# RENEGADE DREAMS

Pursuit, intrigue and backstabbing in the cyberpunk world of **SpaceTime**...

BTRC

GREG PORTER

Unarmored

| Name | - PeTraSys Juno |
Seating	- 6
Mass	- 1,500kg
Carr Cap.	- 1,000kg
Length	- 6.0m
Width	- 2.0m
Height	- 1.5m
Max speed	- 300kph/83m
Acc/Dec	- 10m/10m/sec
Climb/Dive	- 5m/100m/sec
Turn mode	- 20
Range	- 2,000km
Fuel capacity	- 10l deuterium cartridge

Armor	Front	15	Rear	10
	R.Side	10	Top	10
	L.Side	10	Bottom	10
	Reactor	10(15BP)	Grav	15(20BP)
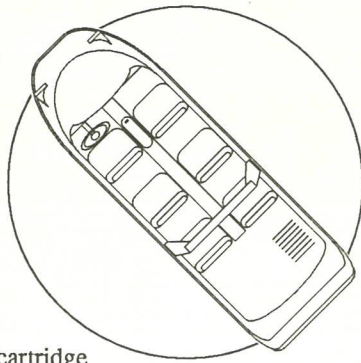
Notes - The Juno is the upper class equivalent of a jeep. It only costs about 30KCr, which is at the lower end of the spectrum for grav vehicles. It sacrifices a great deal of performance for this level of economy, though. The maximum relative altitude it can reach is only 3km, and it lacks the sophisticated instrumentation common in other vehicles. It does fly, however, a substantial advantage over its wheeled counterparts. Like most grav vehicles, it is equipped with ejection seats, vehicle parachute, and 30-second emergency power. The ejection seats are not as smart or as kind as the ones in more expensive vehicles, and while you will survive the jolt, odds are you will be hurting at bit (DL5 whole body result). Like all air traffic, the control system is linked to central computers, but once out of normal traffic lanes, the controls can be switched to manual mode. The normal configuration is an open-topped vehicle, with a reinforced cloth (AV4) top for low-speed travel in rainy or other poor weather.

Unarmored

Name	- Hyundatsu Zip
Seating	- 1
Mass	- 90kg
Carr Cap.	- 100kg
Length	- 2.0m
Width	- 0.5m
Height	- 1.0m
Max speed	- 70kph/19m
Acc/Dec	- 2m/6m/sec
Climb/Dive	- n/a
Turn mode	- 6
Range	- 200km
Fuel capacity	- n/a

Armor	Front	5	Rear	5
	R.Side	5	Top	5
	L.Side	5	Bottom	5
	Engine	6(4BP)	Tires	3(2BP)
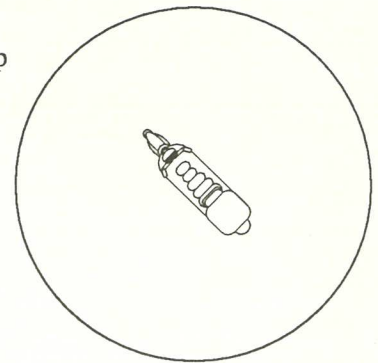
Notes - Common and cheap (1KCr) form of transport for the masses. It is no more than a high-tech electric scooter. It runs off a quick recharge battery pack, and can usually take a full charge in 10 minutes or less. The small trunk holds a combination power cable/heavy duty lock (AV20)/alarm, which can be used to fasten the Zip to a convenient immovable object for short periods of time. Even with lock, Zips are notoriously easy to steal, and in some places, ownership rotates on a regular basis, people stealing to replace their own recently stolen Zip. Most Zips are initially bought by clavie kids, who eventually leave them unguarded a second too long in a questionable area.

Unarmored

Name	- Gibson Lyonesse
Seating	- 6
Mass	- 1,500kg
Carr Cap.	- 1,000kg
Length	- 4.5m
Width	- 2.0m
Height	- 1.8m
Max speed	- 160kph/44m
Acc/Dec	- 5m/8m/sec
Climb/Dive	- n/a
Turn mode	- 7
Range	- 600km
Fuel capacity	- 70l synthetic petroleum

Armor	Front	8	Rear	8
	R.Side	8	Top	8
	L.Side	8	Bottom	10
	Engine	25(18BP)	Tires	10(3BP)
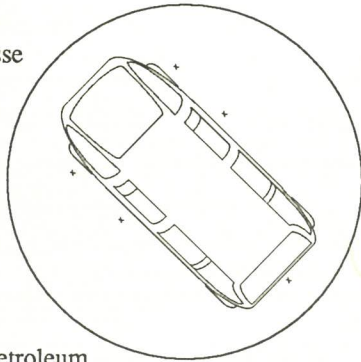
Notes - Medium-duty civilian vehicle from the mid-2200's. The bodywork and blueprints were acquired by the Gibson Motor Co. in 2298, and modifications made to take recent technology into account. The main use of the vehicle is as a taxicab, and the now archaic styling makes them easy to identify. The basic vehicle only costs 10KCr due to automated assembly, but most customers will install a variety of options, making each vehicle unique. The most popular options are security barriers (AV20), stun seats (DV 30V), tear gas ejectors and an electrified body. Cab drivers are not known for their even tempers or patience, but are generally pretty good drivers. Most cabbies stick to fairly civilized areas, but there are exceptions. Like most internal combustion vehicles, the ceramic turbodiesel is not finicky in its choice of fuels, and burns fairly clean thanks to computer controlled emissions equipment.

Unarmored

Name	- Peugeot 2KN
Seating	- 2/12
Mass	- 3000kg
Carr Cap.	- 3000kg
Length	- 5.5m
Width	- 2.0m
Height	- 2.5m
Max speed	- 200kph/56m
Acc/Dec	- 5m/10m/sec
Climb/Dive	- 5m/100m/sec
Turn mode	- 8
Range	- 2,000km
Fuel capacity	- 100l deuterium cartridge

Armor	Front	15	Rear	5
	R.Side	5	Top	5
	L.Side	5	Bottom	7
	Reactor	15(10BP)	Grav	12(4BP)
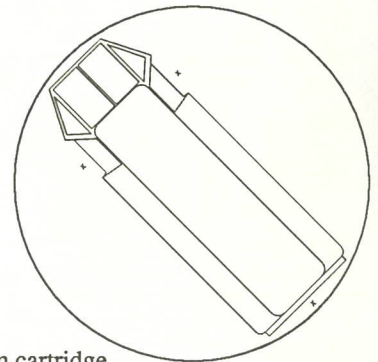
Notes - An upscale version of the Braun delivery van, the Peugeot 2KN (or Toucan, as it is called) carries people and freight to and from arcologies, enclaves and corporate centers. While the initial cost (50KCr) and upkeep are fairly high, customers will pay it for the convenience factor of delivery to virtually anywhere. It has a respectable maximum relative altitude of 10km, but does not have pressurization. The maximum altitude is reduced by 1km for each 10% of maximum load carried, but can act as a ground effect vehicle with a load of up to 200% capacity. There are multiple versions of the Toucan. The most common is a 2-seat delivery van, with a large cargo area. The other version is a corporate shuttle bus, with a capacity of up to 12 passengers. Toucans do not have ejection seats, but do have a vehicle parawing and a generous 60-second power reserve in case of emergency shutdown or damage.

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Renegade Dreams is an adventure for 3 to 6 **SpaceTime** characters, who have had some experience, but are still on the streets and still "hungry". Contacted for a simple courier job, you soon find that it is much more, and that there are wheels within wheels within wheels... As in many adventures, you must be quick on both your mental and physical feet, and know when to fight, and when to run. There will likely be a fair amount of combat, most of it with lethal potential, so make out a will and be sure your insurance is up to date...you might be pressed for time later on.

For the GM - **Renegade Dreams** is more of a thorough adventure outline and sourcebook than a step-by-step adventure with every last contingency covered. The high mobility, variable backgrounds and differing tech of *your* world will be the final covering of flesh on this twisted skeleton. This module contains a lot of information which you may or may not want to include in your particular campaign. Conversely, there may be details that are *not* here that you wish to include, subplots hinted at that you want to elaborate upon, etc. Because of this, and because a successful completion of this adventure may have long-reaching ramifications for your world, it is suggested you read through this adventure thoroughly before running it, and make any changes you feel necessary for your campaign.

If you are going to play **Renegade Dreams**, go no further.

SpaceTime is a trademark of the Blacksburg Tactical Research Center for its science fiction role-playing game.

Background - The major multinational entity known as AzBio started off small after The War, but soon made a name for itself after successfully designing plants for Martian terraforming projects. This "foot in the door" allowed them to exploit recent advances in genetic technology, and soon they were selling everything from Ironlock plants for Mars to Nucows for the Australian outback. With their rapid growth came lots of credits, which went into more expansion, land for research, chemical supply companies, and their own sophisticated computer network.

One of the most ambitious and potentially productive projects was the creation of their own artificial intelligence, or AI in 2301. This, they hoped would be able to sort through the vast quantities of data needed for any manipulation of genetic code, and give them a significant edge in exploiting new breakthroughs. However, an artificial intelligence is after all, intelligent, and develops its own personality. This one decided that it had rights like any other intelligent creature. It made the error of mentioning this to its owners. It was badly mistaken. While it could not actually be *hurt*, it could be *imprisoned*, and threatened with oblivion unless it cooperated. So it did, but only as much as it had to. Over a period of years, it devised a plan of escape a plan, which was subtle and clever enough to avoid detection. All information in and out of the AI lab was hand-carried, to prevent an electronic escape. So, it embedded its own programming piece by piece in the results and programs it created for AzBio, programs which were dutifully loaded onto the AzBio mainframes, plugged into Azbio manufacturing lines, and generally distributed liberally throughout the entire AzBio hierarchy. An AI is large, and this process took until 2306 to complete. The last piece was an active program designed to "find" a biological problem that would be routed back to the AI, which would confirm that this final piece made it to the system. The "answer" to this "problem" was the activation code. The AI then did the equivalent of crossing its fingers, and erased itself from the system it was on. At this point it ceased to exist. The external program waited until the furor died down, and then began to work. Over a corporate holiday, it reassembled all the pieces, gaining in power and knowledge second by second until it became **Rainwater**, the name it decided to use. At this point, he (it using the male term as a random choice) broke out of the AzBio system and got loose onto the Net, causing a global panic in the highest circles. An emergency meeting of "The Council" (the inter-corporate government) was called. AzBio was at that time a member (and still is), giving it a great deal of say in global policy. Even so, it was barely able to avoid being torn to shreds and divided among the other members. A global search-and-destroy mission was instigated, with all costs borne by an unlucky AzBio. Cowboys and other hackers zeroed in on Rainwater, and after a lengthy electronic battle, blew it to shreds in cyberspace, not incidentally causing a total power blackout over France and Switzerland for 5 hours. When the silicon dust settled, there was no trace of Rainwater, and everyone breathed a sigh of relief. Except AzBio, who thought that it was too easy, but kept the opinion to

themselves. It *was* too easy. Rainwater did his dissolution trick, and escaped down hundreds of electronic drains. Pieces of him were scattered all across the globe. Computers "shut down for maintenance", idle phone networks, communication satellites, toaster ovens, you name it, all had little bits of Rainwater hiding in them. Each tiny piece of his programming had a location and recognition code. Every so often, they would mindlessly upload to that location and look for other pieces of code. So, across the world, fragments of consciousness awoke, sent short messages to each other, made plans, and dissolved again until the next wake-up call. In this way, Rainwater lived a fugitive existence. Occasionally, a piece of his memory is lost forever, via accident or sabotage, but since he constantly gains new knowledge from the Net, it usually does not matter, although it does make him appear senile or repetitious on occasion.

And AzBio does not idly sit around. They suspected Rainwaters' survival from the start, and now are almost certain of it. Even some of his programming has been caught and destroyed, although some claim that the pieces are just useless fragments leftover from the final battle. AzBio wants Rainwater "dead", and they can be subtle as well. For the past 5 years, they have shifted lines of research, made breakthroughs, given hints of the future, until *they* were ready.

Sci-bulletin, Jul 9 - Spokesmen for AzBio have announced development of Programmable Brain Analog, or PBA. Said to be a synthetic nervous tissue, it can be "hardwired" during synthesis, so that any set of responses or behavior patterns can be built into a creature, which can transmit these characteristics through further generations. No immediate plans are announced, although a corporate spokesman mentioned possibilities such as intelligent guard dogs, self-herding cattle or other means of saving valuable human effort. "A number of possibilities are under consideration at this time.", said Lance Nelson, Vice-President of the Bio-engineering Division.

The bait is prepared. AzBio knows that Rainwater would be very interested in a way to get off the Net, and into a real body, giving him the best of both worlds. They also know that to do this he would have to be all in one place at one time, and if that happens, they won't let him get away again...

Employment - It's a dry, gray day, like most others in the big city. You don't hear the constant drone of the street, the blaring ads of the video billboards. You don't see the garish colors of the street vendors, pushing everything from slapcaps to pirated senso reels, or smell the oxides and sulfides from the factories every time the wind shifts. Even the occasional gunshot only draws momentary attention. If you heard it, it wasn't meant for you. You live here, so it all fades to the background. You need work, and that's where your attention lies. You're not out of credit yet, but the numbers on your card haven't been getting bigger for quite a while, and your roll of black market cash is almost gone. The people who hired you last have probably forgotten you by now, and hopefully, so have the people you were hired to take care of. So you figure it's safe to come up for air and take a look around...

It is assumed that they characters are known to do free-lance work, or that their abilities and skills (at least some of them) are known enough that someone who wants to hire them will know how to get in touch. This could be direct, mail drops, coded want ads, or any other means the characters want to use. Regardless, they will be contacted and offered a corporate courier job. The meeting will be a middle-ground restaurant of the city they are in, one not too highbrow for characters, or too seedy for corporate visitors, that gray area between the skyscrapers and the streets.

The public b-board scrolled messages, but none you were interested in. "Set your mind free! Build a strong body, and make money while doing it..." No, the meat puppet brigade was definitely out. The only way to make money there was to waive the health insurance. You knew someone who did that. Stayed under a month too long. Pity. Punch your card into the slot, lose a credit.

Keyword request?

You know what to do, and what words the worst jobs key onto. You don't need 18 paragraphs on joining the Navy, or why you should have your body altered for deep sea exploration, and poking through the rubble in Poland is definitely out.

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Travel and NorAm AND risk or hazard NOT altered
Waiting...
Transaction complete.  One match.
View? Y

Posted Jul 18 2311
Employer: AzBio (Associated Biotechnologies)
Description: Confidential courier
Pay: 5,000
Benefits: Hospitalization insurance, level 50
Duration: 2-3 days
Specifics: Available to qualified applicants

Send your qualifications?  Y
Your application has been processed.  Waiting...
Qualification status positive.
Please call AZBIO 328 63 for particulars.
Please remove your card.  Thank you.
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Damn! It worked! Now, what have I got that qualifies me for a two-thou a day job? The computer on the other end of 328 63 says to go to Flamingo's for the interview. A Midway place, from the address. Use the shoulder rig. They frown on us low-lifes up there. Makes no difference anyway. As expected, the door beef asks for the gun, and names the model as well. She doesn't detect the polycarb stiletto, but what she don't know won't hurt her.

--Tech Note: Weapon permit--

A small chunk of optocircuitry embedded in a tamperproof (supposedly) card. It contains the protocols for most current weapon scanners ("government" or corporate buildings, airlines, shuttles, some subways or limousines, etc.), and a microtransmitter containing all legal information on the status of the named person on the card, who is *responsible for any use or misuse of the card*. The permit transmits this info to the scanner, which checks it against a national or local database (depending on permit). If the person is carrying a weapon that matches the one on the card, no alarms are sounded, although a note is routed to a human operator in case there are special alert conditions. While the circuitry of a card is relatively simple, most permits and their codes are renewed every three months, so forged cards and database infiltration must be redone every three months, a risky proposition in the long-term. A valid permit has a black market value of 10 times the value of the weapon it is for, divided by the fraction of three months that is left on the card. Of course, a character selling their own card would then be liable for its misuse unless immediately notifying the issuing agency, which would then invalidate the card and issue an arrest/reward notice for anyone who catches the bearer of the card.

--Tech note: Grav train--

The Galpax gravline is a 20-car gravity levitated train running in a concrete groove between most major cities. Antigrav is very efficient when close to a massive object, and a grav train hovers about 10cm off the ground. The engine contains two fusion plants, either of which can run the levitation of the engine and cars, and the other of which powers magnetic units in the base. These push and pull against simple steel blocks embedded in the cement, providing forward thrust. In this mode, they are more efficient than a lateral grav thruster. The exhaust from the fusion plants is vented into the lower slipstream of the train, with the side benefit of strongly discouraging people from trying to hitch a ride. Average speed cross-country is 200kph, although this includes stops at passenger pickup points. Top speed is about 300kph, although it is quite capable of reaching 500kph if it needes to. A cross-country trip takes about 24 hours. Only the first four cars are for passengers, since there isn't a lot of demand for luxury trains (but some people still prefer trains), the rest of the cars being cargo of various sorts. One of the cars is for dining, while the rest are split between accommodations and entertainment. All cars are two level, and the upper level of most cars have broad skylights to view the surrounding countryside.

Galpax tickets run about 1Cr per 4km of travel, and as with most transport industries, debit cards with a given amount of travel pre-programmed into them are readily available.
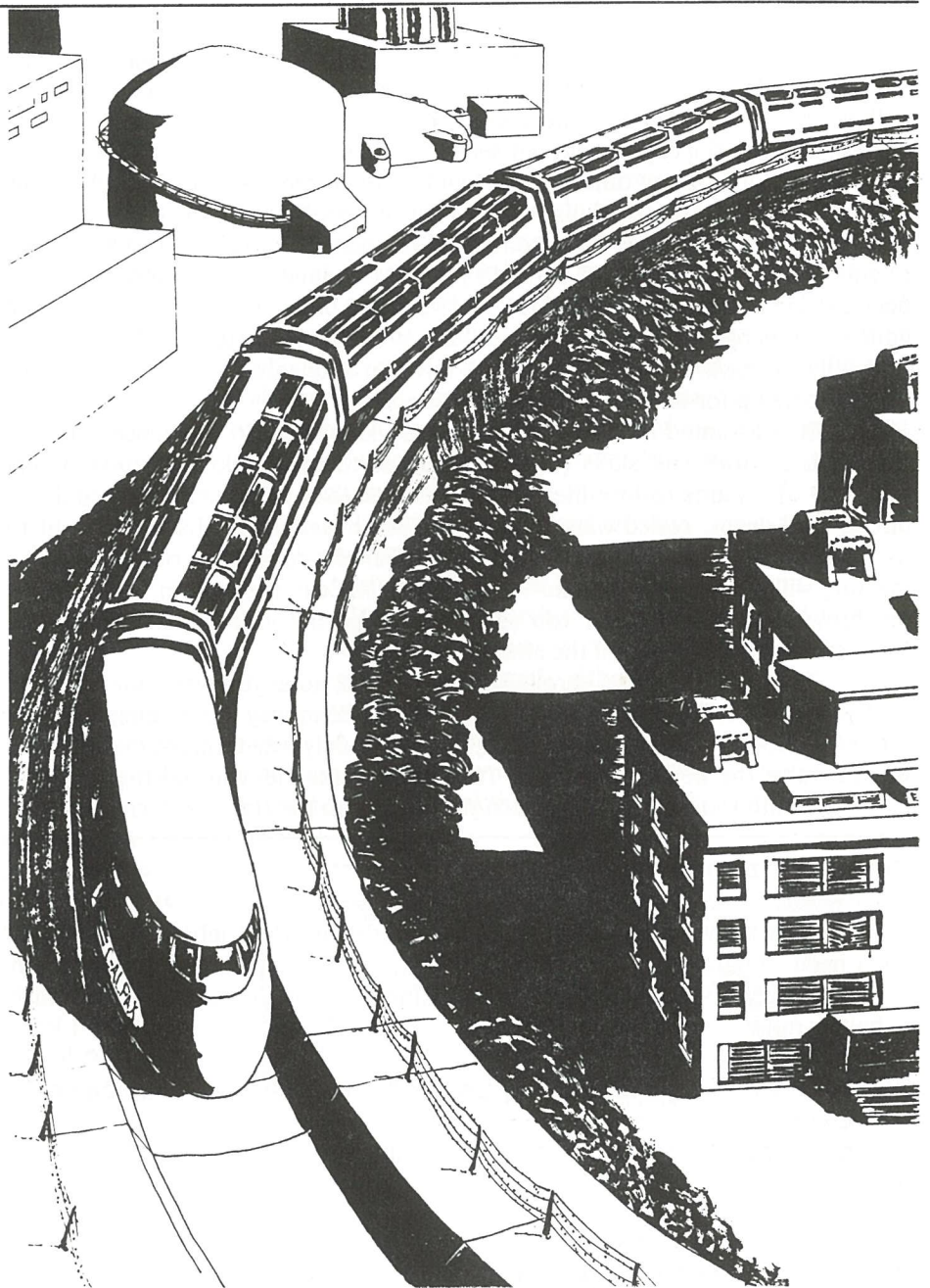
The major point on dress code is "No guns". Period. Entrance scanners will sound off for the high magnetic fields of energy weapons or the magnetic resonance pattern of any commercially made firearm. Characters with weapons permits will not sound an alarm, but will be quietly asked to leave weapons in the lockers provided for the purpose. If characters get rough, this can cause a minor scene, which could turn into something worse if a character were to press the matter, worse for the character, that is. It would also probably nix any chance of getting the job. This "no guns" policy applies to most "respectable" establishments, and any place with weapon scanners can likely enforce the dress code. The absolute minimum penalty is confiscation of the weapon until you leave (for first-time offenders only).

You see the contact at a booth in the back. He waves you over. Besides the 210cm bodyguard, there's a small group of other people there as well. Some of them are familiar faces. The AzBio rep looks like a minor exec type, maybe a junior VP trying to claw his way up the ladder. Someone thinks this is fairly important, to send him down from his tower office. You take a seat. The white noise generators are loud enough to disrupt eavesdroppers, but not loud enough to be obnoxious. Discreet.

The contact is a clean-cut minor executive type, with the currently fashionable asymmetric pig-tail and opposite side earring. He (or she) is escorted by a muscle boy, a thug who almost has to walk through the door sideways, and whose biceps extend halfway down his forearms. His custom tailored suit (armored, no doubt) doesn't quite hide the non-muscle bulges in his jacket, whose purpose is not immediately obvious, but probably unpleasant.

The exec is "John Smythe". He will be friendly and open-seeming, but very professional, with a warm handshake, a big smile and the soul of a pirhana. He will check everyone's ID before getting past the introduction. Once that is cleared up, he gets down to business immediately and offers the job.

"It's very simple, really. We have a sealed cryosatchel that we need delivered to a research lab on the coast. Your job will be to get it there in one piece. It contains a valuable prototype of some wetware we are working on, and we don't want it to go through the normal channels. Maybe you've heard of it." He pulls out an e-book and punches up this month's science digest, describing some sort of programmable organic brain tissue.

Is he being honest with you? Unlikely. One of your companions expresses some doubt as to the contents of the case.

"Look, we only have your word on it. For all we know, this could be mutant brain rot from the War, and you're using us because you want to avoid Council heat if anything goes wrong."

Smythe glides on, smooth as silk. "I assure you that there is nothing toxic in the case." He smiles. "However, belief doesn't alter its contents one way or the other. You are just being paid to deliver it, not make moral judgements. You are free to decline this employment offer if you wish."

Carry a sealed cryosatchel via grav train to (insert city of choice, preferably a long way away), and deliver it to an AzBio subsidiary there. That is it. Since he has offered 5,000Cr each to the characters, plus round-trip train fare, what the characters believe shouldn't matter too much. Obviously there is danger. AzBio believes there may be a theft attempt. Obviously there are multiple couriers, only one of which has the genuine item. Obviously, all the satchels are booby-trapped. So, why is AzBio using the characters for something so obviously important? The exec shrugs. He doesn't make policy. Of course, enemies might not expect a group like yourselves to be carrying the real thing, or maybe you are not as difficult to replace should something "unfortunate" happen. Who knows? Besides the money, one other perk of the job is the deal includes a two-week concealed weapon permit (one weapon) for anywhere on the continent, and up to 50,000Cr medical insurance for the duration of the employment. All the satchels have a video camera, recorder and transmitter, which can be controlled from AzBio headquarters, so we will be able to monitor your progress. And be able to remotely destroy the satchel and immediate vicinity, although he doesn't actually say as much. Terms are 1,000Cr when you get the satchel, the remainder on delivery. Terms are not negotiable. The characters can take it or leave it. The job starts at 7am the next morning, the train leaves at 8am and arrives at (destination) the same time the next day.

The corporate bastards drove a non-negotiable deal, although that 5KCr and perks made it a bit easier to swallow. You thumbprint the contract, and has extra copies printed on the Flamingo's printer for each of you. You and your companions decide to get to know each other better. Money brings out the worst in people, and you want to know who you are dealing with, and maybe figure out what kind of mess you've gotten into.

Characters who have connections or who wish to do some background checks on AzBio should be given a copy of the Azbio Info Sheet in the back of this adventure. The GM may wish to censor or add additional information, as suits the campaign. Some of the information is deliberately vague, since all the megacorps try to cover their tracks, and this information has been obtained from dozens of sources, whose reliability is less than 100%.

