

SHADOWRUN Missions

SRM02-20 CAREER PATH
BY: DARCI STRATTON



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The End of the “Three Martini” Lunch

Marvin Fitz was no lightweight. He knew he'd had too much already, but that didn't stop him from ordering another drink for himself and his new drinking buddy.

“This really should be our last round” Marvin said, “If I drink any more, I'll be squinting at the monitors when we do our diagnostics tomorrow and I'll misread the numbers.”

“Well, we can't have that!” his drinking pal replied. “Let's shift to synthahol for this last one just to be sure. You'll have shaken off your buzz by the time you've walked halfway home”

Fitz watched as the man intercepted the barkeep for a different bottle, then poured shots for each of them.

This one felt different, but not wrongly so. Warm like the scotch they'd been sharing for the past hour, but with more tingle. Marvin had bought the bottle they drank last week, tonight was Jarrod's turn and he'd taken it up a notch to some decidedly real-tasting stuff. This last shot coming from the barkeep's middle shelf wasn't nearly as good, but damn if he didn't feel another bit of buzz kick in just like Jarrod said.

“They're taking away our flextime.”

“You'd mentioned that. I thought you worked normal-extended hours because you wanted to.”

“It's not just that. They're taking away everything Benson set up for us last year when they made the other cutbacks. The food service, the after-hours access to the fitness center for our second-shift lab techs, the flextime. Everything.”

“Sounds like they're trying to tell you something.” Jarrod replied.

Fitz eyed Jarrod. They'd only met a few weeks ago, but had become fast friends within the confines of the bar. It was only a block detour from his usual route home from work, but he'd never gone in until last month when he'd finally had enough.

Jarrod took the bottle and poured him another shot.

“You know that position is still open at my company. It isn't cellular regeneration, but it's still within the biotech arena and I think you'd find it the right kind of challenge.”

“I like the challenge I already have”

“But the more you tell me about the situation, the more it sounds like that challenge is being taken from you. Your raises were frozen last year, which means so was your budget. And now the perks your boss tried to give you to make up for it are being taken away as well. Looks to me like your project is being starved to death just before completion.”

“Well...not really. More like just before testing.”

Jarrod shot upright in his chair, “You mean you got it working? That's great! But why would they treat you so badly when you've basically finished...” his face sunk. “They're trying to ditch you before you get your completion bonus.”

“They're not ditching me! I have a contract. And we won't know it works until we get clearance to implant a test subject. That's the whole problem.”

“They're making life miserable so you want to leave, that way they're in the clear.”

“So you're saying I should prove them right”

“You can do so much better! My company takes care of its employees as if they were family. They don't play these games. They give deserving compensation.”

“You've said that before. But money is not all that drives me. I want to be trusted with the work and then allowed to see it through for a change.”

“You can! You will! Just like I've been doing. Just like I told you last week when we celebrated my equilibreceptor's handover to production.” He gestured towards the original scotch still on the table “Let's make this a celebration of your new job, where you'll be truly appreciated the way you've long deserved.”

Fitz knew the man was right. They'd had this conversation twice before, and at greater length. Harbortech sounded like everything Wellmind Enterprises used to be, before the changes started roughly two years ago. Until recently, it had never occurred to him to drink after a bad workday like so many of his co-workers did. But then, he didn't seem to have nearly as many bad workdays as they did even though they all worked together. If you asked Marvin, they all had the same day. But his co-workers just didn't seem to get excited the way he did. The research itself was a joy for him. Maybe at Harbortech, his co-workers would share the same joy.

“Alright, I'll do it. That's if it's even possible. I told you I have a contract.”

Jarrod let out a whoop. “Excellent! We can have lunch every day instead of drinks every week. You won't regret this.” He handed the bottle over to Fitz. “One last drink 'for real,' this time as a toast before we call it a night.”

Fitz made sure the shot was only half poured, and then downed it after clinking his glass to Jarrod's. He stood up. “I still have to go to work tomorrow.”

“Of course! Of course. I'll talk to my superiors and we'll work out details later. No real hurry, now that you've decided.”

“Great...thanks.” Fitz nodded a smile, then grabbed his jacket and left the bar.

Jarrod watched him leave, then thoughtdialed numbers into his comm. He waited as the recording kicked in before thinking “pound,” then subvocalized “We've got him. Give me another week, and we'll get that project of his as well.”

INTRODUCTION

Career Path is a *Shadowrun Missions* campaign adventure. This is only the adventure portion of *Career Path* – the maps, player handouts, sample characters, and other playing aids are included in SRM02-20B, *Career Path*, *Playing Aids*.

Preparing the Adventure

Career Path is intended for use with *Shadowrun*, *Fourth Edition*, and all character and rules information refers to the fourth edition of the *Shadowrun* rules.

Adventure Structure

Career Path consists of several scenes. These scenes form the basis of the adventure, which should be completed in approximately four hours. If you are running short on time, you should streamline each and be a little more generous with clues, target numbers, and other requirements to aid in guiding the players through the adventure.

Each scene outlines the most likely sequence of events, as well as how to handle unexpected twists and turns that inevitably crop up. Each one contains the following subsections, providing gamemasters with all the information necessary to run it.

What's up, chummer? provides a quick synopsis of the scene's action, allowing you to get a feel for the encounter at a glance.

Tell it to them straight is written to be read aloud to the players, describing what their characters experience upon entering the scene. You should feel free to modify the narrative as much as desired to suit the group and the situation, since the characters may arrive at the scene by different means or under different circumstances than the text assumes.

Behind the scenes covers the bulk of the scene, describing what's happening, what the non-player characters are doing, how they will react to the player characters' actions and so forth. It also covers the setting of the encounter, going over environmental conditions and other properties of the location as well as providing any descriptions of important items.

Pushing the envelope looks at ways to make the encounter more challenging for

experienced or powerful characters and other ways you can add some "extra spice" to the scene.

Debugging offers solutions to potential problems that may crop up during the encounter. While it's impossible to foresee everything that a group of player characters might do, this section tries to anticipate common problems and offer suggestions for dealing with them.

Running the Adventure

Gamemastering is more of an art than a science, and every gamemaster does things a bit differently. Use your own style when it comes to preparing and running the adventure and do whatever you feel is best to provide the best *Shadowrun* game you can for your players. *Shadowrun Missions* adventures are designed to run in a standard four-hour convention time slot.

Please keep this in mind when running the adventure. You should leave at least 15-20 minutes at the end of the time slot to complete any necessary paperwork and pass out the players' Debriefing Logs. **(Make sure that you have enough copies of the Debriefing Log for this adventure to give one copy to each player after running the adventure.)** This section offers some guidelines you may find useful in preparing to run *Career Path* (or any *Shadowrun Missions* adventure).

Step 1: Read The Adventure

Carefully read the adventure from beginning to end. Get a feel for the overall plot and what happens in each scene. That way, if something different happens, you won't be caught off guard and you can adapt things smoothly.

Step 2: Take Notes

Take notes for yourself while reading through the adventure that you can refer to later on. Possible things to note include: major plot points (so you can see them all at a glance), the names of various non-player characters, possible problems you notice, situations where you think a particular character can shine and other things you'll want to keep in mind while running the adventure.

Step 3: Know The Characters

Prior to the start of the adventure, examine the PCs' record sheets and Debriefing Logs for your reference and have basic information about their important abilities handy so you can refer to it during play. Also go over the characters and keep their previous events listed on the Debriefing Logs in mind when determining non-player character actions in various scenes if such a dynamic has been included.

Step 4: Don't Panic!

