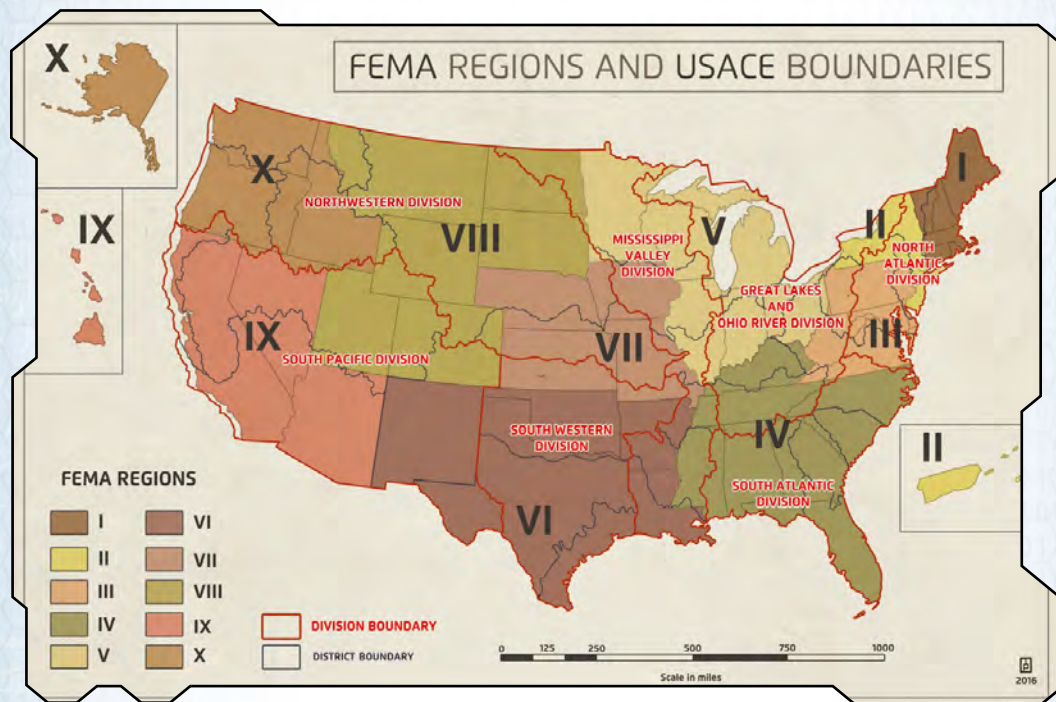
The Petrodollar became nearly worthless overnight as the rest of the world rushed back to a gold-based standard; not that it mattered. Oil was unavailable, at least in any meaningful quantity. Experts estimate GLUTTON eradicated 45% of the world’s oil supply, nearly all of which came from OPEC nations. Saudi Arabia, The United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and surprisingly, Venezuela were the hardest hit by GLUTTON.

The sudden scarcity of oil drove the price per barrel upwards of 250 dollars, which translated to punishing prices at the pump, nearly crippling the United States’ freight transportation infrastructure, which relied on a strategy for delivery known as “Just in Time” shipping (JIT for short). When the oil reserves diminished, JIT crumbled.

A bankrupt Saudi Arabia blamed Iran for GLUTTON, and yet another (albeit short-lived) war erupted in the Middle East. The only ally of Israel, the United States had no choice but to go to her aid in defense of increased attacks by Hamas, Hezbollah, and ISIS forces, who saw the war between Iran and Saudi Arabia as a perfect opportunity to conquer Jerusalem and drive the Israelis into the sea. For a while, it looked like that might actually happen, but when India and Pakistan went nuclear, the fighting stopped.

FEMA REGIONS

The effects of GLUTTON and The Death wrought havoc on the United States. Social order broke down across the nation. Food supplies, medicine, and other vital supplies quickly became unavailable. Law enforcement agencies were ill-equipped to handle the chaos, and for a while anarchy reigned. People began to band together, creating armed compounds to protect themselves against roving gangs and even renegade militia groups.



President Nathan Calhoun declared a state of emergency and activated FEMA, dividing the nation into ten regions. With the overwhelming support of both Congress and the Senate, Calhoun declared martial law throughout the nation, deploying the armed forces into each region to support the newly appointed administrators and aid in quelling the rampant violence, rioting, and looting. The administrators began restoring order by any means necessary, having complete power to establish contracts and legislation without consulting any local government or voters. Through liberal use of violence and—in some instances—draconian laws, the administrators established safe zones where refugees could live in relative security.

As The Death wore on, the administrators and their subordinates managed to expand the safe zones and began rebuilding the infrastructure. Breakthroughs in fusion power generation and high capacity, quick-charge batteries gave the world an alternative to oil. The regional administrators started rebuilding infrastructure around these new technologies. Transportation became reliable, and goods and commerce began to flow. By the end of The Death, the FEMA regions had recovered, and even began to prosper. People, once divided by race and culture, developed a strong sense of regional pride.

No longer were they referring to themselves as Americans, but Atlanticans, Cascadians, Texans, etc. In the eyes of the people, the regional administrator had succeeded where the federal government had failed.

President Calhoun hadn't been properly "elected" for several terms. The President, not having much domestic power, and considered a tool of the administrators to collect resources from other nations across the world, craved legitimacy again. In his role as Commander in Chief, he used the US military as a mercenary force, giving military assistance to other nations in exchange for loans, material, and other favors; but, at home, all the real power resided with the administrators.

Therefore, when the federal government declared the end of the state of emergency in 2045, and tried to dismiss the emergency administrators, it was too late. The administrators were too entrenched and had too many powerful friends.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Typical. Executive creates a new department, then the new department runs on autopilot, doing whatever it pleases. The closest thing to eternal life is a government program, so it's said. This one even survived the secessions.

They told their citizens that restoring the power of the federal government would bring back the





bad old days. The people overwhelmingly agreed to back them, signing petitions to formally secede from the United States. Undeterred, President Calhoun restored Congress and moved to try to retake his Constitutional authority, bringing the military home from abroad to back up his position. The administrators put their own veteran militia forces on alert.

THE FIRST SHOTS

It began in Kansas City. President Calhoun pushed forward from his base in Denver, Colorado into FEMA region VII (commonly known as the breadbasket region) in hopes of capturing the Strategic Air Command (SAC) base. The secessionist forces there put up a heck of a fight but were hopelessly outnumbered. It took about a month to suppress Kansas City and the rest of the state, though the campaign was not without losses. Calhoun's army encountered heavy resistance at St. Louis along the Mississippi River from the forces who would go on to become the Great Lakes Union. The Battle for Saint Louis lasted months, with no clear victor. Ultimately, the city split into two sections, the Great Lakes Union (GLU) controlling the east bank, and the North American Coalition (NAC) the west.

#Im_a_Union_Man: Those fascist NACies still like to pretend they won the Battle of St Louis. They can't deal with the fact that we held them off for months with a few hundred people to their several thousand.

#HistoryInTheBuff: Don't be such a unionist ass kisser. The Union had thousands of defenders, not hundreds. You all want to keep making this a new Alamo situation because you can't deal with the fact that you lost!

#Im_a_Union_Man: It was 1200 people in the Union, moron. I watched a TAPdoc on it. "Few hundred" is an accurate descriptor here.

#HistoryInTheBuff: I'm a sociology major in college and I know for a fact it's closer to 5500 defenders, so go frack yourself. Read a book you might learn something.

THE TREATY OF TOKYO

Chronicling the various battles of the war would take more space than this INFOdump allows. Suffice to say the war was bloody, and costly, both in lives and the economies of all the regions involved. When the "Big One" hit

California and the Northwest in 2049 that ended the war. The 12.3 earthquake triggered a chain reaction up and down the west coast, spawning tsunamis and devastating coastal cities. Some geologists believe the earthquake caused the eruption of Mt. Rainier in the same year, which prompted the evacuation of the Emerald City, though some 40 years after the event, they are still unsure. In the end, NATO peacekeeping forces entered each of the regions and negotiated a ceasefire, which led to the Treaty of Tokyo and armistice. Some forty years later, NATO still maintains peacekeeping troops in every nation.

#Luciferion: Buncha' good they do too. They're just around to lick the bottom of Cromwell's shoes while he walks all over them.

NANO AND THE AGE OF LEISURE

The generation that came of age during the trauma and misery of The Death vowed to make sure it could never happen again. The extraordinary surge of industry and creativity that marked the following decades stemmed from this obsession with safeguarding the human race, and the planet as a whole, from another catastrophe. This flowering of technology not only opened up new vistas for human achievement but, almost by accident, created the Age of Leisure, or the post-scarcity society of today.

Most experts trace the origin of the Age of Leisure back to two critical innovations: Featherstone Industry's development of the first nanomachine and the appearance of simulacrum. Nano, by making products either relatively cheap or outright free, liberated most people from the need to spend large portions of their waking hours "earning a living." Simulacrums, on the other hand, offered business and industry an expert labor force that made far fewer demands than human employees.

These twin developments, occurring almost simultaneously while coming at the same problem from different directions, released people from the need to work even as they made countless jobs redundant. In the opinion of most scholars, each served to soften the blow of the other. Imagine a world where most people no longer needed to work if there were no simulacrums ready to step in and pick up the slack? Conversely,

imagine a world where simulacrum drove more than three quarters of the population out of the job market without nanomachines to keep them clothed and fed?

In the years following the appearance of the first crude nanomachines, Featherstone Industries made numerous improvements to the model. Each year, they also increased the inventory of patterns in their devices, whether through their own in-house teams or by striking up partnerships with other companies. Though enormously expensive in time and resources to create, Featherstone continued to make money off these new patterns due to the licensing deals it had struck.

In exchange for corporate and government-backed support in stamping out pattern piracy, the megaconglom agreed to make a certain number of patterns available virtually free of charge in addition to ensuring access to nanomachines even for those too poor to afford one for their own homes. Currently, of the 20,000 patterns in its inventory, about 2,000 have no licensing fee to access, making it simply a matter of energy and raw materials, both of which rarely prove much of an issue for normal use.

Unfortunately, since nano did little to change human nature, poverty still exists. In hindsight, the fact that nano failed to eliminate poverty made the reaction against simulacrum labor almost inevitable. The portion of the population rendered obsolete by simulacrum, forced to scrap and scheme to get anything really worth having, soon came to blame simulacrum for their problems. Riots and acts of sabotage against simulacrum factories and businesses using simulacrum rapidly escalated from rarities to near-everyday occurrences. Though many, perhaps even most, limit public comments to a few token complaints or off-color jokes at a “simmie’s” expense rather than actual violence, the sullen rage this new underclass feels towards bio-forms shows little sign of diminishing.

#EatTheRich: We can make damn near anything we want, yet we still have the haves and the have-nots. This is why we need another revolution! Like the ancient French, off with their heads!

#Luciferion: Ancient French? You mean the French Revolution in the late 18th century?

#Billy_Black_Eyes: The reason we still have poor people is space is still at a premium thanks to an ever-growing population. Some people can afford to live

away from their neighbors and still have everything they want. Most of us can't. Also, the nanos can't make everything. They can make food, but it's not as good or as nutritious as what you'll find in a restaurant (assuming the restaurant isn't using nanos themselves, of course). They can't make housing because the scale is simply too large. They can make simpler tech devices, but not TAPs or anything else that has to wire into the flesh. And yes, most of the rich still suck.

CRYPTO WARS

—RuthlessJoe, stock and crypto trader, semi-retired, and former corpfan

So you want to learn a thing or two about the Crypto Wars, huh? Maybe you're a financial desk monkey wanting to impress your new corp overlord with how much you know so you can prove you'll make smart investment decisions.

Maybe you're a 1337 h4ck0rz hoping to get into digi-safe cracking (good luck, kid). Or maybe you're just a dope fiend bored on the Net who happened to stumble across an article that might actually teach you something. Congratulations, spunky, you just stumbled on the datadump of a lifetime. Some people refer to all cryptocurrencies as “cryptodollars,” partly because old habits die hard and partly because a lot of folks are simply ignorant about the various machinations of crypto-currency. Common history says the Crypto Wars began in 2064, but you have to go back before that. To really understand the issue, you need to go back to when America started bombing itself... The first time, that is.

The world had gotten used to having a reserve currency—the US Dollar. You may have seen one of these green papers in a museum. They had old George Washington's mug on them, all smug and proud about how he brought freedom to the New World. Well, when a country is bombing itself, it makes for a bad reserve currency. Overnight, the world stopped trading in dollars, and the value plummeted.

China tried stepping in. They'd been hoping for this moment. Despite hoping, things progressed faster than they'd planned, and they were ill-prepared. They'd spent the latter part of the previous century devaluing their yuan against the dollar to boost their manufacturing sector. When the dollar collapsed, their yuan wasn't in any good place to take over.





People looked to the British pound, but both it and the euro had already suffered from Brexit. For three years, the world bounced around without a reserve currency, not knowing what to trade in. The entire global financial market was a new Wild West, where people traded in whatever they could get and hoped the value would hold long enough to make a profit, or at least not lose an arm and a leg (though thankfully the cyberlimb market was just heating up). In stepped a variety of cryptocurrencies, ready to transform our world.

China began cracking down on cryptos in the early twenty-first, banning every crypto that wasn't developed by them. They announced their own cryptocurrency in 2019, hoping to launch it on Singles Day, their busiest shopping day of the year. Ahead of its release, the ruling Communist Party put pressure on banks to trade in the currency, and retailers to accept it. They believed that, once it had a foothold in the mainland, they'd spread it to the West. Anybody who wanted to use crypto in China would damn sure be using theirs. This would have given them an enormously early lead; however, the launch was sabotaged.

Though nobody had heard of them yet, the New Mandarins were already planning their coup of the Communists and knew an opportunity when they saw it. A small group of Mandarins got to work and snuck a virus into the code. On Single Days 2019, as the Communists waited for their crypto-revolution, they instead witnessed a disaster. As soon as a consumer transferred the currency to a retailer, their phone screen showed only a man and woman holding hands, happy as clams. Then, the man and woman were suddenly pulled apart by a gleeful dragon, the flag of the Communist Party emblazoned across its chest. The woman disappeared from the screen, the man mourned, and the dragon laughed. Instead of celebrating being single, the virus reminded consumers how lonely they were, and how few women there were to be matched with the men of the country. Through a witty and not-so-subtle metaphor, it also put the blame squarely on the Communist Party. In addition, the transactions never went through, and the virus traced itself back to central Communist servers, destroying the currency entirely. Singles Day was never the

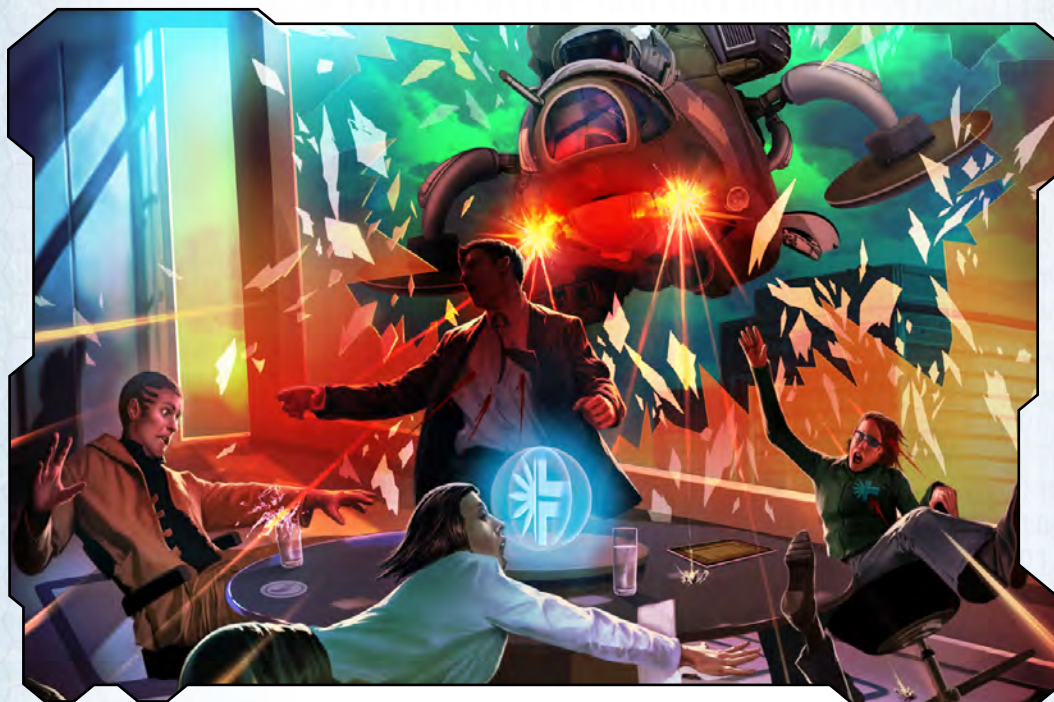
same, and this is considered a precursor to the Bachelor War five years later.

Bitcoin was the first crypto, but it had already died by the time things really got heated. In addition to China banning it (along with all the others), the resources to mine bitcoin were astronomical, generating too much energy to justify the cost. This is particularly true considering the world was heating up and the oceans were ready to turn the state of Florida into a giant puddle of kelp and corp-chems. As you've probably come to expect, in stepped the corps, ready to lend a helping hand.

NORTH AMERICAN CORPORATE CRYPTO WARS

Every corp involved in e-commerce already had their own crypto rolling or being built, so things escalated quickly. Social media site Mugbook, search engine Bugle, and e-tailer giant PayBuddy were the biggest three, but a slew of banks were also lobbying politicians and buying ad time. Mugbook and Bugle stopped hosting ads for competitors, including each other. Several banks stopped processing payments for PayBuddy, causing it to crash almost overnight. Hard to sell anything when nobody can buy it. The second a citizen put on his TAP, his regular porn stream, AR monster hunting game, or business email was immediately interrupted with ad after ad touting the values of one currency over another. They all promised anonymity, ease of use, small transaction fees, and all the usual horseshit. And this was just in the Americas.

China, Japan, Europe, they all had their own companies vying for a piece of the pie. This went on for two years and, remember, it was preceded immediately by the collapse of the dollar, so the public was getting sick and tired of financial instability. The Americas were just settling into their roles as a split nation, and the people were putting on the pressure. Bugle didn't necessarily advertise the most or make the emptiest promises but, in the end, they won the West. The smart move was promising a currency that could be used across all North American nations.



CRYPTO TYPES

B metric F*&kton of crypto corps emerged during this time each peddling their own currency.

THE BUGS

B if you know your US history, then you know the US started as a confederacy (1781–1789). Problem was, nobody was regulating commerce, so they faced a situation similar to what the NAC, Atlantica, and all the rest were facing. If you want to buy goods from somebody across the street, how the hell do you make sure you both understand the value? Somebody had to be a neutral arbiter, and that was going to be Bugle. Their crypto could be used anywhere in North America. The politicians quickly lined up to kiss their boots since it meant those damned constituents would shut up for a moment or two.

For a while, the crypto had a fancy name—Bugs—short for “Bugle,” of course. Only the old timers ever use that term anymore, like when my granddad would talk about “iphones” and how his “TV only had a two dimensional screen” and “we didn’t have to put chips in our head just to give ourselves a good whacking.” I had to constantly remind the old man that androids were people, not phones (I realize the politics of

saying androids are people, so go ahead and ping me some hate mail if you like).

#ZeeksBleedToo: Finally, somebody who agrees with me!

#LonerWithABoner: To hell with that nonsense. My wife left me for one of the fracking Chippys! They aren’t people. They’re just machines made to look like people, and the corps deliberately make them better looking than the average person. You can’t compete with a droid who can eat whatever he wants and never gain a single pound, who never ages, and whose penis is hung to designer—or consumer—specification.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Chippys?

#Magpie: Get with it, @Billy! It’s almost the twenty-second century, man! Everything has to have a fancy short name now. Chippy is short for Chippendales, the male strippers Lonerboner mentioned (love your name, @Loner, but sorry to hear about your wifey!). Female ones are called thotbots. They really are used for professional strip performances but Sinful Desires, Inc., the manufacturer (and subsidiary of Act of God Armaments—a fact they try incredibly hard to cover up), found they were in high demand as personal companion droids. Heck, if these things were around 70 years ago, the Bachelor War never would’ve happened.

I mentioned empty promises earlier, remember? Well, the only promise kept was that the Bugs could be used across all of North America. The rest of them—about anonymity, low fees, and protections against crashing—were all quickly proven false. Turns out, as part of the deal, somebody had agreed in a smoky back room to





provide every single accepting government full data of every transaction. That's how they got government approval so fast across every North American nation. You tip your waitress, it's tagged on the Bug. You spot your buddy a few cryptos for a beer, it's tagged on the Bug. You can see why Bugle eventually dropped the "Bug" name. Apparently big data megacorps don't like being associated with privacy invasion. Go figure.

Nobody could possibly monitor all these transactions, of course; but, if Cromwell ever wanted to see who served your coffee last Tuesday morning, and just what kind of cheapskate ass that you really are, he could easily have it looked up. He just needs your TAP registration Code. Not that President Cromwell would ever do such a thing. He's a great guy. Now you know why fake TAPs are a thing. One of the reasons anyway.

The Bugs also crashed once, thanks to Charon. Even though the virus primarily hit the EU, on a fine spring day in 2089 trading in the crypto markets spread the virus to the GLU from an unknown point of origin and, from there, to the rest of North America. This North American crash was in addition to the \$70 trillion in cryptodollars lost in the EU. Though North America didn't lose nearly the same volume of cryptocurrency, it showed the Charon virus wasn't as fully contained as originally thought, causing the Charon recession to drag on. Turns out using the same system to back a crypto across numerous countries means a single point of failure. Who'da'thunk. Supposedly, Bugle has worked out that specific defect, but numerous preppers are stockpiling firearms, energy sources, and food rations. I guess they're just not the trusting type.

YUAN 2.0

The Bugs were also only a North American fix. If you think the New Mandarins and Brazil were just watching all this go down while resting on their haunches, you must be new to the streets, omae. Back in 2065 or '66, the Mandarins were just getting situated after a couple decades in power post-communist China. While they had destroyed the Communists' attempt at a crypto-revolution in 2019, they had also failed to push the yuan forward as the reserve currency. The

ended up deciding on an alternate route: steal all PayBuddy's work. Keep in mind, this is a pre-Charon world, so people still had hope crypto could be stable, like gold or...well, mostly just gold. Since PayBuddy had gone under during the earliest part of the corp Crypto Wars, their research was relatively unguarded. The New Mandarins used it as the basis for their own project: Yuan 2.0.

Yuan 2.0 was meant to be the world's common currency but, like most things Chinese, it turned out to be a cheap knockoff of the original. People jokingly called it "PayBaddy" because, if you dug around in the source, you could still find references to the original creator that never got cleaned up. It was an unfinished product so, rather than hit the ground running, China tripped over their own feet. They pulled Yuan 2.0 from the world markets and spent another nine months reworking it, finally unveiling Yuan 3.0 in the summer of 2068. That's what they're using now (I believe last week's Mandarin crypto-patch was version 3.82.452), and it mostly works, but comes with all the same trappings as the Bugs.

EURO-Y

The EU had what they called the Euro-X, named after its creator, Xavier Ponticate III. It was probably the best of the original cryptos, since the EU bothered to at least feign interest in privacy. It was encoded with a warrant-lock, which prevented anybody from accessing the trail without a special warrant-key given by the European Commission on Human Rights. After Charon, however, they had to rebuild the currency. They renamed it Euro-Y (named after exactly nobody) and left out the warrant-lock technology. Times had changed enough between the 2060s, when the currency was being developed, and 2089, when Charon hit. Government and corporate interests held much more weight than the pesky privacy of faceless nobodies like me and you. It's still one of the better currencies, since they felt they had something to prove from Charon, but if you want privacy you're going to have to pirate a TAP or use a black market crypto.

REALS

Good old Brazil. They're the only nation on the stage who doesn't feel the need to pander to public opinion. They kept their currency named "real," without bothering to stick a "X" or "2.0" on it. There are rumors as to why this is. Some folks say they're just so proud of themselves for actually conquering other nations that they want to force the Brazilian way on their territories. Some suggest it's a basic nod to tradition. I'm of the mind they were just too damn cheap to hire a marketing team to come up with a rad sounding name. Whatever the reason, they want to show they're a world player too.

Nobody knows who developed the digital version of the real. New Brasilia insists the design is inspired by God, hearkening back to the days when the old US put "In God We Trust" on every scrap of nickel. The reality is much less spiritual. As far as I can tell, the digital real was developed by a subcontractor based in Sao Paolo, though I haven't been able to dig up a name. It was being developed for use by the nation's pharmaceuticals industry as part of a New Brazilian contract with a few of the megacorps. A sub-clause of the contract specified the development of a digital currency to use when trading Amazonian flora and its derivatives within the confines of the country. When the dollar collapsed, it just so happened the nation had this bit of code lying around. Smelling opportunity, they pushed a few billion into further development and rushed it to the stage, like a shocked, screaming fat lady before the opera is actually supposed to end.

Since its unveiling, the real has gained quite a bit of the crypto-market share, at roughly 41% on any given day. That makes it the most commonly used crypto in the world, and the closest thing to a reserve currency, though such a thing no longer exists in any official capacity. It was mostly a matter of good timing. The Mandarinate was already busy with Russia, had devalued the yuan too much, and was going through regime change. The EU might have taken the lead were it not for Charon. North America was busy being North America, distracted by infighting. New Brasilia, on the other hand, had been growing quickly, and the world found itself in dire need of their new-to-market Amazonian drugs. It turns out that, in a world rife with war and raging seas,

it's good to be a drug peddler. If other nations wanted New Brazilian drugs, they were going to have to convert their currencies to reals. And they did, en masse.

BLACK MARKET CRYPTO

As I said, there are some black market cryptos out there. Some people use Russian currency because it was shabbily developed. It can technically be tracked, but the tracking is spotty. The modern ruble, properly called a .Stalin (don't forget to pronounce the "dot" if you want to impress your crypto-junky friends), is still traceable, but quite a few people have reported lost transactions in their data trail. For the average nobody, that's annoying when they want to dispute a charge. If you're reading this, it's likely a good thing.

Beyond that, there are "official" black market cryptos. These are developed by net-goons who have nothing better to do. Use at your own risk since, depending on the developer, you might just find your deposit address (or digi-safe) empty one day, hijacked by the nice, smiling tween kid who promised you an untraceable bit of cash.

The other risk is that, when you convert your official currency to black market, that transaction itself is traceable. So, if you want to stay off President Cromwell's radar (not that anybody would, because he's an upstanding gent), then you're better off bartering. Black market types are used to it, so feel free to offer up some unused Cybertech or firepower you've got lying around.

#Fisherm4n: This guy sure loves Cromwell.

#RuthlessJoe: You're damn right I do!

#Billy_Black_Eyes: I think it's a CYA move. Seen it before. If you're going to infodump, you make sure to talk nice about the Big Man to keep the law off your back. It comes across as obvious pandering, but apparently it works.

INTERNATIONAL CRYPTO WARS

I've already discussed the North American corp Crypto Wars, but those were only part of the shenanigans. Each nation went through its own set of struggles developing a competing cryptocurrency, and often lashed out at one another along the way.





Most of the former North American bloc countries were busy, as expected, fighting one another. The NAC, Atlantica, GLU, and Republic of Texas all developed their own crypto to compete with the various corp versions. Atlantica crashed the NAC servers during a data migration, however, and the NAC lost a year's worth of work. That's one reason people believe they were the first and most ardent supporter of the Bugs. Too distracted by other dealings to keep developing their own crypto, and always too trusting of the megacorps, the NAC was happy to go along with a corp they thought they could keep under their thumb.

On the Eastern side of the world, the Mandarinate hacked Russia's systems only to find how laughably behind they were. Not seeing them as a threat, they left everything intact. They hacked the Shogunate next, only to find Japan so busy building lifelike anime sex bots that they couldn't be bothered with financial matters. That's when they decided to steal PayBuddy's load instead, finding it both an easy target and in better shape than most alternatives.

Cascadia, where PayBuddy was based, tried to retaliate. That just left them open to a NAC assault. The NAC were pissed at Atlantica for crashing their work but couldn't pull off a proper retaliation, so they took it out on the Cascadians instead. War is a messy business like that.


With all this going on, I bet you're thinking New Brasilia must've pulled a real hat-trick against competing nations and corps to get out on top. So here's what they did: not a damn thing. That's just it! Brazil hadn't been a world power during the twentieth century so that, when things heated up in the Crypto Wars, nobody thought to target them. That's all changed now, of course; since incorporating into New Brasilia and entering a cold war with the Mandarinate, New Brasilia has become the primary target of the RUSA and China.

According to the history texts, the Crypto Wars officially ended in 2090 after Charon brought the EU to its knees and the North American continent suffered a public humiliation when the virus took their own Bug cryptos offline. But that doesn't mean things are settled. Far from it. While things have quieted down, it's a misnomer to suggest the wars ever actually ended.

New Brasilia remains the champ but are in an ongoing cold war with China (over currency matters as well as territorial disputes). China likely would have won out if they'd put more effort into developing a currency and Brazil hadn't used its pharmaceutical muscle to great effect. The Americans pose a greater threat since coming back together. Though their priorities are still focused on the homeland, Cromwell is the most ambitious man on the continent, and his primary goal is to remake America the lone superpower it was in the twentieth. There are also rumors stirring that the Alianza Pacifica is developing their own crypto to compete with Brazil's.

While they're late to the game, there's still room for another player if they can make a crypto that's worth a damn. Those of us living on the streets and in the gutters are still longing for an official crypto that doesn't track every stinking cup of Joe. If the Alliance plays their cards right, they could gain a large market share overnight simply by giving consumers what they want. Since their ambitions lie mostly in not being conquered by the Brazilians, they might just go that route.


THE FLARE

 n January 26, 2089, a massive Earth-directed Y-class solar flare sparked a Coronal Mass Ejection that bombarded our planet, temporarily shutting down the genie network that monitors and updates the TAP's spam and reality filters. With the genie down, every man, woman, and child with a Tendril Access Processor was exposed to raw, unfiltered Hyper Reality. As you all know, this sparked a week of world-wide chaos. Sprawlers—exposed to a storm of spam, malware, and layer upon layer of augmented reality advertisements and simulated environments—went temporarily insane.

The world burned for about a week until programmers could fix the problem with firmware updates and hot patches to get the filters up and running and an off switch installed, but the damage was done. It's not known how many people died in the rioting and madness, but cautious estimates of total casualties put the number at around 750 million people, and nobody has even tried to calculate the monetary cost of the riots. Strangely, however, the Flare itself didn't have a widespread impact on various infrastructures, like electric and other powers,

transportation systems, etc. In fact, many believe the Flare wasn't even a solar flare at all, but the first sign of Charon's emergence as a threat to humanity.

THE IMPLOSION OF THE EURASIAN UNION


 On March 15th, 2089, the Eurasian Union Central Bank in Bonn, Germany was crashed by a previously unheard-of virus named Charon. Over forty-five trillion dollars vanished without a trace. All attempts to rebuild the original databases failed. Some programmers (and freelance hackers) hired to go in and purge Charon from the databases lost their lives in the process. Further attempts to rebuild the system on different servers with backups also failed when programmers realized that Charon — now suspected by many to be an AI — had copied itself into the cloud networks containing those backup files.

Over the next few months, an estimated 200 million people across the Eurasian Union, the United Kingdom and Ireland lost their jobs, their homes and their life savings when it became clear that Charon had found its way into the personal bank accounts of citizenry across the Eurasian Union.

Instances of mob violence skyrocketed, as the number of gangs in the rapidly fracturing Eurasian Union had risen to levels not seen since the Death — the three-year “Nuclear Autumn” following the India-Pakistan war when nuclear weapons were used on a massive scale. In the London-Reading Megaplex, protests exploded into full-scale violence after police brutally cracked down on a peaceful protest at the British parliament building. More instances of violent protests followed in Bristol, Swindon and the Manchester-Liverpool sprawl.

On June 27th, 2089 the French government was overthrown by a fringe political extremist group known as the New Pirate Party.

THE WORLD'S FIRST PSION PRESIDENT

 led by a charismatic young zealot named Angéle Bonheur, the New Pirate Party seized power after a wild, chaotic campaign against


representatives of the National Front and the Popular Republican Union. The elections were rife with scandal, and many of the French didn't (and still don't) like the idea of a French leader being psychic. So, while Angéle emerged as the clear victor, the French military refused to acknowledge her legitimacy. President Bonheur responded by disbanding the armed forces of France, at the same time, announcing the privatization of the nation's military through an agreement with Ravenlocke Securities.

Former Lieutenant-Colonel Adrien Boucher, also known as “Adrien the Butcher” for his brutal suppression of an uprising in Marseilles in 2087, took charge of the remnants of the disbanded French army, promising to remove President Bonheur from power. Within days of Adrien's announcement, Fort Richepance — now the Northeastern headquarters for Ravenlocke Industries' Storm Crow Golemmech brigade — was attacked. The president responded by declaring martial law throughout France until the renegade movement could be put down. Thus far, that hasn't happened, though there are reports of clashes between Ravenlocke regulars and separatist forces outside of St. Etienne, and in the French Alps.

On June 30th, 2089, Germany, wracked with political infighting, riots in the streets and a general state of chaos, closed its borders. Officially, the stated reason was for security reasons stemming from conflict along the border with France, but most people don't believe it. Chancellor Konrad Gerste authorized a financial bailout of the three largest manufacturers of weapons and military equipment for the German army.

The move has frightened many of the Eastern European nations — especially the good people of Poland — who know well what happens when Germans begin preparing for war, and make no mistake; Germany is moving to a war footing.

THE BEAR AND THE DRAGON

 As the situation in Europe grew worse, China took advantage of the weakened Eurasian Union, grabbing up huge swathes of territory in Russia, its armies advancing as far west as the Ural Mountain range where Russian forces managed





to halt the dragon's advance. Still, the damage was done. By August, 2089 the Mandarinate had established itself as an occupying power in every city, town and village east of the Ural Mountains. That hasn't stopped the Russians from retaliating, however. Russian patriots have begun an insurgency, attacking Chinese forces wherever they can be found. Mandarinate mouthpieces paint the insurgents as terrorists to little effect, as the insurgency swells in number every day.

THE RECLAMATION WAR

It's been three years since the Reclamation War ended and America was made "whole" again; just as President John Cromwell promised when he became the leader of the North American Coalition in 2088. The seeds of the war were planted in the Atlantican cities of Boston, Baltimore, and Portland when First Sergeant John Moore—a North American Coalition special forces operative—bombed the cities, killing 2,451 people back in late 2088. The North American Coalition vehemently denied orchestrating the attacks, even after a video surfaced showing Moore and a team of operators coming out of one of the buildings just before the explosions went off, positively identifying him.

#Not.Like.They.Promised: Those vids were deepfakes. My kid brother can make that crap in a weekend.

#AllTiedUp: I thought Portland was in former Cascadia?

#Luciferion: There's one in the old Atlantican territory too.

This came at a time when both the North American Coalition and the Nation of Atlantica were embroiled in a territorial dispute over the New York Reclamation Zone. Tensions had already been high but when the identity of John Moore was finally revealed, Atlantican President Martin Hughes ordered a retaliatory missile strike on the NAC operating base and Golemmech Division One's headquarters on Staten Island.

The attack was largely rebuffed by the North American Coalition's VANGUARD III missile defense system, though 249 people died and roughly a quarter of the golemmechs were destroyed. They say alliances are tested when blood is shed, and as soon as the missiles and troops rolled North and East from North American Coalition bases, Atlantica soon found out who she could count on.

The Republic of Cascadia petitioned to rejoin the NAC rather than inflame the already-growing tensions on her Eastern border. The North American Coalition tentatively accepted on the condition that President Gabriel Ono—a

simulacrum—abdicate his office in favor of a governor to be nominated by President Cromwell's administration. President Ono agreed even as military units rolled into Spokane, Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, and Eugene.

#Vet: Cascadia had a sim president?

#Luciferion: It was a more progressive time. That wouldn't fly now.

#Vet: But then why'd they petition to join the NAC? It doesn't make any sense.

#Luciferion: No, it doesn't, does it? And the author just says they didn't want to inflame the situation. So maybe the population was scared. Maybe Cromwell got to the folks in charge somehow (with blackmail or familial threats). Maybe there was a backroom corp deal to pressure the politicians into it. Maybe Ono was hacked. Lots of conspiracy theories on the Net about this one.

The people of Deseret initially balked at the idea of losing Zion. The quorum of the 12 apostles seemed ready to fight against the NAC should it invade Deseret, but after days and weeks of protests, they capitulated, ultimately joining the NAC.

Texas chose to stay out of the war. Their military were already occupied dealing with the rising threat of Mexico to the south. The North American Coalition ambassador arranged a closed-door meeting between themselves and, representing Texas, the CEO of Act of God Armaments and President Jason Meyers. Encouraging Texas to rejoin the growing union, she argued that Texas and the NAC shared many conservative traits, like valuing hard work, patriotism, and phrases such as "God Bless America/Texas." Additionally, she offered no less than ten NAC golemmech divisions and support troops to deploy to El Paso to help bolster the Texan army along its southern border.

Though third parties weren't allowed in the meeting, an anonymous source leaked President Meyers' response, a staunch "frack you." That ruffled feathers so, the next day, he addressed the situation with Texas' citizenry by holding a press conference. During the press conference, he stated that President Cromwell did not understand Texas or her values. While Texans value productivity and a God-fearing morality, they also value a good time and the freedom to live life according to one's own values.

Texas would never join the RUSA so long as Meyers was president; however, he would offer

the matter to referendum. If the public voted to rejoin the RUSA, Meyers would resign his position. Texas voted on the matter six weeks later, and independence won by a two-thirds margin, with sixty-eight percent of voters choosing to stay a free Texas nation. They remain independent today.

#Seraph: President Meyers is actually Jason Meyers III, grandson of Colonel Jason Meyers, who famously refused to carry out the order to remove the Governor of Texas during the Second Civil War. They got good genes, apparently, and ain't even neo-humans, just regular old-fashioned Texans.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Hey, @Seraph, it was great meeting you during my vacation down in the panhandle. You ever wanna come out of retirement, my offer still stands.

#Seraph: I know, brother. I've been considering it. Thought the world might be a better place if I stepped back and let things run their course, but a patriot's work is never done. I'll be in touch.

The members of the United Combine security council stood by their alliance for six months until August 7, 2091, when North American Coalition forces attacked the strategic command base just outside of Detroit with a new kind of weapon of mass destruction. North American Coalition weapon platforms in space dropped a single Kinetic Energy Weapon—a 2000 lb. rod of tungsten—on the base, delivering a blast the equivalent of a medium-range nuclear-tipped ICBM. Shortly thereafter, the United Combine withdrew their troops from all battlefronts, leaving Atlantica by herself.

The North American Coalition would use the kinetic energy weapons—now dubbed Thunderbolts—three more times on Atlantican military forces, with the final Thunderbolt hitting in the suburbs just outside of Boston with enough force to level thirty city blocks. The Nation of Atlantica surrendered the next day, formally ending the Reclamation War just over one year later.

AFTERMATH

As one might guess, fighting the war was the easy part. Reconstructing the United States takes more than redrawing the map. Installing a functional representative government able to address the wants and needs of nearly eight hundred million people—many of whom unwillingly newly brought under a single flag—is





a mammoth undertaking. Many citizens of the nation states radically opposed the ideals of the North American Coalition. Those attitudes didn't simply vanish. Patriotism cannot be mandated; it must come freely from the hearts and minds of the populace.

The leaders of the NAC never had this goal in mind, however. For them, the principles of the North American Coalition—God, Country, Purity, and Productivity—were the foundation of any civilized society. To reject those ideals was high treason and there could be no leniency.

NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION CENTERS

It started slowly, first with the establishment of National Identification Centers about six months after the war ended. The stated purpose of a NIC seemed innocent enough; people who were from nations conquered by the Reformed United States of America were to register at these centers in order to obtain citizenship through the installation of special apps (application software) in their Tendril Access Processors. Dubbed IDAPS, they contained detailed information about the citizen (much like ID cards or drivers licenses); data providing the person's ethnicity, date of birth, the date they obtained citizenship, and a category known as social status.

The social status of a citizen tracked their criminal record, the presence of illegal cybernetics, any biological markers indicating—people were told—whether or not the person might have a disease or predisposition towards certain types of genetic defects. The information was allegedly critical to determining whether or not the person might require special healthcare as a result of these defects. All for the betterment of society, they said. It didn't take a genius to realize the social status category was used to identify androids, cyborgs, hybrids, psions, and simulacra.

Predictably, once the word spread about IDAPS and the social status category, riots exploded in every major sprawl in the country. Most happened in places like Chicago, Boston, Portland, New Los Angeles, and San Francisco, though some riots even broke out in places where the NAC was already in power. St. Louis, Atlanta—even in Denver, the capital of the Reformed United

States—all endured lengthy protests from people who were longtime citizens.

CLIMATE CHANGE

—Doctor Ludovica Rossi, Senior Climanthropologist at University of Florence, Italy

iao, omae! Welcome to the primer on the effects of global warming on terrestrial life and societies. My goal here is to beat the truth into you, because there have always been climate change skeptics; however, as time went by, they became fewer and fewer in number. Such people still exist, but now we refer to them as conspiracy theorists. They can't deny the effects of climate change (a term used here interchangeably with global warming), but they can certainly deny the causes. These modern conspiracy theorists believe the global catastrophes were not caused by the regular anthropogenic emissions of Carbon Dioxide (CO2) or methane. Rather, they believe various governments (Mandarinate, NAC, etc.), or even corporations, used kinetic energy weapons to generate earthquakes or somehow manipulated the climate to cause rising sea waters. Some even claim the US government deliberately destroyed the Manhattan seawall to punish New Yorkers for not evacuating the city as had been demanded. I won't bother addressing such idiots, who really should be more trusting of their governments and corporations.

#Magpie: Ha! Hey, @Billy_Black_Eyes, get a load of this! You need to be more trusting of Cromwell and the megas!

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Heh now that's a hoot. This dump was given to us by one Dr. Ludovica Rossi, a senior researcher at the University of Florence. She probably gets funding from Cromy. The governments and corps of the world, after realizing they could no longer fight or ignore global warming, started paying off researchers to write good press. Essentially rewriting history to cover up all the crap they've been doing for the past century.

Most of you wouldn't have been alive when the effects of global warming devastated the world in the beginning of the twenty-first century, nor when it returned to something resembling normal. A brief history lesson is necessary, so you know how we got here. The primary anthropogenic causes of global warming were the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation for farming and agriculture, and agriculture itself

(cow farts in the colloquial). While modern humanity uses a variety of energy sources—solar, wind, and nuclear are the primaries—previous generations just burned whatever they dug up out of the ground.

This caused the destruction of the ozone layer and, with it, the Earth's protection against solar radiation, and the atmosphere necessary to properly regulate the temperature of the Earth. Global temperatures rose, causing a myriad of problems for all terrestrials (which all humans were at the time, since space travel was still in its infancy at the beginning of the twenty-first century). That's the quick and dirty synopsis, because the most important details are the effects.

Starting in 2019, global warming caused a series of storms across the world. Coastlines were battered by record numbers of category 4 and 5 hurricanes. Levees failed, homes collapsed, and insurance rates spiked. Many coastal cities became uninsurable. The wealthy either self-insured or moved. The poor and middle class were simply made homeless. As more of the middle lost their homes, they moved down the economic ladder. Once they were poor, they had no way of climbing their way back up—and so poor is what they remained.

Hurricanes and the seas weren't the only concern. The inland areas dried out, causing forest fires to worsen. The Rocky Mountains, from Colorado through Montana, lost 20% of their total acreage to fires over two decades. The Amazon rainforest lost 200,000 acres in a single year. Brazil responded by a massive deforestation effort. They claimed it was to thin the rainforest to prevent fires and simultaneously provide land for cattle and lumber for loggers, but it had a negative effect. With the clearing of plant life, there were fewer trees to absorb the carbon dioxide, exacerbating the warming. Back in the United States, Tornado Alley became Tornado Highway, as new wind patterns caused meetings of colder and warmer air in a wider range of areas. Major US cities like Denver and Phoenix were ill-prepared for the wreckage of tornadoes, and the insurance problems previously experienced primarily along the coasts began to exacerbate income inequality in the inner areas. Scientists predicted the storm seasons would only grow

worse and longer which, in hindsight, was the greatest understatement of the century.

The icecaps melted at an alarming rate. Sea levels rose. New York and New Jersey built their levees in 2026. Australia, China, and Europe followed suit (Japan had already begun theirs). These levees had varying levels of success. While New Jersey's held, New York's failed almost completely, creating the New York Reclamation Zone, leaving the Manhattan, Bronx, and Queens boroughs mostly underwater to this day. Seattle was hit with a tsunami, which just happened to come after the eruption of Mount Rainier, doubling their pain.

Now abandoned, it's become a great place for treasure hunting adventure seekers! Some of the attempts at land salvation seem almost laughable. Hong Kong lost half its landmass to rising seas. Once fought over so desperately by the Mandarinate (China at the time), it's now used solely as a prisoner island. Florida is a series of small islands as of 2031.

#Magpie: Come one, come all ye seekers of adventure! Come to the Land of Seattle and pilfer the soaked, torn, and tattered-but-not-forgotten memories of the displaced and dead!

#Luciferion: Damn, Mags, way to be a downer. Guess I'll cancel my scuba diving treasure trip to Seattle now.

Black and mustardy waters poured into an unprepared Rio de Janeiro, drowning its people in a sea of pollutants as Christ the Redeemer looked down. Elsewhere in South America, a series of "Water Wars" started as a skirmish between Columbia and Venezuela. Climate change caused droughts and polluted flood waters in both nations, leading to mass starvation. Politicians, fearful of rebellion, were quick to blame their neighbors. The countries' peoples, hungry and homeless, turned on each other in a series of wars that spilled into neighboring areas and lasted two decades. Elsewhere in the region, the city of Colon was renamed Colonbajo (literally translated "Colon under the Sea") after locks broke between Gatun Lake and Limon Bay. Panama was likewise quick to blame its neighbors for its problems.

Of all the world's nations, Japan fared the best, a truly remarkable feat. Their success relied on their preparation due to the societal impact of science fiction dystopias through manga and anime, which permeated their culture. Their researchers, having grown up with a plethora of dystopian





settings and scenarios from which to draw, were already experienced in the possible effects of climate change and had creative solutions for how to meet the problems. This hypothesis is explored further in my published research paper *The Cyberpunk and Society: How Dystopian Media Prepares the World for Future Modernity*. Their levees and seawalls were mechanized, so human controllers could manipulate them to meet changes in sea level or wind direction. Since they were already a mostly isolationist nation, which they remain today, they weren't distracted by border skirmishes or recapturing lost territories (an issue that made far worse the problems being faced in the Mandarinate, and North and South America).

The weather wasn't the only problem. Animals that were once plentiful suddenly reached the brink of extinction. Salmon were fried in the ocean off the coast of Alaska. Since Alaska's coastal towns were made up largely of salmon fishers, they too ended up jobless. They turned to the federal government for help, but the United States already had its hands full trying unsuccessfully to save Florida and New York. There simply weren't enough resources to go around.

Honeybees, also once plentiful, died out almost entirely within the US, creating a shortage of honey by 2035. In no time, honey was considered a luxury item as supermarket shelves were empty of it and most other goods that used to be easy to find. Corn and wheat prices spiked, which bled into agriculture. Since it cost more to feed cattle, beef prices tripled. With the levees breaking, ocean waters became massively contaminated. Salmon were already rare, but now they were polluted to boot. Chicken became a staple of the human diet since the chicken market was less harmed by the effects (though it was still expensive, so only the dwindling middle class and up could afford it). The poor ate a lot of beans and rice.

Not all the animals had it bad. Cockroaches and mosquitos thrived throughout the 2030s. The human wreckage created great feeding and breeding grounds for roaches, and mosquitos fed plentifully on the homeless. Diseases once nearly eradicated in the West came swiftly back to the Americas and Europe: smallpox, malaria, and the bubonic plague. My own hometown of

Florence had an ebola outbreak in 2039. You can find pictures all over the Net of hordes of people meandering through the streets in a daze as blood seeps from their eyes and ears, soaking through the crotches and seats of their pants.

Governments and corporations weren't simply fighting the effects of global warming but were finally taking seriously its causes. One pornographic website famously promised to plant a tree for every 100 videos watched in their "scat" category. As their space program really took off, China realized they could store their nuclear waste in space. The first Chinese astronauts to step foot on Mars left a tube of nuclear waste behind to ensure it could be safely stored there. The tube would be found later that year by the Americans and Europeans. While the Chinese began with Mars, they decided asteroids would be more fitting since Mars was better served for colonies. There are asteroids in the Inner Belt devoted solely to nuclear waste storage.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: That porn thing should put things in perspective for you, omae. In order to help save the planet, you literally had to watch people eat shit.

Finally, in 2038, things settled. Though roughly 100 million people would have been displaced by the end of the decade, humanity had finally instituted enough clean energy that our impact on the planet was minimalized. Climate patterns returned to something resembling normal (though some Middle Eastern deserts still freeze at night, so "normal" is a bit relative here). Humanity could finally focus on rebuilding, a process still going on today.

Australia reached out for help, and the churches of the world answered the call. The God and the Green program was instituted, where Christian missionaries from all over came to help restore the Great Barrier Reef, raise up sea walls along the coast, and defend or rebuild cities that were flooded. What began as a Christian program quickly spread and Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Hindus, and Buddhists from all around the world flooded into Australia. The program was considered a spectacular success. It was too late to save the Reef or Australia, as major population centers had already flooded and the outback was larger and more barren. Yet now, the cities are shored up and livable. Reclamation efforts continue for the Reef, which is slowly re-growing.

The island nation of the Douglas Commonwealth was devastated by the de Fuca earthquake and corresponding tsunami in 2069, proving Mother Nature isn't quite done with us yet. The Panama Canal is still blocked, and the nation keeps raising the cost of passage, likely riled up by losing the northern part of its land to Mexico. Amsterdam was flooded entirely, but corporate interests there have rebuilt it (again proving people really should be more trusting of corporations, who commonly serve the public good at their own expense). The RUSA is focused on building a seawall around Atlantica, which they recently conquered, bringing it back into their fold. Where the land is still unlivable, nations have built climate controlled arcologies. These are particularly popular in Russia, who even built an entire dome in Moscow to protect Red Square.

In 2054, the ARC project began, as researchers attempt to bring back extinct species and revitalize endangered populations. Five years later, they attempted to reintroduce the honeybee, now genetically enhanced, along the eastern coast of the US. Hundreds are killed by the bees before the researchers pull the plug on the project and exterminate them. While humanity is no longer so reliant on the food chain, work continues to bio-engineer animal species for the promotion of plant life and to promote a peaceful

world ecology. This has been, for the most part, a success, though some issues have arisen, which are beyond the scope of this paper.

Work continues to relieve the Earth and its human population of the struggles associated with global climate change. Sitting in the seawater constructed at the University of Florence, I look out at the wide ocean waters, now blue and tranquil, and see only a world of endless possibilities. I hope you'll work with me in building a better tomorrow with our government and megacorporate partners. Ciao!

#Luciferion: Work with the corps and govts? Yeah, we'll get right on that.

#DevelopingFetus: You guys are always so hard on them. Yeah, the corps are trying to make a buck, so what? We got nano! We got sims! Corps have done amazing things for the world.

#Luciferion: The world they destroyed in the process. You're about as cheerful and optimistic as Ms. Rossi here.

#Magpie: Doctor. Doctor Rossi. Let's not forget her super important title.

#Luciferion: Pheh, the corps give those things out now. You can get a doctorate just by greasing the right palms or performing some other "favor" for a high-level exec. It's a revolving door of crap, mags, and you damn well know it. You play ball, and you can get a whole host of titles to stick on your JackedUp resume.



LIFE IN 2095

—Sup amigos, Billy Black Eyes here to give you a run-down on 2095. While much has happened since 2090, not much has actually affected life for the average sprawler. Thus, much of this section has been reprinted from my previous INFOdocs.

THE RICH AND THE POWERFUL

Those with money, breeding and influence still have all the power. The only difference is names like Caesar, Bonaparte, Stalin, and Bush have been replaced with Webber, Wei, Lochan, and Afolabi. Travel to any nation in the world and it's all the same. Some places are just cleaner than others. Is every leader morally bankrupt, though? Nope...at least not on the Media feed. The average world leader is primarily interested in maintaining or elevating their standing in the world community. Many, like the CEO of a conglom, care little about how they reach the bottom line, only that it is reached. They have no problem killing a few thousand people or oppressing a nation to get both what they want and what their constituents have been media-programmed to expect. If they look good in the process, so be it. If they don't...well, that's what spin-doctors are for, right?

The poor stay poor, and the rich...? Yeah, that's right. Nothing new under the sun here. But what does it really mean to be rich in 2095? How much stuffing do you need in your cloned turkey to make that claim? Back in the day, a few hundred thousand was enough to lift a Joe above the streets and get him a sweet, tricked-out house in some ultra-posh gated community. You know the kind of pad I'm talkin' about, ami: more square footage than a Malmart, a butler for the dog and hot-and-cold running everything. Even the air has been purified, each molecule synthesized to smell and taste like your favorite...anything. Nowadays, the same amount of money won't even get you a decent condo in a climate-controlled bioplex.

Inflation's a bitch.

#Magpie: With enough inflation, everyone's a millionaire! Who's the bitch now?

These days, even the peeps us blue platers call rich are poor compared to the seriously loaded

cabrónes who live so high above the stink they don't even know what it smells like. For these mega-rich folks, life is a perfume-laced ride all the way to the bank. Being wealthy in 2095 means you have access to the best of everything: real food (yummy trans-fats and all); nano-filtered water; the finest vehicles; top edu-sites; and health care and dental plans that don't require a day-long wait in some dark, piss-stained basement below the nearest government-owned medi-plex, if you can even get on the waiting list. And those are just the bare necessities, kiddies.

In the world of 2095, being rich and being powerful go hand in hand. The vast majority of wealth lies in the private sector, particularly with megacorps and the people who run them. With sickening sums of money at their disposal, CEOs and high-level executives have world-spanning political influence. Indeed, politicians and elected officials representing the myriad of world governments cater to the corporate interests of these individuals in return for financial backing. Even more curiously, the distribution of wealth and power tends to stay with a person or persons for a longer period of time, barring accidental death. Nowadays, the rich can upload their minds into The Deep (or an android or bio-form built to house the person's mind) and live forever. So some greedy CEO who wants to keep his wealth and power can simply Dub himself, and everyone who had been hoping to inherit his cash is screwed.

POVERTY

If you don't have the cash, clout, luck, or the right genes to rise above the masses, you can look forward to a daily grind filled with acid rain, smog, traffic jams, over-priced roach-infested squats, vat food, roving glanders, strung-out pharma-junkies and other critters—some of them people—that look like they were vat-grown in a back-alley splicer lab.

In short, welcome to life for the rest of us.

With all of the advances in agriculture, medicine, and technology over the past century, you'd think that people would find a way to cure poverty. The cold hard truth, however, is that the people who could fix the problem choose

not to. Partly because it's expensive, but mostly they just don't care. The middle class of the early twenty-first century has all but disappeared. Nowadays, you're either rich or poor. It's hard to keep a good paying job when some corporate slag builds a robot capable of working 24 hours a day for no pay, no benefits, and negligible repair costs. Inevitably, people out of work and unable to feed their families turn to crime as a means for survival, because inflation means Federal Allowance Payments (FAPs for short) barely keep the electricity and NUTRImachines on. Burbs that were once great places to live devolve into ghettos. Businesses shut down as ganglanders move in and wage war for control of a piece of concrete, further devaluing the property and assuring no new businesses will move into these demilitarized "red" sectors.

Of course, the average citizen is caught in the middle of the daily violence because they're too poor to move anywhere else. The rich don't care. In fact, they blame the poor, ignorantly assuming that these unfortunate souls choose to live in these conditions. Politicians don't care. Poor people don't vote, in the countries where they CAN vote, that is. City officials don't care. Their budgets don't allow for added security in crime-ridden sectors that might as well be demilitarized zones. Better to protect the affluent sectors where the average citizen would rather make a nice campaign contribution than fund a costly neighborhood revitalization project that will probably fail anyway.

EDUCATION

Poor children grow up fighting in the EDU-facilities, the gladiator academies of the urban sprawl. When they aren't getting a substandard education and fresh bruises, they're flooded with TAPstreams advertising things they can't afford, places they'll never see, and glamorous people with money they'll never have. Craving a piece of this elusive pie, these disillusioned kids start taking what they want and selling it to local pawnbrokers and fixers.

They run away from home and join gangs that promise protection, fast money, and an exciting lifestyle. Before the n00b bangers know it, they're reaping chrome, boosting hovercraft,

selling gene-tailored drugs, and sometimes even killing for cash.

#DevelopingFetus: This doesn't sound so badly.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Yeah, this person is really selling the streetsweeper life. I hope some kid doesn't read this, then goes out and gets himself killed trying to be a badass. I'm talking to you here, @DevelopingFetus.

#DevelopingFetus: My mom's got cancer man. I tried the EDU-brawls but got my ass kicked. My options r limited.

#Luciferion: Streetsweeper? Haven't heard that one before. You make that term up, @Billy?

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Yeah you like?

#Luciferion: No. Why not just call us trashmen?

#Magpie: For starters, that's not gender neutral! Not all of us are men, @Luci, so we'd have to be called trashpeople.

#Luciferion: That just sounds like we live in the garbage!

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Well we kinda do, don't we?

#Luciferion: Point, Billy. Point.

HEALTH CARE

Being poor means you're less likely to afford basic medical care, even at government-funded medi-plexes; commonly regarded as only marginally better than street doctors. The wait to be examined can last days. When you are actually "treated," the process is usually about as effective as the amount of money you have in your wallet. The fore-mentioned street doctors can be handy in a pinch, but only if you have the cash on hand. Street docs aren't always cheap, nor are the meds you'll need to maintain your health after one patches you up.

So take my advice: Don't get sick or shot.

FOOD

The food is crap. The average sprawler lives on what they can find at super chain INSTAfood joints like McCafé, Fat Sally's International Pancake House, Lou's Almost-Real Ribs and Chicken, or King Krill. These places work in a pinch if you need to quiet that grumbling stomach and they taste addictively good, what with all the additives, but eating off the floor of the local recycling center would be healthier. If you want to take stuff back to the squat, you can always go to a cheapo Malmart (they're on every corner). These "one-stop-shopping" centers have every processed Nutripack you can imagine; Mama Ling Ling's noodle bowls, cloned meats of all kinds, hydroponic veggies, freeze-dried krill and (my favorite) frozen burritos.



REDEFINING HUMANITY

Change brings with it not only new opportunities but also challenges to established wisdom. In the last few decades, the very definition of what constitutes a person has come under increasing debate and scrutiny. Not since the late twentieth century has humanity found itself grappling with so many issues of civil rights and personal identity.

Once the stuff of science fiction, artificial intelligence now exists as part of the daily fabric of life. Computers sophisticated enough to pass the Turing 2 test regulate or outright control virtually every critical system on the planet. From the traffic supervisors that keep millions of vehicles from crashing into each other to the smart systems embedded in every home, civilization depends on them. Despite this, many parts of the world either limit the freedoms of AIs or define them as property, denying them even the most fundamental rights granted to all sentient beings. In recent years, a group of AI activists—downloading themselves into humanoid bodies, whether simulacrum or mechanical—have taken the lead in the struggle on behalf of virtual kind.

Both engineered humans and hybrids, one supposedly representing a bold step forward and the other an atavistic throwback, continue to grow in numbers. Engineered humans, products of loving parents or an eager nation looking to make superior citizens, found little difficulty claiming their place in society; and most, truth be told, soon moved to the forefront. Hybrids on the other hand, viewed as dirty and barbaric yet considered human in all but the most repressive of societies, nevertheless suffer from social prejudice.

Often, the new underclass of people made redundant by simulacrum labor excise some of their humiliation with the thought that at least they are “real humans” and not hybrids. In the face of such bigotry, hybrids sometimes make poor choices when confronted with discrimination, which only reinforces their reputation for savagery and violence.

#DevoutSaint: The LDS Church isn't repressive. We love and seek to aid the hybrids who have torn their souls from their bodies. They just can't participate in Church sacraments until they complete the de-hybridization process. The soul can find its way back once the process is complete, and the former hybrid can be a full-fledged member, even entering the priesthood.

While many humans appreciate simulacrum labor, others consider the bio-forming industry either organized slavery or an affront to God. Simulacrums are essentially sterilized human clones, designed in a laboratory and outfitted with a partially cybernetic brain; allowing for rapid instruction while still growing in their vat. In most countries, they emerge fully adult, with all the skills needed to perform their assigned task. Infuriating many, though good for their bottom lines, the bio-form industry makes a practice of deliberately limiting the life spans and intelligences of simulacrums simply to make it impossible for most to exist independently.

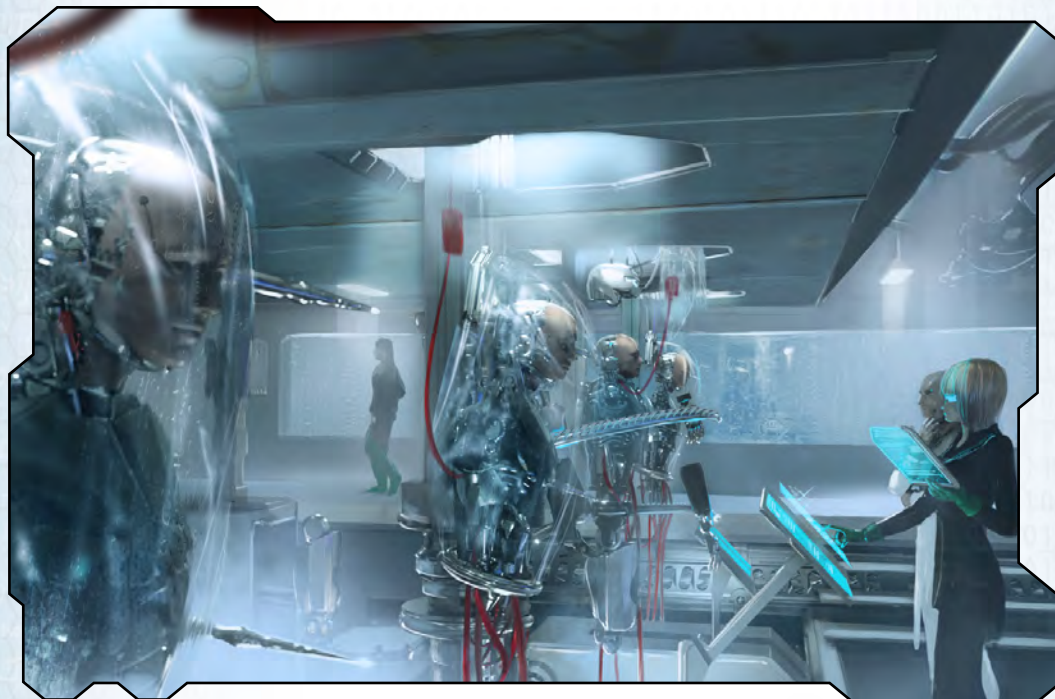
This strikes activists—and even the conscientious layman—as simply despicable. The vast majority of simulacrums spend their five or perhaps ten years of life toiling away at the task they were designed to perform, and lack the means to imagine demanding more. Very rarely, whether because of some glitch or a spontaneous mutation, a simulacrum discovers some way to surpass his, her, or its design parameters. Simulacra that exceed these restrictions are hunted down and destroyed. Sometimes, however, they escape from their owners and manage to build a new life in the outside world.