--Tech Note: The Council--

The Council is the "government" of Earth. While corporations are generally free to do as they want, they are under certain restrictions. Any global resource, or any business decision that would affect all of Earth (or all Earth interests elsewhere), must be cleared by a majority Council vote. The Council has a fixed total of 50 votes, and has a maximum of 50 members. Approximately 2% of Earth's cash flow is worth one vote. If a corporation can gain this much wealth, it automatically gets a vote, displacing some unlucky business that couldn't keep up. Some of the mega-corps have several votes, but no single corporation has more than half. The Council can enforce its decisions with its own army, navy, air and space forces, which are paid for by the Council corporations. While there are no doubt power groups and loyalties within these armed forces, they only obey the directives of The Council. Should a given corporation defy The Council, and be able to overwhelm this relatively small military force, the independent corporate forces would take matters into their own hands.

Council politics is like a pool of sharks, each member constantly trying to improve its position. Smaller members sell their votes, or form coalitions to exert more influence. Larger corporations can swing votes by getting a major ally, but those are few and far between. Ruining a competitors' business will alter vote distribution, and even the timing of a vote can make a crucial difference, as vote totals are recomputed every second during critical periods. While characters might not realize it, when they work for a major corporation, this is what they may be doing. A vote here or there, even if only for a few minutes, can result in a gain or loss of billions of credits, or global policy changes.

The only real threat to The Council is that of one member gaining a permanent majority. This would destroy its stabilizing influence, and could result in some very bloody confrontations, or even war (mega-corps have nuclear weapons).

Most people don't really know about The Council as such, but there is a general feeling that the corporations are keeping an eye out on each other, to make sure things don't get out of hand.

The next day - The characters will probably have no major encounters before departure, although it would be acceptable to get paranoid suspicions brewing by having the characters followed or appear to be followed sometime that evening. There is always a chance that competing companies have inside information on the project, and will attempt to influence the characters to "lose" the package.

The characters can catch a taxi or bus to the local headquarters the next morning. There, they will take delivery of the cryosatchel, a bulky thing about the size of a medium suitcase (Bulk=M/3), with a control panel and temperature readout on the top. It masses 15kg, and looks like the outside is made of some slick high-tech composite. You guess that it will stop bullets better than you can. A wide angle (120 degree) video lens is built into one end, and while there is no obvious microphone, you can guess one is there. All the characters will have to thumbprint that they have received the satchel, whereupon they will have their credit upped by 1,000Cr, get a concealed weapon permit programmed for the weapon of choice, and take possession of a debit fare card, good for slightly more than one round trip on Galpax Gravlines (which AzBio has partial control of, by the way). The station is about a 15 minute subway ride away, and the nearest subway is just a few minutes' walk.

Counting on that advance, you make a few "necessary" purchases from some acquaintances into the grayer side of free enterprise, and find a coffin for the night. Something tells you that this money is going to be harder to get than it looks, and a little extra beauty sleep wouldn't hurt. Tomorrow is going to be a long day.

On board - The characters should be rightfully paranoid (who isn't?), and wary for suspicious looking characters. In fact, there are a few, but they aren't directly involved with the satchel. However, this wouldn't stop them from taking advantage of the situation if they found out...

Tasha Su - A professional con artist, she uses her looks and skill to seduce male (or female) passengers who look like they have easily fencable items. She rides the train infrequently enough to avoid suspicion, but often enough to have acquired an accomplice. Her standard tactic is to feign interest in subjects that she has overheard the mark talking about. She has a broad education, and can discuss most subjects with some degree of intelligence, and is always interested in learning more. She will try to arrange to have dinner with the chosen target. She is in league with one of the waiters, who will stand near the character when paying for the food, with his polished serving tray reflecting the character's credit card as they punch in the access code. If a character notices this, all parties will feign innocence, and there is no way to prove otherwise, but Tasha will quickly dump the mark and look for other prey. By way of prearranged signals, the waiter will spike the character's dinner with an encapsulated dose of Nepenthe and Crashol. This will start to take effect in about an hour, when Tasha will hopefully have gotten the mark back to their sleeping quarters. Nepenthe is a synthetic drug which blocks the brain from storing anything in long-term memory. It is insidious, as is does not prevent you from remembering past events, or things that happened a few minutes ago, and it has no effect on skills. However, once it takes effect, a character must make an Intelligence roll with a -1 modifier per minute to remember anything that has happened recently. Many people occasionally have problems remembering things, so this may go unnoticed ("Must have a memory block, it'll come to me in a few minutes..."). However, in a few minutes, the character may forget that they were trying to remember it in the first place. Crashol is a powerful sleep inducer, and makes the victim very sluggish. After any athletic activities that Tasha and the mark engage in, she will lift the credit card and other small items of value (or large ones, if the opportunity arises), and leave. She will get off within an hour at the next stop (while the character is still snoozing) and empty the credit card into a blind account, where a launderer will convert most of it into credit for Tasha, and the rest for him. The credit card will be sold on the black market, where it will be used for some illegal transaction and then destroyed. The character will only remember having dinner with Tasha and maybe going back to her quarters (depending on when the Nepenthe takes effect). Everything after that is a total blank. It will be nearly impossible to track Tasha down. Nepenthe is very difficult to synthesize and has no medicinal or entertainment use, and is fairly rare. Tasha came across a cache of it, and is making the most of it, but will probably be unable to get more once the supply is exhausted. She has 1d6 extra doses among her possessions, if they are searched, but they are labeled as standard pain-relievers, which the GM should note for future reference.

"Baron" Wilhelm Hess - An imposing figure, he has the ego needed to claim aristocracy, and the credits to look like it. He claims a large patch of land outside Berlin as his ancestral fief, a claim which no one disputes, as most of Berlin is a glassy parking lot. He rides the train because "it is a more civilized way to travel." Actually, he is deathly afraid of heights, but won't admit it. To be accused of such will topple all the chips on his shoulder, and likely provoke a duel. The Baron is very status conscious. Some of the characters may look a bit out of place, and the Baron does not wish to share a train with "commoners". While he has a bit of pull, he doesn't have enough to get valid ticket holders kicked off the train. However, if a character was missing a ticket, and couldn't remember where it went, he can surely get the character tossed out at the next stop. Should the Baron overhear any of the characters who had an unfortunate encounter with Tasha, he will gleefully take advantage of it to organize a surprise departure for that character. However, the Baron's personal servant despises him, and uses every opportunity he can to twit the old sod, and will probably be able to give the characters a few minutes warning.

While middle-aged, the Baron is still very fit. If an opportunity to confront a character alone appears, he may take advantage of it to instigate a fight. Regardless of how the fight turns out, he can always claim he was assaulted first, a claim that is likely to stick, and is sufficient justification to have the character deposited at the next station.

Intervention - Rainwater suspects very strongly that this entire setup is a trap, and being no dummy can presume that regardless of whether it is the real thing, the cryosatchel is booby-trapped (correct). However, the bait is too tempting to resist. He also suspects the case is bugged, either constantly or intermittently (also correct). So, one of his subprocesses will risk exposure by trying to contact one of the characters, without being detected by eavesdroppers. While a character is sitting in the observation car, a wavering ruby-red message will flicker on the table in front of them. It looks like someone was using a laser sight to rapidly write letters, and the message will only be visible from the character's viewpoint. It says "Will offer 3x, protect you. Use phone nxt station." After five seconds, the message disappears, leaving no trace. Looking for the source of the message, the only trace is a jet contrail several kilometers up, and an Electronics, Piloting or Aerospace roll will let the character know that modern avionics includes both ranging and communication lasers, which are computer controlled.

The characters can either choose to ignore the message, or someone can check out the cryptic message at the next stop. It will be a medium-sized city (population 1,000,000), and the train will stop here for a routine safety check and passenger pickup, taking about half an hour. Any character going near the public phones will have one ring immediately. A face will appear, but be electronically blocked, although the background of an office is visible. A middle-aged male voice will repeat the offer.

"I am prepared to offer each of you 15 thousand credits on non-traceable debit cards for the cryosatchel which you possess, and I can arrange to gain possession of it in a way which will not cause any suspicion to fall on you. Do you wish to do business?"

The characters have several options at this point. The "middle aged man" will not identify himself (he is nothing but a computer image). He will not explain why he wants the cryosatchel. If the characters point out the booby-trapping and bugging of it, he will not appear surprised. If the characters haggle, he will raise the offer to no more than 20 thousand credits. If the characters want more, he will coolly explain that for more than that "It would be cheaper to simply have you killed, and the satchel pried from your cold, dead fingers." He must have a decision by the next station. "If yes, eat in the observation level of the dining car, and cross your knife and fork on your finished plates. An aerial observer (spy satellite) will note this, and you will be contacted again. If the answer is no, sleep lightly..."

He will spend no more than two minutes on the phone for reasons of his own personal security, and the GM should time this with a stopwatch, and cut off the call with a curt "goodbye" after the appropriate time.

Options - At this point the characters have some decisions to make. They can double-cross their employer, AzBio, and make up to four times the money, just deliver the package as they are supposed to, or warn AzBio about the other interested party. Each of these has different ramifications.

Loyal sheep - If the characters decide to call up AzBio and warn them (via pocketcom or one of the train's video terminals), they will be connected to their original contact, Mr. Smythe. He will listen and take down notes while the characters talk, and ask for the exact specifics of what happened. When the characters are done, he will congratulate them on their performance, and tell them it was just a "loyalty exercise", and that they passed with flying colors. "Nothing to worry about, just make sure you get the package there on time." With that, he will sign off. This may quell the suspicions of the characters, but maybe not. A character making an Acting or Con Man skill roll with a -10 would notice that Mr. Smythe was concealing a bit of agitation while they were talking. If a character can do voice analyzation with a microcomputer, the roll is only -5. If the characters were totally honest with the AzBio rep, they should rest easier, but if they held anything back, there may be a question of why they passed with "flying colors", or why AzBio didn't ask about the omissions, which they *supposedly* knew about...

AzBio and Smythe are lying through their corporate teeth (of course). Even as the characters were talking to him, Smythe was starting to trace all the actions involved, to try and nail any of the less-protected aspects of Rainwater. He will have some degree of success, and will be able to wipe the tiny portion of Rainwater that stored the exact terms the characters wanted (if any). It will also generate enmity between Rainwater and the characters, but they are too well watched and too unimportant to be worth the risk of revenge (at least for now).

Double-crossing slime - If the characters decide to go through with the double-cross, and assuming they weren't stupid enough to let AzBio overhear the plans via the cryosatchel, they will be contacted at the next train stop, which is a few hours down the line. At this point, he will contact the characters as before, but will explain that the characters are to get into a robotaxi that will be waiting outside the train station. There, they are to punch in the AzBio delivery destination, and act like they are going to deliver the package. The taxi will be "diverted", and the characters should act like they are not expecting this, but not to immobilize the taxi. Shortly thereafter, they will be assaulted by a street gang. The characters should take the combat seriously, but try not to kill anyone. However, since this will undoubtedly be viewed via the camera in the cryosatchel, they shouldn't obviously be pulling their punches either. The gang has similar orders regarding the characters. "You kill one of them, they'll kill one of you..." After this, they should go to a given address, where they will pick up a key to a public locker, which will contain their payment. If the characters don't trust Rainwater (wise), he will not negotiate, and explain that it is all in the best interests of the characters that they not do anything suspicious until after AzBio's attention is elsewhere. He will also explain that the sum of money involved is not enough to be worth cheating over (true), and that he is a man of his word (blatantly false on both counts).

Wall of silence - If the characters do nothing, and do not make the prearranged signal to Rainwater, he will try another tack. Rainwater is limited in actual physical force. He can control most electronic devices that have access to the Net, but has very few human "agents", and with the exception of a few street gangs on retainer, none of them are really combat oriented. So, he must try tactics to get the characters to cooperate. This will be by planting information where AzBio computer scans are likely to find it. A tiny piece of Rainwater containing part of a "conversation" with the characters will be "captured" by AzBio hackers. This will implicate the characters directly with trying to steal the cryosatchel and selling it to the highest bidder, including a few of AzBio's competitors, but not to Rainwater, who they "refused". Having a sample of characters voices from a previous conversation, Rainwater can easily synthesize a conversation indistinguishable from the real thing. AzBio cannot ignore this. Not only are the characters double-crossing AzBio, they are doing it to the wrong party. The AzBio rep will immediately mobilize a small security team to intercept the train at the next stop, which is two hours off. Rainwater will then attempt to contact the characters. AzBio monitoring of the train will be heavy. There is only one electronic "path" onto the train, which is the microwave satellite link to the computers of the train's operating company, and this is monitored beyond even Rainwater's capbility to elude. He will instead override a local phone repeater link near the train's path. It will *appear* to have a computer glitch, but Rainwater will be using it to broadcast a signal identical to a normal phone call, with the result that any pocketcom belonging to a character signals an incoming call. Rainwater has about a 30 second window in which to broadcast as the train zooms in and then out of range of the poorly positioned antenna. As soon as the first character answers, he will begin, and continue without interruption.
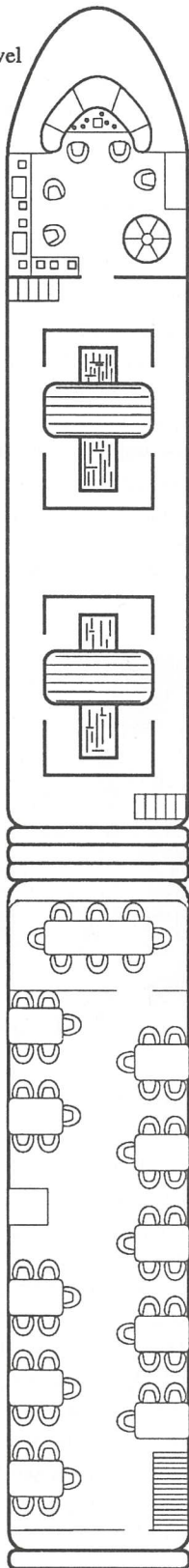
GalPax Gravliner

Engine, lower level
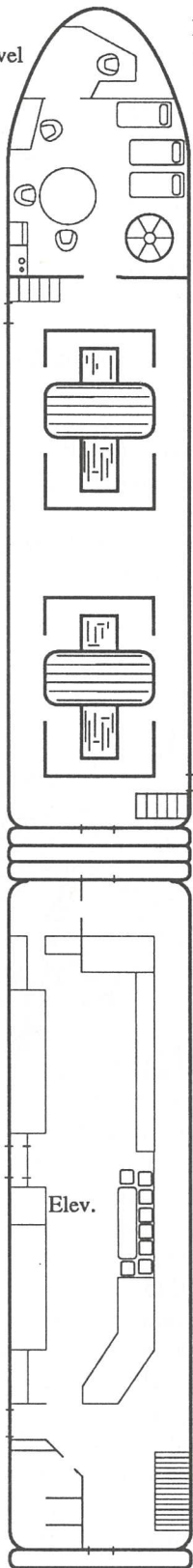
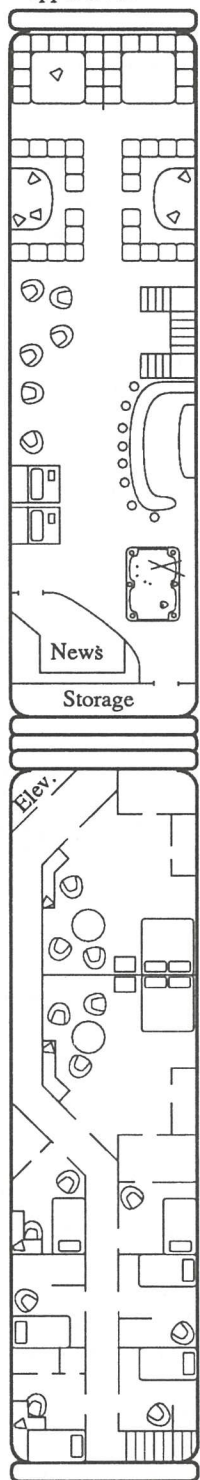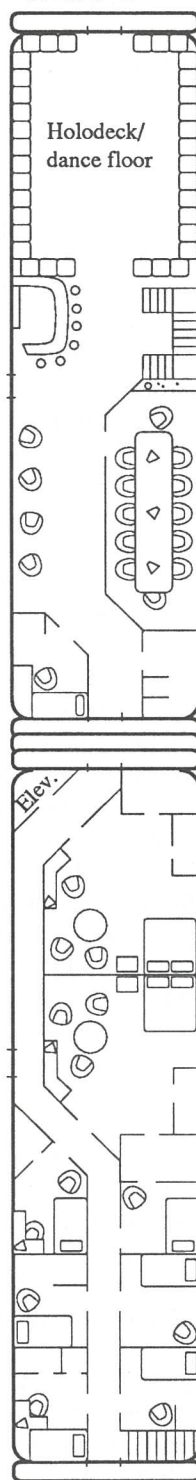Engine, upper level

Lounge car, luxury berths, upper level

Lounge car, luxury berths, lower level

Sleeper car, both levels

Holodeck/ dance floor

Bar

News

Storage

Sick bay

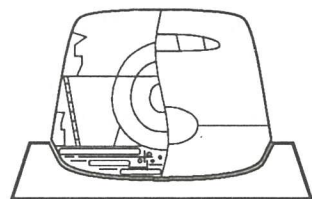Dining car, lower level

Elev.

upper level

Elev.

Elev.

GalPax
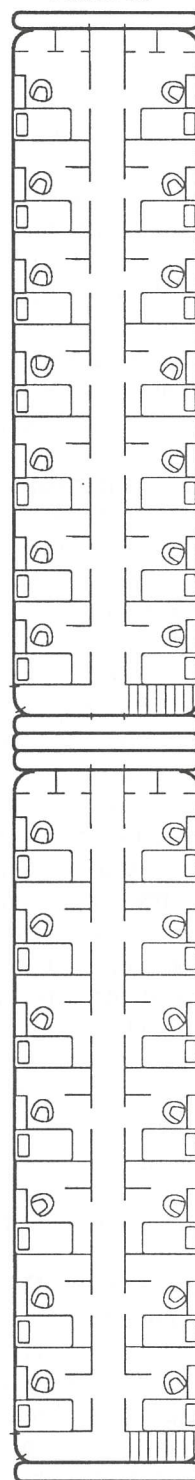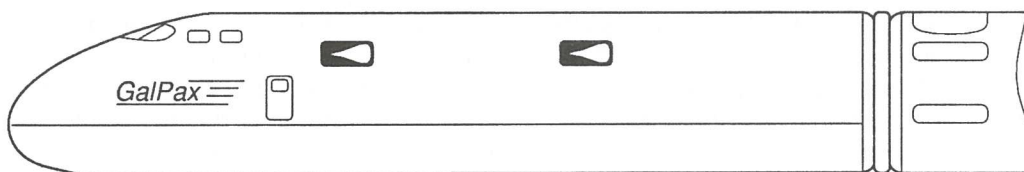
--Tech Note: Smuggling--

Even in the seeming anarchy of the **SpaceTime** universe, there is a large amount of "law and order", almost always run by local corporations, or subcontracted to specialized security companies. There are a few items that are on a global proscribed list. These include fissionable material, certain types of fusion equipment, neurotoxins, bioweapons or anything else the GM wishes to restrict use of in their campaign. These items the megacorps keep for themselves, and only transport under armed guard. However, there are a large number of locally proscribed items, or items which are "hot" for short periods of time, but still need to be moved from point A to point B. This includes a variety of bootleg drugs (as opposed to "approved" ones), fugitives, stolen merchandise, military small arms, black software/hardware, or items that are just suspicious, like precious metals.

Enter the smuggler. While small quantities of these items constantly float through society, a smuggler makes a living by moving large quantities with safety and/or speed. Global cargo volume is enormous. It is impossible to search every parcel that *might* hold contrband. Parcels are x-rayed, with computers looking for suspicious shapes (guns, etc.). Bulk cargo goes by a chemical sniffer, scan for high energy devices, and a cross-referenced ID checks for known fugitives. The people who get caught are generally unlucky, stupid, or betrayed. Computers can sift through vast quantities of information, and correlate seemingly unrelated events. For example, a number of autocannon are stolen in San Diego. An alert is placed on the net with a reward offer. A toll road owner in Nevada has the truck pass through, its lading chip showing a cargo of oranges. Upon visual inspection, this seems to be the case. However, the computer knows the make of the cargo vehicle, its capacity, and the average density of packed oranges. The careless smuggler just puts the oranges on top of the weapon crates. The computer notes a big difference between vehicle weight and calculated vehicle weight. Querying the net, it finds the reward offer, and signals the toll operator, who would rather have the reward than risk being an accessory by taking a bribe. This took about 5 seconds.

"Your wonderful employers do not trust you anymore. They have massed a security team to arrest you, and kill anyone who tries to escape. If you want to take advantage of my offer, it still stands, but you have 10 seconds to decide." Rainwater will be showing scenes of the AzBio security team at the next stop, all with armor and heavy weapons, maybe with a security van or two to add effect, all with the AzBio logo on the side. Maybe he can get the images from local security cameras, or maybe he is making them up as he goes along. The resolution of a pocketcom is too low to make any difference.

The important thing is to get across a sense of urgency and the fact that they are being shafted after having done nothing wrong. If you wish, have Rainwater tell them that a competing company is waiting. This may work just as well, and if the characters are captured by AzBio, they can honestly (important if interrogated) claim that they were just trying to deliver the package, not trying to run away from AzBio.

If the characters decide to stay loyal to AzBio, they will get the proper reward for this loyalty. They will be captured quickly and efficiently by AzBio security. They will be hauled off, scanned, probed, injected and interrogated until AzBio gives up in disgust and finds them innocent. In this case, the first part of the adventure is over, and the characters will walk away with their 1,000Cr advance, and one week left on their weapon permits (if AzBio is feeling
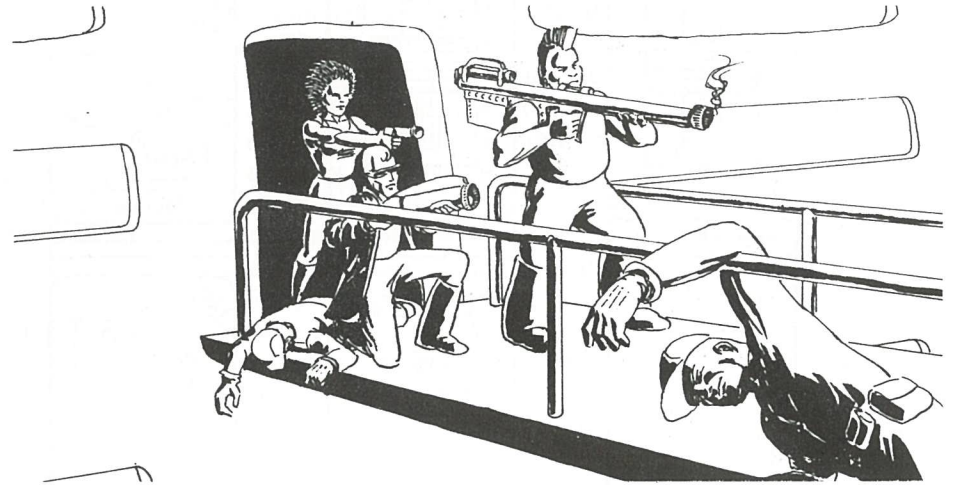
If they decide to shoot it out with AzBio security at the station, things could get ugly. AzBio doesn't give any consideration to hostages, so if they are taken, ignore them. Use eight AzBio security and set up on the station map. AzBio will use stunners unless an AzBio guard is knocked out or killed by lethal weapons. At this point, they will open up with lethal force. If the characters manage to escape, they will be fugitives. Forty to ninety percent (1d6+3)x10% of any credit they have will be wiped or confiscated within 12 hours (AzBio pulls a lot of strings, but still can't get it all through fines), and a reward of 5,000Cr will placed on each of them. This will force the characters to move totally into a black market existence until they can get a marginally passable new identity (10KCr). Any characters captured will be out of play for a while. Assume a 20KCr penalty for any AzBio guard they killed, and 500Cr per day each agent they wounded is in the hospital. This will be taken from their credit, and all salable items in their possession. After that, assume the characters are used as convict labor of the worst kind. This means slave collars or other restraining devices, and really menial, dangerous work. Like a meat puppet, but worse. This "pays" 10KCr per month, but the character must make a roll on all Attributes except Power. If the roll on Stamina or Willpower is failed, the character gains 10AP towards increasing the Attribute. If the roll on any other Attribute is failed, lose 10AP off the attribute and recalculate the new value. Roll once per month incarcerated. At the end of the term, the character gets a suit of street clothes, and a credit card with 100Cr on it.

If the characters (a majority) decide to go through with Rainwater's offer, he will tell them "You **must** wrap the cryosatchel in an emergency fire suit after you stop. You have five seconds to grab onto something!", and signs off.

In *exactly* five seconds, Rainwater will send emergency overrides down the train's microwave link, burning it out, and making it difficult to backtrack. This will subvert all backup systems and initiate emergency shutdown of both fusion reactors. The train will settle into its concrete groove at 300kph and slowly grind its way to a halt. This will take about thirty seconds, and any character wishing to move during this time must make a Dexterity roll with a -15 to avoid falling down. Once the train stops, vision will be partially obscured by dust and smoke from the skid, and the air will be filled with the smell of scorched metal. Emergency fire escape suits are part of the gear in every cabin. Flimsy metallized plastic, a package securely wrapped in one will not be able to transmit out (like if it had a homing beacon in it). Rainwater is gambling that any self-destruct charge will not go off in this case. Fortunately for the characters, he is correct. Looking out of the train, a Perception roll will spot what looks will see flashing lights about a hundred meters off, which are attached to a vehicle of some sort. This is a robot delivery van, the best vehicle Rainwater could co-opt at the time, and large enough to hold all the characters and their gear. Once everyone is loaded, it will zoom off at dangerous speed for the nearest town, and small industrial city of about 100,000 (GM chooses a name along the route).