Gamemastering involves juggling a lot of different things. Sometimes you drop the ball and forget something or you just make a mistake. It happens, don't worry about it. Nobody is perfect all of the time and everybody makes mistakes. Just pick up from there and move on. Your players will understand and forget about it once you get back into the action.

General Adventure Rules

Shadowrun Missions adventures use the rules presented in *Shadowrun, Fourth Edition (SR4)*. Standard rules such as success tests, the Rules of One and Six, and other common mechanics are described in *SR4* and are not repeated in this adventure.

Please keep in mind when preparing for the adventure, that the PCs will not necessarily comprise a "balanced" party. It's entirely possible that the party will be made up entirely of Technomancers or back-to-nature Shamans. If the characters run into a brick wall because of such complications, show flexibility and use your best judgment in how you lead them back to the plot.

Non-Player Characters

Non-player characters (NPCs) are essential to any adventure. They are the allies, antagonists and background characters in the adventure that interact with the player characters. NPCs in this adventure have already been created and can be found in the *Cast of Shadows* section.

The NPCs in this adventure should generally stand up to the average player character, but may need some adjustment to suit a particular group of characters,

especially a more experienced and powerful group. The scenes and NPC descriptions offer tips on adjusting the NPCs to suit the abilities of the characters in your group. To adjust the power level of an NPC, refer to the Prime Runner Creation and Advancement Table (**SR4** p.277). Take the player characters' abilities into consideration when assessing the NPCs in this adventure and modify them accordingly.

Table Rating

Table Rating (TR) is used to adjust the difficulty of an adventure so that it is appropriate to the characters playing it. The TR value can be used to increase the number or abilities of opponents, and the device ratings of equipment in the adventure. Add up the Career Good Karma of all PCs and divide by the number of PCs. Once that average is determined, consult the chart below to determine the class of the table.

Table Rating	Class	Karma Range
1	Green	0-19
2	Streetwise	20-59
3	Professional	60-99
4	Veteran	100-159
5	Elite	160-249
6	Prime	250+

A Note on Commlinks

With the change to *SR4*, commlinks have become a universal appliance. Because just about every NPC is going to have one, they won't always be stated out in the adventure text. For NPCs who do not have a stated commlink, assume it has all necessary ratings at (TR/2) +1 (round-up). These commlinks will not contain any valuable paydata.

Crossing Borders

As a city of 4 nations, getting around Denver can be tricky business. Sometimes a coyote contact can help the team across a border. Other times a border crossing may be an integral part of the adventure. Often, however, crossing the border is just a minor step in completing the run and part of another "day in the life."

To quickly simulate a border crossing, have all characters make a quick test of Fake SIN Rating + Charisma + Etiquette. Threshold on the test is TR/2 (round-up). On a failure, the PC will need to pay a 300¥ bribe to get across safely. If the PC glitches, the passage ends up taking longer than intended, and the character needs to spend 300¥ on a bribe. On a critical glitch, the PC loses one piece of forbidden or restricted gear, and must spend 500¥ on a bribe.

If the whole party is attempting to cross as a group, use a Teamwork test (**SR4** p.59) for the border crossing. In the event of a glitch or critical glitch, all players will suffer the previously mentioned consequences.

Contacts

Some campaign specific contacts may require an availability test. For the purposes of those tests, glitch and/or critical glitch results will have no special effects. In the event that multiple PCs at the table have the same contact, they may each independently attempt the availability test. Please see the legwork section for more information on contacts.

Tracking Faction

A special feature, in Shadowrun Missions, is Faction. As PCs proceed through the adventures in Denver, they may develop good or bad standing with many of the underworld organizations. These standings will affect their ability to interact with those groups.

Because of this, when calculating character awards at the end of the session, make sure to also mark off the faction changes that were earned in the adventure. (As noted in **Picking up the Pieces.**)

In game play, characters will gain bonus dice or suffer dice pool penalties for each tick of faction they have for social interactions dealing with NPCs belonging to those groups. For example, when attempting to negotiate with a Mr. Johnson affiliated with the Casquilho Mafia, characters who have two ticks towards Ally will have an extra two dice for any negotiation attempt. Characters can only gain or lose standing through game play.

Paperwork

After running a *Shadowrun Missions* adventure, there are several important pieces of paperwork that need to be filled out.

The first is to make certain to distribute a copy of the adventure's Debriefing Log to each player. As the GM, please make certain to fill this out and sign off on it for each character. In the interests of time, you may have each player fill out the sections, with appropriate values that you give them. Please consider the PCs actions in the scenario when providing Reputation modifiers, per those rules (**SR4** pp.257-8).

The second is to make sure that all players have updated their character's calendar. PCs are allowed to go on one run per week. The calendar is used to track the character's monthly lifestyle expenses, adventures, and their downtime exploits.

Finally, please fill out the Event Summary report and e-mail it to the campaign coordinator at missions@shadowrunrpg.com or use the web reporting form available at <http://www.srrpg.com/missions>. Future adventures will reflect the outcome of this one. Without GM feedback, the PCs' exploits will be unable to affect the campaign.

Adventure Background

Marvin Fitz is a research scientist for Wellmind Enterprises, a Shiawase subsidiary. They have just cut his benefits, which was the last straw to get him to want out of his lifetime contract. He recently began stopping by a local bar on the way home from work, since his co-workers had been for years. There he met Jarrod, whom he believed to be a peer researcher at rival Harbortech, with whom he could at least share professional courtesy if not actual knowledge. However, Jarrod is in fact a corporate recruiter with strong Vory ties who has targeted Fitz since he first walked in. The Vory want to kidnap Marvin and sell him—and more to the point, his prototype—to the highest bidder. Jarrod convinces Marvin to defect to Harbortech so that he will be easier to extract.

Marvin's team has been working on a new Cellular Regenerator under special contract for the cosmetics industry. Once the bioware device is installed, it will actively prevent the appearance of aging in the subject. The goal for future applications is to reverse already-present signs of aging, though so far attempts to do so have proved disastrous to the health of the subject. Jarrod has convinced Marvin to bring the prototype, and after discussion they decide the most discrete way to do so would be for Marvin to install it in his own head via self-administered minor surgery using tools and painkillers kept in the lab.

Harold Benson is Fitz's boss. The commlink the company issued Fitz has passive monitoring capabilities, which Benson started tapping into when he realized Fitz was the only employee of his not in active revolt over the recently announced cuts. Benson has learned of Fitz's plans only at the last minute – the day of the supposed kidnapping. Benson can't requisition an in-house team on such short notice because he failed to fill out paperwork several months ago (which would have "elevated" Fitz to retained status...along with retaining the benefits he just lost), so instead he hires a Shadowrun team to intercept Fitz before he becomes irretrievable.

Plot Synopsis

Harold Benson hires the runners to prevent one of his researchers, Marvin Fitz, from being extracted. Benson knows the extraction is voluntary, but does not disclose this information. He explains that Marvin has a non-working prototype with him that must be kept out of the competition's hands at all costs.

Benson suggests that the PCs start at Fitz's apartment, where they may learn that his extraction was voluntary. From there, they catch up to Marvin in the plaza of the Happy Canyon shopping mall in Chinatown.

After a quick negotiation, the real extraction team, a professional squad working for the Vory, ambushes them. The Vory team knows Fitz has implanted his research project into his own head, and that it works, but they don't know what it does. The opposing team also knows that the extraction is a scam: Fitz is actually being captured to be sold to the highest bidder.

From there, it's a matter of safely securing Fitz and deciding what to do with him.

Polish Your Resume

What's up Chummer?

Each PC gets a call Tabby about the job.