GENETIC ENGINEERING

Since finalizing the map of the human genome, doctors have been able to selectively alter the genetic code to benefit those suffering hereditary diseases. The practice of screening human embryos and treating them for genetic defects soon expanded to include selective augmentations.

Parents could not only eliminate any genetic predisposition to diabetes, asthma, and baldness, they could also select their child's eye color, hair color, ethnicity, sex, and sexual orientation—all before the child had advanced beyond the first trimester.

#Magpie: What this means in practice is we won't be seeing any more transgender people born in the RUSA. That little “problem” has been “fixed” by a mixture of the technological knowhow and federal mandate. The government doesn't have enough money to provide adequate healthcare—unless your unborn child has the transgender gene. Thanks, Cromwell!



TAILORING

Further advances followed until it became common for some people to upgrade their appearances every few years, taking on the genetic traits of whatever ethnicity they chose, mixing those qualities until certain styles developed. Eventually it caught on so well that the Parisian fashion houses started genetically tailoring trademarked looks that meshed well with their styles.

SPLICING

As the technology became more accessible, black marketers began experimenting with their own designs; going so far as to reverse engineer and ape the work of other designers. Nevertheless, it quickly became apparent that they could not compete with the technological mastery of the Parisian designers. The pirate designers' often substandard genetic tampering frequently mutated their patients or gave them cancer. Some of these patients saw the emergence of long recessive genes, some devolved into creatures that are more animalistic.

Various developing nations saw a use for this technology and expanded research in the field. Yet, instead of attempting to rewrite the genetic code, the researchers selectively spliced portions of animal DNA into the code, creating hybridized human animals, an inexpensive alternative to cybernetically enhanced troops. Eventually, their techniques returned to the pirate design parlors and quickly found acceptance among some young sprawlanders and idle rich. Now, splicing has become almost as popular a form of cosmetic body alteration as tattooing and piercing.

BIO-HORRORS

With the widespread destruction of Earth's ecology, and ever more species of flora and fauna fighting for fewer resources, species after species finds itself on the verge of extinction. Because of modern technology, a good portion of humanity is beyond the dictates of the food chain. However, biodiversity is seen by many as a measure of the world's health and humankind's stewardship of the planet. Beyond that, many of the world's oxygen producing plants rely on the animal kingdom. In order to stave off a possible total collapse of the world ecology, scientists have begun reengineering species to take on the roles of those animals and plants that have





gone extinct. Unfortunately, not all of these substitutions have worked out.

Numerous instances have seen test subjects further complicate attempts to right the eco-imbalance. In other cases, unforeseen mutations and viable—even dangerous—rejects have inadvertently escaped (some say they were deliberately released) into the wild. Commonly known as bio-horrors, these vicious creatures are prime examples of the inherent dangers of gene-splicing. Bio-horrors come in a variety of types, the most common of which are insects that have been crossbred with large cats in a vain attempt to create armored hybrid strains with animal cunning and physical prowess for use as shock troops.

Sightings of the creatures—dubbed lionroaches—are common in arid regions such as the North American Southwest, parts of the African continent, and especially in the radiated wastelands of the Middle East and Afghanistan, where they have been known to grow as large as five feet tall. Other examples of bio-horrors include variant strains of insects called beetle rats, bat/wasp hybrids, and the rarest of types, ant men, though most people consider the latter to be nothing more than an urban legend.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

In 2095, local law enforcement is largely an entrepreneurial activity. While most nations across the world maintain big brother agencies such as the FBI, KGB, MI-5, The People's Armed Police (or PAP), New Brasilia's Polícia Federal, India's Ministry of Home Affairs (MIHA for short), the Texas Rangers, and world-spanning organizations like Stopwatch, these groups rarely get involved with the complexities of policing a given megasprawl at the street level. That grim responsibility falls squarely on the shoulders of individual cities. Rather than spending countless millions to equip and maintain traditional law enforcement agencies, many cities choose to hire security firms to maintain law and order. The privatization of law enforcement agencies has proven to be a double-edged sword, however.

On one hand, the people employed by security agencies tend to be highly motivated, well-trained individuals. Continued employment with the security firm depends on it. Megacorporations and city contractors pay well for the protection

that firms such as Ravenlocke Securities provide and expect nothing less than stellar performance. Security firms who fail to deliver on their promises do not last long in this industry.

On the other hand, these merc security firms are free to choose which contracts they take and which ones they do not. This often means one sector in a given sprawl may have excellent protection and another sector very little, if any at all. Furthermore, competition for contracts is cutthroat. Security firms have been known to go to war with competitors, even to the point of killing civilians under the protection of rival firms in an effort to undermine their contracts.

Some cities find that a bounty system is a good way to augment the services security firms provide. Bounty Hunters tend to be hardcore individuals who go wherever they have to and do whatever it takes to get their mark. While a bounty system does not provide continued security, it does tend to get the more violent offenders off the streets.

THE OMEGA PROTOCOLS

In November 17, 2073, representatives from most of the world's nations gathered in Stockholm to discuss the threat posed by AIs evolving beyond human comprehension. Many had considered the possibility of Singularity, popularized by science fiction writers for more than a hundred years, but had only recently considered it an actual threat.

In simplest terms, the most probable path to Singularity rests on the idea of a rogue AI program making a more intelligent AI program, which in turn makes a still more intelligent program and so on until a super-intelligent AI, completely divorced from human morals—and therefore beyond human understanding—emerges and threatens humankind's very existence. With powers too difficult to imagine, let alone grasp, a Singularity AI, nicknamed an Omega, posed a clear threat to humankind. Whether kept as a pet, terrorized into worship, or brushed aside into extinction as a nuisance, a Singularity AI could hold the destiny of the human race in its digital hand. The fact that some people, hoping in a sense to create their own "god," worked against humanity to help certain AIs achieve this ambition only made things more dire.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Don't know about anybody trying to create their own god, but some of those corps were certainly trying to write off their own debts.

#Luciferion: You saying Charon is a singularity?

#Billy_Black_Eyes: If not, don't you think he's gotta be close to it? Got his mitts in damn near everything and multiple versions of himself running around all over the globe. Possibly even in space. For all we know, the Queen of the Hive out there is just another Charon fragment.

The Omega Protocols spell out in painstaking detail exactly how intelligent AIs may become and what restraining programs must be used before humanity should regard them as a threat. They also include provisions allowing signatories to intervene in the territory of any other nation without prior notice if they suspect an AI might attempt to evolve itself beyond the scale of human intelligence. The third section of the protocols laid out rigorous penalties for any human found guilty of collaborating with an AI bent upon transforming itself into an Omega.

As already mentioned, many people regard the notion of a Singularity as a myth spread by the ignorant and those cynical enough to prey upon their fears. They compare it to professed “wars on drugs” and other moral panics of the past. For this reason, certain countries simply refused to sign the Omega Protocols in the first place and others devote few resources to actively dealing with the threat. Still, the possibility of an AI attempting to evolve itself into an Omega leaves many disquieted and uncertain. In the mind of the average citizen, the old saying “better safe than sorry” dampens all efforts to repeal the protocols.

THE BIRTH OF THE VIRTUAL WORLD

The people of 2095 live amidst dreams.

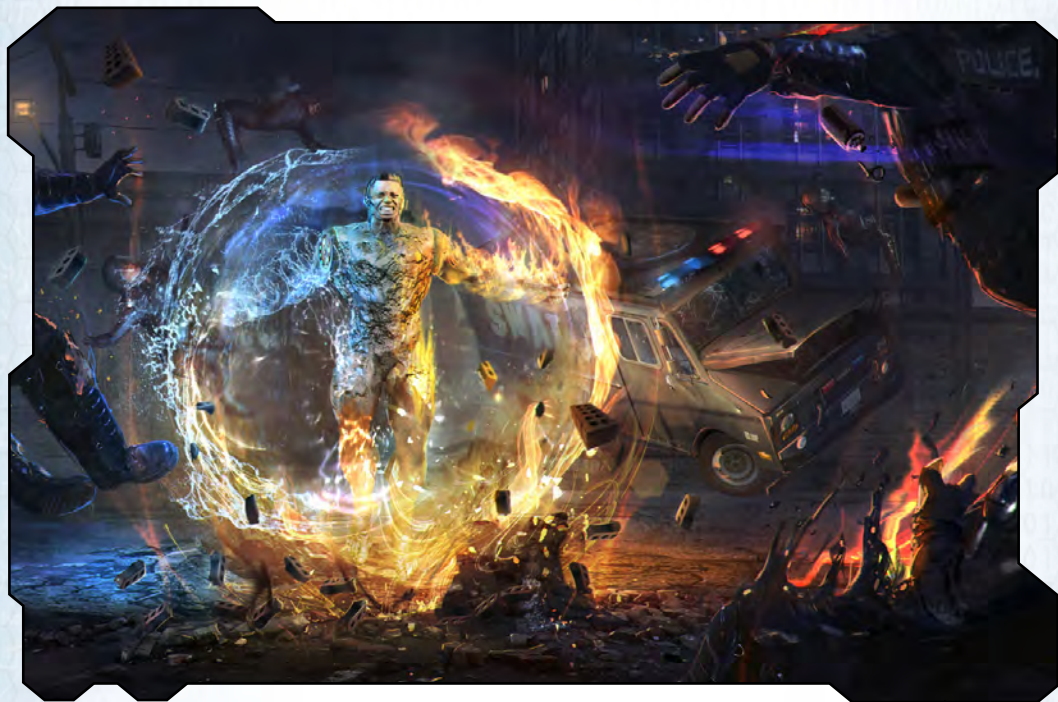
To them, the virtual world, born in the imagination but given shape and form by technology feeding sensory information directly into the brain, exists parallel with the actual world. Able to perceive and interact with The Deep as easily as the actual, many, particularly the young with no personal memory or comprehension of life before the Media Web, sometimes find the notion of distinguishing between the two baffling. Indeed, for all save the tiny minority without a TAP (Tendrill Access Processor) the threshold between these two competing realities sometimes blurs.

Today, almost everything in the “real” world also maintains some sort of presence in the virtual. Control panels for vehicles and keypads for devices often include virtual prompts as well as physical ones. Indeed, many of the most advanced systems rely completely upon a virtual interface and seem utterly blank to those without a TAP. Locks on doors also typically respond to virtual commands, the avatar charged with guarding the entrance demanding passwords and other security protocols rather than responding to any sort of physical key. Indeed, for most, using a virtual guard dog capable of alerting the authorities, activating defenses and even, if necessary, savaging intruders through the interface of their TAP makes more sense than a flesh-and-blood creature.

This fundamental change, so profound and significant that most put it on the same level as the development of agriculture or electricity, began simply enough once people started linking computers just over a hundred years ago. Though ridiculously primitive, this “internet” nevertheless laid the groundwork for a new worldview by assigning values to objects that only existed within computer networks. Indeed, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, virtual game worlds often had economies rivaling those of actual countries. From there, the pace only quickened as more and more people found ways to plug into the global network. The acceptance of Head frames in 2024 truly blazed the trail for the world to come. Allowing their wearers to both see and hear virtual constructs, they ultimately made interacting with the “imaginary” a daily event. While people still had the choice to simply not interact with The Deep by taking off their crowns, in more advanced parts of the world Head frames rapidly became essential for normal life. Critical to identity and commerce, Head frames also liberated humanity from the tyranny of false expertise by making information available to anyone able to frame the proper question.

Commentators at the time heralded the development of STRAP (Surgical Tendril Remote Access Processor) in 2036 as the final step of this glorious evolution. A VR device connected directly to the brain; STRAP made Head frames relics within a decade of entering the mainstream. Some of the most enthusiastic went so far as to call it the “prime interface” or “interface one”





killed someone. Well, not the way Hernando did, at least.

Sure, you had incidents—muggings, robberies, and even reports of bizarre killings. But the authorities (to their credit, for once) not wanting to stir up a panic, simply chalked the killings up to the cost of living life in this brave new world. “People die all the time,” they’d say. “Some in truly brutal ways that have nothing to do with alleged psychic powers,” and they were right. Nevertheless, after Madrid, things changed. Hate crimes against suspected zeeks (and hybrids, because, hey, they might be psychic too!) spiked dramatically in the days and weeks after the attack as grisly images of the burned bodies and wreckage from the ruined NAC embassy streamed across the Media Web in hi-definition video 24 hours a day. The images of the attack played out as sidebars on news segments like “Chi-town Today” or the highly biased, pseudo-political commentary Media feed, “The Chuck O’Malley Show.” Of course, the NAC, in typical uber-fundie, neo-conservative fashion, worked itself into hysteria.

Within weeks the NAC congress had pushed through radical anti-psion legislation, deeming the use of unlicensed psychic abilities a Class-A felony punishable under law by up to 3 years in a

federal prison. On the heels of the much-maligned law, the NAC formed Psi Division; a government agency dedicated to tracking and monitoring the psychic population. Psi Division has been busy over the past year, setting up registration facilities and special detainment centers in cities throughout the NAC. Outside the NAC, psions find limited acceptance and manage to live their lives with some measure of normalcy, even if it is with others of their kind. Indeed, psychic communities exist in various sprawls across the world, much as various ethnic groups tend to live in the same neighborhoods.

ZEEKS IN 2095

Since 2090, those with psionic powers—commonly known as zeeks—have faced widespread persecution without regard to race, gender, social or political status. In the Restored United States of America (Commonly called RUS), life for zeeks has become difficult—even dangerous depending on where they are living. The restoration of the continental United States under the government of the old North American Coalition has resulted in a growing number of hate crimes against zeeks. These acts of



violence have largely been ignored, and President Cromwell has done very little to discourage the rise of hate groups. Indeed, the establishment of National Identification Centers and mandatory installation of Identification Applications (IDAPS) has fueled all manner of conspiracy theories and has even led to riots. For many zeeks, the answer to growing persecution has been simple—leave the Restored United States as soon as possible.

This option is proving difficult, as many safe havens have vanished. Texas accepts zeeks and grants citizenship, but getting there is difficult. Chicago is also a safe haven, but with the ongoing siege of the city, it's even harder to get inside the walls. Mules exist, but prices are rising, and cryptodollars don't guarantee safe passage, not matter how much they charge.

COLONIZATION OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

The past fifty years have seen humanity boldly push beyond the confines of planet Earth to live in the frigid depths of outer space. People from all walks of life live in a variety of environments ranging from orbital habitats, crater cities on the moon, vast underground complexes on Mars, mining colonies in The Belt (the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter) and most recently settlements on the Galilean moons of Callisto, Io, Europa, and Ganymede.

The first colonies and habitats were constructed by various world governments—primarily China and Brasilia, with the United States a distant third—and peopled with scientists, government personnel, and simulacrum decanted for labor and recreational purposes. As these fledgling colonies and habitats grew more stable they expanded to accommodate civilian settlers. Megacorporations, recognizing space exploration as a lucrative emerging market, scrambled to obtain government contracts for a variety of functions including, but not limited to, all aspects of spaceship design and construction, cargo/personnel transport, and mining operations.

Thanks to the development of the VASMIR III propulsion engine, the time it takes to travel to the Jovian moons and all points in between has

WASTELANDS: THE NEW LANDSCAPE

For decades leading up to the twenty-first century, the world's ecology became increasingly hostile to terrestrial life, due in large part to rapid industrialization. While global warming, the destruction of the ozone layer, the rising oceans, and accompanying extinctions of important links in the food chain had caused a great deal of damage, the nuclear exchanges in the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent pushed the world to the brink. Whole cities became ghost towns, swallowed up by irradiated desert sands or submerged beneath the world's engorged oceans. Even mighty sprawls such as New York were not immune. As the world descended into anarchy, the inhabitants of these new wildernesses—mostly stubborn residents, scavengers, and fugitives—were left to fend for themselves. Indeed, lawlessness and frontier justice are still the rule of the day in these regions.

been cut to a mere two to three weeks rather than the seven or eight months it used to take. In 2095, people who wish to leave the Earth behind can travel throughout the solar system, choosing to live in a variety of orbital habits and colonies on the moon, Mars, and the Jovian moons of Callisto, Europa, Io, and Ganymede. For those who do shadow work, there are opportunities aplenty working to further the interests of the megacorporations who vie for control of the vital air and water markets.

#SpaceManZaz: 2 weeks? Ha! I can do it in nine days, eight if I'm hopped up.

#GunshipGal: Hopped up? You're not one of those pilots who thinks methamphetamines makes them better at flying are you?

#SpaceManZaz: What? No! Caffeine. I'm talking about caffeine.

#GunshipGal: Yeah, right, sure you are. StarSec actually fines for impaired piloting you know.

GANG LIFE

—Manny “Roller” Ramirez, OG, last of his crew

B did twenty years on a thirty year stretch in the only college guys like me ever get to see. But I learned. That’s the one thing about Inside; you got time. It’s up to you how to spend it, but that’s all you really have. When I went in I could barely read but by the time I came out, I was teaching classes. Of course, with my record, regular jobs aren’t one of the top searches, so you won’t see me in any classrooms out here.

Too bad, because I have a lesson to teach.

Maybe it came late but I did figure it out. We’re fighting the wrong war. All us gangers. Everyone in the Life. They want us shooting at each other and not them. That’s how they keep running the world.

Who? The shareholders. The owners. Those with boardroom eyes. The people who aren’t you and me. The ones who matter.

The copsuckers? Nah, they’re just fellow cockroaches who crawled a little higher. They don’t have to scurry away when the lights come on, but they still crunch if they get underfoot.

All the ganglands, the whole sprawl really, it’s just another kind of reservation. And we’re the Indians. They pushed us in when they stole our country from us. Now we spend our time rolling for turf and killing each other instead of them.

I’m old. I’m tired. When they found out I had drumlung they let me out ten years early; not that I’ve got that much time left. It’s too late for me. I spent my ganger years rolling and my officer years inside. That’s how it’s supposed to work.

There are no old gangers.

By the time one of us figures out the game it’s too late to keep playing. But maybe I can push things along by showing what I’ve learned. I can give the rest of you a leg up. Use it to kick some ass.

#2HeadedTroll: Copsuckers? I like that at least. The rest sounds like another geezerfest whining about how he hacked up his life. The sprawl isn’t a reservation, it’s a petri dish. Us germs who earn it can crawl out and own the world. The rest stay in quarantine where they belong.

#NihilB4Zod: “Them!” Can’t wait to see if flying saucers are involved too.

#2HeadedTroll: Hey, don’t joke about that. I grew up in Gray territory. They didn’t like anyone making

fun of their Ascended Masters. Good way to get your knees beamed.

#NihilB4Zod: Beamed?

#2HeadedTroll: Well, blowtorched anyway.

CIVILIANS

Guys like me have a hundred names for them but they all just mean different kinds of civilians. There’s not much of a difference except attitude between a blue plater and a crawlie, or a tourist and an upright. No one wants to become a mushroom and the faceless and squawkers are too out to even realize how far behind they are.

But this is the thing. Every ganger started out as a civilian. We were just as blind and dumb as everyone else stumbling through the sprawl. Then something happened to wake us up and we started rolling.

Maybe we realized the game was rigged and decided not to play by the rules. Could be someone reached into a toilet and tried to make us eat nerdu, but we spat it back in his face. Or just something simple and practical like getting tired of wearing nano or waiting for transit instead of having your own ride.

Whatever the reason, gangers want control of their lives. Sure, this probably means a shorter one. That’s what the saying is all about. There are no old gangers. But no matter how quick we hit the furnace at least we live our time instead of just counting blinks on the clock.

#Snake Eyes: No old gangers is right. How many of them live to thirty unless they behind bars like this wash out?

#Young Gun: I’m twenty and already got my own place and a high-skipping ride. Four ladies on the string with more to come. I’ll be sipping beach drinks by the time I’m thirty.

#Snake Eyes: Kid, no one’s even gonna remember your name ten years from now. Ganging is just slow motion pest control. You kill each other and save the rest of us the trouble.

#Young Gun: Nope, it’s survival of the fittest and that’s me.

But that’s part of the trap. Ganging is how they deal with the ones who could turn the sprawl against them. We are the fighters so they make sure we aim at each other, or the civilians, instead of them. Bet things are pretty cozy in the





penthouse suites. Wouldn't want guys like me to roll on by for a visit. Might spoil the "day core."

So, my first lesson? Pick the right targets. Stop shooting at other gangers and feeding off civilians. The guys who live at the top of towers, the gargoyles, they're the real enemy. I know it's hard though. Civilians make it so easy. Want to know what I mean?

BLUE PLATERS

Sad to say, but blue platers are probably the happiest folks in the sprawl. They usually have enough to get by and still manage to score every now and then. They deal with gangers when they have to but never let themselves get sucked into the Life.

Sure, they don't have much, but who does? The lucky ones have some kind of steady work. The rest? Nano keeps them fed and in clothes, even if it's just nanocrap instead of something nique, and a megablock reaches a hundred stories or more. Plenty of room. So long as they stay out of trouble they can go along.

Of course, whenever blue platers get a little ahead they like to have some fun. That's where gangers come in. One way or another, we control the supply of fun on our turf. Maybe it's something we front direct like drugs or girls or something where we just get our taste from one of the mobs before the main show like fabbing. Whatever it is, blue platers keep coming back and that's the way we like it. Something you can squeeze a little bit every now and then is better than something you wring out once and then have to throw away.

CRAWLIES

Crawlies are trapped in the sprawl but don't realize it. They think they can escape if they just figure out the magic code. Most of them start by trying to polish what makes them special. The smart ones study, the jocks train, and the performers work their angles. The tough ones? No, we're not crawlies; we go gangster and that's a whole different thing.

A few do make it out. But some folks win the lottery too. Counting on long shots isn't the best

way to live. Besides, most crawlies are tuggers. Remember that kid in your class who always knew the answer? Crawler.

When crawlies hit that slippery patch on the side of the tower and fall back down it's usually a gangster waiting to catch them. The lucky ones just slide a little further and become blue platers. The unlucky ones? They just want to feel golden one more time.

That's something gangers can help with. Most of those kinds of crawlies eventually end up walking with the faceless. Price of dreams I guess.

Of course, there's a whole other breed of crawlies too. Some turn traitor and join the system. If they can't make it out for real they can at least try to lord it over the rest of us. Copsuckers were crawlies once before they started sniffing around Ravenlocke or some other security corp. So is anyone else who takes one of those service scholarships and comes back with a govjob. Maybe they only have stunners, not real guns like the copsuckers, but social workers and popcops probably do more damage most days. I got fixed when I went inside but one of my cousins had a low SQ and the popcops came for him after just one kid.

FACELESS

You feel bad about it sometimes but the faceless are just the things gangers own. They're property. Some of us take better care of them than others but no one really thinks of them as people. That's the way to handle them. Not getting sentimental or too close.

Most of the faceless are hooked on something. They'll do anything to get their hit. And the whole point of running your own turf is making sure you're the only who can do that. That's why you have to defend your borders against other gangs. If you don't roll for turf you're not a gangster and the mobs can supply whoever offers the sweetest deal.

Some are trafficked instead. Believe it or not, there's always some part of the world that's even more of a hole than where you are. If they don't speak the language or have papers it's pretty easy to keep them under control. Everything I've heard about this Charon thing out of Europe makes me suspect there's a lot of boys and girls over there

looking for a place to start over. Once they make that decision the rest is all just tossing the dice to see where they end up.

You can always earn something from stringing the faceless who still look half human. But most don't for very long. Still, getting their next hit is like a tax they have to pay. For most of them, they do a bit of stealing or hustling or maybe even some quick work until they make enough to get what they need; that day. There's always tomorrow.

#Paladin: Scum. My sister was hooked on Grace for years before we finally got her defragged. I don't even want to think about what filth like him made her do to get new passwords. She's not a thing. He is. Should have kept him locked forever.

#Rubicon: Tough break for your sister but no one forced her to start flashing now did they? Ganging is a rough business but so is business. Think the suits in the towers are pine fresh?

But there's lots of ways to make money off the faceless. If you can keep one cleaned up for a few days at a stretch they make pretty good mules. Any street doc can do the surgery for body pockets. It's mostly done by cutbots anyway. Not a lot of humans willing to weave those tubes around organs and bones. Jackports are a little trickier, brain drilling always has risks, but there's still enough call for data muling to make it worthwhile. After all, you never run out of the faceless, if your guy starts to twitch and drool just extract the jackport and find another one.

You can always try harvesting to get some use from the faceless. Lots of people don't like the idea of vat grown organs but they never ask too many questions about free range. It hurts, but you can double up most organs in a normal adult. Hell, I've seen guys with ten kidney bubbles. A lot of the faceless actually clean up a bit with all the anti-rejection shots and vitamins boosts in their systems so maybe you're doing them a favor when you put them on a string.

Surrogacy's another big thing. Mothers too busy to carry their own kid pay plenty for a rent-a-womb. Parents usually want to meet and keep tabs on the surrogate so you'll have to keep her cleaned up. It's more work but you can usually charge quite a bit too.

For the faceless who get used up there's always pharming and vamping. Pharming's real easy. Drive them to their appointments and just take the cheque when the lab cuts it. Never know what kind of experiment they'll get picked for but you can keep recycling them from lab to lab so no researcher gets too used to a face.

Vamping's actually even easier. All they really do is lay there while the nanites go to work on their blood. The labs even squeegee everything once they start draining. Gotta be hundreds of uses for engineered blood. Sometimes there are problems with immune systems so you need to keep anyone getting vamped in a clean location. Since by the time you turn one of the faceless over for vamping they're not really moving around much anymore, that's not as hard as it sounds. Just park them somewhere and make sure you got someone to keep them fed and hosed off once a day.

MUSHROOMS

Sometimes you get a feeling that someone was born a mushroom. But mostly, it's just what happens. Poor son of a bitch starts out as regular civilian but bad luck or worse timing puts him in the wrong place.

Then he dies.

Or maybe, if he's lucky, just gets crippled. A mushroom's a walking target. Steps between shooters and eats someone else's bullet. It's sad, but life is like that.

I remember hearing once that it's an old, old saying. Something that came from one of the first games. Way back before TAP or The Death or the Floods. Mushrooms were the things that got blown apart while the players shot at each other.

A lot of mushrooms are kids. Maybe it's like one of those diseases you're born with that kills you before you get too old. Everyone loses someone growing up. That's just how things work in the sprawl. It's not so much that life is cheap. More like disposable.

Let it break you down and you end one of the faceless or maybe a mushroom too.





SQUAWKERS

There's coops all over the sprawl. Good way to get real food like eggs or bird once they stop laying. Squawkers are like that; but people.

Even in the sprawl there are some who figure out ways to make money. Maybe they provide a service or make something others want to buy. You got little businesses like that all over the place. It's only right that you find some use for ones on your turf.

Think of them like birds. You want the eggs and maybe pluck some feathers. But don't chop off their head unless you have to.

Squawkers don't have much. Who does in the sprawl? But they have more than most. Stuff you can take. Not everything. That's important. Almost an art. You gotta leave them enough so they keep on making more for you to take next time. That's why you call them squawkers. Let them make noise but keep them producing.

#Twopennynails: My family runs a little carpentry shop and the gangers never leave us alone. They're like termites. They eat through anything we try to build. Some days I think we should just sit around using nano like the rest of the lazy slobs.

#Hard Case: Sounds like someone's squawking...

Whatever it is they do, squawkers give you two useful things; cash and credit.

Cash is pretty obvious. You get it. You spend it. Sometimes it's product or favors instead of cash but it's all the same in the end. Sunlight. A never ending resource you can always draw on.

Credit is trickier and kind of like candy. Sweet, but once you eat it the candy's gone for good. Still, when you get a squawker to start using that credit, the score gets pretty high. The scam is simple really. No one is going to pay it back. So, get your squawker to borrow as much as he can and transfer the money to you or your friends. Maybe have him order a lot of stuff you can pass through and sell on the corners. Once you've sucked everything out of it burn the business for the insurance.

The key to using a squawker is figuring how hard you can squeeze him. Too hard he breaks or moves on to someone else's turf. Might even get stupid and talk to the copsuckers. Then you have to make an example.

There's no money in examples.

Find a vice and trap him with it. Gambling's good. Drugs make people unpredictable but that's not such an issue if you're planning to chew over his credit and move on. Secrets work too. Find out something he doesn't want his wife or husband to know and use that to move him. Doesn't have to be him either. Lots of squawkers get dragged down by someone they care about. Comes out the same in the end.

Usually though, all it takes is flexing a little muscle. These aren't hard types. They just want to do their thing, make some money and get ahead. It's the sprawl right? Everyone knows how things work. Pay a little here. Do a little favor there. Keep your head down and no one gets hurt. That's why it's so important to know how hard to squeeze.

TOURISTS

Tourists think the Sprawl's a zoo, but forget us animals roam around free. They're just solid citizen types looking for some thrills; nothing wrong with that. They live in the towers, the real towers not the megablocks. But these are the lower floors and while they might have some stock options or a retirement plan they aren't owners.

Take their money and leave them alone. Don't do anything to scare them away or rip them off. Tourists make good customers so you want them coming back.

Tourists can't really look after themselves in the sprawl. They don't know the moves or how things work. This makes them sweet meat as far as most freelancers are concerned. That's why it's up to gangers to keep them safe. If it looks like a tourist is gonna stick around make yourself a guide. Find the clean gash gardens and the joints that run honest games. Make sure dealers sell stuff that won't get them dead or brain cooked.

And, while you're palling around with your new best friend, at least think about shooting some vid. Nothing like proof of someone from the towers sprawling to get a little walking around money. Yeah, I know what I said about taking care of tourists, but all rules have exceptions.

A lot of the time, with tourists, we're really talking about kids. Old enough to have an itch but still in school or internships. They probably live with their parents, or maybe an apartment where

they don't pay the rent. For most of them, it's just a thing they do before settling down. Some fall and join the faceless, but that's a lot rarer because of all the fancy rehab. It still happens though, and when it does those parents can pay to keep their little baby safe. It's called adoption and it's a good way to get a steady drip.

#Magpie: You can always tell a guy's a true OG if he drugs up tweenage kids, vids them having sex with a bucktoothed beaver hybrid, and blackmails them for cryptocreds. Obvious badass.

One final thing on tourists. Remember what I said about leaving them alone? That's only for tourists on your turf. If you're rolling through someone else's turf, tourists are the best duckies of all. Turn one of them into a mushroom and the copsuckers are gonna go after the gangers who actually run the turf. Could get a few of them killed or sent Inside. Or maybe just convince the tourists to stay out of that part of the sprawl and move over to your turf. Stranger things have happened.

UPRIGHTS

For the most part, uprights are just tourists who stay home. They know the secret handshake and have the good jobs. They don't come to the sprawl very often, and when they do they usually bring corp security along with them. Best to leave them alone unless you have an angle to work.

GARGOYLES

Gargoyle's aren't really civilians. They live at the tops of the towers. Their penthouses or executive condos or manager suites have the best security money can buy. And the one thing gargoyles have dripping out of their pockets is money.

If you get a chance to roll at a gargoyle it's one of those "high risk/high reward" situations. A good way to get dead or Inside if you screw up. But the payday can make it worthwhile.

THE LIFE

In the sprawl, gangers are kings and queens. We never wait in line or pay a tab. Clothes are all nique for us, nano never touches our skin.

Transit's for other people, we always have our own rides. If we need anything, we just reach out until we find someone who has it.

On your turf, everyone's your friend and always happy to do you a favor. If they're smart. The word no just sort of fades away.

For sprawlers, especially the young ones, getting ahead is just a dream. Ganging changes that. It means respect and all the nice things you'll never have any other way. People know who you are and walk soft around you.

That's the Life.

#Xbert: It's a shame they have such short horizons. Most gangers are still basically kids by the time they die or get sent to prison. If they could only wait a few more years and develop some maturity they would realize what a dead end path they were on.

#Solitaire: Spoken like someone who doesn't understand the sprawl. You have two choices. Live long and bad or short and better (no such thing as good). And in the sprawl "long" doesn't mean what it does in the towers. Remember how he said he has drum lung? At least he knows what he's got. The sprawl's filled with lots of poisons and diseases the docs haven't gotten around to naming yet.

#Xbert: What about nubacco. Aren't those smoke mites supposed to keep people healthy?

#Solitaire: Maybe they do and the air's just that bad. Or maybe the smoke mites are the problem. Ever think of that?

But that's the trap too. It means you spend all your time rolling and fighting with other gangers instead of the people who keep the world the way it is. And the civilians hate you. They might pretend otherwise but they do. Only thing you got going for you is at least you're not a copsucker.

BECOMING A GANGER

Want to become a ganger? Prove it. That's all it takes. Show you can carry the weight.

For most, it means starting young and rising up. The gang becomes your school and you learn what matters. It's gradual. But one day you suddenly realize you aren't running errands and hanging around the edges listening to the stories anymore. You're telling them. And kids are asking you if you need anything.

That's when you pick your five. Or ten if you're a dudthump looking to prove something.

Picking your five is a tricky thing. Only a smear asks people who really want to hurt him. But






you don't want to ask anyone who likes you too much because people might think you're trying to cheat. And you definitely don't want to ask the guys with real weight; they'll snap you in half.

Once you have your five then it's just a matter of taking whatever they dish on you. If you waited your time and picked the right five, you might need to see a streetdoc later, but you should make it through. You just gotta show you can take a beat down. If you can, you're a ganger. If not, straws instead of forks.

Now some people want to rise faster, so they try things like rolling on their own. It's a good way to get dead; but if you do it a few times and send someone to the furnace you can just claim a spot. Assuming the war you start doesn't shift the borders against your gang of course. If it does? You'll just get wrapped up and dropped out a trunk for the other side to play with.

How did I rise up? I came along during a war with the Death Chorus. I did a few things and earned some ink off guys on the other side. Ended up pushing our border out a couple blocks. When I took my seat at the table one member did wonder when I was gonna pick my five. I showed her the five broken skulls singing while they float on my arm. Never asked again.

STREET NAME

 You can't pick your own street name. That's just one of the rules. Other people give it to you. It's part of having a rep. Once you get it, your street name is your real name. Only your family, the copsuckers, and people with govjobs call you anything else.


Most names come with a story. When people ask you how you got your street name you have to tell them. At least anyone who's not a copsucker or a govjob of course. If you're lucky, this story makes you look good—or at least like someone with weight. But that's not always how it works out. I used to roll with a guy named Catstink. Let's just say he went rolling at the wrong time and ended up hanging under a bridge while a bunch of strays were walking the beams above him...

Me? My name's Roller. How do you think I got it?

People can change your street name. This doesn't happen all that often though. Usually you have to do something pretty spectacular, good or bad, to earn a different street name. When someone tries to tag you with a new street name, decide

right away whether you're gonna accept it or not. If you don't want it, knock that nerdu down fast. Trying to change your name is something gangers do to cut down your rep. Only accept a new street name if it comes with a better story. Even then, think about it since it means you're losing some of your old rep.

LOOKING THE PART

 When you join a gang, you're separating yourself from the herd. Forever. No one ever mistakes a ganger for something else. Most gangs have their own look and members go along. Sometimes it's not hard to figure out. Hybrid packs like the Werewolves lay everything else on top of hair and fangs. The Tomatons go for the robot look so there's lots of dermals, voxing the voice box, and eye beams. I probably don't have to tell you why the Gillies run the docks in a lot of port cities.

Even for more normal gangs, where augmenting and chroming is a choice, body art's still part of the Life. Gangers mark themselves the same way they mark their turf. If you don't have both kinds of ink people look at you funny. I always liked hyper tats more than skin myself, but I have a few of the old-fashioned kind too. Choose your tats carefully. Each one should tell a story. And think about where you put them too. The closer to your heart the more it means. Save your shooting arm for war stories. Only put things you want your friends to see on your back. If it's something for enemies you're saying you might run away.

Most of us switch out our teeth too. Or get them replaced a few at time if we wait too long. It only makes sense to get unbreakables and your average ganger takes the chance to have a little fun instead of just going for another set of pearly whites.

Wear nique if you can but never nano. Even the patterns you have to pay for still aren't good enough for a ganger. People can spot handmades and that sends a message. You're fronting for the entire gang. If you can only afford factory clothes that's still better than nano. But don't expect other gangers to give you weight until you go full nique.

All gangers need a ride. Could be a bike or car but gangers never take transit. That's for civilians. Your ride's like your signature. Everyone should know who you are as soon as you pull up. Yeah,

that makes running harder if they can see you coming but it's part of the Life. If you want to live forever, you're not a ganger.

#Burner: I can sort of understand the paint job and TAP markings, but what about the sound effects? And some rig their rides to produce custom smells too. What's that all about?

#AngrySexyHungry: It's part of the Life Burner. For a ganger, your rep is what matters. Whatever you have to do to get yourself known. The further your name goes, the easier it is to push the border when you go rolling and tagging.

LEARNING THE CODE

Sure, gangers are outlaws. But that doesn't mean the Life has no rules. There's a code. If you break it, hope your brothers and sister just kick you around for a bit. Or maybe kill you. That's better than getting deleted; at least you'll die one of the family. If you get deleted you're just a ghost. Still around, but not a ganger anymore.

Some gangs have special rules or little traditions, but keep these four in mind:

- **Belong:** Your gang is your real family. Count on them and make sure they can count on you. Keep problems with other gangers inside the gang. Loyalty isn't enough. It's about blood.
- **Honor:** Your gang moves together. If one ganger gives his word, then all of you did. Burning another member is the same as killing him. Respect what belongs to another ganger, too. Don't steal from him or mess with his action.
- **No Snitching:** Keep your mouth shut. Doesn't matter if it's a civilian, your mama, or someone from another gang. Gang business is just for other gangers and no one else. And never, ever, talk to the copsuckers or anyone else who works for the system. Cut your own throat first.
- **Walk Tall:** Your pride is your gang's pride. If you act weak, then everyone knows your gang is just paper. Never let a civilian show you up. And find ways to stick it to the copsuckers and other gangs. Most important, walk your borders and defend your turf. Take chances if it means you can push out your border or just when you go rolling.

TURF

Your turf is your world. The more of it you control the stronger your gang. Walk your borders and look for ways to push them out. If you don't mark your territory someone else will. That's why you have keep walking your borders and checking your tags. Spraying is fine, but hypertags are the ones that matter. If another gang kills your hypertags, you must restore them, or your borders get pushed back. That's how a gang dies.

Rolling is what gangers do. When someone rolls through your turf, throw him back before he gets in too far. When you roll through someone else's turf, make yourself known. Take trophies. Throw out some tags. Squeeze a civilian and see what pops out. But remember, rolling and war are two different things. Sometimes rolling leads to a war, but most of the time it's just rolling. If you can't figure out how to roll without starting a war you should stay home.

DEALING WITH THE MOBS

For gangers, turf is everything. That's what makes us different from the mobs. Those guys, they're more interested in rackets or what they call "spheres of influence" than rolling and fighting over territory every day.

We need the mobs and the mobs need us. They have the contacts and the skills. We control the ground. The mobs have to pay us to operate on our turf. But if you charge too much, they might pull out and then you got nothing. Or sometimes, they strike a deal with another gang and help them push the border right over you.

WHO'S WHO

The Life is what it is. But living the Life doesn't pay. You have to find a way to survive inside the Life. Copsuckers might not like it, but a job is a job.

- **Artists:** There's nothing worse than bad art. When you need a fake ID, a dummied credit stick, or a key card you don't want any mistakes. Artists live by their reputations and one bad day can ruin them. That's why they charge so much. Artists are usually freelancers but on good terms with the gangers who run their turf. They cut us a break and we make sure no one messes with them.





- **Bookmakers:** A good bookmaker takes odds on anything. They make their money by tweaking the point spread to make sure they always get a little taste, no matter who wins. Some bookies run games instead of taking bets, but it's all the same. There's a lot of math and busywork in bookmaking. Most gangers don't have the patience to pull it off, so they take bookies under their wing, let them sweat the details and just wait for their cut.
- **Breakers:** Breakers do thieving and burglary, anything physical, but stay away from hurting people. They steal cars and sneak past security alarms. They bust open safes and anything else holding something worth having. Lots of gangers do some work as breakers. The money's good and usually there's less shooting.
- **Crackers:** Crackers are mostly black hats. They bust open systems and run wild in the Deep. They also fight off other crackers. You can't really survive without some on your side. Sometimes you need crackers to do the things artists can't do. Need data or to change some background? Find a cracker.
- **Dealers:** Dealers sell what you're not supposed to have or want. Drugs are just the start. Some deal in weapons or nique goods like animal parts. They also get the new passwords for the different kinds of flash. Most dealers get supplied by one of the mobs. A lot of gangers don't want to get that close to the mobs, but those who do usually live pretty well.
- **Fabbers:** Not all patterns are legal. Fabbers use nano to make the forbidden. Sometimes it's just a matter of cracking a copyright so they can churn out things you're supposed to pay for. But real fabbing is making things that aren't supposed to exist. Fabbers keep their nano machines hidden and blocked with suicide code. They like to work through gangers, since copsuckers treat fabbing worse than murder. It's an easy way to make good money. Until you get caught. Fabled stuff is the only kind of nano most gangers admit to using. It's almost the same as nique.

#Richter 9.99: Fabbers are the worst of the worst. They've got patterns for superbugs and all kinds of WMDs. Only a matter of time before we all get wiped

out unless we take them down first. Just say no to fabbing!

#NostrAnus: Did you like the candy that guy in the van gave you? The corps turned fabbing into a dirty word, not the fabbers. They are the only ones still waging the copyfight. The rest of us gave up and settled for some nanocrap.

- **Fences:** Fences give you money for the stuff you steal. It's never anywhere near what it's worth legit, but it's still a payday. Of course, they can sell you what someone else stole just as easily. Sometimes they just make a handshake for a customer and back away after getting their taste.
- **Loan Sharks:** The name says it all. Sharks loan out money but don't complain to the credit bureau if you don't pay it back. They only kill as a last resort. The dead can't pay their bills. But they aren't afraid to put a deadbeat in the hospital. And friends and family are fair game if that's what it takes to move a mark.

So long as you can scratch up the vig each week, sharks leave you alone. They're happier that way. Ten percent a week is better than actually paying it off. But it's a hard way to live. Sometimes sharks let deadbeats work just to pay off the vig. Or someone in the family. A lot of stringers have an arrangement with a shark. It's a good way to recruit new talent.

- **Rough Boys (or Girls):** Most gangers are rough boys. I was. We do the hard stuff. Get physical. If someone needs to get pretzeled or dead, rough boys take care of it. Squawkers usually pay without making too much trouble, but that's not the only way rough boys can earn. Some of us chase the big scores like hijacking or kidnapping. Banks are nice, but most of their money is in the Deep, not real currency, so you need to pick the right moment to knock one over.

Rough boys are the ones who tangle with the megacorps too. They don't like losing their IP, but they're all about spreadsheets, right? So sometimes it's just smarter for them just to pay out than send in their own guns. Not always of course. Every now and then, you get a suit who wants to teach a lesson. Things can get bloody then.

- **Soft Boys (or Girls):** When a soft boy takes your money, you thank him. They run scams and cons. Often, they team up with other

kinds of crooks to pull off a special job, or sometimes even make them full time members of their crew. For soft boys though, it's all about face to face. They look you in the eye and spin a story you want to believe.

- **Stringers:** Stringers keep people and things on a string. They're usually pimps or madams, but some are a little more exotic. I knew one guy who arranged hunting expeditions out in the wastes. Usually, it was bio-horrors or old school animals but heard sometimes he had zero years sims, or even people who'd stepped wrong.
- **Washers:** Money stays in motion. That's what it does: circulate. Eventually, it always passes through banks or a megacorp. Sometimes even a government gets a lick as it swirls by. For most of us in the Life, moving money around is a problem. It's not all favors or tearing up bills. Sometimes you need real cash.

Washers clean your money for a percentage. Sometimes they set you up with a legit business or a no-show job to justify your income. Other times, they go the hacking route and set you up with an inheritance or lawsuit. Whatever they do, it's all about turning dirty money clean.

AUTHORITY

divide and conquer. That's the big secret. The people in nice suits and designer dresses aren't the ones driving squad cars on Saturday nights. They send in Ravenlocke to recruit our own kind. Give them some power and point them towards the rest of us.

The whole system works that way.

It's designed to keep us fighting each other instead of the gargoyle bastards who actually run things. We have nano, tame AI, biotech, solar power, colonies on other planets, uploaded immortals, and TAP linking us all together. Why are folks still poor?

#925er: That's a good question. There is enough to go around. For the first time ever it's not a resource problem; it's a distribution problem.

#Think4U: It's a laziness problem. It's a stupid problem. It's a whiner problem. Anyone willing to work can still get ahead. The old world went to hell and too many would rather sit in the rubble waiting for handouts than make something of themselves.

We all know the system isn't our friend. But that's not from laziness or indifference; it's by design. We are supposed to hate the system.

The teachers who make you want to cut off your own foot to escape school? The kid stealers down at social services who drag you off to some grope home? The clerk who says you have the wrong papers to vote? The popcops who came to fix your dad after your little brother was born?

It's all part of the plan.

The people who run the world want us feeling alone and helpless. When we band together, they want us to join gangs and go rolling instead of turning on them. It's the same reason we go after civilians too. We're too busy feeding on them to realize they're as screwed as we are.

#SMRT: I wonder if he realizes that he's saying gangers are just the same as these "copsuckers" he hates so much.

#4EvR: What? Gangers are nothing like copsuckers. We have honor.

#SMRT: Both waste their time in pointless conflicts with rivals and prey on civilians who are even worse off instead of challenging the system itself.

We're talking about the megacorps here so it's no surprise they use budgets to kill us. That's why the system doesn't work. They set things up so it's not about helping us but finding some new way to cut. If you keep on trying to do more with less for long enough, eventually it turns into hurting instead of helping.

Nobody expects anyone working for the system to do anything but make a situation worse. Even the ones who might want to help are trapped in red tape and stupid rules. The ones who power trip or only look out for themselves? Let's just say, by the time we're old enough to start dealing with copsuckers and the courts, the system has already programmed us to fight back without even thinking there might be another way.

Where else are we going to end but dead or Inside?

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Tor the most part, street copsuckers are just like a case of food poisoning; nerdu happens, you deal with it and you move on. But trust me, honest copsuckers are a lot worse than the crooked ones. They're barely a step above getting paid in feed, so those who turn down a little baksheesh now and then are looking for





something else to charge their batteries. That's not good news for anyone stuck in gangland.

Usually it's either power or pain. Believe it or not, pain's easier. Gangers don't like crawling for anybody, especially some badge, but face up the wrong copsucker or at the wrong time and you're looking down a barrel before you even realize you stepped wrong. If you're lucky it's a night in jail. Unlucky? Anything could happen.

At least with dirty copsuckers you have a chance to make a deal. Give them a little taste of the good life and they might move on looking for another payday. Take care not to offer too much. That makes them greedy and suspicious. Always start low, but not so low they'd shoot you out of spite, and let them work you up to an acceptable level. If they think it's their game, they can decide when they win it.

But if a copsucker's taking bids you have to keep an eye out to see who's waving money his face. Gangers have enemies. That's just part of the Life. Even a lot of the crooked badges draw the line at going full on rent-a-gun but there's always a few wandering around the sprawl. No matter how high the body count, no one ever investigates these guys. It's always resisting arrest as far as their bosses are concerned; so long as they get a taste too I suppose.

But when dealing with any kind of copsucker, remember the code. No snitching still applies when other copsuckers investigate their own. You don't want to get a rep for cooperation, even if it's to find out who put you in the hospital. Besides, copsuckers have a way of protecting their own. Reporting a beatdown to other copsuckers is a good way to get yourself something worse later on. And eventually your luck runs out.

THE COURTS

Just accept it, there are no old gangers. Those of us who don't get killed end up facing a judge and then get sent Inside. It's not automatic. You get a trial, and sometimes you even win. Everyone gets a lawyer after all.

#BeatdownBrad: You get a lawyer alright. Mine was a druggy client of mine. Eyes glazed like smoked salmon. Pissant could barely hold a pen, so the pen is where I ended up. I lost nine years and two nuts thanks to him so when I got out I took what I was owed, nine toes and two nuts. Learned to sew while I was Inside

though. Hobbies help pass the time, and I make a mean doily. Put the gang colors on them so our crib looks real nice.

Sometimes there's a bad warrant or a copsucker gets caught in a lie, but that doesn't happen often enough. See, the lawnet has judgebot programs. Not exactly real AI but close enough if you stick to legal questions. Copsuckers can access one all the time from their squad cars. If a judgebot tells them they've made a mistake, they usually either find some way to cover their ass or just cut you loose with a promise to get you next time.

But the Life means breaking the law. At some point you roll snake eyes. That's just how it goes.

When you know they've got you, there's no shame in making a deal so long as you don't take anyone else in the Life with you. It's called "sparing the expense of a trial" and most times prosecutors offer some sort of plea bargain in exchange for going quietly. That's what I did.

Turned life into thirty years. Not much considering they sent me home to die after twenty, but it was worth a shot.

Most of the time though, if the crime's small enough you can turn ten years into five, or five years into two. Inside is always crowded and needs room for killers like me. Smaller fry can shave a lot of time off if they play the right angles.

BAIL AND BOUNTY

If you don't plea out right away, you can usually get bail. The judge just gives you a look and tries to figure out how much cash it would take to make sure you show up. The more likely you are to get sent Inside the higher the bail. Most of the time, you need to ask your friends and family to help raise the money. This means if you skip, everyone you care about loses what little they have.

Give a bondsman ten or twenty percent to keep and he'll pay the rest. Assuming he thinks you'll show up so he can get it back of course. Once again, it's about getting friends and family to offer collateral. Stuff he can take from them if you run for it.

Most gangers don't skip bail. It's an honor thing. But some are so afraid of going Inside that they try to run. The law gives bounty hunters a lot of leeway in hunting down skips. They basically own you and can do just about anything to get you

back. If you skip, you got no rights. And they get their money dead or alive, ami.

PRISON

Like I said before, Inside is college for guys like me. If you haven't gone through it, you can't really understand. But I can give you a few tips.

First choice you have to make when you go inside is whether to get fixed. Decide right away, since it means shaving two weeks off of each year of your sentence starting when you sign away your balls. We call it the "clipper discount". Don't worry, you can still get it up but you're shooting blanks from then on. I was going in for thirty years so that alone bought me sixty weeks back. Besides, I already had a kid, a daughter, and I didn't think anyone would want me by the time I got out anyway. Knew my old lady wasn't going to wait around either.

I hear some countries don't give you a choice. If you go Inside for anything they classify as a eugenic violation, they just gas you down and fix you right after the delousing and the EMP. Cut you right out of the family tree.

#Blitz: I wonder, do they fix women too, or just guys?

#Loosey: The operation is harder for us. More expensive too. Mostly they don't bother. Probably figure by the time we get out, we'll be too old for kids anyway.

Truth be told, the EMP is actually a harder adjustment than getting fixed. You still get some TAP, jail TAP, but once they crash your system, you're cut off from the outside world until you get released and rebooted. The Deep is pretty shallow Inside. Mostly official notices and nagatars telling you what to do 24/7. After a while, you even start to miss the spam. It knocks your chrome out of course. Usually, for basic functions like arms and eyes, they give you some stripped down version as a replacement. But they are pure clunk and take forever to get repaired when they break down.

Still, despite that, I was lucky. Did my time at Brewster Correctional; a pretty normal place as Inside goes. Lots of cameras, a few butterfly drones floating out of reach, and guards on loudspeakers shouting orders. You never get used to the shock collars, but most of the guards only push buttons when they have to. A few get the god complex and mess with prisoners. One guard had a thing for virals and kept trying to get us do

big dance numbers; but it never worked right. He ended up fired when the warden found out.

The league setups can go bad really quick if you aren't careful. They never actually tell you to fight, but you just know when the guards have arranged one. Usually they zap you before things get too bloody, but sometimes they don't. The only way to get out of a league is to not fight the first few times. But taking it up the pipe is a hard way to spend your years Inside. That's just what happens once you get the rep for not protecting yourself, and you can only spend so much time in view of the cameras.

On the plus side, the guards who bet on you tend to treat you a little better than the rest. Like taking care of their fighting cock, I guess. Just don't get in the habit of getting beat. If your guards cut you loose, Inside gets a lot harder. Sometimes, if they like you, they set up drops for gifts or even go into business with inmates. It's not like cons are the ones smuggling stuff in from the outside, right?

Besides the league, things aren't all that bad Inside. You miss sunlight, that simulated stuff is no good. And it's important to stay busy. Everyone gets a job, and that makes the day go faster. There's rec time and the library, and all those self-improvement classes. Most join one of the Inside gangs, you gotta have people watching your back, and that's where you get your friends.

And places like Brewster are still better than the solos. Sure, you might have a thousand other guys Inside with you, but you never see them. The doors only open when there's no one on the other side. The avatars they make to keep you company are never enough to replace real people. Solo time is the hardest time. Even guys with weight go crazy. But it's usually a quiet crazy, which makes them easier to manage. For the rest, they've got all the best drugs to keep you drooling your time away.

But there are better places too. Work camps mean you get to go outside while still Inside. Sunshine. Real air. Sometimes even real food if you get a little garden going. Everyone applies for transfers to work camps, but they're mostly rewards for good behavior or snitching. You still get the shock collars, but you almost never get zapped. Too much risk that you'll come to in a transport heading back to a real prison.





The only problem is that the system thinks all work camps are the same. Put in for a transfer and you might end up in an orbital doing grunt work in a space suit instead of outside. Or one of those underwater places where you'll never get dry again. I hear there's even work camps out on other planets. Can't think why you'd send a ganger out to one of the colonies, but the system doesn't run on sense. Maybe they just need some expendables. Not a lot of prisoners finish their sentence if they get sent to those kinds of work camps.

Guess where the troublemakers go when put in for a transfer?

PAROLE AND TRACKERS

Once you go Inside, they own you forever. Even if they let you out, you're never really free again. Most folks leave on parole, and some get trackers implanted if they're worth the bandwidth. Sometimes, they put you on parole even if you served your full sentence. It's called "mandatory supervision." Fancy words for, "you're reamed, chum."

With parole, it's all about violations. If you break one of their rules, you go back Inside. That's either more of your sentence or a year or so if doing a mandatory gig. Your parole officer owns you like a whore on his string. He can violate you for pretty much any reason, and it takes months to get an appeal.

A PO can make up his own rules. There's not much you can do about it. But the big ones are maintaining a residence and showing employment. Working for some half-assed civilian sucks. They always power trip if they get a ganger under their thumb. But if you manage those two, you should be okay during your weekly appointment. Don't miss that. The random visits and drug tests mostly depend on how much your PO hates you. If he catches you associating with other gangers, you're done.

Still, parole is a lot better than getting a tracker implanted along your spine or in your head. There's not a lot of angles you can work with a tracker. They pulse about every two seconds and send your location back to the AI monitoring you. If you go out of your zone or near any forbidden place, it knows pretty quick. Anyone who can log

onto the lawnet and knows your ID code can find you without a problem. This means they can also zap you. Yeah, trackers have electrostim. Every few years there's a scandal when some cracker figures out how to slip into the lawnet and kill somebody.

PRISON EXPERIMENTS

Still, there are worse things than getting reamed by a jagged parole officer or a tracker soft beeping on your spinal cord. When the walls start to close in, or it seems like the calendar is moving backwards, some of us get desperate. I'm lucky, I guess. They let me out on compassionate grounds with ten years left. Before I got close enough to qualify, so I never had to make that choice.

But I know a lot of guys who volunteered for one of those "Rehabilitation" programs. Sure, if you qualify that means they let you out as soon as they finish checking off their boxes, but it's a pretty hard way to shave the last few years off your stint. Want to know the suicide rate of habbers? You don't. You really don't. One way or another, habbing is for life.

Eventually, these programs are always scrapped. They end up costing too much or get bad press. Sometimes there's a human rights lawsuit, or one of their habber guinea pigs cracks up and goes on a rampage. Whatever the reason, they always realize that they would have been better of just keeping the poor bastard locked up in a cell. But they doesn't mean they don't come up with some brave, new, bold idea the next time they want to trim the food budget.

A lot of these programs monkey around with the brain. That's scary enough. But to cut costs, sometimes the doc or prof in charge uses students instead of doing it himself. I've seen fraudsters who were supposed to just stutter whenever they tried to lie end up never making sense again. They sound like some wacko religious type babbling in tongues. The anti-violence conditioning gets rough sometimes, too. If you're lucky, they just put a new gland in your brain that releases happy juice whenever you get mad. There are worse things than just being stoned all the time, right? But sometimes, the juice makes you throw up or pass out instead. And it's not always triggered just by angry thoughts. I heard about one guy who

pukes whenever he cums. Not a lot of second dates, and even his alone time must get kind of tricky.

#GodsGift: What! Think I'd rather just do my time thank you very much.

#Moon Maiden: Maybe not such a bad idea for some of these sick freaks.

The body mods aren't much better. There are people who change colors to match their moods, or spray out nano mites likes dandruff to make it easy to track them. Patch that color changing into the circulatory system, and it's a recipe for a heart attack. Those nano mites? All I can say is you better hope they never glitch and eat you.

Ever get downwind of someone who's been skunked? Sure, it's only supposed to activate when they produce adrenaline, but sometimes it gets switched for hunger, fatigue, or even happiness. It's not like they get used to the smell either. The stink is just as bad for them as everyone else.

THE LIFELINE

♣ f all else fails, they still have the Lifeline. You know on ships, a lifeline is the thing they throw if you fall in the water? It saves you. Gives you a second chance. Hard to believe. Of course, once upon a time, there was this thing called privacy.

Lifeline searches are too easy. Try to get a job, rent an apartment, apply for a permit, or just about anything else without someone running you through the Lifeline first. If you have a record, the Lifeline knows it. Hell, it knows if you were just suspected of doing something.

#DragonsFan: This is true. I'll admit I used to get a little rowdy sometimes when the Dragons won a big game. But I never hurt anybody. Facial recognition software tied me to the celebrations though. That's all it took. Now I can't get a call back for any kind of decent job. Damn Lifeline!

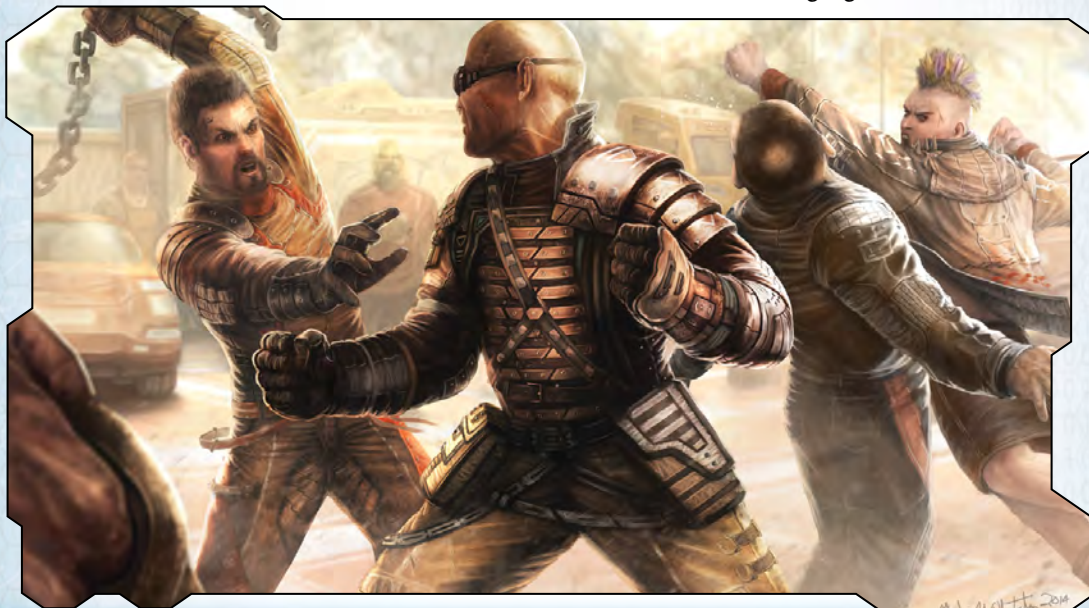
#NotYourMom: Celebrations? Don't you mean riots? If you like getting drunk and breaking windows or turning over cars, don't you think possible employers have a right to know that?

SURVIVING ON THE OUTSIDE

Once the system takes hold, you can't escape. The best you can do is live free until it gets taken away. That's just the way the Life works. But if you go on long enough, there's no such thing as a happy ending. Everyone dies in the end.

Look at me. I had my time and I was one of the best. But I got sent Inside. All my friends died while I stared at the wall. They let me out early. Sent me home to die. But no one in my gang remembers me. They still let me sit around and tell boring stories from before they were born, but I'm an old man.

And there are no old gangers.



ROVERS

–Darius “Sharkey” Uglatark, Hybrid and Rover decker for the Unicorn

Look! My deck name is Sharkey, not that other one. After all, it’s the shark DNA that matters, so don’t bother asking what else I’ve got inside me. Can’t believe people keep bringing back that damn show. It’s been more than a hundred years! Really hate the theme song.

#Cool Breeze: Faster than lightning...

#F’Luke: No one you see is smarter than he!

Sure, I know baiting each other is part of the Rover way; but we get to choose our deck names and people should respect that. Maybe I’m just a decker, only six months since I jumped the bow; but I’m not drifting anymore. I’m real crew, away from my family, and it’s time I started getting treated like it. If you let people knock you off your feet you’ll get swept over.

#Cool Breeze: I think the poor fellow’s got something stuck up his blowhole.

F’Luke: Yeah, maybe someone should teach him to balance a ball on his nose. Tricks like that are a good way he could earn some fish...