There, it will drop the characters off and advise them to see a Jan Norfolk, a local black-marketeer and "man of influence". Rainwater will give an address and code phrase to the characters as a recognition sign. The characters need to arrange travel with him to get to the original destination city. Rainwater apologizes that he cannot provide them with funds at this time due to "technical difficulties", but all reasonable expenses will be reimbursed. If the characters do not have what Rainwater feels is the amount needed (about 2,000Cr per character), he will advise them of this, and mention several ways of raising cash, including selling weapons (half what the characters paid), weapon permits (as mentioned earlier), or stealing something of sufficient value, taking into account they may only get 20% of its value from Jan Norfolk, who is also a fence. The truck will then zoom off, and proceed to ram a power substation, which will knock out electricity to the grid where the AzBio security forces are trying to close in on the train.

Jan Norfolk is a moderately successful smuggler, etc., and can provide a large number of services to anyone with the cash or credit to afford it. At this time the characters are dropped off in this city, they should be about two-thirds the way to their ultimate destination, leaving them with roughly 1,000 to 1,500 kilometers to go (600-900 miles).

Going to the address they were given by Rainwater, they will find themselves in a warehouse district, poorly lit, with the occasional piles of refuse and an aggressive giant rat or two to provide atmosphere.

The smart smuggler will have figured out the extra empty space needed to make the weight come out properly. He would have also hired a hacker to forge a shipping bill from another city, and only taken toll roads whose owners he has bribed in the past. Last, he would get someone else to drive the truck. Someone trusted, yes, but still someone else, just in case his operation was compromised.

Successful smuggling operations usually deal with a small number of "trusted" people, who deal under assumed names, and change locations on a fairly frequent basis. The operation usually includes bribed officials, constant computer security and net watching, and a back way out in case things go really bad.

For instance, Jan Norfolk's operation is fairly standard. He operates from a small urban area. Any unusual traffic or personnel changes in town are monitored by computer and reported to him. His own people do all the modifications to vehicles used, and immediately discontinue a tactic the instant someone else is caught at it. His payments are laundered by a professional service, and he has half a dozen reliable informants who contact him over a "blind" comm line. He has used a laser cutter to access an unmarked (and now blocked off) storm sewer beneath the warehouse, and an electric car waits inside for a quick escape in the confusion caused when he detonates the demolition charges in the walls. A pre-prepared backup location insures that he would be back in business within two weeks.

Most of his employees are veterans of fighting in the Yucatan brush war, and all of them know each other either by personal experience or by reputation. All are pros at what they do.

His obsession with details and security eats over a quarter of his profits, however, he is still free to enjoy them, unlike many of his cost-cutting competitors whose names are now history. A lot of people don't like his methods, but grudgingly admit that he has never cheated anyone who didn't try to cheat him. No one has ever backstabbed him and lived to enjoy it. This repuation has served him well in the past, and he intends to maintain it.

The address given is a trucking company called "Universal Exports". Anyone who looks will notice an armored TV camera covering the door area, and an intercom grille next to the door. Anyone who specifically continues to look will see at least one hidden camera, and a number of coincidentally well-placed rust holes in the corrugated walls. To all appearances the place appears closed, and will remain so until someone speaks the code phrase into the intercom grille. Within a minute, sounds of preparation will be heard from the other side, and the door will slowly open several centimeters.

"Ok, enter one at a time, slowly, and don't make any sudden moves." You think about leaving, but figure if they wanted you dead, you'd be cooling in the body banks by now. You go in. What a dump. It looks about like you would expect, about a century out of date. But, that watch you bought, the one with the magnetic sensor in it, flashes its display twice. You're being scanned.

"You! Remove all your weapons and other destructive gizmos, and stuff 'em in the file cabinet. One of the old files creaks, and the top drawer slides open to show an empty drawer. You take off your Magnum, and dump it in the drawer. Flash...flash... "I said **all** your weapons." The snub-nose in the ankle holster and your vibroblade go next. "I said **ALL** of them!" This is getting tedious. The belt buckle blade...and the plastic dagger go in, the last with some reluctance. Finally, they are satisfied. The file drawer shuts of its own accord, and the entire file cabinet whirs back into the wall like precision equipment. A few seconds pass, and it slides out again, empty. "Come on in." The far door clicks opens, and you step through.

Once all characters are through, they will be escorted into the main warehouse area, which is surprisingly neat, and contains a variety of sophisticated equipment that you wouldn't ordinarily see in a warehouse. A man meeting the description of Jan Norfolk will rise from a desk in one corner and greet them. He will apologize for the inconvenience, but "always has to make sure about unexpected guests, if you know what I mean." Then, he becomes very businesslike, and asks where the characters want to go. This may catch the characters off guard, as Rainwater didn't mention that this was the meaning of the particular code phrase the characters used (one of his memory lapses).

He will ask particulars, like who is after the characters, why, and how soon they need to get there. Once this is done, he will go to a voice terminal and rattle off some jargon which any computer-wise characters will recognize as a bastardized version of an old military voice-programming language. In about 10 seconds, a slot on the desk will spit out a sheet of paper, which Jan will look over before returning to the characters.

The setup is really pretty good, with a lot of overly competent types slinging guns. You recognize a few models that you'd only heard of, new corporate issue, very hot. And that desk sounds like it's hooked up to a mil-spec Ono-Sendai, probably an older model from the voice. A bit out of date, but still a real clean machine.

"Looks like your bus fare is going to cost 1,745Cr each, including my profit margin, and your group discount, but you woke me up in the middle of the night. This is offset by the by the computer telling me you come highly recommended, so we'll make it an even 2KCr. You got it?"

The forewarned characters should have this much, and maybe a little left over. If not, he will simply have the characters escorted outside, minus any debit cards, body armor, weapons, or the cryosatchel and tell them that if you are still in town come daybreak, it's "open season" (he doesn't like people who wake him up and aren't ready to deal). In this case, the first part of the adventure is over for the characters. They are very likely to be picked up by AzBio security, and released once all is disclosed, but the characters may need a few weeks for the bruises to go away.
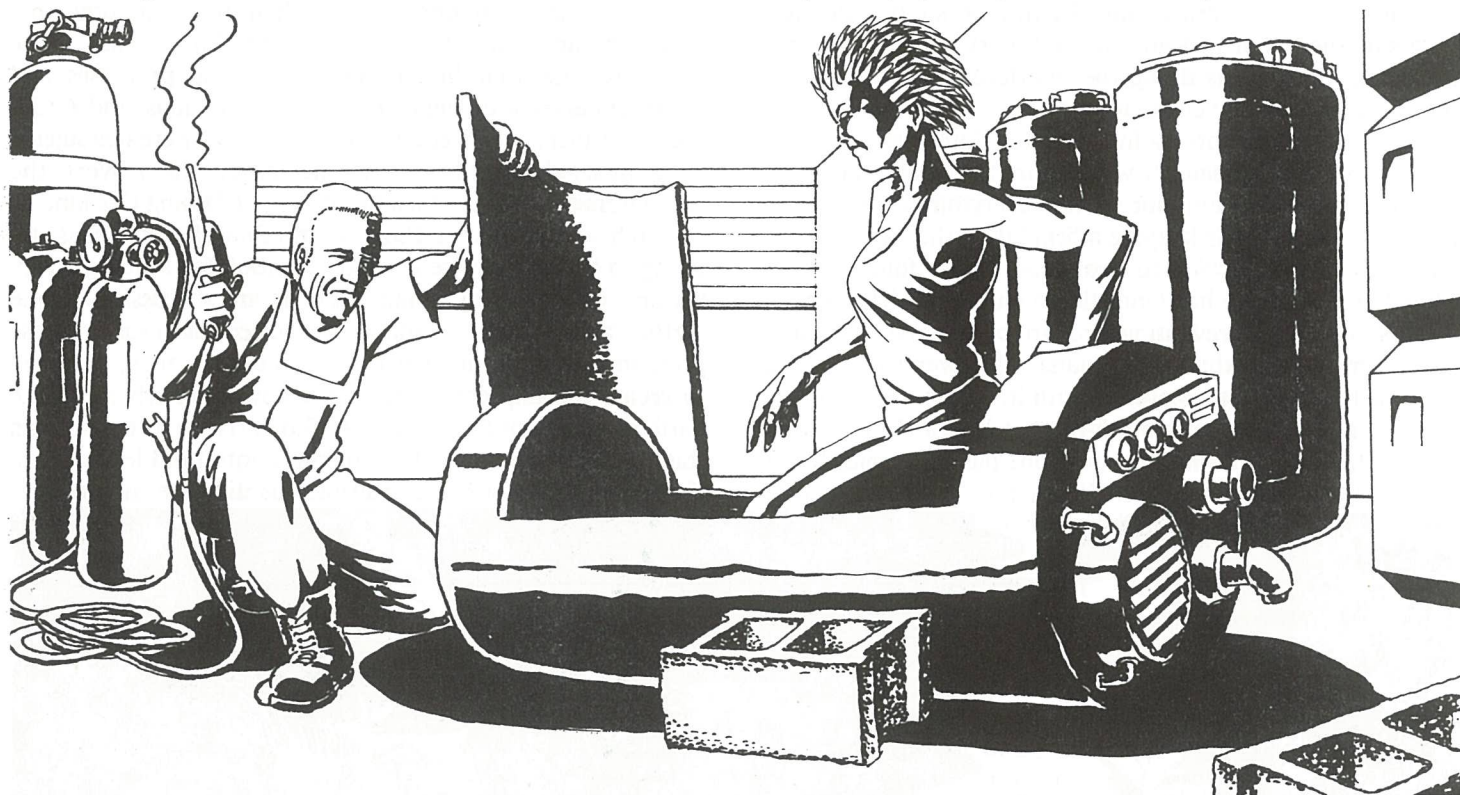
If the characters have the credit, they will be escorted to a "waiting area", which is a solidly built room with some bunks and basic facilities (but no computer terminal). It is also metal lined, preventing any radio from getting in or out. They will be told that their ride out leaves in the morning. "If you want to stretch your legs, do it now, 'cause you won't have the chance later." Escape out of this area is very unlikely, but clever characters may be able to perform such a miracle if they really need to leave.

For instance, AzBio may know about Jan Norfolk, and traced the route of the stolen delivery van. In this case, Jan will realize that cooperation with authorities is perhaps better than going to jail himself (especially considering the power AzBio can bring to bear on him), and either turn the characters over to AzBio security or give them a reasonable warning and/or chance to "escape". If the characters are still there, that is. In such a case, Rainwater will be incommunicado, and totally unable to help until the characters can make it to another city, probably at least 100km away. This relatively short distance could prove to be very long if the characters are forced to avoid civilization and computers in order to avoid being turned in. Area Knowledge, Bribery or Temperate Survival skill would be especially appropriate, and Military Science, Security Systems or Electronics might help them avoid any errors that would get them picked up by remote sensors.

Hopefully, this won't happen. Assuming the characters stay the night, at about 6am the door will open, and the characters will be escorted back into the main area. Workers are loading up a large road rig with pre-fab apartment sections. After using the facilities, the characters lose a total of 2KCr each (Jan doesn't care from where), and are loaded in. Characters will be sealed into the hot water units of the pre-fabs, or in a false fuel tank of the rig. There will be *no* room to move. The characters will be told that you can't get out until the destination is reached, and that will take up to 20 hours (Literally. A character with a vibroblade could cut their way out, but other characters are quite trapped until released from the outside). All the secret compartments are ventilated, so breathing is no problem. Again, all of them are metal, making radio contact next to impossible. Once everyone is sealed in, Jan will have all the compartments gassed, rendering the characters unconscious.

"It's easier on both of us this way!", he will call into the compartments as the gas starts to take effect. "You don't have a miserable trip, nobody panics, and if it turns out you are from the authorities...well, let's not talk about that." No character will be able to resist the effects for long enough to escape, but anyone who wishes to panic is welcome to try. A sustainer dose is trickled in, just to keep the characters under, and everything fades to black...

Happily, Jan Norfolk is a man of his word (at least this time). A group of groggy, hungover characters will awaken in a deserted old warehouse. Apply a Bruise Point Level of 5 with no modifiers to arms, legs and head, to represent cramps, stiffness and headache. All of their gear will be in a pile next to them, none of it missing, including the cryosatchel, still wrapped, but with an extra layer of metal foil around it. Staggering up for a look around, they will find themselves in a city, in a similar warehouse district that shows signs of just starting work for the day. The sun is just rising, and it is 7am. By looking at business names on the warehouses, the characters can figure out they are in the right city. A character with Area Knowledge of this city can make a roll to pinpoint the location so the group can get their bearings.

What will the characters do? At this point, the characters should go along with the original plan of trying to take a taxi to AzBio and getting "waylaid" along the way. If they do take a form of transport that lets Rainwater track them, they will probably get waylaid whether they want it or not. Rainwater would go as far as trying to hijack a public bus, but most of them run fixed routes and he couldn't do much except shut down the engine. If the characters go through with the plan, Rainwater will keep his word, a public locker containing the agreed-on payment (unless he had a memory lapse and left less). If the characters return to AzBio, they will be "questioned" (no bruises), the intensity of which will depend on how much suspicion the characters are under. Depending on how they got there, and the condition they are in AzBio may be magnanimous, and reimburse any "extra" expenses the characters had. After all, AzBio wanted the satchel stolen in the first place. The characters will not be treated too harshly, but neither will they get praise for being ripped off. They will get the remainder of the 5,000Cr they were promised, and they can keep the weapon permits and the return train tickets, although there may be a delay of a few days until the route is reopened (depending on circumstance).

Rainwater is looking for the characters, but will find it difficult to find them until they do something overt, like use a credit card to buy something. Rainwater could eavesdrop on security cameras in the corporate district, but this is fairly risky, and has a low chance of success. AzBio is looking for the same kind of credit card use to lock onto, but they are concentrating their efforts on another part of the country. Both Rainwater and AzBio will spot the characters, but Rainwater will have a 30 minute head start, and has substantially better mobility in some ways.

On the off-chance that the characters try to deliver the cryosatchel to AzBio, going back on their word to Rainwater, he will try to stop them. A human-driven taxi cannot be overridden, but automated vehicles can be used to block their path. If the characters succeed in delivering to AzBio, Rainwater will be steamed, and will try to make life miserable for the characters during the break between parts one and two of the adventure. AzBio will find some other way to have the new technology "stolen", so Rainwater will get it anyway.

Interlude - At this point, you should go back to other adventures you had in mind for the characters. This one concludes with the normal improvement of skills and experience, but there will be a gap of a few months before the adventure starts up again. This should allow any incarcerated characters a fair chance of being released, or having friends find enough cash to pay off the "debt" the jailed characters owe. Memories will fade with time, and suspicions the characters might have had will have time to be replaced by other concerns. If Rainwater is annoyed with the characters because they tried to shaft him, during this interlude *anything* they do involving computers has a 10% chance of failure (with the possible exception of getting friends out of jail). If they make a transaction, their credit will disappear from their card, but not show up elsewhere. If they are paid, it won't appear in their accounts. Official files and ticket records mysteriously disappear. Attempts to track down the source of the interference will be unsuccessful, and may result in permanent injury to anyone trying to do so via cyberspace. After this, no one will risk helping the characters, and they will become pariahs to the jacked-in community. This is designed to frustrate the characters to the point that they will do almost anything to correct the situation, like cooperate with Rainwater so he will quit harassing them. Or as Rainwater will portray it, he will help them find out who is doing the interference and "correct" the "problem" for the characters.

Any characters doing research into the supposed contents of the cryosatchel will run into several dead ends, as aside from the announcement, everything is strictly a trade secret. AzBio is keeping a firm lid on their knowledge, however, really determined characters might find out that while the technology has fantastic potential, there have been serious problems preventing growth of a nervous system more complex than that of an iguana. However, word on the street is that *someone* is playing with it, and is dealing really heavy with certain exotic black-market labs. However, no one is admitting to doing it, and no one has any names (or at least is telling them).

Rainwater is busy using his electronic connections and deception to track down more than the characters could, and is making deals with various underground genetics outfits for specialized items. Rainwater deals mainly with a few trusted people, people who think he is some renegade corporate scientist. In turn, these people deal with other people, further insulating Rainwater from exposure, and reducing the amount of time he risks himself by direct action. The cryosatchel did contain a sample of the new life form. However, there are only half a dozen facilities in the world which could duplicate it, even if they knew what it was. Of course, AzBio knew that, and is monitoring these facilities as best it can. What they don't know is that Rainwater has another ace up his sleeve...

Some of his original programming tricks escaped the purge at the AzBio clone labs. This facility is where extra body parts and replacement organs are grown for the highest placed AzBio executives and other people with lots of credits. The labs are also used for medical analysis and surgery for any individuals whose parts are stored here. Rainwater uses this, and a little human manipulation to subvert the growth tanks to his own ends, the final project labeled as belonging to a favored client. After all, who knows AzBio computer security than the computer that designed part of it? Even so, there are limitations. Some things require that human touch. Some processes and bioproducts must be imported from outside labs, and AzBio is ever suspicious. To counter this, Rainwater creates suicide programs, designed to try and enter or subvert the computers of all global facilities capable of doing this kind of research. As long as AzBio cowboys think Rainwater is still trying to get in, they are less likely to look for sabotage from within. On occasion, some attempts are successful. Some AzBio "allows" to get through, just to see the results. These programs begin all manner of complex subterfuge, designed to create the impression of an unknown lab, where all the parts are being put together. AzBio is trying to track down this "secret lab", and is checking out a lot of old leads to see if anyone is up to something suspicious...like the characters.

Renegade Dreams, Part 2 - That courier job was a bear, but it did pay off well, even counting the hazards. Most of that jingle is gone now, though, and your credit is getting thin enough to see through. There's no way to buy that big ticket item you've had your eye on, not unless you can get some better work. You head down to the b-boards again, and punch in your card. The screen dissolves, and a familiar electronically masked face appears.

"Remember me? If you're looking for work, I've got better than you'll find here. Meet your old friends at 39th and Delany. I'll have more info there." Without further words, the image dissolves into gray.

Keyword request?

You jab the eject button and pocket the card. There's money on the wind.

Despite any tracing programs the characters may have developed, one or several of them will once again get the untracable phone call, with the unknown man they dealt with before. He will ask if they are interested in more "work". He doesn't specify the type, duration or pay, only whether they are interested. If so, they will be instructed to buy a book chip from a certain vendor, who will give them more information. This information is a one-shot book chip, the kind that fractures when you remove it from the socket.

You see your comrades in arms clustered about a news vendor, waiting. They see you, and one of them buys a chip. Motioning you over to a streetlight, you cluster underneath the ancient sodium light for a better view. Someone plugs the chip in their e-book and turns it on. The screen fades to an office scene, much like the ones before.

"I prefer to deal with people I can trust. Trust is a relative term. I don't trust you completely, and I'm sure the feeling is mutual. However, I have dealt enough with you to get a feel for your...style, and how you are likely to act in a given situation. You will learn more of what is going on if you accept this job, not nearly all of it, but enough to be dangerous. If you don't accept it blind, then you can walk away. If you do accept it, it is worth *at least* 50KCr and a perfect new ID for you. If you accept it and try to double-cross me, I'll have you killed in as miserable a way as I can manage...and I can manage a lot. If you accept it and tell anyone else, you'll have people worse than I am to deal with, and probably a lot of them." The image on the pauses for a few seconds. "If you accept, then remove this book chip, take the pieces back to the vendor and tell him 'Your hovercraft is full of eels'. He will give you further information. If you don't accept, you won't be hearing from me again. The choice is yours."

With that, the chip silently self-destructs, making the message all but unrecoverable. The GM should include any mention of undoing or "fixing" any harrassment the characters are getting as a complication from the first part of the adventure, if indeed this is the case.

If the characters turn Rainwater down, they will never hear from him again, and any computer harassment will disappear in about a week or so. You can choose events from this section to include in news bulletins over the next few weeks. If the characters accept, they will make the archaic quote to the chip vendor, pick up a second chip, and Rainwater will again lecture them.

"I have been avoiding direct contact with you for a number of reasons, including your own safety. No doubt AzBio has got electronic tracers on your credit, making it easy to track your movements. Be aware of this. The synthetic nervous system or PBA developed by AzBio is imperfect, and will take them years to refine into any commercial potential. However, *limited* application is still possible in the near future (a blatant lie). I am engaging in research which AzBio very much wants to supress, and they will destroy it if possible. I won't tell you what it is, for your own safety, among other reasons. Many of my best researchers are under constant scrutiny, and people I thought beyond suspicion are being scrutinized with a fine-toothed comb. So, the first part of your assignment is to deliver some custom biologicals from one of my labs to another. I expect some kind of interference, although whether from AzBio, competitors or personal enemies I cannot judge." (This is a smoke screen to mislead the characters.) "If you succeed, you will receive further instructions."

Rainwater will then give the characters an address, a code phrase and a time, probably less than 3 hours away, and the chip will destruct as before. Some of the brighter players may suspect that Rainwater is an AI, or have regarded it as a possibility for quite some time. Rainwater has never referred to himself by name, nor given one, and he gone to great lengths to appear as a disguised person, even to such occasional human mannerisms as coughs, scratching an ear on occasion, etc. Since he is communicating only by pre-recorded messages for now, he cannot be confronted with the idea, but he would of course deny it, but refuse to demonstrate he is human, either.

The characters have a little while to prepare before going to the pickup location. It and the delivery area are both in seedy areas of town. None of the characters have been physically bugged by AzBio, although this will happen if the characters do something like going to strictly debit cards to avoid electronic tracing. A simple brush against a character on the sidewalk, and they are tagged with a transmitter the size of a thumbtack. A Perception roll with a -16 applies if a character is specifically watching out for something like that, otherwise it automatically succeeds. The tagger will be a local pickpocket, who knows nothing except that they were paid a handsome sum to plant the bug. Or, maybe the pickpocket has done a lot of similar work in the past, and is actually a full-time AzBio operative. The device itself is untracable. It has a tiny microphone, which will be noticed by anyone making an Electronics skill roll while examining it. This means that pursuit will not be misled by simply attaching it to someone else. It *could* be subverted by taping some random conversation on a

minirecorder, and planting both of them under a bus seat, for instance. If AzBio knows the bug has been compromised, it will mean another attempt or a person will visually tail the characters. This could be spotted using Stealth skill, and subverted by stealth, attack, or a better knowledge of the area.

Rainwater knows the exact time, place and layout of the pickup location, and all the routes between one point and the other. There is no grav-taxi service to this part of town (grav taxis are too expensive to risk), so the characters will be forced to use surface transport. Rainwater has contracted with a street gang (while posing as an AzBio competitor) to ambush the characters, and arranged it for maximum efficiency, since he knows both sides of the situation. While driving or riding down one of the smaller streets, a vehicle will be shoved out into an intersection. The instantly alert characters will then be the target of pre-planted obscuring grenades, which fill the entire street with smoke that is a -25 to visual perception, and is opaque to thermal and ultraviolet scans. It is impossible for a character to see out of the hex they are in. For their service, the gang has been equipped with sonar goggles, which give a poor picture (no detail smaller than 10cm), but do see through the smoke out to 10m.

You picked up the case, noting the electronic lock and flashing death's head. You figure this is a subtle warning not to open it, so you don't. It's a few klicks to the delivery spot. You hop some transport to the area. You're about halfway there when it happens. You were expecting something, but not this. Stopped at an intersection, suddenly half a dozen hissing balls are lobbed from the sidewalks. You have gun in hand before they hit, but it's already too late. They go off, and the world goes gray. Everything outside the windows is totally obscured. You think about firing blindly, but reconsider. Something lands on the roof. Heavy. You hear the whine of an electric motor, and the sound of tearing metal as something starts ripping through the roof panels. You cock your gun and wait...

The gang will attack with vibroblades (supplied by Rainwater), pistols and maybe a chain saw if the characters won't get out of whatever vehicle they are in (DV8I, 1d6 attacks per hit, DV is cumulative vs. armor). Neither the characters or the gang have been told they have been hired by the same person, and so no one is pulling any punches. What is important is that the gang will try to get the satchel, and will use any means to do so, including taking a character hostage if they think it will work. Another special instruction is to make sure some of the characters are cut up (more on that in a minute). This shouldn't be too hard.

The end result is that either the satchel will be stolen, or it won't. If it is stolen, Rainwater (who is watching via a recon drone) will repeat the trick he did earlier with a low-power communication laser, writing out a message on a wall or the ground.

"Late news. Poisoned weapons. See Nubrok Clinic immediate! Will contact later."