Tell it to them straight

What is it about freelancing that makes people think you're always bored and sitting by the phone waiting for their call? Never mind that this morning, at least, you just happen to be awake and bored and thinking about maybe fixing lunch a bit earlier than usual when your commlink rings.

Behind the Scenes

Each PC gets a call from Tabby (see **Cast of Shadows**) describing an urgent short-term job for this afternoon and evening. The meet with Mr. Johnson is in two hours at the FRFZ Conference Center in the UCAS side of the Hub. Tabby assigns each of them a fake name. She'll use their street name as their given name plus a color as surname. Simply go through the rainbow around the table. Make it obvious. Then tells them use the name to pick up their "badge" for the Biometrics Symposium at the convention center's main Information desk. She explains that they will be fed well, plus that she negotiated a 500¥ gratuity (each) for their timely attendance on such short notice.

Foot in the Door

What's up Chummer?

Harold Benson has learned one of his employees--Marvin Fitz--is about to be "extracted," and hires them to rescue the man before it's too late.

Tell it to them straight

It's funny how being out-of-place in a huge group takes away the out-of-place part. The FRFZ Conference Center is one of the best "huge group" locales in all of Denver, and they've done a good job over the years of maintaining that level of excellence. Being downtown, the Center was limited to its original footprint. It's grown vertically to accommodate new patrons. The additions have kept the angled rooflines and UV-coated transparent glass, giving the appearance of one giant cluster of organically growing wedge-shaped crystals, with the illusion of not being as tall as it really is. In front of the main entrance on 14th street, a bright AR marquee lists both *CulCon XL* and *Biometrics Symposium 2071* on a "welcome" splash screen. The convention-goers milling about the front and side entrances seem to fall into one of two distinct camps. The smaller group is mostly male, mostly older and mostly introverted. They walk in tight little groups, heads together talking and oblivious to everyone and everything around them. It's too bad you gave up petty thievery, because this place would be ripe for the picking...if not for the other, larger group in attendance.

Behind the Scenes

The Johnson has arranged a room in the FRFZ Conference Center, in the middle of a small medical convention he was attending when he got the news. He inserted the aliases into one of the registration lists that would get them each a convention pass at the "complimentary" attendance level, which does not require an ID check. With the pass comes a schedule file, containing directions to conference room 512 as if it were the attendee's only panel that day.

The larger convention taking place at the same time is CulCon, (short for "[Pop] Culture Convention") for fans and historians

of popular culture from the previous century. Let the players start to guess this by the costumes and such before allowing them to see a program left on one of the tables or at the info booth.

Roughly two-thirds of CulCon attendees are dressed like they think folks from the 1960s-1980s were dressed, though they've got some of it wrong: one item in an outfit is from the wrong decade or style, etc. This is described in relation to how folks dress in 2071 without using specific date references. Others are not in costume, but carry antiques from the period. A few mix-and-match ideas are on **GM Reference 1** in the handouts packet.

While standing in line at the Info booth (to get their attendance passes), they notice several clusters of people where more than one person is holding an object to the side of their heads, though they appear to be conversing normally. Some are the size of a small burrito, others are as small as a personal white noise generator; a few have hinges in the middle while others have small sticks at one end. (These objects are in fact mismatched cell phones from various tech-generations, but don't spell this out for them.)

They go through what feels like a rat's maze, but a clearly labeled rat's maze. After passing row upon row of rooms with open doors showing a table at the far side with rows of chairs in front, they come into a section of hallway with closed doors that are clearly numbered. Room 512 is one of them.

Inside is a smallish conference room, with an angled-oval table for twelve in the center and two short console tables on flanking walls. One console table has three ice-water pitchers and a dozen cans of carbonated drinks in the center, and the other is piled with food: a tray of sandwiches made with real meat, and neat rows of bags of potato chips.

At the far end of the table sits a blonde dwarf man in a charcoal gray wool suit. His pewter gray silk tie has been loosened, but the top button of his shirt remains closed. As each PC enters the room, he greets them with a practiced fake warmth, and gestures towards the food, "Help yourself while we wait for everyone to arrive, and then we'll start." He'll also hand each of them a certified credstick with 500¥ on it.

Once they're all there, he says the following:

"Greetings, and thank you all so very much for coming at such short notice. I hope not to take too much of your time, for time is of the essence with what I have to offer you.

"My name is Harold Benson; I manage a research team for Wellmind Enterprises. I've just learned that one of my employees has been targeted by a competitor for 'compensation restructuring.' I've also learned that they intend to act later this afternoon. I believe it's always easier to prevent a bad situation than to fix one, so I'd like to contract your services for the remainder of the day in order to keep my employee happy."

He describes Marvin Fitz as being the most passionate researcher he's ever had the pleasure of supporting. Benson can see how Marvin would be sought after by another company, because of his dedication to pure technical exploration combined with his social aptitude. Marvin has never expressed discontent, but that wouldn't stop another firm from "acquiring" him through non-voluntary means.

That's precisely what is about to happen. He can't specifically say how he obtained his information, due to non-disclosure agreements, but explains they should trust that it comes under the heading of the usual corporate information-gathering practices used to keep abreast of changes in the marketplace.

His initial payment offer is 1200¥ * (TR+1) per person currently present for run. This can be negotiated: each hit on an opposed test gets another 150¥ per person, up to 600¥ per PC.

After they take the job:

Marvin has a company-issued handheld commlink he uses constantly and never goes anywhere without. Benson will give them the MatrixID for them to track Marvin via the commlink. Last night before leaving, Marvin had asked to work from home today (which he does on occasion, so that alone was not cause for concern) and when Benson last pinged it (shortly before leaving his office to come here), Marvin appeared to still be there. Benson will also give them Marvin's home address and enclave access codes so they can enter discretely. They are to "secure" Marvin (either at his home or

elsewhere) and call Benson to arrange for longer-term protective custody.

If someone tries to ping the MatrixID, it comes up as “inactive,” meaning the device with that ID is currently not powered on.

Benson describes Fitz as being about two meters tall and thin, with brown hair and eyes. He will tell them that Fitz always wears a deep green windbreaker as a jacket outside. He thinks Fitz’s sister got it for him. Looking for this and the commlink, they should be able to easily identify him.

Something else Benson would like them to keep an eye out for: Marvin often brings pieces of the project home with him. He has that high a clearance and his apartment—he commutes on company transport—is in a secure enclave. Should Marvin have any project data or mock-ups, secure those with Marvin. If the hostile extraction team has already grabbed such items, destroy them to prevent reverse-engineering. The plans are secure in the corporate lab. They can make another one with a minimum of fuss and only “lose” whatever tweaks Marvin has made in the past day. In fact, Benson knows full well that Fitz has the prototype with him, but doesn’t know that Fitz has already installed it in himself. If they ask what should happen if they have to choose: “My employers would have me tell you that the project is more important than any one employee, however my employers are not here so I am saying I want Marvin safe.”

Debugging

If they wander around instead of reading the schedule, they’ll be paged one at a time (with other nonsense pages in between) over the loudspeaker, “Mr. White is wanted at the circuitry-in-radiology panel in room 512.”

Pushing the Envelope

If the players seem paranoid, or if you just want to let another shoe drop, bring in some old “friends.” Take the time to review the PC’s debriefing logs from earlier in the arc. If there are any common foes, bring one of them back here. The easiest option is Lone Star Officers (**SR4** p. 275). However, other options could include An Peng (*SRM02-13*), Detective Jack Diamond (*SRM02-05*), Matty Zorn (*SRM02-17*), or Mark Longfeather (*SRM02-01*).

Lead-In Questions

What’s up Chummer?