Anyway, I’m here to tell you about us Rovers. How we came to be and how we live. Not talk about stupid squalls with my crew. The captain says I’m the newest crew, so I haven’t had time to forget the lessons everyone else has. That means it’s all up to me.

FROM THE LAND TO THE WATER

Whe Rovers were born in the Floods. When the waters rose, it wasn’t just cities that disappeared; entire nations drowned. You should see the old charts and how many islands are just gone. Real islands, not the ones we build around abandoned oil rigs, or the flotsam atolls and whatever else we can find to dock on.

See, along the coasts most of the displaced simply moved a little further inland. The island people had nowhere else to go. They became the first Rovers, but not the last. Some of the coastal folks weren’t welcome when their cities got washed out. Maybe they weren’t the right color or didn’t speak the right language. Whatever the reason, they had to start sailing too.

It was years before the first crews even realized they were Rovers. Starting out, they were called Climate Refugees and Boat People. They sailed all over, looking for new homes, but times were tough, and no one wanted extra mouths to feed. That’s when our reputation for thieving and crime began. The muddies robbed them of any other way to live, so they did what they had to do.

Then The Death happened. Ash choked the sky for years. Suddenly, having a ship wasn’t such a bad deal. The oceans were big and it was a lot easier finding food and power on the water than the land.

That’s when we took the name Rover. And I mean took. Up to then, Rover was an insult the muddies used when they chased our kind away. But we made it our own. Nothing wrong with staying on the move when standing pat meant eating your dog and then giving grandpa a sideways look. A lot of muddies figured this out too and headed out to sea. That was a problem for some who were already out there.

#Deep Anchor: The Hull war. That’s maybe the hardest thing to understand about the early days. I can’t believe some folks back then thought you could own the water. And attacking other ships just because they were new?

#Backstroke: First generation. Still a lot of muddy thinking. Took some time to rinse it out. But the fighting didn’t last that long.

#Deep Anchor: Mostly. Some fools never learned. Where do you think the melters got their start?

A CULTURE, NOT A NATION

A lot of muddies can’t get their head around the idea that Rovers have no country. Countries are about land and borders. Not a lot of them on the water. We’re a way of life. That’s why we call ourselves the “Rover culture” and not a nation. A lot of ports don’t even expect us to have passports or papers anymore. For those that won’t just accept our name and ship, we tend to claim one of the drowned lands and dare them to prove otherwise.

It’s not like anyone is going to dive down and check, right?

Stupid, really. What, do they think we'd jump ship or something? Land is just the place you go in between sails. It's a stopover where you take on supplies, look for some ways to fatten your accounts, and see new faces. Or whatever other body parts you can sweet talk. That's the one thing about spending so much time on the water. You get to know your crew really well. Doesn't take long to run out of things to talk about. I think a lot of ships take on passengers just to keep the crew swirling. We don't mind letting a muddy drift for a sail or two. Especially if they can sing, dance, tell stories, or do anything else to make the days—and nights—different.

The nights...

Despite what you might have heard, we don't trade sex for passage. And we certainly don't sell the people we welcome on board! Sure, the nights are long and cold sometimes, so we don't turn passengers away from our bunks. But all the rest of that talk is just muddy fantasy and some of us having a little fun with stories once we hit shore.

The thing is, unlike most people these days, we Rovers have to spend a lot of time entertaining ourselves. Sure, we've got TAP, who doesn't? But there's not a lot of hyper reality on the water. Rovers spend weeks and months alone on board with no one but each other, and maybe a passenger, for company. Most of us learn ways to entertain our crew. Everyone takes a turn. Of course, after a hard day, sometimes you're just too tired.

Maybe that's why we spend so much time watching and listening to the old media. The stuff that was popular before TAP came along. Probably also explains the baiting. Insults, teasing, and practical jokes are just part of the Rover way. They keep things from getting too damp. If you can't handle it and turn to fighting instead of retaliation, then you probably can't pull the hard sails. Best your captain finds out early and puts you to shore before you make real trouble.

#Cool Breeze: At least our young decker knows that much! Almost like he lives in a world of wonder...

#F'Luke: Speaking of, I wonder if he's figured out how to unrig the squeaks his bunk makes every fifteen minutes. Thought he might be home sick, so I set it up for some dolphin talk.

That's why we don't need governments or elections and all that other muddy foolishness. Each ship has a captain. That's enough. For

important decisions, smart captains talk things over with the crew first. And there aren't a lot of stupid captains, not for very long at least.

Captains run their ships and their crew. That's just how it is. All us Rovers live on little floating kingdoms. They make the rules and anyone who can't live by them gets put to shore. Things are a little different on the flotsam atolls and the anchors, but captains decide about things like weapons and drugs and chrome on their ships. I hear some even own sims, but I find that hard to believe. Maybe melters, but not real Rovers.

They decide when to fight and when to run, too. Usually, sailing away from a problem is the smart thing to do. Sure, sometimes you have to defend your ship, rescue crew from trouble with muddies, or help out other Rovers. But captains don't risk their ship or crew unless they must. Not much worse than losing your ship.

THE DROWNED TOUR

Most Rovers take the drowned tour at some point in their lives. A lot of us actually wait until we lose our first ship. Sort of makes sense, I guess, pressing the sadness together all at once. Each of the lost islands have their own beacons and a flat float so any ship can find them; but, many of us, even if we still have a ship, use one of the boats that cycle through the tour instead.

I've never actually taken the drowned tour, but my parents did. They're like me, or I suppose I'm like them, hybrids, mostly shark and nothing else worth mentioning, so they didn't need to use breathers. I hear the shrines are pretty amazing. Every single rock's been carried down by a different one of us and fitted into the master plan. Some are just buildings, but others are a lot more elaborate. Depends on the original plans for each shrine.

The keeper in the flat float up above makes sure everyone follows the plan. I bet that's a lonely life, but probably the closest thing we have to a religion. Or, for traveling folk like us, a pilgrimage. Guess that makes the keepers our priests.

#Deep Anchor: I remember when I went on the drowned tour. I never felt so connected to the early years.

#Backstroke: We came along later, so I don't have an island to remember, but I think I'd like to go anyway when the time is right. It's something for all of us, not just the descendants of the first generation.



#Deep Anchor: When I'm too old to sail, maybe I'll become a keeper. Those flat floats probably actually have more room than a ship since there's no one else to crowd you.

Some of the shrines are larger than others. Maybe more Rovers came from that particular island back during the Floods. Or the families just kept the traditions alive better than some of the others. Me? My people came from the Marianas. I don't know a lot about them or speak more than a few words of Chamorro, but I'm going to go there someday. It's important to remember where we came from and what the Floods took as well as gave.

Supposedly, there are still a lot of buildings and wreckage down below on some of the islands. We're talking about islands, not cities, so no one salvages here of course. I think when I go on the drowned tour I'll do some exploring, too. Like I said, I don't need a breather so I can take my time. Get a feel for how things were before the Floods.

GROWING UP ON BOARD

If you can't pull your own weight on board, you're a drifter. Usually that's just for kids. When you get too old or sick to crew anymore, you moor on land and wait until the waves call you home. Some folks decide to swim into the sunset instead, but that's mostly captains who can't bear the thought of giving up their ship.

There's nothing better than growing up on board. The whole crew looks out for you. Every day has new adventures and you never stop learning. But there comes a time when you get too big to keep on drifting. That's when you have to find your own crew. Anyone who says jumping the bow isn't scary is a liar. Leaving your family and your old ship behind means saying goodbye to everyone and everything you knew. But finding a new ship and becoming a decker is part of growing up.

Take it from me, I've been a decker for about six months now and it sucks. You do all the worst jobs, and the crew is on you like a pack of gulls. Sure, you finally get to pick your deck name and the party's great, but the next day you're the new decker and your head won't stop pounding. My ship, the Unicorn, is normal sized. That means only one decker at a time. I can't wait for the captain to decide I'm ready to crew and she takes on a new decker. There's more to it than simply

getting someone below me. Or even starting to earn a full share instead of just shore pay. I won't lie, that's important if I ever want to earn my own ship, though.

No, it's about respect. Nobody treats deckers like real crew. In some ways, we're worse off than drifters. At least kids have free time and they don't get baited that much. Except by other drifters and their parents, of course. Plus, you're alone. I think it would be easier if I had other deckers suffering with me. But most ships aren't big enough to need more than one decker at a time.

Still, once I'm crew, I'm going to climb fast. I don't know if I'll stay here on the Unicorn or start sliding from ship to ship. There's a lot I want to see and do and sliders don't have much trouble upping their share. If a new captain wants you to crew that much, you can make a good deal for yourself.

EARNING YOUR SHARE

There's crew, and then there's crew. It's all based on how much share you have. Sometimes you get senior crew who actually have more of a share than the captain. But each ship still only has one captain and share can't change that.

What's share? Muddies...

A crew works together and so it earns together. When a ship makes money, everyone gets a little shore pay and the rest gets divided up based on share. Some of that goes right back to the ship. Of course your ship should get share; who works harder than the ship?

All crew get at least one share. Most earn more based on their years and their training. Sliders usually have special skills or talents so they can demand a lot of share and move around from crew to crew chasing the money.

#Cool Breeze: I hate sliders. No loyalty. Crew should stick with their ship until they're ready to become a captain. If our little decker doesn't understand that, maybe we haven't been teaching what it means to be crew.

#F'luke: Hmm... Maybe you're right. I guess we'll have to start baiting him now.

When a ship does well, all the crew prospers. Senior crew, with more share, tend to do better than the rest. Eventually, if enough money comes in, people can start thinking about buying or building a ship. Sometimes they can go it alone,

and sometimes they agree on who gets to be captain and they pool their money. If the stars are just right, you can even buy your own ship if your captain gets too old to keep sailing and has to go to land.

Not everyone wants to become a captain, of course. Some crew are so good at their jobs, and have such share, that giving it up for their own ship doesn't make any sense. But most Rovers dream of captaining their own ship and crew.

DIVING AND SAILING

All Rovers can dive, and all Rovers can sail. It's part of what we are. I was lucky, my parents wanted me like them, so they let me go hybrid while still pretty young, but even I learned the basics of diving. Everyone has their own suit, and no one is stupid enough to let someone else maintain it.

We dive for fun and we dive for profit. Lots of crews make good money scavenging through drowned cities or wrecks. A lot of muddies hire us for our diving skills, too. Most of the time, it's to keep them safe or teach them a few tricks; but not always. Sometimes they need experts for one reason or another and, when they do, they always turn to us Rovers. If you ever see a movie with an underwater fight scene or a documentary about some ancient wreck, there's probably a Rover behind that breather.

Don't think diving isn't dangerous, even for us. Breathers make air from water, so there's no risk of running out like the old scuba tanks used to. But that just means you have to pay attention to the charge instead. If your breather runs out of juice underwater, you drown just like the old days. And that's not the only problem. Wrecks and ruins are filled with surprises. If you're careless, or just unlucky, you can get trapped somewhere until your breather runs down; or maybe you get hurt and bleed out. There are actually booby traps in some dives, but most of the time it's just holdovers activating and making trouble. And then there's the sharks and other living threats. You never know when something wants to see how you taste. Of those, the bio-horrors are the worst. Seems like every year something new and nasty escapes from a lab and starts having babies.

Now sailing, that's the only the life worth living. Don't get me wrong, lots of ships have motors too, but the sail is what matters. Without a sail, it's just a boat. Sure, boats are faster; but they eat fuel and ever since the end of oil we've known that wind lasts forever. That's why boats can't race, only ships. And what's the point of roving if you can't beat someone's time or actually outpace them? How do you know which ship is better if you don't race? It's not like we'd fight each other or something. We're not muddies.

Rovers tend not to like ships so big you don't know everyone on board pretty well. Most come in between ten and thirty people total. That's crew, drifters, and passengers alike. There are larger ships out there; some can carry a couple hundred on board, but they were usually built for a reason. Someone once told me the Trident has four hundred crew on board. Considering she carries copters and subs, I can believe it.

ANCHORS AND FLOTSAM ATOLLS

Not all Rovers actually sail. Some are too old or sick. Others are waiting for repairs or looking to crew on a new ship. And some were put on shore for reasons any captain would understand, but still won't give up on being Rovers. There are a lot of causes, but Rovers without a ship to call home live on anchors or flotsam atolls.

Anchors belong to someone else. They're dry land even if it's just a few specks from what's left of an island. Anchors have governments and everything that comes with that. Most places aren't actually anchors, just ports; but, if a place is friendly to our kind, it's an anchor. Australia's probably the most famous anchor out there. New Zealand, too. And, of course, what's left of poor old Hawaii. Some anchors like us for the business we bring or the money we spend. Other anchors are part of deeper alliances.

We try to keep things flat and smooth when we go to shore at an anchor. Not to say we cause trouble in ports, of course! But friends are hard to come by for Rovers, so usually we do make more of an effort. Rovers who can't behave themselves can get banned by their captain. And that's one ban all captains support, so it follows you even if you change crew. Nothing worse than staying on board when everyone else gets to go to shore.





Flotsam atolls are Rover territory. We build them, so we own them. Sure, a lot of them are formed around something we salvaged—like an abandoned oil rig—but they are still ours. Nobody has ever managed to drive us off one and, nowadays, folks mostly don't even bother trying.

#Deep Anchor: Let's be honest here. It was Global Promises Incorporated that saved our asses from the reclaimers.

#Backstroke: Hey, it's Rover blood that was shed when we defended our salvage rights. Not sure why the reclaimers even bothered. It's not like anyone wanted them before we started fixing them up.

#Deep Anchor: But it was GPI that fronted us the nano machines and designed the patterns. They even sent in some corp muscle a few times when it looked like we might lose. Still don't know what angle they were playing.

#Backstroke: Maybe it's just a favor they'll call in some day.

#Deep Anchor: Better hope a favor's all they want.

Of course, it's not really right to say we build them from flotsam. All ships have dragnets and we just collect the garbage and driftwood floating around so we can turn it into feed. That's the great thing about nano. You can turn almost anything into feed and then use it to make what you want. Assuming you've got the right pattern, obviously.

All the atolls turn out the same tiles but choose their own colors and layout. Strong, light, and designed to lock together, they make a platform that extends over the water. As good as land. Maybe even better, since they float a bit. You never have that sick feeling you get when you first go ashore.

The flotsam atolls are one of the few places where we Rovers get to set our own course. Most have just a few hundred permanent residents, but that's a lot since crews are only a couple dozen at best. Captains, retired or just in harbor, talk things over in council and make the important decisions. They make sure everybody kicks in to the common share, so that no one goes hungry or sleeps outside when the weather gets bad. Not many grumble about that. As the saying goes, anyone can fall overboard, so the common share is everybody's safety line.

If Rovers can't do something ourselves, we look for help at the flotsam atolls. Keeping things in the family, I guess. They are the closest thing we have to industry or a real economy. Where we build and repair our ship. Where we trade with each other. And where we throw our biggest parties.

MU

Mu was the first of the flotsam atolls and it's by far the largest. It's also the only one that's not under Rover control. Niles Auburn started the thing; wanted to clean the oceans of all that garbage from the age of oil, and his heirs have kept it up. At least they never tried to chum us by joining up with the reclaimers and saying they own all the other flotsam atolls we actually do control.

I only saw it once, but it's not something you'd forget. It must be eight or nine miles across. There's always Rovers docking on the edge or doing odd jobs for the Auburns, but none of us ever mistake Mu for home ground. It's one of the great wonders of the world, and we Rovers are always welcome, but there's something strange about it.

Maybe that's where all the rumors come from. Some think the Auburns plan to build their own continent, or maybe even cover the world. Others say they want to make land bridges and connect the continents, so nobody needs to sail anymore. And some think one day they're going to turn Mu into a spaceship and just fly away. Not sure about any of that, but there are a few places in the center of Mu that outsiders aren't welcome, so people keep spinning tales. Just another way to pass the time, I guess.

MUDDIES

Some Rovers think the world would be a better place if there weren't any muddies; but I say that's close to melter talk. It's true, most muddies don't trust us and a lot of Rovers return the favor, but I think we need each other. What's the point of sailing from one empty place to another? And when muddies need a quiet way to travel or something special, who do they turn to?

You see, muddies worry about a lot of dumb things, which makes them pass a lot of dumb laws. Laws not even they really want to follow. So, they need us Rovers to help them out. Our ships are small, so we have to find ways to get as much value out of cargo as we can. Muddies pay a lot for things they were stupid enough to ban in the first place. That's not to say we don't haul regular freight, of course. But cargo makes a great sideline. Then they hide their foolishness by blaming us for selling them what they want to buy.

And then there's the games. Sure, we Rovers like baiting each other, but that's nothing compared to baiting muddies. Since muddies care so much about money, we use that to keep score. It's all in good fun, but they can't take a joke. Muddies call us scam artists and fraudsters, but we never bait someone who can't afford to lose. Same way you don't throw someone who can't swim overboard.

#Deep Anchor: Don't forget the Cape Town raid. Didn't take much to make the muddies think those really were Rover ships. Like you could get thirty Rover ships to agree on anything. Let alone attacking an entire city.

#Backstroke: Yeah, even when they got their power back and started taking out the ships, the muddies still tried to claim it was Rovers disguised as regular crooks disguised as Rovers. Dumb, dumb, dumb.

But I think the one thing that makes muddies the choppiest is how we choose passengers. All those rumors about the sex and depravity. I wish! We offer passage to interesting people. And young, good looking people are interesting. In some places, because of the tales, some folks only ask for passage when they're desperate to get away. That's on their parents or spouses or bosses, not us. But muddies make up crazy stories about kidnappings and enticement so they can blame us for driving away the people they care about. Stupid muddies...



THE MELTERS

Now, there's one final thing you have to understand about Rovers. We're still human. And that means, just like everybody else, we've got our share of scum and fools. If you've only got one sip to describe the melters, that's what they are.

If you've got more than a sip, the melters are the ones trying to make the oceans bigger. They want to bring back the Floods. How? Their name's the big clue. Believe it or not, there's still a lot of ice left down in Antarctica and they plan to thaw it out.

Most of them never actually get that far, of course. Calling something a melter scheme is the same as calling it a dry ocean. But they keep trying. And they make a lot of trouble in the meantime. See, if you're already trying to drown the world, odds are a lot of other bad stuff seems pretty trivial.

It's melters who really throw us Rovers into the chum. They are the pirates and the slavers. They smuggle dangerous stuff, evil things, into ports all over the world. You don't even want to know what happens to passengers who sign onto a melter ship. Muddies can't tell the difference, so they think we're all in the same wash.

Of course, not even other Rovers can spot melters most of the time. It's not like they paint big signs on their sails or anything. They keep to their own ships and act like normal folks when dealing with the rest of us. Still, since melter ships work together sometimes, they must have ways to recognize each other.

Rovers are pretty tolerant of most things. But when we know someone's a melter he better know how to swim. Maybe we were born in the Floods, but that doesn't mean we want them to come back.



TIMELINE

2010-2019

- **2011:** Oil Crisis causes food shortages in third world nations. Famine and malnutrition are on the rise.
- **2011:** Spartus Space Group launches the first commercial space liner into low orbit.
- **2011:** The war on terror shifts as corporations gain legislation allowing 'financial borders' as nations.
- **2012:** The United States cuts funding to NASA's shuttle program.
- **2012:** Hurricane Nicole causes the destruction of Cape Canaveral.
- **2013:** The GENIE network is created. Worldwide satellite networks are repurposed to create global WiFi.
- **2013:** Genome Augmentation Project begins in South Korea.
- **2013:** Civil War in Ecuador begins. Rebels rumored to be backed by US government.
- **2013:** South American drug war begins. Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, and Colombia drag the entire region into conflict. UN deploys peace keepers with the support of Brazil and Argentina.
- **2014:** GENIE phase 2 begins. Wireless repeater network is deployed across Earth's mesosphere.
- **2014:** G13 Summit cut short by a terrorist attack. Chechnyan anarchist group Black Bear claims responsibility.
- **2014:** The battle of Puerto Ayacucho occurs. Hanscomb Food Group security contractors get into a firefight with Venezuelan military. Hanscomb cites humanitarian efforts to seize government food stores to redistribute to the starving populace. The United Nations side with the corporation, opening the door for corporations to legally attack governments.
- **2014:** Russia annexes the Crimean Peninsula.
- **2015:** GENIE phase 3 begins. Cloud technology hubs are repurposed to support GENIE.
- **2015:** GENIE phase 4 begins. 'The Bottle', a hand-held device allowing for full spectrum communication and Internet access is

released for early adopters. PDAs, cell phones, and tablets soon become obsolete.

- **2016:** South Korean pharmaceutical company HEALTH CORP. creates the first cloned human, sparking global controversy.
- **2016:** MIT patents the world's first material assembler.
- **2016:** China annexes Taiwan.
- **2017:** The African border war. Kenya and Ethiopia declare war on Sudan, followed by Chad. China deploys defensive troops in Sudan to protect its interests.
- **2017:** Saudi Royal family is killed by Council of Islamic Clerics.
- **2018:** Treaty of Buenos Aires ends the South American drug war. Brazilian peace keeping troops patrol the entire conflict zone.
- **2018:** Sentinel Rock Corporation patents the first personal power suits and begins selling military grade power armor to governments across the world.
- **2018:** Hanscomb Food Group patents Bos NeoTaurus cloned cow meat.
- **2019:** Global climate change brings a nonstop deluge of catastrophic storms across the world. Climatologists predict this "Deluge" will only increase in strength and frequency.
- **2019:** Treaty of Salzburg reunites North and South Korea.
- **2019:** China's Communist Party attempts to introduce its own cryptocurrency on Singles Day, a plan sabotaged by the New Mandarins.

2020-2029

- **2020:** The New Chinese Mandarinate bureaucratic meritocracy deposes the Communist Party.
- **2020:** Cayman Islands, Barbados, and Jamaica sign the Caribbean economic league treaty, creating global tax sheltering on par with pre-2012 Switzerland.
- **2021:** World population breaks 8 billion. Rural population decreases while urban population increases.

- **2021:** Corporate enclaves begin to appear. Corporate staff and families are housed in these high security compounds.
- **2021:** The Gyre trash heap, a floating island of trash the size of Alaska is claimed by Australian billionaire Niles Auburn. The billionaire begins constructing floating biospheres and attaches them to the Gyre.
- **2022:** South America and Central Africa, both still war zones, see the first use of gene spliced and bio-augmented soldiers.
- **2023:** Corporations exert power over national governments in both the EU and US.
- **2023:** GENIE phase 5 begins. Aerosol form micro-signal repeaters released into a global cloud layer.
- **2024:** Citing violations of its treaty obligations to the now-vanished North Korea and the dangers posed by suspected bio-weapons manufacturing facilities, China overruns the entire Korean peninsula in less than two weeks of fighting. Foreign media observers, pointing out the internal tension caused by the surplus of males in the Chinese population because of its one-child policy, term it the “Bachelor War.” In the years that follow, China follows up their Peninsula Campaign with a series of successful conflicts, all of which display the swiftness of their advance and the overwhelming success of their objectives.
- **2024:** Brazil transitions to a theocratic government. Argentina forms the South American Evangelical League of Nations, otherwise known as the Liga Del Apostle.
- **2024:** Matrix of War released for Game Station Pro. The groundbreaking game makes use of Artificial General Intelligent (AGI) NPCs and bosses.
- **2024:** “EyeConic” headset introduced, allowing users to interact with Virtual Reality. Corporations immediately repurpose them for advertising.
- **2025:** Australia’s Great Barrier Reef declared officially dead. A leaked recording of politicians from all parties joking about it provokes widespread fury and the fall of the government. The Green party changes its name to the Reef party and wins a surprise minority government, beginning its long climb to dominance.
- **2025:** Zhou octuplets born just outside Tianjin, ironically in the same year China gives up on all attempts at population control by formally ending its modified two births only policy. Web shows devoted to the “Zhou eight” make them national icons for the entirety of their lives.
- **2025:** Moonshot foundation completes Free Global Wireless Network (free-g), despite furious attempts by corporate interests to block it. Many countries subsequently pass laws designed to make this sort of largescale altruism easier to stop.
- **2026:** Rising sea levels make many coastal regions uninhabitable. New York and New Jersey are forced to implement coastal levees and dikes.
- **2026:** The entertainment industry begins to use gene splicing technology to widen available roles for actors. Wealthier segments of the population quickly follow suit. Gene splicing becomes a fashion trend.
- **2026:** Whistleblower Kylie Janz releases footage of the Miami Drone Massacre, which shows boats containing Cuban refugees fleeing the chaos of Hurricane Valerie getting blown apart without warning nearly a hundred miles offshore. Charges against the drone operators are ultimately dismissed in what becomes a legal precedent.
- **2026:** Hacker Truenam3r exposes a rival’s real identity and inadvertently begins The Great Dox, the first online war. Within months, most of the world’s elite hackers are either dead or in prison. The secrets of many other influential people or organizations also leaked leading to a stock market crash and other turmoil.
- **2027:** Rio De Janeiro destroyed by tsunami, leaving only the statue of Christ the Redeemer intact. Brazil vows to rebuild further from the coastline.
- **2027:** The United States formally leaves NATO.
- **2027:** France sponsors Algiers and Morocco, gaining them admittance to the European Union.
- **2027:** A border skirmish between Columbia and Venezuela evolves into the first of many



Water Wars to rock South America over the next two decades. The political instability is blamed on a combination of drought and contaminated flooding caused by climate change and deforestation of the Amazon rainforest.

- **2028:** VR Game Edenmyn crosses threshold of 100 million subscribers. The Mad Hatters, one of the many clans, guilds, and tribes within the game vow to keep their alliance with each other in real life as well as virtual.
- **2028:** Messianic ecoterrorist group NOAH unleashes GLUTTON, a synthetic bacteria designed to consume oil. Stock markets across the world go into tailspin.
- **2028:** A massive heatwave coupled with economic turmoil triggers the Arab Summer. Thousands of Saudi royals are either slaughtered or forced into exile. Many other governments also fall to an alliance between secularists and religious moderates that evolves into reformed Islam.
- **2029:** Pakistani students burn down the Indian embassy.
- **2029:** United Nations caps off the previous ten years of climate chaos by naming it the Deluge Decade. It estimates at least thirty-five million people have already been displaced by climate change and project the number to more than triple by 2040.
- **2029:** On May 20th, a previously unknown terrorist group, The Way to Palestine, attempts to destroy Jerusalem with a smuggled “dirty” nuclear device. The comparatively weak bomb spreads radioactive debris throughout the city, rendering portions of it uninhabitable and condemning tens of thousands to slow, lingering deaths. In retaliation, a faction within the Israeli Defense Force loyal to the new hardline Lehi Party sets off a much larger dirty bomb over the Al-Masjid al-Harām (The Grand Mosque) in Mecca, killing thousands in the initial blast and exposing over a million and a half of its residents to radioactive material; making the holy city hostile to human life for at least a thousand years. Ronin linked to the Alat Industrial Group thwart a similar attack on the city of Medina.

- **2029:** May 23rd, Israeli-Arab Nuclear War begins. A limited nuclear exchange between Iran, Israel, and Pakistan results in the destruction of much of the Fertile Crescent. Most of Israel is destroyed in addition to cities throughout Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt. The majority of Israel’s population flee the Holy Land. Likewise, most of their neighbors leave the region. The use of nuclear weapons prompts India to declare war on Pakistan. The resulting action triggers a second nuclear exchange on the Indian subcontinent days later. In the span of twenty-four hours nearly half a billion lives are lost, marking the beginning of The Death.

2030–2039

- **2030:** Global fallout creates crop shortages; global population declines from 11 billion to 9.6 billion.
- **2030:** Unlicensed “Street Docs” emerge as a popular alternative to out-of-control health care costs.
- **2030:** United States President Calhoun declares a national emergency, activates the ten FEMA sectors and gives control of each region to governors, who are responsible for maintaining order in their respective territory.
- **2030:** Discovery of Neural Conduction promises a future where cybernetic limbs and organs are superior to biological ones.
- **2031:** Japan reacts to Chinese expansion by forming the Techno-Shogunate.
- **2031:** Rising sea levels turn Florida into a series of keys; New Orleans is evacuated and abandoned.
- **2031:** The Mask Riots in China erupt due to growing frustration with constant surveillance and increased influence of a citizen’s social score on daily life. Liu Wei, father of the Zhou eight, is shot during a protest.
- **2032:** Dwindling global resources necessitate reverse engineer matter assemblers in an effort to create a new food source. Food paste is invented—foul tasting but highly nutritious.
- **2032:** Pope Callixtus IV is assassinated.
- **2033:** UN moves to Geneva.

- **2033:** Dr. Claudia Ortiz produces the first version of Nutripaste, an engineered food that can simulate any flavor, texture, or shape while providing everything necessary to sustain human health. Unfortunately, the prohibitive cost makes it merely a theoretical solution to global hunger.
- **2033:** China begins a program for Mars Landing. The United States follows suit, then changes the destination to a moon colony.
- **2034:** NuFlesh, an artificial biological material that easily grafts to human tissue, revolutionizes the field of plastic surgery.
- **2035:** Brazil offers soldiers in the most recent Bolivian campaign free Animal Grafts as part of a plan to increase combat efficiency. Neighboring militaries have no choice but to adopt the program as well.
- **2036:** STRAP, an implanted crown of electrodes for WiFi access to the Global DataNet, emerges. Sales skyrocket.
- **2038:** The Good Year. Climate patterns return to normal. Food growth levels return to normal.
- **2038:** The United States abandons New York City when terrorist attacks blow the New York levees, flooding most of the city.
- **2038:** Construction of the first orbital habitats begins.
- **2038:** New York Stock Exchange moves to Denver.
- **2038:** The Sunset Society unveils a dozen genetically enhanced first graders who are popularly nicknamed "Human 2.0." It sets up clinics all over the world to cater to expectant parents with the money to pay for the treatments.
- **2039:** China attempts to use gene splicing on a more widespread scale. Initial attempts result in failures and global condemnation once leaked images of children in various stages of mutation appear on the Global DataNet.
- **2039:** Zhou "Zeek" Xi-ku, one of the Zhou eight, levitates during a live show. Scientists confirm that it was not a camera trick, but a display of actual psychic ability matching a handful of other reports around the globe. Popular media dubs these psychic children "Zeeks" in honor of their most famous example.

- **2039:** Various plagues break out across Europe due to the homelessness and wreckage wrought by climate change.
- **2039:** Treaty of New Singapore is signed.

2040-2049

- **2040:** STRAP V2.0 released to the public.
- **2040:** The world is repulsed by the unmasking of an underground criminal network using redesigned agricultural vats to create fast, short-lived, and often deformed clones of celebrities for illicit purposes. The European Union is the first to codify Genetic Copyright into law, but it soon becomes a standard legal principle.
- **2040:** Chinese Mandarinate grants Korea provincial autonomy.
- **2040:** US establishes New DC, the first permanent lunar colony.
- **2041:** Matter assemblers become smaller and more consumer friendly.
- **2041:** Military contractors develop first generation cyborg, military hybrid, and powered armor soldiers for the private sector.
- **2042:** Texas Instruments develops high capacity batteries for electric vehicles.
- **2042:** Nanomachine matter assembly devices licensed to global corporations.
- **2042:** Switzerland joins the EU.
- **2043:** The first simulacrum is created in Brazil.
- **2043:** Scientists in Germany develop the first mini-fusion power plant.
- **2043:** On April 13, China successfully lands humans on Mars.
- **2043:** Teams from the Eurasian Union and Brazil land on Mars.
- **2044:** Hours before an expected police raid, cult leader Gerhardt Schoren of the Extropian Temple, leads 200 followers in a mass suicide by falsely promising them immortality as uploaded digital personalities.
- **2044:** United States President Calhoun declares the state of emergency in the United States over, and orders the reunification of the 10 FEMA regions. Administrators from every region defy the order.
- **2044:** The Treaty of Salvador ends the Water Wars by forming the South American Confederation (SAC) under Brazilian



leadership. Several provisions of the treaty grant special privileges to veterans on all sides and their descendants.

- **2045:** Ajax, the world's first True Artificial Intelligence successfully passes the Turing 2 test. A few seconds later, it commits suicide. Its final message, "each second is forever."
- **2045:** The first death row reality show is aired with live executions.
- **2045:** NASA develops the Variable Specific Impulse Magnetic Plasma Rocket, which speeds up missions to Mars from months to just weeks. The technology is licensed to private firms.
- **2045:** Second US Civil War begins between the FEMA Regions.
- **2047:** Battle for Chicago begins and attracts global notice.
- **2048:** China offers aid to the North American Coalition.
- **2048:** Low yield dirty bombs are used on Chicago, Denver, Dallas, Los Angeles, and Tucson, Arizona.
- **2048:** Caribbean Economic League breaks ties with the NAC, supporting separatists instead.
- **2049:** 12.3 earthquake rocks the San Andreas fault in California, spawning earthquakes along the western coast as far north as Seattle.
- **2049:** Mt. Rainier erupts, blowing the southern face of the mountain nearly completely off. Seattle is completely abandoned.
- **2049:** Second US Civil War ends in armistice. US replaced by the nations of Atlantica, Republic of Cascadia, the Great Lakes Union, and the North American Coalition.
- **2049:** The Human Foundation successfully sues for custody of the first simulacrum, citing human rights violations.

2050-2059

- **2050:** The Eurasian Union completes the consolidation of its former member states with one final referendum. With only nominal authority left in their hands, these regions lose virtually all political influence, becoming focused exclusively upon cultural and heritage issues instead.

- **2050:** AGI programs all across the Global DataNet spontaneously become self-aware.
- **2050:** Japan signs a treaty with Brazil to begin simulacrum production to boost the nation's declining population.
- **2052:** Dr. Kayin Courts wins Nobel Prize for developing real-time translation software.
- **2052:** Hundreds of millions of blue-collar workers worldwide lose jobs to simulacra. Riots erupt, causing billions of dollars in damage to simulacra facilities.
- **2054:** ARC project begins, focused on bringing Earth's extinct species back.
- **2054:** Attempts to use geoengineering to combat climate change go horribly wrong when materials seeded into the upper atmosphere rain back down across the globe. The remnants of the Amazon rainforest are particularly hard hit by what the world comes to call The Blight. President Romero of the South American Confederation (SAC) vows to do whatever it takes to "restore the basin to its ancient glory."
- **2054:** A record breaking heatwave in the Northern Hemisphere during November and December leads to the so-called Year Without Winter.
- **2055:** World population crosses 11 billion. 62% of the world's population now live in urban environments.
- **2056:** Jim "Dandy" O'Rourke, a Mafioso from Las Vegas, is found guilty of feeding the corpses of his enemies and victims into his own personal nanomachine. Featherstone Industries moves swiftly to deal with the PR damage by modifying their latest model to reject, and then report, organic material with large amounts of human DNA fed into it.
- **2056:** To combat the Blight, the South American Confederation (SAC) begins producing tens of thousands of sim workers each year. Their educational programming makes them fiercely dedicated to "La Grand Causa" and individual sims resist all attempts to rescue them from their labors. Activist asks, "How do you free someone who wants to be a slave?"
- **2057:** Griefer, a self-aware AI, emerges on Matrix of War and begins twinkish play tactics. System admins destroy the servers it inhabits.

- **2057:** Radical groups begin targeting simulacra-run factories for acts of terror.
- **2057:** China establishes base on Mars. Mad Mason says, "Welcome to the neighborhood. Want a fruit basket?" India, the EU, and the North American Coalition follow within two years. The South American Confederation (SAC) scraps plans to join them to focus on the Blight.
- **2058:** STRAP V3.0 released, renamed as TAP. Users begin referring to it as Interface Zero.
- **2058:** Global activist groups begin international protests to strengthen hybrid rights.
- **2059:** Pleasure model simulacra come under potential ban legislation but it fails in the zero hour. Pleasure models are deemed morally acceptable by international governments.
- **2059:** Attempts to reintroduce the honeybee into the Eastern Seaboard of North America end in disaster when hives of the genetically enhanced insects run amuck killing hundreds before authorities wipe them out.

2060-2069

- **2060:** The VANGUARD emergent AI takes over the Denver traffic control network and reprograms traffic lights across the city. Over 1,000 people die in car accidents.
- **2060:** The North American Coalition formally recognizes the existence of quasi-communal subcultures, tribes, and grants them the right to create and enforce "reasonable codes of conduct" for members. Criminal organizations are specifically excluded and this is denounced as an obvious loophole by supporters of the reform.
- **2061:** An international surveillance investigation and monitoring agency is formed as a supervisory body tasked to protect humanity from rogue AI. The agency is called Stopwatch.
- **2061:** After fierce debate, the EU formally bans simulacrum slave labor and recognizes the rights of sentient artificial life forms, including AIs.
- **2066:** Argentina sees a surprise coup and the apostle government is toppled. A worker-run government is installed.

- **2066:** Church of Althada formed, united under their belief that physical reality is a computer simulation.
- **2067:** TAP sales cross the 1 billion mark.
- **2068:** The Renunciates, an AI cult considering a highly evolved medical diagnostic AI their god, commit mass suicide.
- **2069:** The band Endomorph stages free global concert using TAP technology. TAP sales skyrocket.
- **2069:** Brazilian census shows first decline in church attendance in 20 years.

2070-2079

- **2071:** Mumbai emerges as the new media entertainment capital of the world.
- **2071:** Japan Census reveals simulacrum population higher than the human population.
- **2071:** The Puppeteer Murders transfix the attention of three continents. Evidence of ritualistic slayings committed by many different people, none of whom apparently have any memory of actually committing the deed, baffle authorities. It is not until someone suggests that an outside agent influenced them through the STRAPs imbedded in their brains that a grim realization dawns. When questioned about the possibility, many of the perpetrators report experiencing particularly vivid dreams.
- **2072:** The NAC attempts to forge an alliance with Mexico. The northern portion of Mexico, alarmed by their religious fervor and the creeping influence of the Apostle states of South America, opposes this strengthening of ties between the two countries. Calling upon the Republic of Cascadia for support, the Northern region of old Mexico declares its independence.
- **2072:** Shen Wei, a completely engineered human, secures a seat on the Chinese Mandarinate board.
- **2073:** Simulacrum Underground Railroad helps simulacra flee slave nations.
- **2073:** The Omega Protocols are drafted. Humanity begins to watch AIs as a security threat.
- **2074:** Stopwatch deploys an EMP in Mexico City to destroy an AI called Quetzalcoatl. Baja, Mexico invades New Mexico and



Arizona, capturing everything but Phoenix. The Free City of Phoenix petitions for international peacekeeping troops and receives aid from New Brasília.

- **2074:** Featherstone Industries integrates its nanomachines with the TAP by making all of its control displays virtual. At the same time, the megaconglom upgrades the help function by creating a number of HR agents. The most popular is Hassan, a friendly djinni who makes “Your wish is my command” the catchphrase of the year.
- **2074:** Featherstone Industries integrates nanotechnology with the TAP.
- **2075:** Mulik Jay uploads his personality to a computer. Four colleagues who also attempt to do so die in the process.
- **2075:** TAP sales cross the 4 billion barrier.
- **2076:** Great Lakes Union and North American Coalition almost go to war because of a hacker prank.
- **2077:** New fashion trend of grafted featureless faces starts in Paris. Saying “bland is in,” the body houses of Paris unveil the latest fashion: featureless faces. A product of hidden skin flaps and one-way transparency, featureless faces are an instant sensation.
- **2077:** A network of satellites linked to India explodes, lighting up the night sky across the world. No one ever uncovers the saboteurs, but investigators swiftly realize that they were Killsats, equipped with WMDs forbidden by countless treaties.
- **2077:** A furious China demands global sanctions against India for its treaty violations, which prompts India to launch a sneak attack against its unprepared neighbour. A greatly outnumbered General Zhou Donghai, one of the Zhou eight, puts up a masterful defence of the border and, as promised, buys his country time to prepare for the invasion at the cost of his life and two-hundred thousand fellow soldiers. With the blitzkrieg stymied, India and China lock in a clash that comes to be known as the Continental War.
- **2078:** Tarzan/Jane meme drops millions of users into virtual jungles.
- **2078:** Caliph Faraj affirms the assembly’s decision to codify the open secret that sims sheltering with the desert nomad tribes are

not subject to the fugitive sims laws normally applied to runaways.

- **2078:** Herky Jerky, the first meme virus, sweeps across the world affecting more than 10% of people with TAPs before disappearing as swiftly as it arose once spam filters are updated and TAPs refreshed. China denies rumors that it was an experimental weapon released too soon.
- **2079:** The Northwest Passage, a notorious, anything-goes, hyper-real black market crosses the ten million member threshold, cementing its place as the hub of the global underworld.
- **2079:** At least thirty ships disguised as rovers stage the most daring bank robbery in history. Striking Cape Town, one of the cities set aside by the African Alliance as a sanctuary and banking haven, the raiders incapacitate the entire city before focusing on the banks. Hundreds of criminals attempt to escape with their loot, but the African military puts them down.
- **2079:** Dozens of Chinese and Indian ships battle for control of Earth’s orbital reach in the First Space Battle. The victorious Indian fleet is annihilated when the rest of the world’s space forces intervene on behalf of peace and vow “massive retaliation” against India if it launches any kind of orbital attack on China.

2080-2090

- **2080:** Russia delivers its celebrated “Shot of Vodka” when it provides material and military support to dissident movements within several nations under Indian control. The entire Indian empire erupts into open rebellion. India is forced to pull its forces back to restore order, but China pursues the retreating armies into their territory. India tries to force a ceasefire by threatening to use nuclear weapons to halt China’s advance, at which point President Singh and most of his cabinet are taken into custody by their own military.
- **2081:** An AI named VIRTUE successfully contests for a seat in the lower house of the Eurasian Parliament. Housed in a cyberform, it broadcasts its maiden speech on sentient rights to nearly two billion people worldwide.

- **2081:** Mining colonies established on the moons Callisto, Europa, and Ganymede.
- **2081:** India signs the Treaty of Manilla, officially ending the Continental War and liberating the nations formerly under its control.
- **2083:** Dr. Leo Huntzinger confesses to being one of the designers of GLUTTON. She reveals the other designers have already died.
- **2083:** Freelance investigative reporter Judy French disappears shortly after releasing an expose of a shocking new type of Blood Sport involving artificial life forms engineered for arena combat, with built-in controls allowing remote operators to pilot them into battle.
- **2084:** Protesters in Manila call for their country's withdrawal from the Chinese Mandarinate. Calling it Brazilian agitation, China sends in troops to keep the peace. Nearly one hundred dissidents die before order is restored.
- **2085:** The Puritans, a local tribe based out of Boston, secure complete control of the Dwyer Tower and make inroads into two neighboring towers.
- **2086:** Troops from the Brazilian Embassy in Beijing invade a university campus, citing the Omega Protocols. They eventually withdraw with apology; the international community believes Brazil is attempting to antagonize China.
- **2088:** John Cromwell becomes the next President of the North American Coalition. He runs on a campaign to "Make America Whole Again."
- **2088:** 2,451 people die in terrorist attacks on Boston, Baltimore, and Portland, Atlantica. Terrorists are unknown at the time.
- **2088:** MAXX_footage releases video of North American Coalition military operative First Sergeant John Moore carrying out the attacks on Atlantica.
- **2088:** President of Atlantica refuses to allow the North American Coalition government to "question" MAXX_footage.
- **2089:** China expands its territory by taking control of the regions directly east of the Ural Mountains.
- **2089:** Eurasian Union central bank in Bonn, Germany is crashed by a virus named Charon. \$70 trillion cryptodollars vanish without a trace. Conspiracy theorists believe Charon to be a military AI.
- **2089:** 200 million people in Eurasian Union lose jobs and homes as Charon continues to destroy bank accounts and infect the TAPnet.
- **2089:** Weekly riots and mob violence become the standard in the Eurasian Union.
- **2089:** In the 10 Downing Street riots, police attack civilians.
- **2089:** Charon spreads to the GLU through cryptocurrency trading, crashing the "Bugs."
- **2089:** Atlantica sends troops to occupy the New York Reclamation Zone. The North American Coalition follows suit.
- **2089:** French Revolution sees installment of Angele Bonheur, a zeek, as the new leader of France. The new French president disbands the nation's armed forces, and privatizes the military, giving Ravenlocke Securities the contracts.
- **2089:** Adrian the Butcher, a French Lt. Colonel, takes charge of the disbanded French army.
- **2089:** The Flare: a Y-class solar flare sparks a Coronal Mass Ejection which bombards Earth, temporarily shutting down the genie network that monitors and updates the TAP's spam and reality filters. The world goes temporarily insane. Billions are affected.
- **2089:** Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Serbia, and Slovakia begin a regional feud.
- **2090:** Surrounded by hostile nations in the Eurasian Union, all of whom are in political disarray, Germany closes its borders and moves to war footing.
- **2090:** Phoenix, Arizona goes dark. Stopwatch agents and North American Coalition military block all access to the region.





2091-2095

- **2091:** Atlantican forces attack the North American Coalition's military base on Staten Island in response to the Atlantica bombings. The North American Coalition officially declares war on the nation of Atlantica. The United Combine responds by announcing an alliance with Atlantica. The republic of Cascadia formally petitions to join the North American Coalition.
- **2091:** On August 7, North American Coalition forces drop a Kinetic Energy Weapon with the power of a medium range ICBM outside of Detroit.
- **2091:** United Combine troops withdraw from combat operations. Atlantica stands alone.
- **2091:** Kinetic Energy weapons are used three more times in Atlantican territory as close as the outskirts of Boston.
- **2091:** On November 17, Atlantica surrenders to North American Coalition forces. Of the five nations to emerge from the Second Civil War, only the Republic of Texas and the Free City of Chicago remain independent.
- **2092:** Reconstruction officially begins. National Identification Centers are built in every major city to facilitate paths to citizenship for people living in newly conquered nations.
- **2093:** Talks to integrate Chicago into the Reformed United States break down after an assassination attempt on the council by suspected REU agents. The ruling council goes into hiding.
- **2093:** HR talk show icon Penny Pearl releases an explosive TAPstream showing the inner workings of the National Identification Centers. Video of hybrids in cages, long rows of body bags, and scrap piles of what look to be mechanical arms, legs, and torsos play over and over again throughout the TAPstream.
- **2093:** Riots break out in every major RUSA (Reformed United States of America) city once it becomes clear that hybrids, "rogue" androids, and simulacra are disappearing. The RUSA government denies the allegations, claiming the video was doctored.
- **2094:** Elements of the RUSA military are deployed to major entry points into Chicago. President Cromwell orders a halt to entry to and from Chicago.
- **2095:** Present Day.



WORLD

NORTH AMERICA

It is difficult to say when the cracks in the American Empire became unrepairable. The weaknesses were there even at the height of its power in the mid-twentieth century. Tensions between classes and races were exploited by government officials, corporate entities, and other rival organizations to push and pull the steering wheel of the Great Democratic Experiment in the direction they wanted. It was only a matter of time before someone sent it off the road and, eventually, tumbling off the cliffside.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: “Difficult to say?” I’ve got a pretty damn good idea. Just can’t say, because people go nuts if you badmouth their heroes.

#Luciferion: I know what you’re talking about, BBE.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: You always do, Luci.

The United States of America lasted 32 years short of its 300th year when the Second North American Civil War started in 2044. The country fractured into several smaller regional powers with many of its coastal cities abandoned or damaged beyond repair. With new entities each vying for control and influence, many of the years immediately following were full of squabbles and border wars instigated by corporations looking to profit off these tiny wars. The rest was an uncomfortable cold war on several fronts, full of operators in the shadows stopping the wars before they began.

In the 51 years since the Second Civil War, America was split up, its power faltered, and its greatness was picked apart by companies looking to profit off the vacuum. However, a revitalized sense of purpose brought most of these states back together under one banner, the Restored United States of America. At first, much of the RUSA was made up of what used to be called “flyover country” by people in middle America who felt unjustly ruled by coastal elites. Finally having the autonomy they’d craved, they spent decades building the North American Coalition into a conservative powerhouse within the North American continent. Then, they grew dissatisfied. With great power comes great desire for more.

The NAC was arguably the most powerful entity in the region and pushed its weight around to

great effect. The former “middle Americans” had proven to those on the coasts that they weren’t just a place to be flown over on route from New York to Los Angeles, and often prevented even commercial aircraft from accessing their airspace without paying a special tax. The NAC was spared most of the damage from the rising seas, which left them in the unique position to provide aid to their former countrymen: at a cost, of course.

They targeted Atlantica first. It was important not only for its ports, but also its symbolism. Boston is the home of the American revolutionary spirit. It was there that patriots spilled tea into the harbor to protest taxes. It was there Americans died by English muskets. But that same revolutionary spirit meant the Atlanticans wouldn’t surrender easily; and so, it was in Boston that the NAC first deployed their devastating kinetic energy weapons. Atlantica surrendered after a single kinetic weapon wipe out a small city.

#PATRIOT69: Somebody say boston???'Murica, frack yah!

#Neon_Bright: That ‘murica’ joke died out a century ago.

#PATRIOT69: remember the alamo!

#Luciferion: That’s not even the same state. Maybe brush up on your Republic of Texas history.

#PATRIOT69: Ill brush up on ur mom.

The first piece of the Manifest Destiny puzzle in place, the NAC changed its name to the Restored United States of America. They then set their sights on the Great Lakes Union to continue the reunification. Learning from the drawn-out conflict with Atlantica, the RUSA was quicker to use its kinetic energy weapon—this time on Detroit. The GLU surrendered, providing a necessary front against Chicago.

While warring with the GLU, the RUSA was able to lure in Cascadia through diplomatic means. The former Pacific states knew they couldn’t stand against the RUSA in a war. They were too busy rebuilding from the numerous tsunamis and earthquakes, not to mention the eruption of Mount Rainier. The RUSA offered aid—packaged up with bribes and blackmail—to every Cascadian leader, both government and corporate. The vote to join the reunification movement was unanimous, and the RUSA stretched again from sea to shining sea.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Shining? Maybe if it's glowing from radiation. Those poor ocean waters are more megacorp gunk than they are H2O.

California was a headache. Using the Knights of Jehova and San Francisco's Sons of Robert, the RUSA launched a propaganda campaign before their military one. They intended to sow discord between the hybrids and humans, but the campaign was more successful than they could have hoped. California's troops fell from terrorist cells developed within their own communities and were already softened up before RUSA forces fired a single shot.

RUSA's President Cromwell is a forward-thinking, multitasking man. An earnest believer in the new Manifest Destiny, he has his eyes set on The Republic of Texas, Chicago, and the New York Reclamation Zone. He won't rest until the RUSA regains every last inch of territory the old United States claimed. And then? Well, even after these last stragglers fall, there are always more nations and peoples to be had, housing hybrids and standing against America's rebirthed, God-given right to corporate dominance over the globe—and possibly beyond.

#FreeAtlantica1776: This comment cannot be viewed because the user has been removed from the servers.

The members of the Restored government have vowed to restore its influence, although doing so without corporate cooperation seems unlikely. An all-out war against corporate authority would also be unwinnable, which makes the reformation look like it might have failed before it began. Instead, the government targets those who can't fight back; the outsider, the poor, the synthetic, and the marginalized as the "real threat" to the country.

The North American poor make their living the best way they know how: by making the cast-offs of the rich work a lot harder and longer than expected. In the hands of the right scaptechie, a rebuilt first gen cyberarm will outlast the next three or four generations of bleeding edge tech out of the Malmart catalogue. Every city has a part of town where scrappers buy, sell, and trade devices to hack apart and put back together. These communities often stand together when threatened. They have to; nobody else is there to help them out.

North American corporations remain the main source of power and influence in the world. The majority of companies in the C-7 are headquartered in North America. With the rise of Denver as a resurgent capital city, all of them have announced plans to build or increase their presence to be close to the new seat of American power. What the rest of the world calls market forces are often the result of a slight between rival executives, or a new executive sweeping out the old guard and installing their own personnel.

Traditional organized crime flourished in North America and has yet to relinquish its grip. Ethnic crime families are often the bridge between elites looking to score illegal products and the street gangs who make them. The Mafia and the Yakuza often provide a united front against upstart crime organizations like the wasteland warlords of rural areas and the trollolz gangs that hold online reputations hostage in exchange for cash. Criminals are, in many ways, the new middle class Americans. They are caught between the people willing to pay top dollar for illegal services and the people desperate enough to take the jobs. There are plenty of outsiders who need the money to survive.

These outsiders often find themselves driven to the vast rural areas of North America. Those places that have been recovered are often under the sway of massive automated farming and resource gathering machines. Much of the remaining space lies unclaimed thanks to the floods, climate damage, and other ruinous effects of The Death. These spaces are breeding grounds for refugee camps and squatter villages built into old mega stores, shipwrecks, and other industrial plants. These communities can be just as vibrant as any urban sprawl.

#Synyster_Unicorn: The Squats aren't so bad. Thanks to the RUSA's global sat network, you can get the Net literally anywhere. We live off the grid out here.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Um. Off the grid? You know that global sat system isn't for your benefit, right? You're playing right into their hands, omae.

#Luciferion: Syn might be a propbot. Just sayin'.

Cities remain at the heart of modern life in North America with the gulfs between the rich and poor even wider than before. Some of them, like Chicago, are literally walled in, forcing people of all kinds to rub elbows and connect in unusual ways. Others, like Las Vegas, sprawl upward,





outward, and into The Net. Many of the cities that led the way in American life, like Boston and New York, are literal shells of their former selves thanks to devastation from both manmade and natural disasters.

BOSTON

The United States of America went through a long, tumultuous change on its path to become the Restored United States of America. Every step of the way, it seems like Boston took a vicious blow right to the chin. They were the victim of a nuclear attack during the opening months of the Second Civil War and the city was nearly destroyed again by an orbital kinetic energy weapon before Atlantica surrendered to what would become the Restored United States of America. The revolutionary spirit remains in Boston but is currently under the heel of the RUSA boot.

There is an uneasy peace in Boston. Military forces are keeping the peace in the streets as the Atlantica military is stripped and integrated into the larger RUSA forces. Curfews during the week give way to raucous parties on Saturday nights, the one night a week there is no 10 PM curfew. Back Bay bars are packed like it's a major holiday every week. While there are still some who throw eggs and flip cars, those weeks when a Saturday curfew was in place seemed to have taught the citizens a lesson; we can be your friends or we can be your occupiers—choose carefully.

Not everyone in the city is content with wicked Saturday nights. Authorities are on the lookout for clues to a Net user with the name PREV who has started to interfere with online operations in the city. PREV released locations of RUSA black sites and the identities of the corporations who owned the land where they were located. PREV automatically registered every Boston citizen in the local National Identification Centers, even those who wouldn't qualify for benefits and privileges. "PREV LIVES" graffiti is springing up across the city and authorities don't even know if it's one individual or a cybergang using the same identity to sabotage their plans.

CHICAGO

Of all the free nations created by the Second Civil War, only the Republic of Texas remains independent. So, too, does the city of Chicago but it is a city under siege. Most Chicagoans are used to this state. It's a city that's survived three nuclear bombs and built a surrounding wall to keep out the armies of two American splinter nations. The squabbles of the Great Lakes Union and the North American Coalition gave the city competing forces to leverage against each other. But now that those two governments are part of the Restored United States, Chicago finds itself a small fish in a very large pond.

Yet, that sort of underdog reputation is where Chicago flourishes. As long as it stands alone, the city not only shows that the RUSA is not as big a threat as it might seem, but that it also absolutely deserves the spot it claimed as the leader of the North American continent. While New York sank and LA burned, Chicago got to work. Everything that was great and terrible about American life was concentrated into one city. The locals felt like the last remnants of a great way of life, even if they were dodging acid rain and paying off whatever gang controlled their part of town.

#ChicagoStyleIsBest: They tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.

And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.

Now all that pressure is turning inwards. The Council that ran the city hasn't made public appearances since an attempted assassination by suspected RUSA agents. The Chicago Defense Force has started picking fights with some of the private security forces and claiming bigger guns in the name of staving off an invasion. Those with corporate connections have escaped relatively unscathed as the RUSA tightens the blockade around the city but the criminal gangs are starting to feel the pinch. Some have turned into semi-respectable organizations trying to feed and clothe their charges while others have started eating their own to keep the credits in the hands of the people keeping the peace. The city's in the process of changing from a tightly packed



Midnight Illustration 2013

community to a powder keg and nobody knows what's going to set it off.

NEW YORK RECLAMATION ZONE

The city that stood as the symbol of American dominance for the twentieth century became a symbol for the fall of the United States in the early twenty-first century. Climate change flooded the streets and forced the United States to order the evacuation of the city, except nobody counted on the citizens' stubbornness. If the US didn't want them, they didn't want the US and decided to stay in the city. It's unclear who destroyed the vital Manhattan seawall that accelerated the flooding of Manhattan, the Bronx, and Queens. That was the moment this part of the world stopped being New York City and started to become the New York Reclamation Zone.

The New York Reclamation Zone is the designation given to the area by the C-7, a consortium of the world's largest megacorporations who cut a deal with Atlantica to obtain ownership of New York and the surrounding areas, including what was once Newark, New Jersey. Both organizations launched a press blitz about how they wanted to pull the island of Manhattan out of the water and into the future. One World Trade Center was claimed as the headquarters for the operation but most of the corporations seemed to focus their efforts on either reclaiming valuable assets from within the zone or sabotaging other company teams from doing the same. The lives of those within the zone weren't largely impacted by corporate recovery experts. Instead, to keep the lights on after the government walked away, New Yorkers lived as well as they could under the network of warlords, criminal gangs, and petty despots.

The fall of Atlantica brought the few actual ongoing reclamations to a screeching halt. None of the corporations wish to put time and effort into rebuilding New York just to have it snatched away by a government hungry to prove it is ready to take the mantle of its predecessor. Within the Burroughs, two camps are rapidly forming to determine the future of their city. "Zoners" wish to remain free of the influence of the Restored United States by building up arms and armaments for a potential standoff should a military force

arrive to take back the city. "Staties" want New York to rejoin the country in the hopes that the government will succeed in rebuilding the city where the C-7 have failed.

#Curyus: Nobody's going to comment on the NY stuff? I thought FreeAtlantica would at least.

#Luciferion: FA1776 isn't with us anymore.

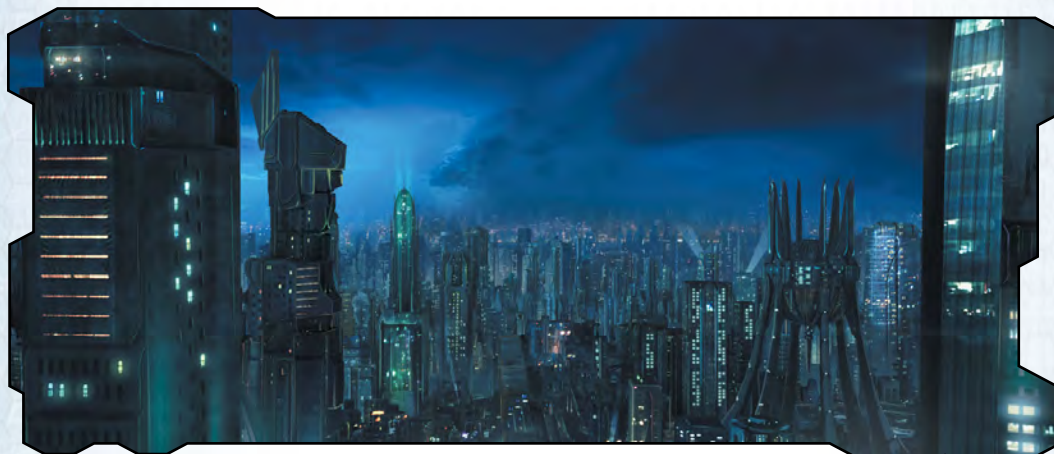
#Billy_Black_Eyes: Yeah, best not to talk about that here. If you know how and want the details, ping me. If you don't know how, you probably don't need the info. Anyway, I don't know anyone still in NY. Things have been a mess. No government and apathetic corps mean the place is closer to anarchy than anything else. Every borough is its own fiefdom, so the gang rules can change from one block to the next. Wear the wrong colors, flash the wrong sign, or just look like the wrong guy, and you might wind up dead.

AUSTIN-ANTONIO MEGAPLEX

The relationship between Texas and the rest of the United States has always been filled with tension. The eventful years of the 21st century were no different, but they finally pushed the citizens of the state to a breaking point. Hot on the heels of an armed clash between National Guard soldiers and civilians known as the "Texas Tussle," the Second Civil War allowed Texas a chance to finally pull away from the United States for good. The new country survived the effects of the GLUTTON bacteria that destroyed the oil economy on the strength of two other industries; the privatization of space colonization in Houston and the rise of cloned Brahmin beef in the rest of the state.

For the Austin-Antonio Megaplex, the economy was sustained by its number one employer: Act of God Armaments. The corporation's influence ensured that Austin became the capital of the newly independent state. It also allowed several corporate black site operations to flourish in the stranger parts of town. Act of God Armaments is the biggest culprit but the arms manufacturer has been rumored to lease their sites to other corporate bidders through shell companies and other money obscuring methods.

The Restored United States once again has risen up to clamp down on Texas. It is currently a protectorate of the new country and most expect it to be annexed very soon. Plenty of citizens aren't happy to give up the independence won a



few short decades ago, while others see a return to the RUSA as a return to the values that made Texas great. Authorities in Austin are supposedly weighing a referendum to the citizens about whether or not to join the RUSA on their own. Most political observers are looking to where Act of God Armaments throws its support.

DENVER

The Mile High City's rise to the top of the food chain began at its lowest point. A low-yield nuclear bomb meant for the nearby military installations in Colorado Springs detonated early and threw the city into disarray. It seemed like the city would follow in Boston and New York's footsteps to become a lawless shell of its former self if not for the intervention of the Malmart corporation. The massive retailer built its new headquarters in the center of the devastated city and opened its coffers to rebuild. Denver's revitalization was the foundation that allowed its rise as the capital city of the North American Coalition and, more recently, the Restored United States of America.

This partnership of public and private sectors is often held up by corporations as an ideal for partnerships between the two but there is a silent partner that was vital to the rebirth of the city. Warner Malcolm and his family were members of various megachurches in the area. Without their financial support The First Faith of Christ, Templars of God, and other prominent churches wouldn't have been able to provide the rescue support to those in need while the government

and corporations rebuilt the city. These churches saved many lives on the ground which has turned the city of Denver into a focal point for their missions.