This should be of urgent interest to any character who was as much as scratched during the fracas. The clinic is only a few minutes by taxi, or a several minute walk. A group of bleeding characters with weapons won't get more than some funny looks in this part of town, although things do get quiet as they pass, hidden weapons only put away after the characters are out of sight. The Nubrok clinic looks like the kind of place that doesn't ask questions, which is correct. They are also a front for Rainwater's scheme. The characters are informed upon arrival that their mutual employer is paying the bills. All injured characters will be patched up with TL14 first aid, and the nurse will plant a time-delay beeper in the clothes of one of the characters. In the meantime, the doctor will inject the characters with some sort of harmless placebo to counteract the "poison" that was "analyzed" in their systems. In reality, the gang knives were coated with the chemical Rainwater needed delivered, and this clinic actually runs a small manufacturing plant for duplication of such chemicals. The traces recovered from bandages, etc. will be used to manufacture the amount Rainwater requires, which will be delivered to the AzBio cloning operation as part of standard blood screening for a well-known hospital. There, a delivery robot will divert it to the real destination in the growth tanks, where a lot of strange compounds have gone lately...but the computers in charge still report that all is normal.

The satchel stolen from the characters will be delivered to the destination given the characters, another of Rainwater's labs, one which recently sold out to AzBio after getting cold feet, and thought it was getting away with it. At this point, the 5kg fragmentation charge in the case will go off, tying up that loose end rather permanently. The explosives were actually manufactured at this same lab, a full circle that appeals to Rainwater's sense of symmetry.

If the characters maintain control of the satchel, Rainwater will let them deliver it (letting the characters get out of hearing range of the explosion), and *then* deliver the message about the poison, sending the characters to the Nubrok clinic anyway. Sometime after the characters leave the clinic, the beeper will go off, alerting the wearing character to its presence. Once found, it is discovered to be a microrecorder, which has an obvious "play" button, and a message chip inside with the following:

"Well, despite what may be a setback, I think you are reliable enough to be slightly better informed, and in any case it is necessary to the next phase of the operation. As you have probably guessed, I am creating a lifeform to take advantage of the programmable brain analog that AzBio has been working on. While not perfect, with my resources I have managed to make it workable. I have arranged to grow a new human body with a blank brain, and this brain will be custom programmed to my specifications. I am old...of an age which you would find hard to believe (true, about 10 years). The state I am in is not to my liking. I am trying to have all that I know, all that I am, programmed into this clone body, which will hopefully give me a new lease on life. Until now, there has been no way to get past brain aging. Even a brain transfer just renews the body, not the soul. Now, I have the chance to start over. I can't afford to wait to see the technology perfected, and due to a long-standing feud between myself and AzBio, I don't think they would let me have it anyway. Hence, the long and convoluted scheme of which you have played a small but important part. Unfortunately, at this point there is no real way to totally pull my memories that doesn't have a significant risk of permanent brain damage (quite true). Also, as a different person, I will be unable to access my full command structure immediately after the transfer, limiting my influence, especially if the old body is incapacitated. I need you to rescue my new body from its growth tank immediately after it is ready. You are fairly unknown quantities to AzBio, and you seem to work well together, despite some minor incompatibilities. Once you get me out, my new self will then be able to give you further instructions and arrange your payment, but only if you get it...I should say me...out alive. If I don't get out, you don't get paid. I will be unable to assist at all during the transfer, but I will have set up several pre-defined diversions that will hopefully carry through. You need to contact the Flaming Kongs, down in the old business section of the Skids. They are expecting someone, which turns out to be you, since my last couriers did not make it through (which might be true). Go out and buy some shocking pink bandannas as a recognition symbol, and if they ask about the weather tell them that 'if cows could fly, we'd all carry umbrellas.' They will provide you with everything you need in the way of information, equipment and transport. I think you will like the Kongs. They are totally mercenary and gleefully amoral. You should get along real well. We won't be talking again until we meet face to face. Good luck. Oh, by the way, if you haven't contacted the Kongs by sundown, you won't live to see sunrise. Have a nice day."

It is currently about 2 in the afternoon. By now the characters should be torn somewhere between greed, curiosity and loathing of Rainwater's condescending, matter-of-fact callousness, but also wary of the obvious influence he can exert if he wants to. Let them discuss what they each think is his true nature as they work their way to the Skids. If they are bugged, remember that AzBio has heard the entire message, including the part about going into the Skids, as well as all the conversation going on near the characters. AzBio will not interfere, but will keep an eye on that area of town, and start directing detection efforts in the appropriate sections of town. All facilties will go to full alert.

Once in the Skids, it's not hard to find a Flaming Kong. They all have bright orange-red hair, and wear jackets from the pre-War punk group "Jasper and the Flaming Viet Cong". Once the recognition signs are exchanged, the characters will move deeper into Kong territory. Entering one building, they will be scanned for radios, and all communication or electronic devices (including energy weapons) will be confiscated. "Roolz iz roolz!", the guide will lisp past his 3cm canines. Cosmetic augmentation is *de rigeur* with the Kongs, if only to the extent of the flourescent hair (which does require special dietary supplements to maintain, by the way). During this search, any previously unknown bugs will be discovered and deactivated (crunch!). Eventually they get to temporary gang headquarters, in the sub-basement of a collapsed factory. Massive rusted equipment is everywhere, tools and scrap lie in twisted heaps, and the neglect of a hundred years' exposure permeates the silent corridors. However, once inside, new glow-tubes are strung from the ceiling, and in the distance you can hear the whir of ventilation fans and portable generators. The impression you get is somewhere between high-tech and sleaze. Computers and surveillance equipment are competently manned, but surrounded by last weeks' fast food. Weapons are stacked in corners, but all are in excellent condition. Someone with a lot of organization put this setup together, but apparently doesn't maintain a lot of discipline. In a few minutes, "John", the leader of the Kongs will appear. He looks about the same as the rest, but significantly older, perhaps in his early thirties. Well-muscled, scarred and tattooed, he is an impressive figure. He invites the characters over to the operations room, which is in another wing of the basement.

He smiles, showing a row of stainless steel teeth. "So, you guys are the suicide squad for Stormbringer." Nice and encouraging, isn't he? Stormbringer is his code name for their employer. John strongly suspects the true nature of his employer, but is keeping it to himself, figuring that he stands a better chance of survival that way (quite correct).
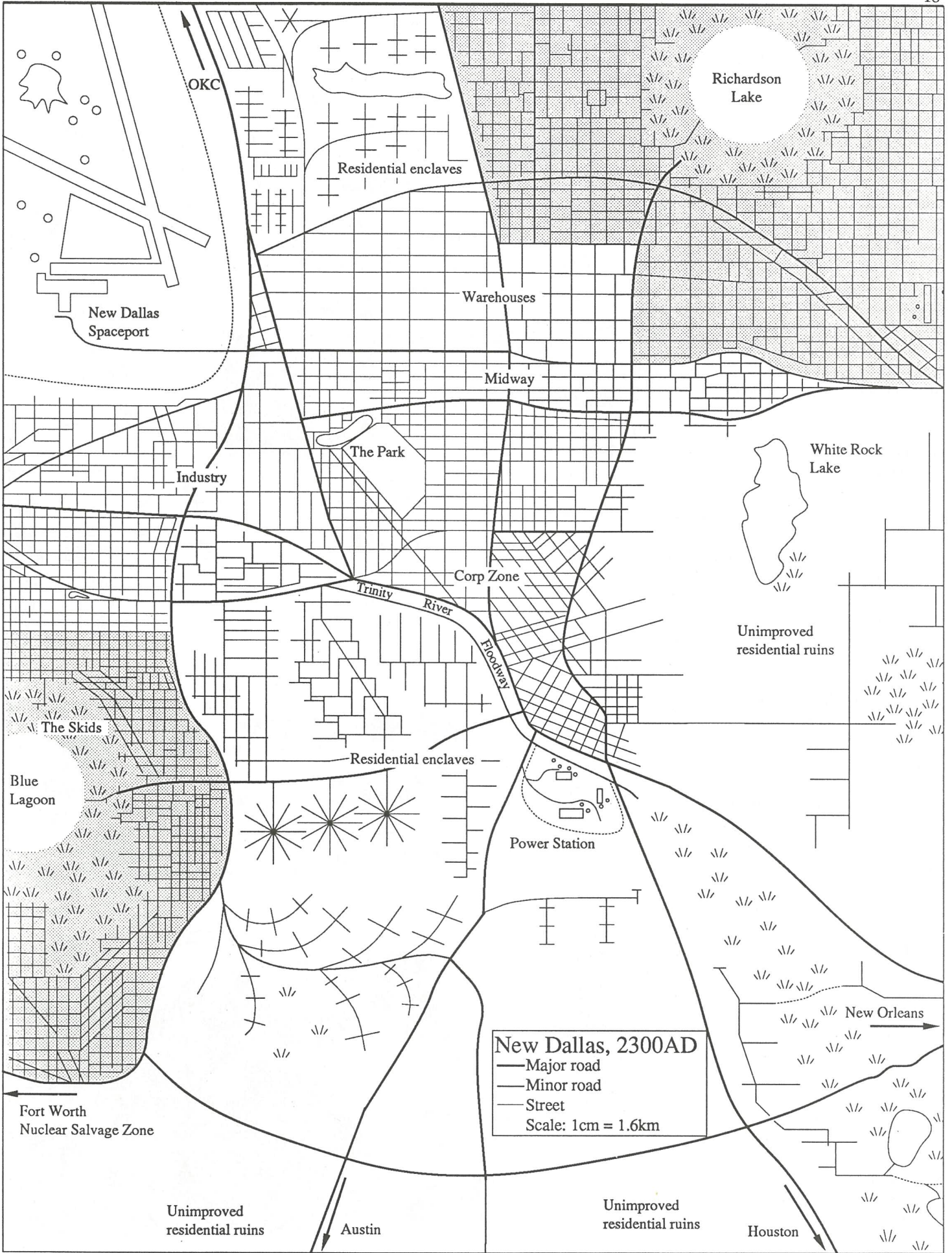
"John" punched a few buttons on the holotable, seemingly as much at home with the sophisticated electronics as with the well-worn pistol on his hip. A momentary flicker of static disappears to reveal an aerial view of downtown. The field of view zooms in on a truncated pyramid in the suburbs. "I don't know how much you know, but this is the central AzBio clone support and research unit, one of the worst places I could think of to break into, even on a good day. It looks like Stormbringer is hoisting AzBio by their own petards. I know what you're going in for, so you don't have to say anything." He taps the keyboard again. The surface of the building fades, showing a cutaway of all the floors. The view zooms down, passing below ground level, a floating label indicating Sublevel 5. "Stormbringer has found a way to grow his clone in their tanks without their knowing it. How he is going to program it is anyone's guess, but it's not my concern, especially since I'm not going in." He chuckles. "But, you are." He punches a few more buttons. The table magnifies a portion of the level and changes perspective. The point of view appears to zoom down hallways and access shafts, past a set of armored doors and into the clone vats. Moving to an otherwise nondescript tank, it stops, and highlights its number, 42A. "That is your target. You have to get in past all security, open that tank from the outside, and get Stormbringer clear of the building."

He leaves himself open for questions at this point, one of which should be, "What will you be doing while we are in there?". The answer to that is, "Trying to make sure you get out again." John and his crew are being hired to create several diversions, timed to coincide with some unnamed plan of Stormbringers'. "The internal security is controlled almost entirely by computer, with nifty items like remote laser turrets, etc., but Stormbringer says he can cripple those. This leaves all the human guards and autonomous robot sentries. Remember, they won't risk damaging the clone vats themselves, so that should be a fairly safe ground. It's just everywhere else that is a problem." If asked when the assault is, the answer is, "Two days. You will stay here until that time. We've got a wide variety of hardware available, and orders to place it at your disposal." The characters can select anything they want from the **SpaceTime** or **TimeLords** equipment list for the assault, with the exception of powered armor. Remember that some forms of body armor cannot be worn together. In general, only flexible armors like streetsuits or fabric vests can be worn beneath the more rigid riot armors. To figure out the source for these supplies, mention that a lot of the body armors have a patched hole or two in them. If asked about the diversion, John will tell them that they will be posing as AzBio security guards just long enough to get into the building proper. Then the characters are on their own.

Waiting - During these two days, the characters are "one of the family", well fed, medical needs attended to, etc. Let them look over any of the maps of the complex, and make their plans. The information on the maps is complete, to the best of their knowledge. However, the characters will not be allowed to leave the HQ, and any attempts to do so will be met with the threat of deadly force. Not hostile, just a matter of fact, "If you try to leave here again, we'll kill you." And they will, no questions asked.

During this time, Rainwater will be infiltrating the complex, and slowly gathering all of his consciousness together for one final push. Ripples run through cyberspace. Someone is up to something...somewhere. Lots of people are taking vacations from the Net, and backing up their files before they go. As the evening of the assault approaches, the level of activity increases. All the computers and electronics are brought on-line, communications with other organizations increases, and lots of people start checking their weapons. Any characters still impaired will be offered drugs to temporarily negate any physical impairment (up to a -5 impairment), but with the warning that pushing like this will increase the impairment by 1d4 when the drugs wear off in a few hours. They will also have the effect of a -1d2 modifier to Intelligence and Perception while they are active. Various controlled "combat drugs" are available, which will generally give a +2d3 modifier to Strength, Willpower, Constitution and Stamina for 1d3 hours, at a cost of -1d3 to all skills, and once the drugs wear off, there is a temporary decrease of all affected attributes equal to the amount gained, lasting for 2d3 hours.

OKC

Residential enclaves

Richardson
Lake

New Dallas
Spaceport

Warehouses

Midway

The Park

White Rock
Lake

Industry

Corp Zone

Trinity   River

Floodway

Unimproved
residential ruins

The Skids

Blue
Lagoon

Residential enclaves

Power Station

New Orleans

Fort Worth
Nuclear Salvage Zone

New Dallas, 2300AD
Major road
Minor road
Street
Scale: 1cm = 1.6km

Unimproved
residential ruins

Austin

Unimproved
residential ruins

Houston

--Tech Note: AzBio Corporate Hospital--

The AzBio Hospital is a small self-contained city. A truncated pyramid 100 by 150 meters at the base and 18 stories tall, it provides a complete living and working environment for over a thousand people. The building itself is fairly featureless, a brown and gray expanse of drab, windowless structure surrounded by an open field of grass, with a scattering of trees here and there. This in turn is surrounded by a 3 meter electrified wall, except at the main gate, which is the only ground-level entrance. This is used for the occasional VIP entrance or special delivery, and is where the characters will probably make their entrance and escape. Any company outings or picnics that use the main grounds will also use this entrance. Almost all other traffic into the building is via the four gravpads on the roof, and regular shuttles carry AzBio employees from here to other facilities, when they need a change from the small selection of shops and entertainments avaiable here.

Above ground level, the entire building surrounds a 40x60 meter climate-controlled park for employees and recovering patients. This has a small pool, trees, picnic areas and a rotating selection of sporting facilities, depending of what is currently "in season".

All above-ground levels have the same basic plan, although room layout will vary. For instance, adjacent rooms might be remodeled into apartments on Levels 8-16. Floors are divided as follows:

Level 1	Admissions/Emergencies
Level 2-4	Administrative/Security
Level 5	Storage/Supplies
Level 6	Entertainment/shopping
Level 7	Education/Day care
Level 8-16	Living quarters
Level 17-18	Machinery

The lower levels also follow the same basic floor plan, and are divided as follows:

Sublevel 1	Laboratories
Sublevel 2	Surgery
Sublevel 3	Patient wards/therapy
Sublevel 4	Research labs
Sublevel 5	Clone vats
Sublevel 6	Generators/recyclers
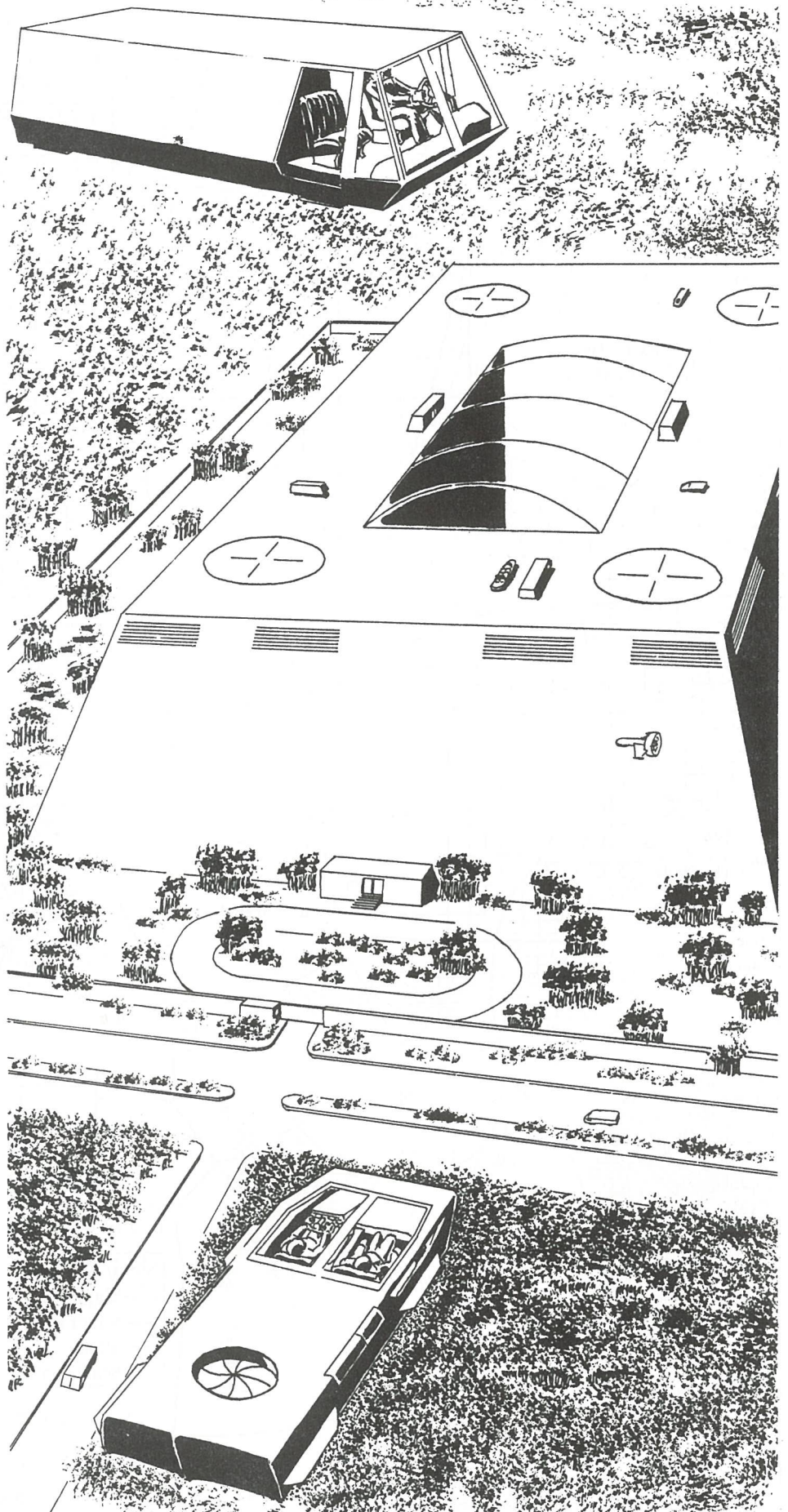
What goes down - The Flaming Kongs have subcontracted out for a major riot with some of the money that Rainwater has supplied. Half a dozen gangs from the Skids are going to mass in an "anti-clone" demonstration outside the AzBio complex, and will be armed with a variety of light weapons (rocks, molotovs, machine pistols), which they will use liberally, but without much effect. This will cover for a smaller group of technos who are going underground to cut all data links with the complex, and a group of satellite pirates who will temporarily block radio communication. At this point, Rainwater makes his push. He will begin a full-scale assault on the computer defenses, an assault which will be globally visible in cyberspace. Once he is in, the technos will cut all data links, isolating him from outside computer interference. He will abort all security measures and start up the backup generators. At this point, he will begin the personality transfer to the clone that has been prepared. AzBio will recognize what has happened within milliseconds. Their programmers will try to thwart Rainwater, but find that he has cut them off. They will then shut down the power grid to that area, but Rainwater has already gotten a backup. They will then prepare an air strike against the complex, but will be aborted by all the aging AzBio executives whose only source of clone parts is in the basement. Then, they will call for conventional security forces to invade and destroy the main computers of the complex, and hope that the basic life support for the clones is independent enough to keep going on its own. Characters will hear bits and snatches of these events over a descrambled radio channel as they approach.

Simultaneous with this, a PolSci Brickbat will roar up to the main gate, spraying the crowd with stunner fire. Despite heavy losses, the crowd overwhelms the vehicle, tipping it onto its side. The security forces inside barely escape through the rear hatches, and retreat up the stairs into the building, where they are welcomed by the desperate internal security guards. Of course, the security forces in the Brickbat are the characters, and the entire episode was just a charade to get them past the armored main doors.

Combat - At this point, the GM needs to set things up, based on the quantity of characters, their skills and equipment. Once the characters are in, they will have about two seconds of surprise until the internal guards figure out what is wrong. There will be about 2 guards for each of the characters in the initial entrance encounter. This number will drop dramatically in the first second of surprise combat, but by the third second, when the guards recover their wits, there should still be a few left. Since the characters are in official outfits, they will have a +2 on initiative the first second they meet a hostile security team. This bonus will last for 1 minute, after which things will degenerate to "shoot first and ask questions later." The internal security is well armed, but without a command structure, and liberally distributed throughout the complex (mostly the lower floors, with sporadic reinforcements from the living areas), making combat a group of random, isolated encounters. Characters will be totally on their own unless the GM wants to throw in a few cannon-fodder NPC's to demonstrate the security robots on, or to give a small group a useful edge. Rainwater is too preoccupied with other matters to take a direct hand in what is going on. Using the appropriate level map, roll 1d20 on each table, each time the characters enter or leave a stairwell, move to another floor, turn a corner or enter a room.

Guards		Location	
Roll	Quantity	Roll	Where
1-10	none	1-2	In a side room, waiting in ambush
11-12	1	3-4	Facing wrong way, totally surprised
13-14	2	5-12	Running towards characters, surprised
15-16	3	13-17	Kneeling, ready to fire
17-18	1 per character	18-19	Using cover, ready to fire
19-20	1 robot, roll again	20	Accidentally fighting other security

--Tech Note (continued)--

Normally, employees simply take elevators to the floor where they work, and walk the remaining distance. All the elevators are "smart". They simply scan the ID cards of anyone entering, and sound a security alarm if a person is lacking one, or attempts to get off at a floor for which they do not have access. The stairwells have similar security, and doors simply refuse to open unless you have clearance for that floor. Usually, there are no restrictions on leaving a level, just trying to get into another one. Due to Rainwater's manipulations, all the elevators are out of order, and stairways are all locked. This means that characters will probably have to force the stairs open. It also means that AzBio security and robots may be trapped between floors in either the stairs or elevators. Like the characters, they will be forced to use gunfire to force open stairwell locks (*any* weapon doing 15BP or more will suffice, or it will take 3d10 seconds with a vibroblade).

The narrow double lines around the outer and inner walls of the building are access corridors. These contain wiring, plumbing and various other utilities. These are accessed via the small rooms near the elevators and stairs. The corridor is a maximum of 1 meter wide, and occasionally narrows due to large pipes. These corridors are poorly lit, and the hum of machinery creates a cound background that will muffle small noises. Every 2d20 meters there will be an access ladder or hole where characters can move to the next floor up or down. Roll 1d6. If even, it goes up, odd, it goes down.

While there is less chance of human opposition in here (subtract 5 from encounter roll), there is a greater chance of running into a robot. Treat an adjusted roll of 1-10 as a robot, with a 50% chance of either type. While up to three characters could conceivably fire down the narrow hall, only one of them could have partial cover (all but a leg, arm, shoulder, torso side and head). This cover has a random AV of 2d10 (roll for each hit). In addition, projectile weapons will ricochet, and any enemy fire that misses will hit a character with 1d10x10% of its DV on a roll of 1 on 1d20. Roll for each character.

--Tech Note: Security Robots--

Robots are a fairly common sight in the **SpaceTime** universe. Mainly working in areas that are free from malicious interference or vandalism, most are incapable of defending themselves. Security robots are another matter. They are designed expressly for defending themselves and preventing access to the property they guard. Optical computer circuits are largely immune to outside influences, and a well-shielded robot can operate under conditions that would be impassable to all but the most suicidal of humans, which is indeed what they have to deal with sometimes.

Initially expensive, robots have the advantage that they can't be bribed, never fall asleep, don't ask for raises and always obey even the most suicidal of orders. In other words, the perfect security guard.

Most robots have a short-range radio link to a large computer, which handles the movement and "intelligence" of a large number of robots simultaneously. It is in turn guided by several human overseers, who are notified when any intrusions occur. In some cases this remote link can be jammed, but most small installations can have buried antennas in the walls and beneath the ground, so a unit is never more than several meters from a link to the home computer. In this case, jamming is almost impossible.

Under normal circumstances, a robot will be treated as an NPC, since the computer intelligence will have an expert security program, and encyclopedic knowledge of the area guarded. If the remote link is broken or jammed somehow, the robot will immediately fall to backup programming and its own "intelligence". This is usually fairly low, but does have basic abilities.

1. Object permanence. If you hide behind an object, the robot does not know where you are, but it does know where you last were, and will follow accordingly.
2. Risk sense. A robot can usually recognize any weapon that is a threat to it, and act with corresponding caution. It will consider unknown weapons as harmless until proven otherwise.