They go to Fitz’s home and find he’s not there, so they track him down after perhaps learning a few things.

Tell it to them straight

At the Fitz residence:

This housing complex reminds you a lot of that Trid show you caught a few weeks ago on historical food production practices, back when everyone ate real meat. Here are boxes inside boxes on top of boxes, with little doors for inhabitants to poke their noses out of in their quest for the daily routine. You’ve always hated the daily routine, which makes it funny that you’re now about to break in to this chicken coop for one small but important egg-layer.

It’s a good thing your Johnson gave you those codes, because this is more fortified than any simple housing structure you’ve seen in a while. The first set gets you all the way to your target’s front door, and the passcode he gave you will open the last one while making Central Security think the boss is stopping by to check in.

Behind the Scenes

Research:

Information on Wellmind Enterprises, Marvin Fitz, and Harold Benson can be found in the Legwork section. Harbortech is also included, in case they obtain this name from Fitz’s laptop.

Fitz’s Place:

It only takes a moment to do a sweep (living room, kitchen, bedroom) and learn he’s not home. There’s more clutter than actual possessions here. Fitz doesn’t seem to have much in the way of leisure activities, but then the way Johnson described him it sounded like work was his idea of fun to begin with.

It’s a tiny one-bedroom “sarariman special.” There are piles of trade magazines serving as both end tables and footrest to a battered sofa. All the journals are back issues of the same two magazines. The address-stickers clearly show he has subscriptions to both. They’re piled in date

order, newest on top. A small trid rests in one corner. Narrow floating shelves that are mostly empty save a few super-hero action figures adorn the walls. A large desk is lined up along the back of the sofa so it also faces the trid.

A laptop computer with both vidscreen and jacks, a small lamp, and a pen cup shaped like a cartoon super-hero whose cape swirls roughly into a cylinder all rest on the desk. Also on the desk, right next to the lamp, is a prescription vial of some kind of medication. It has a bright green sticky-note saying "don't forget!" affixed to the cap. On the vial's label is the logo for Fitz's company (Wellmind Enterprises), and "experimental" in large letters. *Fitz takes this for the bioware (similar to transplant patients taking meds to fight rejection, but it also helps it work properly).* A Logic + Medicine (2) will identify this as a cocktail of immunosuppressants and muscle relaxants. On failure, it might as well be allergy meds for all they can tell. *Fitz is a bit of a flake and forgot to pack them.*

A calendar is running on the computer. The only appointment for today is "Lunch at Lotus Pond" with the entire afternoon blocked off. Data Search + Browse (2) reveals that there is one Lotus Pond listed in all of Denver. It's a restaurant in the Happy Canyon Shopping Center over in CAS sector. If they hack in to the computer, they encounter the following:

Firewall	Response	Signal	System
4	3	2	4

IC (R:4)

Running Programs: Analyze (R: 3); Blackout (R: 3); Track (R:3)

Once inside the system, a Data Search + Browse (TR) reveals a folder of copies of text messages from several sources (the computer, the commlink, public terminals) between Fitz and someone named Jarrod. These discuss a new project at Jarrod's company (Harbortech) in vague terms. Jarrod clearly expresses that his team is

looking forward to Fitz's contributions and rapport. The last message is from last night, confirming that today would be great and that there is no problem with the meet location Fitz has requested. From reading this exchange, the team should realize that the extraction is voluntary. This might help them "know" how to act later.

In addition, the data search will also reveal several files of notes from projects at Wellmind. Logic + Cybertechnology (2) will reveal that these deal with cosmetic biotech implants.

If they don't have the means to hack the system (or they don't succeed in cracking it) they should continue believing they are saving Fitz from an involuntary extraction which will make things more amusing in the next scene.

A careful search of the rest of the apartment (Interception + Perception (3)) will yield there's absolutely nothing personal here. No photos, no trinkets. Only the most "common" few remain of the rows of action figures that were on display, with dust rings where the rest of them used to be. Though there doesn't look like there was much personal stuff here to begin with, it's all missing now.

If they try to access the Matrix ID any time before they search his apartment, it's still off. Once they learn he is not home and have had a chance to search the place, it will come on and give the coordinates for Happy Canyon.

Debugging

The PCs will not have an opportunity to catch up to Fitz before he reaches the shopping center. The only way they'll gain on him, is once he arrives at Happy Canyon.

Pushing the Envelope

While making their way out of the corporate enclave, the PCs hit a traffic snarl. Consider the possibilities of violent gun toting PCs interacting with corporate sararimen who are undergoing serious road rage.

Show Initiative

What's up Chummer?

The PCs catch up to Fitz at a table in the outdoor plaza of the Happy Canyon shopping center, right at the end of lunch rush. He doesn't behave quite like they expected.

Tell it to them straight

Even without the sign, there would be no mistaking Happy Canyon Shopping Center. The authentic Chinese architecture, the nine-story temple in the center...and oh look, the Red Wire electronics store has managed to stay open since you were last here. The weather is nice and it's not too hot out for an August afternoon, so the plaza is crowded with shoppers of all types. From corp folks on their lunch break to immigrant housewives buying ethnic staples to shutterbug tourists admiring the classic oriental buildings, everyone is enjoying the sunshine as they go about their lunchtime activities.

Small clusters of youths lean against walls and columns, most of them in red or white tees worn untucked over the latest styled short pants. In the central parking plaza, surrounding the large temple and the buildings furthest from the street, are several small pavilions with square plasticrete tables underneath each. They appear to all be occupied, but after only a minute or two of scrutiny you notice one man sitting alone, eating lunch and wearing a deep green windbreaker despite the warmth of the day.

Behind the Scenes

The PCs may recognize this location from SRM 02-05, *Through A Rose Colored Display Link*. It's a little bit of the "real" China right here in Cherry Hills. The buildings are arranged in a standard U with parking in the middle, but in the center of the lot is a nine-story Pagoda Temple, with small pavilions surrounding it amid the parking spaces and turning the space into more of a plaza with cars. Most of the buildings are two stories, and there's a catwalk that connects the second floors of those and the roofs of the few that aren't. See the player handout section for specific locations of the various

storefronts. All windows are reinforced glass with a barrier rating of 9. Since the PCs last visit, security cameras (DR:3) have been installed all over. One in each corner of the U, mounted under the catwalk, face in towards the plaza. Each staircase has another pair, and four more are mounted two stories up in the corners of the U to cover the catwalk. Alarm systems have also been installed, though these are currently all inactive since the shops are open. This does, however, mean that shopkeepers now have PANICBUTTONs. The one exception is the Red Wire electronics store, for which patrons must be buzzed in through the rating-5 maglocks. The feed for this camera system goes to Knight Errant dispatch, but is first filtered through Triad-owned equipment, so Triad will have the first response.

Please refer to the **Node Record Sheet** in the player handouts section for the Happy Canyon Mall node profile.

Fitz is in the plaza under one of the pavilions, chowing down on a RealMeat™ teriyaki skewer from Lotus Pond (they can tell by the wrapper) while looking around nervously. On the table in front of him is his commlink, on and open to a file. On the ground next to his feet are two medium (and mismatched) duffel bags bulging at their seams. He visibly de-tenses when the team approaches, and seems relieved to see them. He'll start by looking back and forth between the PCs, waiting for one of them to speak first. He stays wide-eyed throughout all conversation, speaking in short sentences. He's somehow blunt but polite (or at least, not rude) at the same time. He tugs at the corner of his glasses every minute or so to "adjust" them, a slight nervous tic as he thinks of what he wants to say. Refer to **Cast Of Shadows** for more details on his personality and background for roleplay, which is key to this scene.