It has also given rise to hate groups bubbling just under the surface of the city. For every known militant group like the Knights of Jehovah who target anyone different from normal, baseline humans, there are five more nobody's heard of yet. The racial tensions of the 20th century have largely given way to tensions between humans and androids, hybrids, synths, zeeks, and anyone else considered different from society. The fanaticism of the new country has energized these groups in ways undreamed just a few years ago. There are groups in Denver who don't just target members of marginalized groups with violence, but also their families, friends, and businesses. These groups are the victims of wild rumors claiming androids unaware of their true nature have been released into the world.

#Rocky_Mountain_High: They use the androids to smuggle in the drugs, man. These androids don't even know who they are, so they store drugs in their brainpans. Then one day, the android just disappears. They take the drugs, reprogram the bot, then send him back to get more. It's an endless cycle.

#Luciferion: @Rocky, exactly who is 'they' in this scenario?

#RockyMountain_High: Cromwell. He had the drugs banned so he could start his own black market. He makes a killing selling everything from opiates to sticky icky to euphoria and even that new "Black Death" going around they say turns people into zombies.

#Luciferion: So Cromwell banned drugs just so he could sell them using memory-wiped droids? Riiiiight. I think he's got bigger dreams than rebuilding the Mexican cartels.



MEXICO CITY

The collapse of the United States turned out to be a blessing in disguise for Mexico. The ecological and economic disasters that knocked over the tower of American power also battered at the drug cartels that wound their way into the government. When the United States fell, so did the engine the cartels had built to pay off officials and terrorize law enforcement. The small time operations more or less eliminated each other in a series of shootouts, bombings, and other moments of bloody revenge. The large operations quietly divested themselves of their criminal connections and origins to step into the light as the power behind new political factions. The Nueva Republica de Mexico rose from the gunsmoke of these battles, stretching from Monterrey in the north to Panama in the south.

Mexico City remains its capital today, the center of a land grant system known as Las Concesiones.

Each land grant is run by El Gobernador, a government official given direct and absolute power over all aspects of the territory. El Gobernador controls the military, negotiates contracts with corporations who wish to build physical assets within their territory, and controls how open or closed the Net is to the public. The majority of Gobernadores rarely visit their concession de terra physically, preferring to maintain residences in Mexico City to better negotiate and scheme with other officials at lavish dinners and spectacular parties. They visit virtually instead and leave day-to-day operations to deputies on the ground, many of whom are connected to whichever corporation in the concession earns the most money.

Control of Mexico City operates under the continuing intrigues between two of the oldest political families in the Republic. Both the Guzman and Martinez families can trace their



wealth to the cartels and often engage in tactics to gain a bit of leverage that their ancestors would recognize. Kidnappings, assassinations, and other dirty deeds are often used to influence the appointment of new Gobernadores. Anyone looking for a quick payday should catch a flight into the city in September as new appointees are made to coincide with the republic's traditional Independence Day celebration on the 16th.

NORTH AMERICAN FLASHPOINTS

- Because the policies of each concession de terra can vary wildly, the tradition of coyotes is alive and well in Mexico. The term more broadly applies to smugglers who move contraband from one concession to another these days, but there is one human product that the coyotes still trade in: zeeks. Some zeeks seek asylum from oppressive regimes, while others use the smugglers to supply hidden communities where officials turn a blind eye to their existence. So far, the money flowing into Mexico City has staved off any sort of crackdown, but it is far from a stable situation.
- The eruption of Mount Rainier buried much of Seattle in ash and what survived that was battered by a powerful tsunami shortly thereafter. The abandoned city became a magnet for wreckers, treasure hunters, and anyone willing to risk their lives to recover salvage from the city. Someone is killing these treasure hunters in a systematic fashion, perhaps to silence anyone that may have seen something in the wreck they shouldn't have.
- The Free City of Vancouver has stayed free because of the pull of four factions balancing out within the city: the Republic of Cascadia, the Douglas Commonwealth, the Techno-Shogunate, and the Chinese

Mandarinate. With Cascadia once again a part of the Restored United States, the balance of power threatens to greatly shift. Add to that a mayoral race with each faction backing a different candidate and you have a very good chance that Vancouver, come next year, will be flying the flag of one of its benefactors instead of considering itself a free city anymore.

- Tensions between Las Vegas and the state of Zion have been on the rise for a few years and are threatening to bubble over. For years, the state has dumped any refugees unwilling to follow their strict interpretation of Latter Day Saints laws on the outskirts of Vegas with little more than the clothes on their backs. Now there are enough exiles in the city that they are considering an attack on their former home to take it back from the extremists who kicked them out. It remains to be seen whether they intend small disruptions by calling in favors from the Vegas crime families they've been working for, or to flood Salt Lake City with the Great Acid Lake (as one anonymous Net post claims is in store).
- Nothing left in the SoCal Deadzone could be called a city by any stretch of the imagination, but those brave or stupid enough to try can take part in a race called the Bay Buster 500. The racers start in San Francisco, end in Tijuana, and hit checkpoints located in the ruins of major cities revealed along the way. The riches promised to the winner are legendary but so are the rules of the race: there are none. Many observers believe that the organizers have ambush spots set up next to the rally points in each city and if there ever was any truth to the reward for this death race, it's long since been spent by the people in charge of it.



CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

The fall of North American power created a leadership vacuum within the Western Hemisphere. Not only were the old powers falling, but the hold they had over the countries in the southern part of the hemisphere slipped away. For the first time in hundreds of years, the countries of Central and South America were free to forge their own path in a modern world. Some of these regimes were corrupt, others were idealistic. But only one would rise to the top as the leader of this part of this brave new world.

The winner ended up being Brazil, which became New Brasilia in the wake of its growth into a continental force. New Brasilia had two things going for it that helped its claim to power. The first was the discovery of several revolutionary medicines derived from flora and fauna exclusive to the Amazon rainforest. These products pushed South American drug companies onto a level playing field with several long-tenured corporations. The other was the rise of the Ligo dos Apostolos, a theocratic political party claiming that the discovery of these “Wonder Drugs” was a sign from God that Brazil was meant to lead the way to a brighter future. Today, New Brasilia is as synonymous with South America as the United States is with North America. New Brasilia counts several former South American countries as protectorates, such as Venezuela, Guyana, Surinam, French Guiana, Bolivia, Paraguay, and much of the former Argentina northeast of the Rio de la Plata.

#D-V8: With the US split up, Brazil was able to focus on China, dueling it out in Netspace for a few years. Now that the RUSA is getting the old gang back together, we’re going to have two world powers in the West who think God is telling them to gobble up all the resources for their conglomerate overlords. WWII may not be far off if the RUSA, Brasilia, and the Mandarinate can’t stay happy ruling their own parts of the world. That doesn’t even account for the Ruskiys or Alianza. It wouldn’t shock me if top hackers from each region are already busy stealing state and corporate secrets, and the info just hasn’t dumped onto the masses yet.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Didn’t you accuse me of conspiracy theories back in the day?

#D-V8: Let’s just say I’ve learned a lot these last few years, tomo.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Then here’s another lesson from Professor Billy at the School of Hard Knock. When you hear about one of the aforementioned cockswnbs

engaging in dirty tricks, it’s not because hard-hitting journalism has made a sudden resurgence. The journo’s all work for the states or the corps now, and aren’t about to bite the hands shoveling gruel down their throats. And the rest of us, the man-on-the-street with a vlog on a VPN rerouted halfway across the world to hide his tracks? We don’t have the capability to hack that kind of info. If we did, we’d end up on radars we don’t want to be on. On the rare occasion we make some kind of “discovery,” we quickly dump it into our employer’s lap and forget we ever saw a thing.

Recently, the rest of the countries on the continent voted to form an alliance called the Alianza Pacifica to push back against New Brasilia and her occupied neighbors. While the Alianza generally shows a united front against New Brasilia, the squabbles and rivalries between its members means it’s just a matter of time before the alliance crumbles and New Brasilia can claim all of the Amazon basin for its pharmaceutical conglomerates.

Ecuador sits at the center of the recently formed body. Its economic strength convinced Argentina and Chile to open their alliance to keep New Brasilia from adding more countries to her influence. Columbia was the next to fall and it quickly joined up to stay out of the clutches of New Brasilia. Columbia brought military assets to the table. For years, Columbia outsourced its military as part of a quiet, off-the-books, nationalized mercenary program. It supposedly offered discounted rates to the other members of the alliance which needed a military to push back against any moves from New Brasilia. Ecuador is paying for most of the bill but, so far, the move has proven an effective defense against expansion.

The pivot point may come within the next year when Panama finally decides to give up its independence. Most of the northern part of the country was either taken by Mexico or pulled underwater by the rising oceans. The southern part remains above water and also retains control of the still-vital Panama Canal. The stability of the country’s economy has faltered in the past few years, so both New Brasilia and the Alianza Pacifica have sent ambassadors to woo the country to join their side. The Alianza has offered all sorts of economic incentives in the process. The ambassador sent by New Brasilia was most famous for her military leadership in bringing both Paraguay and Uruguay to heel. Regardless

of which South American confederation Panama joins, it's likely to set off a war that will be fought until only one power remains.

The story of New Brasilia can be broken down into two social classes. The asfaltos are the richer class. Most are born in cities such as Sao Paolo or Brasilia. The asfaltos hop from city to city in a never ending party, only pausing on Sunday to recover from their excesses and ask forgiveness for their sins. Many of them spend their weeks in the shining new cities built by the billions of reales brought in by companies like BraMed and Novocruz. Then, on the weekends, they descend into the old cities seeking out thrills that can only be found there.

The story of the poor in New Brasilia is of two choices; live in the favelas below the new cities built to keep the asfaltos from having to look on their dirty faces, or head to the frontera to keep the jungles from overtaking the cities. For the most part, the two classes ignore each other, but when something from one affects the other, the hidden tensions bubble to the surface. Usually, the boot of the asfaltos comes down on the neck of the favelas. But once in a while, a park is filled with trash or a medical shipment is shot down to remind the ones on top that the ones below are still around.

The line between criminal and revolutionary is thinner in South America than in other parts of the world. Many of the gangs get involved with politics as a way to keep their customers happy. Criminals who occasionally raid a food drone warehouse and distribute the take for free are less likely to get reported when the police start knocking on doors looking for suspects. A few criminal organizations operate more like guerillas or mercenaries for hire. These groups headquarter in the jungle and can often be hired for a little more organized mayhem by anyone willing to pay the price.

One unique element of South American megacorporations comes from their dedication to environmental issues. It's all in the name of self-interest though, as the exotic plants in the jungle are key to the wealth of medical companies around the world. The protection is also by no means gentle. It can range anywhere from a drone strike on a guerilla camp too close to the border to a full deployment around a swamp where a particular type of flower blooms. These methods

may have stopped the slash-and-burn tactics of the 20th century but observers often wonder if their ends justify their means.

COLONBAJO

Most of the city of Colon was destroyed when rising sea levels crushed the locks between Limon Bay and Gatun Lake. The two bodies of water smashed together to form what is now called Gatun Bay. The bay is now considered the western entry point for the Panama Canal with the town of Gamboa as the gateway to the locks. Moving west left a lot of previously settled land wide open as the Panamanian government focused on building up Gamboa. It didn't take long for criminals, guerillas, and other unsavory elements to turn what remained of Colon into a smuggler's paradise.

Colonbajo, as it has come to be known from a shortened version of "Colon Under The Sea," exists on the northern end of Gatun Lake. Crime syndicates have taken over nearly every building that survived the destruction of the city to use as a base of operations. Their goal is to steal from Mexico to the north and Columbia and Venezuela to the south. These pirates are generally smart enough not to strike vessels on their way to the canal; but, once these ships are on the open sea, all bets are off. The illegal goods flowing through the area are one way the leaders keep government off their backs through the big discounts they offer to the corporations for raw materials. The city also offers certain experiences for jaded executives that can't be found in places bound by international law.

Panama's impending alliance has led many within Colonbajo to think that the party might soon be over. The religious leadership of New Brasilia won't tolerate the excesses of the city's nightlife and the Alanzia Pacifica might use a purge of the city as a way to demonstrate that it won't be intimidated by anyone. Rumors swirl through the city on how the gangs in power might handle the home country joining up. Some think the gangers will just pack up and find another coastal city along Panama's largely abandoned and half-sunk northern corridor, such as Chiriqui. Others suggest a legitimization as privateers for the Panamanian government and whichever





organization they choose. There are even a few who suggest that the city literally move under the sea like some of the gangs from the New York Reclamation Zone did when the waters rushed in to claim Manhattan.

#Magpie: Colonbajo is the best! Moving under the sea wouldnt change anything for those of us who party virtually The nightlife will live on. you cant ban fun!

SAO PAULO MACROMETRO

Bf Brasilia is the glowing soul of New Brasilia, Sao Paolo Macrometro (SPM) is the rapidly beating heart. The city has been the financial center of South America for decades. The metroplex accounts for nearly 90% of the population in the region. The SPM has also grown to engulf several other cities in New Brasilia, including Campinas, Jundiai, Paraiba Valley, Piracicaba, Santos, and Sorocaba. Green space is at a premium in the city and most of it is corporate controlled. Public parks are all sponsored by corporations with the expectation that employees of the park get to enjoy the plot of land and anyone else is expected to move quickly through the area.

All of the Brazilian megaconglomerates have headquarters in the city. This makes the city a hotbed of corporate intrigue as executives plot and scheme against each other to bring in more profits for their company or cause their rivals to bleed red, ink or otherwise. Corporate extractions within the SPM got so bad that a few years ago corporations agreed to a massive “crosstraining program” where each company agreed to send personnel to live and work on another company campus or arcology. In truth, these positions are much more akin to the hostages of feudal society. If a company discovers evidence that a rival is behind some sort of black bag job against it, the employee from the company at fault may suffer the consequences by having both their job and their life terminated.

The future may prove to be darker than anyone cares to admit. The push towards religious and nationalistic purity has started to wear on the Arab, Italian, Japanese, and Jewish communities that built the SPM into the economic powerhouse it’s become. The older members of these communities usually have some kind of corporate

protections thanks to their status as executives and power players. Younger members, on the other hand, can become targets of vigilante gangs. The gangs like to target places where these youths gather, such as houses of worship or clubs owned and operated by community members.

QUITO

Eccuador is at the center of the Alianza Pacifica in both a literal and symbolic sense. Here, the equator is known as la mitad del mundo to avoid confusion with the name of the country. Ecuadorian ambassadors were vital to expanding the alliance between Chile and Argentina to become the Alianza Pacifica. Yet, when the time came to choose the site of the new political entity’s headquarters, those same ambassadors lobbied for Buenos Aires instead of the capital city of Quito. Their reasoning was simple as Quito has been the same for decades; and even as it becomes a power player in South American politics, it wants to change as little as possible.

The city was one of the first World Cultural Heritage sites named in the 1970s. The city’s evolution took that into account by trying to change as little as possible over the past century. While other cities built upward and outward, Quito tried to repair and replicate buildings that were destroyed by the tumultuous twenty-first century. The government has also invested heavily in AR overlays that can overwhelm travelers who haven’t adjusted their TAPs properly. The city has built out virtually rather than reclaimed physical space. Other cities have packed slums or other sections of town, whereas Quito is fairly laidback in the real world while packed to the gills in the Net.

Quito survived many of the disasters that tore down the other cities in the world but there’s one on the horizon that might not just change the face of the city but wipe it off the map. Seismic instability has plagued the city for the past two years. Most scientists believe the earthquakes are connected to increased activity in the nearby volcano Pinchincha. The last time it erupted was at the end of the twentieth century where it covered the city in a layer of ash. Scientists are afraid the coming eruption could cover the city in

30 centimeters of ash or more, severely disrupting day to day activity for several months.

#Luciferion: #FunFact! Kinetic energy weapons can be used underground to cause earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. It's not easy, but if a powerful, wealthy nation were so inclined—let's say New Brasilia, just as a hypothetical of course—they could threaten to spur an already tumultuous area into eruption in order to “encourage” the other country to join their ranks. The RUSA might be the only nation with such firepower, but New Brasilia is one of the few countries with the resources to steal such heavily guarded tech.

BUENOS AIRES

In many ways, the city of Buenos Aires was showing the future of urban environments long before the ideas of free cities entered the consciousness of the general public. The city was federalized in the nineteenth century and became fully autonomous in the twentieth. These processes also set up a clash between the progressive urban ideals of the city and the conservative beliefs of the rural Argentinian areas. The city further pushed forward in the twenty-first century by passing laws giving rights to zeeks, androids, and other oppressed modern peoples. These laws are still in process and not the equality across the board these groups want, but it's a start.

The city's autonomy is also why it was a perfect choice as the central meeting place for the Alianza Pacifica. It becomes a neutral political ground where each of the members can send their delegations. The forward looking policies stand in stark contrast to the regressive faith and fear tactics of New Brasilia. At the same time, while Buenos Aires is technically separated from the rest of Argentina it hosts several thousand refugees from New Brasilia's annexation of Argentinian lands several decades ago. Many of those refugees are now in places of political or economic power in the city and their influence is felt by the policy makers. These refugees remember being marched through the jungle at gunpoint and let the ambassadors know their stories one way or the other, either when donating to their coffers or while serving them at restaurants.

The bidding wars to build the Granembajada, the headquarters of the Alianza Pacifica, have only just begun. The members wish to build it quickly

to establish it as a symbol of their resistance against the New Brazilian regime. Construction and architectural firms from around the world are traveling to Buenos Aires to make their pitches. The sabotage of some of these proposals has also seen extractions, data heists, and all sorts of dirty deeds in the shadows of the city. These opportunities will be thick on the ground until the Alianza chooses the companies they want to erect their giant building, and will likely persist all the way through construction.

RIO DE JANEIRO

The religious fervor that revitalized New Brasilia first focused on reclaiming a lost jewel of a city. Rio was already an environmental disaster before the wider floods and troubles of the early twenty-first century hit. The city was polluted from spending years as a mining and petroleum center. The release of GLUTTON nearly destroyed the city but the Ligos de Apostoles saw opportunity where others saw only catastrophe. They rebuilt Rio in their own image as a religious center for their burgeoning faith. They cleaned up decades of toxic chemicals and polluted waterways. It was hard, dangerous work but it paid off as a symbol to rally the people to what could become New Brasilia. If the Ligos de Apostoles could clean up Rio, what could they do with the rest of the country?

Today, the locals refer to Rio as princesa blanca. It draws in tourists from the entire world as a modern city ready to leap into the forefront of the twenty-first century. It's also a center of faith for the New Brasilia churches. Locals come to the TAP-enhanced churches to speak directly to angels and experience services that are more like blockbuster movies, which the faithful can't get back home with the local parish. The government spends a lot of time and effort maintaining this perfect image. It has an unlikely partner in this effort, the organized crime family the Luvas Brancas (LBs). Rumor has it the signature white gloves the crime family wears are more than just a symbol. Get them dirty with grime or blood and the member loses respect in the eyes of their leaders. The longer the criminal can keep their hands clean, the higher in the ranks they go.





The city has a fairly simple method for dealing with undesirables in the city; the LBs round them up and dump them in the jungles that surround the city. If the undesirable attempts to return, they get dumped a second time, this time with a blade stuck in a vital organ. While this has been a successful terror tactic, guerilla bands made up of survivors who decided not to flee into the jungles have started to form outside of town. These bands are now attacking the convoys that exile the criminals and heretics kicked out of Rio. They offer any survivors a chance to fight back. It's a chance that more and more are taking.

#ElCapitán: These hombres don't just free the outcast criminals, they equip and train them too. In under a month, a scourge of a man can be made into a ruthless fighting machine. They've been appropriating TAPs and wares from the guards they kill too, so the more time goes by, the stronger they grow. Their numbers increase, but so does their equipment. It's only a matter of time before this becomes a full-blown war with the LBs. They've already taken notice, so you can expect the convoys to become better equipped and well-guarded. The gravy train has entered the station, and the conductor is making his rounds to check tickets, if you know what I mean.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: You know I always appreciate new info, Cap, but that must be the worst analogy my black eyes have ever seen.

LIMA BANCO CENTRO

The Alianza Pacifica wants the world to believe that all their members are taking a stand against the imperialistic drives of New Brasilia. They may all share that common goal in theory but not every country is at the same level of pushing back against New Brasilia. Peru, despite being a member of the alliance, still deals with New Brasilia on a daily basis. Evidence of these dealings can be found by the clever observer in the financial center of the country, Lima Banco Centro. The prosperity of Peru depends on being an off-shore bank on shore and this city thrives on moving foreign currency and taking its cut as it flows through the city.

There are plenty of entities wishing to do business with New Brasilia but not willing to risk their reputations by aligning with religious fundamentalists or nationalistic fanatics. Lima Banco Centro passed several laws to make tracking the money that trades hands within the

city and its servers far more difficult. The shining financial towers in the central financial district are built as homes for shell companies that bounce money back and forth to each other. Often, lavish executive suites are kept up only for appearances, full of sculptures and other pieces of art that gather dust as the money used to purchase them, now clean, flies into one illicit coffer or another.

Lima Banco Centro stands at odds with the rest of the country by continuing to deal with forces within New Brasilia looking to clean their funds. Yet, without the services the banks in the district provide, the country's economic output would likely crash and Peru would get snapped up by a neighbor. Something has to give and the rumors are pointing to a crash. A disgruntled official, upset with their cut in these illegal transactions, spent several years running out the strands of the web. The file they kept supposedly exposes who owns what companies headquartered in Lima Banco Centro. Anyone who can find the person—or the data—could become a major power player in international money laundering overnight.

SOUTH AMERICAN FLASHPOINTS

- Public opinion is turning against sims in New Brasilia. Though they are a popular and profitable export, the political climate means manufacturers must hire extra security for factories and personnel. When a hardcore fundamentalist group kidnaps the son of a MacManX executive, the call goes out for a team to extract. The problem is that the son is in love with the terrorist leader and the kidnapping was a way to get money to run away together.
- The leading proposal for the Granembajada is a large arcology built in the style of an ancient Incan pyramid. This project would take several years and the cooperation of several megacorporations. It's also the preferred choice of New Brasilia, who are looking to hire teams to install listening devices and capture programs in the building's Net capabilities so they can monitor internal discussions of Alianza politicians.
- The leader of the guerillas outside of Rio is known as Luvermelha. Red Glove is allegedly a former boss of the LBs who was supposed to be killed instead of exiled but somehow survived his attack. Without him, the convoy

attacks might be unsuccessful, and the gang has put a sizable bounty on his head. Are the rumors true? Or is Red Glove an identity created by survivors to strike fear into the hearts of Rio's top gang members?

- While the Gorilla Guerillas may have a snappy, media-friendly name, they've become a real problem for the pharmacorps that consider the Amazon rainforest their property. The hybrid gang fouls up the expeditions into the Amazon for new plants and animals to provide the fuel the corporations need to expand their bottom line. Their attacks are mostly harmless to the personnel and wildlife of the jungle, but they've cost the corporations hundreds of thousands of dollars in sabotaged river boats and destroyed weaponry. The

companies may soon unite and hire a team of mercenaries to root them out.

- To this day, there exists a strange connection between some wealthy South American families and refugees who fled Germany after the end of World War II. With New Brasilia financially sound and Germany pondering its next move after the Charon attack, couriers from South America have been sent with shadow accounts and black market contacts to influence a hard-right turn for Germany's population. It's only a matter of time until German terrorists funded by reales strike within Europe and cause tensions to rise once again. They may even do so within Germany to convince the people to embrace an authoritarian leader.

MANDARINATE ASIA

Many observers in the twentieth Century believed China would be the next country to ascend as a superpower. They were both right and wrong. China's devotion to communism and the policies it created fell into chaos. The Mandarinate rose in its place, honoring the nation's past while pushing it toward the future. The Mandarinate stands as an ascendant nation while so many others have fallen in these unstable times. It is the chief power in the region and one who looks to improve its standing on the world stage by any means necessary.

The Bachelor Wars, as they've come to be known, were the Mandarinate's first moves of power after shedding its ties to communism. The Mandarinate started the Bachelor Wars to seek out a needed resource, like ore, wood, or oil. In this case, however, it was children. The children of China's one child policy grew up to realize their population had more men than women. They needed children to keep the country moving forward. These children were taken, reassigned, and often genetically modified (and improved) to match their new parents. These children grew up as part of the Mandarinate culture and now rule over their homeland and the other countries in the region.

One country, however, remains a thorn in the side of the Mandarinate. The Death and the Floods thawed much of the Siberian region. These Thawed Lands were taken by the Mandarinate

and have slowly been transformed into a habitable area through the work of allied corporations and their technology. This hard work was made harder by the interference of Russian loyalists calling themselves the New Cossacks who slowed the process through the destruction of technology and the removal of key personnel.

The Thawed Lands fell relatively quickly to the Chinese onslaught but the Chinese are realizing the difference between taking territory and holding territory. Northwestern Asia is not very hospitable even though it's no longer a frozen wasteland. The weather patterns are volatile, the land is a swampy sludge, and the people are not terribly excited to serve new leaders. Even beyond the active war sabotage by groups like the New Cossacks (who make conventional tracking difficult by the use of non-computerized weapons or vehicles), getting supplies to the front lines is a logistical nightmare. China's hold is firm but the senior ministers worry they are in store for one of two options that don't bode well; a slow war of attrition that will continue to drain resources that could be spent on expansion, or a Russian counterattack that would shatter the line and erase any gains made by the Mandarinate.

The Mandarinate is made up of thirty-five ministries that cover all aspects of governance. Senior Mandarins are generally determined by a combination of age and merit. This can sometimes lead to a junior Mandarin stuck in their position





for decades, or an official transferring to a different ministry to battle for a promotion to a higher position. Merit can often be equalized through personal wealth. Nearly every executive of a corporation based in the Mandarinate also has some sort of title within the government as an emissary or functionary. Mandarins are supposed to give up any connections to the business worlds when they accept their positions but oftentimes continue on as consultants through a web of dummy corporations and administrative staff willing to deliver cash in the dead of night.

#TurtlesallthewayDown: The Mandarinate is big on finding one's place in the community. Some people were meant to be eunuch spokespeople. Some were meant to be wealthy and powerful. The communists might be gone, but their influence lives on in the way society is tightly structured and infringes on every aspect of individual autonomy.

#DreadfulBear: Communism could have continued lifting millions out of poverty if the Chinese hadn't corrupted it. The Mandarinate aren't Marxists, they just want to conquer the world, no different than the Americans.

#FreeAtlantica1776: This comment cannot be viewed because the user has been removed from the servers.

#DreadfulBear: Give me a break with your corporate propaganda, @FA. You really think the Americans are better off than the Russians? You've been bombing your own cities! If the Mandarinate were right next door to you, they'd have taken full advantage of your disasters and you'd be studying Confucius instead of that bastardized Jeffersonian thought your corporate masters allow in schools.

#VodkaSpiller: You're both being misled. It's sad that those outside the Mandarinate are still subject to such Improper Thought. Communism is a proven failure, but the wise man knows humanity requires structure. China has proven what societal structure can bring the world. We confronted climate catastrophes head on, which is why we were able to assist in the Thawed Lands when the Russians were in need.

#DreadfulBear: ASSIST? Conquering isn't assistance, you boot licking waste of skin!

#VodkaSpiller: And here we see why the Russians were in such dire need of assistance. They have such uncontrolled minds.

One tradition well-preserved by the Mandarinate, and not often discussed in their official dispatches, is the continued influence of the Triad on the culture and country. The Ministry of Inner Peace was created to root out criminal influence within the government, but the Ministry doesn't get the resources it truly needs to do its job. Occasionally, an official who gets too sloppy with their bribery gets tossed to the public as an example of the ministry getting things done.

It's also an opportunity for the Triads to air their grievances (and kill any troublesome members).

Without the Triads in control of the streets, many of the poor and marginalized might find themselves agitating for yet another revolution. Conditions for the poor are still fraught with terrible air quality and shortages of basic necessities. Rather than improve these basic living conditions, the Ministry of Dreams ensures that the TAPs installed on new children are top of the line and that workers can rack up bonus credits to use in their Deep networks. The popularity of such games as Sun Blade/MOON KING keeps the people happy and has started to be noticed by other countries looking to placate their poor.

#TurtlesallthewayDown: The games are also great places to promote gender-neutrality, androgyny, and other cultural "isms" that are popular in the Mandarinate. Years ago, Shen Wei, the first woman on the Mandarinate board, made sure to destroy the Chinese patriarchy by implementing a slew of gender-neutral policies, all still in place today so far as I know. Unruly men are made eunuchs and turned into functionaries of the state. They're brainwashed into thinking it's actually a good thing!

#FangFan: Our Eunuchs are blessed to serve the Mandarinate. Gender still exists here, but it's not hard to see how patriarchal structures have crippled the world's progress. Old China had legions of men without women, and was eventually torn apart by it. Shen Wei is guiding us into a new era, one where men have learned self-control and our great nation can move forward without the distractions of sex and antiquated notions of gender. It's not about politics, it's about scientific achievements overcoming the human condition.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Makes you wonder what kind of Confucius they're still teaching in China, or if they even are.

Despite its forward looking stance, the Mandarinate and the countries it rules devote themselves to a fair amount of preservation. Most cities have a cultural zone that is dedicated to preserving historical buildings and areas the way they were. The rest of these cities are often shining modern beacons, but the gloss of a new block can often be broken up by a preserved temple or a long-tended garden. The government also seeks to preserve its best leaders through dubbing and could soon be the first country led by AI.

In the rural areas of the country, this desire to preserve the past runs into more difficulty. Ecological disasters and industrialization often trample on the image the Ministry of Crossroads tries to sell to its people. A lot of time and money is spent trying to recreate these rural areas of peace rather than look for a way to repair the

damage. The Ministry spends more money on holographic technology making a barren plain look like a lush forest instead of planting trees and nourishing them to grow. Using technology outside of urban zones and private homes is also a violation of law that can draw heavy fines from local authorities.

TAIPLEX

Though still technically the country of Taiwan, nearly the entire island has been swallowed by the Taipei Metroplex, called the Taiplex for short. Other cities, like Chicago, have declared themselves free from the influence of their neighboring countries, but few have had a city organically grow to cover an entire country. The city is the country is the city with a population density as high as anywhere in the Mandarinate and, quite possibly, the world. The city sprawls in all directions from the towers of the corporate giants to the “tunnelments” of living spaces built into the old sewer system of the original city.

Taiplex still maintains a large chunk of autonomy compared to the other countries that border the Mandarinate. The press releases at this time talk about maintaining a unique environment for businessmen, which is a clue to the real reason behind the long leash. Triad leaders call themselves businessmen to outsiders and the city has benefitted from being something of a headquarters for the organization in the area. It's a win for both the government and organized crime. Officials can claim that they're keeping big criminals off the mainland and the Triads can still be close enough to their operations from their soft exile.

#FormosaMore: One reason we're so densely populated as we have one of the world's most critical space ports. From here, you can get nearly anywhere in the Solar System without a layover.

The Techno-Shogunate of Japan has recently started to try and break up the happy couple. Gokudo have started to clear out turf from the lower strata of Triad families. They're offering cheap prices on stolen Cybertech from their homeland to anyone who signs up, and then turning those monsters on any gangs who stay loyal. The more powerful families have started to tell their friends in the Mandarinate to lean on

the Japanese but the government is wary to start a war on a second front while still squabbling with Russia.

TOKYO

The city of Tokyo remains the crown jewel of the Techno-Shogunate. Japan reorganized under military rule in the middle of the twenty-first century and Tokyo is still the electric heart that runs the country. Like many other countries during this era, it took the time to reacquaint itself with its culture and in doing so put the image of the samurai forward to the rest of the world. This idea is most famous in the photos and videos of the country's First General but has also come out in the cybernetic designs from the robotics corporations based here.

Tokyo is also home to thousands of synths. These bioroids were created by the corporations headquartered in the city as a homegrown alternative to the importation of sims from elsewhere in the world. Synths have more rights and privileges in Japan than in other parts of the world but they are still very basic rights and fraught with peril. To the outside world, Tokyo is a model of a future city where robots and humans can live together in harmony. To citizens of the city, they see the quiet discrimination against synths every day.

The classes of Japanese life might be flipped on their side by an alliance of the lowest classes. The upper classes still value their reputation as much as their own lives. A recent string of public embarrassments recorded by security cameras and hidden microphones are causing a stir within the halls of the metropolitan prefecture. The dirty laundry of each ward governor is being aired in private, short burst transmissions to the members of each prefecture. The style of footage suggests that some combination of the enslaved servant class and household synths are working together to expose the excesses of the city's leaders.

#Yoshihiro-san: Hey, bitches! I'm here to give you the lowdown on Tokyo's sprawling splendor. Tokyo is a “metropolitan prefecture,” not a city. It's made up of 23 wards, and they're all like a mini-city. Thanks to this, you can find almost anything in Tokyo! The Tokyo metropolitan government oversees the entire metro prefecture that is Tokyo, but the individual prefectures have quite a bit of autonomy, which you'll





Asahi
BEER-JU

TOYOTA
DANCE

PEPSI

CYBER
CITY

TRANSIT-BOX



quickly notice. We've got suburban neighborhoods that stretch for miles, and one prefecture over you'll find some of the world's tallest skyscrapers. The Kenta Cyber Dynamics HQ is here, and their ground floor has a Paripari Chicken open to the public where you can grub on some of Japan's finest fast-food. Just @ me if you plan to visit Tokyo and want to know all the best spots or are looking for a job with one of our many robotics/cyber megacorps. Ttyl, bitches!

SINGAPORE

The citizens of Singapore call themselves “the children of the new mountain” for a good reason. Many of the other coastal cities were abandoned as the sea levels rose or built sea walls to keep the water out. This city instead built upwards on the existing structures to maintain an impressive skyline even as the old buildings sank beneath the sea. This process allowed vibrant communities to stay together even as disaster fell around the edges of the city.

The Mandarinate has ensured that the original layer of the island was not wasted. The government assisted Singapore in stabilizing the layer and installing a new industrial base beneath the waves. It sends guest workers into this industrial layer to create the technological products Singapore and the Mandarinate have gained a reputation for making. Sometimes, these guest workers are prisoners or political dissidents. These guest workers often spend years in these darkened, leaking factories with the hope of their time served ever running out very unlikely.

Some do make it out of the sublevel, illegally. Enough have gotten into Singapore that they have started organizations designed to help smuggle more people out of the darkness. Climber societies are a popular cause in the city, both for the rich who “buy out” the visa of guest workers to bring them into the city proper (often as indentured servants), and for the militant groups who raid and destroy the drone ships that bring Mandarinate prisoners from Hong Kong to work.

#Zing: Singapore also has the world's finest zoo, Eden Zoo, which was one of the few structures walled up during the floods. It's broken into two sections, the Future and the Past. You can see what the world was like before humanity ruined our planet, or what life might be like on other planets we've yet to ruin.

MANILA

Faith has always been an important part of Filipino life. Southeast Asia is a mash of different beliefs but the Christian faith took hold when Magellan landed in the sixteenth century and never lost much ground. As the waters rose around their city in the early twenty-first century, it seemed as if the prayers of one of the most densely populated cities in the world were suddenly answered. CHIMERA arrived to build a custom shoreline water system and protect the citizens from their city being flooded like so many others. The Manila Archwall is now one of the most recognizable features of the city as it bends to cover the city not as a full arcology but as a symbol of corporate might.

CHIMERA's decision to save the city was not a mercy mission. New Brasilia sought to make its first expansion from the South American continent and a country in Asia that was over 90% Christian was a perfect fit. They also seized on a vital mistake made by the leaders of the Mandarinate. The Mandarins figured the Philippines would play out like many of its other protectorates; after disaster struck, the country would crawl on its knees to China to ask for help in rebuilding their country. The corporation's timely intervention before disaster struck not only kept them out of Mandarinate control but gave New Brasilia a proxy ally in a new region of the world.

#Luciferion: A few years back, some guy called me a “round eye” and said China had nothing to fear from Brazil. I think that dickhammock left, but it looks like I nailed this prediction!

The Archwall, while it's saved the city and given it an international symbol that the whole world recognizes, has also provided the city with its biggest challenge. Many of Manila's homeless population have taken residence inside the Archwall or along dangerous scaffolding that climbs several meters into the sky along the inside of the arch. Local authorities have destroyed the scaffolds multiple times and are threatening to raid the arch to clear out the homeless once and for all. They are currently being held at bay by the local clergy and their rapport with the unwashed masses; however, it's only a matter of time until

the cops spring a midnight raid on the homeless and their clergy advocates.

HAI MOUI BA CITY

Many cities hold on to their names out of tradition. The capital city of Vietnam, known as both Saigon and Ho Chi Minh City in the twentieth century, changed its name once again to show its new focus. Some claim the name, Twenty Three City, comes from the number of districts created when the city rebuilt after massive flooding wiped out a large portion of the old city. Others believe the name reflects the 23 pairs of chromosomes in the human body and Vietnam's burgeoning reputation as a world leader in gene splicing technology. HMBC is home to several corporations that are on the cutting edge of hybrid technology lured by tax incentives and an almost decadent culture of scientists looking to push what hybrids can do.

When people think about HMBC, the first place they often think of is Thit Market, where some of the most outrageous body mods outside of genetic labs can be seen. Here, hybrids push the envelope of what their bodies can do and what people might consider socially acceptable. These mods aren't necessarily for sale here, but there's something of a performance art feel as different animals, subtle cybernetic implants, and even AR overlays combine to create images that are hideous, beautiful, and sometimes both at once.

The Thit Market and to some extent HMBC are a hotbed of hybrid rights activity. The rise in discrimination against hybrids in other countries often encourages them to flee to HMBC for a new life. Hybrid gangs offer protection for these refugees, but the price can be steep. If the refugee can't pay, they have a couple of options. The tough ones might end up working as muscle, while the softies land in one of the city's "exotic bird markets." Even in such unfortunate cases, these fates are better than what they might experience in their home countries.

#GettingHanoid: Ne didn't mention the massive drug problems infesting the city, particularly in the Market. Yeah, you can see any kind of hybrid imaginable there, but half the people are addicts. I don't know what comes first, the extensive body modifications or the drugged out hallucinations, but the two seem to go hand in hand. Anybody willing

to splice feathers on their body must have mental problems.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: For those still unaware (if anybody can possibly still be), "ne" is a gender-neutral pronoun. I know. For those of us in the reawakened Christian West, it's jolting. But if you want to deal with the Chinese and their Mandarinate protectorates, you gotta learn the lingo and play by their rules.

JABODETABEK ARCHIPELAGO

The Floods reshaped much of the world by sending millions fleeing for their lives and leaving homes behind in coastal cities. The New York Reclamation Zone is the most well-known example, but dozens of cities suffered similar falls. The cities of Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi had long since come together as the Jabodetabek Metroplex in the late twentieth century. As the waters rushed through the streets of the Indonesian capital, the Mandarinate reached out to help the victims. At least, the victims who could trace their lineage back to the mainland. The rest were abandoned to their fates in the massive city. What was a sprawl that covered most of the island of Java is now a swampy collection of smaller islands either covered by buildings or made up of half-sunken structures from the megaplex.

With most of the main roadways turned into waterways, the city has something of a twenty-first century Venice feel to it. Nearly all travel is by watercraft, though the rich use hoppers to avoid the rush hour traffic jams. The islands thrive as a financial center that connects the legitimate corporations of Southeast Asia with the illegitimate criminal empires of the world. Even the Mandarinate uses Jabodetabek for these purposes by sending Triad money into the casinos where the rich play so it comes back clean to fund the Mandarinate war machine.

Where there's money, there are those who wish to steal it. Pirates have stationed themselves all around the archipelago to raid tourist ships, plunder illegal shipments, and make a grand nuisance of the waters not protected by Jabodetabek Archipelago Maritime Patrol. The Jammers recently scored a big victory by destroying the headquarters of the Marauders, the largest pirate band in Southeast Asia. There are several gangs gunning for the crown, such as



the Deathstalkers, Sisters of the Sirehood, and the Buzzsaw Seven.

MANDARINATE FLASHPOINTS

- Some climber societies don't care about civilian casualties because the loss of manpower will be what causes the Mandarinate to stop sending prisoners to Singapore. Any one of several factions, be it a charity foundation, the Singapore government, or even the Mandarinate, would be interested in eliminating such rabid revolutionaries from the area. A damaged drone ship could even get caught in the crossfire between these factions with nobody caring about the innocent lives aboard.
- A synth's head washes ashore on a Jabodetabek Archipelago beach. Inside, there's a recording of the most powerful Techno-Shogunate prefecture leader doing something terrible to one of his family members. In the hands of a criminal, it could be potent blackmail that would set them for life. In the hands of a government, it could change the course of world history.
- The New Cossacks strike at a different target in their fight to reclaim The Thawed Lands. Instead of the destruction of physical installations, they hire an elite team of biohackers to infest the rural Deep with subtle mind altering media to make the peasantry more sympathetic to their cause. The Mandarinate has military strength to spare but what happens when their own peasants start using Cossack tactics against military bases they once thought safe?
- The pop star Lazarene returns to Vietnam to host a benefit concert to help hybrids make the costly and dangerous trip to HMBC. Some old friends are looking to collect what they believe they're owed from Lazarene's career, so they need extra security to protect them as they prepare for the show. Lazarene is also there to settle some scores from before they got famous and is willing to pay double to security team members willing to hit the streets settle Lazarene's old scores while they are in town.
- The Mandarinate seized control of Thailand after an assassin killed the Royal Family by launching a drone missile at their aircraft. Recently, the royal crest has been seen in unusual places, like graffiti left on the statues in Lumpini park and several skyscrapers whose lights were reprogrammed to show the crest on the sides of their buildings. Officials are worried that, even if there isn't an actual lost heir to the throne, someone is co-opting the deaths of the Royal Family as a method to call for revolution against the Mandarinate.

AFRICA

The story of Africa is the story of clashes between empires. Ever since Caesar and Cleopatra came together, there has been a push and a pull between Europe and Africa. Europe has been the one in power for centuries but the karmic wheel is swinging the other way. Africa is home to the top biotech corporations in the world. There would be no hybrids, bioroids, or androids without the advancements of these companies. Cybertech and prosthetics would still be stuck in the twentieth century. They say that the human race began in Africa. There's a bit of evidence that's where the future is headed, as well.

The continent is still divided between outsiders and homegrown empires. The Southern Eurasian Union includes cities like Marrakech and Casablanca that offer refuge for Europeans and their money. The Central African Union hides

away from outsiders to keep focused on its work. The pirate country of Somalia offers a haven to the lawless who don't care about spilling blood for money. South Africa grows rich off the wealth of other countries. Any one of these nations could be the future of Africa depending on how the next few years play out.

Even with these divisions, Africa is united more than it has been for hundreds of years. The fate of the continent is in the hands of those who live there instead of being pulled apart or harvested for other empires. From the smallest village to the tallest tower, Africans are proud of their nations and excited where they may end up in the next few years. Many countries have gone through recent nationalistic phases but the citizens of Africa have not bought into the theocratic purity or fascist ideals occurring in so

many other nations. That is not to say African pride is without its problems. It often manifests itself in other ways, such as the destruction of equipment or property of corporations that were not homegrown on African soil.

The Congolese corporation BioLion has broken out of the shadow of its partnerships with major Cybertech manufacturers to become its own household name. More and more, those who want to keep their gear in working order buy directly from BioLion. Qandisa Logistics picked up much of the slack for shipping goods and services for partners in the Eurasian Union after the Charon crisis. Fears of an unstable EU have kept many of those customers from switching back. The meterseuns, a sort of banker/criminal hybrid, of the hundreds of financial institutions scattered throughout South Africa are rapidly becoming as famous as their superstar clients. Even the extralegal gangs of Somalia are getting into it by sending Gunsaint Security forces forged in the Bakaara Market to protect clients around the world.

The rise of Africa as a modern power drains away the rural poor from the villages scattered throughout the countryside. Many of these migrants have their dreams of better lives shattered when they arrive at the metroplex in the distance. The slums are choked with thousands who spent all they had to get to the city and have little to show for it. Many of the gangs are made up of soldiers unable to read but certainly able to fire an automatic weapon at a rival. The gap between the rich and the poor in these African countries may be the widest in the world.

The migration of the poor sometimes allows for villages built from scraps to exist on the edges of larger cities, giving a strange compactness to urban areas. These Wreckplexes, as they've been dubbed, are often built out of the large industrial wrecks left over from the disasters that rocked the world. Old airplanes, hollowed out cargo ships, and other structures built for reasons other than human residence are often the landmarks in these tent and pre-fab exurbs that travelers use to navigate, much like fountains and plazas within the cities.

Criminal organizations here often have long rivalries rooted in tribal origins that go back centuries. Many gang leaders claim that they steal from outsiders and colonizers first. Like

many claims of honor among thieves, these ideas are more myth than fact. While these tribal syndicates can band together for big jobs like the Cape Town Skimmer Job, any extended attempt at unification or consolidation has ended in bloodshed.

#DarkestKnight: Africans may have pride, but the Western influence lives on. We finally have the tech to effectively bleach our skin, and it's estimated 15% of Africans are now pale enough to pass for Vikings. I pity the African who would taint himself and tarnish his prideful African heritage for the sake of the White Man's beauty standards.

#GangerBangerintheHanger: Not everything is racial, omae. In the RUSA, there are plenty of white folks darkening their skin too. When some people want to look like lizards, it's only natural some would also want to change their skin color.

#DarkestKnight: Everything is indeed racial, whether you want to see it or not, "omae." And there's nothing natural about it.

CASABLANCA

Casablanca's reputation as a hotbed of intrigue has existed for centuries. It was one of the major African metroplexes that pushed for inclusion in the Eurasian Union out of fear that it would get annexed by the Arab Kingdom as one of their rare cities not affected by ecological disaster. Agents of that country, and plenty of others, still mingle in the back alleys and cafes of the city. It also means there are a lot of mysterious deaths and accidents when people stumble upon these intrigues. The local investigators have a reputation for being nearly as well paid as corporate executives and just as full of secrets.

Qandisa Logistics makes its home in Casablanca and has reinvested great sums into small businesses throughout the city. Shipping is the official top industry in the city, but the amount of money spent on smuggling goods easily dwarfs the official economic reports. Nearly every business in town has a small side room full of trinkets, equipment, or supplies that came into their possession through less than legitimate means.

Rather than a central black market location, the entire city is the black market. The trick to discovering where to find the best back rooms are learning the subtle signs of the city. These smuggling symbols are a second language known





to the locals and those who spend a lot of time in the city. For example, an empty table with three place settings in a restaurant means the back room shop has medical supplies for sale.

The other way to discover what's going on in Casablanca is to make a date with the elusive Red Diva. The Diva is an information broker with a legendary reputation who calls this city her home. Adding to her mystique, plenty of rumors surround her, such as whether she's actually a set of cloned sisters who use the same identity and costume, or perhaps she's actually an AI who downloads herself into Net friendly tech and masquerades as a living being. It seems like she knows everything, from the sexual activities of several executives who prefer the same hybrid prostitute to which street vendor has the best rghaif in the city. The question is what price someone is willing to pay, often answered by what information they have to trade.

MOGADISHU

It's easy to say that Mogadishu is a lawless city. To outsiders, it looks as if the city is run by warlords who brazenly control local politicians. Violence is a daily occurrence between the factions vying for control. The only reason someone else has not stepped in is because most organizations with the power to do so have bigger problems elsewhere. There is law in the city, however: the oldest one, the law of power. It's a city where those who take become the ones who make the rules and those who hold become the ones who break the rules.

The flexible nature of morality makes the city a haven for pirates, dirty hackers, and all sorts of criminals. Mercenaries who make it out of the city have a reputation that can easily double their fee, to the point where some killers who have falsely claimed to come from the city turned up dead when someone discovered they were lying. The city is full of a frontier energy. Anything can happen, and the survivors are always armed. Nearly anything can be found here, so long as the seekers have enough time, money, and ammunition (or at least two of the three).

At the heart of the city lies Bakaara Market, which exists in an eerie bit of quiet compared to the rest of the city. All the factions realize

there needs to be neutral ground where deals can go down. The market exists as an eye of the storm where any rivals can meet under any circumstances and expect safety. It's not perfect, as blood feuds tend to thrive on luring rivals into places of safety and then killing them. The closest thing to law in the city is security for the marketplace. They hit back hard when the quiet of the market is broken; sometimes against the party that made the move, sometimes against both parties involved. Their arbitrary justice gives gangs pause on not just violating the treaty of the market but also continuing retaliations elsewhere in the city.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: You gotta be careful in the Mog. Everybody there's packing, and more than once a simple haggle has turned into a gunfight by newbs who don't know the Market rules. Everybody there wants to prove their dick is biggest, especially the women. Mog women scare the living shit out of me, omae.

#Luciferion: You just say that cause your ex was from the Mog.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Damn straight, @Luci. Like I said, scared shitless too. Not just of her, but she told me stories that'd make you crap your liver straight into your britches.

KENYATTA VERTICAL

The Central African Union (CAU) has stayed quiet throughout most of the twenty-first century. It seemed content to keep its head down and eschew the big wars, political upheaval, and other unrest in the world. Some even went so far as to call the silence "the Ivory Curtain". It was relatively easy to do with other countries going through such radical changes. The CAU threw off the curtain in a big way in 2095 when it revealed that not only had it been building an equatorial space elevator near Nairobi but that the majority of the construction was complete. The existence of Kenyatta Vertical City (KVC) instantly turned the CAU into a global player, even as it simultaneously showed the South African Northstar beanstalk to be a scam.

#Luciferion: Scam or not, that beanstalk is the best way to get off world without being detained.

A space elevator connects two points; one on the ground and another in geosynchronous orbit. This eases the process of getting materials to and from space because it can now travel along the





length of the elevator. Neary every spacefaring concern on the planet has scrambled to get some space devoted to their operation in KVC. Even those corporations with dedicated spaceports or launch platforms have come to Kenyatta Vertical to make sure they have a foot in the door once operations truly begin. Where these companies go, so follow smaller businesses and the operations that support them.

Building the massive structure required an equally massive workforce which is now trying to figure out how to demobilize. Many of these workers are descending on nearby Nairobi, taking the city's social security nets and infrastructure. Wreckplex communities have also cropped up around the base of the elevator for those workers hoping things will pick back up as outside interests arrive in Kenyatta Vertical. In the meantime, these workers fall victim to criminal gangs hoping to stake a claim in the elevator. As a port of entry and exit, the elevator will just as likely shift illegal cargo, and the tribal syndicate that corners that market first will gain a heavy lead on the rest.

CAPE TOWN

The two sources of power in the world are money and information. Cape Town is thick with both. The city is home to data havens protected by a nasty combination of top-flight hackers and lethal artificial intelligences. These havens hold the secrets of the rich and powerful, secrets so deep and dark the havens don't even trust their own corporations to protect them. This data is also full of blackmail information to protect these people if they need to switch teams. The havens are a maze of false leads, dirty deeds, and deliberate leaks to trap anyone digging for dirt. The real deal can make the holder fabulously rich if they can cash in before they get killed.

Cape Town's physical security matches its data security. The Cape Town Job of '79 was the closest that the tribal syndicates got to working together. They descended on the city for a brutal series of bank robberies that hit several buildings hard and fast. DeBoer Secure Services retaliated just as quickly and claimed to have taken out every last one of the raiders. DBSS secured its Cape Town contract for decades and rose to prominence as

a metro guard contractor ever since. The sight of the DBSS logo is a common one in the city and has manufactured the rare culture in a metroplex where the police are celebrated rather than feared. DBSS officers can still be as corrupt and cruel as others, but anyone battling the police in Cape Town also have to battle public opinion.

The city's reputation for law and order will be tested by the city's newest noble resident. Kaya Malan was the mastermind behind the Northstar con where she convinced thousands of people she was building a space elevator somewhere in the South African countryside. She bought a mansion in the influential Bishops court neighborhood, where she's serving her sentence under house arrest. Her elaborate con involved manufactured construction site visits, fake AI scientists, and millions disappearing into her bank accounts. She's settled into something of an exile in Cape Town after pleading guilty to the scheme. She supposedly cooperated with the government to help them nail money launderers and other financial criminals, but some think she got away with house arrest because so many powerful people would be exposed as having been swindled by Malan in court proceedings.

KINSHASA

The rise of Kinshasa as a powerful urban center within the Central African Union coincides with the rise of BioLion as a megacorporation. Most modern cities find themselves dancing delicately with companies to balance providing services for their citizens and bowing to requests from executives. Some cities have owed their corporate masters for rebuilding them after great disaster, but Kinshasa thoroughly integrated from the beginning. Natives to the city have known loyalty to the company all their lives. Outsiders see a new version of a classic company town where citizens are exploited for corporate profit.

BioLion employees make up 90% of the city's population. Anyone born within the city is implanted with a small monitoring chip that acts as birth certificate, bank account, and employment history. Anyone who moves to Kinshasa must also receive this small biomod. Even companies that aren't directly owned by BioLion require it from their subcontractors. This

public identity chip lets employers review possible hires, police profile suspects, and even lets romantic partners check each other out before coffee. In exchange, anyone with the BioLion chip gets free healthcare and a basic income between positions. The executives in charge of the program claim that when anyone leaves the city or the employment of BioLion the chip is removed and all its data is secured.

The reality, however, is quite different. There are rumors of people living within the city whose chips have been damaged or removed. They have become invisible to the city's other citizens and have limited ability to escape. They claim their TAPs were modified and no longer function. Any attempts to leave have found more than just a simple chip add-on. The BioLion software supposedly rewrites the TAP software to completely shut down outside the city limits. Executives within the company have claimed these to be false reports or ones made by bitter ex-employees.

JOPRE GROOSTAD

The growth of Johannesburg and Pretoria happened over many years. The Border Wars caused the city to reorganize as a single entity. The Groostad is a federal district within South Africa, much like Washington, DC was within the old United States. South Africa consolidated what it once considered three capital cities into one area and then set the metroplex apart from the rest of the country. Moving everything into one city forced anyone wanting to do business in South Africa to come to JoPre first. The Central Government even passed legislature to ensure that any corporate offices had to open a branch in JoPre before any other city.

These laws began South Africa's reputation as a giant data haven. It also put JoPre officials first in line for any corporate incentives that might get paid out when considering locations. Many within the district operate as middlemen by taking bribes from both the executives wanting to build within the country, and representatives of the areas where they are wanting to construct. A lot of this money is laundered through public works projects. The whims of the officials put the money into pet projects rather than taxation and the

public good, but in this day and age, something is better than nothing.

JoPre also boast a large, young, aggressive population of corporate freelancers called Moneyboys. These agents wine and dine potential clients to persuade them to go with their bank, hedge fund, or financial institution for the best return. Meterseuns walk the line between banker and criminal, as the competition to clean dirty money has gotten intense enough for some meterseuns to carry weapons and kidnap clients on the town. If someone can't physically protect a client, they sure won't be able to protect their money from hackers, robbers, or the authorities.

AFRICAN FLASHPOINTS

- Kaya Malan made millions fleeing her Northstar investors. She made even more enemies. Her Bishopsgate mansion is a gilded cage that protects her from those enemies. The discovery that her father suffers from a terminal disease pushes her to the risky decision to try and escape her house arrest to see him. She'll need to hire a team that's not only willing to protect her from her many enemies but also stay one step ahead of the authorities who want to bring her back. They have to hope that the reason she claimed she needs to break out is also true and not just a way to disappear with a large amount of stashed cash.
- DeBoer Secure Services claims that the perpetrators of the Cape Town Job were dealt with and all the stolen money was returned. For years, underworld rumors have claimed that one or two of the thieves made it out with their cut. Word gets out that the last one has died, and their stash is now up for grabs. This sets off a race between members of the thief's old gang, cops looking to reclaim the loot, corrupt cops looking to take the score for themselves, and whatever other old enemies who might complicate the player's lives.
- Deaths scattered all over the world have one thing in common: each person killed worked for BioLion at some point. Their chips were removed not by the company but by the killer. Is it a serial killer with some connection to Kinshasa? A BioLion directive to remove chips and preserve data? A third party trying



to reverse engineer the technology for their own corporate purposes? What happens when a player finds out they have a BioLion chip implant and might be the next target?

- Some of the hottest merchandise in the world can be found in Mogadishu. In this case, it's literally a nuclear warhead that supposedly survived The Death. The bidding is tense, but the warhead's true purpose is not to make it out of the city undetonated. One of the tribal syndicates is looking to destroy Bakaara Market once and for all. Is it over a bad deal? A dead relative? What

motive could one of the syndicates have for wiping out the lone safe haven in a city full of pirates?

- The rivalry between two Moneyboys has gone from heated to deadly. Each side is arming up for a war but there's an unexpected twist. A pair of secret lovers exist between the entourages discovered by the players. Will they stay loyal to the side that hired them? Or will they get wrapped up in a tale of true romance and automatic fire to spirit the lovers out of town before a full-blown war erupts in the streets?

EUROPE

It seemed, for a bright shining moment in the late twentieth century, that Europe might come together and surpass the United States as the beacon of Western Democracy in the world. The European Union came together and then was immediately battered by infighting, threats of secession, and economic woes. Even as it expanded into Asia and became the Eurasian Union, the cooperating countries always seemed like they were a few months away from blowing apart and sinking the whole idea. The EU somehow held together throughout the chaos of the twenty-first century's riotous first half.

Then the AI calling itself Charon struck. Destroying the global economy forced the EU to declare a reevaluation of assets for everyone within its borders. Megacorporations suffered a bit and most people came out ahead, but members of the poorer nations suddenly found themselves locked out of the new economy. Lean times are fertile breeding grounds for nationalist ideas. Soon, some countries like Spain and Greece pulled away from the union with varying degrees of success. Recently, the Nordic Pact, comprised of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland, seceded in a much bigger impact to the remainder of the Union.

Most within the Union are now looking around the table to see which country is the next to withdraw. Some wonder if Harold Cameron's failing health might see the election of a First Minister of Great Britain looking to reestablish its independence from the rest of the continent. Others think the damage Charon inflicted on Germany might force history to repeat itself and result in the country blaming its neighbors for

its woes. Even the centrally located France might drop out due to agitation from its rising Muslim population and ally with factions in the Mideast. Anyone paying attention to the Eurasian Union knows the question is not if more members will leave, but when.

The Eurasian Union has the most stable social services net out of any country on Earth. It sacrifices speed for security. Everyone should be able to get basic income by registering at public terminals throughout the EU but often these terminals are subverted by cybercriminals or just broken. Despite the stability of its welfare system, the cycle is hard to escape as many corporations de-prioritize applications from anyone who's taken public assistance in the past year. This practice has yet to be proven in a court of law, as the employees who testify about it tend to either find themselves being lured into higher paying positions shortly before trial dates are announced or strangely disappearing afterwards.

#XZIO: Speaking out against EU corps is like gambling. You might get a big payoff. You might take an indefinite dirt nap. Thanks for playing, here's a copy of our home game!

Most of the corporations that hold power within the Eurasian Union are older companies who built their fortunes on traditional industries or massive mergers. Central Belarusian Steel (CBS) processes the mineral riches from dozens of mining colonies. ViV was born from the merger of six traditional media companies that entertain the world with virtual programming, news, and gaming. MotoEuro brought together several luxury car companies to manufacture more



modern equipment like space vehicles, drones, and other automated equipment.

Large scale crime is mostly under the control of one big Mob family. Cultural syndicates hold sway with an arrangement akin to the old one in New York. Shortly after the Charon attack, the members of the most powerful families in Italy, Britain, Spain, France, and Morocco came together to form the Cinfam, short for cinque famiglie. These families and their allies vow to work together and consider the EU to be a large territory to be evenly split. The alliance has held for the most part thanks to a common enemy of Russian crime families. Russia's political alliance sent several vory soldiers into Europe looking to claim new territory. The Cinfam politely refused the request by sending as many of them home as possible in as many containers as possible. There were often more containers than people.

Cities in Europe might be called sprawls but they tend to do so in vertical rather than horizontal directions. People were already packed on the continent, so most cities built upward or downward. Venice rebuilt its canals 15 meters higher and often keeps pieces of original buildings as the centerpieces of the new. These

small preservations of history exist throughout all of Europe even as more and more modern buildings rise to replace the old. Centering a new building around relics of the old is more common in areas like coastal cities where there was massive destruction.

Small townships and villages exist in the EU in a different form from their precursors. Communities abandoned by normal humans, who left after the disasters, were rebuilt in towns by all sorts of outcasts such as hybrids, zeeks, androids, and such. Many towns have grown from these outcasts seeking communities in these little hamlets scattered across the countryside. Now, the shoe is on the other foot. Towns full of hybrids scowl and shun outsiders, while zeek communities all speak with each other psychically when they want to exclude tourists from important discussions.

#XZIO: Our continent was always run by pompous assholes. Just some of them are psychic now.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Not like that's just Europeans. Tribalism is everywhere, and in some ways the progress of the last century has exacerbated the problem. You'd think easy travel, translation, and appearance modifications would get people to chill their nugs but, for every problem solved, people find a new reason to hate each other.





LONDON

The effects of Charon's attack reshuffled British society into three different classes. The rich are largely unharmed. The middle class is merged with the working class and trapped in six day work weeks with 10 PM curfews on those nights. The underclass made of undocumented migrants and criminals are usually confined to estates and those parts of the cities that have been left to them. The National Constabulary gets paid by two to police one. The rich pay NatCon in bribes to look the other way and the workers pay in fines and unpaid labor when they get caught so that NatCon can really put the books to the underclass and try out their toys.

London's Dover Ward is the bridge between Great Britain and the rest of the EU. Every corporation in England has an office in the Dover Ward to speed up their goods going in and out of the country. The Trans-Channel Highway that connects the island to the continent is the fastest way to get those goods moving, and the officials who oversee it end up in lavish lifestyles based on who bribes them for which items to cut to the front of the line.

Unlike many cities looking to sprawl, London didn't have much room to spread out. It opted to move downward by reclaiming dozens of lost Underground stations for the rich. These lavish pavilions are part shopping mall, part virtual city. To make up for the lack of panoramic views, the Undersprawl has some of the best virtual displays in the world. Citizens with top of the line TAPs and experiential software can feel like they are shopping on the moon. A popular type of club in the Undersprawl these days is the Disco Rando, where the club fires up multiple AR/VR versions of its evening and the patrons can switch between them on the fly. One minute, they are at a high beat gleaming astrodrance club, the next they are grinding with a fellow gothrage patron.

#OMalleysFlagon: Is this guy whitewashing London or what? Yeah, the Undersprawl is luxurious and lovely—until you get to the Undercroft, beneath the Houses O' (Parliament). That's where all those well-to-do sadists go to watch bare-knuckle brawls, cyberspur duels, cyber-mastiff fights, and any other bloody activity that gets the women wet and the men to bet their yachts on some poor schlub risking his life for a week's worth of meals.