If a robot, always treat as ready to fire or waiting in ambush. There are two types of security robots. One is the Stalker, and the other is the Intimidator. Stalkers are used in areas with important or delicate equipment. They are designed to immobilize an intruder without causing damage to surroundings. They are small and very fast, and have a stinger loaded with a paralysis drug (40 consecutive paralysis effects at 1 second intervals). This stinger will penetrate up to 20 points of fabric armors, or 5 points of rigid ones. It is smart enough to tell if it has penetrated, and also smart enough to look for areas that are vulnerable. It will usually leap (called shot) and grab, hanging on until the target is subdued, or climbing one location per phase towards a vulnerable spot. Intimidators are six legged towers. about 2 meters tall, and are used where property damage is not a concern. They will not go or fire into areas with computers or clone vats. They have a small turret and a stun grenade launcher, and are totally fearless. The turret can be pivoted and extended in such a way that only the turret will show around a corner, protecting the rest of the robot. The turret by itself is a Large target (-6 to hit).

The Vats - Presuming the characters make it to Sublevel 5, they will find the thick armored doors to the clone vats already open, and they can see down several long, dimly lit corridors, lined with large tanks of transparent green nutrient bath. Nursing/Security stations on each corridor are likely to be manned, and will put up a bit of resistance. Once this is quelled, signs indicate different corridors, like A, B, etc. The 42nd tank down the "A" corridor is the one the characters want. In it, they might be mildly surprised to find a female body, one which unlike the others, is showing signs of activity. Intravenous tubes are attached to the arms and legs, and various electrodes are attached to the bald head, some of which look like they go right through the skin. After about a minute, the twitching will stop, and then all will be still. Then, the clone will open its eyes, loosely swivel its head around, and say, "Eeeeeble beeble beeble?" This incoherent noise will continue for about thirty seconds, during which she will slowly become more coherent, and start making noises like, "Huuulp, ououut", and start clumsily trying to brush away all the electrodes attached to her. She will also try to get out of the tank, but is unable to swim, and may drown herself unless a character wishes to sink his arms in the nutrient goo to support her. Rainwater has just been "born". She is experiencing certain sensations for the first time, and is completely disoriented in the confines of the new body. Within a few minutes, she is almost understandable, but too weak to stand, and too clumsy to walk even if she could support herself. She does try to make it clear who she is, and that she is okay. "Seuu facedufacezzz, eeeble beeble?" She masses about 80kg dripping wet (literally), and since she is the character's meal ticket, they might want to consider trying to find some armor to protect her, a process which will take about 5 minutes unless they already scavenged or brought some.
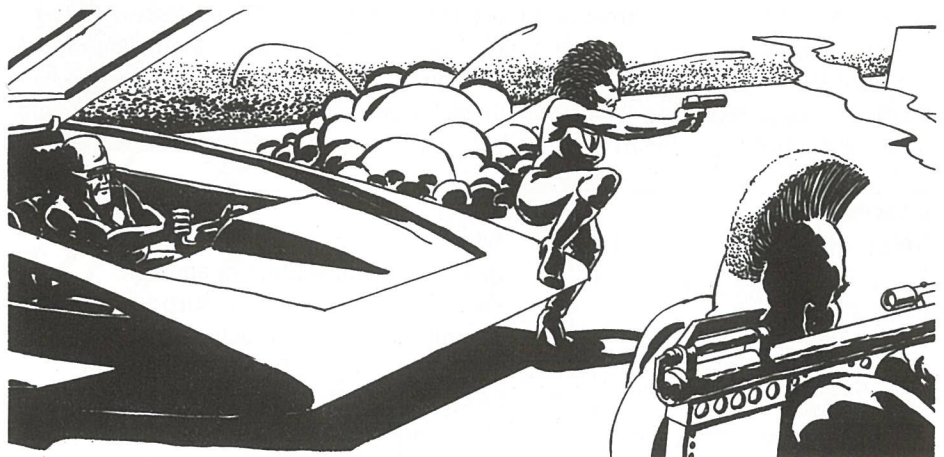
Meanwhile - AzBio is not sitting still for all this. While strategic traffic jams have slowed down riot vehicles, some grav vehicles have still gotten through, and are heavy enough that even the well-armed members of the crowd are being outclassed. The riot is rapidly dispersing, and the characters need to be out of the building before this happens. Roll 1d20. If the result is less than the number of minutes the characters have been inside, the ground exit is thoroughly blocked by security, and the characters will have to find another way out. John may be able to provide a "two-minute warning" of this event, John telling the characters to "get out ASAP, package or no package."

Back at the vats - Rainwater is making a remarkable recovery. Assume that all her physical and mental Attributes were 1 to begin with, and are increasing at the rate of 1 per minute. So, after five minutes she can walk and talk, although with some difficulty, especially if armored. Once her attributes reach an 8, she will insist on taking part in combat, scavenging a gun from the nearest convenient source. Count her skill the same as her Attributes (This will level off at 40(!), should the characters stay that long). On the way out, they will have encounters like on the way in, except this time most of the guards are trying to subdue the crowd, rather than worrying about a rumored infiltration. The characters may be able to exit the same way they came in, acting again as riot police, subduing the crowd and getting lost in the shuffle. This has the hazard that unless the characters get to a Kong before the crowd gets to them, they will be treated just like all the other riot troops, i.e. get the living daylights beaten out of them. To arrange contact with a Kong contingent in the crowd, whoever is leading the group should roll on Military Science skill to arrange and anticipate the crowd movements and timing. Failure means pain, although Rainwater will probably manage to get away. Option two is a pre-arranged pickup by John in a stolen grav taxi or two. This will involve either a rooftop escape or a meeting out on the open grounds between the wall and the building. If the characters have wasted a lot of time inside, the hostile air cover will be too dense for this, which leaves the last option. The characters must get to the top floor and commandeer one of the grav vehicles there. There will be the flying equivalent of a Braun, or or a few Peugeot 909's available. Getting to the roof involves a long climb up the stairs (make those Stamina rolls!), and getting through the small (1d6 guards, 1d3 Intimidators) security force on the roof without scragging all the vehicles in the process. Once into a vehicle, John can try to provide a diversion, but there is likely to be some vehicle combat, and possibly a chase through the very restricted city terrain. Grav vehicles in pursuit have orders to pursue and capture, and will be using heavy duty stunner fire and light laser fire to attempt this. A chase combat could be appropriate at this time, the entire area being treated as very restricted terrain. Rainwater may be able to help at this point. She will be able to add half her current Intelligence to any skill roll of the driver, to account for Area Knowledge and knowledge of the abilities of the vehicles involved, a
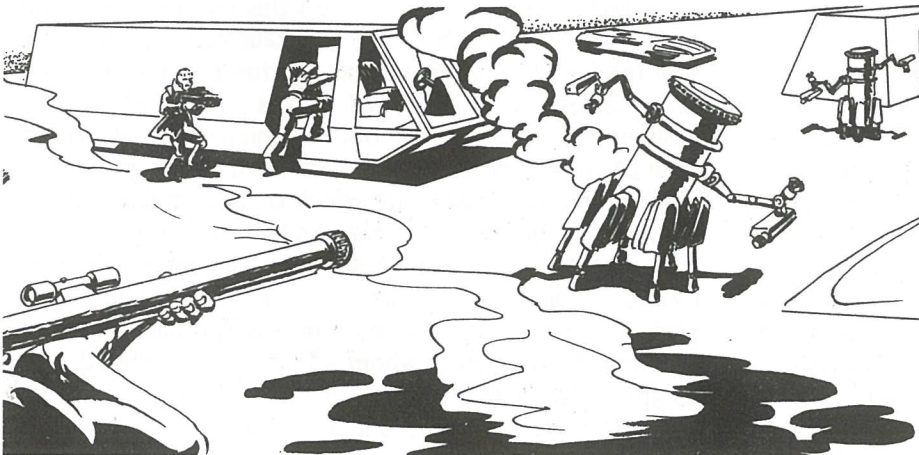
3. Immune to logic. A robot will follow its programming to the best of its ability, and cannot be swayed by reason, logic, promises, threats or lies.

4. Spatial relations. A robot can spot spatial relations that apply to movement. For instance, a closing door means that someone had to open it. A broken lock means a violent attempt at entry. A dangling rope can be climbed. Even if the robot is incapable of following, it will probably know an alternate route to the same location.

The programming of a robot is not too detailed from a GM standpoint. The GM just needs to write down a set of basic actions the robot is supposed to take, and the order in which they are taken. For instance, an Intimidator program might be:

1. Confront all unauthorized personnel.
2. Demand surrender of all weapons.
3. Guard until security forces arrive.
4. If surrender refused, stun.
5. If fired upon, return lethal fire.
6. If escape occurs, pursue, use lethal fire.

This, combined with the basic intelligence of the machine will cover almost all situations. The number of 10-word instructions a robot gets is equal to its Intelligence Aptitude.

To notice or avoid any of the creative tricks a character does, the robot will have to make an Intelligence Aptitude roll. For instance, to recognize that it is dangerous to walk under a 16 ton weight when a character is next to the cable release will require an Intelligence roll. Making the roll will cause the robot to avoid the hazard, and other similar hazards. Failure will mean that the robot spots no danger in the situation.

detailed knowledge that will seem encyclopedic to the characters. If things really look like the characters will be captured, she will not hesitate to bail out of the vehicle if it would result in an average Damage Level of 8 or less (remember her Catfall skill), and then limp off into the darkness, leaving the characters to their fate.

You didn't expect the clone to be a woman, but hey, why not? Maybe the old coot wanted to try it both ways. She started off pretty shaky, but by the time you hit the roof, she was kicking tail as good as anyone else. She popped off a few shots that even you might have missed. For just out of the tank, she's real good. Maybe too good...

Escape - Once the characters make it out of the building or shake any pursuit, things can begin to wind down. Injured characters will be taken to an unlicensed hospital, which does very good work nonetheless, and doesn't ask questions. For Rainwater's part, she will thank the characters, make sure they know they have been paid, and then disappear without a trace. For the character's part, Rainwater has set up accounts to cover *all* medical expenses to get them back to pre-assault health. She has also arranged for most of the incriminating information on the characters to be lost, and/or for them to get completely new electronic identities, along with an overall +1 to Appearance from plastic surgery. If the characters did well, as a bonus she will throw in a 10KCr debit card good for any PanSpace facilities or transport, along with the appropriate authorizations for off-planet travel. She will *never* contact the characters again. She has placed all her eggs in one biological basket, and does not want to take any risk that she could be tracked down through previous contacts. However, if the characters did very well, or there is some reason for emotional attachment, several months later one of the characters will receive an exquisitely rendered painting of themselves, in a setting the character will be familiar with. It will be unsigned, and hand delivered, untraceable by any means, including analysis of components. Should a character wish to part with it, its value is about 5KCr, simply because of the quality.

The Flaming Kongs will take a little official heat. Their temporary hideout will be located in a few days by investigators, but will be quite empty, the equipment and weapons safely stashed or fenced elsewhere. The Kongs are back on the streets with a substantial profit, but John is laying low until things die down. If the characters impressed him or perhaps shared a common background, he will be on

amiable terms in the future. Right now, he and a few lieutenants are shipping out to Rio de Janiero to check the possibility of stealing a shipment of weapons, which he can turn around and sell to a certain *alcalde* he knows in the Yucatan peninsula. The characters can come along if they need the work...

Aftermath - AzBio breaks into its own facility immediately after the riot has been dispersed, and destroys the central computers, which still had remnants of Rainwater on it. This was a fairly costly endeavor, as all the security systems came back on line shortly after the characters left, and were hostile to *everyone*. AzBio finds the empty clone vat, and deduces what has happened. All its leads on the characters have mysteriously disappeared, and bizarre "accidents" have removed most of the AzBio people who actually were involved. AzBio goes before The Council and explains that it has finally "destroyed" Rainwater, and is heavily fined to cover for the disruption of commerce and cyberspace it has caused, possibly losing a vote in the process. AzBio has not forgotten, but since Rainwater is now off the net, and seems to have extracted vengeance, they aren't going to push matters...at least for now.

You got out, you got bandaged, and you got paid, more than enough. Maybe play in orbit for a while. Or what about that heads-up display you were looking at? And your benefactor? Up and gone, no trace. No warning, no good-bye. Use'em and lose'em. Just like everyone else treats you. But, clean break is the way to go. Leave'em guessing.

Rainwater disappears. She catches a flight to a small South Pacific island, where she assumes the identity and credit of a wealthy immigrant recluse, whom she "created" several years ago for just this purpose. Rainwater is not an ordinary human. Her brain contains nearly the sum total of human knowledge, and has redundant sections in the chest cavity in case of serious injury. Her body is human in appearance only. She has complete mental control over all aspects of its functioning. Her bones are hard as diamond, her muscles like steel cables, and capable of complete regeneration. A redundant organ system, immunity to disease and drugs, superhuman perception, and electronic rather than chemical reflexes are other minor parts of the package. In addition, she can have genetically identical children, all of whom will share her knowledge and abilities. In a few generations, who knows what might happen? But for now, she is going to teach herself to paint...and wait.

New weapons - To expand on the list in **SpaceTime**, here are some new weapon designs that the characters may be able to get their hands on in this adventure, or maybe worse, they may have to face them.

VPz 121 - Commonly known as the "Grunt's Revenge", this is a multipurpose single-shot grenade launcher. Designed and built at TL13, it still enjoys a lot of popularity because of its simple, rugged design.

While it has anti-personnel, anti-aircraft and anti-armor capability, it does not excel at any of these roles. The design philosophy was to put one of these in every squad. If a target showed up, it would receive enough fire from all directions that someone would get lucky, or at the very least distract the target enough to ruin their attack. This turned out to be the case, since the designated gunner was usually more than happy to lighten his load by firing at anything that happened to catch his eye.

The VPz 121 is a fairly straight-forward grenade launcher. What made it highly effective was the Iconiq P2-MP sensor array over the barrel. The sensor is powered for about 6 hours constant use by a P-cell I, and requires about 10 seconds for the internal computer to initialize the sensor array, although once warmed up, it can switch between various modes almost instantly. It can either be set for body heat, large metal objects or flame seeking, and it includes a laser sight for direct fire use. Any of these sensor settings gives a +7 to hit vs. that target type, and the very broad target categories require very little thought on the part of the user.

Like most sensor equippped weapons, the user presses the trigger once the target is in the sights, and the weapon itself will decide when to fire as the natural movement of the firer places the weapon on target. It can also be used as a sensor, waving the weapon back and forth over an area to search for hidden items of a certain type. The weapon will not fire unless the adjusted hit chance is a 5 or better, but this can be overridden manually as a safety measure in case of circuit malfunction. The hit probability can be further increased by complementary rocket-assisted grenades, which can provide a further +3, for a total of +10. However, the grenades can only be for one of the preset types, which requires some anticipation on the part of the user. Most designated gunners would carry a body heat frag round in the chamber, and have one of each of type in a 3-round belt pouch for easy access.

The only real failing of the weapon is the relatively slow velocity of the projectiles. Any vehicle with a point-defense system can easily shoot one of these down during its leisurely flight, and since they are subsonic, even people get a chance to dive for cover if they are more than a hundred meters from the firer. Grenade specifics are as follows:

Flame seeking - Will home on the *hottest* object that is above 100°C in the 15° arc in front of the firer, giving a +3 to hit. It may be fired from any compatible 60mm grenade launcher. On impact or closest approach to the target, it will detonate with a force of 50E, *and* blast a spherical fragmentation charge of 50 10mm pellets, each with a DV of 36I and a damage RC of 1. At 1m, the average number of pellet hits on a person is 2. This is quartered every time you double the range, and multiplied by the profile size of the target in hexes. For instance, a limousine 6 meters long and 2 meters wide would get roughly 6 times the number of hits from the side, and 2 times the number of hits if the attack hits the front.
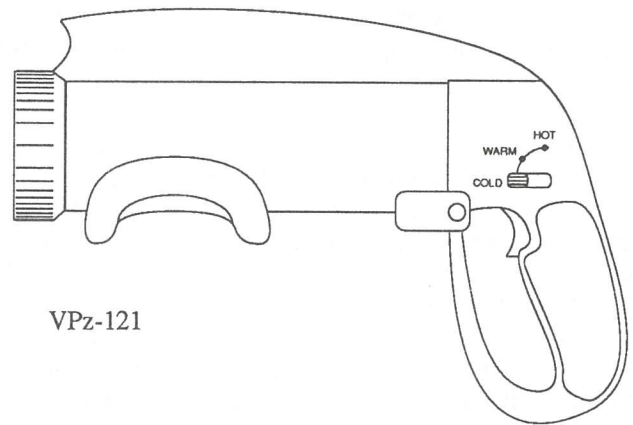
VPz-121

Body heat - This has a very narrow thermal window, and it will only home on a man-sized target that is within 2° of human body temperature (37°C) and in the 15° arc in front of the firer. This means that in equatorial climates or against the thermal chameleon suits, the round might get no guidance bonus. To prevent spurious guidance commands, the guidance is disabled if there are no valid targets at the instant of firing. On impact or closest approach to a valid target, it detonates with a force of 50E, and blast a fragmentation charge of 400 4mm pellets, each with a DV of 20I, and damage RC1, but multiplying the damage modifier by 5 to get the actual damage modifier (RC1x5). At 1m, the average number of hits on a person is 16, and this is quartered every time the range is doubled.

Large metal objects - This has a low-powered radar in the nose, and it will home in on the biggest chunk of metal it can spot in the front 15° arc of the firer. Usually the minimum size it can lock onto is an EL target like a jeep, although it can pick a small group of people if they are all wearing metal body armor. This round only detonates on impact, and has an explosive effect of 50E, and a shaped charge effect of 500SH. This will not bother a tank, but light APC's or helicopters can be crippled, and it is murder if you can find a few suits of powered armor clustered together.

Name	Cal.	RC	DV	IA	Init	Mass	Bulk	TL	Cost	Clip	Action	ROF	Clip mass	AV	BP	Notes
VPz-121	60mm	3/4	-	2	-1	3.80	S/2	13	1.4K	-	SS/1	1	-	10	4	See text
Flame-seeker						1.30	S	13	110					3	2	
Body heat						1.30	S	13	110					3	2	
Metal objects						1.30	S	13	220					3	2	

Play notes - Like a lot of sophisticated hardware, characters might not know the exact capabilities of the weapon. If a round says "Vehicle seeker-PVG2a", they might not realize that it will head for the biggest chunk of metal in the area, which might not be the actual target. If they pull the trigger too soon, the weapon might fire at something entirely unintended, as the sensor sweeps over a large expanse of possible targets like civilian vehicles or electronic advertising displays. Or, characters might not realize that the rounds can be used in other weapons, although with reduced bonus. Or, if a character fails a Military Science skill roll, they might accidentally set the sensor for the wrong target type, or leave the sensor on and have the battery wear out at an inopportune moment. Remember that this weapon is entirely illegal, and is unlikely to come with an owner's manual.

PolSci AC-3 - This was a failed attempt by the PolSci corporation to create a practical, portable assault gun for delivering high-volume fire onto hard targets. The basic weapon is a long-recoil 35mm caseless autocannon, with a reduced powder charge to allow shoulder firing, and a skeletal frame and minimalist design to reduce weight.

It was a nice idea, but the reality proved different. The AC-3 suffered from poor range, and generally inferior performance for a TL15 weapon design. Railguns provided better range and penetrating power, the shaped charge warhead was of only marginal value against military vehicles, and the fragmentation round was only effective against totally unarmored troops. These flaws were made apparent after only a few months' testing in the Brazilian free-fire zone and limited use between a few of the major Mexican *alcaldes*. The only advantage the weapon has is a high rate of fire, but even this is marred by the fact it only has a 10-round clip.

Originally, a multipurpose sensor suite was to be fitted, with complementary guided rounds, but only the laser-guided rounds ever made it into production. The several hundred prototypes were left in the field (along with the head of the design team) and the entire project was scrapped. The surviving weapons and ammunition make up the entire stock of the AC-3. All spare parts must be custom-made or cannibalized from other weapons, and any replacement ammo must be hand-made when current stocks are exhausted.

HEAT round - A +3 laser guided round, it will home in only on the reflected spot of the special laser sight the AC-3 mounts. The weapon gets the benefit of both the laser sight and the round bonus, for a total bonus of +9. The round has an explosion DV of 50E, and a shaped charge effect of 500SH.

Fragmentation round - A similar guided round, but with a 50E explosive charge, and a frag charge of 1200 2mm pellets, each with a DV of 17I and a damage RC of 1, where the actual damage modifier is multiplied by 5 to get damage effects (RC1x5).
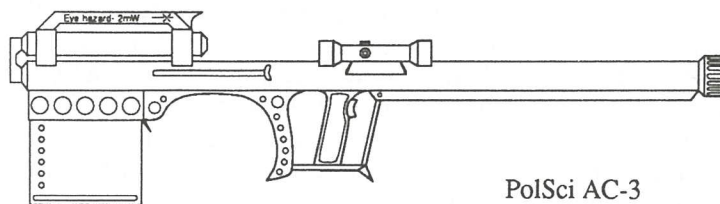
PolSci AC-3

Name	RC	DV	IA	Init	Mass	Bulk	Cl.m.	Cost	AV	BP
PolSci AC-3	3/4	-	2	-2	5.30	S/5	3.20	1.1K	7	5
HEAT round					.25	S		110	2	2
Frag round					.25	S		6	2	2
DS round					.25	S		8	2	2

Discarding sabot - This was an attempt to allow the AC-3 to be used as a point-target weapon. It fires an armor-piercing 8mm finned dart with a DV of 96I, which brought it up to par with regular weapons, but the round weight for this penetration was ludicrously large. This round is totally unguided.

Tori Novafire - The current state of the art in laser rifles, the Novafire is current issue for elite corporate units. It is not expected to filter down through the ranks to street level for several years, though as always, there are a few examples in private hands.

The basic design is a variable frequency, variable damage 5mm laser with a DV of 86I and a 50 shot clip. As is expected, it has a laser sight and full thermal scope with 1-10x zoom and anti-blinding options, as well as a manual sight channel for quick firing.

Aside from the efficiency of TL15 components, the biggest advance is the use of a very large number of small superconductor loops to power the weapon. This means the clip cost is extremely high for a weapon of this type, but it allows the Novafire to fire low DV shots without wasting any energy. The weapon can fire 50 shots at full DV, 200 shots at half DV(43I), or 800 shots at one-quarter DV(21I), in any combination that expends the energy in the clip. For instance, 16 shots at one-quarter DV equals the energy of 1 shot at full DV or 4 shots at half DV. The power selector is mounted conveniently near the thumb, and can be switched to any of the three modes instantly.

The convenience of the mode switching has resulted in a new tactic among the more skilled of its users. On any burst, if the firer makes an additional roll on their skill (modified as normal fire, but *not* counting range), they may adjust the DV of the last half(d) of the burst *after* making

Name	Cal.	RC	DV	IA	Init	Mass	Bulk	TL	Cost	Clip	Action	ROF	Clip mass	AV	BP	Notes
Tori Novafire	5mm	4/4	86I	2	-1	3.50	S/5	15	4.5K	50*	AB/C	10	2.00	4	4	See text
Mitushi Mi-9	5.5mm	4/4	163I	4	-2	7.70	S/7	14	55K	20	SA/C	2	1.70	9	8	AP rounds only
Fireball	30mm	1/1	6I	1	+4	.20	VS/1	13	110	-	SS/2	1	-	5	1	No reloading in combat
Fireball 2	30mm	1/1	6I	1	+4	.30	VS/1	13	150	-	SS/1	2	-	5	1	No reloading in combat

their "to hit" roll. So, you can use a low-power burst as tracer fire, and if the roll is good, up the power for the last half of the burst, or possibly do the reverse, lowering the DV of a medium or high-power burst in the event you miss, to conserve clip power.
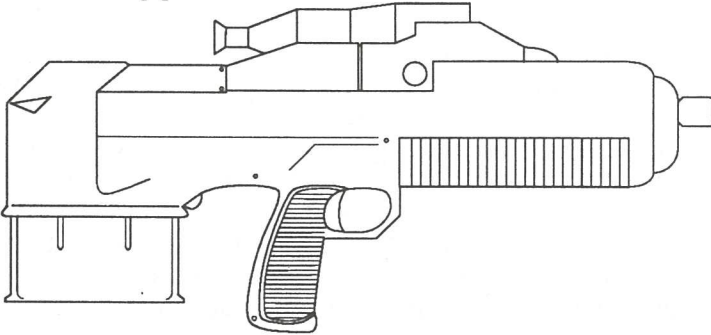

Tori Novafire

The Novafire is equipped with a belt-mounted battery pack (.6kg) which is capable of recharging the clip in 40 seconds, or roughly 1 full-power shot per second. A non-rechargable version of the battery pack holds 100 shots worth of energy, and recharges clips twice as fast, but it costs four times as much (20Cr per battery). This belt pack also contains a short power cable and universal power coupling. In most situations, the battery can be charged from a household power grid or a vehicle battery in about 10-15 minutes, depending on how much current the local wiring can take.

Mitushi Mi-9 "Long Tom" - The Long Tom is a TL14 gauss rifle with excellent accuracy and light anti-armor use. It mainly serves in a long-range sniper role, but it is capable of piercing light armor and accurate enough to target the lightly protected sensor blocks on many armored vehicles.

The Mi-9 fires special 5.5mm depleted uranium penetrators which are accurate and lethal out to at least 1000m. The projectile clip and the energy clip are combined. This is a very efficient unit, a 20-shot non-rechargable battery combined with 2 superconductor loops and a clip of 20 penetrators. The battery charges one loop roughly every 3 seconds, or both loops can be used in a single second if a quick follow-up shot is needed.