Depending on how they introduce themselves, happy confusion ensues. He clearly thinks at first glance that they've come to rescue him from Wellmind Enterprises and whisk him away to a life of luxury at Harbortech. If they go along with this and pretend to be *his* extraction team, he will gleefully ask them all sorts of questions (Do they do this sort of thing all the time? How long have they been doing this? What model cyberarm is that?) as he wraps the remains of his skewer and tucks

his commlink away in a jacket pocket. He can't believe it's really happening! Just as he's about to stand up, though, **Beware Hostile Takeovers** begins.

If they walk up and immediately try to convince him he's in danger of being kidnapped, he'll reply, "nonsense" and continue eating. He won't elaborate without considerable prompting. As they presumably make their arguments he'll deny them one by one as being untrue. He won't come out and say "I'm expecting them, I hired them" but he'll make it clear he feels himself in no such danger. He'll start to get flustered after a while, though. (add another -1 penalty to his Negotiation for every two rounds of talking) If they happen to mention Vory, he'll get flustered immediately and demand proof.

If they otherwise try to convince him that he must leave with them "right now" (for example, by pretending to be Knight Errant or federal agents as opposed to the extraction team he's expecting), he will politely but firmly offer that they sit until he's finished eating. If they insist, he will resist and start exclaiming and they will have to start using force, at which point **Beware Hostile Takeovers** begins using the "swoop-and-grab" contingency. If they negotiate with him while he eats, he will do his best to refute their claims between mouthfuls of beef (occasionally talking with his mouth full for a few words before pausing) with the same degradation of his debate skills as mentioned previously. Right as they manage to convince him, **Beware Hostile Takeovers** begins.

If they've chosen a more *forceful* approach rather than negotiations, he will get excited to the point of hopping up and down in his seat and flailing his upper arms in front of his torso (like clapping without completing each clap, as if he was using a small accordion very quickly). It really is just like on the trid! How wonderful! He won't calm down, and his voice gets higher. Then he starts to have problems breathing. He's having a panic attack, which has other implications—see "Debugging," below.

Debugging

If they've chosen to just swoop in and grab him by force, the Harbortech team from **Beware Hostile Takeovers** will show up as they turn to leave. This also means that **Another Fine Mess (Optional)** will almost definitely happen: if they sedate Marvin during their snatch-and-grab, the drugs will interact badly with his meds, but if they don't sedate him he'll have a panic attack. Either way, DocWagon will be called. Unless, of course, their snatch-and-grab is carefully thought out and prepared for, occupying the game time allocated for negotiations and roleplay.

Pushing the Envelope

If any team members have Triad faction worse than -3, or if the team average is -2 or lower, they can immediately attract shadows upon entering the Shopping Center. An Intuition + Perception (TR) test will reveal TR+3 Triad Posse (**SR4** p. 276). These guards are closely watching the PCs, and waiting for an opportunity to assault them without creating too large of a disturbance.



Beware Hostile Takeovers

What's up Chummer?

The real extraction team shows up, just in time to make things interesting.

Tell it to them straight

If they negotiated, just as Marvin seems ready to go with them:

While you've all been chatting, nearby diners have finished their lunches and gotten up. Others have sat down to take their place. Many of them pass close to Marvin's table to return to their cars, and one smartly dressed Ork woman pauses as she does so. When she speaks, her voice is syrupy and low, and it carries a faint island lilt: "Excuse me Mr. Fitz, but if you're finished with your lunch now your escorts are ready to bring you to your next meeting." She lifts her head to look directly at one of the PCs "Sorry to cut your socializing short, but Mr. Fitz is on a tight schedule for the rest of the afternoon." She reaches gently to his elbow as if to help him up.

If they did a swoop-and-grab, just as they're about to leave:

Not so fast, chummers. It seems your quarry is more popular than you thought. Standing right in front of you is a group much like yourselves that seem intent on making your way out a whole lot harder than your way in.

Behind the Scenes

This is the Vory extraction team. They're pretending to be under hire from Harbortech because that's who Marvin thinks is rescuing him. They're actually Vory Enforcers led by the ork houngan Taijha whom the PCs may have met previously. Besides Taijha, "H-team" is scaleable by TR to be a roughly even match for the PCs, see notes under **Cast Of Shadows**.

"H-Team" is trying to be discreet. They would much prefer to just walk in and walk out without anyone else noticing, rather than risk a firefight. But there's no altruism: it's because they're Vory and this shopping center is Triad turf. They're only here because Marvin picked it, and Marvin only picked it because he loves eating here. They

will point out the same visual aid—the green windbreaker—Benson had given them, implying he wore it for them to identify him. They'll ignore the PCs at first (unless PCs already have their guns out, or have gone the "tranq and grab" route). So, PCs might not realize they're the competition for a minute or two. Once H-team realizes what's up, they'll give the PCs one chance to "just walk away" before they initiate combat.

H-team will be careful at first to not hurt Fitz (this will be very clear to players) unless and until it looks like they're losing badly. Then they'll gun for Fitz as much if not more than at the PCs.

After one full combat turn, three young Triad Posse (**SR4** p. 276) will start firing pistols from across the plaza, causing any remaining civilians to flee. This delay is because they're assessing the situation: any PCs with a Triad Faction of 3 or greater will be recognized and not get fired upon. If at least half of the PC team has a Triad Faction of 3 or greater, the Triad group will focus entirely on H-team. If the PCs have an average Triad faction rating of -3 or lower, the Triads will immediately call in a Knight Errant SWAT team (Use 6 members of Red Samurai Detachment **SR4** p 276.) They will arrive in (10 – TR) combat rounds.

If Fitz takes any damage, he will attempt to duck behind an overturned table (or he'll overturn one himself) and activate his prototype. If no-one checks on him, he will emerge one combat round later...but with a different face. Marvin is 48 and he emerges looking 28, and different enough to not be immediately recognized: his hair is darker and shinier, his thick glasses are gone, and his jawline is more pronounced. If the PCs aren't paying specific attention they might not realize it's still him unless they stop to check what he's wearing: the device doesn't change your clothes, only your face. If anyone is actively using cracking skills at this time, have them make a Logic + Electronics Warfare (2) test. On success, they'll notice a low-level, localized spike coming from "nearby." However, they won't be able to identify Fitz as the source of the spike.

Something goes wrong with it, though, because he's due to take his meds and he left them on the desk! He will slowly try to leave without getting shot further, but in one full combat round from activation, he will

start having what looks like a mild epileptic fit. It will get worse over the next two combat rounds until it is close to Grand Mal in appearance, at which point his DocWagon bracelet will activate. How long DocWagon takes to arrive depends on whether the PCs chose to talk their way into and out of the plaza or did a too-quick snatch and grab. (see **Another Fine Mess**)

This is still a public place they're in, with all that it entails! People are watching, as are a number of cameras. Make sure you consider the implications of dozens of innocent and unarmed bystanders as gunplay and area effect spells are unleashed.

After the first round of combat, have the players make a test using just their Kirillov Faction (2). (PCs with negative faction may spend Edge on a long shot test as normal, if they wish.) On success they'll notice that they recognize a few members of the opposition as Vory enforcers. If the PCs quickly win the battle, surviving opposition can reveal that they were working for the Kirillov Vory. Alternatively, inspecting any of their commlinks will reveal that the interface is set to Russian. Mikael Petrov's Matrix ID will be listed in the "Recent Calls" section.

Debugging

They're in the central plaza of a busy shopping center. It's a very public place. If they're taking too long (you will want 45 minutes to an hour to run the last scene and take care of Missions paperwork), Knight-Errant will come and scare away the remaining H-team.