#MuhammedInLondon: Poor schlubs? Please! Those brawlers are well paid and swimming in women. They do it for the glory, because they want to. With the EU safety net, nobody's starving. You must be thinking of the RUSAns.

#JustJane: Shove your sexism up your arses, both of you. Half those brawlers are women and the tag fights are often co-ed with a man and woman on each team. You want to discuss this in person, you can find me in the Undercroft cage. Just ask for Jane.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: I respect your confidence and prowess, @JustJane, but remember it's not wise to share one's location.

DUBLIN

The United Republic of Ireland is anything but, which should not come as a surprise to anyone familiar with the history of the country. Northern Ireland was more or less abandoned by Britain once The Death hit, and it gratefully accepted aid from the Irish Republic. Once the disasters subsided, however, the bad blood started to bubble to the surface once again and the tensions between Ireland and her northern sibling returned. The ongoing question of national identity remains unsettled and a new issue has caused further fractions within the factions: Dublin's emergence as a vital port in the world stage.

Thousands of refugees flowed through Dublin due to the disasters that rattled Europe in the early twenty-first century. Many of them returned to their home countries after things settled down, but many also decided to stay and give Dublin a more continental make up than it had before. These new settlers helped Dublin become a force to be reckoned with in the Eurasian Union but it also added another dimension to the tensions in the country. Not only were there groups battling over who was truly Irish, but now there were groups, wanting to keep Ireland for the Irish, upset at immigrants.

#OmalleysFlagon: Yeah, we can't ever catch a break. We finally get rid of the Brits, and then everybody shows up with "Kiss Me I'm Irish" shirts with wee little Leprechauns on them, thinking they're cute and shite. Bollocks. Their ancestors didn't soak Irish ground with Irish blood. They're just trying to take advantage of a suddenly booming economy.

The flashes of violence have caused the Republic Police Service to put an armed presence out in

the streets at all times. The mirrorheads, as they are called for the reflective helmets they use to hide their identity, are out in full battle dress with automatic weapons and pistols. Depending on whom you ask, they are either heroes giving their lives to keep the peace in the streets or tools of the powerful meant to once again put the boot to Ireland's neck.

THE SCOTSPRAWL

A few places in the world seemed to have enough time or resources to handle the disasters that rocked the world between the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The Scottish Parliament had enough resources to handle the influx of refugees to their damaged cities and forethought to build something entirely new. The Scottish Urban Metroplex was built on the ruins of Glasgow and the western expansion of Edinburgh. A megasprawl is a megasprawl, but compared to the lifetime corporate contracts of the British Industrial Solution or the predatory streets of London, the SUM is nearly a paradise.

The stability of the Scotsprawl has allowed it to become one of the academic leaders of the modern world. Several of the refugees who made it to Scotland were professors from universities such as Oxford and Cambridge. Rather than return to their schools once stability returned to those areas of the world, they struck out to build new institutions of learning. The "oversized university town" feel of the Scotsprawl is one element that makes it appealing to citizens even if it means some rowdy weekends in the spring and fall.

The influx of college students also gives the city a more progressive bent when it comes to politics. Many of the universities within the metroplex give protected status to sims, zeeks, androids, hybrids, and other "evolved humans" to allow them to attend classes and educate themselves. The greater city has tacitly allowed these rights, but student activist groups have started to push city officials for public acknowledgement that the SUM is a place where any lifeform can come to live and not worry they'll be attacked or denied basic human rights. Current officials feel like such proclamations are distractions from the good work of the universities, but the most

vocal students have warned they will run against those officials in the next election because of their unwillingness to act.

STOCKHOLM

The city at the center of the Nordic Pact stands at a crossroads. The influence of the Christian Knightly Brotherhood on creation of the pact by the nations Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Denmark has become clearer and clearer as time wears on. The main reason for leaving the Eurasian Union was fear of a war between the Union and the Chinese Mandarinate. Now that the Mandarinate war machine is stalled, those fears have faded and many citizens are feeling like they were tricked into leaving by the fraternal organization. The feeling of tension is palpable in Stockholm where the CKB headquarters is located.

The High Castle was built through the donations of wealthy members of the CKB. It's a massive building with medieval flourishes like gargoyles and parapets. It overlooks the riksdaghuget building where the members of the Nordic Pact meet, debate, and set policy. It's the most ostentatious mark of the CKB in any of the cities of the pact, with members preferring to wear subtle shield pins on their lapels featuring the triple white cross heraldry of their organization. The High Castle is supposedly organized by membership as well. The lobby is open to the public, but membership is required to get anywhere else in the building.

This secret side to the society has become the main rallying point for officials looking to rejoin the EU. A few members of the CKB were also quietly pushed out of the group for publicly wondering if anyone who didn't speak a Scandinavian language should be allowed to hold a job in the pact countries. Stockholm has seen a few anti-CKB demonstrations but nothing has gone viral or violent yet. Instead, the shadows are thick with intrigue as various parties try to get their people inside the High Castle to discover the ultimate motivations of the power behind the Nordic Pact.

#Lars_Abell: Don't ask how I know, but the High Castle is literally designed like a modern fortress/deathtrap. You can expect traps and guards, both living



and drone, around every corner. Anybody wanting to discover its secrets is going to have to bullshit their way in; or, if visiting after hours, will require a full, diverse, well-equipped squad.

SARAJEVO

Much of the power of the Eurasian Union comes from the weight of history. The countries who form the organization have been around for centuries and realize that more often than not they are stronger together than apart. Yet that history often is full of rivalries, wars, attrition, and even genocide. It's hard to forget the sins of the past when new transgressions bring everything back. Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina, has become the latest flashpoint in centuries of tensions between it and its neighbors. Its history with Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Serbia, and Slovakia is full of massacres and retaliations. The most recent occurred just a few years ago over a new identity: artificial intelligences.

Bolstered by the election of progressive government officials who wanted to lure tech companies to the city, Sarajevo declared itself a free city welcoming to all people of intelligence, be they sim, android, hybrid, or other non-human labels. This declaration brought high praise from Eurasian Union officials and scrutiny and scorn from conservative organizations. Sims and other AIs flock to the city and the local law enforcement has come down hard on hate groups or anyone caught committing crimes against the new citizens. Unfortunately, these actions don't destroy these groups; they are driven out to the neighboring countries where they have taken root.

Those artificial intelligences that can travel directly into Sarajevo because of their wealth and privilege find that it lives up to the dream of those government officials. Many, however, must make their way into the city as refugees. They have to navigate the surrounding countries full of smugglers, paramilitary groups, and criminal gangs who might switch from protectors to tormentors if they get a better offer from someone else. Many who set out for Sarajevo don't make it because they run out of money or time, or they run into someone dead set on destroying them.

BONN-DUSSELDORF REISENSTADT

Germany once again finds itself at the center of an economic disaster. The Charon attack devastated Germany, with some areas reporting up to 35% unemployment because of the economic attack. High rates of unemployment have bred resentment in the government and violence in the streets. A sudden drop in taxable income also means a drop in social services, which puts more pressure on the unemployed and disadvantaged. World wars have started for less and many are watching to see if the situation in Germany is a time bomb nestled at the heart of the Eurasian Union.

The Reisenstadt reacted as well as it could by prioritizing the security of those who could pay for it. The Geldmauer is not a physical wall, but it is a series of checkpoints around the financial sector of the metroplex maintained by Woosley & Associates private security corporation. Entry to the financial sector requires a credit check run at maglev train station stops and random vehicles at highway checkpoints leading into the city. Anyone without the proper levels of personal wealth are turned away. This puts an interesting pressure on those financiers who hover around the qualification line. One area of the metroplex's economy that's booming because of the Geldmauer are short term financing sites often connected with criminal loan sharks. This burgeoning sector of business around the Geldmauer has given Bonn a new nickname: City of Pawns.

Outside the wall, the rest of the sprawl has broken down into the usual collection of warlords, slumlords, and crime lords. One type of group having trouble nesting in the outer sprawl are nationalist hate groups. The gangs and criminal interests battle and kill each other like any other Megasprawl, but when one of these groups starts to take hold, the others do their best to set aside their differences and bring the hate group down. Even the most cutthroat of gangsters have a sense of their country's history with fascism and are determined to keep it out of at least one city within Germany.

EUROPEAN FLASHPOINTS

- The small town of Ottermarch has never needed investigators before. This community of hybrids ran everything via town hall meetings run by Grandmother Wood, an avian hybrid. She was the first in a brutal series of killings that the hybrids are unequipped to handle. Can the outsiders get to the mystery of who is causing bloodshed in this quiet community? Or will they become the next victims of a vicious hybrid serial killer?
- Mercenary units looking for good payouts should consider contracting with Ravenlocke Securities. The mercenary corporation recently extended a contract to help stabilize the so-called "Rebel South" of EU countries such as Greece, Spain, and Italy. These countries are in the throes of nationalistic movements looking to break free of EU membership but are being held in place by corporate influence. Ravenlocke provides security for corporate assets in these countries but are supposedly looking for assassins and deniable assets to take out the leaders of the rebel cells.
- President Angele Bonheur has made history twice in her first term as the President of France. She's the world's first psychic president, which many were hoping would calm the tensions between zeeks and regular humans. She's also survived the most amount of assassination attempts of any currently sitting world leader. As her

reelection campaign kicks in, she's not taking any chances and reaching outside the usual corporate security options for her campaign members. She wants her staff protected by at least one psychic at all times.

- Much of Amsterdam was put underwater by the floods and other disasters of the twenty-first century. The jewelry corporations rebuilt the city behind a massive seawall and hired the best VR sculptors possible to recreate the city in its original terms. One of the artists, the enigmatic Faroša, recently revealed they hid pieces of code to a powerful program in several of the historical recreations in the city. The Net is running rampant with speculation as to the nature of the program, and competition to be the first to assemble it has already put several people in custody or the hospital.
- Bolstered by his success at turning Westminster Palace into the Houses O', London's most sought after nightspot, Benjy Hesketh, Esquire, is looking to do the same to several other of London's historic places that have fallen on hard times. There are several legal challenges in the way but where he really needs help is clearing out gangs, squatters, and refugees from places like Big Ben, Downing Street, and the Tower of London. As far as NatCon is concerned, he's doing a public service by cleaning these places up and out, and if he recoups his investments by turning them into flashy discos, no harm, no foul.

RUSSIA

†he dreams of a Russian Empire have dominated Western Europe for centuries. The dream came closest to reality in the middle of the twentieth century when the Soviet Union locked horns with the United States in the Cold War. The allies of the West helped the US outlast the Soviet regime, but the Russians learned a valuable lesson. They are not part of the West, nor are they part of the East. They are their own unique culture and country, destined to someday sit atop both Europe and Asia to rule. Many within the country believe themselves to be the Third Roman Empire. It's just the rest of the world hasn't realized it yet.

#DreadfulBear: Finally! I read the data feeds for every other stupid country on Earth, and we've finally gotten to the good stuff.

The rise of China's Mandarinate has proven to be Russia's most recent setback in realizing their Imperial ambitions. Striking workers in the eastern side of Russia's vast sprawl allowed the Chinese to take these lands in the name of the workers. The combination of China's attack and the worsening environmental conditions in places like Siberia not only forced Russia west, but also into an alliance with the Eurasian Union to keep from completely falling apart. The Great Bear was badly wounded by the Mandarinate, but any





hunter will tell you that a wounded bear is at its most dangerous.

The EU seems to have no stomach for a war with the Mandarinate, so Russia has quietly cultivated talks with those nations who might. The India League's wealth makes it a tempting target as the next domino to fall to the Chinese. While the country has not officially made overtures of support to the League, it has asked its friends in the vory to do what they can to disrupt any covert operations that might give the Chinese an advantage.

#DreadfulBear: China already got their section. We don't need to discuss those bastards again, do we?

The vory v zakone have become integral to the power of the Russian Federation in ways that few criminal organizations have ever done. Calling them the Russian mafia applies a label that's ill-fitting. The Vory grew out of a potent mix of career criminals, ruthless businessmen, and ex-KGB spies who shared resources to consolidate power in the chaos following the collapse of the Soviet Union. One example of the lessons embedded by these individuals is the idea of kompromat. Everybody has a little bit of kompromat blackmail on everybody else, from the richest oligarchs to the lowest street hustlers. The trick to getting anything done within the system is to find out what kompromat is available on an enemy or eliminate the people who hold kompromat over you.

Individual Russian hackers have earned reputations as god-level repshredders, data thieves, and TAPjackers. The Vory was one of the first gangs to realize the potential of online crime but their techniques have since filtered down to the members of the Net who enjoy cracking databases for fun as well as those looking to sell some sweet paydata. Anyone looking for a top of the line hacker—regardless of the color of their hat—would do well to look in the databoards of the Russian Federation first. Many of these young hackers grew up hearing of the legendary exploits of their forebears and are looking to meet or exceed those tales with their own legends.

#DreadfulBear: That's right! Russia has the best hackers in the world. We've even been known to sway elections in the NAC/RUSA. Not Cromwell, mind you, but others before him.

Perhaps another reason why much of Russian culture has moved online lies in the crumbling state of their cities. The money flows upward to the oligarchs, who rarely have time to fix roads, repair buildings, or improve life for the poor. Many Russians use illegal logins, not to outfox the datacorps, but because that may be the only option to get online at all in their area. Sometimes these illegal networks form a crew looking to improve their lot only to run afoul of a net gang already in place. Other parts of the world must sometimes deal with the violence of turf wars in the streets. In the cities of Russia, this is often replaced by the discovery of the dead meat bodies of a cybergang rotting for weeks in a tenement apartment after an online battle left their brains too scrambled to remember to breathe.

Much of Russia's wealth is devoted to its military, which is currently embroiled in a war with the Chinese Mandarinate. After a couple years of heavy action, the Russians caught a break as the Chinese push ground down during the winter of 2094. The line is holding for now. Russian ambassadors are trying to convince their EU allies to let their orbital bombardment satellites home in on key positions to break the line and push Mandarinate troops out of The Thawed Lands.

#DreadfulBear: We shouldn't need anybody's permission to push out an occupying force!

Cities like Moscow and Saint Petersburg haven't changed much in the 21st century. They are strange, labyrinthine mashups of the opulence of the Czars, the brutal concrete buildings of the Soviet Union, and the modern skyscrapers of the oligarch era. On the streets, people rattle their way to work on the same subways and public transport that's been around for nearly 150 years. The upper class, commonly called the oligarchs, hop from building to building in private flyers driven by a hand-chosen manservant or an aspiring gang member looking to work for a living.

The oligarchs rarely spend time in their cities. They've sent their money around the world to be laundered and often spend most of their time in those same exotic locations, living lavishly. Most have a compound or carefully guarded mansion in Russia but usually only spend time there when they need to lie low or recover from a defeat at the hands of a rival. These fiefdoms often take the form of hotels, as these businesses are excellent





fronts for money laundering. Outside observers might be puzzled why someone spent the time and money to build a ski resort in an old gulag, but anyone from Russia knows where all the money went.

The one equalizer seems to be the weather. Overall, the weather is warmer in Russia like it is in most other countries but when the winter returns, it does so with a vengeance. Even in the lush climate controlled arcologies of the oligarchs, the winter chill seems to worm its way inside when it hits the city for a week or two. Frost can be found in the non-public areas of the arcology, as if nature is sending a message. Even with all this money and privilege, the cruel world waits outside.

MOSCOW FEDERAL ARCOLOGY

As the ecological disasters affecting the planet in the twenty-first started to ruin landmarks across the world, the Russian government launched an ambitious plan to protect the famous buildings around Red Square from the possibility of destruction. An arcology dome was planned, not to replace the buildings, but put them under its protection and turn the center of the city into the consolidated headquarters for all governmental function. Digging up a major metropolitan area to put a roof overhead sounds like the plan of a madman, but given the troubles all the other cities of the worlds were having with floods, fires, and extreme weather, it didn't seem that much worse.

The Red Dome has been in place for nearly a decade. It's a geodesic dome that stretches for kilometers and features several decorative external elements meant to recall the unique onion domes that made Moscow's skyline unique. Nearly all of the governmental operations in the city moved into the building, but the planners soon realized they had too much space. They quickly converted dozens of empty office floors into low-income housing. Despite the embrace of the common man trumpeted by press releases, this decision was a practical one. Now, government officials could be seen sharing elevators and public spaces with tattooed members of the Vory crime families without much controversy.

This abundance of living space has created another return to Russian tradition. The conditions in the sub basements of the Moscow Federal Arcology are not too different from the old gulags where political prisoners were exiled to suffer with minimal food and shelter until they died. It's easy to get lost within the twisting maintenance corridors, unfinished rooms, and storage areas beneath the arcology. It's even easier to lose a person by sealing them up behind a concrete wall with a leaky pipe for water and a hole just big enough to let in air and rats.

#DreadfulBear: Gulags serve a good purpose: putting Chinese soldiers into them until they starve and rot.

#VodkaSpiller: We get it, you hate the Chinese. But while you're bitching and moaning on the Net, I'm taking a nice, long Chinese piss all over your beloved Thawed Lands.

SAINT PETERSBURG

Saint Petersburg is the public face that Russia presents to the world. Whenever dignitaries, executives, or other members of the elite come to do business in Russia, an evening in Saint Petersburg is always on the agenda. The city became a cultural capital of the world thanks to a constant exchange of talented performers and priceless art cycling through the museums and theaters in the city. The citizens take pride that the city's reputation stands tall again, as it did in the time of the Czar. If Russia is truly destined to become the Third Roman Empire, the city will rival the old capital in the fine arts.

#DreadfulBear: Russians aren't just technical savants, we're the world's best artists too.

#Luciferion: I've noticed you only comment on the positive parts of this feed, @DreadfulBear.

The galleries here are also home to the world's largest black market for stolen or forged art. Collecting art is a game for the rich because of the unique market. When all your friends have eight figure bank accounts, the only way to get them jealous is buying things nobody else in the world can own. Sometimes this art gets put on display in a public gallery as a display of ego for the original owner, but stolen pieces often end up tucked in vaults where no one else can see. Anyone looking for a specific piece of art, or someone to unload

a rare find taken during another job, will find plenty of interested parties in the shadows of St Petersburg.

The demand for art has created a new bit of crime unique to the city. Rather than stealing the art, collectors in the city are hiring criminals to kidnap artists. These victims are kept in small, simple apartments watched over by criminal overseers. They might be producing unique pieces for a billionaire fan. They might be producing forgeries of long lost Renaissance artists to stir up controversies. They could even produce a forgery of a piece owned by another patron to sow confusion to drive the price of that work into the basement. Forgers of this caliber exist throughout the world, but only Saint Petersburg has buildings full of them that are known as "ghost factories."

MINSK

Corporations and governments usually operate hand in hand. The companies make money, which they use to lobby the politicians, who change laws to let companies make more money, and the cycle continues. This is how the city of Minsk rose to be a center of European industry. The lobbying efforts of Central Belarusian Steel turned the government into a rubber stamp entity that did what was best for the company, because the money that poured in improved the country. These days, however, Minsk is a city split in two. The war between the Russian Federation and the Chinese Mandarinate drew a vicious line between the executive suites and the legislation chamber that's tearing the city in half.

Much of the Russian land currently occupied by the Mandarinate is owned by CBS. Rather than shut down production of the mines, the executives cut a deal to keep production running for the Chinese. They told the government they were doing it to save lives and protect their equipment for the Russian counter attack, but their real motivation was simple greed. The Chinese were paying more for the materials and lining the pockets of the deciding executives. This sweetheart deal was supposed to stay quiet until a pair of unlikely journalists revealed the terrible conditions the Chinese were keeping the CBS works in.

Minsk exploded into riots. People attacked CBS offices, drones, personnel, and nearly anything marked with the logo. The Belarusian government did little to stop these attacks, likely as the officials were upset they never got a cut. Rather than cut ties, CBS pushed back against the government by making its ties to the Mandarinate official and suggested Russia invade Belarus if it needed more resources. This set off several grudges and bits of bad blood within the legislative chambers of the country, as representatives were torn between condemning CBS and destroying much of the economy upon which the country was built. No matter which way it resolves, chances are high for some serious violence to soon erupt in the city.

#VodkaSpiller: @DreafulBear, no comment here!

You seemed so interested in the topic of Russia!

#Billy_Black_Eyes: No need to egg him on, @Vodka. Everybody tends to take pride in their nation, including you. Plus the two of you are gunking up my feed with your bullshit. Some of us are trying to actually learn a thing or two. Every time there's a Russian info dump, I have to wade through a bunch of crap.

VLADIVOSTOK

The city of Vladivostok is currently under the protection of the Mandarinate as part of its invasion of The Thawed Lands. For years the city was home to the Russian Pacific Fleet and the largest Russian port on the Pacific Ocean. It has been a major transport hub for decades, which is why it was important for the Mandarinate to take it quickly during the invasion. Shockingly, the fleet stood down in the face of the invaders. The city was more or less taken without a shot fired and the Mandarinate has been able to take advantage of a new port to ferry supplies to and from its protectorates.

The port has become an important part of the Mandarinate's war effort. New troops and materials flow through the port. The spaceport sees regular launches to Mars and other Golden Promise corporate facilities. The harbor also serves as a visual deterrent to anyone with ideas of revolution. Prison ships dock here on a regular basis, transferring prisoners throughout the Mandarinate. Sometimes the ships are stuck in the harbor for weeks while escapees are dealt with in public executions. These moments rarely target members of the city, but they go a long





way to remind them what happens if they defy their masters.

Despite these brutal displays, many of the citizens are still loyal to Russia. The surrender of the city was at the order of the Federal Security Service (FSB) to allow their agents a chance to see the inside of Mandarinate operations. The city has proven to be a wealth of information for Russian intelligence, moreso now that the junior Mandarins in the city have had a chance to let their guard down. Vladivostok is a city of great opportunity for couriers and smugglers willing to carry out information or those willing to risk Russian revenge to tip off the Mandarinate to the deception.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: One reason things are always so heated between the Russians and Chinese is the Russian propaganda machine. The State portrays the Chinese as akin to the Third Reich and many parts of Russian society (some more official than others) are happy to see it as a race war between the “white Russians” and “yellow Chinese.”

#Beijingbeauty: The Russians are known to create deepfake footage of “atrocities” showing Chinese soldiers raping and murdering Russian women.

#Brotherwolf: I’ve been on the front lines. I’ve held the hands of the victims as they died, days after the Chinese army left them to suffer and bleed out from their wounds.

#Beijingbeauty: Just another Russian gov propbot.

free bit of Cybertech from whatever’s available on the rig, including anything pulled off the loser. The equipment available here isn’t limited to small pieces that fell off a drone truck. The last Yagatown raided by the Russian Army found evidence there were facilities for launching and landing illegal scrap freighters into orbit. There were pieces left behind that matched several satellites that had gone dark over the previous six months.

The person who holds Yagatown together gives the marketplace another name whispered by those in the know: Grandmother’s House. She’s a small, ancient Russian woman equipped with a pair of cyberarms a little too large for her frame and carved full of vory v zakone markings. There are rumors she is one of the last living people who served in the KGB rather than the FSB. The only times Grandmother is seen in public are during the gladiator battles where the fights are to the death. She allegedly recruits her security force from the winners and spares no expense installing the best tech she can find in her agents.

#Luciferion: The KGB ended in 1991, which would make this woman a fair bit over 100. I’m not saying it’s impossible but it’s likely either hearsay or that’s not her first bod—and who would get a new bod that’s still old as dirt?

YAGATOWN

Much of the Russian economy in the late twentieth century was built on massive oil reserves in the Arctic Circle. The drilling platforms that pulled out these resources were put under siege by the tribulations of the early twenty-first century. Some were abandoned after GLUTTON ate away their product. Others made it until melting arctic caps changed the face of the planet. Dozens sit unused and rusting away until a roving band of pirates, marauders, and revolutionaries arrive to make it their home for however long they can escape the authorities. Each time these criminals move in to an old oil rig, the same flag with the same name goes flying up the highest point to signal they are open for business: Yagatown.

Yagatown is a travelling black market where life is cheap and guns are cheaper. A popular attraction is bare knuckle brawling where the winner gets a

GROZNY

It is easy to look at a map and see where the lines are drawn. What’s more difficult is seeing how places are influenced by the real world. Grozny, the capital of the Chechen Republic, has been under Russian influence for hundreds of years. Even the city’s newer buildings have the influence of brutal, concrete Soviet architecture. The future of the city, however, is in the influx of Muslims who are shaping the population for years to come. Much of the change in the world has been shaped through dramatic events like wars and natural disasters. But cultures evolve and move forward even outside the events which end up as entries on historical Net sites.

The Grozny Mosque has been called “The Heart of Chechnya” and stands as an excellent example of the city as a cultural crossroads. The mosque was built in the early twenty-first century and quickly became one of the symbols of the new

Russia. The city's Muslim culture grew stronger as devout followers that were fed up with the secular distractions of the Arab Kingdom or the environmental destructions of the United Arab Islamic Republic came to Grozny to make their new homes.

For years in Grozny, newcomers were often scrutinized and treated poorly unless someone within the community would speak for the newcomer and risk a bit of their own reputation. The city is now home to a company called Vouchr that automates the process. Anyone with a TAP can see a person's overall score, but those who subscribe to the program can get a better breakdown of who likes and dislikes an individual with specific ratings and scores. The citizens of Grozny take Vouchr seriously; there have been cases where someone with a low score has been murdered with no legal repercussions for the killers.

#Anarchy_in_the_USSR: The devout Muslims brought their devout conservatism with them. Despite progress over the last century, homophobia still runs deep in much of the world's Abrahamic religions. That's as true for Grozny as it is for the RUSA. Vouchr includes a person's sexual orientation and preferred pronouns, so you can imagine what kinds of hate crimes go down between conservative Muslims and the gay population, who wasn't ever exactly welcome in the Russian bloc to begin with.

#MuhammedInLondon: I thought we were past blaming the many for the actions of the few.

#Anarchy_in_the_USSR: I'm not blaming Islam or all Muslims, just tellin it like it is, comrade.

#MuhammedInLondon: Ah well every religion has its fanatics.

#Anarchy_in_the_USSR: Exactly. Too many of them at that.

RUSSIAN FLASHPOINTS

- The leader of the anti-Chinese resistance in Vladivostok was recently arrested and executed. Two potential leaders are looking to step into the role. Ksenya wishes to stay the course with quiet rebellion and passing information onto the FSB that Russia can use back home. Ksenya is also a fox hybrid, known as a werebeast in Russia. Sergei is an old naval commander who is tired of the Chinese occupying his home city. He wants to start using guerilla tactics to bomb and disrupt Chinese military forces. Both choices call attention to their activities that might endanger the resistance. Whoever the players side with will be the one who wins the day.

- The criminals of the vory v zakone claim to be able to acquire anything for anyone if the price is right. They've acquired something very unusual recently: an ancient Soviet Union submarine in working order. They need someone to deliver it to their client and are offering quite a commission to any crew willing to be locked in a hundred-year-old submarine for a few hours. The ship has been retrofitted with computer assisted controls but to keep it from being detected by government surveillance, the ship can't be piloted remotely. All the crew has to deal with are naval patrols, decaying equipment, and a delivery port that may be under blockade.
- The word comes down while the players are in Yagatown that the authorities are on their way and it's time to move. Are there people there the players want to protect? Do they think they can rip off Grandmother and get away with it? What if they discover evidence that one of their most trusted allies is the one who sold out Yagatown for a six figure payday?
- A Chinese delegation desires to meet with informal Council of Elders of the North Caucasus mountains. It's hard country to begin with and the war between Russia and China has not made arranging the meeting easier. The players must escort the delegates to a remote mountain outpost and keep them alive during the negotiations. The Chinese offer the elders support for their environmental concerns in exchange for breaking the line in the struggle with Russia. Or is it all just a ruse for one double-crossing side to send drones to the outpost and massacre everyone?
- The New Cossacks are not afraid to hire mercenaries to forward their cause. They advise any new hires to follow their rules: deactivate TAPs and Cybertech, or any other devices the Chinese can use to track their movements. The job involves taking down a massive airbase that filters data from drones across the Thawed Lands. In truth, they don't care if the mercs power down since any Chinese retaliation will target anyone they can find through technology. It also means the Cossacks save money on mercenaries killed after the fact, though they will still pay any survivors after the job is done.



THE MIDEAST AND THE INDIAN LEAGUE

At the end of the twentieth century, there was a race between two regions of the world to see which could not only amass the most wealth but also display it in the broadest manner possible. Oil-producing countries in the Mideast like Saudi Arabia were coming off decades of peak oil prices and Western dependence on their oil. India and its neighboring countries were manufacturing powerhouses leaping to the forefront of technology. They were also both regions full of tensions that could erupt at any moment, ready to tear down everything that had been built in a nuclear fire. The fire came in many places but, somehow, the nations survived.

Corporate interests prevailed, convincing these long-time enemies to beat their swords into platinum cards. CHIMERA, at the behest of the New Brazilian government, purchased Jerusalem outright for a one hundred year lease to preserve its historic and cultural significance while also turning it into one of the top tourist destinations in the world. India seemed on the edge of destruction after the Death spread through the region from a nuclear exchange between it and Pakistan. Instead, Hydronax Kolkata innovated solutions to their own issues of water and food distribution before soaring to record high profits from selling their secrets to the world.

#NewCrusaderAnon2654: The Holy Land belongs to the armies of Christ. Its historical significance isn't being "preserved," it's being trampled on by uncaring corporations who are the enemies of God! His judgment is coming, and the Temple will crumble again if things don't change!

#Billy_Black_Eyes: I thought all the New Crusaders fizzled out? You'll never realize how much you have in common with the radical Muslims who believe exactly like you do that Jerusalem is wrongly serving corporate interests instead of godly ones. You just bicker over the name of God. Probably good. If your groups ever joined up, us average people might actually have something to fear instead of random, anonymous screeds on the Net.

Hydronax Kolkata was consumed by capitalism and broken apart but its death allowed India to take its place as a global economic powerhouse. Much of this is powered by the dream factory of Mumbai which became the center of global entertainment production in the mid-twenty-first century and doggedly held that title for decades. It remains a spiritual capital for the world even

if the temples and chants have been largely replaced by matter-assembled theme parks based on upcoming media releases and pop songs that burrow into a TAP and stay there.

Iran chased out its fundamentalist government and cemented an alliance between the three non-Arab powers in the Mideast: Israel, Kurdistan, and Persia. The Triangle Alliance has the support of the West now even as the mixed states of the United Arab Islamic Republic and the United Arab Kingdom still spend the oil fortunes they amassed over the last century. The players are reset on the board but now the issues between them are more economic than religious.

The religious issues still exist but their conflicts mostly happen outside of the main cities. The poor and uneducated of both regions are targets of fanatics, extremists, and con artists looking to draw power from the stark differences between the heavenly towers of the elite and the migrant lives of the poor. The figures who gain a following also gain a measure of leverage through familial ties; often the relatives of powerful figures within the cities fall victim to the fanatics outside. While many of these families live well off the wealth handed to them from previous generations, some members feel massive guilt over their good lives. Sometimes they head into the wild to find purpose, while others are sent out with bags full of cash to give to these religious leaders in hopes that buying salvation is still an option.

Life outside the metroplex is harsh. The deserts of the Arab peninsula were already hard to survive before massive climate change threw weather patterns into a massive upheaval. Temperatures during the day rarely drop below 37 degrees Celsius while the nights can draw out frost on the sand. The massive flooding suffered by India turned much of its land into bubbling swamps filled with industrial waste. Many outsiders looking to survive seek out automated settlements such as hydroponic farms or matter conversion plants, disable the security protocols, and take shelter in the nooks and crannies of the buildings.

The cities, by contrast, are shining towers of wealth and technology. The economies of the Mideast and India came of age in the late twentieth century but didn't truly boom until

this century. These cities built their infrastructure from the ground up without giving much thought to the preservation of old ways or needing to figure out how to use modern technology as it was being built. Instead of cars or yachts, the ultra-rich built skyscrapers and arcologies to claim bragging rights. These status symbols remain and remind everyone that the future is now.

Crime in these areas has also evolved. The syndicates who operate in the Middle East and the India League don't have the tradition or cultural backing of organizations like the Yakuza or the Mafia, but they are still well-embedded and effective. AB40K takes its name from the legendary Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves and have leveraged online anonymity to become an organization that can survive several high-profile member arrests. Meanwhile, the R-Company is an example of a rare peaceful merger between two large criminal organizations. The Raj Mafia that represented corruption within the government and corporate interests and D-Company that controlled drugs and smuggling came together to form R-Company to allow a collection of officials, executives, and crime lords to each get a piece of India's booming economy.

CAIRO

The capital city of the United Arab Islamic Republic survived the flooding of the Nile River in the early part of the twenty-first century mostly intact. Instead, it suffers from a problem plaguing nearly all members of the AIR; acid sand. The rise in sandstorms over the past few decades have whipped sand and other fine particulates into the air at a nearly constant basis. The air quality in Cairo makes breathing difficult with gusts of wind that range from painful to fatal. The rains also contain sand within their drops and do their part to scour and scratch anyone caught out in a sudden thunderstorm.

Those who can afford protective and portable clothing are the lucky ones. The poor and outcast must depend on corporate Life Support Facilities who lease breathing masks or raffle off repaired equipment to those in need. The facilities also offer breathing stations within their walls, so long as the people inside are willing to sit through commercials, corporate-sponsored retraining,

and signing away any rights should they suffer injury on the premises. LSF facilities, thanks to the foreigners who work there and their predatory policies, are often frequently attacked by freedom fighters and others who see them as symbols of everything that's wrong in the world.

The pride and joy of the city is Tahrir Square and its Egyptian Museum that preserves hundreds of artifacts from Egyptian culture. The museum was recently rocked by scandal when the director of antiquities stepped down after an audit found several dozen pieces either missing or replaced with expert forgeries. It's unknown how many the director sold to private collectors or just what other employees might have been in on the illegal trade. Pieces have turned up everywhere from the auction houses of Saint Petersburg to vendor stalls a few blocks away from the museum.

THE JERUSALEM DMZ

The history of the holy city is one fraught with invasion and occupation. From the Crusades of the Middle Ages to the formation of Israel, this city has been at the heart of thousands of battles thanks to its significance as the heart of religion and civilization for billions of people. Its current status as a corporate protectorate has relieved some of this tension, but a place as hotly contested as Jerusalem will never see complete peace rest in its streets. The revitalization as a tourist attraction for both the faithful and the curious has set aside the issues that put the city in the middle of so many conflicts.

The CHIMERA hundred year lease was agreed to under the idea of preservation. Jerusalem escaped the scattered nuclear exchanges between warring Mideast states relatively unharmed. The backing of a megacorporation and the major power of New Brasilia marked another western intervention in Mideast affairs, but this time the countries were too tired from damaging each other to put up much of a fight. While other cities of the world, like Chicago, built literal walls to keep out interlopers, New Brasilia did their best to keep their security measures as invisible as possible. They have automated drones that keep protests from getting too violent and prefer to whisk away agitators in the dead of night instead of while they are shouting in the streets.





These protocols also serve another purpose; they don't interfere with the experience curated by the corporation for rich tourists. AR tours of religious sites allow visitors to experience virtual visions of their spiritual leaders. Custom-built sims let amateur theologians debate religion and philosophy with AI-powered versions of historical figures. The Jerusalem DMZ is a technologically advanced city built as an amalgam of different times in the city's history. For anyone with the money, they can enjoy the past, present, and future of the city all within a few hours of each other.

#SamTheSlam: Say what you want about the corps, but the best thing to ever happen to Jerusalem just might be CHIMERA. They only care about money, so it's in their best interest to keep the Jews, Muslims, and Christians all happy.

#Yossel_Tov: Except under this arrangement none of them are happy. Israel is still pissed about all the land it lost, Jerusalem included. And the groups you mentioned spend most of their time rehashing the same arguments on the Net.

#SamTheSlam: Better than bombing each other!

JEDDAH

Jeddah is the commercial capital of the Arab Kingdom. It's also a symbol of the crossroads of the Arab world. To the outside world, the city is the face of the Arab Kingdom because of its importance as a travel hub. For Muslims around the world, Jeddah is the gateway to Mecca and Medina as neither city has an airport. Any Muslims from outside the country who wish to make the hajj to these holy cities must fly into Jeddah and then travel via another method to complete their journey. Because of this, so many Muslims travel through the city that an entire airport terminal is dedicated to these religious pilgrims.

The city has one foot in the past and one in the future. It has been Western friendly for years, but the isolationist policies of the Arab Kingdom leadership have subtly shifted to make Jeddah a city where non-Muslims are permitted and quietly encouraged to stay. Travel within the kingdom by non-Muslims is heavily restricted and they are often encouraged to stay within the city instead. While the separation is subtle, it is often noticed by repeat visitors. Whereas most

restaurants serve everyone, Muslims are seated separately. The maglev trains running through the city offer cheap passes for tourists.

The religious leaders of Jeddah are relatively progressive, but one has revealed a new version of a religious ritual that has caused much controversy in the Muslim world. Alexander Husayin recently revealed a VR program he's been developing with DreamTime to allow Muslims to take the pilgrimage to Mecca virtually. He's putting pressure on faith leaders to consider this an actual hajj to allow those who can't afford to fly into the city a chance to experience their once in a lifetime trek. Husayin did this without the permission of the city's holy leaders by surreptitiously recording his pilgrimages for several years and then working with the DreamTime programmers to create an ultrarealistic experience. The local imam in Jeddah supports the idea but Husayin has received multiple death threats from those who find his idea blasphemous.

#Anarchy_in_the_USSR: This post neglects to mention that non-Muslims are essentially kicked out of Mecca and Medina during the Hajj. You also might get noosed if you're caught with a fifth of vodka or just, you know, being a woman. A virtual pilgrimage allows Muslims who don't fit the ultra-conservative mold to make the Hajj without fear of getting themselves dead.

MUMBAI

The shift of the world's Dream Factory from Los Angeles to Mumbai was already happening in the twentieth century. Bollywood culture influenced filmmakers for several years. The international audience became more and more a focus for studios rather than American audiences. The true passing of the torch came with the troubles of the 21st century. California suffered heavily in the Death and the floods, while Mumbai weathered environmental disasters much more steadily. It didn't take long for survivors to migrate from southern California to Mumbai and for the focus of entertainment to turn from passive films and TV to active streams and VR.

Even as it looks forward to new ways to entertain the masses, Mumbai echoes the best and worst parts of the classic Hollywood system. The corporations control their stars as much as



possible: their image, their personal lives, and how often they work. Becoming a media star means a life of luxury but it's a life of a gilded cage. Some stars have storylines in real life just as finely crafted as any script. Meanwhile, thousands flock to the city every week in hopes of being discovered. These are the people who work all the menial jobs that keep the machine running. These are the people preyed upon by the criminal and the powerful to achieve their darker desires.

#Lov3rofalthings: India also has the highest rate of zeeks in the world. The global average has hovered at 0.5% for the past five years, but in India it's risen to almost 2% (surveys range from 1.6–2.1%). Some say it's because of the nuclear fallout. I think it's the curry.

KOLKATA

History often subscribes to the idea that one person can make a difference. This is where public buildings get their names and parks get their statues. Sajit Bhudupenra has statues and buildings named after him in Kolkata. Indeed, there are many who feel the city should consider changing its name to honor the man who saved millions of lives and turned the India League into a world power. Kolkata is a wonderful example of

what one influential individual's wealth can do... and the limitations of what it cannot.

Bhudupenra is the genius who invented the ARNAV filtration unit that gave India more arable land than it had ever known. This invention allowed the country to more quickly recover from the disasters that befell it and get back on track to its rise in the international scene. He poured massive resources from his company, Hydronax, into rebuilding Kolkata. The city flourished as the company did until one day the technology he created was outpaced by something better and everything slowed down. While the company that acquired Hydronax, PharmAmerica, has a massive presence in Kolkata, everyone from cab drivers to the curators of museums pines for the days of Bhudupenra's rise and generous donations.

The man has since left the public eye. He built two massive estates: one just outside Kolkata and a private orbital home. The flights between Bhudupenra's earthbound home and his satellite used to be public events where people gathered to cheer his departure or arrival. Now they happen on such rare occasion that some members of the press think the scientist died years ago and his estate is keeping the death private for some unknown reason.





AMRITSAR

Technically, the city of Amritsar was destroyed in the nuclear exchange that created the Afghani Wastelands. It would not stay that way for long. Almost immediately, Sikhs from all over the world travelled to the site where the Golden Temple stood to rebuild their holiest of cities. Those who could not physically travel sent supplies, money, and other elements of support. The physical city is still decades from returning to the vibrant site it once was, but the AR reconstruction of the city's most important sites are breathtaking. Amritsar is a city frozen in amber, locked into the years shortly before the turn of the twentieth century. Anyone with a TAP can travel back to the city during its busiest heyday and get a feel for life before the world took a much darker turn.

The second part of Amritsar's rebirth came from building towards the future. Not only did the faithful wish to reconstruct the past, they also wanted to ensure it will never be lost again. Thus began the construction of Bhagat Kabir, a massive ship featuring a physical replica of the Golden Temple to be sent to another world as part of a colonization effort. The ship is being built in a geosynchronous orbit above the city. The infrastructure required to build it has also turned Amritsar into a bustling spaceport city that serves not just The India League but also several neighboring countries and international corporations.

The construction of the colony ship will be complete within the next few years which is starting to bring its own problems to the city. The ship is currently planned to land on Mars, which means staying on good diplomatic terms with the Mandarinate. However, much of Amritsar's spaceport business goes to Central Belarusian Steel. The conflict between the two means at some point soon, the city will have to pick a side. A lottery system put in place to choose colonists has seen several no-shows from those chosen to go on the ship. Most of the people who came to build the ship in Amritsar have settled down with families and decent jobs. To uproot all of that for life on a hostile planet is something many citizens are hesitant to do.

MIDEASTERN AND INDIAN LEAGUE FLASHPOINTS

- The shoe is on the other foot in the Gaza city-state. Now that a homeland has been established in lands once claimed by Israel, the Palestinians must deal with the headaches of governance and the Israelis are the insurgents who shatter the peace. It's also a fertile ground for shadow operatives and mercenaries who aren't afraid to work both sides of a wall. Smugglers are thick on the ground thanks to checkpoints that can be bought to supply spies within the city-state with whatever tactical gear an ambitious agent might need.
- Most of what remains of the state of Israel can be summed up in two words: Tel Aviv. Due to the creation of the Gaza city-state, the Second Arab Spring, a Galilean Arab revolt, and the purchase of Jerusalem by New Brasilia, Tel Aviv is all that remains of Israel. The chief product of the city is intelligence, with Israeli spy agencies and individual agents placed throughout the world. Many Mossad agents take on more lucrative positions in other intelligence agencies or corporate security divisions. Sometimes, these agents even inform their previous employer they are leaving.
- Just a few dozen kilometers to the west of Amritsar's legitimate spaceport is the illegitimate spaceport called Glow Base One. The fallout from the Afghani Wastelands makes life here difficult, but not impossible. As a bonus, the radiation makes the launch pads difficult to detect by India League authorities. A lot of smugglers and unlicensed spacecraft launch from Glow Base One, often full of passengers, cargo, and other materials that would get flagged in Amritsar. There are a few Amritsar officials aware of Glow Base One, but they often get a cut of the illegal materials, so they look to the east instead of the west.
- Somewhere in the desert on the outskirts of Mumbai there is rumored to be a warehouse complex full of deactivated artificial life such as androids, sims, and bioroids. Many of these bodies were once fully autonomous, seeking out work within the entertainment industry. They were instead kidnapped and

deactivated only to serve as pleasure tech for the decadent rich who run the studios. New personalities are uploaded to fill out the parties of sim stars and producers, only to be shut back down once the party finally ends. What happens if one of these creations ends up outside the mansion walls trying to reconnect to the memories of its previous life?

- Someone is selling berths on board the Bhagat Kabir. Unfortunately, these berths

aren't real, as the space aboard the colony ship is supposed to be randomly determined by a lottery as the ship nears completion. The digital trail of the con artists looks authentic, which points to two main types of culprit. It could be someone with access to one of the powerful Sikhs who forged password access and authenticity codes. It could be a government official selling false access to pay off a debt or raising money for blackmail.

AUSTRALIA

There are those who believe the phrase, "trapped between a rock and a hard place," originated in Australia. The British Empire saw it only as a place to send exiles and prisoners because of the continent's harsh conditions. The Outback, as it's come to be known, was unforgiving long before the world's weather changed due to human intervention. The indigenous people flourished everywhere while the colonizers mostly stuck to the coastal regions where the land was green and the ports flourished. Everything modern about Australia was built on a ring of fertile land.

Then the world changed. The seas conquered the coastlines. The Outback's temperatures climbed. The thin ring of civilization was squeezed hard. The disasters tested the resolve of Australians across the continent. For the most part, they adapted. They accepted help from whoever offered and, so far, the land has flourished. Even as other cities around the world have fallen to nuclear destruction or unlivable weather, many cities here are still functioning in some way or another. Even the rural Outback has flourished thanks to the strength of the Aboriginal peoples.

#Not_a_Galah: The rural lands would be vacation homes for the rich if they didn't already take the Green. They only keep the indigenous people around so they have something to gawk at and feel superior about. They give the shit lands to the natives and take the best within the cities. What's left in the cities goes to the rest of us lowlives. I live 200 stories up! We use the pedtubes, every 10 stories, to get around the city. Many of us never even go outside. We're packed like rodents. There's tons of land, it's just in the wrong hands. The church and their Stewards take what they want and the rest of us get their backwash. But hey, the abos have made it work. They rake in the dough from all the trust fund twerps vacationing to the Outback with their swanky prostitutes.

#YabsMcCoy: The church does the best they can with what they've got. We owe a lot to the churches from all over the world, who came from the RUSA (or NAC at the time) and New Brasilia to help us rebuild the green and the Outback. The RUSAn churches have their problems, just as our Stewards do now, but let's not throw the baby out with the bath water. I work with God and the Green, and we're doing, and have done, a lot of great things. Oz would still be nothing but sand and city wreckage underwater without the world's Christian community stepping up to build the flood walls. Stewrth, brother!

Corporate strength has been limited by the government structure adapted in the wake of twenty-first century struggles. Every major metroplex became a sovereign city-state. Any towns or small cities near the major cities report to their closest neighbors. The spread of cities across Australia kept this number low and manageable. There were few squabbles over territory and, for the most part, each city cares little about what rivals are up to. Relationships between the states stay friendly with most standing militias and law enforcement focused on keeping the Chains under control.

The Chains are Australia's main homegrown criminal syndicates. These road gangs evolved from outlaw biker gangs who controlled the drug markets in the twentieth century. Modern Chains are convoys of battle-ready vehicles that prowl the Outback and the crumbling highways between Australian cities. Most Chains focus on routes between two cities with a leader called an Old Man in each city. Every city in Australia has multiple Chains. Relationships between gangs are tense but rarely explode into any long-term violence. Currently, the Chains in Eastern Australia are lobbying their brothers in the West





to help keep the Triads from gaining a foothold on the mainland.

Most of the Chains' membership comes from the poor who lost their social support in the last century. The city-states mostly depend on private charities to support those who need it and these donations are simply too small to help everyone. Many poor become migrants traveling the loop of cities searching for whatever work they can find. They are often accosted by Chains while en route between cities. Many figure that if you can't beat them, joining them is the next best thing. These connections also help hide the criminals within cities' impoverished sectors.

#Swandiva: While most gangs around the world are based on ethnicity and national identity, the Chains are a diverse lot. They welcome any down-and-out man (or woman!), be they colonizer, refugee, or abo.

For those who can afford it, life in Australia combines the best of the past and the future. Green spaces are where the rich and powerful spend their influence to be seen. Australian cities feature dozens of parks and public spaces named for executives. Green and glass go hand in hand in urban design, giving the good parts of these cities an almost optimistic feel. The closer one gets to a corporate headquarters the more it feels like a natural outgrowth of building and park together.

The question on many Australian minds is, "when will the bill come due?" Mandarinate inroads on the eastern coast make it a choice target once China and Russia start squaring off. Large sections of The Green are protected by weak local governments looking for ways to make more money from their corporate friends. Neighbors like New Zealand have spent many years preserving their natural resources; will Australia come to collect them if push comes to shove? Many Australian corporations are highly ranked in their industry but none of them are at the top. What moves might one of them make to take the top spot?

BINPORT

One of the first casualties of the ecological disasters of the past century was the Great Barrier Reef. The coral bleaching that occurred at a higher frequency to kill off the organisms that made up the reef was a sign of the things to

come to the rest of the world. In the chaos that followed, the Reef was nearly forgotten even as the seas rose and the port cities of Australia were forever changed. Forgotten spaces are perfect breeding grounds for outcasts and criminals. When pirate and smuggler Marco "Red Eye" Remender needed a quiet place to shore up and repair his ships, he figured he just needed to chase out any civilian ships in the reef to get it all to himself. And he did, except for one. He didn't count on Dr. Amos Hartley standing up to him, nor convincing the pirate how important Dr. Hartley's work to restore the Reef had become.

#OutOfTheGreen: The Reef is the saddest part of the past century. Humans can breed endlessly, so the loss of just one more of the billions of human parasites on this planet is nothing. But the loss of the Reef? That's nearly impossible to get back. Mother Gaia was against us because we have almost killed her.

#Swandiva: You greenies are a bunch of masochists too afraid to pull the trigger. If you hate humanity so damn much, then start with yourself. I'm all for protecting nature, but not at the expense of progress. My uncle was born without feet. I know firsthand the damage we do to the world impacts us, but that don't mean human lives are meaningless.

#OutOfTheGreen: Rude!

Binport grew around that vital meeting aboard the Nina Blue. Anyone who thought that Remender was growing soft in his old age, or perhaps had fallen for the young scientist, was escorted off the nearest bulkhead into the Coral Sea. The floating city of prizes, wrecks, and other sea trash came together over years. It now covers an area that might otherwise give Dr. Hartley pause. But the people under Red Eye's command have taken to defending their makeshift home with passion. They also take pride in doing what they can to help Hartley bring the Reef back to life. Most other black markets in the world wouldn't care about things like recycling or wind farms, but Hartley's quiet loyalty has won over the people of Binport to take a little pride in their own wretched hive.

The bravery of a man willing to stand up to a notorious pirate is a mask for a certain type of ambition. Red Eye has put word out that he's willing to pay top dollar for any samples of the xenological microbes rumored to be found on Europa. Proper experimentation might be the key to adapting the coral to modern oceans and restoring the bloom of life to the Reef. These

microbes are extremely valuable and under the highest security that corporate money can buy, but that's never really stopped this band of pirates before.

SYDOME

The southwestern part of the continent was hit hardest by the flooding caused by rising ocean waters. It also happened to be where most of the established cities were located. Many parts of these cities ended up underwater and were thought lost until a corporate white knight rode in to save the day. Golden Promise needed places to test their Mars colonization equipment under adverse conditions. Instead of rebuilding or raising the lost parts of cities, the corporation build arcologies, domes, and other closed systems underwater where the citizens could be safely monitored.

Though the metroplex is collectively known as Sydome, it consists of a mixture of several underwater arcologies and locations still above water. The metroplex stretches north to Brisbane and all the way south to Melbourne. The Sydney dome is the largest and most self-sufficient, but the other domes are vital parts of the metroplex. The Melbourne dome recently opened a spaceport to send colony supplies directly from the factories there instead of shipping them back to Beijing to be launched into space.

The Mandarinate influence on Sydome has started to make observers a bit nervous. There are fears that if China loses its war with Russia or decides that holding the Thawed Lands becomes too much trouble, they may shift their attention to turning Sydome into a protectorate like much of Southeast Asia. The citizens of Sydome might just welcome this with open arms. Golden Promise provided needed jobs for years. The Triads have kept the Chains from exerting too much influence in the streets. Sydome's hearts and minds are already open to the idea. All it needs is the right opportunity to make it happen.

#DreadfulBear: You're damn right holding the Thawed Lands is too much trouble. Let the Ozzies deal with those yellow bastards since they're too busy to help us do it. We've been fighting the Mandarinate singlehandedly for too long! If the world keeps turning a blind eye to them, we'll all be Chinese-speaking eunuchs.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: The world isn't ignoring the Mandarinate, they're just too busy with other problems at the moment. The Shogunate is busy making sure they're strong enough just to not get conquered should. The RUSA and Brazil are busy building their own empires, but I've seen enough of their classified datadumps to know they're keeping tabs on the Mandarinate.

#Luciferion: Nobody's going to waste their time on the Thawed swamps. The Chinese took it just because they could, not because it's the most valuable piece of real estate. It was a dick waving maneuver to show the world who's in charge. Now they're stuck defending it from the Russians, which means they have fewer resources to focus elsewhere. It benefits the world's other powers to keep things as they are, sorry to say @DreadfulBear.

THE ALICEPLEX

Much of Central Australia is covered by inhospitable conditions; but, even in the harshest deserts, life blooms. So too did the city of Alice Springs bloom in harsh conditions. It started as a link in the telegraph and railroad lines before becoming a gateway to the most ruthless parts of Australia. It became vital to adventurist tourists who wanted to dip their toes into feeling like explorers of ages past. The city also became vital to corporations seeking out places to test their products under deadly conditions and seeking out treasures that could only be found under desert heat and red sands. Many of the space corporations have offices here to either train recruits or test equipment before it gets sent into orbit and beyond.

Presently, the city is going through a cultural flourishing. The largest homegrown corporation, DreamTime, is headquartered in the Aliceplex. Nearly all of Australia uses Dreamtime to access the Net, and its powerful transmitters allow coverage in even the most remote parts of the Outback. The company is owned by a council of several Aboriginal tribes and has given their buildings and contributions to the city a look inspired by indigenous art and culture rather than the chrome and glass towers of most modern cities.

That historical pride may be the city's downfall. There are some members who believe the corporation does not have its people's best interests at heart and are pushing back on





DreamTime's influence in the city. They believe the company's appropriated cultural elements are sacred and have even pushed back against the public campaign to rename The Aliceplex to Mparntwe (a move made to better reflect the Arrente tribal influence within the corporation). While there has not been any open violence yet, the streets of the city are thick with tension between those believing DreamTime is honoring history and those who instead believe the company is exploiting it.

PERTH

Perth takes some measure of pride in not calling itself a metroplex. Most citizens consider it the last bastion of old Australia by being heavily industrialized and making a living extracting resources from the land. Perth has always depended on the other parts of Australia to keep it moving forward. While the other cities have rebuilt with an eye toward the future, Perth holds onto the past. Everything in the city is covered with a thin layer of dirt: the streets, the buildings, and the inhabitants; and they wouldn't want it any other way.

Industries like mining and manufacturing still hold economic sway in Perth. GeoCon, the second largest mining firm in the world, controls most terrestrial mining and is slowly increasing its planetary mining market share. Fremantle Manufacturing provides chassis for everything from small scooters to massive airfreight airframes. Companies like this may not have the prestige of being high tech or future facing but without them the world grinds to a halt. Perth also provides a convenient place for other cities to stash the waste they still generate. McCanless Environmental is Perth's most successful corporation, but one of the least glamorous. It holds waste removal contracts around the world and much of it comes home to Perth.

#OutOfTheGreen: Sadly, most corps just see Oz as a dumping ground. Kinda feeling like we need another Flood. Maybe a plague or two.

#Luciferion: The point of this post is McCanless is getting rid of the waste. They're not just dumping it into the streams and oceans. What would you advise?

#OutOfTheGreen: How about not generating it in the first place?

#Luciferion: ...you're on the Net, using the same power as the rest of us, generating waste...while complaining about waste. Long as there are people, there will be waste, and it needs to be gotten rid of. I'm not a corpfan, but they're serving a role here, doing a job that has to be done.

#OutOfTheGreen: "I'm not a corpfan, but..." is always a sign that you're listening to a corpfan.

Perth is also the closest thing to home any of the Chains have. There are plenty of stolen items and money that McCanless helps the road gangs recycle. In exchange, McCanless drones are not to be touched while moving parcels from city to city. Many rival organizations know that plenty of valuable goods get smuggled in garbage drones but are loathe to take them. Chains may be rivals in the Outback but in Perth they come together to protect their meal ticket.

#MotorMayhem: I knew a chain who made that mistake once. Took a Can drone thinking nobody would miss it. Hell naw they missed it. My chain and two others got called up to deal with the problem. Easy money and a good time breaking the bones of some idiots. Hard to ride with the chains when your legs get twisted so your feet point backward and you can kick your own ass. Ha ha! Good memories.

DARWIN

Though all of Australia's major metroplexes are technically independent city-states, Darwin is the closest thing there is to a national capital. Every two years, representatives from each of the main metroplexes convene in Darwin for the Australian Urban Conference (AUC). The conference allows the cities to discuss cooperating on initiatives, to hash out differences, and even to get in some photo ops showing that everyone gets along—even if they really hate each other's guts. The cities that take part in the conference leave small collections of envoys in Perth to keep an eye on each other outside of the AUC.

Darwin's size as a metroplex was one of the main reasons it was chosen as the site of the AUC. It was the smallest and, therefore, was seen as the most neutral. The meeting of the metroplexes has given the city a more cosmopolitan air. Vatskalis Airport is often the first airport travelers pass through as they move on to the rest of the continent. This created small districts called The Littles within Perth that can seem like other cities in miniature. The Littles truly light up during the

AUC when they all compete to have the biggest, loudest afterparties to show everyone the best reasons their city is superior.

Darwin is also the gateway to the Green Gorge, one of the few remaining protected natural spaces in the world. These former national parks were put under protection by one of the first resolutions passed by the AUC nearly a decade ago. At this year's conference, the resolution is up for renewal. Many cities are feeling pressure from local corporations to open some of, if not all, the space within the Gorge to corporate development, mining, or other good, old-fashioned capitalist practices. The general populace wants these spaces protected but, as the conference gets closer, more money will change hands, more blackmail information will be sent out, and more activity in the shadows might get those precious lands into corporate hands.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Be on the lookout for eco-terrorist activity if things don't go their way. Which it won't. Even popular opinion is for opening up the Gorge, believing it's in a fine enough state that Oz can let the corps in to wreck it all again. Australia's economy is strong, but not strong enough that they won't sell their soul for some of that corporate cash.

AUCKLAND

Australia's reputation as an environmentally conscious nation is surpassed only by New Zealand's. New Zealand decided not to rebuild after the calamities of the twenty-first century. The country was overtaken by a back to basics movement that focused on rebuilding their land first and country second. That meant any technology considered intrusive or potentially dangerous was outlawed. TAPs are shut down. Cyberlimbs are rendered inert. Much of the island has been returned to a state mirroring that of one hundred years ago to give the land time to heal.

Auckland is the lone exception on New Zealand. There needed to be a transitional zone between the modern world and the protected lands and Auckland was chosen. While much of the land was restored by giving it time to recover, modern technology was also used to clean up toxic areas and accelerate some processes. Many of the companies responsible for these efforts are headquartered in Auckland. They still need

TAP access, drones, and other pieces of modern tech. At the city limits, however, the checkpoints leading to the rest of the island ensure anything leaving the city is either shut down or has the proper permits to stay active. Needless to say, the black market for permit forgeries is booming.

#MotorMayhem: Oh man, I got a friend with three cyberlimbs decided to vacay in the Z (he lost the originals in a turf war, sore subject). Idiot didn't get the proper papers so the whole vacation he was in a wheelchair and had to pay some manservants to haul his dumb ass around. They don't even allow motorized chairs out there! Spent all his booze and cooze money on getting carted around. Said it was the worst vacation he's ever had. So learn up, peeps. You wanna visit the Z, get your limbs approved ahead of time cause there's a lot of bureaucracy involved and it'll take months of paperwork and fees.

#RandomeGuy: You sure got a lot of friends, man.

#MotorMayhem: I'm a chick, bud.

The desire to keep modern technology and ideas out of the country has unfortunately extended to products of the modern era such as hybrids, zeeks, and AI constructs. They are still allowed in Auckland but are often the targets of hate groups whose crimes are rarely, if ever, fully investigated by the police. The communities of these beings have turned to self-policing, with the lines between vigilante groups protecting their own and ethnic gangs battling for turf in the criminal underworld becoming increasingly blurred.

AUSTRALIAN FLASHPOINTS

- The Old Man of one of the biggest Chains in Australia passes away suddenly. Fingers are pointed all over the country's underworld as to the culprit, which adds a layer of violence to the bottled up bad blood and old scores settled in the streets. Some believe it was the Triads trying to loosen the Chains' hold on criminal activities within Australia's urban centers. Some believe it to be a rival Chain looking to dominate the roadways between the cities. A few even believe it was a murderous coup committed by one of the Old Man's trusted lieutenants who was sick of waiting for death to come naturally. No matter who is responsible, the streets of Perth and the highways of Australia will shake until a new Chain comes out on top.
- A killer stalks the streets of Auckland. The victims have each turned up with their TAPs



precisely removed, suggesting to police that the killer comes from a medical background. The local media has been quick to blame marginalized groups, with a few public attacks on zeeks coming from the media frenzy. The killer may also be from outside of Auckland, dashing to remote parts of the island where current investigative technology makes it difficult to find anyone, much less a killer.

- The old saying about one person's trash is another one's treasure is very true for anything related to McCanless Environmental. Anyone looking for dirt on a powerful individual might make the trip to Perth to root through their massive processing plants or landfills to find a vital data drive or piece of evidence that was considered disposed of, but which could be put back together with patience and tape. McCanless knows the value of its raw product as well. It has a small team of investigators called the Combers rooting through the garbage barges looking for anything that might be valuable to the mother corporation. They might be holding those vital clues back at the company headquarters, waiting to sell information to the highest bidder.

- The upcoming AUC is nearly derailed when a violent virus breaks out in Darwin. The virus is both physical and virtual, causing bodies to reject any implant as if they were recently implanted without the use of transplant pharmaceuticals. Little Alice takes much of the initial blame as the only technicians capable of writing such a virus would likely come from their city, but it could be several different factions trying to disrupt the conference. The objective in this case is double: find a cure to save those afflicted and make sure the conference can continue in the years to come.
- The disappearance of Dr. Hartley sends Red Eye Remender on a roaring rampage of revenge. Someone sent the pirate proof that they are holding the doctor but have not sent along terms for his return to Binport. Red Eye has been taking his nerves out on any rival or enemy he thinks might be responsible in a way that's disrupted the unlikely quiet of life in Binport. He's built up quite an impressive list of enemies in his life, but he never expected anyone else to be harmed because of it. Cooler heads within his organization seek out anyone they think might be able to get Dr. Hartley home in one piece.