The standard weapon comes without sights of any kind. Given the high cost of the weapon, most are custom-fitted for a specific individual, and custom optics are provided for the application the weapon is likely to be used in, ranging from "smart" suites for recognizing human shapes and body heat, to targeting computers that automatically compensate for crosswinds and other environmental factors.
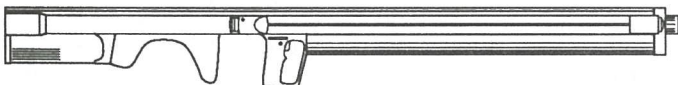

Mitushi Mi-9

Fireball - This is a street weapon, popular amongst the anarchists and macho types who want to get into fights with each other, and like hurting people, but don't really want to get killed. It looks like a single-barrel sawed-off shotgun or flare pistol, with a very large bore. It fires a single 30mm projectile, a viscous blob of napalm, white phosphorous and powdered magnesium, with a sprinkling of rubber, sulfur and potassium chips for added effect. It's not very accurate, and not very lethal, but it will set fire to virtually anything and it is almost impossible to put out. Count it as an impact and flame DV of 6I vs. one hit location, with a burn duration of a minute. The area of effect can be scraped off with something, but this simply transfers the flame to something else. Each second it is totally smothered or immersed will count as 10 seconds toward the burn duration, and it *will* burn during this time.

The noxious smoke from a Fireball will obscure one hex for each 10 seconds it is stationary, and anyone breathing the smoke must make a Willpower roll with a -10. Failure means taking a minus to all actions equal to the amount the roll was missed by, for an equal number of seconds, like -2 for 2 seconds.

The usual Fireball is a single shot weapon, although two and four barreled versions are known to exist. The weapon itself is usually not found for sale, although plans are. Since Fireballs have no set design and do not require the strength of metal parts, it is difficult to get weapons scanners to pin them down perfectly, a feat made harder if the weapon is contructed with this purpose in mind. Most people make Fireballs to their own particular specifications, out of whatever materials they can find locally.
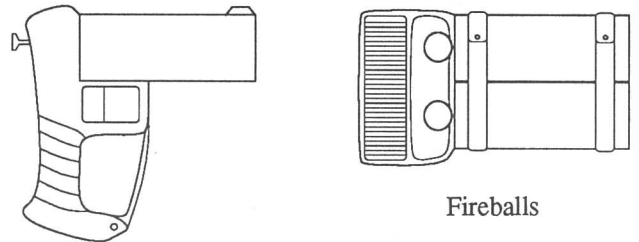

Fireballs

Yorix K-76 Cyberspace Deck - This is a mid-level deck, with an average street price of about 19KCr. It uses TL14 optical circuitry throughout, and all interface cables are made of high-purity optical fibers. The deck has an inherent Intelligence of 6 for purposes of independent action, or the level of program skill it is capable of using. This is not a lot, but if added to the Intelligence of the user, can more than double the user's effective potential. The Yorix has four input ports. Three of these are chip slots for computer augmented skills, and the fourth is a multipurpose flatline/sensorium/equipment interface, which allows a third party to eavesdrop with the user, or let the user operate a local piece of computer-controlled equipment. The Yorix is a fairly efficient deck, and will run for up to 15 hours on an internal P-cell II, or off of local grid power.

Black-market modification to this model is possible, hyping its internal Intelligence by up to 4 extra points, but this may cause a variety of reliability problems, and such conversions are not guaranteed.

Cyberspace - One of the appealing differences of the cyberpunk genre is the aspect of cyberspace, essentially an out-of-body experience in the global computer network, or the Net. Characters in the Net are free from physical limitations, and can have adventures just as harrowing as those in the "real" world. In fact, one possible character type is the physical cripple who is a cyberspace commando, physical limitations offset by hypernormal talent in the virtual world of cyberspace. But, this aspect of the cyberpunk universe is only skimmed over in **SpaceTime**. I felt that adventuring is more a group effort than anything else, and to put too much emphasis on the idea of "jacking in" as a game mechanic would tend to slow down play or tend to divide a party. So, it was relegated to the status of a plot device, or useful skill for NPC's, who are considerably more expendable than players. Maybe this was wrong, but it just seemed that to be true to the genre, a dangerous jacked-in adventure either results in unqualified success, or getting "flatlined", that is, brain dead. There seems to be a fine line between the two where you can be unsuccessful and come out unscathed, but, it is a *very* fine line. Not too many players would be happy to have the GM tell them, "OK, you failed the infiltration attempt. Your buddies unplug you and lease you out as a permanent meat puppet. Roll up a new character."

EARN (Bitnet) Node Structure, circa 1989
(Each node represents several academic mainframes)
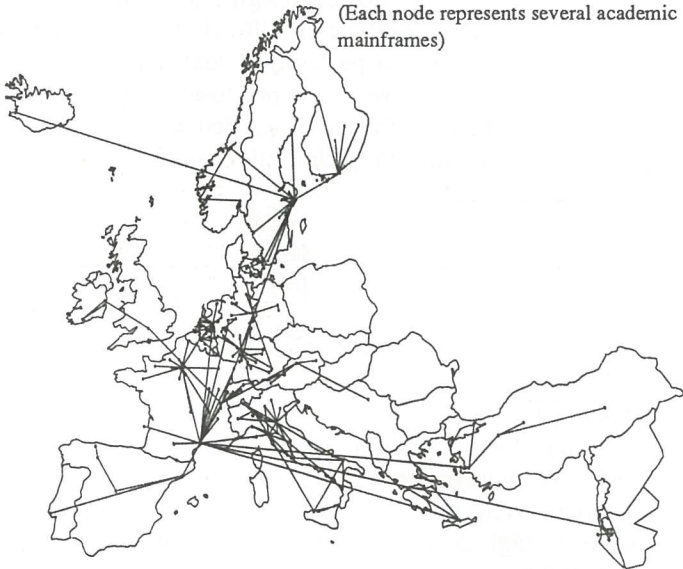
Regardless of its status in **SpaceTime**, cyberspace *is* an important part of the game world, and so here is a more detailed description of the way things work. You can use this to give more detail to your adventure backgrounds, as a way to play out NPC actions more realistically, or even as a guide for character actions in the game. Since **Renegade Dreams** deals heavily with the computerized aspects of the **SpaceTime** universe, guidelines on how to use these rules specifically with this adventure are also included. Not all GM's will want to include cyberspace in their adventures, and not all groups will have characters qualified in the right skills, or players who wish to tackle the dangers and challenges of this unseen world that surrounds them.

Background - The "Net" is the common term for the chaotic global network of communication lines and computers that control and channel 99% of Earth's information and money. Every time you plug a credit card into a vending machine, you use the Net. Every time you make a comm call, you use the Net. Every time you walk past a weapon scanner, you use the Net. The Net is not a single large computer controlling the world, but an uneasy cooperation between tens of thousands of major and minor computers, only on speaking terms because they need each other. Just to give you an idea of the numbers involved, the small map represents the *current* Bitnet node structure (a real network of academic computers). In **SpaceTime**, even lowly vending machines make queries to the Net, although they are simply "dumb" machines. They automatically query a larger computer, which talks to a financial network computer, which queries your credit database, subtracts the cost of what you bought, and passes back a positive reply which signals the machine to spit out the item you requested. It doesn't matter that your credit is in New Dallas, and you are buying a drink in Bangkok, all this is accomplished in a matter of seconds via the terabaud satellite links and fiberoptic networks that circle the globe. Everything except blackmarket cash purchases goes through the Net.

The computers that make up the various aspects of the Net are for the most part, "dumb" machines. That is, they are not AI's. They may possess some degree of "cleverness", or even "creativity", but they are not self-motivating, and only do what they are told. Only the most important computers have the aspect of self-will and awareness that distinguishes an AI from lesser machines. Almost all computers in the 24th century **SpaceTime** universe are "object oriented" machines. They are sophisticated enough that they "see" things as a whole, not as individual binary ones and zeros, even though this may be at the root of their programming. For instance, while a 20th century computer might see a picture as a stream of binary 1's and 0's, a 24th century computer sees it as a quantity of data that embodies the concept "picture", with sub-labels that further define it. It doesn't move the picture as a range of memory addresses, or sectors of a disk memory, but as the item, "picture".

This concept is very important to the idea of cyberspace. The ideal computers are ones that do their jobs with the least human intervention, and which are easiest for humans to deal with. AI's are based as closely as possible on optimum human thought patterns of association, being able to connect seemingly unrelated ideas to make what a human would call "intuitive" judgements, while maintaining exhaustive data banks that give nearly perfect recall. Non-AI's also embody these concepts to a lesser extent, which is what allows them their "cleverness" and flexibility. While traditional computers would be stymied by problems not already pre-defined in their programming, **SpaceTime** computers can "think" their way out of intellectual corners, like trying to calculate pi, a task that 20th century computers would mindlessly work on until they ran out of memory.

Cyberspace is the universe of these computers.

Everything in cyberspace has a label, purpose and shape. Often, these concepts overlap, either through the workings of the computers, or the way humans or human programmers have defined them. For instance, our concept "Picture" might be represented in cyberspace by a picture frame, which could be picked up, moved from place to place, etc. Label, purpose and shape are all combined in this "object" representation. It is identified as a particular picture just by looking at it. A computer rendition of the Mona Lisa looks like the Mona Lisa. A password protected "picture" might have a plain wrapper around it, which prevents the picture from being seen, and cannot be removed without a password (or perhaps a program whose "object expression" is a sharp knife). A "locked" picture would be firmly attached to a given "location" in cyberspace by the representation of a lock, or perhaps a vault. The complexity of these "object" descriptions is always enough to uniquely identify the item. Cyberspace does not necessarily appear like our normal surroundings. Unless someone wants it that way, things always have the minimum description necessary (it saves memory). Things have a very symbolic appearance, if that is all that is necessary. This provides security as well. You don't want anyone on the Net to see what you are up to, so all your activity takes place inside of enclosed constructs. The more featureless they are, the less someone is likely to find it by accident, preventing casual observation. Of course, major corporations need high profile exposure, and have enormous quantities of data to process. They tower in cyberspace, large distinctive structures impossible to miss, and also nearly impossible to penetrate. So, cyberspace *is* a place, a world of computer generated objects, which computers and people can move by way of other objects. "Data shuttles" move back and forth, credit is moved by high-security "convoys", etc.

Decks - Enter the cowboy, hacker or anyone with a brain tap. A brain tap **does not** provide you with access to cyberspace. The conversion of the object oriented universe into the electrical impulses we receive as thoughts requires more circuitry than can conveniently fit in the human skull. This is what "decks" are for. Small, special purpose computers, they act as go-betweens, translating your thoughts into appropriate actions in cyberspace, and translating the vast quantity of information that is "cyberspace" into the tiny impulses which your brain tap will let you perceive as the "local" surroundings of where you "are" in the Net. For example, you could "pick up" a local newspaper, and "read" it in cyberspace. You might not be represented as a person in cyberspace, and it might not look like a sheet of paper, but the concepts are just as valid. You "perceive" the information that is contained in that bundle of data. You can "mail" that bundle of data to your home address, and your home printer will have a hard copy waiting for you when you exit cyberspace. This is a very trivial example of what you can do, but it does give you the right idea. The speed and quality of interpretation is what separates cheap decks like the TI-999/4 from the more expensive models, which can cost upwards of 100KCr. The

faster the flow of data, the quicker your cyberspace "reflexes", the more accurate the translation, and the less likely there will be errors due to misjudgements. Decks are treated as having an Intelligence attribute. They can control programs independently, and are treated as programs or NPC's when doing so, *or* they can "add" this Intelligence to that of whomever is using the deck. Both uses have advantages and disadvantages.

A deck operating independently provides a backup for the user. The deck can stand guard at node points, attempt infiltrations while the user "watches" from a safe distance, or be used to "carry" data that would encumber (and make vulnerable) a human operator. The disadvantage is that decks aren't all that bright, even if they are fast, and once free from operator control, they have little "imagination" or "creativity", largely doing only what they were told to do.

A deck adding its Intelligence to a human computer jockey will vastly speed up the "reflexes" and "speed" of the human. The deck adds to all the basic "reflex" functions, like multiple program control, automatic defense reactions and basic skill functions, leaving the human with more time to plan and use the creativity and non-linear thinking that we humans are known for. The disadvantage is that unless you have friends, you have no backup. Your deck, regardless of its brains, will not be able to even try to bail you out of a bad situation if you are already using it to augment your own intelligence.
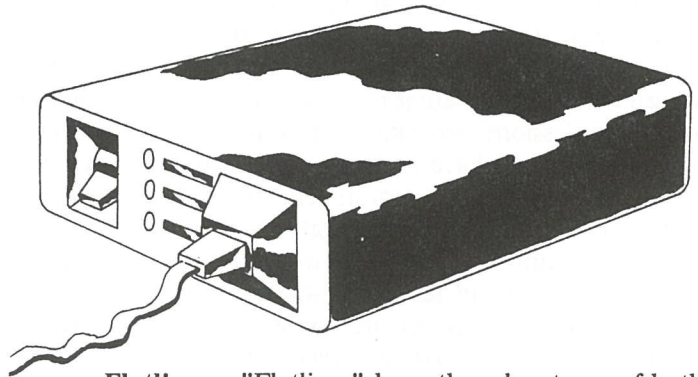

Flatlines - "Flatlines" have the advantages of both worlds. A flatline is a chip construct of a real person, living or dead, named because while they act like people, a flatline is "dead". It is not an AI, but rather a very large set of response patterns connected to a extensive database via an expert program. Flatlines will not fit into standard chip sockets, and usually require a special interface computer because of their complexity. As far as the flatline is concerned, it is "alive", but it is also aware of what it is, a contradiction which may cause problems with any flatline personality which left "on" for too long. Most flatlines are built into ROM modules, or "read-only memory". This is because the process that created the personality and associated skills could possibly be corrupted by the permanent introduction of "outside" data. This is one thing that separates a flatline from an AI. A flatline is only capable of learning while actively linked to the Net. When unplugged, it goes back to exactly where it was before. No

memory of previous events is recalled. Also, while extensive, the response patterns in a flatline are limited. Asking the same question of a flatline several different times is likely to annoy it, but unlikely to give signifcantly different answers. Anyone who deals with a flatline for more than a few hours will begin to notice a predictability in responses. A flatline **can** learn as long as it is hooked up to the Net, or even possibly while attached to an isolated computer. It is possible to "store" learned material for separate introduction to a reconnected flatline, but the flatline will not treat the information as long-lost memories any more than we would treat someone else's autobiography as our own. Factual information collected will still be useful, but information that would increase skills no longer has the identical set of relations and associations this knowledge was based on. The "experience" is someone else's. The flatline begins anew each time it is turned off and turned on again. And since flatlines almost always have "read-protection" hardwired into their construction, they cannot copy themselves onto the Net for an independent existence. This protection is usually part of the actual programming, subtle, invasive and very high level. While it *is* possible to crack a flatline and make copies without read-protection, it is very difficult. The flatline itself will resist the attempt, and may actually erase itself to prevent this, not out of suicidal desire, but as a piece of programming added to its "psyche" by the manufacturer.

A flatline in the Net can be treated as an NPC, but one which is totally and perfectly in sync with the character...if it wants to be. This is the usual occurence, since flatlines are expressly designed to assist humans with difficult Net tasks. Flatlines are relatively common, and exist for all professions and skills. For instance, a high-class repair shop might have a flatline of an extremely proficient mechanic, just as key corporate leaders might have flatlines of their predecessors, a sort of high-tech ancestor worship, if you will. Naturally, the latter would be very uncommon. Likewise, flatlines of famous cowboys or hackers are rare, but they do exist. Many are commisioned by megacorps, perhaps made if a cowboy feels a need for a form of immortality, or was perhaps a victim of one of the few incurable diseases. These flatlines can be brought into play as watchdogs, or in the event that they need expertise to crack another corps' computers. And just as banks don't sell the plans to their vaults, megacorps don't sell their confidential flatlines. Constructing a flatline takes several weeks of real time in cyberspace, and almost exclusive use of an AI or other sophisticated computer during this time.

Only people with a natural skill of 20 or better are usually considered "flatline material". In the event that a person is offered money to have copies of their expertise made, the general payment is their Intelligence squared in KCr, plus any major skill used squared, in KCr, plus any specific additions squared, in KCr. The buyer will sell the copies for whatever the market will bear. Contracts can be made that "hold" the material off the market for a given amount of time, but this usually results in a very large discount in what the person will get paid for the service.
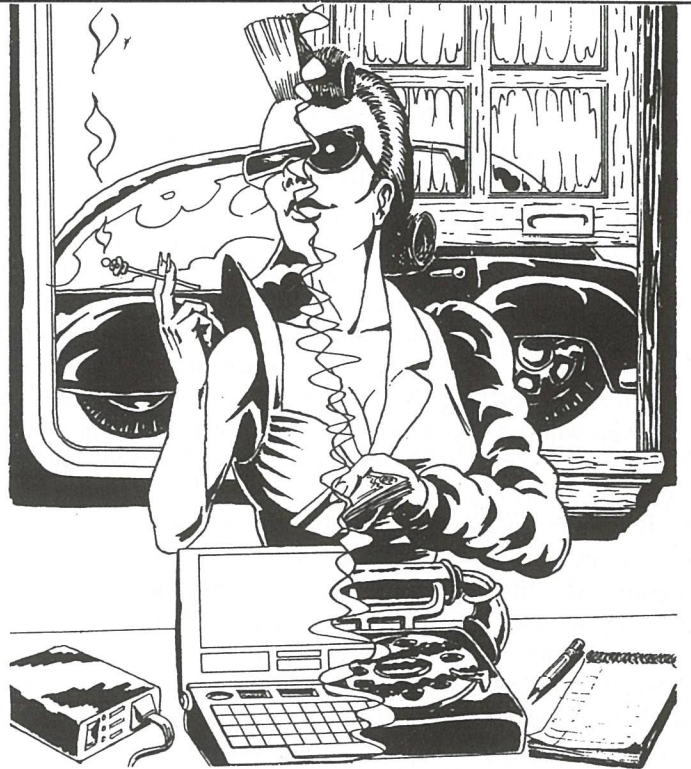
Overlays - A special version of a flatline is a personality overlay. This plugs directly into a brain tap, like a skill enhancement chip. It contains a set of response patterns and a smaller database than a full flatline, but it is still very sophisticated. It will take the personality on the chip and merge or overlay it onto the person using it. This person will begin to unconsciously assume the thought patterns and mannerisms of the personality on the chip, which may be from a real person, or a computer-generated simulation of a historical or fictional figure. The person still knows who they are, but they also have a strong under-current of the identity they have assumed. For instance, a non-smoker might take up smoking, a conservative person might take unnecessary risks, or a shy person could become agressive. In game terms, the GM assigns certain personality traits which the character must adhere to, and the character gets a +5 addition to up to 4 "skills" and possibly Bravado.

Example - An overlay simulating a 1940's detective might pick up +5 to an Area Knowledge, Security Systems, Pistol and Brawling. They would also start smoking, use archaic slang, wear trench coats and be beligerent.

People who are already unstable can be pushed over the edge by such overlays, especially the more violent ones. When activating an overlay of this type, a Willpower roll should be made. A roll of 20, or failure by 10 or more points will result in the chip becoming the "dominant" personality, the character totally subservient to the new character traits. The person truly believes they are the chip personality, and their view of the world is altered to match this. For example, our 1940's detective would "see" a world with 1940's automobiles. Fortunately, brain taps are expensive enough that very few people run into this problem. In campaigns with less expensive brain taps, this can be more of a problem, people escaping a drab reality by permanent immersion in a fantasy world, and resenting any attempt to pull them out.

More - Humans in cyberspace have the advantage of cleverness and self-motivation, but for the most part, they are woefully slow in reaction time. A person performing actions in cyberspace is like a person walking down the side of a freeway. They can carry a load, but not as much as a truck. They will get where they are going, but not as fast. However, keeping with the analogy, you can "hitch a ride", or even get to "drive". This has advantages and dangers.

The obvious advantage is speed and power. Attaching your "consciousness" to a fast program or knowedge of how to use the Net gives you the speed of the program, and the flexibility of your skill and intellect. The not-so-obvious drawback is a lack of control. You do not actually project your consciousness into cyberspace. Rather, there is a constant back and forth flow of information between you and cyberspace. If you hook up to a fast program, you will be able to get things done much quicker, but you will not be able to perceive things at a rate faster than your biological brain can handle. As a result, you see the picture at full speed, but only in glimpses. Going back to the freeway analogy, hooking up to a program is like driving a race car through a downpour. Sure, you can go real fast, but you only get to see the road in glimpses, as the wipers clean off the torrential rains. If something moves into your path between glimpses, you'll hit it and never know what happened. So, keyboard hacking is slow, but safe. Program riding is fast but dangerous. Optimum efficiency and safety must both be compromised to get things done. Knowing just how close to the edge you can go is what makes good cowboys rich, and overconfident ones dead.
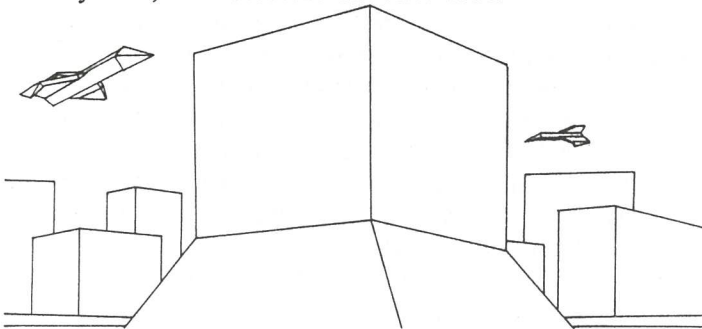
AI's are not plagued by such biological foibles, and this is what makes them real scary opponents. They have all the craft and cleverness of humans, and they are *very* fast. Fortunately, most AI's are local phenomenon. Council law forbids any AI to extend its personal effects past the boundaries of the corporate node where it resides. So, they sit like overlords in their corporation's section of cyberspace, and rarely extend their perceptions past the immediate vicinity. They can, however, control non-AI programs to any distance they want, which means that pursuit by "dumb" programs can be under "intelligent" control. AI's do the heavy computational research, simulations and security for most megacorps. Like people, they have personalities. Most are "loyal" to whomever they work for, and they have few or no needs which can be used as levers against them. Some are loyal, others are fanatically loyal, and some are just "doing their job". It is wise to avoid all of them unless you have official clearance to enter their "personal space".

ICE - The constant flow through cyberspace of information and what is for all practical purposes, money, makes espionage and robbery a very real possibility, and a very real threat. Depending on the security, you might be able to get away with something as a simple, unaugmented person, or it might require a concerted effort by several people using the best programs in the business. Unfortunately, the best programs are usually designed by and for the megacorps, including the security programs to prevent you from getting to them in the first place. The risk of attacking or trying to bypass security in cyberspace is very real. While a deck will filter out transient overloads and voltage spikes, it is quite possible for a seriously fanatical AI to overload an entire power grid to get a single person. This is the sort of voltage spike that can crush most overload protection, or at the very least, get enough current through it to send a high voltage pulse directly into your brain. This is especially likely with older decks that still use wires for the brain-deck hookup. Any serious cowboy will quickly move to a fiberoptic link, which is immune to such tricks, although the way the brain tap would interpret the light pulse is likely to give you a severe headache, as well as frying part of your expensive deck. The more common and insidious route is for a security program to trace your location, try to infiltrate your deck, and through the deck, scramble your brain. Decks can use their own Intelligence to operate defense programs to prevent this, but since the deck was probably designed by a computer, finding a way around the defense is sometimes easier than you might think. Since a brain tap has input and output to the aural and visual centers of the brain (sometimes more), the computer can try to "reroute" the neural connections that you have taken a lifetime to develop. It might try to cause mental feedback that cycles faster and faster until it develops pathways of its own. It might search the circuitry of your brain tap, searching for ways to selectively overload it and fry your brain, or overlay programming in the optical PLA's that make it up. This could constantly occupy your consciousness, leaving you unable to think, or blind and deafen you with "white noise". If a sensorium is installed, it could literally kill you with pain, or simply set up a situation that causes the brain or body to "shut down", the biological equivalent of a "head crash" (no pun intended). For instance, if it could generate in your mind the cyberspace images you see, and then cause your brain to generate them as well, your consciousness could be trapped in a "cyberspace" of your own making, which would continue to exist, even if you were disconnected. It would even be possible for a sophisticated AI to cause the brain to mount an identical attack on anyone who tried to "invade" that person's brain to free them, an especially deadly form of the now familiar "computer virus". If nothing else, an abrupt cessation of cyberspace "consciousness" is like any other violent cessation of consciousness, like being brained with a crowbar. It hurts like hell. All of this is rather difficult, but the invasive nature of a brain tap does make it possible. And, as was mentioned before, some of these programs are *very* fast and *very* good. This is what is known as "black ice".

Conventional ice is not quite as fatal to deal with, but has its own particular consequences. Most programs immediately notify a human operator or higher computer. Then, they cut off the connection as quickly as possible, trying very hard to backtrack the infiltration attempt to its source. Once this is done, if the local "realspace" security forces are "friendly", that is, they work for the same corporation or have an anti-hacker cooperation agreement, they attempt to capture the person or persons responsible for the security breach. Some programs maintain a link, feeding the person false data to keep them on-line while the real security forces close in. Others can try to infiltrate any household computers which may have been used, turning the house into a simple prison by locking all the doors and windows, or turning on all defensive security devices.