If Fitz is hurt at the end of this scene but there's less than 45min or so left in the session, have one of the PCs notice the DocWagon bracelet starting to blink. They will probably want to leave the bracelet behind and flee quickly, but if H-team was successful and took Fitz from them, the PCs might choose to let DocWagon show up and do the rest of their fighting for them.

Pushing The Envelope

Depending how long they take, Knight Errant security guards and/or more Triad gangers will come in. Triad gangers would get mostly beaten, then retreat with the implication of reinforcements, but this gives PCs a nice window in which to vacate the premises.



Another Fine Mess (Optional)

What's up Chummer?

If they've chosen not to negotiate with Fitz (say, by swooping in and grabbing him), or if they did but breezed through it with little in character interaction, the bioware triggers Fitz's DocWagon bracelet that he forgot to remove when he left his house. A DocWagon Response Team will take until the end of **Beware Hostile Takeovers** to arrive.

Tell it to them straight

Why is Marvin's face twitching? And why, when he puts his hands up to his face to try to calm the muscles, is there a glint on his wrist that you don't remember noticing before? A pulsing glint. A red pulsing glint. A red, pulsing glint in the shape of the DocWagon logo. Oh, bloody hell.

Behind the Scenes

Run this scene only if the players did not roleplay/negotiate with Marvin, either by tactics or player-style, *and* if there's more than an hour remaining in the session after **Beware Hostile Takeovers** has finished, *and* if the PCs themselves are not too badly hurt. If they have fun negotiating and roleplaying in **Show Initiative** but then appear to be mopping up H-Team, do not run this scene: use the "Pushing The Envelope" within **Show Initiative** instead.

A DocWagon High Threat Response Team (use Renraku Red Samurai, **SR4** p.276) is responding to Fitz's bracelet, which has triggered for one of the following reasons:

- The stress of being kidnapped sent his blood pressure skyrocketing and he's about to go into cardiac arrest.
- A tranquilizer (whether chemical or "percussive") the PCs used on him is reacting with the meds he's on and he's having a seizure.
- He was badly wounded.

How they behave depends on how badly hurt the PCs are as a result of **Beware Hostile Takeovers**. They will not immediately fire on anyone who is already halfway down on their Physical Damage Track (Condition Monitor), opting to shoot less-damaged or undamaged PCs first. They will also not shoot anyone immediately adjacent to Marvin unless the target is foolish enough to hold a gun to Marvin's head thinking the "hostage tactic" will work. Other than that, it will be a standard firefight as they try to rescue their client and take him to their facility for medical attention.

Debugging

This scene is meant to fill things out for the session if the table is heavily combat oriented, not to create a bloodbath. If the PCs are getting badly hurt the HTRT will offer a ceasefire "if they hand over the client." Their contract involves returning Marvin to Wellmind, so the PCs will still "succeed" but get paid half unless they negotiate. Instead of **Unhappy Returns**, things are taken care of with Benson via commlink call and transfer of funds.



Unhappy Returns

What's up Chummer?

The players have a number of options to choose from.

Tell it to them straight

If Fitz is alive and OK or only mildly hurt:

Good job! But now what? Clearly there was more going on here than you thought to start with.

If Fitz is badly hurt:

Well, now you've gone and done it. This guy may be a nobody, but he's an important nobody as far as your Johnson is concerned—he specifically said he wanted Marvin brought home safe—and now he's barely holding on. Anybody got a medkit?

If Fitz is dead:

Well now you've gone and done it. This guy may have been a nobody, but he was an important nobody as far as your Johnson was concerned and now you've gone and let him get killed. Looks like you don't have too many options, but you need to figure out something and fast...starting with, how to get out of here and what to do with the body.

Behind the Scenes

Encourage the players to stay in character as they decide or debate what to do. Solutions for their more likely choices follow:

- **Return Fitz to Benson** at Wellmind Enterprises, which is what they're getting paid to do. Benson will have them meet at the convention center, in the same conference room which he had reserved for the entire day. He will mention that he's arranged a security detail to escort Marvin home from there. There are four Wellmind Security employees in the room now as well, two just inside the door on either side. They appear relaxed. Benson will be falling over apologizing to Fitz as to the ordeal Fitz just went through, *making no mention of it having been Marvin's attempt to leave* but still saying he'll make it up to Fitz by getting his status changed. This will provide Marvin with

extra security so that he doesn't get "stolen" so easily again, with the added benefit that all his earlier perks will be restored. Forgiven? Marvin says he guesses so, but will then shoot the PCs a look as if to say he's *wiser* now.

- **Bring Fitz to Vory** for possible bounty. If one of them has a Vory contact they can use that person to set things up. Alternatively, if a member of H-team survived they could interrogate to get *their* Johnson's contact info. Failing that, some discreet Street inquiries will yield H-team's Johnson: Mikael Petrov, who the PCs might have met in SRM02-16, *Primal Forces*. They will be offered 1500¥ * (TR² + 2TR) *total*, not per person. This is not subject to negotiation.
- **Bring Fitz to Harbortech office**, since they think that's where he wants to go. They're not expecting him! They didn't actually hire him! Harbortech's facility is in the warehouse district of CAS sector. The receptionist is very helpful and welcoming towards the "new employee"...until she checks her computer. They have no record of anyone named Fitz—Marvin or otherwise—being brought on board anytime in the next six months. If they are insistent, a skinny man in "shirt and tie" will come out and nervously apologize for any misunderstandings. He'll question the PCs and Marvin briefly, and then insist that Harbortech did not recruit Mr. Fitz. He will not divulge whether anyone named Jarrod works for Harbortech, but explain that all offers of employment originate from their parent company's Alaska headquarters after thorough review and approval. If they tell him about the firefight, he will be alarmed: Even if Harbortech did occasionally "assist potential employees in obtaining releases from former obligations where prior employers are hesitant," (and he's not saying they do), they certainly wouldn't involve such a display in the middle of a lunch crowd where people might get hurt. He assures the PCs that they will investigate the matter, and that if someone did attempt to initiate hiring proceedings without going through proper channels they will certainly be

disciplined. He will gladly give Marvin some paperwork to fill out, should he wish to apply for a position. Someone will get back to him within a few weeks.

- **Kill him deliberately** (thus destroying the bioware implant). They can't destroy the implant without killing him. A short meet with Benson at the convention center should follow, though it's possible they might choose to take the body elsewhere (see below). There will not be the security detail mentioned above. Benson will still pay them (though only half of their original agreement, and this is non-negotiable: they were hired to protect and retrieve Marvin first and foremost). After all, they went through all that trouble and they *did* prevent the implant from getting out. Benson will appear morose until the PCs are ready to leave, then he'll seem to muster up a "show must go on" face. Truth is, Fitz's death will be easier for Benson to report (and explain away) than a botched thievery would have been.
- **Help him "go underground."** If they want to assist him in obtaining a fake SIN and relocating, they can. Only their existing contacts may be used. Marvin will not suggest this idea, but can easily be convinced it's the "only safe option" if that's what the PCs decide. Marvin remembers having a distant cousin in Topeka he might be able to stay with briefly while getting re-established somewhere.

- **Sell him out to someone else entirely**—maybe a Syndicate they have a better rapport with than Vory—for possible bounty. An existing contact must be used. The PCs would be offered 25¥ more per person than Wellmind is paying them, unless they have a Faction rating of 3 or higher with whoever they're selling him to in which case they are offered 100¥*(TR+1) more per person "take it or leave it."
- **If he was otherwise killed**, the PCs could bring his body to either Wellmind or some other Syndicate (see above). However, in either case, they will only get half of what they would have if he were alive. The bioware will be much harder to reverse-engineer without the designer to interrogate first, so there's a greater risk of failure which could render it worthless.