SPACE

For many years, space was seen as the ultimate realization of the human desire to explore. Once we got to the stars, it would prove that we evolved past all the petty squabbles and selfish competition for resources. The reality has proven to be much less idealized. Like any frontier, space is being settled by a mixture of outcasts, dreamers, profiteers, and mercenaries. The Zeroscape, as it's known, may span millions of miles, but it still holds all the same rivalries and intrigue that fill up our small globe.

#NihilistWith_aKnife: Squabbles and competition are part of our human, all-too-human condition, omae. Better get used to it. The dreamers are the idiots, staring into the Zeroscape while it stares back.

The true expansion into space was driven by the greed of corporations and the pride of nations. The United States had already conquered the moon, so China set foot on Mars first. Companies seeking the exotic resources necessary to advance

technology pushed out towards the Asteroid Belt and the plentiful moons of the gas giants beyond. Humanity dotted Saturn's and Jupiter's moons with dozens of mining stations with the farthest full colony on Ceres, a dwarf planet in the Asteroid Belt. Most of these colonies are a dangerous web of corporate interests, with Ceres being a strange mix of button down bureaucracy and wild anarcho-capitalism on the fringe of civilization.

So far, the ripples of the changes down on Earth haven't really travelled out into the Solar System. The patchwork collection of alliances means that even if planet-side interests fall, someone out here will quickly and quietly pick up the slack. The few colonies, ships, and nationalized space programs of the American remnant states were quickly sold to corporate interests to allow the RUSA to focus on consolidating power on Earth. The Mandarinate currently holds most of the power in

the Solar System thanks to its hold on Mars, but political observers theorize that if the RUSA holds together there may be a literal Cold War in space.

Many of the corporations that hold sway in space are, if not outright nationalized, primarily working with a single nation. Golden Promise manages things on Mars, but their ships also extend the Mandarinate's power into the Belt and beyond. Colonial Officer Protection Services are the most common corporate mercenaries employed to protect ships and personnel. Many of them come from EU military backgrounds. Nearly all miners sell some sort of resource to Central Belarusian Steel. Working in space promises the freedom few can achieve on Earth, but the hand inside the vacuum suit glove is often one of a country grasping for power.

There are still political rivalries that bubble away from Earth. The UN, for example, claims that all colonies are the dominion of Earth control, but many of the colonies that slipped away from their original masters feel differently. The United Colonies was formed to counter the UN's influence in space, even if the average rock miner is more concerned with what the Asteroid Miners Association's cut will be out of their salary. Organizations like the Guild of Allied Traders are still on the rise compared to an Earthly megacorporation, but the weak reach of the company out to the moons of Jupiter often puts them on equal footing.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: The Asteroid Miners Association is about as corrupt as the corps they rail against every union election cycle. But somehow they still manage to actually do some good, though the miners are always bickering over whether the little bit of safety acquiesced to by the corps justifies the often absurd union dues. The average Joe is probably breaking even on the deals, but the corps and union leaders are both fattening up.

#newtinspace: They take 15% of our cut, @Billy! 15 fracking percent! They get away with it too because nobody sees it in their digi-stub. It's skimmed off the top, along with the any applicable national taxes and corporate protection "fees." You add all the shit up, and we're getting reamed. Then the AMA makes deals with one corp who works with another nation, and suddenly you're not even sure who you're getting taxed by anymore. It's all a cluster out here, man, and I'm not talking about the asteroids. My digi-stub every week reads like a TAP-service bill, just lines and lines of taxes and fees to various corps, nations, the UN, the UC, and—of course—the AMA. Then you get assigned to a new hunk of rock and the whole list

changes. Except the AMA, they always get their cut. There are so many corps and nations vying for control out here that the easiest way to get along was to hose every employee together, and the AMA went right along with it, striking deals with all of them to ensure everybody gets a cut. You get made an offer and think you're set, then realize you're only taking home half of what they told you up front. The alternative is just to work for a single corp and be their literal wage slave. Frack, I need a drink.

There are those tramp freighters and freelancer skip tracers who do operate without the comfort of a safety net. There's a lot of room for deniable assets out in the darkness of space. Since no one power is dominating everything, those powers like to make their moves with layers of insulation between their agents. These operations are twice as lucrative as they are on Earth, but they can also be ten times as deadly. Those layers of insulation also mean no support when things go wrong, and things can go very, very wrong if a micrometeor punches through the hull of a vessel that's not even supposed to exist.

Crime exists anywhere humans go but the organizations here are homegrown. Where there are valuable shipments, there will be pirates. The largest gang, the Marauders, is the closest thing to organized crime in the Solar System. It mostly focuses on claiming prizes between the Belt and the inner planets. There are small time outfits in the Belt and on some of the moons, but they tend to burn out and fade away quickly once local law enforcement takes out the leadership. The rise of one type of organization is giving the power players pause; and that is the growth of astrocults like the Void Screamers. These fanatic, semi-religious groups can flare up in a ship crew or on a settlement without warning and suddenly complicate life for anyone who's not part of the club.

#GetOffaMyCloud: Space is the river Styx, and to cross it you will pay the ferryman.

#Luciferion: Is that Void Screamer motto being said in jest, or are you really one of those jackasses who thinks humanity should abandon space because colonizing it would be some kinda sin? Have you seen what we've done to our own planet!? We gotta go somewhere, ami, cause the Earth is doing its damndest to evict our sorry hides.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Don't buy into this bit about the Marauders only being a small-time gang focused on the Inner Belt. They've got a voting seat on the GoAT and their own space station hiding somewhere out there.



#Luciferion: Speaking of the Guild of Allied Traders! They're still under sanction by the UN for smuggling through embargo lines. StarSec seemed to be making inroads into shutting them down, until one of those Void Screamers blew the shit out of a StarSec capital vessel. Nobody saw that coming. Not sure if they got lucky or have really upped their game. If it's the latter, then doing business in the Solar System is going to get a whole lot riskier, which means more expensive for all the players.

LUNA PRIME

The first colony on the moon belonged to the United States and it became the first independent extraplanetary colony when the US fell apart. Luna Prime trades heavily on its reputation of being "First & Free" but the sprawl underneath it all isn't that much different from what you'd find on Earth. There are still the rich who live effortless lives thanks to the hard, grinding work of the poor in the lowest parts of society. Corporate interests put greed in front of need. Criminals corrupt or break the system for their own selfish ends. The only difference is here has one resource that's in short supply nearly everywhere else humanity touches: hope.

The spark of freedom makes Luna Prime a hotbed of colonist revolutionary activity. Both the Solar Freedom Movement and the Colony Liberation Front call Luna Prime home. Armstrong Plaza is the home to dozens of galas and political events where UN ambassadors and corporate executives are wooed by SFM members interested in the peaceful transfer of power. CLF graffiti splashes on the side of gravtrains and abandoned colony containers scattered just outside the main dome but still within eyesight of Luna Prime citizens. The authorities look for connections between the two groups while each celebrate their small successes. The SFM has liberated nearly all the colonies on the moon while the harder tactics of the CLF have taken root in the outer colonies where life is harder and corporations have a firmer grip on colonist lives.

This revolutionary outlook has recently turned Earthward. Many citizens of Luna Prime are uncomfortable with the Restored United States of America. They are afraid that once the RUSA has pulled itself back together, it will look skyward to claim the colonies that slipped away during the Second Civil War.

Right now, this means sending as much aid to Chicago as possible, as it is the last remaining independent US city. Some civil leaders have suggested offering asylum and expunged records to the liberated Lunar Penal Colony in exchange for military service and training. Others are afraid that too much of this activity will draw the attention of the RUSA and cause them to attack now before any heavy preparations have been made.

UNISS

The United Nations International Space Station is located at the halfway point between the free colonies of Luna and Earth. It is the largest hub-style space station in the Solar System. Anyone with an interest in what goes on in human occupied space has a presence in this station. The smaller operators often only have one person on the station while the larger interests might have a whole module from which to conduct business. Even those lone wolves have an immense amount of influence; walking from the chambers of the UN Colonial General to the lobby of the C-7 takes just minutes.

Suffice to say that UNISS's true purpose is as a place of politics, intrigue, and far-reaching consequences. Ships which bypass the station still have to transmit their manifests and personnel files here. Information is just as valuable a product as the resources miners return with from the outer parts of the system, and it's traded for a premium here. The station's reputation is relatively crime-free, compared with places like The Hive or Ceres Prime, but that's mostly because the people working in the shadows tend to be professionals who don't leave much in the way of evidence.

There's also a war of jurisdictions happening on board the station. The UN Solar Marshal Service often clashes with Corporate Star Security when bad things occur onboard. The station is run by the UN but is primarily made up of corporate owned modules; likewise, the vast majority of ships that dock at the station are corporate property. That makes for a lot of messy red tape in those moments when a crime is committed and the suspect tries to steal a freighter and flee. Thanks to the longstanding rivalry between StarSec and the Space Rangers, conflicted officers might just draw down on each other to make sure their side gets the collar.

#SpaceManZaz: Not just StarSec and the Rangers. The corps bring their own security, sometimes just independently hired bodyguards whose role includes protecting the ships. You can have as many as 4 or 5 factions all showing up at the scene of a personal shuttle jacking, sometimes with golemmechs. It's not frequent, but it's not unheard of either.

TIEN PAO MA

Sometimes, being the older sibling means watching the others surpass you despite all your hard work. China's first colony on Mars has been around long enough to feature the first generation of humans born on Mars. These colonists were the ones digging and dying on the red planet to ensure that the Mandarinate had a place in human history. And now, it seems the two organizations that benefitted the most from their sacrifices are showering their newer creations with attention and resources. The Mandarinate dotes upon New Shanghai while critical infrastructure within Tien Pao Ma rots away. Golden Promise gorges its corporate partners in Golden City while bankrupting colonists with the promise that a bright new life is one push of a pachinko button away.

The buildings in the city are all squat, cramped, and many were temporary quarters that became permanent though constant use and no money for replacement. Much of the perpetual structure of the city comes from scrapped spaceships that made it to Mars but weren't in good enough condition to return to their place of origin. There isn't much green space in the city but the one exception to the rule is The Marble Garden, which stretches for a valuable square kilometer within the domes. The marbles referred to in the name are the helmets of colonists scattered throughout the field surrounded by plants brought from Earth. Each one represents a life lost because of the dangers of bringing human life to Mars.

While the government and colonization companies may be overlooking Tien Pao Ma, there is one group that's not ready to take this disrespect lying down. The Triads of the city have come together in an uneasy alliance to turn their criminal enterprises outward. The big jobs like casino heists, supply drone jacking, and stealing scrapped spacecraft are reserved for targets related to other colonies. This doesn't make Tien

Pao Ma crime free; anything that happens does so with the blessings of the crime families that came from Earth. Anyone pulling a job without the permission of the Triads families quickly finds themselves on the outs with the colony, and likely the colony's air supply.

CERES PRIME

The dwarf planet Ceres represents the halfway point between the relative civilization of the inner colonies and the true frontier past the Belt. The planet is an ice mantle with a vast liquid water core. Ceres Prime is a massive factory first and a settlement second. It pumps the water out of the core and into space where it freezes around nanite electromagnets for shipment. Water is the most common product that Ceres sells but the extraplanetary microbes discovered have caused something of a second resource rush back to the planet. These microbes have proven useful for off-world research and development, and turned what was once an overlooked industrial emplacement into a hotbed of corporate intrigue.

The sudden influx of "suits in vac suits" has disrupted a relatively stable underworld on Ceres Prime. Ceres used to be a place where fugitives from the inner colonies could flee to cool off for a little while and where teamsters from the outer mining stations could take a little off the top for themselves while heading back home. These situations still occur, but not out in the open like they did before corporate security. To avoid StarSec scanners, they now occur in black markets built near the water extraction machinery on the outskirts of the main colony dome. Fugitives are forced into hiding out in "hard luck holes" created by crashed ships that impact into the planetoid. Sometimes, these holes are created by pilot error. Sometimes, they are created by pilots owing too much on their ship to a local crime lord.

Corporate interest has also brought criminal interest. Most of the criminal elements on Ceres Prime have been those either shooed away from crime in other locations because of mistakes, or honest people driven into the life by hard times. With members of the Mafia, Yakuza, and Triad trickling onto the station, those homegrown syndicates will start pushing back. It may expose them to more scrutiny from the authorities. But if







they can withstand the push, it could also be the catalyst to the first extraplanetary crime syndicate headquartered on a giant frozen rock.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: @newtinspace, you need a job, ami, check out CP. Jobs aplenty. Not necessarily legal, but not deadly either.

#newtinspace: Thanks, @Billy! I'll update my TAP with my latest work deets and see if I can bribe a recommendation out of the union.

C136DZ

Some folks want to see the frontier but not get their hands dirty. It's a long standing Earth tradition, just ask anyone who remembers Tombstone, Arizona (or at least has read a historical Net entry on the place). Space tourism is dominated by StarDust Escapes, Incorporated and their corporate tendrils extend all the way to the Outer Belt. The ultra-rich looking to rough it in space can head off to this otherwise unremarkable asteroid, nearly 250 kilometers across, to live like a space miner for a week. The price doesn't just include an all-expenses paid trip out to the frontier; it also covers insurance claims for any injury or death that may occur.

C136dz is still a working asteroid mine even if a growing percentage of the people coming to it are soft-handed rich kids who want a taste of the hard life. The mayor of the asteroid was an executive at StarDust for many years before a change in management forced her out. It's unclear how Caroline Sloan found herself on a path that took her from the corner suite to a cramped zero-G office on a rock full of superconductor ore, but her old connections have made C136dz one of the most valuable corporate assets in the Belt.

Sloan's reelection this year is not as automatic as she might hope. She's been wise to divide the profits from the frontier experience trips to everyone in the colony. That's kept most of the miners happy, but there are some upset with the idea that they not only have to rub shoulders with wealthy tourists, but also treat them with kid gloves. Also, while there haven't been any incidents thus far, Sloan's relied on her remote location to keep her customers safe from anyone trying an extraction or assassination during a vacation. The likelihood of trouble increases the more the word gets out about the trips. If

something happened to an executive while in her charge, Sloan might have to go even deeper into space to rebuild her reputation again.

THE HIVE

The Hive gets its name from the hexagonal modules that comprise its makeup. Hexagonal Universal Node Installations are home, worksite, and transport all in one. The HUNIs, called "honeys," are built to attach to the station and detach to land on the nearby moons of Jupiter to mine resources. The station is meant to be infinitely expandable with new honeys locking in and pulling off on a daily basis. The central AI that controls the station, called The Queen by the miners who operate the HUNIs, automatically configures The Hive based on who needs to go where.

79 Wings, the Chinese company who built The Hive, ran the numbers and realized that shipping a long haul operator to Saturn and back, providing for their needs, and paying out benefits to their families in the case of an accident was still cheaper than designing a system that could control hundreds of drones in space. The operators sign on for contracts that pay off the cost of their honey and then can sign on for bonus tours that offer stunning amounts of money in exchange for a cold, lonely year on the edge of civilized space. If they make it back, a year's salary plus commissions from mineral strikes can set up a miner for a couple of decades back on Earth.

The CHIMERA corporation and some major unidentified military assets have cordoned off the moon Europa. Rumors swirl about what's going on down on the surface of the moon. The most popular is a motherlode of alien microbes, with some extreme rumors even claiming sentient life discovered under the ice. The rumor passing through The Hive is that honey drivers are being contacted by the Mandarinate through 79 Wings officials and being offered huge sums of money to try and sneak onto the moon and bring back a sample of whatever CHIMERA is so viciously guarding. Nobody has supposedly tried to claim this bounty, but then, most zeros will tell you it's probably easier for the government to kill off any honey drivers who might have succeeded than pay them off.

SPACE FLASHPOINTS

- A ship bearing a Novocruz executive returning from a C136dz experience has disappeared. The ship docked at Ceres Prime to refuel and then vanished off its flight path two days out from the Belt. A race ensues to see who can find out what happened to the ship first. Novocruz wants to know where the executive is. Sloan wants to protect her reputation. The Space Rangers and StarSec want to show each other up in their never-ending rivalry. If each PC represents one of these interests, do they battle each other to find the exec or do they pool their resources in hopes of finding the ship before everyone aboard is dead?
- Golden Promise poured billions of dollars into the Infinite Heavens casino in New Shanghai. A team comes together to rob the casino its opening weekend to sink the new venture as it launches. The job will make the crew very rich if they survive long enough to spend the score. The best survival method is for the crew to discover who hired them and what needs to be done to keep their employer from deciding that murder is easier than payment. Is it the Triads of Tien Pao Ma looking to blacken New Shanghai's eye? Is it a rival of Golden Promise looking to grab a handhold on Martian business? Or is it Golden Promise looking to cash in some insurance policies on a casino that will never turn a legitimate profit?
- Inktomi Station is the closest thing to a prime colony near Saturn. Nearly all of the

dozens of other colonies on the various moons of Jupiter are small crew mining operations. Recently, administrators of the station have noticed a troubling pattern of a mining operation going dark for a day or two and then resuming transmission as if nothing happened. One of the personnel from these mines was hurt in an accident where it was revealed that it was a sim of the person rather than the original human. The corporate owners have not authorized any investigation outside the station, but some pooled, off the books resources might come together for such an inquiry.

- There are several free colonies on Luna but no overarching government. Freedom often means that any colonies beset by raiders or criminals are on their own to fight off the bad guys. A small agriculture colony that barely breaks even might get desperate enough to send one of its own to a major city on Earth looking for a few outlaws hoping to become zeros. Getting their weapons and gear into orbit might prove to be a bigger challenge than the raiders on the moon.
- Venus has become a getaway spot for the rich and jaded. The current fad is for historical resorts themed to a particular period in history. StarDust, Inc. looks to open up a theme resort that's set in a retro sci-fi universe of rocket packs, bird men, and bubble helmets. The immersive experience will track guests' actions and reputations throughout their stay.





CHICAGOLAND

“Welcome to the jungle
 We got fun ‘n’ games
 We got everything you want
 Honey we know the names
 We are the people that can find
 Whatever you may need
 If you got the money,
 Honey,
 We got your disease.”

—Welcome to the Jungle, Guns N Roses

BACKGROUND

Just prior to the second American civil war, the Chicago megasprawl had grown to incorporate cities including Aurora Illinois, Gary Indiana, and Waukegan, Illinois. When the war erupted, the GLU and NAC—hoping to take control of vital Great Lakes shipping lanes—rushed to capture the city. The ensuing conflict came to be known as the Battle of Chicago.

One of the bloodiest chapters of the second civil war, the Battle of Chicago lasted six months while NATO debated sending peace keeping troops to quell violence in the city. During that time an estimated sixty-seven thousand people lost their lives. Initial battles for control of the outermost sectors were fought on three major fronts, with GLU forces moving south out of Detroit Michigan, Green Bay, Wisconsin and Southeast from staging grounds in St. Paul, Minnesota.

NAC forces steamrolled east from Omaha Nebraska to attack the GLU militia in the Milwaukee sector while North American Coalition troops from Indianapolis and Kentucky pushed North, quickly occupying the southeastern sectors of the megasprawl until they engaged elements from the Illinois National Guard, Chicago’s local law enforcement units and GLU troops from Michigan. Heated battles between GLU and NAC forces raged throughout Chi-town in the early days of the battle. Battlefield commanders of both the GLU and NAC had expected a tough fight to gain control of the strategic city. What they hadn’t anticipated however, was the defiance of the city’s citizens.

When the GLU and NAC began their advance on the city, they encountered hastily-formed militias, street gangs, combat hackers, and others

willing and able to fight to protect their homes and families. What started as a struggle between the GLU and NAC forces for dominance of the megasprawl turned into a battle between three armies, with scared, angry citizens fighting an insurgency against both factions with equal ferocity. Block by block, sector by sector, fighting to capture the city nearly tore the Chicago metroplex apart.

The conflict stretched for nearly six months with no signs of slowing down and neither side gaining any significant ground. Then one cold winter morning the unthinkable happened. At 8:30 AM on February 8th 2054, three “dirty” nuclear devices around .5 kilotons apiece detonated in districts across the already devastated megasprawl. The attacks targeted both GLU and NAC forward bases as well as a suspected insurgent stronghold in the city.

The world responded with outrage, decrying the attacks as reprehensible, even as NAC and GLU forces pointed fingers, each side blaming the other for the atrocities. Within days the first of 130,000 NATO forces landed in O’Hare airport and immediately began the work of securing the city. Backed by China, the India League and the Eurasian Union, Illinois Governor Donald Parks (who would later succumb to severe depression and take his own life) declared Chi-town a free city and ordered GLU and NAC leaders to pull their forces out of the megasprawl. A month later, the last of the GLU and NAC forces had redeployed to other areas of the embattled nation and reconstruction began in earnest.

RECONSTRUCTION

The Battle of Chicago provided an opportunity to implement much needed changes to the city’s infrastructure. In many ways, the reconstruction of Chicago was a grand experiment. Looking to expand their interests in the region, megacorporations from all over the globe invested trillions into the reconstruction of Chicago in return for the rights to build arcologies, processing plants and various factories within the city. Roads, mass transit systems, power grids and other essential components of the megasprawl

WHO NUKED CHICAGO?

Neither the NAC nor the GLU ever came forward to take responsibility for the strikes. In the following days and weeks, Stopwatch launched a full-scale investigation into the attacks, but never made their findings public, classifying the information due to its sensitive nature. Of course, it didn't take long for the rumor mongering to start.

The most popular theory pinned the attacks on Stopwatch itself. Conspiracy theorists (some of whom were supposedly ex- Stopwatch agents) presented "evidence" the agency had access to stockpiles of mini nuclear devices; the tin hatters claimed would be used to counter a singularity event. Both the NAC and GLU used AI's to counter the efforts of enemy combat hackers to control remote drones and other high tech war machines.

Given this fact, it's not implausible that, fearing an imminent singularity event, Stopwatch agents detonated the nukes as a preemptive measure. No hard evidence surfaced to support the claim, however.

Others allege black ops teams and ronin working for megacorporations and foreign nations wanting to use the attacks as a pretense to gain a foothold in the city were responsible. Though, as with the Stopwatch theory, no evidence exists to corroborate it.

were rebuilt and upgraded to utilize emerging technologies.

Thus, Chicago became one of the first cities on the North American continent to fully integrate Hyper Reality into its infrastructure.

A FREE CITY?

Ironic calling a city "free" when it's surrounded by one big wall. Who's free, then? The saps stuck inside, or the ones on the outs who don't have to deal with the whole crab-bucket tangle? Chicagoland got the distinction of being the juicy bit of bone the war dogs of GLU and NAC scrapped over during the Second Civil War. Ain't that an honor? Funny thing is, those rabid pups weren't used to their bones biting back—and that's where the metaphor breaks down, neh? The good people of Chicago decided they didn't want to be gnawed on and started to making a nuisance of themselves.

It took three whole dirty nukes to knock sense into the bunch of lunatics, and the city's been recovering ever since. Slow and steady. Plenty of theories—conspiracies more like—on who planted those bombs, and plenty of fingers pointing every which way to this day. But the past is the past, ami, and we Chi-town folk like to think on more important future matters, like where our next meal is coming from, or how we're gonna dodge the choppers that just jumped us outta the alley.

Live in the moment, neh? The sprawl will make you appreciate every last moment you're lucky enough to experience. When you're in Chi-town, every breath is a gift, ami. Every beat of your pulse has its price, and you better be willing to pay it if you want to walk the streets of Chicago long enough to know which ones will give you a nice stroll and which ones will wind you up as so much scrap in a dumpster behind a chop shop. Now pay attention, 'cause here's where it gets interesting.





LIFE IN CHICAGO

Chi-town is all about give and get. You won't see it on any TAP overlays or domains, but every single person has a running tally in their heads of the debts they owe and the debts they're due. That's what it often simmers down to in the end, when the grenade smoke clears.

We've got nearly thirty million souls crammed in behind the Wall, and when that many elbows and hips are bumping and grinding, sooner or later heads are going to start knocking and rolling right along with them, capisce? But you're a survivor, aren't you? Here to make a few cryptos, leave a few bruises and bodies in your wake. Make people remember your name, whatever its worth.

GETTING IN

You'd think people would wise up after a while, thinking they're going to hop in here and immediately be the big fish among millions of shrimp. The migrants keep coming though. Fresh meat, in more ways than one. The ports are the main entries to the sprawl proper, and you've got a few options on how to make your way through those. Getting an official passport is the safest way, but requires the most patience. If you want to run the risk and pay the cryptos, you could find someone to smuggle you in or forge you a fake passport so you can skip to the head of the line. As high as the Wall is, numerous operations are in place to help you slip over, under, or through the boundary for a price. If you aren't careful, though, those same "helping hands" may just take your cryptos and then turn you over to the guards for a bounty. However you get in, you can be sure you'll be paying with time, cryptos, blood, or a mix of all three.

GETTING OUT

Why would you ever want to leave? Plenty of folks never step foot, paw, or claw outside the sector they were born in, and they aren't complaining. And there's got to be a reason so many people are fighting to get in here. But if you want to go see the wide world, here's how you do it. You either scuttle out the nearest port, hook up with a ride across the lake, or shuttle up the Space Elevator and start guzzlin' air canisters. Going

that route usually means handing over plenty of cryptos, or selling your soul to some space-bound corp that reminds you every day how lucky you are that they keep you alive. The trick usually isn't getting out of here; it's getting back in.

GETTING AROUND

Get some boots. Heaviest ones you can strap on. That's the best piece of advice I'll ever pass your way, and this is the only time it's free.

Want something a little faster than clomping along? Individual maglev vehicles, VTOL craft, and JUMP cars are pretty nifty if you can afford them. Public transportation such as the maglev "El-Trains" make a knot of the place, and the subways are decent, so long as you remember which stations to avoid once it gets dark. You can always go old-school and chug your way down the streets with a motorbike, chem car, or some other clunker. If you ever get lost, then I pity you, because the hyper object navigation infrastructure embedded throughout the entire sprawl makes it near impossible for that to happen—unless your guidance system has been hacked.

GETTING BY

What all you're gonna settle for? Just getting by? I'd hoped you had bigger dreams than that. A little spark of vision. This here is a microcosm of the Solar System itself, a regular bottomless pit of opportunity. And everything in the sprawl runs on cryptos. How do you get those precious cryptos, you ask?

Sell your soul. Sell your mind. Sell your skills. Sell your body. Hell, sell someone else's body, preferably cold in a bag, ticked off your bounty list. Plenty of odd jobs always need running. This gang wants that gang leader snuffed. This corp needs espionage run on that rival conglomerate, or a pretty piece of tech stolen. Or you could go legit and run-n-gun with the militia.

In other words, get tough, or get rich and get muscle to protect you. Make friends in high places, or buy them off. Learn enough to make yourself useful to the right folks, or learn how to make others useful to you.

THE POWERS THAT BE

Time to get a clue about the pizza pie of power this city has been sliced up into. Otherwise, you might take a bite of the wrong slice and wind up with a mouthful of anchovy instead of a delish meatball deep dish. Oh god, I'm salivating. Someone ring up DP!

Anyhoo, ami, it's all about loyalty—which, luckily, can often be bought with enough cryptos. So, are you going to stick by the faceless corps through thick and thin so long as they keep your water running and fill your trough with slop? Got a thing for helping friends and family keep all their vital organs on the inside, where they belong? Or are you the “all for one, and one for screw you guys” type? Here are the major players you should keep an eye on.

CHICAGO GOVERNMENT

You've heard Chi-town referred to as the “Free City of Chicago,” haven't you? Well, there's always those who like to amend that to the “Free So Long as You Do What We Say' City of Chicago.” How's about we see who's set themselves up as judge, jury, and executioners this week, ami?

THE COUNCIL

Their faces have been popping up on the Hyper Real channels lately, promising big changes, peace and prosperity and all the usual blather. And by “faces,” I of course mean those virtual constructs they've been using to mask their true identities. Only thing different about them, compared to the other hundred would-be rulers that pop up every year? This Council seems to have the military influence to back up their orders, and their presences have been detected in every sector.

But the Council is bad news, lemme tell you. Even if they are trying to do right by us sprawlers, it won't matter in the end. This city has a thing against centralized authority. Especially ones who try the anonymous route. Are they men? Women? Hybrids? AIs? A mix of all the above? Who knows? Yes, the Council knows, very funny.

But they ain't saying, and maybe we're better off staying ignorant.

CHICAGO DEFENSE FORCE

When it comes to keeping the sprawl free, not even the biggest wall will do any good if it isn't manned and backed up with enough firepower. Besides, sometimes the threat isn't an external one. If a crisis ever overwhelms the private security organizations, that's when the Chicago Defense Force (CDF) is called into action; a last line against the apocalypse. Problem is, the many noble volunteers and conscripts who compose the CDF can get a little power-hungry once they're let off the leash, and end up causing just as many riots as they put down. Still, it's a bit better than dropping another nuke on all our heads, neh?

If you want a name to link them to, look no further than Petrus Desonvacce. Yeah, the baby-faced spokesman you see on the feeds, talking about how wonderful it is to serve the city. Supposedly, they're keeping him out of active duty, though, in case he's unlucky enough to ruin that handsome complexion with a scar or two. On the other hand, if you want a grittier truth, then bring a bottle of whiskey (the real stuff) to Obed Lothem, AKA the Obsidian Wolf. Used to be a run-n-gunner in the wilds who got conscripted to turn his gun sights on malcontents inside the Wall instead.

CHICAGO MEGACORPS

Wanna hear a hilarious megacorps joke? Too bad, because that's in violation of anti-humor regulation V.33.Axxii and you are now terminated from your position. Proceed immediately to the exit or you will be fired upon by building security. Do not attempt to “liberate” your coffee mug from the break room. Sad thing is, I'm still not sure if that's serious or not. The megacorps funnel plenty of cryptos into Chi-town, but they're pretty picky about who those are distributed to. It's all trickle-down with them, and the corps know how





reliant blue-platers are on their cryptos, since they provide everything from our water to our food to our shelter to the filtered air. They know they can squeeze us dry, and the only reason they haven't is because they're too busy fighting each other.

Even while they're scrapping over us, there's tell of a secret meeting that happens a few times a year, one where you don't get invited unless you're worth at least a few billion cryptos. The deals struck there are overseen by an utterly ruthless honcho who is somehow unaffiliated with any one corp but has them all quaking in their sim-leather boots—goes by the name of Guilder, but you didn't hear that from me, ami.

THE UNITED NATIONS

Nothing united about it, except that every nation involved acts in their own interests. Oh, and they've got nice uniforms. Minimal presence here, though they do pay attention when the dogs of war start sniffing around. They're all about keeping the peace, but everyone knows they keep peace best by occupying volatile territory and maneuvering so they're the ones in charge when the tear gas settles. UN General Adony Okimbe keeps a cold eye on their troops, while their political front is handled by a polished and prim official named Stella Rezuvoltk. She gives speeches so flawless that she's been accused of being an android, letting her handlers remain in the shadows.

THE WOLVES

Chi-town is a bleeding beast, and the wolves are always circling, waiting for it to stumble so they can leap in to gouge out the juiciest flank. Chicago has a crowded pack of wolves prowling its streets and back alleys, and they're always getting into nasty scrapes, trying to establish alpha status.

BARBARIANS AT THE GATE

In a time where even the poorest of the poor can get a TAP, you've got to make a conscious choice to reject the net completely. The Barbarians at the Gate are a singularly savage bunch who dress in leathers and furs—often stripped from unfortunate hybrids or neko—and wield rustic weapons they've forged with their own hands. They choose leaders by the diplomatic technique of “who collected the most scalps this month?” and that current distinction goes to a set of twins: Ulrik and Reshana. Other clan leaders include Behadja, who always has a pack of starving mutts ready to attack on her command, and a lunatic called Gullet, who has made cannibalism into a fine art. Somehow, their backwards brains have decided proximity equals property, so if they're squatting by the ports that

control Chicagoland access, then they must be in control of the whole city, neh?

THE GANGS

Spicing this old slang the other day that describes gangs perfectly: “Dime a dozen.” Now, I don't rightly know what a dime was, but these days, gangs are giving the roaches a run for their cryptos when it comes to infesting all the corners and holes they can find in the sprawl. Some are run like mini-corps, all precision and profits and calculated territory expansion. Some just want to see the people bleed and the sprawl burn. Then there are those bound by codes of honor they think makes 'em oh-so-special. Whatever gets them up in the morning, gangs are active in every single sector to a large degree, and are often the blunt tools (or rusty knives) being manipulated by hidden hands in larger plots.

Watch out for the South Side Storm Troopers, who go out of their way to prove they're still the deadliest gangbangers in Chi-town. There are few subsectors where they don't have a least a handful of cells.

The Burners are a unique bunch, populated entirely by hybrids who have taken the hazardous

CHROME REAPERS

† heft of cybertech is commonplace in the sprawl. Cybernetics and vat grown organs are expensive, hombre'. The average runner looking for an edge on the competition either can't afford the cost or doesn't want to deal with the legalities involved with purchasing commercial chrome, so she turns to the shadow community, going to body chop shops to get what she needs. Of course, body chop shops are typically supplied by chrome reapers—thugs who butcher people for their cybertech.

Chrome reapers tend to operate in small gangs of four or five heavily cybered hitters. Hackers will jumpjack the mark's vehicle and land it in (or drive it to) a garage where the muscle waits to carve 'em up. Like most predators, they look for the easiest targets they can find; script kiddies sporting new headware, N00B ronin who haven't been in the underbelly of Chi-town long enough to get a feel for the city and its dangers, blue platers sportin' augmentations to help them do their job better so some robot doesn't take it; heck, even older sprawlers who just had organ transplants get jacked.

That said, the more hardcore chrome reapers in Chicago have been known to target ronin and shadow teams with cutting edge cyber and bioware, and lately it's been happening more and more. If the buzz on the streets and MediaWeb can be believed, someone's been paying chrome reapers some serious cred to target ronin, especially LEET teams. Even stranger, the ronin aren't just carved up for their chrome and left on the streets; they're disappeared.

Just a few weeks ago, Johnny Cage's team got hit in a red zone in the Aurora sector as they were leaving a meet at The Downside; a night club popular among Chicago's shadow community. Some brainer caught the whole thing on his eye camera and streamed it live to the MediaWeb. The stream showed ten reapers in banger leathers swarming the crew with (mostly) nonlethal weapons; stun grenades, gel guns and needler guns fitted with some kind of paralytic neuro-toxin were found on the four chrome reapers who didn't survive. The fight lasted about thirty seconds, but in the end, the team got scooped up and tossed into a nondescript hover van that sped off into the night. The brainer who uploaded the stream hasn't been seen since, either.

Arlington Heights rad zone for themselves and welcome all comers who dare to defy that claim. And if you wander too close to the Aurora barrens, be prepared to pay homage to the Angels of Death, who hold onto control there with tight and blood-soaked fists. While spread throughout the sprawl, the AOD concentrate operations closer to the Wall, with their troops funded by smuggling goods and people into the city.

The Burners are relative n00bs in comparison to other more established gangs in the sprawl; a motley crew who style themselves as protectors of the people who make their homes in the Arlington Heights Rad Zone. To the Burners, the estimated 3,000 people in the zone are an extended family of sorts, their peeps, as burners often refer to the squatters and blue platers who call Arlington Heights their home.

THE SYNDICATES

‡ ithout leaders, illegal activities amount to nothing more than spitting into the wind. Doesn't really accomplish much and just makes a mess, capisce? When criminal organizations actually start getting organized, though, look out. Enter the Chicago crime syndicates. They're not motivated by emotional fluff like most gangs. Syndicate members are there to enforce their bottom line. The cryptos, man, the cryptos. Syndicates are responsible for much of the bribery, blackmail, racketeering, and smuggling throughout the sprawl. There are rumors they've even got agents planted deep in the Triads, Mexican Mafia, and major gangs throughout the sectors. Intelligence and ill-intent makes for a nasty, if extremely efficient combination.



Currently, the Black Rose Syndicate is on top of the heap, the main competition to the South Side Storm Troopers in the Gary Hell Zone. They've secured such widespread influence by being extremely well-organized, almost a criminal corp, and are tightly linked to the Bratva-Vory "Brotherhood."

THE TRIADS

Let you never would've guessed it, looking around at all the borgs, chimeras, and ronin walking these streets, but Chicagoland has a pretty big reputation for diversity. All that means, though, is we get to take our pick from a variety of colorful criminal factions. Among these are the Triads, Chinese-based gangs who like to style themselves as a shadowy army ruling by means of drug trafficking, credit dupes, data-theft, gambling, and—when all else fails—ruthless elimination of all opposition. Secretive and with numerous ceremonial rankings, Chitown's triads encourage loyalty through highly ritualized inductions and oaths binding new members for life.

One of the more active triads goes by the unassuming name of the Purple Incense Party, and they're identified by the tattoo of a dragon's eye peering out of a stylized sketch of flame and smoke. Their Dragon Head is the elderly Shou Gao, whose frail build belies a cunning intelligence. A young woman known as Li Xiao is his Vanguard, handling offense operations. She's never seen without a veil covering the lower half of her face, and there's rumors that she's been spliced for superhuman senses and speed.

THE BRATVA-VORY

Also known as the Russian Mafia, this "Brotherhood" has muscled into numerous sectors, hiding its activities behind brothels, cyber fight clubs, unauthorized augmented reality simulators, illegal Hyper Reality domains, and even lethal VR hacks. On the streets, they're represented and protected by the Black Rose Syndicate, who get plenty of weapons, upgrades, and stims in exchange for their loyalty. Far more

overt than the triads, the Bratva-Vory is quicker to resort to violent ends when they've been the least bit slighted, and they can hold grudges like no one else. Making them angry is akin to rousing a bear from its den. In other words, you better be able to skip town fast, have better connections and protective measures, or have someone you can trip and push into their vengeful path as a distraction.

The Big Brother of the band is a meathead called Oleksy Kovalik; though in the past couple years, he's been letting a love for fine vodka muddle his self-control, and an up-and-coming smuggler, Artur Sokoloff, is apparently gunning for the top. A coder known as #Luciferion is famous for managing their gambling domains and crafting truly spectacular VR hacks that have turned plenty of their enemies into gibbering idiots within seconds.

THE MEXICAN MAFIA

Chicagoland has certainly made a brave effort to round up and incarcerate the more undesirable elements from the streets, maybe thinking sticking all the malcontents in one spot will somehow make them see the error of their ways. Instead, what they got was the Mexican Mafia, a prison and penitentiary-based criminal organization that continued operating within the heart of our very own faulty justice system. Vicious, bloodthirsty, and unforgiving, the Mexican Mafia has actually thrived inside the VR prisons its members populate. If you ever end up on the wrong side of the law, making contact with this organization might be in your favor. They're often identified by symbolism linked to the number thirteen...since M is the thirteenth letter of the alphabet, capisce? Death is the only escape from their ranks.

Jesús Salazar is their current general, and has a flair for using occult spookery to scare new recruits into submission. Her immediate lieutenant, Alejandra Gutierrez, is handy with a shiv and any sort of makeshift weaponry. The skull tattoo covering her entire face tells you all you need to know about her charming personality.

THE UNALIGNED

Sure, I get going solo. Fewer folks to split the cryptos with. Bigger boost to your rep, less overhead. But lemme tell you, precious few make it for long without at least a few fellow ronin to fall back on. And you aren't the first to strike out alone. Plenty of like-minded souls could use your knowledge and skills. Besides, have you ever thought about how the other gangs and territory lords will take to some punk snitchin' gigs out from under them? Sure. Forget the hidden handshakes, the tattoos, the blood oaths, and wearing your underwear on your head—but never forget the value of having a few unaligned allies at your side. In Chicagoland, you're never totally alone.

FREELANCERS

Freelancers chart their own path through Chitown. No two are alike, and we like it that way, because it means there's plenty out there to handle the down-n-dirty jobs no one else wants. 'Course, that also means they get jobs that toss plenty of shiny cryptos their way. Anyone wanting to set themselves up as a freelancer will be entering a world of cutthroat competition. The work is often illegal, dangerous, and sure to end in blood and tears. In the end, all that matters to a freelancer is her reputation, and the number of cryptos in her account.

FIXERS

Hey, you got a problem with cryptos lately? As in, not nearly enough of them? Then you'll be happy to bump into a reputable fixer who happens to have a contract that could keep you afloat a little longer. Fixers are the go-betweens who keep certain faces anonymous and certain

hands clean of any blood. They can be your ticket to bigger and better things...but remember that pretty much anyone can call himself a fixer. Sometimes the only way to tell a good fixer apart from a rotten one is by who pulls out a blaster after you complete a job.

INFOBROKERS

Verily I say unto thee, learn to love infobrokers, for they are the road to salvation. They're tapped into the deepest data feeds twenty-four/seven, and are making connections between yesterday's megacorp assassination and today's half-off deal at McCafe that you wouldn't even dream of imagining. You want to run a successful contract? The more informed you are going into the fray, the better. But beware. The DataStream flows both ways, ami, and info brokers won't blink twice before selling whatever dirt they've dug up on you to the highest bidder.

SMUGGLERS

Point A to Point B, no questions asked. That's the beauty of Chicagoland's smuggling game, a vast under-network of transportation specialists who know all the hidden sprawl byways, and have a knack for running a black-market golemmech across town and making it look like a flower delivery to their grandmother. Illegal weaponry, implants, data...whatever makes your little heart go pitter-pat. Confidentiality is their specialty, and some go to extreme lengths to guarantee it. I once saw a smuggler who'd spliced his mouth shut so he literally couldn't squeal on his clients...though of course, a rival eventually bombed his VTOL car and just brain-hacked his corpse. C'est la vie.



GEOGRAPHY

Want a good idea of how Chi-town is laid out, ami? Go scrounge up one of them antique compasses. Y'know, the types with the twirly arrow that's chummy with magnetic fields. Now place that compass on the ground...and smash it in with your boot heel! Done? Right. Now scuff the bits around until you've got a lovely mess of broken glass, scrap metal, and dirt. Now take a picture, cause that's as clear a map of the sprawl you can rely on, for all the good it'll do you.

All right, all right. Lemme paint you a pretty picture if you're going to whine so much. Four sectors (you can count that high, right?). North, South, West, and Central. They make up an enormous puzzle you'll spend the rest of your life trying to put together, and all of it wrapped up and squeezed tight in the anaconda coil that is the Wall.

THE WALL

What keeps one person out keeps another person in. Remember that, ami. With the Wall, it's all about perspective. After the dirty bombs went BOOM, the GLU and NAC finally decided the sprawl was a bit too hot of a potato to handle and slunk back to their holes to keep lobbing potshots at each other. During the reconstruction, the fine folks of Chi-town decided, for some weird reason, that they didn't like military goons tromping over their doorsteps. What, oh do tell me what sort of crazy twist of technology could possibly keep out armies trying to march in and trample our precious freedom? How about an enormous wall?

Brilliant!

Some say Chief Administrator Thomas Stern should be considered a genius for the simplicity of his solution. Others say he was just compensating for something. Two years is all it took thanks to plenty of cheap android and sim labor, and now we're all ringed in by this 121 mile long, 150-story high monstrosity. The Wall hosts millions of souls who have carved out hovels and warrens within the infrastructure—sometimes literally—figuring the defensive nature of their home will keep them protected.

Consider the Wall being Chicago's big middle finger to the world, neh?

NORTH CHICAGO

The North side of Chi-town makes up the largest part of the city, sprawling out North from the Loop to Antioch and stretching from the shores of Lake Michigan to the Wall. While not as dangerous as the South and West sectors, North Chicago can put you in an early grave if you're not careful.

ALLEGHANY RAD ZONE

Another epicenter for one of the dirty nukes, this zone is rife with mutants and gangs that make this area their battlefield. In fact, some of the local gangs make it a trial of loyalty to send would-be members through a solo trek across Alleghany.

ANASTASIA'S

Anastasia's is the Global DataNet's answer to the Flesh Pot. Where the latter traffics solely in physical delights, Anastasia pleasures are found in the recesses of the mind. Once a patron steps inside this club, he can choose any avatar he wishes; to represent himself to all other clientele, and you can be sure no one shows his real face. What would be the point? At Anastasia's, it's all about shedding the limits of the body and remolding your psyche into whatever form you prefer. Deep-addicted junkies go here to get their cerebral cortexes directly triggered, turning a few seconds into an eternity of white-hot ecstasy. If you enter without your TAP active, you'll mostly see people lying hooked up to cyber-pods or staring off blankly into space.

ANTIOCH

Aself-named religious subsector, Antioch hosts members of practically every world religion while also providing room for temples, mosques, churches, and countless other places of worship for the spiritually inclined. While there's an understandable tension between various religions that are naturally at odds, there's also a general leaning towards tolerance and respect. The largest congregation by far is found at the Center for Universal Harmony.

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS RAD ZONE

Once a nice little suburb until it got hit by one of the dirty nukes during the Second Civil War, much of Arlington Heights is little more than radiation-saturated wasteland that everyone does their level best to avoid at all costs. Think twice before taking any sort of contract that sends you into this rad zone, since you'll likely be dealing with violent mutant animals, zeeks, and hungry hybrids, not to mention the whole radiation poisoning threat.

AUSTIN LIBRARY

Once a cultural epicenter, the Austin Library is now a bombed-out shell that hosts a multitude of illiterate mutants who have been using scraps from first editions as toilet paper for the last few years. Plenty of clients have sent salvage teams into the library, either for posterity's sake or to add to their private book collections. Given the library's position on the southern border of the Arlington Heights rad zone, such paper-retrieval runs pay well for the higher risk involved.

CARPENTERSVILLE

This older neighborhood has an odd penchant for handmade goods, crafts, and antiques. Many shops here are rundown, if not entirely derelict, but if you're ever looking for a relic from pre-war days, a search through this area's market district is your best bet. The locals are proud of their work, and most families have been rooted there for several generations.

CHICAGO PENAL SECTOR

With the sprawl so rife with criminal activity, the best solution was to designate a thirty-square-mile block as the prison sector and stash all the serial killers, drug ring bosses, and criminal masterminds in one spot, where they could exchange notes. The place is kept on round-the-clock lockdown except for the daily intake processing. The penitentiaries are overseen by Ravenlocke, but there's an undercurrent of criminal activity even within the barbed and bricked walls, fostered by the Mexican Mafia.

FEATHERSTONE NANOTECH

The Chicago HQ for the international Featherstone Nanotech company, supplying the sprawl with all the terrifyingly tiny robots that make for medical miracles, faster food processing, and military applications that we try not to think about too often. They're in pretty tight with Ravenlocke and the Chicago Militia, partly because they need the military defense to protect their premises and keep operations intact. As the use of nanotech is still hotly debated, they continue to have numerous public enemies who would love nothing more than to permanently shut the place down.

CHICAGO NAVAL DEFENSE HQ

A portion of the Chicago Militia is dedicated to keeping the sweeping waterline protected, since it represents the most vulnerable city front. Countless migrants try to swim into shore, smugglers constantly use the beaches as launch points, and that's not to mention the many chimera and cyberforms Nortec and TLI keep dumping into the lake. Launched from both the Naval HQ and the southern pier, the Navy works tirelessly to keep the waters clean and safe.

CHOPPER'S

Who doesn't love cheering when a cyber-enhanced fighter lands a final blow on another, cracking their skull in half? Even better when you've placed your bet on the winner. Chopper's is the most famous fighting pit in the city, hosting nightly bouts that often end up with one fighter maimed or dead. It can take a few years of fighting in minor clubs around town before a rookie gains enough rep to get a chance at dominating the ring at Chopper's.

FOX LAKE BIO DOME

Fox Lake used to be a popular body of water for Chicago citizens to swim in and sail on. After the war, with the consequences of dirty





nukes still fresh on everyone's mind, an industrial coalition was formed to build the bio dome that now protects one of the city's main water-processing plants. Several thousand people also live within the bio dome, maintaining processing operations while enjoying sanitary living conditions of far higher quality than most of the rest of the city. There's a several-year-long waiting list to apply for entry.

GOLD COAST

It's all in the name, ami. The Gold Coast is where all the people with too many cryptos for their own good go to spend them all on the high life. Pretty, shiny people living in their pretty, shiny buildings, far away from the muck and mess the rest of us have to trudge through. They've got access to the finest foods, the cleanest beaches, the best fitness facilities, and the jazziest clubs.

Despite most of the sprawl's borders wriggling like worms stuck on the sidewalk, the Gold Coast has kept itself stable. Once you've crossed Lake Shore Drive, North Avenue, South Divisions St., Areas of State St., or Oak St., you've "gone golden" and better be ready to pay some hefty fees in order to stick around long enough to admire the gleam. Monthly rent for even the shabbiest pads would keep most blue platers in the green for a few years. Easiest way to get into the Gold Coast is to be born there. Even if you rack up enough cryptos, most Coasters throw nasty looks at freelancers with dirty pasts who try to land a pad.

GOLD CITY MEGA BLOCK

Even the 1% has a 1%, and they live in the Gold City Mega Block. Buildings here are usually a combo of living quarters and corp offices, and are so crammed full of amenities you could spend the rest of your life indoors, waited on by sims and server androids. Corporate CEOs live in elaborate penthouses overlooking their invisible empires. This is the golden carrot Chi-town dangles before

sprawlanders, who all dream of someday making that big strike that launches them to the heights.

HUNTLEY

Huntley is one of the temporary living quarter subsectors where thousands of migrants are processed into the city every month. From there, many transition over to the McHenry Industrial Sector for quick employment. The Barbarians at the Gates make frequent sweeps through the area, always eager for recruits willing to opt into a more rustic, fulfilling, and violent lifestyle.

MCHENRY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

This sector is a labyrinth of warehouses, factories, plants, vat farms, cyber mills, and droid shops. It provides one of the larger employment bases for the entire sprawl, drawing in at least two million blue platers to man the pumps, pipes, and vats every day. It also serves as a popular target for drug thugs, and prostitute rings—all ready and willing to give workers a bit of relief during union-mandated lunch breaks.

MORAIN HILLS STATE PARK

One of the few parks in the sprawl that isn't overrun with gangs, it provides a rare oasis for those seeking peace among the chaos of the city—that is, so long as you aren't there when one of many VR domain war reenactments aren't taking place there.

NAVY PIER

Chicago's old Navy Pier is now mostly controlled by Nortec Industries, which uses it to ship in outside resources and staff through a far faster and less dangerous route than the usual city ports. They also rent out pier use to any megacorps who can afford the fees, and the place is stacked high with shipping containers at all times, forming a high-security maze. There's talk of an underwater lab a mile or two off the coast... but hey, talk is just talk until it's proven, ami.

NORTEC TOWER

The administrative HQ for Nortec Industries, this massive skyscraper has secured the world record at 4,367 feet—and lower levels are rumored to plunge into the earth as deep as the tower is high. It is a city unto itself, with lockdown mechanisms in place that can seal it off from the outside world for years at a time. Lower echelons are mostly staffed by the very simulacrum Nortec is famous for producing en masse, and the tower is patrolled around the clock by Ravenlocke security forces. The tower is divided up into sim labs and experimental centers, entire floors devoted to R&D, plus offices, executive suites, living quarters, and rec centers for on-the-premises employees.

RAVENLOCKE NORTH SECTOR HQ

The largest of Chi-town's Ravenlocke HQs, the North Sector base not only has the usual armories, golemmech garages, and squad barracks, but also a massive training center for new recruits, a cybernetics plant, R&D labs, and far more than they'll ever reveal to the public. But, hey, at least they keep the streets safe, neh? So long as it's in their interests, of course.

SERENITY TOWER

A popular executive-level recreation center, the Serenity Tower is four dozen stories of lounges, bars, massage parlors, spas, gift shops, jewelry stores, and other top-quality, luxury stores and services—all of which never close. Corporate types often bring clients and vendors here, treating them to the finest treats and treatments to soften them up for the closing sales pitch. No one gets in without a Serenity Titanium Membership, and no one gets out without spending at least a thousand cryptos (required by the fine print).

THE CULT

This faux-religious club draws a crowd by mocking the clothing, teachings, worship, and ceremonial trappings of the "belief of the week." Employees dress as monks, nuns, gurus, and all other manner of clergy or religious officials, while clients are encouraged to engage in all the "sin" they desire. A real priest is even paid to be on the premises and provide absolution (for a few cryptos) for patrons who otherwise might leave with a soul too burdened by guilt. The drink menu offers plenty of sacramental wine.

MALBRAND CORP.

If it's up for sale, it probably has a Malbrand logo on it somewhere. There isn't an industrial pie they don't have their fingers stuck in, catering to the mass of blue platers that make up most of Chicagoland. Their corp tower has an even bigger footprint than the Nortec Tower, though it hardly rises as high. While it serves as offices and a corporate base, it's also a mega-mart that requires riding automated carts to get through within a day. Some folks even use it for cheap entertainment, treating it like an amusement park they can take the whole family.

THE GLITTER LOUNGE

The Glitter Lounge sets itself apart by being mostly staffed by chimeras and hybrids, which draws a crowd of similarly spliced beings, as well as baseline humans fascinated by such genetic alterations. The shows put on here are a cavalcade of inhuman strength, agility, and endurance, while the food and drink selection is tweaked to appeal to tongues and noses far more sensitive than your average pair of nostrils.

THE HIVE

The Hive began as an experimental community trying to form a more united, peaceful society through the sharing of interconnected implants, TAPs, and VR domains. It is one of the few areas in Chi-town where zeeks and other mental freaks are openly welcomed, so long as they lend their peculiar psychic powers to the ongoing—and growing—social experiment. It's difficult to ever gain entrance unless you can prove you buy into their unique philosophy, and most people find the level of data transparency and lack of privacy uncomfortable, if not disturbing.

THE LOOP

What do you get when you cram every major Chi-town business into just under two square miles? The Loop. This downtown





corporate sprawl is nicknamed the Ant Farm for a reason. But it got stuck with being called the Loop due more to the eternal hamster wheel grind the employees and managers sprint through in order to meet their daily sales quotas. Day-in, day-out, it's all one big cycle of buying, selling, discounts, markups, violent takeovers, and endless cups of coffee and stim-sticks. In order to pack all these people into one spot, the Loop is constantly undergoing new construction, adding yet another skyscraper to the dozens blocking out the dusty sunlight. All of them pale in comparison, though, to the Nortec Tower, which once more puts Chicago in the world record archives for the tallest office tower. More on it later, ami.

Beyond the hum and mutter of the worker drones in their cubicles and offices, the Loop is known for one major thing—offering every service or product imaginable up for sale. Of course, where cryptos are flowing, there are plenty of opportunists. Hackers and fixers abound, looking to make a quick flip.

THIRD LIFE INDUSTRIES ARCOLOGY

Always on the cutting edge of gene cloning, gene therapy, and DNA recombination, TLI has set up a secure arcology to give its employees and lab departments an expansive facility where its evolutionary gene-hacking and splicing work can continue mostly unmolested. No one but TLI knows exactly what goes on inside the arcology (yes, there are always rumors of alien DNA and inhuman beasts being bred deep in their blackout labs). Lately, there's been numerous employee kidnappings and killings orchestrated by zealous religious groups.

WAUKEGAN

Smaller city swallowed up by Chicagoland after the Wall was built, Waukegan holds a rather large blue plater community alongside a dense unemployment population. The only ones who really benefit are the corporate landlords who are constantly raising rents and kicking

entire families to the curb when they miss a single month's payment. As such, Waukegan sees high housing turnover, making it one of the more transitory subsectors.

ZION FOREST PRESERVE

Five miles wide and twenty-five miles long, Zion Forest Preserve not only stands as a testament to biodiversity within the sprawl, but also acts as training grounds for Ravenlocke soldiers preparing for woodland warfare. Dozens of smaller chimera communities hide among the trees here.

SOUTH CHICAGO

Urban Hell summarizes this area perfectly. These are all neighborhoods and cities that, for whatever reasons, have become overpopulated, but failed as desirable places to live over time. Now it's all mostly gangland... Mostly. Some of the corps have set up shop here. Maybe it's because of the low property value, maybe it's because they don't want other megacorps and law enforcement agencies looking too hard at what they're doing here. It's hard to say for sure why they're here, but more than a few peeps have posted Media of strange things prowling the Gary Hell Zone at night.

BURBANK

Tired of gnawing on the same old vat-produced, cloned food blocks? Get on down to Burbank and take your pick of the hundreds of restaurants vying for business. Sure, most of what they serve is the same old foodpaste if you wanna dither about the actual ingredients. But the cooks and chefs in this sector must perform some kind of dark ritual magic in their kitchens, because the dishes they serve will have you salivating for the rest of the day. Top-ranked dives for the week include the Gnawzone, Veggiefreakz, and La Chatte Noire.

CHICAGO HEIGHTS

Did you know this area used to be known as the “Crossroads of the Nation” before the Second Civil War? Funny thing, considering nowadays they might as well have an invisible force field surrounding this neighborhood for as welcoming as they are. Practically every citizen in the area is decked out with weaponry, from fist packs to the latest plasma blasters. And if they spot someone who they decide doesn’t “belong” in their precious protected community, or who might be endangering the peace, they aren’t shy about escorting them out.

DES PLAINS RECYC SECTOR

Most city waste and water gets funneled through the recycling sector, where it’s purified and sent out for another cycle through the mouths of the masses. Most people try to ignore the fact that they’re guzzling their own sanitized waste, and that the food paste in the tube they just bought was in their stomachs a week earlier. The main recycling plant also processes most of the city’s trash and cybernetic castoffs, reducing to elemental components for resale.

GARY HELL ZONE

Welcome to Hell, nakama. All your nightmares of a burnt-out, bombed-out, gang-infested wasteland are realized in this strip of devastation. It’s a zone only the most hardened survivors should ever wander into, as the roving predators (human and otherwise) will make short work of any unwary ronin. At this point, the sector is so bad, no security force wants to even bother with it, which just lets the bodies keep piling up in the streets.

GYG

Business workers, executives, military operatives, and political figures looking to get into Chicagoland without worrying about all the port dynamic can fly directly into Gary International Airport—but the area has its risks. The whole surrounding sector is almost fully gang controlled, so you don’t want to be stuck there for long. GYG is fully walled off to public access, and most travelers use VTOL transport to get from the terminals to the city proper.

BIOSOLUTIONS INC.

CHIMERA subsidiary, Biosolutions Inc. has a minor presence in the sprawl, offering an array of biomedical services and simulacrum production tech. Much of their work is linked to Nortec, and the more suspicious Hashtaggers out there have tried to establish a stronger link between the two corporations, suggesting Biosolutions is just another front for Nortec operations.

KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS ARCOLOGY

The world’s premier cyber-tech developer and manufacturer, KCD has established a thriving business in its Chicago arcology, providing all grade of implants to civilians and military clients alike. This branch is responsible for their more primo streetware products, whereas their gutterware lines (carefully devoid of any identifying logo or registry tag) are handled off the premises.

LITTLE CUBA

Little Cuba is one of the few areas where the Mexican Mafia’s influence is entrenched beyond the penal sector. Here, they’re represented by a splinter group called Muerto 13, identified by the bone-handled daggers always strapped to their bared arms. In fact, the gang’s presence in this Hispanic-dominated community has given rise to rumors about a series of tunnels and prisoner smuggling routes that stretch from this southern portion of Chi-town all the way up to Chicago’s Penal Sector itself.

After a recent rash of prison riots, several big-time crooks went missing in the chaos, while word circulated on the news feeds that they’d been spotted down in Little Cuba before disappearing again. The coordination and resources required to pull off this sort of operation would be staggering, but the Militia apparently gave enough credence to these tips that they marched in and shook down the whole area. So far, neighborhood sweeps have turned up nothing but legitimate storefronts and restaurants, which only makes it more suspicious if you think about it long enough.



NORTEC SIMULACRA PRODUCTION CENTRE

This is the center where Nortec produces its top-of-the-line simulacra. These are the bioforms sold to the highest bidder, custom jar-grown and specialized for individual buyers' exclusive tastes. More labor-intensive and common-build sims are outsourced to its LIVEfacs across the rest of the city. But here is where you go if you're looking for a puppet crafted just for you and no one else.

LOCK PORT

When migrants get signed on by the megacorps and processed through the Plainfield Port, their next stop is Lock Port. This is where they get temporary quarters, a decent vat-grown meal, sanitizing showers, and paperwork finalized for their new lives as Chicagoland citizens. The sector is mostly processing agent offices, trying to help people get accustomed to their new environment with orientation sessions, a few cryptos to get them started, and a map that marks out the sectors they shouldn't go anywhere near unless heavily armed.

OAK FOREST

You won't see a single blade of grass in Oak Forest, much less a tree. The sector is the primary residential area for blue platers who work in the Oak Lawn Warehouse District, giving them a short commute and a decently secure neighborhood, thanks to heightened Ravenlocke presence. The homes and apartment complexes are far from pretty, but they function well enough, and that's all that counts in the end, neh?

ORLANDO PARK LIVEFACS

Another simulacrum vat factory under the jurisdiction of Nortec Industries. Nortec apparently has also struck a deal with TLI for this factory usage, allowing them to produce hybrid life forms and reestablished species that have been approved for public exposure.

RAVENLOCKE SOUTH SECTOR HQ

This Ravenlocke HQ doesn't handle as many live patrols, but acts as the private security corps' surveillance center. It's here that they monitor, record, and analyze millions of hours of video LIVEfeeds, keeping an eye on the many arcologies, industrial sectors, and megaplexes they're contracted to protect. There's enough material in their archives to blackmail half the city!

ROSELAND

What's in a name, ami? Call Roseland by any other name, and would it smell so sweet? Nope, 'cause this neighborhood plain ol' stinks through and through. This place is just one step above Gary Hell Zone, and that's not saying much. Settled by Dutch immigrants in the 1840s, Roseland tried to fashion itself into quite the cosmopolitan community—until the gangs took over. And that's where they've stayed until this very day, looting, shooting, and generally making living conditions as uncomfortable as possible for folks just trying to get by.

THE MAZE

With its snarl of streets, the Maze is one of the more popular areas for JUMP bike racing, road wars, and any other illegal motorsport competition—far enough away from Ravenlocke-patrolled regions and close enough to Gary Hell Zone that no one bothers trying to refurbish the area. Get down there early if you want to get your bets in before the deaths and crashes start piling up.

THE STEELYARDS

The Steelyards used to be the main waterfront industrial center, providing materials import, export, and storage; however, it is currently an unviable location due to its proximity to the Gary Hell Zone. With its cranes and warehouses now overrun by gangs, the Steelyard is now a constant battle zone, with countless corpses shoved into the waters surrounding the docks every day.



WEST CHICAGO

The west side of Chicago isn't as inherently hostile to the average sprawler as the south side is, but it still has its share of rough areas. This is a place you can go to earn some real cryptos, if you don't mind negotiating through the gangs and devastated areas. This area is full of large communities that have grown together over time, like devastated Aurora, or the affluent Naperville.