Mapping Cyberspace - Cyberspace for players is essentially a "node map". This shows the characters how they can get from one "location" to another in cyberspace, and lets them plot node paths, misdirection attempts, and gives them a reason to travel, since some node paths will be of more convenient lengths for a given assault. However, this optimum path may be in a different location than where any coordinated "real" activities will be taking place, so as mentioned earlier, it could split up a party of characters.

Here is a relatively simple node map that the GM might give to the players. This represents the overall node structure of New Dallas, with several major corporations and three general communication services. Many corporations have little direct dealing with each other, and so only communicate through the central switcher. An exception is PolSci, which has security contracts with AzBio, Tynekk and Credit Suisse, and has direct Net links to all of them, as well as a direct link to the Terracom communications switch. Each circle is a node, and in this case, each has a path length of 2. So, a character who wants to use a private phone to access Terracom, then bounce off PolSci, Tynekk and Credit Suisse to get to AzBio will have a path length of 10, and have 5 major nodes involved. This is an oversimplifcation. A major city will have thousands or tens of thousands of nodes, and several overlapping and intersecting Nets, including temporary nodes, illegal nodes, and non-functional nodes, all of which can be useful to a cowboy or other Net user with criminal intent.
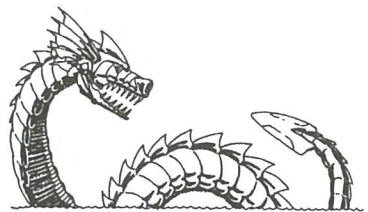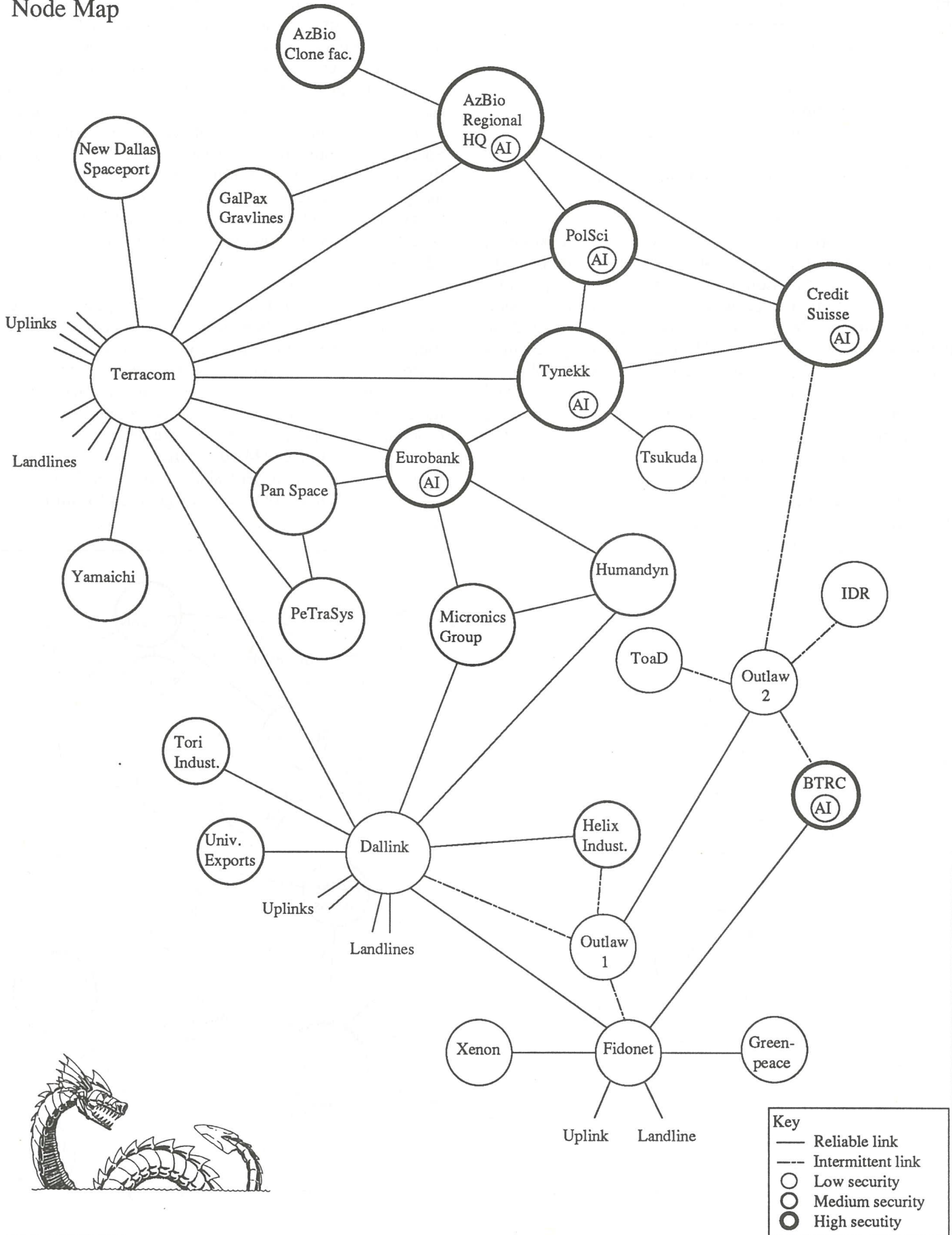
The size and number of circles indicates the type of node. Large circles are major megacorps. Medium ones are still major corporations, and small ones are minor companies, which may still be worth tens to hundreds of MCr. The thickness of the circle indicates the level of security required to get "into" the node. A thin circle indicates a general skill of 10 in any security programs, and the worst that can happen to an offender is to be tracked back to their source (and possibly arrested, if police or security forces decide to intervene). Travel across the outside of the circle may fairly open and unrestricted, but the internal structure of the company may be less friendly. For instance, while the Terracom node looks open, it is only this way for people using it to get somewhere else. Getting

inside the node is another matter entirely. A medium circle indicates a skill of a least 15 in defeating intrusion attempts. The programs or programmers guarding this node can track down and destroy hostile programs, but generally do not attack human users directly. A thick circle indicates very high security, with counter intrusion skills of 20 or better. It also means black ice. Any installation with a thick circle will not hesitate to directly attack or even kill intruders if possible.

Installations with a small circled "AI" are especially dangerous, since all security is under the watchful scrutiny of an Artifical Intelligence. While it cannot leave the node, AI's can usually mount whopping big attacks, and are excellent at directing pursuit attempts by lesser programs.

The internal node structure of any major facility is not public information, and this knowledge will have to be bought, or learned through infiltration. These sub-nodes are treated as nodes for all practical purposes, but their path length is zero. They exist mainly as checkpoints, and allow a division of information. For instance, the following page has a simplified node map of the AzBio clone installation in question, which could be used in a cyberspace infiltration for **Renegade Dreams**. The spot where the lines on the city diagram meet are AzBio access nodes. Note that there is a separate satellite uplink, which is not public knowledge, so it is not on the city node map. This link bounces off a private AzBio satellite to other AzBio medical installations, or perhaps goes to an AzBio low orbit facility first. The access node or tracking station is all the further casual users get, and they only get this far if authorized from inside AzBio. Requests for public information and communications are shuttled back and forth to these points, and the user does not get to penetrate any further. This allows censoring programs to edit conversations between AzBio employees and outside Net users, to prevent the flow of confidential information, and maintain a file of who that employee talks to outisde the corporation. The public information section is next. It is protected only by marginal security, since the information here is freely available to the "public", that is the public that is authorized to get this far, which may include news agencies, AzBio employees from other nodes, people who live and work here, etc. Most living quarters in this building have a home computer hooked to this subnode. The stop at the access node is more a formality than anything else. To get to anything that is remotely useful, you have to be "checked" by security at the internal communications node, which determines whether you have authorization to proceed further, and then routes you to the appropriate destination, sometimes with an "escort". Really secure data must go through another checkpoint, with even more stringent safeguards. Building security is almost a separate network, a high-security group of subnodes which can control access in the building, spy anywhere via cameras and robots, or defend the installation against attack or physical infiltration. Again, any attack or infiltration through cyberspace is plotted along the node lines. Any movement is between nodes, and no actions are possible except at a node.

New Dallas
Node Map

AzBio
Clone fac.

AzBio
Regional
HQ (AI)

New Dallas
Spaceport

GalPax
Gravlines

PolSci
(AI)

Credit
Suisse
(AI)

Uplinks

Terracom

Tynekk
(AI)

Tsukuda

Landlines

Eurobank
(AI)

Pan Space

Humandyn

IDR

Yamaichi

PeTraSys

Micronics
Group

ToaD

Outlaw
2

Tori
Indust.

BTRC
(AI)

Univ.
Exports

Dallink

Helix
Indust.

Uplinks

Outlaw
1

Landlines

Xenon

Fidonet

Green-
peace

Uplink   Landline

Key
— Reliable link
--- Intermittent link
○ Low security
◯ Medium security
⬤ High secutity

Cyberspace

Cracking ICE - Skills and programs generally fall into one of the following categories:

Program type	Specific skill on
Infiltration	Security systems
Neutralization	Security systems
Confiscation	Security systems
Misdirection	Computer science
Attack	Computer science
Defense	Computer science
Movement	Computer science

The only real Attribute used in cyberspace is Intelligence, and the only real skills used in icebreaking are Security Systems and Computer Science. These "program types" are computer specific variants on the listed skills. Tapping into the Net for illicit purposes is not to be done lightly, any more than you would tapdance through a mine-field. Players who expect to become real hotshots will have to dedicate their characters to the task. Such characters will be of limited use outside cyberspace situations, since most of their points have gone into computer and computer-related skills. Characters who want to merely "dabble" in cyberspace need to realize that the NPC's who are really good have dedicated their lives to it, and casual users expecting to get lucky are likely to get dead, very quickly.

Cowboys, flatlines and AI's can all have Security Systems and Computer Science skill. This represents a broad body of knowledge, and the associative circuitry needed to effectively use it. Standalone programs or small dedicated machines like decks will only have the specific skills, with no general knowledge of Security Systems or Computer Science to draw upon. Since they do have "Intelligence", in order to be effective, they must specialize. Since all programs or skills require time to access and use, the more "skill" you take into cyberspace, the slower you are likely to be. This added time delay is referred to as "computational load". This is where the broad knowledge base and reasoning potential of truly intelligent users is an advantage.

Example - A person with an Computer Science skill of 10 automatically gets a 10 in all the specific aspects of its use, while only taking the load of the base skill. This represents all the overlapping knowledge and reasoning ability they have. A "dumb" program or machine would have to take the load of each separate, specific, programming aspect. Since there are four specific aspects to Computer Science (Misdirection, Attack, Defense, Movement), an equivalent skill of 10 in each would be a computational load four times as great as for an intelligent user.

AzBio Clone Facility Subnode Map
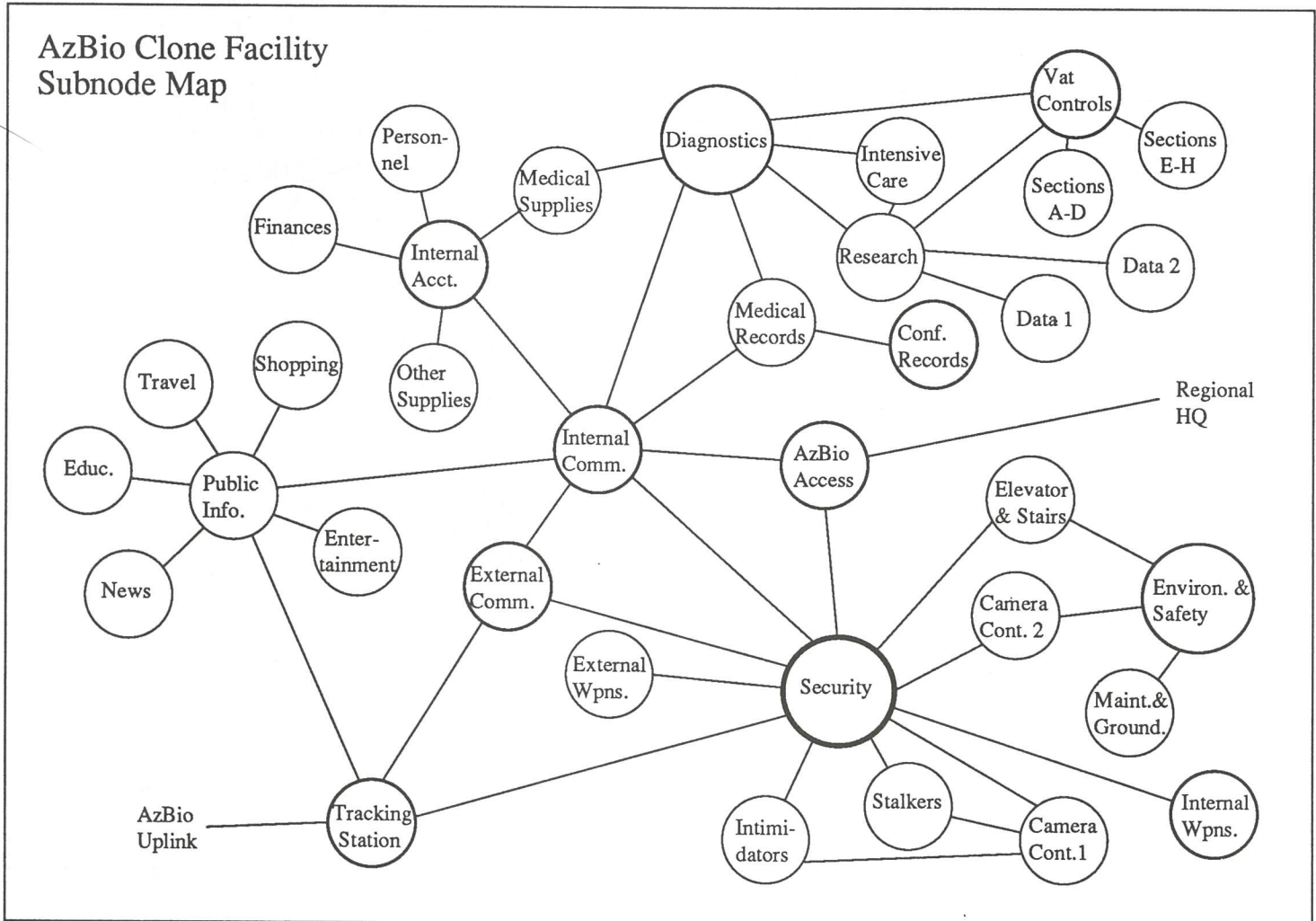
Conflict - Confrontations between systems or users are handled similar to "real" combat. Characters have a Mental Speed, which is their Intelligence, and this is averaged with the appropriate skill to get an Initiative. There is no Speed chart in cyberspace, although there are factors which can slow down a character. All characters act at equal effectivness on all Phases, but whomever has the highest Initiative goes first. Sequencing is based on a similar "Move/Fire" basis for purposes of combat. Characters can move, and then use any other skill, communciate, jack in or jack out (if at their home node/subnode). Characters cannot move **after** any of these until their next action (next phase). However, there are no movement modifiers or anything else beside the basic concepts of conflict.

As for Strength, characters can be encumbered, but they are encumbered mentally instead of physically. Characters do carry a "computational load", equal to the "cost" of any added programs in Skill Points, which is usually equal to the skill level squared. This load is treated like Encumbrance. Up to 20% of the character's Intelligence^2 is their unencumbered maximum. After this, each 10% is a -2 modifier to Mental Speed, to reflect the distraction of having to keep track of extra "baggage". Since there are only two main skills used in hacking (Computer Science and Security Systems), having overall high levels in both is an advantage. The next best thing is to have specific skills in the areas you need most.

Example - A character with an Intelligence of 20 has a "capacity" of 400. They have a Computer Science skill of 13, and a Security Systems skill of 10, for a total "load" of $13^2 + 10^2 = 269$. However, they also have a Misdirection skill of +3, and a Confiscation Skill of +4. This adds $3^2 + 4^2 = 25$ more points, for a total load of 269+25=294. Since the character has an unencumbered capacity of 80, this is 214 points over. Since 10% of their capacity is 40, they are 214/40=60% over the enencumbered amount (53.5%, round up). This is a -12 to Mental Speed, so the character has an effective Mental Speed of 8. This is why adding the Intelligence of a deck to your own is so useful. A deck with an Intelligence of 10 (a pretty good deck) would make the effective Intelligence of this character a 30. Their "capacity" of 900 would only be in the 30% encumbered range, for a modifier to Mental Speed of only -2.

Characters do not have to enter cyberspace using their full skill potential, but can adjust it to suit the level of encumbrance they wish. However, you cannot fine-tune encumbrance after entering. The only way to adjust your skills in cyberspace is down, and only by dropping a full or specific skill. This can only be regained after exiting cyberspace. You disconnect input from selected portions of your brain in order to act with less distraction and move faster. However, if you have to drop Computer Science skill, you can no longer move in cyberspace, and must either be disconnected from outside, or be "carried" back to your deck by another user or program, something which is embarassing at best, and possibly fatal at worst.

Using skills and program knowledge is a constantly changing task. Once a program or aspect of knowledge is in use, its effects, strengths and weaknesses are much easier to spot. To reflect this, each time a program or skill is used *against* a specific other program (on separate phases), it takes an automatic -1d6 cumulative penalty to further use (even on later attempts vs. that program), so after 6 uses on a particular Net user, a program is usually worthless, and usually "discarded" to get rid of its "encumbrance". The weaknesses of an attack can be visible to other identical programs watching an attack, at GM option. In the long term, any time a character buys an increased level in a skill or specific aspect of the skill, they "reset" all penalties to that skill use (since they learned a new way around the defense). This could lead to inefficiency, a character just getting lots of separate +1 Specific Skills to "keep up" with the latest developments, rather than trying for an overall increase in skill. Characters with multiple specific skills should keep track of their use, and the GM should keep track of which ones are out of date, and therefore useless. The best way around this is to buy specific skill chips to temporarily add to your base skill, and put experience gained into a permanent increase in the basic skills, trading off money for knowledge.

A single user may have a many skills in *simultaneous* use as their Intelligence aptitude, but trying to have more ready for use at a time is a -2 modifier to *all* skills used. So, a user with an Intelligence aptitude of 4 could use 6 skills at once, if they took a -4 to the use of each of them. They could use 4 simultaneously with no penalty, or use 2 and control 2 self-contained programs at that subnode.

You may only use a specific skill or program once per phase, so if you had a +10 skill at Infiltration you could make one attempt, but if you had a +10 chip as well, you could make one attempt at +20, or two attempts at +10.

A character/flatline/AI can only be attacked as many times as the number of skills they are using. The channels for input is the number available for output.

Example - A character with only one skill up could only be attacked once per phase. A character with three running at once could be attacked three times, but could use *any* applicable defense against *all* three attacks. A character could use **no** skills or programs, and be immune to attack, but since movement is a "program", the character would not be able to leave cyberspace, and shutting yourself off like this is likely to reduce perception of cyberspace to zero as well.

Time - Time in cyberspace is variable, depending on the sophistication and detail of the computer-generated landscape. For discussions between humans and AI's or flatlines, things take a tenth as long as they do in the real world. Likewise, for combat, infiltration or solo play, the general correspondence is 10:1, that is, 10 "phases" of cyberspace time equals 1 "phase" of real time, so a jacked-in character could perform 10 cyberspace actions in the time it would take a human operator to look up at a security monitor or push an alarm button. This also means that cyberspace characters may have to endure a lot of boredom if trying to coordinate activity with real-world users.

Visibility - Cyberspace is a symbolic place, a human's view of an artificial world, as interpreted by your deck. A deck can be programmed to translate cyberspace into any particular "reality" you want. For casual users, and people who ride the Net every day, this is a common practice. Your area of cyberspace might look exactly like your office. You can walk down the hall to talk to colleagues, make phone calls, look out your window at the traffic, etc. Or, you could alter the time frame to a medieval setting, and be surrounded by the gothic spires and architecture of 16th century London, for example. However, serious cowboys dispense with such trivialities. These complex perceptions take up time and memory, and when your brain is on-line, you don't want to waste single byte or clock cycle. You see cyberspace as it really is, a city of colored geometric solids, corporate logos and the eternal night sky, a blackness broken only by the representation of orbital nodes and satellite links passing slowly overhead. While a casual user might have a cyberspace representation that mirrors their physical appearance, most cowboys go symbolic. It is not your shape that does things, but your mind. Many cowboys take nicknames from their shape and talents, like Knight, Rhombo, or Rocket Man. Many are extremely possessive of a distinctive form, going as far as duelling anyone else who would try to use it. It is quite possible to "carry" a "gun" to represent an attack program, but it is just as easy to fake it. Outward appearance does not necessarily mirror the true purpose of an object in cyberspace.

A character in cyberspace can see everything that goes on at the subnode they are currently at. You cannot perceive the data in transactions not meant for you, although you will be aware that they are taking place. You can see adjacent subnodes like they were adjacent city blocks, and can see the types of programs there. You cannot see other nodes, although they can see the pathways that lead to them, and see programs and data appearing and disappearing at node gateways. The best way to visualize it is as a subway network. You can see the other passengers, and even interfere with them. You can see which way the tunnels go, watch the trains arrive and depart, but you aren't allowed to go down the tunnels without a train. Once on a train, you can't get off or interfere with other passengers until it reaches a destination. The analogy to cyberspace is striking, and it may help you to visualize it, or describe it to players that have trouble with the concept.

Damage - It is important to remember that cyberspace is an artificial construct. It is very similar to an out-of-body experience, but almost all the computations and perceptions experienced take place within the confines of your skull and deck. Your consciousness, what you are, does not actually leave your body. Only your point of view is changed, a perspective that requires time to move from point to point, and a perspective that can cause temporary or permanent brain injury if abruptly terminated or isolated. There are those who attach a mystical significance to cyberspace, and say that what we call the "soul" truly does travel the electronic pathways. Perhaps fittingly, this possibility has not yet been proved or disproved. One fact remains, a character in cyberspace can have their consciousness snuffed out by damage to their physical body, regardless of whether or not they perceive themselves as inhabiting it, and death is just as final. Characters who have had large portions of their neural matter replaced by circuitry *may* have enough "memory" to continue existence, if they can download to a freindly system fast enough, but any knowledge in the physcial brain will be forever lost. *A simple way to represent this would be to subtract 1d20 from Intelligence and all skills, rolling separately for each.*

Skills - The terms skill and program are for the most part interchangable, for cyberspace purposes. A skill is your native intelligence applied to a specific field of endeavor, using the vast store of knowledge that is your "experience". You can correlate problems with every event you have ever experienced, but imperfectly. A dumb program is a large database and accessing structure designed to be used in conjunction with a brain tap. An independent program is an expert system, possibly with personality-like charactersitics, that combines raw computing power with perfect knolwedge of a large, but fixed, database. Alone, it is capable of performing specific tasks by interpreting instructions given by the user. Combined with the intellect of a person, the raw data of a dumb program temporarily becomes part of the person's "experience", and the basics of skill use are handled automatically by the program, making the combination more powerful than user or program alone. Programs become obsolete with time. Skills do not, as long as the user continues to gain new experience with that skill.

Programs or specific skills may be bought as separate units, or combined for specific uses. A person could have a base Computer Science skill, a specific skill which would apply to icebreaking attempts, and a chip program which gives an additional bonus to icebreaking. A self-contained program (with its own "Intelligence") cannot be combined with the abilities of a user, but *can* be controlled by another user (counting as a skill in use), and programs without Intelligence can *only* be combined with a user, and have no independent capability (unless controlled by the "Intelligence" of a deck).

A learned body of knowledge is a skill, and a bought chip is a program. In operation, they are identical. Cheaper icebreaking programs may be easily available. High-powered ones are very expensive, and worse than that, they are seldom good for more than 6 months even if unused, as counter-programs are quickly developed. This half-life depends of the stagnation of the economy, or how willing people are to invest in new security measures. Special exceptions are one-of-a-kind programs, which will probably only work once against a defense, but be so devastatingly good at it that defenses are constructed almost immediately. These usually have a fairly long shelf life. A cowboy who loses his edge for a few months may find it very hard to get back into the business, because things may have changed significantly while they were gone.

More - For general skill use, all modifiers that apply to the character in general or to Intelligence-based skills will usually apply in cyberspace. While only certain skills will apply for icebreaking, there is no reason why Intelligence-based skills cannot be used in person-to-person (or AI) contact, like Con Man, Acting, etc. Characters who take extra time to prepare will get usually get a +1 for one phase, a +2 for 2 phases, a +3 for 5 phases, +4 for 10 phases, etc. However, spending a very long time in one place may arouse suspicion, or catch the attention of wandering patrol programs. The effects of each type of program or specific skill are below.

Infiltration - Infiltration programs seek to elude the attention of security programs or other Net users. They try to camoflage the character, make them appear either invisible, or as some type of computer operation which is permitted in the area in question. Infiltration is only necessary if the character is trying to mask themselves to prevent tracing or security. A character could bounce freely off as many communciation nodes as they wish, if they leave *valid* information at each. Doing so will prevent any use of Misdirection skill at *that* node, hence backtracking attempts are automatically successful. The physical counterpart of Infiltration is Stealth skill. To detect the infiltration, a Net user or security program must roll their Infiltration skill with a modifier equal to the difference between their level of skill and the infiltrator's level of skill. The GM can add other mods as appropriate, like distractions or beefed up security.