Debugging

If the players can't agree on what to do with Marvin, Marvin will decide (if he's conscious) to go home. "And then what," he doesn't know. Hopefully that will nudge the PCs into deciding, if only to convince Marvin what to do so they can get paid.

If they initially reject both Wellmind and Vory but can't seem to think of other options, Marvin will ask to be taken to Harbortech thinking the Vory were just intercepting him.

Picking up the Pieces

Money

Each PC should get 500¥ for the initial meet, if they showed up on time.

In addition, if they return Marvin to Wellmind they will also receive 1200¥ * (TR+1) per character, subject to negotiation. If Marvin was killed and they return his body to Wellmind, or if he was so badly hurt that DocWagon took him, they will receive half this amount.

If they bring him to the Vory, each PC should receive an equal share of the 1500¥ * (TR² + 2TR) sum.

If they try to sell him to someone else entirely, they will receive either 1200¥*(TR+1) + 25¥, or 1300¥*(TR+1) depending on their Faction rating.

Karma

1 – Returning Marvin to Wellmind.

1 – Attempting to talk Marvin into accompanying them rather than resorting to violence.

1 – Successfully avoiding violence at Happy Canyon other than that dictated by **Beware Hostile Takeovers**.

An additional 1-3 points of Karma may be awarded for good role-playing, a good sense of humor, or a particularly insightful action. The maximum adventure award for SRM characters who played this adventure is 6 karma.

Faction

Kirillov Vory: Returning Marvin to Wellmind will earn the PCs 1 point of negative faction with the Kirillov Vory. Bringing Marvin to a Vory contact will earn the PCs 1 point of positive faction. Injuring or killing any Vory-affiliated NPCs will earn each PC 1 point of negative faction.

Triad: Attempting to violently abduct Fitz at Happy Canyon will earn each PC 1 point of negative faction with the Triad. If they attempted negotiations, the Triad will believe the Vory instigated the situation so the PCs will earn 1 point of positive faction. (Unless more than half the PCs have a Triad Faction rating of +3 or greater as described in **Beware Hostile Takeovers**, in which case there's no change)

Yakuza: Returning Marvin to Wellmind will earn the PCs 1 point of positive faction with the Yakuza due to Wellmind's corporate ties. All other outcomes will earn the PCs 1 point of negative faction.

Reputation

Switching sides to assist the Vory instead of their original contractor will earn the team one (1) point of Notoriety.

Contacts

Characters who successfully complete the job for Benson, earn Tabby as a contact at Loyalty 1. If a character already has Tabby as a contact, they earn +1 loyalty with her, to a maximum of 4.

Legwork

When a PC gets in touch with a contact, make a Connection + Connection test for the contact. The results of this test will determine how many ranks of information the contact knows about the question. (Apply die modifiers to this test based upon relevance of the contact to the subject matter.) A PC then makes a test of Charisma + Etiquette + Loyalty rating. The contact will reveal that many levels of information about that topic for free. (Up to the number of hits scored by the contact for that topic.) If the contact knows more, additional information will require a payment to the contact of 50¥ * TR.

If the PCs have worked all of their contacts, and are still missing important information, they may ask a contact to ask around. If they do so, have the Contact make an extended (Connection + Connection (20 minutes)) test. Additional information will be available at a cost of 200¥ * TR.

A Data Search may also be utilized to gather information from the following charts. They may only make a number of Logic + Data Search rolls times equal to their dice pool (**SR4** p.58). Hits on this extended test may be substituted per the standard Data Search chart (**SR4** p.220).

Wellmind Enterprises

1. Hey! Don't they make that NuvoDerm skin care line? My sister swears by it.
2. It's a biotech firm located in UCAS sector. Cosmetics/vanity products, mostly.
3. They're a subsidiary of Shiawase
4. Word is their new anti-aging product is going to knock the competition out of the market...if they can ever get it out of R&D, that is.

Marvin Fitz

1. Graduated academically at the top of his class at Colorado Tech twenty-six years ago. Hired by Wellmind upon graduation.
2. Master's Thesis was on "Triggering Non-Malignant Cellular Regeneration in Laboratory Mice." Rumor has it he was courted when he first registered the topic.
3. Is named under several patents that Wellmind holds, all specifically within the regenerative and restorative fields. The core NuvoDerm formula is one of them.
4. His personnel file indicates he has only held two positions since joining the company: researcher and senior researcher. Notes indicate he is one level below attaining "tenure" and has met all requirements, but his status change requires a form yet to be submitted by his supervisor.

Harold Benson

1. Holds a Bachelor's in Bioengineering from Colorado State. Began working at Wellmind seven years ago after a five-year stint at a contract Forensics lab.
2. Began as a researcher on a team adjacent to Marvin's.
3. Lost his certification last year, due to failure to fill out his own paperwork by the deadline—he submitted it a full month late, asking for "special dispensation" after the fact.

Harbortech

1. Their office is in CAS sector.
2. They're new to Denver, just opened two years ago.
3. Their corporate HQ is in Juneau, AK
4. Harbortech is a subsidiary of Evo.
5. Many Harbortech employees in Denver have Vory ties

Cast of Shadows

Martin Fitz

Human Male; Connection Rating 1

B A R S C I L W E S S I N I T I P P M S M

3 5 3 3 3 5 6 2 5.7 8 1 10 9

Active Skills: Negotiation: 2; Medicine: 2; Etiquette: (Geek) 4(6); Cybertechnology (Bioware): 6(8);

Knowledge Skills: Professional Knowledge (Medical): 4; Genetics: 4; Biology: 3; Chemistry: 3; Twentieth Century “Science Fiction” Cinema: 3; Professional Knowledge (Superhero Figurines/Collectables): 5.

Cyberware: Experimental “Youth” implant

Marvin Fitz is 48 years old. He’s average in all physical ways: an even 2m tall, with light brown eyes and mouse brown hair that’s starting to thin. His build is on the skinny side, because he forgets to eat sometimes when he’s deep into a research problem, but his face is closer to average with slightly doughy lines. He is extremely near-sighted and wears old-fashioned horn rim eyeglasses that are thick—last century they would have been called “coke-bottle bottoms”—because he doesn’t want eye surgery or replacements. There’s nothing rational about it. He’s fine with brain surgery just *don’t touch his eyes*. Look into those eyes, though, and you’ll see his intelligence is far above average.

The problem is that it’s all book-smarts because he hasn’t gotten out much since recruitment while still an undergrad at Colorado Tech, where he graduated with honors. In his twenty-six years with Wellmind, he’s been taught loyalty of a sort not seen since the 1950s. It’s taken him until now to become disillusioned because this is the first he’s been betrayed. The company

has just cut his benefits, tying them to impossible performance goals. He wants out. He talks just a little too much over his whiskey sour, which he doesn’t actually like. He drinks it, because of what he thinks it says about him. That he’s more assertive than he really is. He’s seen “extractions” on TV dramas and fancies himself a Johnson. He’s naïve enough to believe it’s actually working. If and when he learns it’s all been a set-up, it will crush him.

Fitz is the lead research tech on a new bioware implant to enable cellular regeneration (useful for anti-aging applications, among other things) He enjoys his work. He’d be tinkering with biotech even if they didn’t pay him, which is part of why he didn’t notice his raises every year have been barely enough to cover cost of living. In the beginning, his boss was nervous that Marvin was trying to compensate for having no home life. The fact is Marvin is personally obsessed.