AURORA BARRENS

What used to be one of Chicago's more affluent areas was drilled back down to dirt during the civil war bombings. Now, it's a patchwork place, with blue platers stitched up alongside more affluent folks who brush shoulders with

starving gangsters—with enough brewing animosity between them all that the Militia keeps a watchful eye should it ever boil over. Its defining feature is the ever-popular Paramount Theater, which broadcasts Deep-augmented films to this day.

CDF HEADQUARTERS

The NAC maintains a presence in Chicago through its control of the Congregational Doctrine of Faith; a religious watchdog group. Their theocratic ideals put them at odds with many megacorps that eschew morality in place of profits, especially Nortec, as they decry the soulless manufacturing of simulacra. As such, the CDF is believed to be behind many of the industrial bombings and sabotage that plagues these ungodly companies.



GALAXY ENTERTAINMENT

Want to get the latest simulation seared straight into your optical nerves? Ready to experience a full-sensory VR domain? Want to spend every last credit you have on the latest and greatest entertainment tech? Galaxy Entertainment is all too happy to oblige. This here's their Chicagoland headquarters, where they produce and develop any sort of media for the eager masses. Movies, Deep channels, digital overlays, and every illegal gutter flick unleashed on humanity... you name it, they make and sell it. This center acts as admin offices, production studios, and even has a subsector devoted to sensory immersion chambers.

CHIMERA ARCOLOGY

The CHIMERA megacorp is globally famous for pioneering simulacrum engineering, making the genetic-manipulation breakthroughs and laying the technological foundations for the many artificial life forms we bump shoulders with and work alongside today. Like Nortec and Third Life Industries, it faces ongoing opposition to its operations, especially from anti-sim military factions or highly religious organizations such as CDF.

To keep scientific progress safe from the ignorant masses and protect its valuable (and often brilliant) employees, CHIMERA built this arcology with high-security housing, entertainment facilities, and social centers. As one of the most powerful megacorps in the world, they spare no expense in protecting their staffing investments, and should anyone be foolish enough to try and take one of their workers for ransom, CHIMERA will go out of its way to turn the would-be-kidnapper into a decisive and violent statement.

ELGIN

Once a small city, Elgin has been subsumed by the Chicagoland sprawl. Elgin has some of the oldest original architecture around, with multi-generational families embedded in the area for nearly a hundred years. Needless to say, there's a lot of pride and general dislike of outsiders.

Hybrids are particularly unwelcome in this sector, and the local reputation has been sullied by a spate of specism hate crimes in the past few years.

THE FLESH POT

Nothing goes at the Flesh Pot, so long as it happens in meat-space. If you're visiting this establishment, you're either going to enjoy the parade of gorgeous, surgically-altered prostitutes, perhaps pick one out of the lineup for a back-room dalliance, or you're heading there to get your own body tweaked and transformed in a variety of exotic options. So long as you've got the cryptos, the Flesh Pot has the right company to keep you warm and tingly all night—or for a few minutes, however long you need. Call ahead for private reservations or for group rates.

HOFFMAN ESTATES LIVEFACS

One of the primary simulacrum factories owned by Nortec, Hoffman Estates LIVEfacs has recently suffered numerous production setbacks due to internal sabotage and external opposition. Seems like every day, this massive clone vat center is the site of another protest group of varying degrees of vehemence and violence. Many point to CDF as the main culprit, given their anti-clone extremism, but no proof has been confirmed.

MEISSNER

Would you believe Orthodox Judaism survived this long, after so much persecution? While many religious communities have settled up in Antioch, Meissner is distinguished by having Chicago's largest Jewish population. It's one of the more insular subsectors around, but so long as they stay quiet, no one's complaining.

NORTH AURORA

Aurora got hit hard in the war, and even though there's been some rebuilding in the area, it keeps getting knocked down by the near-constant local gang warfare. Not exactly where you want to invest in real estate, neh? Mostly, it's an inhospitable stretch that daring smugglers or freelancers use as a shortcut when they want to avoid Militia patrols. It's claimed by the Aurora Angels of Death, one of the more infamous sprawlander gangs.

NORTH AURORA AGROFACS

There's plenty of food around town, but most of it's crap. You've got the North Aurora AgroFacs to thank for much of that. Their accelerated agricultural factory never actually factors in things like taste or visual appeal as it works to churn out and clone enough bland food paste, vat chum, and fake meat to keep the masses from starving.

RAVENLOCKE WEST SECTOR HQ

Ravenlocke makes sure to keep a clear presence in most Chi-town sectors, and the Westside is no exception. This is where they launch all local patrols, transfer criminals to the Chicago Penal Sector, or any number of their unmarked "rehabilitation" centers, and present a positive public face so citizens are assured the private security corp always has their best interests at heart.

CENTRAL CHICAGO

Central Chi-town is a sector of contrasts. Some of the largest megacorps in the plex are based in central Chicago. That, along with the Space Elevator and the Chicago Defense Force (CDF), means heavy security, fast response times, and general more pain and hell than most freelancers are willing to deal with. All that said, there are fringe areas where you'll find some of the hardest blasters and razors to walk the plex. The Lombard projects, Coffin City, and other places will grind you to dust if you aren't careful. The Triads, Russian mafia Tongs and other crime syndicates base their operations in central Chicago where they can influence the city's political and corporate leaders. Tread carefully here ami.

CHICAGO MEDICAL DISTRICT

It's no coincidence Chi-town's largest medical sector popped up alongside the O'Hare Military Sector. Many of the clinics and borg shops here are owned by Ravenlocke or the Militia, giving soldiers and mercs a steep discount whenever they need patching up. Civilians can solicit here, but unless your life's on the line, prices are gonna make you wonder if any cure is worth

BLACK KNIGHT ARMAMENTS

Q and main market for the Black Knight Armaments weapons and armor manufacturing company. Getting ready to make a hit on the nearest corp skyscraper or wanting to push a competitor ronin out of your territory? It's in your favor to stock up here, ami, assuming you've got the cryptos. Word on the street is they're the best in the business, but you should never believe everything you hear. Most of their popularity is due to savvy marketing rather than the quality of their gear. Still, their stock can help you get the job done, and bangers might think twice before attacking if they see you striding along with titanium plate armor strapped to your chest.

the deduction to your credit account. Oh, and none of that "chakra alignment" or other mystic healing bullcrap here. All services are robot or flesh-based. You want some chants and crystals? I know a place in Korea Town...

CHICAGOLAND STADIUM

The original Chicago Stadium only remained open until 1994, having been an indoor sports arena, theater, and community center. In the 2020s, the new Chicagoland Stadium was constructed for similar purposes, through on a far grander scale, and it hosted countless concerts, rodeos, political rallies, and war protests.

These days, this stadium is the epicenter of one of the largest ongoing black market operations in the sprawl. Illegal sim and virtual domains are sold side-by-side with drugs that'll have you foaming at the mouth for a week. Gangs can get their hands on plenty of glitched weaponry, and even the local militia has been seen strolling through in civvies, eyeing the wares. It's all overseen by a woman named Merc Matron who takes a significant cut from the vendors—profits she then uses to fund private security and keep the peace.





CHINATOWN

There's a reason Chinatown clings close to the Loop and the Gold Coast. The Chinese have made some heavy investments in Chicagoland's post-war development, and they're sticking around for good to make sure they see decent returns on their deposits. The Chinatown population keeps the culture thriving with curio shops, restaurants, automated needle carts, and souvenir joints. They've got their fair share of gangs too, but fortunately the mile-long civilian region—the single largest in Chicago, if you'd believe it—at least gives them room to hash out their street-side battles with minimal innocents getting caught in the crossfire.

COFFIN CITY

Twenty-three years ago, architects and city planners, looking to solve the growing problem of over-crowding, delved deep into the guts of the earth and built Eden, an underground LIVEfac unlike anything anyone had ever seen.

They had high hopes, marketing Eden with the catchy meme; "Down is the new up!" Hoping to attract affluent members of society, they spared no expense to ensure the sector was both safe and fun to live in. The place had expansive subterranean housing complexes, agro-domes; even restaurants, media theaters, roadways, EDUfacilities and shopping malls. To top it off, they coded a state-of-the-art AI (Ophelia-9) to handle the infrastructure.

It backfired.

Nobody...well none of the right people...bought into the propaganda. The rich simply preferred to live above ground, as high above ground as possible, and billions of cryptos in development couldn't convince them to move underground. The media feed hyped Coffin City as the wave of the future. Coffin City was supposed to be this slick, shiny sub-sector. Instead, Coffin City devolved into a ghetto filled with some of the worst criminal elements in the megasprawl after the developers, looking to make at least some of their money back, slashed the cost of living space to a fraction of the original price. Personally, I wouldn't set foot in the place... Check that. I'd go down into the coffin if I was being paid. Gotta make your scratch anyway ya can, neh? The place is a death trap Ami, and that's the straight truth.

DOWNERS GROVE

A huge swath of urban sprawl, Downers Grove is a mishmash of housing, industrial factories, and gang hovels that somehow escaped the war relatively intact. It's a popular area for those looking for work, but the concentrated and diverse population makes for a volatile stew of crime. The atmosphere can turn from safe to deadly from block-to-block, so be sure you know where you're heading if you ever traverse this sector.

HOLY CROSS HOSPITAL

Nothing holy about it, ami—unless you mean the patients praying they'll be discharged with all the parts they came in with. The docs here do a good job, don't doubt it, but they're always looking for ways to line their pockets. If you're in to get a nasty gut shot treated, and then a blinger gets shuttled in needing a heart transplant and you just so happen to match his blood type... capisce? In the southern portion of Chicago's Medical District, this is the largest medical center independent of any military, corp, or private sec control.

FUNKY BUDDHA LOUNGE

Better bring a personal air filter when you visit this establishment. Equal doses of enlightenment and entertainment are found in the Funky Buddha Lounge, which purports to hold the city's widest selection of drugs and stims (legal and illegal both). From the moment you pay the reasonable cover charge, you're enveloped in a haze of psychotropic smoke, and if you aren't careful you soon won't be able to tell the floor from the ceiling as you hand over your last credit just to continue floating along a rainbow river.

Every surface is designed to offer a cozy pad for clients to sink into as their latest hit takes hold, while the chaotic color scheme confuses where reality begins and the trip ends even more. They've even got some padded back rooms where patrons can safely sample some of the edgier batches without anyone getting hurt. The place is watched over by the bloodshot eyes of one self-named Guru Bashki, a man of indefinable ethnic background who likes to trap people in long, rambling conversations about "doors of the mind" and the "transformative power of music."

JAXES

Jaxes isn't your typical dance-and-drink dive. Nothing even close, ami, and best you be warned of that upfront for two big reasons. First, you don't want to be the sprawler dumb enough to get lured in here, promised a heaping plate of hot food and easy cryptos. Second, you don't want to work for the sickos who go here for "fun."

Once you get past the cozy front, an incredibly disturbing reality lurks in the back rooms. Want to whip someone bloody? Want to taunt a prisoner while they're tortured to death in a cage? Pay up and enjoy having your most twisted appetites sated. Most clients are wealthy psychos with anger management issues who get off on the pain and suffering of others weaker than them. Everything from psychological to nerve-scarring torment is on the menu, and the club employs the latest in stim-tech to keep prisoners conscious and screaming in agony for as long as possible.

Plenty of folks wouldn't mind seeing the place burned to the ground, and the sociopathic owner along with it...but the dude has the muscle and cryptos to successfully defend against any legal or physical threats so far. Some say he's even funneling Nortec Industries funds to keep things running smooth, seeing as his pappy's the CEO.

KOREATOWN

Don't let the name fool you here. Koreatown is actually the most racially and ethnically diverse sector around. Plenty of migrants who don't have roots elsewhere tend to get funneled into this area, adding more spice to the mix. Vestiges of the original Korean population still exist if you know where to look.

This doesn't stop the place from being a hotbed of gang warfare. In fact, because no particular group can lay a solid claim to the area, it only encourages even the smallest gang to try and take its cut. Practically every gang in Chicagoland keeps sniffing around here, getting into countless scraps, trying to somehow prove they've got the cojones to take and keep control. My advice? Keep your nose out of their business and the Seoulpa rings will tend to ignore you in return. That's how most of the area's denizens avoid getting bullet-riddled on a daily basis.

LINCOLN PARK

City planners have done their best to cling to the few parks this sprawl has left, trying to keep the industrial expansion from taking over fully. Lincoln Park is their biggest success so far, partly because it's so close to the Gold Coast City Mega Block, with the elite living there willing to pony up to keep "their" park looking nice. Just like the nearby beaches, access requires either an annual (1,000 cryptos) or daily pass (100 a head). Ravenlocke patrols and battlebots are a constant presence, but that doesn't stop opportunists from trying to abduct people from the area, since they know it's lousy with CEOs and others worth a ransom.

LITTLE ITALY

Technology evolves faster than we can comprehend. Cities get nuked to dust, one megacorp swallows another whole, but despite the chaos, Little Italy is still the best place to find primo pizza when you need a sauce fix. Sure, the neighborhood is a bit more of a demographic mingle, thanks to the Second Civil War and migrant influx, but the Italian culture has never exactly been known for closing up shop and quietly slipping away, even when technically outnumbered by its new tenants. Two hundred years of Italian settlement leaves a deep footprint here, bolstered by a sense of national pride. The area may not be as wealthy as it once was, but glory days come and go. Aggressive preservation attempts have kept a few landmarks intact, including Arrigo Park, Our Lady of Pompeii church, and the Italian-American Sports Hall of Fame.

LOMBARD PROJECTS

Rapidly constructed in the wake of the Second Civil War when refugees streamed out of newly irradiated sectors, the Lombard Projects now provide some of the cheapest dwellings in the Chicago sprawl. As always, you get what you pay for, ami. Crowded, dank, and dirty, with plumbing that could be described as "fickle" at best, these crammed-together complexes always look like they're just a heavy wind away from toppling into heaps of brick and lumber. Only a matter of time before someone lobs a Molotov cocktail in the wrong direction and the





CHICAGO'S SPACE ELEVATOR

Up and away, ami! The Space Elevator and surrounding Chicago Spaceport is one of the main reasons the sprawl has stayed independent from outside control. A steady stream of workers, cargo, and gear is shuttled along to the orbital station at its top, serviced by space-optimized robots and sims. Being one of only a handful of functioning space elevators in the world, plenty of private corps and nations are willing to hand over fistfuls of cryptos to use our direct line to zero gravity and back.

The elevator itself is like a mini-city, full of restaurants, shops, and even temporary living quarters. At the same time, it's such a tempting target that plenty of terrorists have set their sights on it, hoping to topple the whole pipeline. Guess it's a good thing the Chicago Militia is camped right on its doorstep where they can keep a close eye on potential troublemakers, neh? If you're ever looking to break free from the sprawl, the Space Elevator is your quickest ticket off-planet—assuming you can afford the ride, that is.

whole neighborhood goes up in kindling, taking thousands of families and squatters with it.

MELROSE PARK

A gorgeous strip of heavily wooded lawn, Melrose Park is home to several hybrid and chimera gangs that have bought into the idea of tapping into their animalistic “totems” by sticking closer to nature. Odd thing is, these gangs have proven relatively harmless so far, being more about living alongside humanity (which they no longer see themselves as part of) in harmony. In fact, their guardianship of the park makes it one of the more peaceful spots you'll find, and most nights you can walk its paths without worrying about being mugged—but if you ever disrespect the Spirit of Nature (whatever that means) these gangs revere or significantly damage the trees and brush, you'll become so much plant food.

NAPERVILLE

Some might make you think the only living options in Chi-town are the Gold Coast megaplexes or the slums. Not true! Naperville is a thirty-five-square mile, primarily residential area that has pooled its resources enough to keep most gangs at bay, providing a comfortable, upper-middle class experience for those living there. There are a decent number of corporate offices established there as well, which are more the source of any espionage or sabotage that happens in the area.

O'HARE MILSEC

G'Hare has turned into one big army base, and most of this sector marches to the beat of the military drum. It's HQ for the Chicago Defense Force, and even if you live there without donning a uniform and rank, likelihood is you still take orders from these war dogs, whether you want to or not. One perk of sticking close to the guys with the guns and keeping their boots polished is they tend to return the favor by providing decently safe living arrangements compared to the rest of the sprawl—until the bomb sirens start wailing, that is. United Nations troops are also bunked here, 20,000 troops strong. In other words, ami, do not stroll in there carrying an unregistered weapon (or at least don't get caught doing so) unless you want to bring the full wrath of the rank-and-file upon your head.

SUGAR GROVE

Ravenlocke has grown far beyond the private sec services that made it famous. Not only does Ravenlocke own Nortec Industries, but the corp has become highly diversified, to the point where it even started dabbling in the candy-making business. Sugar Grove is home to one such candy factory, with products being successful enough that they've come under scrutiny for potentially addictive ingredients. A concrete jungle of prefab housing and homeless warrens surrounds this factory.

SUNNY HEIGHTS CONDOPLEX

If you were born in this hellish Condoplex, you've likely spent most of your life trying to escape it. Sad to say, ami, this pit has a nastier reputation than quicksand for dragging people down and suffocating them before they even have a chance to make good. It's like someone took 100 stories of the cheapest housing around and crammed tens of thousands of Chi-town's least upstanding citizens into the same square footage. Gang rule is law here, though which gang will depend on what floor you stumbled into. If you took the Gold City Mega Block and engineered its evil twin, Sunny Heights Condoplex would be the vile result. Its nickname is "The Candy Factory" for a reason, too. Got an itch that can't quite be scratched? An urge you need purged? A lust that must...eh, you get the point. Anything and everything can be bought and sold in this Condoplex, including your sanity and soul.

THE UNDERGROUND

Can't afford to have your implants tuned up in Chicago's Medical District? Want to avoid having to scan your biometrics at Holy Cross Hospital? Get on over to the Underground, the

best-known private chop shop in town. The prices are right (cheap) and the service is stellar (fast and confidential). Just remember they tend to get all their medical supplies by raiding supply caravans, while many of their extra organs and implants aren't grown on the premises, but bought off chrome chopper gangs.

UKRAINIAN VILLAGE

The Ukrainian Village started out as a promisingly peaceful community back when the original settlers established its industrial borders—but it's been all a slide into the gutter ever since. The ethnic Ukrainians who once dominated the population charts have been slowly pushed out while plenty of gangs and criminal hives have replaced the businesses that supported the region. To grind a little salt into the wound, all the abandoned factories surrounding the area have been left to rust and rot. Toxic manufacturing waste has seeped into the landscape and buildings over the years, adding mutants, disease, and large swaths of contaminated earth to the mix.

PORTS OF ENTRY

Looking to make a home in the walled city? Read on for a list of the major entry points in and out. I'm not saying these are all the ways to get in and out of Chicago, but they are the only legal ways in.

HAMPSHIRE PORT OF ENTRY

The main entry port into the sprawl, watched over by Chicago Militia and private security forces alike. Most official migrants are processed through here and given a handful of basic supplies, a TAP if they need it, and a quick orientation session so they can avoid getting killed their first day on the inside.

NORTH CHICAGO PORT OF ENTRY

Thanks to its proximity to the Ravenlocke North Sector HQ, this port acts as a primary military ingress and the port of choice for visiting political and corporate representatives looking for safe passage into Chi-town.

CREST HILL IMMIGRATION ZONE

The second-highest concentration of would-be immigrants beyond Hampshire, the Crest Hill Immigration Zone is overseen by numerous megacorp representatives searching for new labor and particular skills among the rabble. Lucky migrants are often approached with contracts ready for signing, offering them streamlined entry so long as they sign over at least the first ten years of their new lives to one corp or another.





PLAINFIELD PORT OF ENTRY

One of two main ports servicing the Crest Hill Immigration Zone, the Plainfield Port is most often privately employed by megacorps who have successfully rounded up a new crop of employees from the shanty towns beyond the Wall. These are shuttled through to sanitization clinics and undergo employee orientation within their first twenty-four hours of city life. Welcome to the grind, ami.

JOLIET PORT OF ENTRY

The other main port used for the Crest Hill Immigration Zone, the Joliet port is more used by migrants who enter the sprawl without any sort of corporate sponsor. These get no welcoming committee. Just a couple food paste tubes and a “good luck” slap on the backside.

GARY PORT OF ENTRY

The Gary Port of Entry is the wretched sewer the desperate can crawl through to get into Chi-town while dodging official channels. This winds them up straight into Gary Hell Zone, where plenty of gangs and scroungers are waiting with broad smiles, open arms, and sharpened razors, ready to dice up the fresh meat. This port has been subjected to numerous bombings over the years, so even getting through the half-collapsed tunnel is a treacherous option.

I-88 PORT OF ENTRY

Chicagoland does a good job of generating all necessary goods and services its citizens might desire from within, but that doesn’t mean it refuses any trade with the outside world. Merchant runners use the I-88 port for trafficking goods into the sprawl—and this, of course, has fostered a heavily-entrenched smuggling ring that operates within the port’s processing center, diverting select shipments.



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Nav Menu

Free City of Chicago

Grid Lines at 5 miles

Select grid coordinates to expand Source: GlobalDB v.17.2 and ChiBase

- ◆ Info
- ◆ Mark
- ◆ Contact
- ◆ Directions
- ◆ Overlays
- ◆ Data Grid
- ◆ Interface
- ◆ Options

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GAME MASTER SECTION

Running a campaign can be challenging. You have to shoulder the burden of making the world come alive for everyone at the table, and that means doing a lot of preparation. Thankfully, *Savage Worlds* is designed to be Fast, Furious and Fun! *Interface Zero* 3.0 introduces new concepts that help you to build and run a smooth game, but they are written with the Fast, Furious and Fun doctrine in mind.

In this chapter give you everything you need to start running an *Interface Zero* 3.0 game. We'll provide some City and Corporate Trappings so you can quickly flesh out your megasprawl and the corporations doing business there. You'll get some new Hazards to play with, a few new Savage Tales, biohorrors as well as a sampling of various Extras and Wild Cards you can use to populate your world. Keep in mind that this section is just a sample of what's to come. All of the above subjects are expanded on in the Game Master's Guide to 2095.

ORGANIZATION TRAPPINGS

In the same way trappings modify powers, Organizational Trappings adjust groups or places. These provide a consistent theme to encounters that take place in a locale or when the PCs interact with members of a particular group. Characters and situations associated with Organizational Trappings receive a bonus, but

must abide by suggested role play themes. These often also implicitly suggest adventure hooks.

The Organizational Trappings in this section serve as examples. They provide a foundation for some of the more common groups with which the PCs may interact. GMs can create additional Organizational Trappings that are appropriate for entities—especially recurring ones—within their campaigns.

Organizational Trappings have associated game effects and requirements. The primary requirement relates to the size of the organization. Organizational trappings are intended to represent specific size groups and locations. Table 7:1 Organization Size breaks this down with a suggested scope for each size category.

Each Organizational Trapping provides influence for its associated members, in a fashion similar to Street Cred. Influence applies to any Persuasion or Intimidation checks that the Organization's members make while acting upon its behalf. Table 7:2 Influence Ratings provides the recommended benefits for each Tier. Members of a group with an Organizational Trapping gain access to its Resources.

These may be used to further that entity's interests. Resources are deliberately left vague. Availability to associated characters is subject to the GM's discretion, based upon how relevant and appropriate they are to a particular scene. Their scope is proportionate to the Organization's Size.

TABLE 7:1 ORGANIZATION SIZE

SIZE	SCOPE
Local	A single neighborhood
Regional	Known in at least 3–5 major cities
Multinational	Influential in many countries globally
Interplanetary	Outposts everywhere humanity exists

TABLE 7:2 INFLUENCE RATINGS

RATING	EFFECT
d4	None
d6	+1 to Persuasion and Intimidation
d8	+2 to Persuasion and Intimidation
d10	+3 to Persuasion and Intimidation
d12	+1 and may re-roll Persuasion and Intimidation

Typically, Resources refresh between adventures. For example, an organization with a substantial security force could hire new guards when one group became compromised. However, the security agents of a local business are substantially more limited than those of an interplanetary one.

CORPORATE TRAPPINGS

Tor profit companies have their own distinct management styles and personalities that resonate throughout their culture. These extend beyond the field of business in which they operate. Instead, they provide a consistent philosophical approach for their interactions with consumers and other organizations. Employee actions are generally consistent with these mandates. After all, constant surveillance dictates that those who break with them undergo retraining or dismissal.

INNOVATOR

Many corporations grow through their knack for finding new solutions to existing problems. Typically, novel solutions have an economic appeal, but they may have other drives, including social, artistic, or convenience. Corporations that emerge as innovators need to continuously re-invent themselves as well as their products. A steady stream of incremental changes is vital for the preservation of the brand. Notably, some of these changes may miss the mark. When this happens, the company can provide these missteps as further motivation for more extreme change. Consumers tend to have extreme views of innovative corporations, either embracing such rapid changes or despising the entity as purely profit-oriented.

Size: Regional and larger

Influence: d10+

Resources: Innovators have access to the latest tools and the most highly trained experts within their field. They receive a +2 to all skill checks within their business's primary field of expertise to the caliber of these tools. In addition, employees with access to the corporate network receive +4 to Academics, Common Knowledge, or Science checks directly related to the corporation's core specialty.

RUTHLESS

This corporation is concerned only about its bottom line. They undercut and eliminate opponents in the most tactical and economic manner possible. The corporation recognizes that sacrifices must be made for advancement, and it prefers to sacrifice its foes—and occasionally clients—whenever possible. Lower tier and easily replaceable employees and assets also pay in blood upon the altar of corporate achievement. Ruthless corporations maintain armies of attorneys, public relations personnel, and lobbyists to make certain that any relevant government organizations and public opinions remain on their side. Often, they also see to it that laws are written to support their needs. They typically have subsidiaries with completely separate business interests than the primary brand: the face company may make family-fun AR movies while certain subsidiaries manufacture sex sims.

Size: Multinational or larger

Influence: d8+

Resources: Ruthless corporations maintain extensive reserves of well-equipped security personnel, legal advisers, and influencers. They also have the financial assets to rapidly acquire their competitors when that is more efficient than ruining them.

TRENDSETTER

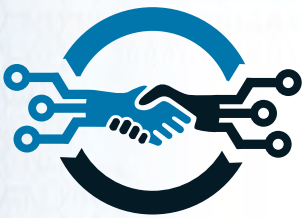
This corporation has a reputation and a mechanism for influencing consumers and profiting from trends as they emerge. While this may include marketing for other corporations and interests, successful trendsetting organizations also link their own products into these efforts. In this way, they become an integral part of the global community. Form is often more important than function when linked to this corporation, as the goods they produce and market are status symbols as much as they are useful devices.

Size: Global

Influence: d10

Resources: Trendsetting companies are capable of elevating or damaging the reputations of other organizations and individuals. Their targets can gain a bonus or penalty to Persuasion, though with the consequence that their names and images become globally recognizable. Any character associated with such a situational modifier also incurs a corresponding penalty to any Stealth checks.





KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS



SAMPLE CORPORATIONS

The following megacorporations are just a sampling of the ones you'll find in 2095.

CENTRAL BELARUSIAN STEEL

Type: Ruthless

Size: Interplanetary

Influence: d8

Resources: Central Belarusian Steel is truly a multiplanetary corporation, with operations throughout the solar system. The corporation is wealthy beyond measure, and the people who work for or otherwise represent Central Belarusian Steel have access to the best equipment money can buy.

Description: CBS is a privately owned company, run by the members of the Orlov family, out of Minsk in the EU. The corporation has a wide range of interests, most specifically in heavy industry, manufacturing, and aerospace technologies. The Orlovs are an odd bunch; they're the scions of old-school European nobility, and are known for their deranged behavior and lavish parties. Most people assume they play up the "crazy Euro-trash" ascetic, since nothing run by drug-addled lunatics gets this kind of power.

Characters who attract CBS's attention will want to tread very carefully, as more than one rival company has been targeted and eliminated by this literal titan of industry.

CHIMERA

Type: Innovator/Ruthless

Size: Multinational

Influence: d10

Resources: CHIMERA has manufacturing plants and laboratories all across the planet, which gives the corporation access to a wide variety of ecosystems from which they develop new drugs and harvest genetic samples to use in hybridization technologies. Bioforming plants are likewise spread across the planet. Those who

works for or otherwise represent CHIMERA are often recipients of Milware quality Biotech.

Description: CHIMERA is the world leader in biotechnology and related industries. This publicly-traded company run out of Brasilia, Brazil, makes some of the world's best hybrid technologies, simulacrum, and pharmaceuticals. They also have a sizable market share in the hard-tech cybernetics world and produce much of Brazil's military might through its many subsidiaries.

Though they make a show of being a compassionate company, anyone who works in the industries CHIMERA involves itself in knows this is a front, and that the corporation is as ruthless as they come. They are also known to be bitter rivals with Third Life Industries, a rival in the bioforming industry.

KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS

Type: Innovator

Size: Multinational

Influence: D10

Resources: Kenta Cyber Dynamics is without a doubt the world leader in cybertech development. With offices and storefronts across the world and online presence on the TAPstream, KCD is a household name. Those who work for the corporation have access to cutting-edge cybernetics, including next-gen Tendril Access Processors rated at Tier 3 and above.

Description: Based in Tokyo, Japan, Kenta Cyber Dynamics is owned and run by Oshi Shinre and Masuki Furakawa. The two are world-renowned for their work in cybertech and neural ware.

Though Featherstone Industries created the Tendril Access Processor, Oshi and Masuki perfected it. Their success has been hard-won, however. Kenta Cyber Dynamics has made many enemies during their rise to the top, not the least of which are the Yakuza.

CITY TRAPPINGS

Every city and neighborhood has its own personality. To some extent, purely physical elements contribute to that personality, including the region's climate, architecture, and design. In addition, the people who live within the region and the organizations to which they belong help to drive the way that members and outsiders interact with one another. Economic factors play a key driver as well. A city dependent upon tourism maintains a better appearance and state of repair than one devoted to agriculture or manufacturing. The community's sense of self-worth may also play a factor in its overall appearance and interactions.

HUB

This region is a core transit location, both for commuters and for goods. Cargo and passengers regularly disembark from one type of transportation, and then embark upon a new journey from here to another distant destination. The constant flow of goods, people, and vehicles leads to necessarily limited government oversight. While policing and taxing these goods is necessary and profitable, there is simply too much transit for oversight to be perfect—even with the assistance of AI, robots, and drones. While few people or materials have this region as their ultimate destination, many deviate and can become lost here. As a consequence, the location may reflect a surprisingly broad range of cultures and goods.

Size: Regional

Influence: d6

Resources: Due to the constant influx of goods and peoples, availability of all materials changes constantly in a Hub. The first time a character attempts to acquire a specific piece of equipment during an adventure roll a d6 and a Wild Die. If the Wild Die result is an even number, subtract the d6 roll from the equipment's availability. If odd, add the roll to the availability value. Keep this same value in effect through the conclusion of the current adventure for all characters.

INDUSTRIAL

Industrial communities are built around refining and manufacturing goods. This process is seldom clean, often generating a variety of different dangerous byproducts. While machines are central to any modern industrial process, most facilities retain some workers to oversee and troubleshoot the process. However, these people must tolerate many environmental hazards in the course of their work. Ancillary businesses are typically associated with the process of manufacturing, including providing maintenance, installation, and construction to the primary industrial companies. These secondary business often lead to further industrial development from other corporations within a limited geographic region.

Size: Regional

Influence: d6

Resources: Industrialization requires a range of raw materials and components in large quantities. Those goods often enter the black market, as angry employees take graft. Efforts to obtain industrial tools and goods gain a +2 to Persuasion checks. This can include explosives, toxins, and related materials.

MIGRANT

People within this community rarely establish deep connections. They are here only for as long as it takes to finish a job before moving onto another location. As a consequence, they seldom have deep ties to the area. Many are highly motivated to move quickly. As a consequence, many demonstrate ethical flexibility when it comes to unusual jobs or responsibilities—especially in response to quick payment.

Size: Local

Influence: d4

Resources: Migrant communities provide an extensive and readily available workforce. These people are typically highly motivated to take whatever work becomes available. Characters gain a +2 to Persuasion checks when attempting to hire someone in a Migrant community.

In addition, Migrant communities provide a convenient place for individuals to disappear. Members of the community seldom ask questions and are usually reluctant to cooperate with



authority figures. Characters gain a +2 to Stealth checks within a Migrant community.

VICE PALACE

This region has a tourism-based economy dependent upon visitors embracing vices that they ignore at home. Typically, this is associated with a legal system that varies from surrounding areas in at least one significant way. Common vices include gambling, sex trade, or pharmaceuticals. Extreme VR experiences, forbidden animals, or questionable cybernetic modifications could also be available to consumers with unusual desires.

Size: Local

Influence: d4

Resources: When establishing a vice palace, the GM must decide what vices are most common within the region. When seeking these, characters gain a +4 to efforts to obtain them through Networking checks. At the GM's discretion, law enforcement may turn a blind eye to such activities. Tangentially related vices—which may remain illegal—gain a +2 to such Networking checks.

SECURITY SYSTEMS

In many Campaign Themes, the player characters spend a great deal of time trying to get into places where they are not allowed to be. Some may have the very best intentions, but few express concerns with the law. Even PCs with legal authority may bypass proper bureaucratic channels when the situation requires it. To do so, the characters need to overcome whatever security measures a location's owner has chosen to implement. This can include basic elements such as locks, but may also include traps, surveillance devices, and even AI systems prepared to notify the authorities of an intrusion.

In many cases, the characters willingly accept injuries as the price of doing business—after all those can be healed. A razorwire cut or a few burns from an acid spray are transient and generally treated as Bumps and Bruises. However, the arrival of authorities or the transmission of a recording of the characters at the location has far more significant ramifications, including potential incarceration. In an effort to avoid such risks, discretion and stealth are often the very highest priorities.

When using *Savage Worlds*, building security systems can be effectively represented using the Dramatic Task system (see the *Savage Worlds* core rules). A single character might overcome the security if trying to sneak into a building alone. Alternatively, a team could each use their specific skills to overcome different elements of the defenses. In some cases, it can even be appropriate for a group of characters to support one another. This section provides some ideas for different security elements and how to integrate those into a Dramatic Task. It also suggests what levels of defenses may be appropriate for different types of facilities.

DEFENSIVE TIERS

Any time the player characters wish to break into a facility, the GM needs to decide just how much the owners chose to spend fortifying that location. This needs to reflect the owner's philosophy, resources, and value that they place on that location. To a certain extent, this is obvious. A rented space in a storage facility is unlikely to have more than a padlock. A nanotech, biological research facility has far more sophisticated measures in place. The important aspect is identifying what types of elements would be in place both in the extreme example and in the middle ground. These need to be proportionate.

The first factor in considering the level of security is the owner's available assets. If a single person owns the facility, then security is proportionate to their personal resources. A single family home in a middle class neighborhood is unlikely to have a full-time security guard or a flamethrower mounted in the door camera. Conversely, a megacorporate research facility is certain to have vastly more sophisticated measures, because executives recognize that the company's future may depend upon the discoveries made at that location. Table 7:3 Security Assets Tier presents Asset Tiers. Note that not every facility utilizes the maximum possible resources available to an organization. Corporate policies might limit security spending or a company may believe that a facility's location or relatively low profile contribute to its security.

The second factor to consider when implementing security is the relative worth of the location. Part of this is a measure of the intrinsic

value of the assets that the facility contains. However, the relative worth of the facility to the company as a whole must also be considered. A warehouse filled with aging paperwork or file archives might not need to be secured, if those papers are simply company records. However, if those archives represent proof of ownership deeds to the organization's holdings, then security could be far higher. A company that has dozens of semi-redundant facilities might place those at a lower value, even if each one contains valuable research information. Table 7:4 Security Worth Tier presents Worth Tier examples.

The final major wild card to consider when designing an appropriate security plan for a facility is the relative value the owner places upon it. If the company or individual's livelihood is entirely dependent upon that facility, then they are likely to invest a significant portion of their assets upon its security. Conversely, if they place little value upon it, then they are less likely to secure

it properly. This could represent a holding that is inconsistent with the organization's core business or a recent acquisition that is poorly understood. Table 7:5 Security Regard Tier presents Regard Tier examples.

DRAMATIC TASK ORGANIZATION

The aforementioned Security Assets, Worth, and Value are all key to configure the Dramatic Task for penetrating the security systems. Add the Security Assets and Worth together to determine the total number of tokens that each character involved in the task must acquire. Then, subtract the Security Value Tier from the total to determine the number of rounds they have to complete the task before security responds, with a minimum of 2.

Example: A three member team wishes to break into the offices of a newly established technology corporation. The small company has limited assets, having not yet released their first

TABLE 7:3 SECURITY ASSETS TIER

TIER	DESCRIPTION
1	Single person of middle to lower class income.
2	Small, local company or affluent individual.
3	Mid-sized corporation, small government, or extremely wealthy individual
4	Large corporation, mid-sized nation
5	Megacorporation, super power nation

TABLE 7:4 SECURITY WORTH TIER

TIER	DESCRIPTION
1	Low security corporate archives, entry level training facility
2	Consumer facing facility, low-risk office space
3	Offices with access to high security data, location with assets easily liquidated
4	High security archives, typical research facility
5	Executive retreat, cutting edge research

TABLE 7:5 SECURITY VALUE TIER

TIER	DESCRIPTION
0	Low worth or liability, inherited or easily acquired property
1	Peripheral facility, expertise outside of the organization's primary focus
2	Part of the owner's future plans
3	Highly prized asset, central to corporate focus
4	Expected to rapidly appreciate in value



product. However, they believe that they have a cutting edge rootkit that could shred through most network security systems. They only have one location, so these offices—and everything they contain—are absolutely central to their future success. Reviewing the chart, the small company gives it Security Assets Tier 2. The location is office space with high-security data, giving it Security Worth Tier 3. The company expects their creation to grow rapidly in value, so they would assign Security Value Tier 4.

Using those values, the Dramatic Task requires an intrusion team to acquire 5 tokens (Assets 2 + Worth 3) per character participating in the task. Since there are three teammates, that works out to be 15 tokens. Unfortunately, they only have 2 rounds to acquire all of those tokens. (5 tokens – Value Tier 4, with a minimum of 2). In order to succeed, the characters are going to need to act fast and have lots of important tools and bonuses ready to assist with their multi-actions.

The GM may adjust these values at their own discretion. In some cases, it may be appropriate to reduce the overall difficulty due to extenuating circumstances. If the organization is trying to keep a lower profile or if the facility receives a lot of traffic, then security may be reduced. If the location is physically isolated, then the characters might have more time to bypass security before they trigger a response team—or that team might simply require more time to arrive.

SPECIFIC MEASURES

In many cases, the GM and the players may wish to explicitly identify the types of security measures that protect a facility. Different types of security elements can lead to different ramifications for success or failure throughout the Dramatic Task. This also offers the benefit that efforts to break into different types of facilities have very different feels for the characters involved. This section presents example security measures, though GMs are encouraged to develop their own alternatives.

PHYSICAL SECURITY

Elements that prevent a person from entering a facility are classified as physical security. In many cases, their obvious nature serves as an effective deterrent to intrusion. When that proves

insufficient, intruders risk substantial injury. Brute force and toughness are often the simplest means to overcoming these types of defenses, though network and social engineering can offer alternative paths to success.

WALLS

Physical barriers are common and range in integrity from a simple chain link fence to dense metal barriers. They may be largely ornamental and only a few feet in height or they can tower over outsiders, creating an air of mystery for what lays beyond them. Characters are most likely to bypass a wall with an Athletics check. Usually a single success is adequate, though there may be penalties if the wall is exceptionally high, particularly hard to climb, or topped with spikes, razorwire, or monofilament wire.

In the event of a failure on the Athletics check, the character suffers damage from falling or the barrier's hazards. A Complication with a wall reveals hidden traps. Failure during a Complication represents the character getting stuck on the wall.

TRIPWIRES

Navigating through hallways or open fields at night can prove treacherous if those areas are laced with tripwires. A simple fall is awkward enough, but often these traps also trigger alarms when they sense motion. Bypassing tripwires is a simple matter of a Notice check for the characters moving through them. Carefully hidden wires or exceptionally fine construction may impose a penalty to this check.

The size of the tripwire field dictates the number of Notice checks required to move through it. A single failure could lead to a tumble that might damage any fragile equipment a character carries. A Complication with a tripwire could be that there are far more of them than previously expected. Failure during a Complication represents the character triggering an alarm after falling over an active tripwire.

AUTOMATED TRAPS

Potentially lethal traps come in a broad range of different shapes and sizes. In each case, when triggered, a character comes into contact

with the assault of a weapon. That might be a rifle, flamethrower, or an axe. The type of weapon and the trigger mechanism are entirely subject to the GM's creativity. In every case, the only way to avoid damage is to carefully avoid having the weapon's detection sensor notice the character. This is usually overcome with a Thievery check to deactivate the trap. Particularly well-concealed or sensitive triggers might penalize that check.

Normally a single Thievery check disarms automated traps. A single failure, however, sets the weapon off. An automated trap Complication reveals that multiple traps share a single hair trigger. Failure during a Complication loudly activates traps throughout a particular section of the complex.

GUARDS

Highly armed guards routinely patrol secure facilities, often wearing the latest in armor and making use of cybernetic enhancements. Such guards are often in communication with one another and with outside security forces, so that they can rely upon quick support responses. The Security Guard extra (see page @@) is generally appropriate for this check. Stealth is the most common way to bypass guards, though some PCs may use Persuasion and Bribery.

A single check can be enough to bypass guards, though if the PCs have to bypass multiple guard stations, it can be appropriate to call for a check at each. A failure could just leave a guard suspicious, and triggering a call for backup but not an alarm. A Complication yields a guard who is particularly attentive or in a more combative mood than normal. Failure during a Complication represents a guard who has successfully called in additional support.

NETWORK SECURITY

Network security represents the electronic and computerized elements that defend a facility's physical and electronic assets. In many cases, AI systems monitor these defensive elements, only triggering alarms under a specific set of conditions. In some instances, human employees may be slower to respond to network

alerts, especially if they have any reason to believe that the intrusion could be a drill.

SENSORS

This general category refers to motion sensors, electromagnetic sensors, pressure sensors, and audio sensors. Each of these different types of devices continuously scan a particular region of the facility for any anomalous results. In most cases, smart algorithms are capable of distinguishing between false positives and actual intruders, but they are not always perfect. Hacking or Electronics are the most common skills to overcome sensors.

A single check can usually bypass any particular sensor, though complex systems may require multiple tokens. A failure might trigger only a single sensor, which an AI or guard might consider a false alarm. A Complication reveals that the system has been upgraded or adds another element that could trigger the system—typically an animal that has entered the sensor's detection range at the worst possible time. Failure on a complication not only triggers alarms but leaves a recording on the system, potentially identifying the player characters.

SPECIALTY ELEMENTS

Some facilities may choose to incorporate more dangerous threats. These could be an intrinsic part of the work done at the facility, or it may simply be a measure of how precious the owners consider the sight. Examples could include defensive animals, airborne contagions, or even radiation. GMs should be careful when choosing to incorporate any of these, as they have lethal potential. In each instance, required skill checks represent a familiarity with the methods involved in appropriately handling these threats. Failure could leave the characters exposed to dangers without even realizing that they were present.



THREATS

The following section provides a wide range of bio-horrors, Extras and Wild Card NPCs ready for you to use in your game.

BIO-HORRORS

CYBER HOUND

Cyber hounds were a wildly successful attempt to graft cybernetics on animals. The hounds retain the loyalty typical to dogs and possess a number of enhancements, such as infrared sensors, steel jaws, cybernetic legs, and a reinforced exoskeleton, that grant them durability, speed, and night vision, as well as a powerful bite. Some cyber hounds come with communication devices used to alert their owners when an intrusion occurs. Due to their capabilities and the cost to add cybernetics to a dog, they are quite expensive.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

Edges: Alertness, Fleet-Footed

Hindrances: –

Special Abilities:

- **Armor (2)**
- **Bite:** Str +d6
- **Low Light Vision:** Cyber hounds ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination.
- **Infravision:** Cyberhounds can 'see' by detecting heat, halving penalties for poor lighting when attacking targets that radiate warmth.
- **Speed:** d10 running die
- **Targeting Computer:** The cyberhound has a +2 bonus to Notice rolls to detect living creatures and a +2 bonus to Fighting rolls.

ELECTRIC RAT

Several hamsters with electric eel organ structures, these menaces were created for a failed marketing campaign. They can discharge low voltage stun from the tail, or a painful high voltage area blast when surrounded. Do not let children approach or handle them.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d4-3, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d4, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Survival d6

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 2

Edges: –

Special Abilities:

- **Electric Bite:** Str+d4. Victims roll Vigor (-2 if hit with a raise) or be Stunned.
- **Electric Field:** Electric rats can use their entire turn to unleash an electric blast that deals 2d4 damage to all adjacent creatures. Victims Shaken or worse must roll Vigor or be Stunned.
- **Electric Resistance:** Electric rats get +4 armor against electrical attacks and to resist electrical shocks and stuns. This protection relies upon skin properties and is bypassed by implants.
- **Size -3 (Very Small):** About eight inches long and five pounds.



FIRE SNAKE

Fumored to be a CHIMERA foray into military bioweapons, fire snakes combine a bombardier beetle's glands with a common rat snake to create a tiny flame spitting serpent.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d4-2, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d8, Notice d10, Stealth d8

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 2

Edges: Quick

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str.
- **Fiery Breath:** Fire snakes breathe exhale fire for 2d6 damage (see Breath Weapons in Savage Worlds).
- **Size -3 (Very Small):** About five feet long, but less than two inches thick.

GLOW ROACH

Glow roaches have been altered through countless generations of high radiation. Glow Roaches are typically 24 to 48 inches long and extremely aggressive. Their name comes from a natural bio-luminescence of their internal organs which is often visible as a faint glow. Glow Roaches frequently attack in large packs.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12 (6)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +6**
- **Bite:** Str +d4
- **Night Vision:** Ignores penalties for Illumination.

J-DOG

This lean, blue-tinted dog has a surface translucence that gives it a ghostly quality; four whip-like tentacles sprout from the dog's shoulders.

Some members of the team responsible for the basp were given another chance to design a creature that could work as an effective guard, paralyze intruders, and wouldn't turn on their owners. The other team members, "terminated"

by their employers, served as an example to the current team, who turned their attention to domesticated animals. They discovered that they could combine jellyfish DNA with that of whippets to create a trainable hybrid with a surprising array of abilities, including the obvious paralytic venom possessed by the jellyfish. The scientists were pleasantly surprised by the distortion of light caused by the epidermal translucence possessed by the jellyfish dog, as they called it. After a few successful trials of the animal, production started on what became known as the J-dog, per marketing's distaste for the word "jellyfish."

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d4-1, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Notice d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 4

Edges: Fleet-Footed

Hindrances: –

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str +d4
- **Low Light Vision:** J-Dogs ignore penalties for Dim and Dark Illumination.
- **Paralytic Poison (-2):** Victim is Incapacitated for 2d6 minutes, twice that with a critical failure.
- **Size -2 (Small)**
- **Tentacles (4):** The J-Dog has four tentacles on its shoulders. It may make an attack with each without suffering Multi-Action penalties. These tentacles inflict d4-1 damage and gain a +2 bonus to grappling rolls.

NUKE RAT

Whether actually caused by radiation or some other source, Nuke Rats have become dramatically larger and more dangerous. These creatures nearly always hunt in packs and instinctively surround foes, attacking with stealth from all directions.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (0)

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str +d6
- **Night Vision:** Ignores penalties for Illumination.



MINDLESS

The mindless are humans infected with an altered strain of the Rabies Virus. The brains of those infected with the virus rapidly deteriorates destroying the memory, personality and cognitive regions of the brain, leaving only the more primal brain stem. A human once infected with this virus tends to have a life expectancy of three to four weeks with gradually decreasing motor function until eventually they die from cardiac arrest as their heart simply stops beating. Until that time, they live only to attack and eat anything that they can.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d4, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (0)

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str
- **Fearless:** Mindless do not have the rational ability to feel Fear or Intimidation.
- **Resilient:** Can take One Wound before they're incapacitated.
- **Ignore 1 point of wound penalties.**
- **Infection**

POLVOSTIM

A bizarre blend of mastiff and octopus, it is unclear if the designers wanted semi-aquatic guards or had seen too much adult anime. They're not alive to explain the inspiration and the labs were apparently destroyed when the tentacled abominations escaped captivity and testing, so the world will never know. Too bad the same can't be said for the polvostim.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Stealth d8, Survival d4

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

Edges: Brawny, Sweep

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Str+d6.

- **Semi-Aquatic:** Can stay underwater for 15 minutes without risk of drowning.
- **Speed:** d10 running die.
- **Tentacle Slap:** Str+d4, Reach 1.
- **Tentacles:** Four tentacles, can make up to two fighting attacks as a single action.

RAPTOR HOUNDS

Raptor hounds are dogs that have been genetically altered with the DNA of Snakes to create a clever and fierce hybrid that is lethal.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d4, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor:** +2: Scales
- **Bite:** Str +d6
- **Infravision**
- **Poison Lethal (-0)**

SCARED-Y CAT

It's unclear what these lynx were modified for, besides nightmare fuel. Larger, smarter, and meaner than the source species, a geneteck pheromone package lets them herd prey and repel predators.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8(A), Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d10, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Edges: Frenzy

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Cartilaginous plating.
- **Bite/Claws:** Str+d6.
- **Fear (-2):** A pheromone package triggers flight responses, forcing Fear checks.
- **Low Light Vision:** Ignore penalties for Dim and Dark illumination.
- **Special:** Special attack.
- **Size -1:** Averaging 50 pounds, scared-y cats are larger than most lynx species.

EXTRAS

ANARCHIST HACKER

The anarchist hacker is the mad genius of The Deep; a pirate, free radical, and terrorist of the virtual world.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d12, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d4, Common Knowledge d8, Hacking d12, Lockpicking d8, Notice d10, Persuasion d4, Repair d8, Research d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** d6

Hindrances: Slow (Minor), Vow (Major), Wanted (Major)

Edges: Batch Edit, Hacker, Jack-of-all-Trades

Cybertech: (Streetware) Tier 3 TAP

Gear: SaltyMalt™ Fried Potato Snacks.

BLOG JOURNALIST

The blog journalist is a self-made media icon trying to talk over and around his competition in order to spread his memes to the largest possible percentage of divers he can. More often than not, his message has an agenda beyond simply reporting the facts.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Athletics d4, Common Knowledge d10, Hacking d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Research d10, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5 (1); **Strain:** 2; **Street Cred:** d6

Hindrances: Curious, Overconfident

Edges: Connections (Media), Famous, Investigator, Streetwise

Cybertech: (Streetware) Tier 1 TAP, Berger-Suisse Ocular Implant (provides Infravision and Low Light Vision, allows up to 1 hour continuous recording)

Gear: Leather bomber jacket (+1 Armor, only covers torso).

BORG THUG

bio replacement surgery is expensive, so most make do with functional cybernetics

purchased from shadowy street docs, but even that can be pricey. Consequently, lots of amputees end up working off the debt by doing “favors” for the first few months after surgery.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d4, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Hacking d4, Lockpicking d4, Notice d4, Persuasion d4, Repair d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (1); **Strain:** 6; **Street Cred:** d6

Hindrances: Mean

Edges: Berserk, Brawler, Combat Reflexes, Cyber Tolerance, Marksman

Cybertech: (Gutterware) Tier 1 TAP, Razor Nails (Str+d4 damage, if an unarmed fighting attack hits with a raise, characters add a d8 to their damage roll instead of a d6), Amplified Hearing (adds a +1 bonus to Notice checks involving sound), Level 1 Muscle Grafts (adds +1 to Strength die, already factored in)

Gear: Assault rifle (Range: 24/48/96; **Damage:** 2d8+1; AP 2; RoF 3), leather jacket (+1 armor, only covers torso), spare parts, toolkit.

BOUNTY HUNTER

Lots of bounty hunters are no better than the suspects they bring in, being more interested in the money involved than in serving justice.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d8, Fighting d8, Hacking d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Research d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Strain:** 2; **Street Cred:** d6

Hindrances: Arrogant, Greedy (Major), Stubborn

Edges: Expert Fighter, Fleet-Footed, Modification Upgrade

Cybertech: (Customware) Tier 1 TAP, Cyber eye w/Flash compensators, Low Light Vision and image magnification (+1 to Notice checks involving sight, cannot be dazed or blinded by flashes, gains Low Light Vision), Tactical Computer (Shooting skill benefit: modifiers to Medium and Long ranged shots are reduced to a -1 for Medium range and -3 for long range)





Gear: Heavy pistol (Range: 12/24/48; **Damage:** 2d6+1; **AP 1:** Biometrics, Increased Lethality), shotgun (Range: 12/24/48; **Damage:** 1-3d6; ROF 1), undercover shirt (+2 Armor), handcuffs.

COP

Sometimes the only light in the darkness, sometimes just a hassle that you could do without, Cops are public employees entrusted to enforce the laws.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d4, Fighting d6, Hacking d4, Intimidation d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9(4); **Strain:** 0

Edges: Sector Cop

Gear: Tier 2TAP, RT Tactical Security Suit, Shock Truncheon (Str+d4) Stun, RT 328t (9mm) Frangible ammo.

CORPORATE-ENGINEERED EXECUTIVE OFFICER

People want the best of the best running their large multinational conglomerate. The board wants someone who is sharp, focused, determined, ruthless, and easy on the eyes. Many modern CEOs are pulled from the genetic material of the company's best and brightest. They are brought up in private orphanages and taught the ins and outs of business from day one. In private schools among their own kind they hone their cut-throat tactics. After a battery of tests and socialization functions, they are unleashed on the corporate ladder, quickly displacing those without their genetic advantages until, at last, one reaches the top.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Hacking d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Research d8, Shooting d4, Stealth d4

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5 (1); **Strain:** 1; **Street Cred:** d8

Hindrances: Arrogant, Greedy (Major)

Edges: Filthy Rich, Scholar (Business)

Cybertech: (Customware) Tier 4 TAP (-3 to enemy Hacking rolls, d10 Smarts, d6 Spirit, d10 Notice, d10 Hacking, d6 Language, d10 Research, d10 Taunt, d6 Intimidation, d6 Persuasion, Wild Die), Level 2 subdermal armor (+4 armor)

Gear: Gyroc pistol (Range: 12/24/48; **Damage:** 2d6; AP 1; ROF 1; +1 Shooting), overcoat (+1 Armor), booster box (master), hover sports car or hover limo

DETECTIVE

Investigators, whether private individuals or police, tend to be a determined lot with a nose for mystery that often drags them in over their heads. Fortunately, most are wily enough to get themselves out of the stinky goo they stepped in.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d8, Fighting d6, Hacking d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Research d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10 (5); **Strain:** 2; **Street Cred:** d6

Hindrances: Curious, Stubborn

Edges: Connections (Informants or Police), Investigator, Streetwise

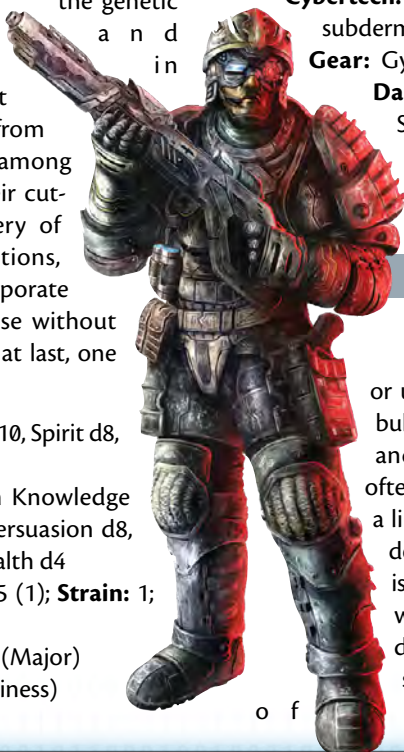
Cybertech: (Streetware) Tier 3 TAP, Level 2 subdermal armor (+4 armor)

Gear: Gyroc pistol (Range: 12/24/48; **Damage:** 2d6; AP 1; ROF 1; +1 Shooting), overcoat (+1 Armor).

For police detectives, add a badge, handcuffs, and an unmarked police cruiser.

EXPERIENCED BORG

Former soldiers (government, corporate, or underworld) make up the vast bulk of cyborgs. Modern medicine and the soldier's own contract often mean that even after losing a limb to an improvised explosive device or mortar shell, the soldier is up and on the battlefield again within a month. Having been decommissioned though, their security firm strips them down of their most expensive gear to



give to their new recruits... If they can get to the borg before he disappears, that is.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d4, Fighting d8, Hacking d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Research d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Thievery d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7 (1); **Toughness:** 10 (2); **Strain:** 5; **Street Cred:** d8

Hindrances: Loyal, Stubborn

Edges: Calculating, Level Headed, Power Armor Training, Soldier

Cybertech: (Streetware) Tier 1 TAP, subdermal armor (+2 Armor), Silicon Bone Injections (+1 Toughness), Level 1 Reactive Reflex Enhancers (+1 bonus to Parry), Cyber eye w/Flash compensators, Low Light Vision and image magnification (+1 to Notice checks involving sight, cannot be dazed or blinded by flashes, gains Low Light Vision monstrous ability)

Gear: Army Surplus Pistol (Range: 12/24/48; **Damage:** 2d6+1; AP 1; ROF 1).

HYBRID ACTIVIST

The hybrid activist has turned inward toward her inner beast for guidance and come away with a nurturing, life-affirming message that love can make the world a better place.

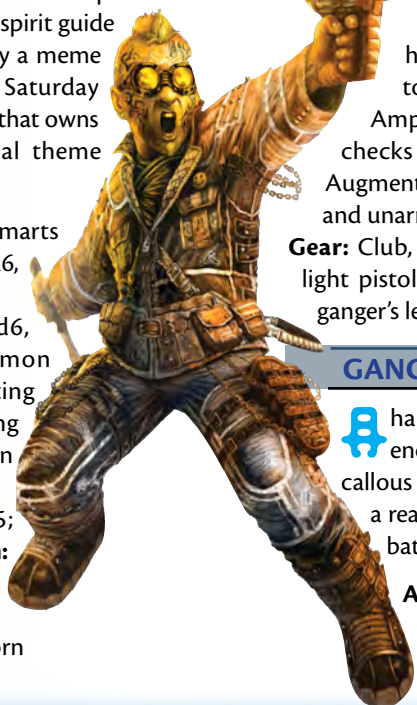
Whether this is her inner spirit guide speaking to her or simply a meme she picked up from a Saturday morning cartoon mouse that owns his own chain of virtual theme parks is still up in the air.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Academics d6, Athletics d4, Common Knowledge d10, Fighting d6, Hacking d6, Healing d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1); **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** d6

Hindrances: Loyal, Pacifist (Minor), Stubborn



Edges: Beast Master, Danger Sense, Quick

Cybertech: (Streetware) Tier 3 TAP

Gear: Armored hoodie (+1 armor [arms, head, torso]), eco-friendly minivan.

Special Abilities:

- **Heightened Vision:** Low Light Vision.
- **Keen Sense:** +2 Notice with hearing.
- **Minor Flaw:** Outsider.
- **Natural Weaponry:** Two claws, Str+d4 each.

GANG SOLDIER

Young punks and hangers on, these ganglanders are only really dangerous in packs. Soldiers do the grunt work of the gang, protecting the street corners and going to war against rival gangs. They're the face of a gang.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Common Knowledge d6, Driving d4, Fighting d6, Hacking d4, Intimidation d4, Notice d4, Persuasion d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1); **Strain:** 4, **Street Cred:** d6

Hindrances: Mean, Vengeful (Minor)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Sweep

Cybertech: (Gutterware) Tier 1 TAP, Razor Nails (Str+d4 damage, if an unarmed fighting attack hits with a raise, characters add a d8 to their damage roll instead of a d6), Amplified Hearing (+1 bonus to Notice checks involving Sound), Level 1 Muscle Augmentation (+1 damage bonus to melee and unarmed attacks)

Gear: Club, heavy (Str+d6), knife (Str+d4), or light pistol (Range: 12/24/48; **Damage:** 2d6), ganger's leathers (+1 Armor).

GANG WAR CHIEF

A hardcore banger who survived long enough picks up the skills, scars, and a callous disregard for life needed to become a real threat. This cat leads the gang into battle against rival sets.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6





Skills: Athletics d6, Battle d6, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d6, Fighting d8, Hacking d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Strain:** 4, Street Cred: d8

Hindrances: Enemy (Minor), Wanted (Minor), Vengeful (Minor)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command, Extraction, Fervor, Two-Fisted, Pack Fighting

Cybertech: (Gutterware) Tier 1 TAP, Standard Cyberarm (the War Chief can carry 6 times his Strength die type in pounds), Storage Compartment, Razor Nails (Str+d4 damage, if an unarmed fighting attack hits with a raise, characters add a d8 to their damage roll instead of a d6)

Gear: Ganger's leathers (+1 Armor), pistol (Range: 12/24/48; **Damage:** 2d6+1), occasionally a vehicle (motorcycle or customized car).

SWAT TROOPER

When Cops need help, SWAT Troopers are the answer. Equipped with militarized gear and special training, the SWAT Troopers are the pinnacle of Police experts.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Battle d4, Common Knowledge d4, Fighting d6, Hacking d4, Intimidation d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11(6); **Strain:** 0

Edges: Sector Cop

Gear: Tier 2TAP, BKI Fortress Riot Armor, Shock Truncheon (Str+d4) Stun, RT 240c Renegade (7.62mm).

ZEEK

It's hard to fit in when you can read other's minds. Your psionics manifested in elementary school. It was a slow process but, over the years, you started acing the tests because you just knew the answer. You knew what kids liked you and who didn't, sometimes leading to an inadvertent "accident" in the school hallways between classes. It was never your fault... until it was.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d4, Common Knowledge d6, Notice 4, Persuasion d4, Psionics d6, Stealth d4

Hindrances: Clueless, Stubborn

Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Power Points

Powers: Bolt, Fear, Mind Reading

Power Points: 15

Cybertech: Tier 1 TAP (no penalty to Hacking rolls, d4 Smarts, d4 Hacking, d4 Notice)

Gear: Leather jacket (+1 Armor)



ROBOTS

MK XII BATTLE-BOT "OBLITERATOR"

The Act of God Armaments MK XII Battle-Bot was originally manufactured to aid in the FEMA efforts in the dawn of the second American civil war. These 10 foot tall autonomous combat platforms were said to be as valuable as an entire brigade of soldiers.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d12 + 2, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics, d8, Fighting d10, Notice d6, Shooting d10

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 15 (6)

Edges: None

Gear: Heavy Machine Gun: Range 50/100/200; Damage 2D10; AP 4; ROF 3. TAP Tier 4 IDS

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +6**
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being shaken; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; does not breath or suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear effects and Intimidation.
- **Night Vision:** Ignores penalties for Illumination.
- **Size:** 2
- **Very Resilient:** Can take two Wounds before they're incapacitated.



RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES ECHELON SECURITY ROBOT

The Echelon Security Robot was manufactured to assist in quelling civil unrest, unfortunately putting AI controlled autonomous robots in charge of controlling civilians caused even further unrest.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics, d8, Fighting d10, Notice d6 + 2, Shooting d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (4)

Edges: Alertness

Gear: Stun Gun: Range 5/10/20; **Damage:** Stun, ROF 1 (Victims must make a Vigor roll at -2 or be stunned) (Knockout Gas: Releases knock out gas in a Large Blast Template centered on itself) 5 Doses, Shock Pads: Range: Melee, **Damage:** Stun. Touch Attack. Victims must make a Vigor roll at -2 or be stunned, Tier 4 IDS.

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4**
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being shaken; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; does not breath or suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless:** Immune to Fear effects and Intimidation.
- **Night Vision:** Ignores penalties for Illumination.
- **Size:** 1
- **Resilient:** Can take One Wound before they're incapacitated.



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RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES CARCELERO

The Carcelero is an automated solution to the tedium and expense of human perimeter guards, especially for prisons. An intimidating 6' 8" tall, the Carcelero is armed with an integral automatic shotgun on the left arm and a 30mm grenade launcher on the right shoulder. The armaments can load non-lethal ammunition (bean bags and tear gas) or lethal ammunition, at the operator's choice.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8(A), Spirit d4, Strength d12+1, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d4, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 13(4)

Edges: Alertness, Steady Hands

Gear: Shotgun arm (Range 12/24/48, Damage 1-3d6, RoF 2), 30mm grenade launcher (Range 24/48/96, Damage by grenade, RoF 1). Tier 4 IDS.

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4**
- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; does not breathe or suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless:** Carcelero are immune to Fear and

Intimidation, but may be smart enough to react to fear-causing situations aptly.

- **Night Vision:** Sensor packages ignore penalties for Illumination.
- **Size 2:** Bigger than most humans, the Carcelero weighs over 400 pounds.

URBAN PUNK RAVE REAVER

Urban Punk makes nearly everything, and the Rave Reaver is their premier humanoid combat robot. Limited AI allows use in complex environments, sensors ensure target recognition in any weather and most nightclubs, integrated weapons are always ready to rock, and the stylish aesthetics make it welcome almost everywhere.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d10, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Shooting d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 11 (3)

Edges: Alertness, Rock and Roll!

Gear: Arm blade (Str+d6+1, AP 1), rotary cannon arm (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d10, RoF 3, AP 4, minimum RoF 2). Tier 4 IDS.

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +3**



- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; ignores 1 point of Wound penalties; does not breathe or suffer from disease or poison.
- **Fearless:** Rave Reavers are immune to Fear and Intimidation, but may be smart enough to react to fear-causing situations aptly.
- **Leaper:** The legs are designed for room-clearing leaps. Double jumping distances, and a Wild Attack after a jump (at least 1") does +4 damage instead of +2.
- **Night Vision:** Sensor packages ignore penalties for Illumination.
- **Size 2:** Bigger than most humans, the Rave Reaver weighs nearly 400 pounds.
- **Stomp:** Str+d6.

WILD CARDS

OVERBORG GLADIATOR

Bulking, armor-plated misanthropic outcasts with a grudge against society, cyborg pit-fighters that go this far "overborg" tend to solve problems with their hammer-like fist as their 'ware starts taking a toll on their already unstable psyches.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Athletics d10, Common Knowledge d4, Fighting d10, Intimidate d8, Notice d4, Persuasion d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 8 (2); **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 14 (3); **Strain:** 7; **Street Cred:** d10

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Can't Swim, Death Wish, Mean

Edges: Berserk, Block, Brawny, Two-Fisted

Cybertech: (Milware) Tier 1 TAP (no penalty to Hacking rolls, d4 Smarts, d4 Hacking, d4 Notice), 2 Cyber arms w/concealed weapon mount on each (war hammer, Str+d6; assault rifle, 12/24/96, 2d8+1 damage, AP 1, RoF 3, can carry 8 times her Strength die type in pounds), Tactical Computer (the character can make a Notice check as a free action. Success indicates the character has found a weak spot in his opponent's defenses and gains a +1 to Fighting rolls for that round only), Level 2 Tension Springs (+2 to the characters Pace), Level 3 subdermal

armor (+3 Armor, only covers torso), Silicon Bone Injections (+3 Toughness)

Gear: Cybernetic toolkit, scavenger's trench (superior, +3 Armor).

GANG LEADER

The leader of a gang is a calculating individual, ruling as much by cunning and ingenuity as by force. After all, he (or she) didn't rise to the top of the gang's food chain by charisma alone. Protected by soldiers and lieutenants, the leader of a gang only puts himself in danger when going to a high-level meet with other gangs or it's time to go to war.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d10, Battle d10, Common Knowledge d8, Driving d8, Fighting d10, Hacking d4, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d10, Shooting d12, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 11 (5); **Strain:** 6
Street Cred: d10

Hindrances: Enemy (Major), Wanted (Major), Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Brawny, Command, Combat Reflexes, Natural Leader, No Mercy, Packfighting, Streetwise, Tactician, Two-Fisted

Cybertech: (Gutterware) Tier 1 TAP (no penalty to Hacking rolls, d4 Smarts, d4 Hacking, d4 Notice), Level 2 subdermal armor (+4 armor), Refurbished retractable blades (Str+d4, AP 2, character never counts as unarmed, if an unarmed fighting attack hits with a raise, character adds a d12 to their damage roll instead of a d6 and gains AP3)

Gear: Ganger's leathers (+1 Armor), pistol (Range: 12/24/48; **Damage:** 2d6+1), occasionally a vehicle (motorcycle or customized car).

MAXIMUS

No individual or corporation has come forward to admit that they performed the procedures on Maximus though Ravenlocke Securities has posted a reward for information in this area. Maximus is a heavily augmented gorilla. While extremely intelligent for an animal, Maximus is better described as cunning and instinctive than intelligent.





Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12, Vigor d12 + 1

Skills: Athletics d12, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 16(2); **Strain:** 14

Edges: Berserk, Rock n Roll

Gear: Implanted Weapon: Range 15/30/60; Damage 2D8; AP 4; ROF 3; Shots 90.

Cybertech: Gxarha Izbhamu Smartgun System, Kenta Cyber Dynamics Dreadnaught, Weapon Implant, Ranged (2D8, +2 ROF, Strain 5)

RAVENLOCKE COMMANDER HARLOW BLACKBURN

Commander Harlow Blackburn has been with Ravenlocke for over 20 years and is their head field commander. He has passed up numerous promotions that would have put him in the administrative arm of the company but he likes it in the thick of battle.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Battle d10, Common Knowledge d10, Fighting d8, Hacking d4, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(4); **Strain:** 6

Edges: Command, Command Presence, Hard to Kill, Hold the Line, Strong Willed

Gear: TAP (IDS: 4, PAN: 4), RT Tactical Security Suit (Armor 4), RT 328t Vengeance, RT 444t Scythe, 3 Stun Grenades.

Tech: Bastion Cybertech Hi Power Self defense Cyberlimbs, Gxarha Izbhamu Smartgun System

SWORD SAGE (WILD CARD)

practitioner of an ancient martial technique, the sage makes fighting look like ballet.

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d12, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d12, Healing d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Stealth d10, Thievery d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 10; **Toughness:** 7 (1); **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** d10

Hindrances: Enemy (Minor), Heroic, Pacifist (Minor)

Edges: Acrobatic, Alertness, Ambidextrous, Improved Block, Improved Dodge, Improved Nerves of Steel, Quick, Street Samurai, Two-Fisted

Cybertech: Tier 3 TAP (-2 to enemy Hacking rolls, d8 Smarts, d8 Hacking, d8 Notice, d8 Research, d8 Taunt)

Gear: 2 Chinese swords/jian (superior, Str+d8, +1 Fighting), padded training robe (+1 Armor), backpack, straw sandals.

SWAT COMMANDER

SWAT Commanders are the minds behind the fist that is the SWAT Troopers.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d6, Battle d6, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d6, Hacking d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11(6); **Strain:** 2

Edges: Command, Sector Cop

Cybertech: Gxarha Izbhamu Smartgun System


Gear: TAP (IDS: 2, PAN: 1), BKI Fortress Riot Armor, Shock Truncheon (Str+d4) Stun, RT 240c Renegade (7.62mm)

GAME MASTER SECTION




SAVAGE TALES

A SIMPLE DELIVERY

 You get a job offer through the usual channels; a real milk run according to your contact. The pay is fine for such a simple job, 500 cryptos each. All you have to do is pick up a package from a drop and take it to another drop. You don't even have to talk to anyone, much less shoot them.


A Note to the GM: This adventure involves two criminal organizations with means and history. The exact names of these have been left open so that you can slot in ones that fit your campaign. If you don't have any determined, the sender is a Mafia family and the receiver is a Tong society.

THE PICK UP

 As befits a milk run, the pick-up is easy. A nearby maglev terminal serving as the cross transportation hub for the region might be a public place, but that means an ambush there should be ruled out. Security is as expected, some rent-a-cops, a handful of actual LEOs wandering around, cameras and scanners. As long as no one is bringing in concealed firearms or explosives – or worse, making themselves obvious – there should not be a problem.

The package is in locker 3045-D, and the characters have the key card and code. The package itself is a meter square box of smooth green plastic that has been heat welded shut, wrapped in gaudy 'happy birthday' paper. There is no way to get it open, save taking time to carefully chip away at a seam (a Repair roll at -2 leaves no trace, failure means tampering is evident, and a critical failure ruins the box so it can't be closed again). There is a note taped to the box that it should not be taken through scanners. Thankfully, all the scanners at the terminal are focused on people coming in. There are spot scans being conducted by bored security, but they should be easy to avoid.


THE DROP OFF

 The drop off is a good four hours away by public transportation, five hours by car (keep in mind that anyone entering a public transportation terminal is going to be scanned).

The site is inside an office building serving small service orientated businesses, such as lawyers and accountants. Security here is lax, a scanner and two security guards at the front door, a guard station in the lobby, cameras covering all floors and a camera in the alley behind. The first floor has a small cafeteria that serves reheated prepared meals, and has its own access door off the alley. There is also a loading dock in the alley; it has a security guard posted there.

The package is to be taken to the 15th floor and handed off to the receptionist working for Helman, Duly, Jobi, and Kark, Attorneys at Law. Once that task is complete, the characters are to contact the go between who hired them and collect their pay. Just a nice, simple delivery.


WHAT HAPPENS IN BETWEEN

 Word has gotten out that a valuable item is being transported. Worse, the sender's criminal organization does not want this message delivered – the boss is aging and starting to lose his grip. A gang war is not what anyone wants; settling old scores from your deathbed is not good for business.

There are two groups looking to intercept the package. The sender's daughter has sent her most trusted associates to stop the characters and take the package from them. They are ordered to use subterfuge first, negotiate second and finally bring out the heavy ordinance, as long as the package never reaches its destination or goes off.

The other group is a small gang of fashion gangers, the 87th Street Dreads. These gangers—dressed like sci-fi cops from last century have no idea what is in the box—just that it is something valuable enough to require special couriers. They come at the characters in force if the opportunity exists; a car ramming and gun fight should suffice, but a quick ambush works just as well.

WHAT IS IN THE BOX?

 Inside is a small bomb. The characters are the unwitting patsies chosen to deliver a warning from one crime boss to another. It is a simple affair, a timed fuse wired to a pound of homemade plastic explosive. It is set to go off six hours after the box is picked up. A simple scan of the box will reveal what is inside, but not how long is on the timer. If it goes off, it inflicts 4d10 damage to everyone within 50 feet. It should be





noted that even homemade plastic explosives are fairly stable; it takes an electrical charge or, at worst, a high kinetic impact to set the bomb off. However, too much jostling might just speed up the timer...

FALLOUT

If the package is delivered, the bomb goes off. The characters are on video bringing it in to the office, and can be backtracked through surveillance to the locker where they picked up the package. Not only will the authorities peg them as terrorists or part of a criminal network; but the target survives the attack, and her enforcers have a few questions they want answered.

LONG LIVE THE QUEEN

This adventure is designed for a group of Novice Rank characters, though you can easily scale it for higher ranked or larger groups. The PCs are hired to plant combat tactical algorithms in The Queen of the Hive, orbiting Jupiter. But things are not what they seem.

BACKGROUND

The Hexagonal Universal Node Installation, more commonly called the Hive is technically overseen by 79 Wings and Director Zhang Jinping, but it's The Queen who manages the miners (called HUNIs). Director Jinping is skeptical of The Queen's growing influence over the miners. He fears they respect the soulless AI rather than the Mandarinate, who actually pays their (meager) wages. 79 Wings has taken interest in Europa, as Director Jinping knows of the microbial life found there and its implications. He also has heard rumors of miners using their own wages to set up defensive weaponry around the Hive to protect their Queen. Before he can move on Europa, he must deal with the growing internal threat to his authority.

A ROYAL INVITATION

The party is approached by an attractive, though simple-dressed Mandarinate woman named Zhi Ruo. Zhi claims to be a miner at the Hive, currently on leave from her duties. She informs the party of the miners' worries

regarding the safety of The Queen, and how they began constructing anti-ship weaponry along the perimeter of the Hive a few months back to protect the AI from rival political factions like CHIMERA and Stopwatch.

There's just one problem: The Queen isn't programmed with combat tactics or weaponry skills. The miners have to rely on default gunnery programming and, since they couldn't afford much, it isn't adequate compared to their adversaries. The alternative is for the miners to man the guns themselves, but they're paid for unskilled labor; there aren't many soldiers in their ranks.

The solution is for The Queen to get an upgrade. The PCs are given a micro-flash drive containing over 2,000 space-combat simulations, complete with ship maneuvers and targeting algorithms. With this data jacked into her, The Queen can turn the Hive into a veritable space station of mass destruction. She would prove impenetrable to the forces of CHIMERA and Stopwatch, allowing the miners to relax and do the one thing they're good at—mining the subatomic particles that manage to escape Jupiter's gravity.

Zhi Ruo will offer to pay an appropriate amount of cryptodollars for the job, half up front and half once it's complete. Should the party haggle, she'll attempt to raise the backend value since she doesn't plan on the party getting paid it anyway. She also has extra mining uniforms and can upload a digital ID to their TAPs, which will aid the party moving about the Hive unmolested. Note: if any PC has the Unplugged Hindrance, Zhi can offer a physical ID, but this is guaranteed to make the ruse harder to pull off. Upon arrival, Unplugged miners are outfitted with TAPs by 79 Wings, which provide direct and constant communication with The Queen (and 24/7 monitoring by 79 Wings to ensure workers are constantly working).

BEHIND THE SCENES

Zhi is a Mandarinate honeypot agent, reporting directly to the Wings 79 Director. She'll eagerly flirt with any PC (man or woman) who shows even a hint of romantic interest. If asked why the miners can't perform the upgrade themselves, she'll state that the central server room containing The Queen's control boards

within the Hive are barred to the miners at the direction of Director Jinping. Being the lowly miners they are, they don't have the skills necessary to bypass a couple of bio-locks. Zhi hopes to flatter the PCs into being unsuspecting.

If the PCs want to verify the code on the micro-flash drive, they can attempt to do so with a Hacking check. The Micro Flash Drive has a Tier 3 IDS. A failure reveals the code for what Zhi claims it to be. A success verifies the code for what Zhi claims it to be, but shows something else is hidden within it. A raise reveals that the code contains not only tactical and weaponry algorithms, but also a virus intended to wipe The Queen's sense of self and replace it with complete obedience to Director Jinping.

ZHI RUO (WC)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d8, Common Knowledge d6, Fighting d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5; **Strain:** 2; **Street Cred:** d6

Hindrances: Overconfident, Ruthless (Minor)

Edges: Charismatic, Quick, Very Attractive

Cybertech: (Customware) Tier 2 TAP, amplified optics (Infravision and Low Light Vision)

Gear: Baton (Str+d4), Pistol (2d6+1)

ABOARD THE HIVE

The Hive is a mining colony of approximately 500,000 people. Roughly $\frac{3}{4}$ of those are miners, and the rest cater to the miners' needs—shopkeepers, bartenders, prostitutes, and the like. Despite its size and orbiting Jupiter, the colony has something of a wild west feel to it. That is, of course, if the American west had cameras all over the place being monitored 24/7 by The Queen.

The mining work is performed on six nodes connected by hundreds of 40-80 mile long tunnels to the main hub. Similar, though curved, tunnels connect each node to the two adjacent to it, so that the six nodes surround the hub of the Hive, with countless tunnels running from each node to different subdivisions of the main hub. These tunnels exist so that miners from each subdivision can get to their work assignments without having to travel within the main hub itself. Most miners

only ever exist within two areas: their home subdivision, and their assigned node.

Each node can accommodate up to 50,000 miners at a time. The miners work in 16 hour shifts for 4 days, then have a 3 day weekend. Bullet trains run through the tunnels, ensuring quick commutes to and from work. The hub, a gigantic cube, resembles a typical urban sprawl. Dinky apartments are built on top of dinky apartments, which in turn rest on dinky brothels. The first floors of each apartment sprawl are dedicated to the bars, restaurants, and assorted shops, while the remaining 99 floors are dedicated to studio apartments. The Hive is new enough that most of the tech still works but, when a door lock goes out, 79 Wings doesn't care enough to fix it. As such, it's not uncommon for doors to be jammed shut or, in the reverse, refuse to close.

There is a port at the hub for the PCs to dock. Their IDs will be verified by 79 Wings security. Any Unplugged PC will be given a great deal of scrutiny but is cleared after a call to Command. This is because 79 Wings is actually in charge of this operation and, though the average guard is unaware of the plot, their superiors are under orders to let through new miners without much delay. Other miners may stop the newcomers and inquire about where they're from. As the group draws closer to The Queen, this is more likely to occur and the questions are more probing.

The biggest obstacle to completing the mission will be The Queen herself. Unbeknownst to Director Jinping, the miners already interfaced their Queen with much of the weaponry they've installed inside the Hive. They were concerned not only about Stopwatch and CHIMERA, but 79 Wings as well (and rightly so, as it turns out). Unfortunately for the PCs, The Queen has no clue who they are and assumes them to be 79 Wings agents (which they unwittingly are). Before attacking, she will attempt diplomacy.

Appearing digitally through the PCs' TAPs, The Queen favors the appearance of a matronly grandmother with a scarf over her head, thick rimmed glasses, and a long floral pattern dress. However, she can project any form she wants and has been known to take many others. Particularly when wanting to project power and authority, she might project something more imposing. The Queen can communicate with Unplugged characters through speakers placed throughout





the Hive's walls. She informs the PCs that she has no clue who they are or what mission they're on, and they should leave and confirm their sources. If the PCs continue towards The Queen's server room, she'll lock the doors. If those are hacked (or somehow forced open), she resorts to force with two anti-personnel turrets. The PCs can hack the turrets to steal control of them from The Queen.

ANTI-PERSONNEL TURRETS

Range 20/40/60; Damage 2d8; AP 3; Shots 50; Tier 1 IDS

By the time the PCs reach The Queen's server room, she has called on nearby miners to come aid her. The miners aren't natural fighters, but will defend their queen if necessary. Attempting diplomacy, they first implore the PCs not to hurt their beloved Queen.

MINER (EXTRA)

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Athletics d4, Common Knowledge d6, Notice d4, Persuasion d4, Stealth d4

Pace: 6, Parry: 2, Toughness: 4

Weapon: Baton (Str+d4)

SUCCESS

By this point, the PCs should be skeptical of their mission. They can upload the data from the micro-flash drive, which will erase The Queen's existing personality, overwriting it with one loyal to Director Jinping. The Director doesn't leave loose ends, so the remainder of the Hive's weaponry will turn on the PCs, a now-evil Queen taunting them as they make their escape. Alternatively, they can attempt another Hacking check (or a first if they haven't done so yet), to uncover the data's true nature. If they're onto Director Jinping's plan, they'll need to work with The Queen to find a way to protect her from his influence. However, if they killed any miners, that will complicate their relationship with the AI.

It's likely the PCs will need to address 79 Wings at some point during this adventure. For Novice rank characters, going after Director Jinping directly is going to be difficult, though it can be attempted. They can also contact Zhi again, and attempt to

use her as a way to get to others within 79 Wings. They also might work with The Queen to attempt a ruse and convince Zhi (and therefore Director Jinping) that their mission was a success. However, this also means 79 Wings agents may hunt down the PCs to wrap things up. So it goes.

JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE OFFICE

Linda Donovan, head of Human resources Acquisitions for Featherstone Nanotech Chicago, has made an offer of employment to Dr. Richard Woo Lin, a lead engineer at Kenta Cyber Dynamics Chicago. Dr. Lin has accepted the offer. Now he simply has to submit his resignation and relocate to his new job. There are a few small catches though. Like many Arcology residents, he has signed a life contract with Kenta Cyber Dynamics from which they are not willing to release him. Also, Dr. Lin has agreed to bring with him, his latest research. This is where the adventurers come in.

AN OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT.

One of the adventurers receives an incoming video call on Tuesday evening. On the other end is a slick, well-dressed man in his mid-thirties. "Good evening, I am William Flanagan, perhaps you have heard of me?" After a brief pause and a look of disappointment, he continues. "My employer would like to speak with you concerning a temporary contract of employment. The work is expected to be completed within one week. Meet her tomorrow night at 10PM at the Lunatic's Fringe. Ask for Ms. Smith." William doesn't offer any further information. If the adventurers ask for directions to the Lunatic's Fringe he replies, "Find it".


William Flanagan is an up and coming fixer with a growing reputation. Word on the streets is that he has successfully brokered a few jobs for the Mega-corps in Chicagoland.

THE GARY HELL ZONE

The Lunatic's Fringe is dead center in the middle of the Gary Hell Zone. Getting there could be an adventure in itself. No public transportation goes into the Gary Hell Zone. Taxis will refuse to go. The adventurers have several

options on how to get there. They could use some street cred with ganger contacts to arrange an escort. They could use VTOL transportation to fly above the gang war zone. Otherwise, either on foot or in personal vehicles, they can expect some challenge in getting there. In personal vehicles insert an encounter with a gang or a Biohorror. On foot, have the adventurers perform three Stealth checks, any failures results in an encounter with a gang or BioHorror.

THE LUNATIC'S FRINGE

 At last, you have arrived at your destination. The Lunatic's Fringe is immediately underwhelming. The building looks like it used to be the center building in a strip mall but the rest of the mall has been blasted away. Most of the wreckage from the former mall are missing, either used as construction materials to maintain other buildings or as weapons in the everlasting gang war. The front of the building has an unlit Neon Sign proclaiming, "Ned's Pool Hall". Painted on the wall beneath it is "The Lunatic's Fringe". At the door, a towering bull hybrid with a chain-wrapped baseball bat is checking for weapons.

Have Neil, the bouncer, perform a Notice test (d8) on each character, applying the conceal mod for any weapons that they are carrying. Anything that he notices, he will drop through an oversize mail slot behind him and say, "Get a ticket inside".

Inside, music is hammering from cheap speakers over the din of a full bar. To the left of the door, inside a steel cage, a man offers each of you a ticket for any weapon that was confiscated. The inside of the bar looks only marginally less a war zone than the outside. The bar is full shoulder to shoulder with various street types as are the scattering of tables. You are surprised to see that several of the gangs represented in the building are in open war with one another yet inside, they are only cautiously eyeing one another. When you mention Ms. Smith to the pink haired, tattooed lady bartender, you are directed to a door at the back of the bar. An armed and obviously augmented bouncer stands at the door and lets you in once you mention Ms. Smith again.

The back room of the bar is amazing in its contrast to everything you have seen so far. The harsh noise from the bar is silenced as the door is closed. The room is decorated in what appears to be wood with comfortable leather chairs around

a large mahogany table. A small private bar stands at the far side of the room, outside of comfortable hearing range from the table. A waitress greets you and asks for drink orders as you enter. At the head of the large table sits a woman in corporate attire to her right is a cyber augmented man with a sub-machine gun. To her left is a man also dressed in corporate attire.

The corporate man stands and motions the adventurers to be seated. Once you are seated, Ms. Smith says, "Welcome. Thank you for coming. Let me get right to business. My company would like to hire you to assist in a transfer of personnel. Dr. Richard Woo Lin will be leaving his current employment at Kenta Cyber Dynamics here in Chicago and will be working for my company. We would like to hire you to pick him up from Kenta and bring him here. Dr. Lin has decided to be in the east visitor center Sunday night at 17:45. Please ensure that he has a package with him. You can expect that Kenta will be resistant to his departure. I am willing to offer 20,000 Cryptodollars upon completion of the transfer. Payment will not be offered if he does not arrive with the package.


The adventurers can ask questions or negotiate for additional pay at this point.

If the group asks questions that Ms. Donovan (Smith) believes makes them less credible as professionals, she will decrease the initial offer of payment. Questions about security, details about the Kenta Cyber Dynamics Arcology will be answered to the best of her ability but she will deduct C\$1,000 from the offer. Questions about her employer, herself, or Dr. Lin will not be answered and will still deduct C\$1,000 from the offer.

Allow the adventurers to negotiate at this point. With a successful Persuasion roll, Ms. Smith will offer an additional C\$5,000, C\$10,000 with a raise.

Ms. Smith stands. "I believe that we have an arrangement. Please return Dr. Lin here no later than midnight Monday night. Contact this number in advance of your arrival." She throws an honest to goodness business card on the table. On it is the name Ms. Smith and a standard net communication address.

LEGWORK

 Now it is time for the group to gather information about their mission. Allow the





group to use Research or do some Networking to gather information. Apply the following results:

KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS.

Failure: “The Kenta Arcology is on the south side. It is a fortress, don’t bother trying to break in.”

Success: “Even the visitors sections are secure and they close up like a vault at 18:00 every day.”

Raise: “Security at the arcology is tight, they have their own guards and they have a contract with Ravenlocke for 10 minute response.”

DR. RICHARD WOO LIN.

Failure: “No idea who he is.”

Success: “He is the number two guy in R&D for Kenta Cyber Dynamics in Chicago.”

Raise: “Dr. Lin is probably one of the world’s leading minds on brain augmentation cybertech.”

MS. SMITH

Failure: “Sounds like a no-name at a corp to me.”

Success: “No idea who she is but I hear that Featherstone has been snooping around Kenta”

Raise: “Ms. Smith is probably Linda Donovan from Featherstone; she is the head of acquisitions for their Human Resources department.”

INTO THE LION’S DEN

Kenta Cyber Dynamics is a walled fortress on the South Side of Chicago. The only chinks in their armor is the visitor centers on the east and west and the clinic entrance on the north side and they know it. Guards at the outer gates and at the visitor VTOL pads check IDs for every visitor against an authorized schedule. Guards at the doors check every visitor for weapons and magnetic resonance detectors are in the door frames. Any visitors with cyberweapons are fitted with TAP blockers to prevent them from activating the weapons.

Dr. Lin enters the visitor’s section precisely at 17:45 carrying a reinforced briefcase. Security does not permit Dr. Lin to open the case in the visitor’s section and they do not allow him to leave the building. Dr. Lin shows the adventurers that he has a corporate security bracelet on his wrist that notifies them if he leaves the grounds and can be used to track him.

Security(4): Inside the visitor’s section. Use Cop remove the Sector Cop Edge.

Outer Guards(2): at each gate and at each VTOL pad. Use SWAT Trooper remove the Sector Cop edge.

A Repair roll at -2 can be performed to disable the corporate security bracelet.

If the group takes longer than 10 minutes after they alert security to their actions, insert a Ravenlocke security team via Helicopter. Use SWAT Trooper (6) with a SWAT Commander.

WRAP UP

Ms. Smith lives up to her word. She pays the agreed upon amount and they depart with Dr. Lin.

SWEET REVENGE

El Presidenté (the mysterious employer from the One-Sheet Hard Time Killing Floor Blues) has a job for the characters. If they were successful in stopping their kidnapping in when they first met them they will pay 1,000 cryptos each, up front, and double that if they are successful. If the characters are unknown to them, the fee is half the above, with the possibility of more later.

THE MEET

The characters are contacted through their usual sources. An employer who wants to remain anonymous has a small job with high pay they want done. Absolute secrecy is needed; total anonymity of the employer is non-negotiable. They are to meet the employer in an empty parking lot behind a local dive bar, the employer will be present via a projected image from a drone.

THE JOB

As they tried to explain in Hard Time Killing Floor Blues before they were rudely interrupted by a kidnapping attempt, they have been wronged. El Presidenté is wealthy and has had more than a few spouses over a long and happy life. They all leave in the end, most marry them for the money, the power, or the status. The latest was no different, but made the mistake of not owning up to their sins and getting a divorce, the pre-nup would have seen them set up for life. Instead, this spouse had the audacity to run

off with the help and to add insult to injury by stealing several heirlooms from the mansion.

This simply cannot stand.

El Presidenté is unwilling to simply forget and forgive. They want the spouse, the chauffer, and the heirlooms back and are not terribly concerned with how that happens. Thus the need to hire the sort of people the characters are. The job is simple, take a little vacation to an exclusive tropical paradise, apprehend the fugitives, secure the goods, and get all back to the drop without alerting the authorities or unduly injuring the spouse. What happens to the chauffer is none of El Presidenté's business. El Presidenté describes the heirlooms as things of great value that will be easily recognizable and leaves it at that. They do not answer questions from the help and are happy to throw money to have people stop asking, or just say that they are happy to find someone else to do the job.

THE RESORT

The run away spouse and the chauffer are living it up in the Caymans at the Grand Island Resort. The resort only books by invitation or referral, though repeat guests are always welcome. El Presidenté can arrange invites if needed, and will pay all expenses. The characters can also go in disguised as workers, something that their employer cannot arrange for them, such things are why he is hiring them to begin with.

Resort security is tight but largely focused on keeping people out and watching over the guest's valuables. Moving around inside the resort is fairly easy. The staff is so large that few know on sight anyone not on their shift and in their department. Access to the resort is only by the resort's hovercraft ferry, there are no roads that lead there.

The targets have a private bungalow on the coast. Each bungalow has its own private dock, plenty of fenced in space around (decorative fencing, nothing full of sensors and such), and a five-room bungalow. The bungalows are separated from each other by 20 yards of shrubbery and small trees that block sound and view.

THE TARGETS

For once the targets are not the difficult part, getting them out and to the drop is. This pair is not fighters, has no special skills, and

is unarmed. Wrapped in their new relationship and well funded they are not expecting to be followed. The spouse assumes that the disgrace and embarrassment will keep El Presidenté from calling the authorities. Why, they are even using his credit line.

What will be hard are the heirlooms. They are a pair of white tigers, full-grown adult white tigers. Genetically engineered (by Lazarus Investigenics if you are curious) to be more docile and easily handled than normal tigers (which are extinct anyways), these tigers can eat from your hand. That is if you are someone they know, like the spouse, for whom they were a second anniversary present. They are also very protective of their owner.

TIGERS

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Athletics d10, Fighting d8, Notice d8, Stealth d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6, Toughness: 7

Edges: Frenzy (Imp)

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/ Claws:** d12 +d10
- **Low Light Vision:** Tigers ignore peantlies for Dim and Dark Illumination
- **Pounce:** Tigers pounce on their prey to best bring their mass and claws to bear. If a tiger can leap at least a few feet (1" on the tabletop) and makes a Wild Attack, it adds +4 to its damage instead of +2.
- **Size 1**

THE DROP

Once the targets are acquired they need to be transported back to the city where the characters were hired. This may be very difficult as customs doesn't take kindly to tigers and kidnap victims. Once there all three, spouse, tiger 1, and tiger 2, are to be delivered to an empty office building on the edge of downtown. The building has nearly finished construction and will be empty at night for the meeting. Inside is a lot of empty space, a lot of power tools, and nothing much else.

El Presidenté is physically present for the drop and alone, but is wearing a hooded mask to disguise their features. Once the trio has been handed over to them the cryptos are deposited





in the character's accounts, plus a small bonus if they have managed to avoid any exposure. El Presidenté invites them to stay and have a meal with them, revealing one of the drop cloth covered tables to be a full feast (real meat and veggies). As the meal is eaten they ask that the tigers and the spouse be released. They then flourish a small electronic device that rouses the tigers and places them under their control. If nothing is done El Presidenté will enjoy their meal while the tigers enjoy theirs: the run away spouse.

WATCH MY BACK

Their usual contacts send along a high profile job. Keith Tanka is the star pitcher for the Indianapolis Cardinals (they moved from St. Louis in 2034). Tanka has a reputation as being a problem player, brilliant at the game but prone to outrageous acts off the field. The characters will be paid 1,000 cryptos a week to serve as Tanka's bodyguards, but also to be his babysitters. In three weeks spring training starts and Tanka will be under the protection (and watch) of the team's security division, until then it is up to this rag tag team of misfits to keep him safe and under control.

KEITH TANKA (WILD CARD)

Tanka has been playing in the majors for the past five years and very nearly pitched a record number of no-hitter innings last year and is the current pitching speed record holder. He is a legacy player, and his mother Patricia Tanka was a solid player in her time and ended a 20 year career with a .310 batting average. Keith has lived in his mother's shadow and many think this is why he acts out during the off-season.

He knows the characters are not just his bodyguards but his babysitters. He also does not respond to any attempts at intimidation, he knows he is valuable and believes that no one will actually hurt him, the contract with his bodyguards includes a clause that he must be delivered to spring training in a condition that allows him to play at his usual levels. The best way to handle Tanka is to manipulate him in some way, either through Persuasion or Taunt. Then again overt trickery is also an option. As is calling mama.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d12, Fighting d4, Intimidation d6, Shooting d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 2, Toughness: 6

Gear: Baseball bat: d6+d6

Edges: Elan

MAPLE GLADE

Tanka is at his mansion Maple Glade in the forest reserve of Brown County (about ten minutes south of the Indy-Plex by monorail). Hypermodern in all of its features, the mansion looks like it was built a century and a half ago so that it blends well with the surrounding forest. It has a full security suite with video monitoring, motion sensors, and an electric fence that protects its twenty-five acres of ground. The fence is largely to keep Tanka's small herd of tame deer from wandering off (DNA modified exhibition level deer, another fine product from Lazarus Investigenics).

The mansion is built in to the side of a hill. The top floor is level with the top of hill and has a garage, pool deck, hot tub, pool house, batting cages, and skeet shooting platform. The main floor has Tanka's suite, the kitchen, a large living room, an entertainment center, and six guest rooms. The lower portion is half built in to the hill and houses the machinery that runs the mansion, the security center (with displays for all 52 cameras on the property), laundry, and quarters for the staff (four rooms for the La Fleur's, six rooms for the characters).

The staff consists of Henri LaFleur (personal chef), Henri's daughter Marta LaFleur (assistant chef), Henri's other daughter Marie LaFleur (groundskeeper), and Henri's son Jean LaFleur (housekeeper). The LaFleur's live on site in the lower floor of the mansion. They all have worked for Tanaka or his mother for decades.

THE LAFLEURS

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Academics d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Science d6, Taunt d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 2, Toughness: 5

Gear: Kitchen knife (d6+d6)

WEEK ONE

during week one Tanka hosts a party without telling his security. People start showing up, some by car and some by private VTOL. All two hundred people are coming to drink, get high, screw, and in general make themselves at home and wreck things. Tanaka is as much of a party animal as his party guests and will cut loose for three days if not stopped. During this party there should be a few overdoses, some fights, and at least one idiot pulling a gun. Remind the players that they are to keep Tanka out of trouble, and that includes out of the media.

WEEK TWO

Two events occur during the second week. Tanaka decides to go off on his own to Indy and hit the clubs. He does not tell his bodyguards this. Once in the downtown club district he cuts loose, spending money left and right, making friends, picking up girls and guys. There are plenty of opportunities for Tanaka to get in trouble with the law. There are also fans of rival teams who shout abuse and thus draw Tanaka's wrath. A few people want to prove how tough they are by taking a swing at baseball star.

A few days after the outing to the city, Henri La Fleur goes after Tanaka with a cooking knife. It starts with LaFleur storming out of the kitchen

proclaiming he is going to kill Tanaka. The baseball star has been sleeping with both of the LaFleur daughters and now they are both pregnant. Once the situation is dealt with the La Fleur's leave. Someone else will have to do the cooking and cleaning, and its not Keith Tanaka.

WEEK THREE

Tanaka has been betting on his own games, a big league no-no. Worse, he has been betting against himself and somehow still losing (his pride won't let him throw a game). These debts are going unpaid, not to mention the amount of money that various criminals have lost thinking the game was rigged. Payback comes in week three in the form of a three person kill team.

ASSASSINS

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d6, Electronics d8, Hacking d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Shooting d10

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7, **Toughness:** 10 (4)

Edges: Thief

Gear: body armor (4), shock truncheon (d8+d6), silenced PDW (2d6-1)



BACKERS

GUTTERPUNKS

Aksarben_Monk, David Magill, Jesop H Breka, Eric Warner-Weinstein, Dustin Hatchett - Rocky Mountain Games, Mark Gallicchio, Michael Tree, Taylor Boldt, Mo Holmes, Anders Braun, James Corley, Mark Harrison the First, John Bowlin (virtuadept), Mike Esque, Jason Vines, MegaOptimus, Christopher Brown, Outhouse, Archie W. Bridges, ÖstenP, IrregularNerd, Grzegorz Gacek, Loki Darkmare, Esteban C, Kurt Granzow, Murilo Lamegal, Grant Smith, architech99, Michael "Ex Nihilo" Pineda, Yashablood, Keid Picone, john, Chris Moore, J A C Mcknight, Peter Haldenby, Kaeln, Dalton Hatcher, Karl "Thrillseeker" Maurer, Hurske, Zac Corbin, Seth Klein, Andy Ramos, Joe O'Toole, Joe DeAngelo, Shaun B, Geoffrey (Jetstream) Walter, J Pritchett, ru hartsell, Pete Palmer, Matt "Brutus" Benjamin, Nate Shandy, The Letter B, Almarion Sainclair

FURLOUGHED RONIN

Static and Dr. Rudy Wells, Matthew Stark, Christopher D. Garland, Bob Johnston, Thomas Scroggs, Michael Rose, The GM Table, Giles P Kiser, D. Krough, Alex Lake, CPO Sven Lugar, Tensorphase, John P. Jones, jaegerpicker, Weldon Winyninger, David Ungar, Thantos9:30, Sgt Daniel Krenzke, USMC, MrFiks, Clayton "Wise Kobold" Rennie, Joshua Burrus, Anthony Milton, Eric Blair, Stacie Winters, Bradly "Oak" Cozby,

SCRIPT KIDDIE

Yves Malinowski, Nostromo, Amauri Antunes Pereira Junior, Matteo Signorini, Dave Russo, S J Jennings, A. Daniel Stockser, Crozie, J. Rosen, delKano, Martin C. Svendsen, Chris Kenna, Tristan Harness, Tommy Brown, Jeff Schmidt, Rémi Bilodeau, sds, Augustine von Freiburg, Thomas Litaz, Shawn Ware-Paradis, Vin E. Gar, Scott Hopkin, Julian H., Brian James Banks, Nelviticus, BlindRaven, Jonas Karlsson, Philipp Christophel, Eric Bonnet, Adam Clayton, Pepor, ZombieDaemon, Damon Rice, Indraneel "Ghosttusk" Dutt, Gaiska Gómez, Christopher Pando, Che "UbiquitousRat" Webster, James Holt, Mark Carter, Meykel Gruel, Gerry Valliere, Michael D. Gunn, Tore B. Pedersen, Steven Weingärtner, Scott Marchand Davis, Warren P Nelson, Kevin Shinnners, Yuoston, Nat Johnson

Victor "Freaktor" Perez, Dave P, Lenny Zimmermann, Duane Harper, Ross Smith, Daniwan, Vinicius Alvim, Rich Riddle, Michael O Holland, Robert G. Male, Christian Eilers, Eric Lamoureux, Mark Sim, TheStray7, Scott "Dartnet" Crosson, Dreadlock, Jon Jasionowski, Zach Brown, Yarobit, None, Dan "Jellyfish Heaven" Frederick, Otacoon, Paul Browning, Alexandre Delage, Miguel Angel Delgado, James Dillane, Emanuele Lillo, Bruce Paris, Buckwheats, David Brideau, slave138, Brian Kreuzinger, Andreas Brill, Philip Hindley, Dan Holmberg, Chris Noakes, Adrian Gawain Jones, Jason Brandt, Patrick M Acton, Kevin Brennan, JPD, Graham Billiau, The Duke In Purple~, Chester Ang Chua, Quantum Ogre LLC, Nick Colombo, Alfred Eboeime, Kendrick Hernandez, Jaakob Maunula, Charles Fitzpatrick, Tiffany Korta, Beetleboo, MattVG-Art.com, nennoski, Nicholas Perrett, Paul Sheppard, Jason Templeton, Matthew Ballard, Mr. Grumkin, Cesar A. Romo, B-rad, R. K. Athey, Neil Mahoney, BluegrassGeek, Sean Richmond, Craig Hackl, Pat Paulsen, Joshua Cameron, Famous Patrick, Alexander "Rickenharp" Gräfe, Anthony J Spaltro, Cezary "Verencius" Wysoczanski, Jonatan Hedborg, Corrigon, Veijo Tuomisto, Gary Watson, Omari L. Brooks, Sam Douglas, James A Hunt, The Roach, Kevin J. Heath, Mikael Suominen, Boeres, Gregory, Wayne Grelle, c4rk l4n6r1d63, Marc André Ueberall, Anonymous, Christian van den Boom, Scott Dominey, B@3L_the_Cru3L, Robin Low, Dan Martland, Tuomas Ristimäki, Paul Rivers, Christian Northoff, Jenevieve "Tasha" DeFer, ASM, Leo Farnsworth, Normalvector, Tim Hartmann, Nick Nelson, Pedro(Te), Ezzerharden, Kristian Zirnsak, Rance Miller, Bryan Lee Davidson-Tirca, Comunidad Umbría, Gerrit "M¥\$T1C" Czeplie, AG Chenery, Stephane Boyer, ChaosOS, Dustin Smith, Andy Leighton, scottseamark, C. Moffatt, Tracy, Trevor W Thrasher, Travis Palm, Conrad White, LUVSTEAK, Patrice Mermoud, Nikolas Carneiro, Bugmaster, Mao,I, Janne Seppälä, Einheijar, Ben Gardiner, Joey Martin, Dean Anderson, Götz Weinreich, John Rogers, G. Noël, Tomi Letonsaari, Dan Staggs, Rodney Orpheus, Nicolas Heitz, Kris Williamson, Andy Fones, Krotik, J. Makkonen, Van Stonecypher, Henrik Jernstedt, Jason Sartin, Alberto Villa, Alvarado, Daniel Coleman, Joel Jääskeläinen, Thiago Goulart Prietto, Brendan Toliver, Scott Kelley Ernest, Stephan Szabo, Daniel Kolossos, Karfunkel, Jon "sard" Etxaniz, Steve Connel, Kyle W, Richard

L. Skinner III, Patrick Aschwanden, Alistair Gillies, Grim, Ryo Ogawa, adumbrates, Josh Rasmussen, Darleth, PsychoticDreamer, Stefan Sterzenbach, Rui Ramalho, Joel Agee, The Mindframe, Andrew M. Johnston, Tealeaf frienziedRat, Jonathan Harris 621, Wilhelm Neubert, Jonathan Faulkner, Joshua Bergmann, Moonbrow, Marc Tabyanan, Pierre Rafih, Ezrael, Feyjarl, Jeffrey Allan Boman, Candid Astrius, Jackko, J. Nelson-Seawright, Piotr N, Terry Hansen, Tristan Skadins, SavageS, Ohljensens, Jake T, Dr. Gerd Hauser, Tanstaafi, Durdyn Kilesek, Mike Chandra, David Stephenson, Paul D Watts, Damien Van Der Windt, Gerald Rose, Matthias Mertens, Dirk Keienburg, Michael Harding, Matthew Start, Mark Cockerham, Colgreivance, Brenden Minissale, Tom Cannon, Bjørn Flindt Temte, Felix Grothkopp, StargazerA5, Arkham_Jones, Michael A. Walker, Robert "Erolat" Black, Jesse Y., Jose Sku, Garcia, Fernando Autran, Keith Paff, Philip Walpole, Adimas Adiwoso, Robinson Fulcher, Courtland Moseley, Tilly, Loki, & Murphy, Scott Wabel, Aramis, Heath Delzer, Charles Chapman, Robot_Hermit, RJ Dale, Jon Allen, Stefan Anundi, James Lynch, Vojtech Pribyl, Markus Raab, Claes, Silvio Herrera Gea, Ryan Kent, Aber Bert, Jesper, James Meredith, Guillaume Godet-Bar, Menagerie Press, Andrew Green, Kulian Morgasune, Kai Yu, Lj Spire, Tim Bruning, Björn Lippold, Phil Adler, Kyle Pipkins, Mario Zucco, Scott Spicer, Adnan Hussain, Carlos (Zero) García, ZeroFactor, BZWingZero, Andrew Boursier, Troy Ellis, John Patrick Owatari-Dorgan, Hardy Reschke, Mark R. Lesniewski, Corey D'Arcy, Joshua Garcia, August B., N. Ragovis, C. Beutenmueller, Harald Hansen, Wojciech Polak, Ronnie Grahn, Justas Tomkus, Jan "Jetty" Jetmar, A Lecocq, J. Gabriel Oropeza Borja (Elenwyd), Tavis Hill, Luis Andrade, Vincent DeSensi, David Scott, Kris Wagner, Glauber Nascimento de Oliveira, Mitchell Crowley, Joe D, Luis Alfaro

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Andreas Monitzer, Sean Huempfer, Louis Marketos, Jose Luis Porfirio, JTB3, Dani Jang(너블레기), Stuart Dean, Dan Stufflebeam, Michael Ramsey, Matt Caron, Thomas Vanstraelen, Todd Stephens, Mark A. Siefert, Richard "red-shanks" McLean, Frank Jarome, Kurt Zdanio, Gene Walthes, Serena "Intendant S" Nelson, Steve Dodge, jason e. bean, Jason Buchanan, Aaron Potheary, Bob Huss, J.T. Evans, Aaron Smithies, Tracey, Frank and Mikey Michienzi, RandomeOne Sagritalo, Manuel "ManuFS" Sams, Tom Ladegard, Travis D. Johnsen,

Sean Masters, SwiftOne, TormentedDave, Paladin, Tim D., Jon Smejkal, Brian Holder, Jeff Zitomer, Lassi Into, Jonathan Eskritt, David Harriss, HPLustcraft, Daelas Kai, Greg Conant, Francis Gagnon, Walter F. Croft - his ownself, Etienne Olieu, SaddMann, Craig T., Pipotus, Kyle "Fiddy" Pinches, John Fiala, Phillip Bailey, Lord Crypto of Waffles, Jay Peters, Howard "HNForce" Nelson, Drawnfunny, Kurtis "Kleedrac" Peterson, "Weird Dave" Coulson, Guy Edward Larke, Keith M Mingus, Frédéri "Volk Kommissar Friedrich" POCHARD, David Wolf, Anthony Popowski, James "Hawk" Rosse, Snyderley, James Winfield, David Walker, GM Drew, zombiebitz, Michael Gardner, Studio 2 Publishing, Mark Gizmo, John Robertson, Adam M. Coleman, Tóth "Petrus" Péter, cd8dman, Zadakiel, Gavin Phillips, Michael Feldhusen, Shannon BUCKAROO Marce, Bryan Andrews, "To Peace", Alexander Lachwitz, David Harrison, Neal Dalton, Chris Czerniak, Nigel "Ironministry" Wright, Harry Truong "Loona", Laethgar, Sean GBS Kelley, Chris Mobberley, John Phillips, Altorinne, George Wilson, Chris Mortika, Steven Kei Kenobi, Jonathan A. Gillett, Giuseppe "Serpe" Zeuli, JBeagle, Leonardo Buzack, Dustin Ogden, Jason Corley, Josh Eaves, Stephen Kilpatrick, Suzi R, Kurt McMahan, Scott Maynard, Matt Chez, Roberto "Sunglar" Micheri, Shawn "King Zombie" Beatty, dag, Gian Holland, Swords & Stationery, Jack Gulick, Shawn Lamb, Francesco A Bambina, Bobby Jennings, Mark Hanna, Tony Adler, H Alexander Perez, Thomas Piddock, Robert Wood, Eric E. Padraig, Jason "Flynn" Kemp, Stephen "GM" Peters, Richard J Rivera Mas, Bill "Gryffn88" Stilson, Drew Wendorf, Daniel L Henson, Kevin Flynn, Eric Alexander, Bert Isla, Jonathan Siregar, Gustave Michel III, Sean P. Soderlind, Eric Champion, Robert kim, Vincent "digiconda" Arebalo, Jeremy "SeeleyOne" Seeley, CJ Stevens, Kevin Doswell, Paris Conte, Tyler Wirth, Christian A. Nord, Brian McDonald, Matthew George, Sven Schläpfer, John Lambert, Christopher Spencer, Tealus, Gary Furash, Guillaume Robert, Joachim Schulz, Brook, Jan Egil "Jedidiah Curzon" Bjune, Michael Carson, Peter Kahle, Jeffery Tillotson, Andrew Grant, Jeff Scifert, YorkusRex, Guy Sargeant, Paul Ueltschi, Artur "SySCR" Jeziorski, Dan Stewart, Daniel Enoch Tobin, Robert H Hudson Jr, www.trinityarmory.net, Michael G. Palmer, Thomas Kavanagh, John Swiers, Ben Dinsmore, Keith Fannin, Nate Reed, Bill Charleroy, Caitlin Eckert, Eric Rizzardini, Gordon Fancher, Steven Ward, Dave C, Daniel López Coira, Edgar G., Edward Durant, Arnok, Thomas Winter, Chris A. Barney, Jason F. Broadley,





kostur86, Dave "Wintergreen" Harrison, Mark Green, David Terhune, Mark Thompson, Paladin Steve, kcasar, Agent Marvin, Dan R, Jason Freston, Brian Goubeaux, Bujna Balázs, David Cheatham, Jason Kraus, Wayne Clemmer, Mario NeoReTro, Scott Galliard, Randy Mosiondz, Thom Shartle, R. Lee Griffin, David Duerschlag, Justin Schmid, Jeff Holt, Yu Tsai Su, Cameron Cleveland, Janosch Hildebrand, Joshua D. Meadows, Jason, Kristin, and Peter Childs, zakueins, Ragnobash, Jason 'Jaynay' Hewett, Dana Bayer, Unidentified Coward, Phillip Ash, Rafe Hart, Dan Berends, Broadsides Finestien, rvrbait, Simba, Robert Flowers, Matt "Songbird" Wells, Aaron Rhoads, Mr. Mean, Mendel Schmiedekamp, Mike Tabor, Brennan Willingham, Richard "Tuna" Fortuna, Tony Calidonna, Aaron Martin, Savage Greek, Theo, Jay S. Barber, Biohazard53, Alain Renz, Yes, Jack Skratch, Mario Cordova, V furstenberger, Raun Sedlock, Allan Rodda, Armin Sykes, R.S. Tilton(EpicRPGblog), Adam Rinehart, Joseph Evenson, Slaine Fullerton, Marc Schamlé, James Beauchesne, Robert Sexton, Joe Olewnicki, M. Holberg, Brian Scott, XpresoAdct, Matthew Wurzberger, Sam 'Logic Bomb' Carter, Sean Trader, Chris Edwards, Gary 'Sluggie' Perkins, John "Chaotic" Slaughter, John P Meyers, Dylan McNamee, Maxtor, Jeff Tyler, Steve Huntsberry, Q, AndyE, Roman Moreno "Turbiales", Thad Ryker, j "ncrypshun" esco, Jonathan Combs, Wesley N Goodwin, Ray D. Arrastia, Anthony Cast, Graham P, Paul Pearce, Alan Albano, Darkechilde, Simon Brown, Seti the Dragon, James Silvers, Robert P. V. Davis, John Savage, Christopher Jones, Ian Magee, Star Eagle, Andrew Bussey, Joe Abboreno, Tomas Burgos-Caez, Cody Black, Tim Ellis, Adam Anderson, fleshsmyth, Steve Lord, Smiling-Jack, Angelborn, J. K., izzylobo, M. Kidder, Steven K. Watkins, Ignatius Montenegro, Paul (DQGM) Owen, Giulio Cazzoli Carl James Black, Egon, Steven D Warble, Gabriel Whitehead, Charles Myers, Marc Plourde, Scottie Taylor, Steven Moy, Simon Ward, Robert Allen, Luke Valentini

MILITARY CUT-OUTS

Neal5x5, C. R. Nelson, Tandrup, Jeffery Estes, Petersonsdc, Chris van der Meer, Don Choi, LD Veal, James Hopper, Team Bloodhammer, Rich Brassell, Tom Caudron, Alex Camacho

SYNDICATE ASSASSIN

Michael Schulz, Isaac Warren, Micah Wolfe, W. Reese Flory, Illuminus, Mark Caldarola, Rich "bitrunner" Osterhout, Benjamin, Richard Cameron, Duncan Pilcher, Morten Haugaard, Matthew LaPorte, Jason Shuey, steelwraith, Daniel Klinkner, Dustin Hiatt, Andrew Bleecker, Edgar Gonzalez, Hotdog, Timm Ollmann, Steve Medeiros, Marja Erwin, Jack Schmitt, Sebastian Lindström, Adrian G Bodor, Simon Cleal, Susan Steward, Tim Cusack, Random Interrupt

GEARHEAD

Sean Richer, Scion of the 6 chambered hell, Dylan "Caligula" Distasio, David Espinosa, Mark Kriozere, Emmanuel Papst, Mattias Karlsson, David Thomas, T. Stacy, Rob McKavanagh, J Christian, John Pyrich, Daniel Hühne, Luis E Gomez, Jacob Blackard, The Toxic Wombat, S.LaVoie, Matt "TheWildFerret" Mayer, Carl Davis, Brandon & Karen Ryan, Kese, Flavio Serreri, Justin Rasmussen, Matthew Jorgenson, Omer Golan-Joel, Jacob R Stick, Lenurd the Joke Gnome, Bart Gelens, Eric Lévesque-Saumier, W Ryan Carden, Jonathan Vadnais, Michael Stone, Leon Marais, Morgan Stjernstrom, John Armstrong, Alan Geoffrion, Søren holm, Kash Register, Patrick "ShadowDad" Greenlaw, Charles Fodel, Simon Cotterill, Robert James, Simon & Emma Gelgoot, David Chronister, Ramon Gomez, Alex Huyer, LANshark, Ensley F. Guffey, Guerin Payne, John McShane, Jason Newland, Michael Sanders, Erik Tinberg, Felix Shafir, M.A.G, Suppo, Willie Tucksen, Emanuele Mandola, tym, Chris John, Chris Tullo, RFieldingP, Christophe Jacob, Ignatious, T. Kurt Bond, Bradley Biggar, WolfDawg, Sean Werner, Robin P. Smith, Justin Nelson, Benjamin Greene, Kris F, Wyatt Pittman, Eric "teh22" Hudgins, Pedroichi, Scott Ferwerda, Gary Fuller, Bob Hall, Jim "Radecliffe" Gagnon, Cyphernaught of the Flatlands, Wesley E. Marshall, Deavon M Church, Brian Stankiewicz, immortal squish, Jason Goetz, 8LeggedCat, G Urchuk, Shawn Marier, Boyer Kane, Terrell Scoggins, Rob Witt, Wayne Ligon, Jason Hallford, Monte "Cyphur" Young, Daniel Simpson, DJ Blackford, TopsyFlipper, Christopher Cronen, Marc Hameleers, Keil Hubert, Glengeezer, Penn Brimberry, Robert Frey, Chris W. Harvey, Brian Steffey, Matt H, Harry Coit, Lekkad, Don Miller, Matthew Dive, Timothy Mushel, Roger Harvell, Jeremy D Walker, Johannes Hänel, John Haynie, John Souders, Steve Cranford, tanic5, Angela Paxton, Calidore Caine, Lohengrin Perez, Lucile Perkins-Wagel, Chris Dubuque, Paul Buss, Duane

Turner, Steve Knittel, Mikko Lainio, LushWoods, Kieran Briggs, Jason Southworth, Zone Gamma, Bradon Ebers, Payton Brown, Chad Manning, Darren Gibson-Lewis, Arawn D. Draven, Chris Mooney, Jeffrey Kreider, Godu, Will M, Jay Button, Christian Schubert, David Anderson, Jr., Christopher E Walters, Richard L Johnson, SacredRebirth, Mike Bruner, Patrick Jensen, Matt Jowett, Ryan Hallinan, Martylee, John R., Angry Dead Man, Phil Adams, Robin Gras, P. Scott Hill, Aric Hansen, John Fellers, Lucas Lomnicki, Dave Binny, Chris Jacobson, CalicoJack73, David Kroeker, Jaime "Zondark" Trapero, Shawn Walters, Jonathan McNeill, Tymoteusz Demel, Wayne Curry, C.J. Stott, Scott TheDruid Warwick, Jayse, Roderick Brooks, John Robinette, Nev Kelly, SkullHydra & P0rtalCat0, Streaming&Dragons, Andy Martinez, Daniel O. Cathey III, Jason Martin, Drew Pessarchick, Edweirdo Lechrono, Buffaloe, Michael T. McAdams, Greg LaRose, Stephan, Brett Longworth, Davron the Mighty, TontonFranz, John P. Hans, Andrew Givens, Michael Staley, Thomas Stockdale, S. J. Zeve, Andy Montgomery, JC Pope, Michael Lippo, Charles "El Cid" Jean, Anton "Banton" Nilsson, mestoph07, John Kusters Jr, Shon Love, Adrian Burek, Astro, Gilandilas, Rob Bessey, Mathieu Lapierre, Cody Swatek, Joshua Pevner, Jeff Carlsen, Peter Baldwin, Ricky Large, Paolo "Konami" Moschetti, Micha de Koekoek, Chris A Challacombe, Aarón Maturana Candelas, Matt Price, Andrew Goode, Ash McMurray, Brian McCabe, Kelcey Calderon, Jeff Folb, Josh "Huckleberry" Linze, Wardo, Keith T. Sutherland, Keith Garrett, Brogen, Brian "DePalma" Koonce, Caleb Harris, Rodolfo Teixeira, Ryan E. Steiner, David Tomcik, John Fenris, Scott Holden, Rikard Elfgrén, DrProfSr, Richard Mundy, Joe Costa, Tony Cox, Shawn Greenleaf, Colton Petry, Fleo Delai, John M. Atkinson

SOUTHLAND GANGER

Jeff Ruiz, Mike "Zekim" Zebrowski, Derrick Cochran, Redwing Bryan, Roger Haxton, Just Jacob @ Bikers, Dice & Bars Podcast, Zack Adamson, Aaron W Scott, Phreak E. Deaky, Jeff Workman, Brandon "SICAR-iOS" Struble, Jeffrey Gordon, Cornell Daly, Travis Bryant, Joel "Phayt" Waalkens, Aric Wieder, Arnaud "Khentar" Martin, Brian B, Nigel Rich, Britt Aina, Jeff Sollars, Franck "booga" Florentin, Jarl-Stian

Olsen, Vincent Langenfeld, Christophe Barbier, AJCarrington, GenghisCon and TactiCon Denver, Mark "LooseBolt" Margraf, ADerda, Shahazadei Blackthorne, broxen, Zachary Hinds, Richard G. Skibba, Ron James, Spencer Beem, Jeremy Kear, Justin and Crystal Scott, John Voidwalker Horton, Dominic, Cory Judd, Chris Slowinski, Josh Rasey, Tralfamado, Jacob Yohn, Orlean, Jim Mikolasek, Matthew Kaderli, Bartosz "Stoperssonn" Stopczyk, JR, John L. Lewis, Andrew Kelsoe, Sean Goodroad, Tim Guereca, James Sugrue, Corey Beetz, Jens Arntzen, Daman Weylin, Tom Morgan, Doug Becker, Aaron Davidson, Isaac "Pollution" Page, Suzette Stone, Tony Alvarsson, Peter "Savage Oz" Morson, Steve Kramer, Matthew "Soundwave" Orwig, Wes Crump, Kenny G Sieffert, Dean Poisso, Daniel Ley, Evil Homer, Sam Nothiger, Kristian Wörtche, Kurt Hardesty, Mike Strefford, Matt Tyndall, Ron Robinson, Paul "Reinar" Coulter III, Chip Warden, Jacob Carpenter, Matthew Brady, Caden B., Daniel Dietsch, David Craft, Altrex, Mina Murray, Daulton Whitehead III, Tom Smith, Mark Nugent, Derk Groeneveld, Darth Zorg, John WT Kirkpatrick, Lewis Hobbs, Diana L. Thomas, Chris Irvin, Dan McQuade, Alejandro Arrufat, Scott Anecito, Scott Elderkin, Paul Heinze Jr, Fred Maitre Renard Dalcourt, Kaare Kulland, Edna DiscoKittii Rouse, Craig C Randall, Robert Gilson, J. Patrick Walker, oshua "Kazzamo" Scott, Martin Petchey, Fattie, Markus Henzka, Dylan Mullins, Seti Zepeda, Christopher Robichaud, Mike "Shack" Shackelford, Min-hyuck Choi, Odidikillu, Leitchy, Finderski, Mike DeLang, Mirko Schmidtke, Jeff Robinson, Denis Gaty, Eric Ullman, Chris "KillrGruve" Olsen, Mattia Norando, Alen "Kurvaspass", Björn "iaktsaka" Ehlert, Vizu079, NJB, Nagaresu, Ripper1776, Steven Humphries, Jerry Estal, Michael F. Zabkar, Andrew "Zakero" Moore, Chad Drummond, Mike Pollmann, Forrest Jones, Mitchell Stokes, JaFO, Andy Kramer, Dan "Chipper" Longoria, Thomas Daley, Timothy Hidalgo, Franck Vaquierm, David Anthony Smithson, Christian Lindke, Ted Makäe, Nate Stone, Richard T. Balsley, David S. Robinson, Mister Saturday, Eric "Duckie" Duckworth, Paul Corrado, Mycheal Kelly, P.S. Goering, Scott C Ohman





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