There doesn’t seem to be room for anything else. Really there is—old movies. Specifically, Marvin loves old “science fiction” movies, especially ones that they take place before 2070. He loves comparing what they thought tech would be like by a certain year with what the tech actually was.

He relates to his co-workers easily enough and is a very active member of the project team. He’s very good at getting help from other departments when needed. Though, he is mostly solitary otherwise. If his teammates don’t want to talk about work over lunch, he’ll sit and smile at their discussion but won’t participate in the conversation.

Marvin is thoughtful, choosing his words carefully so that he’s not talking down to his listener despite clearly being more intelligent than they are, meanwhile trying to avoid “dumbing down” his words as well.

Harold Benson

Dwarf Male; Connection Rating 2

B A R S C I L W E D G E S S I N I T I P C M

5 3 3 3 4 4 4 5 1 6 7 1 10

Active Skills: Negotiation: 3; Etiquette (Corp): 2(4); *Athletics*: 2; Cybertechnology (Bioware): 4(6);

Knowledge Skills: Biology: 4; Chemistry: 3; Business Administration: 2; Dwarven Professional Soccer League: 2.

Harold is Marvin's boss. He doesn't hate Marvin, and didn't actively have his benefits taken away, but isn't affected himself, so there's not as much sympathy as there would be if they were in it together. He does see Marvin as lacking ambition, though by the same token he's relieved to have at least one subordinate not gunning for his job. He values Marvin as a hard worker who has an obvious passion for his field.

Harold hates paperwork. It's a necessary evil to get his people what they need, but sometimes they don't get it, and it's because he didn't fill out the forms in time. He lies and tells them things were rejected and (if they react badly to the news) that he's appealing. Harold isn't spying on Marvin, but a routine checkup brought a piece of communication across his desk. He needs to put a stop to the extraction Marvin's arranged for himself, but now he can't fill out the paperwork (for an in-house team) because a) there's not enough time b) other paperwork he didn't do will make the process longer. The same paperwork that would have made Marvin "irreplaceable" would have also lessened the indentured servitude into which they just shifted him. He has no one to blame but himself, and he knows it. He hates paperwork, and gets mental blocks at administrative deadlines even when it's his own career advancement that's on the line. He'll try to fix it later. Right now, the most important thing is to get Marvin back.

Harold's hair is blonde, and kept short in an "office worker" cut. He uses reading glasses that he keeps in his vest pocket. He's wearing a full business suit (with vest) when the PCs meet him, and he's the sort of person who dresses "business casual" (collared shirts and khakis) even when knocking around the house on a Saturday afternoon.

H-Team

Table Rating will determine how many members are on the team. At TR 1, there are three. For each additional TR, there is one more member. Alternate adding additional members between *Vory Enforcer One* and *Vory Enforcer Two*.

Taijha

Ork Female; Connection Rating 2

B A R S C I L W E S S M I N I T I P M S M

5 2 3 4 4 5 4 5 6 6 7 1 11 11

Active Skills: Assensing: 2; Perception: 3; *Conjuring*: 5; Unarmed Combat: 2; *Sorcery*: 4

Knowledge Skills: Magical Theory: 4

Gear: Armor Jacket, Sustaining Focus (Rating 4, Force 4 Chaotic World)

Spells: Chaotic World, Flamethrower, One less (Human), Heal, Manabolt

Qualities: Magician, Mentor Spirit (Dark King)

An ork woman of Carribean descent, she wears a black suit with skirt and sunglasses. Taijha married into the Vory extended family through Mikael's cousin. Her talents have made her an excellent addition to the syndicate. As a follower of Ghede, she provides a steady flow of souls to pass through the crossroads.

Taijha is accompanied by TR Force 4 corpses, possessed by spirits. (GM discretion for type.)

Vory Enforcer One

B A R S C I L W E S S I N I T I P C M

4 5 5(6) 4 3 4 3 4 3.8 9(10) 2 10

Active Skills: *Athletics*: 2; Dodge: 4; *Firearms*: 5; Perception: 3; Unarmed Combat: 4

Gear: AK-97 with Explosive Rounds and external Smartgun System, Armor Jacket

Cyberware: Cybereyes with flare compensation, Smartlink, Wired Reflexes 1

Vory Enforcer Two

B A R S C I L W E S S I N I T I P C M

4 5 5(6) 4 3 4 3 4 3.8 9(10) 2 10

Active Skills: *Athletics*: 2; Blades: 5; Throwing Weapons: 4; Unarmed Combat: 4

Gear: Throwing Knives, Combat Axe, Armor Jacket

Cyberware: Cybereyes with flare compensation, Smartlink, Wired Reflexes 1

Mikael Petrov

Human Male; Connection Rating 4
B A R S C I L W E S S I N I T I P C M
3 4 4(6) 3 4 5 3 4 4.3 9(11) 1 11
Active Skills: Clubs: 3; Infiltration: 2;
Intimidation: 3; Leadership: 2; Perception: 3;
Pistols: 4; Unarmed Combat: 4
Knowledge Skills: Law Enforcement: 4
Cyberware: Reaction Enhancers 2,
Cyberarm, Smartlink
Gear: Armor Jacket, Browning Max-Power
with Smartlink, Defiance Super Shock, Stun
Baton

Gentlemanly on the surface, Mikael is a scorpion in a silk suit. As a high ranking Avtoritey lieutenant, Mikael is always dressed to the nines and appears more suited for a boardroom than meeting with criminals. Cresting six foot with close cropped black hair and dark brown eyes, Mikael speaks with a heavy accent that is only a few years removed from St Petersburg.

He disdains killing not because of moral restraint but rather the manpower concerns that can later build up if care isn't taken. Because his companions often forget these concerns, the Russian disapproves of violence for its own sake and prefers to use the exact amount of force necessary. Enormously patient, Mikael only loses his temper in the face of impatience and violence. Having lost his left arm to a childhood accident, he does his best to conceal the cybernetic replacement.

Tabitha "Tabby" Morgan

Changeling Female; Connection Rating 3
B A R S C I L W E S S I N I T I P C M
3 3 3 3 5 5 4 5 5.7 8 1 10
Active Skills: Con: 4; Dodge: 2; Electronics
Skill Group: 2; Etiquette: 5; Ground Craft
(Car): 2 (+2); Intimidation: 3; Negotiation: 5;
Perception: 3; Pistols: 2

Tabby is a human female, 1.7m who weighs in at 62 kg. Athletic and furry are two of the first words to come to mind when describing her. She has tawny two-toned fur and cat slit eyes. (Note these do not give her night vision)

She worked as a face for a shadowrun team until Halley's comet made its last pass. With SURGE came a need to re-invent herself. She shortened her name to Tabby and started talking to some of her fixers about how to make it on the other side of the table. Still fairly new to the game, she is trying to hide her past transgressions (running) but will admit to them when directly questioned.

On the surface, she's playful and to the point. It's said that Tabby believes that she has the nine lives of a cat. Four of them have been used already in circumstances she's not willing to comment on, but she has five to go. Underneath, is a woman who had her sense of self-identity stripped away from her by a random surge of ambient mana.

Tabby is still bitter about the fact that she had to stop running. Her changed appearance made her a "liability for the team" and she noticed that people stopped calling with jobs that required stealth. Since the day her team walked away from her, she's been running from the part of herself that remembers the thrill of adrenaline coursing through her veins and the veiled threats between runners and Johnsons. SINless, she couldn't get a job working within any part of real society so she stayed out in the fringe.

Specializing in Corporate politics, Tabby tries to avoid dealing directly with the syndicates whenever possible. She is based primarily in the CAS sector and does occasional work in the Hub or outlying sectors of Denver when a favor is called in from her associates.