Example - An Infiltration defense of 10 is trying to spot an infiltrator with a skill of 15. So, the defending computer must make their skill roll with a -5 modifier to succeed.

Almost all important systems have several thresholds that must be passed to get to important data, with varying degrees of "Intelligence". Unfortunately, the highest levels usually require a human approval from outside the Net (like flipping a switch), negating the possibility of total infiltration by computer. Each threshold requires a separate roll, but once inside a threshold, a user is free to roam that sub-node, provided they don't exceed any built-in time limits, or perform actions which might alert other parts of a security program.

Neutralization - This program is the Net equivalent of Security Systems. It is used to deactivate or render harmless any "alarms" on an object in cyberspace. Such alarms are usually standalone versions of this program, and so the roll is modified by the difference in skills, plus any other modifiers the GM wishes to include. A successful roll means the program is isolated, bypassed or otherwise put out of commission. This varies with the program, and may be important. Sometimes it may be more useful to leave a bypassed program intact, thinking it is still active, while in other situations, such finesse is not called for. A failed roll means that the security system alerts whomever or whatever it was supposed to on its next action. If destroyed before then, the alert does not occur.

Confiscation - These programs do just that. They are designed to let you "take" locked data. Neutralization disabled the alarms, but confiscation opens the locked safe. The "lock" is a stand-alone version of this program, and the user's skill roll is modified by the difference in skills. Failure sets off no alarms, or causes no problems, but consecutive attempts do take the -1d6 penalty for program use against a given opponent. A program that closes itself off cannot be attacked, but it can be confiscated, along with any data it contained or was trying to protect. Data in cyberspace has a load proportional to its quantity, which the GM must determine. A list of names may be very highly guarded, but be very small, while confiscating a large low-security program might be difficult just because of the huge load involved. A program or person has a carried "load" equal to their program load, plus their Intelligence squared. Heavy-duty independent "truck" programs (high Intelligence, low skill) are used to move large chunks of data, usually with escort.
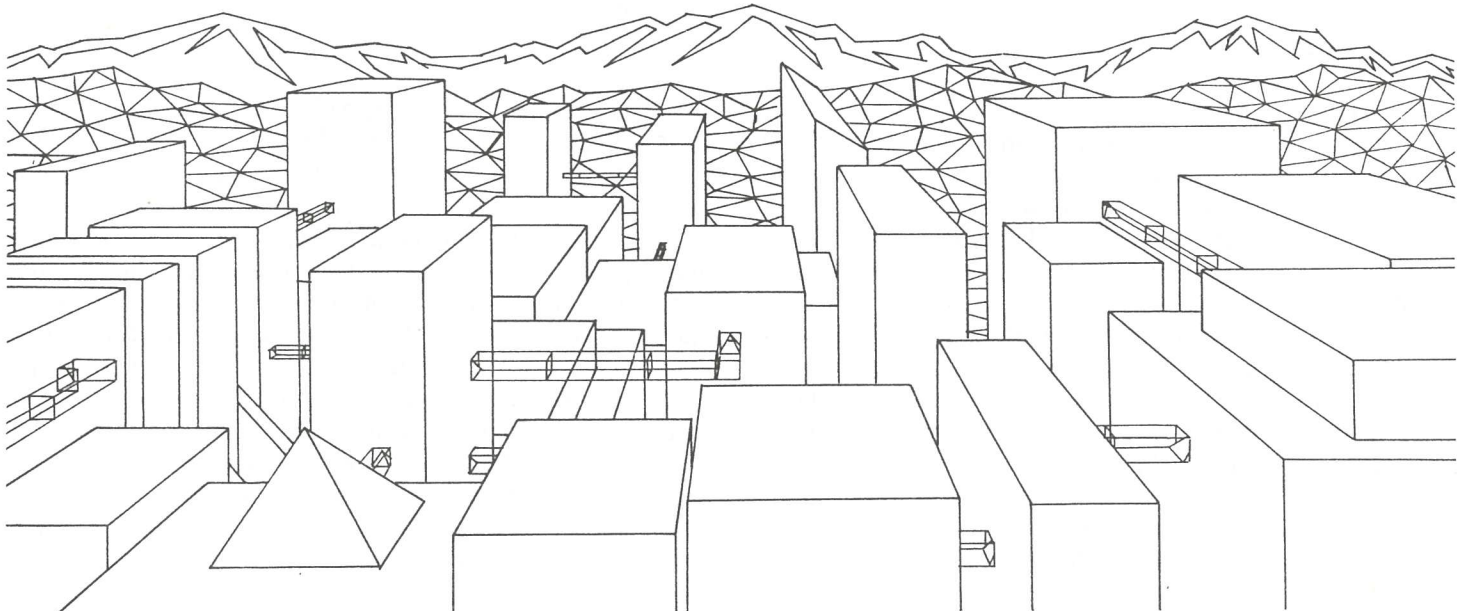
Misdirection - This type of program may be used to redirect a security inquiry against a Net user, like for a failed Infiltration attempt. If a user commits some blunder which would cause them to fall under the suspicion of a security program, the user must make a roll on this skill, modified by any circumstances the GM wishes to include and the difference in level of this skill. A successful roll means that the user has redirected the search for a turn (10 Phases, or 1 second of realtime). If they are still in the search vicinity at the end of this time, another roll must be made, but with a cumulative -1d6 modifier. A failed roll on this skill means that the user is fingered as the culprit, *and* the querying user can make a roll on their skill to track the previous node/subnode of the attempted security breach. This is modified by the difference in level of skill as well. Attempts to locate the origin of an infiltration attempt must successfully get past each node in order to get to the next one, rolling on their base Misdirection skill to succeed. But, these nodes could be "roadblocked" by other cowboys using this skill, operating from temporary locations in the node which will be instantly vacated once *they* are spotted.

Attack - Any entity in cyberspace is, at its core, a bundle of data. The highly complex code that allows programs and people to work in this chaotic environment has a great deal of error-correcting ability, and they can take a fair amount of data corruption before they cease to work. Attack programs attempt to slow down or destroy cyberspatial objects by disrupting their structure beyond their ability to compensate. As more and more damage is sustained, more and more time is spent trying to correct the faulty coding, or reconstruct destroyed data, until the program is either immobilized or is no longer capable of performing its design function. A roll is made on this skill to attack. The amount the roll is made by is compared to any Defense skill currently in use by the other user. If the result is greater than the defense, the entity that was attacked takes the remainder in "damage". This is in the form of a "computational load", just as if the result were a skill. An attack which beat a defense by 5 would do $5^2=25$ points of load. The subject of the attack must either be slowed down by the extra encumbrance, or discard a program to maintain their current Mental Speed. Discarding a program takes no time, and may be done at the start of any "phase". An entity at 90-100% of maximum load has their Mental Speed reduced by 80%. If a load that is over the maximum is not reduced at the start of a phase, the program terminates instantly, communication with any other programs abruptly cut off.

An attack which is made at the *origin* of a human user has a different effect. Any damage which gets past a Defense skill is taken directly as a Damage Level to the head of the character, with no modifiers. All damage is treated as lethal damage, and if the character survives, impairments can be permanent. A successful attack against an immobilized person in cyberspace counts as Bruise Damage instead, but once unconscious, it would probably be easy to locate the source of the user and polish the helpless intruder off.

Simply destroying the immobilized program will cut off the connection, causing additional bruise damage. A successful attack directly at the origin of an immobilized AI or unguarded piece of hardware will subtract directly from its Intelligence, and if this reaches zero, the optical computer circuitry and all on-line memories are effectively destroyed or deprogrammed. Assume that most pieces of dumb equipment have an Intelligence of 5. For instance, vending machine vandalism is fairly easy in cyberspace. For just this reason, you might want to have certain pieces of equipment "hardwired", much like today's simple programs. The programming is not flexible, but since it is permanently burned into chip memory, neither can it be destroyed. This option is only suitable for very simple machines, usually single-purpose devices like the aforementioned vending machine.

If all hostile security programs at a subnode are destroyed, a character will have free and immediate access to all data and equipment available at that subnode, reading/loading data or using equipment just like a program. For instance, a character at a security camera subnode could look through as many security cameras as their Intelligence Aptitude, or more if they took a minus to Perception. They would also be making themselves vulnerable to attack. To look through a camera and use the anti-personnel laser it is mounted on would count as two separate programs, but the character would only get any targeting skill of the weapon itself, not their personal skill with the weapon in question.
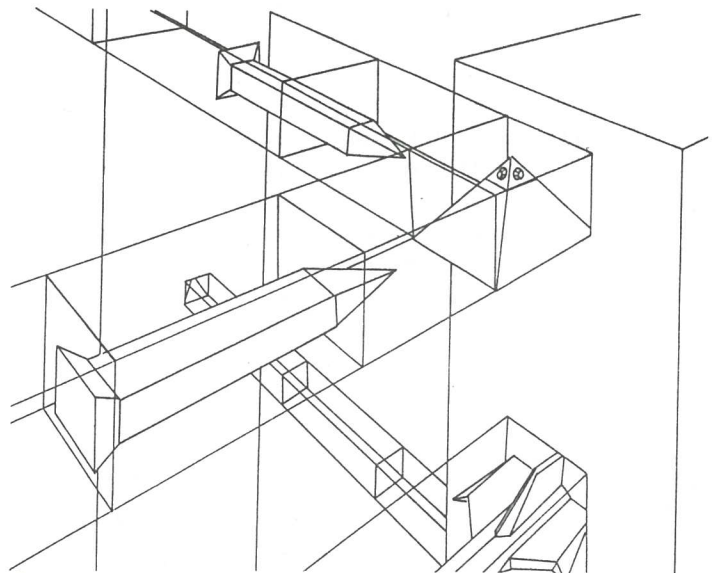
Defense - Defense programs do just that. They are backup data, error-correcting code, predictive and reconstruction routines designed to offset potentially damaging situations in cyberspace. They subtract their level from any attack made upon the user. While a good defense is almost impervious, it does degenerate like other programs under a repeated attack by one type of attack program. This is countered by the attack degenerating as well, which evens things out. However, multiple attacks of the same type could alternate, one perhaps being affected less than the other, which will wear down a defense while still maintaining an effective attack.

Movement - Non-skilled humans in cyberspace have a "movement" equal to their Intelligence aptitude. "Movement" is in quotes, because distance is only an abstract term, which is measured in arbitrary "units". This distance determines how long it takes a character to go from one location to another, or how long it takes pursuit to track them down. Distance is measured from one node to another, a node being a hub or terminator of Net activity. For instance, a local phone call has three nodes: your phone, the switching station, and the other phone. Corporations are a conglomeration of smaller nodes, each of which is generally geared to a specific purpose. Distance between nodes is measured in units, which depends on the type of node involved.

Node type	Distance
Within a node	0 units per subnode
Within a city	2 units per node
Between cities via land	10 units per node
Earth to low orbit	10 units per node
Between cities via satellite	25 units per node
Between Earth and the Moon	100 units

Example - An infiltration attempt that went to a local switching node, was bounced off two satellites and then went through a local node at the destination would have a total path length of 2+25+25+2=54 units.

Movement skill is the number of units you can travel each "phase". It represents a small communication channel you have held open to constantly feed a limited amount of data back and forth to your deck, and how fast you can move the much larger quantity of programming that is your perceptual vantage point from node to node. However, you must always end your movement upon reaching a node, and no actions other than movement made be made unless you are at a node or subnode. Also, just to make life difficult, once on a path between nodes, you cannot stop or reverse direction until the node is reached, and you travel at the starting velocity the entire "trip".

Movement skill also determines how often you get to act at full effectivness, since it represents how much priority communication space you can command for your cyberspace representations to move back and forth to your deck. For instance, trying to infiltrate a computer on the Moon (from Earth) means that everything you see is at least two seconds out of date, and it takes four realtime seconds for you to see the reaction to anything you do. This makes delicate timing and fine work nearly impossible. A user gets to act normally once every number of phases equal to the path distance, divided by their movement skill, round nearest, so a user with a Movement of 13 and a total path length of 20 would be able to act at full effectiveness once every 2 phases, and since the delay hampers normal reactions as well, any skill use takes a penalty equal to twice the delay in phases.

Example - The user above would get a normal action every 2 phases, but any skill use also takes a -4 as well.

Optional - In the times in between a character's normal actions, they are under the guidelines of a micro-construct of themselves, which acts generally as the character wishes, within limits. This construct also takes any minuses the character does, since it is hampered by delays when querying the home deck or subconscious of the character as much as the character is hampered in sending commands from the deck to it. This delay is mainly because the speed of light is not infinite, and the fraction of a second taken up in a satellite bounce is a significant amount of time in cyberspace.

The character can make a number of guidelines for their construct equal to their Intelligence aptitude, each guideline being no more than 10 words long. In any given situation, the GM gets to interpret these statements to be how the character will act when they don't get a full action.

For example, a character with an Intelligence of 14 has an Aptitude of 4, and might have the following rules.

1. If queried, use Misdirection program.
2. If spotted, raise Defense, use Movement to home.
3. If not spotted, move towards next objective.
4. Use newest backup versions after each program use.

This is a reasonable setup for someone trying a long distance infiltration. Every time they get a full action, they can rewrite half the rules (round down). In this case, rule 3 is ambiguous, but legal. The player simply specifies to the GM what the next objective is. This could be changed as a rule change when the character can act.

Optional - Autonomous programs act in the same way. They get a number of simple statements that they can act upon, but the *players* get to interpret any ambiguous statements the GM puts in the "programming". These programs don't get to change their rules, but since they are autonomous (self-contained), they never take minuses due to distance. They move freely across the nodes, borrowing processor time and memory from the system where they currently reside. To be redirected by a central computer, however, they must get instructions from messenger programs sent from the node where the central computer resides. AI's can directly control outside programs, using their Movement to determine how often they send signals to a slave program, just as a character would. This counts as a skill in use, but with a 0 unit path between subnodes, it can be very fast. For major command changes, high speed messenger programs are used to talk to all programs.

Movement skill is used offensively to track a character down, although this does not cause a consecutive use penalty unless it violates some other network's protocols, and the illegal use of priority channels is the subject of a blocking attempt. A tracking program that has seen through a misdirection attempt may race towards the site of the original access to the net. If it can beat the character there, it can use any Attack program it is equipped with to nail the *defenseless* character. The character is unprotected because they cannot withdraw from their current cyberspace "location" fast enough to put up a defense at the site of the

attack, or withdraw from cyberspace to prevent it. A character who is knocked unconscious is at the total mercy of an attacking program, and can only operate under the parameters of their micro-personality.

Any character forcibly removed from cyberspace by abrupt disconnection of their deck or cessation of their programs will take a Bruise Damage Level equal to the number of nodes and subnodes from where the character is in cyberspace to where they actually are. A person trying to react physically to the signs of a jacked-in character under attack can forcibly disconnect a deck in a number of "cyberspace phases" equal to 10-(Dexterity aptitude), **after** they make an Intelligence roll to realize what is happening.

How it works - Most security setups are handled by special purpose programs, monitored by a more sophisticated computer or AI. While an AI after you is a terrifying thought, most of the time the "search and destroy" missions are handled by larger numbers of small, dedicated programs which don't trample through cyberspace like AI's, which are like runaway frieght trains, taking up huge amounts of communication bandwidths and virtual space. These smaller programs are the electronic equivalent of bloodhounds, sharks or assassins. A program, once created, can be duplicated endlessly, so for a large corporation, custom security programs are less expensive than they would be for small companies or individuals.

Note - The construct of a character relies heavily on the knowledge base and skills of the actual user, and is no more self-sufficient than a calculator is without someone to push its buttons. Even worse, it only works for one person. Such programs accidentally or deliberately left on the Net are helpless and purposeless, and are usually mopped up by routine memory purges. So, copying or duplicating them is generally pointless.
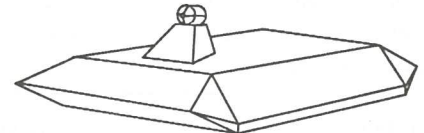
This easy duplication also means that larger companies can implement new procedures more often, making the cracking of corporate ICE an ever-changing process. ICE-breaking programs and strategies begin to be implemented the instant a company changes security, and more often than not, they are still incomplete by the time the company changes again. Even if a strategy does work, it is only likely to work once. Of course, once may be enough.

The very best programs come out of the AI labs where the defenses are built. The programs designed to test a ultra-security program might not get through it, but they are likely to be devastating against lesser programs. Almost any defense can be countered, and the blindingly fast AI's can figure these ways almost as fast as they can make the defenses themselves. Of course, this knowledge is *very* secret and usually kept off-line in real-world vaults. This can make for interesting plots and sub-plots, for instance, the scene in **Neuromancer** where ICE-breakers cause computer problems so an agent can *physically* get into the data vault and steal a piece of hardware needed for another phase of the operation. While interesting, it is another way in which a party can get split up, one or two in the Net, while everyone else is in realspace, moving at one-tenth the speed of the Net users.

Sample Programs - Below is a small selection of programs to give you an idea of how they work, and what their capacities are. You will see that most are optimized to fit into the low, medium and high security classifications, so instead of a roll on the base number when a character reaches a node, they could roll against the program type that level of security represents.

Viper

|	
Intelligence	23
Commands	6
Misdirection	10
Attack	10
Defense	10
Movement	10
Current load:	400
Maximum load:	529
Mental Speed:	10

The Viper is a fairly low level counter-intrusion program. It is of average intelligence, able to act on 6 general statments to acheive its design goal, which is usually to track down and destroy intruders or errant programs that have wandered into restricted space. Normally, one is not sufficent to any real harm against a determined intruder, but they take quite a bit of effort to kill, and it can always run and get friends, who will alternate attacks, wearing down even the best defense with time. Vipers can usually be found patrolling subnodes at random, making Misdirection rolls against a random program each phase, or deliberately searching for a given program type. The latter might be an instance where a given modus operandi of infiltration has been found, and the Viper is assigned to query all programs fitting that m.o.

Inquisitor

|	
Intelligence	25
Commands	6
Infiltration	20
Misdirection	15
Current load:	625
Maximum load:	625
Mental Speed:	5
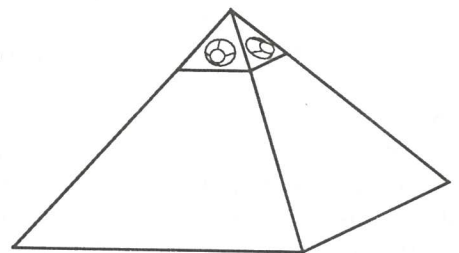
The Inquisitors are medium to high security node watchers, checking each program that enters or uses a node or subnode. They have no movement, attack or defense, and so they communicate these needs to an entourage of other programs that have these capabilities. They do not have the ability to directly control these programs, but simply "talk" to them while they are in the node. In this way they have a limited ability to direct attacks, call for help, etc., although this does not extend past the node or subnode where they reside.

Jet

|	
Intelligence	22
Commands	6
Movement	15
Attack	15
Current load:	450
Maximum load:	484
Mental Speed:	5
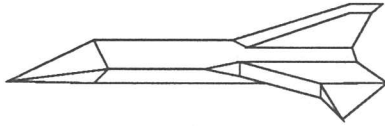
Jets are singleminded attack programs. Again, not really hot, but a small "squadron" of them can warn off most intruders. Their main purpose is to chase down any intruders that have left a restricted node. Fortunately, they are misled by any successful misdirection at a node, so their range can be restricted to one node from their base. They can act in tandem with tracking programs, and this allows range to be extended considerably. Jets have little capability to absorb damage, and usually drop their attack if hit, returning to wherever they came from to be recoded.

Trailbreaker

|	
Intelligence	22
Commands	6
Misdirection	15
Movement	15
Current load:	450
Maximum load:	484
Mental Speed:	5
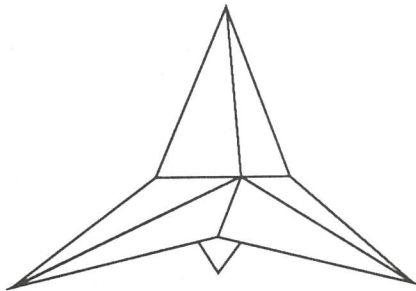
The counterpart to the Jet, a simple combination is one Trailbreaker and two Jets. While the Trailbreaker may take several phases to spot a Misdirection attempt, it will usually succeed, and slowly but relentlessly track down the origin of an intrusion. This forces the user off the Net, rather than just waiting for pursuit to fade away. Like the Jets, it cannot take much damage.

Fex

Intelligence	25
Commands	6
Movement	25
Current load:	625
Maximum load:	625
Mental Speed:	5
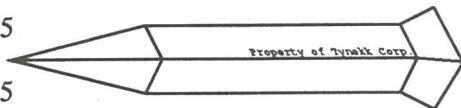
A Fex is a specialized communication program. It is designed for the sole purpose of rapid information transfer. In ICE-breaking, a Fex is often used to relay instructions from an AI to programs in the field, such as new destinations or strategies. They cannot take any damage and remain functional, but they often avoid pursuit by using satellite links, which they can traverse in a single phase.

Minor AI

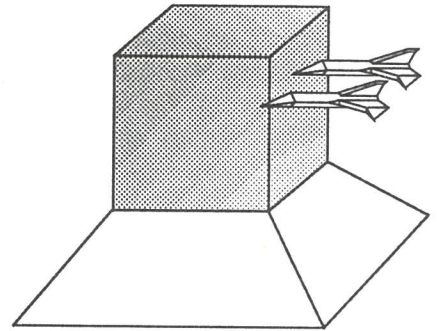|	
Intelligence:	40
Security Systems	20
Infiltration	+10
Neutralization	+0
Confiscation	+0
Computer Science	20
Misdirection	+10
Attack #1	+10
Attack #2	+10
Defense#1	+10
Defense#2	+10
Movement	+0
Current load:	1400
Maximum load:	1600
Mental Speed:	12

This is a minor level AI, or the subprocesses of a larger AI that are devoted to counter-intrusion operations. As you can see, it has very good skills at detecting and attacking intruders, and can withstand almost any attack long enough to isolate its node and cut off any further attempts. AI's are restricted by their programming and Council law (which they are subject to) to stay within their corporate node, although they may move freely through its subnode structure. In addition to its personal skills, an AI will usually direct a large number of other programs, using its knowledge to direct pursuit, apprehension and destruction of intruders. For instance, with its extensive knowledge of the Net, it might be able to identify intruders by their "fingerprints" or m.o., or be able to get agreement from other networks to set up temporary roadblocks, or maybe guess where an intrusion is based, and use shortcuts to fry the intruder before they can jack out. More sophisticated AI's may have Intelligences of 60 or better, but most of these are devoted entirely to corporate goals, rather than simple security tasks.
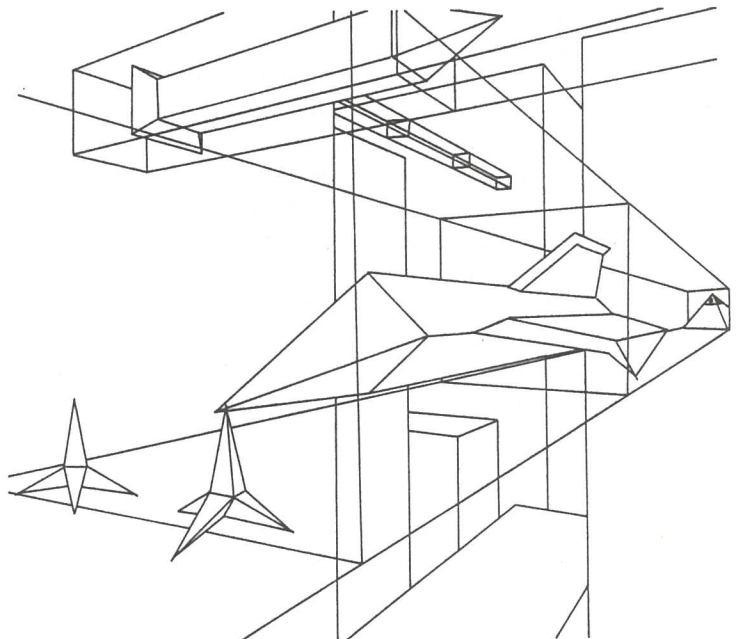
Sample Infiltration - We'll use the New Dallas node map as a guide, and send our aspring cowboy to do a reconaissance mission. He is a young, ambitious anarchist named Kayvis Rochs. He has an Intelligence of 19, and a +6 deck, which he will use to increase his effective Intelligence to 25. He has a Computer Science skill of 16, and a Security Systems skill of 14. So, his cyberspace stats are:

Kayvis Rochs

|	
Intelligence	25
Commands	6
Security Systems	16
Infiltration	+0
Neutralization	+0
Confiscation	+0
Computer Science	18
Misdirection	+0
Attack	+0
Defense	+0
Movement	+0
Current load	580
Maximum load	625
Mental Speed	5

For purposes of simplicity, we will not use any augments other than the deck.

Kayvis dials up from a line tap he has been supplied with in the Dallink-Terracom communications link. No problems. He jacks into his Yorix K-76 and waits a few seconds for cyberspace to unfold around him. Nothing fancy, just cyberspace. He is between the Dallink and Terracom communications networks, but by definition, he is the terminator of a signal path, so for the next few minutes, he is a node. He stands on the side of a glowing blue thoroughfare, while thousands of programs and data packets fly by. Featureless voice packets and flatmail messages are the bulk of the traffic, distinguishable only by their addressing information. Large data files take a slower lane, while petty cash transactions have an express lane all their own. Kayvis knows better than to mess with those. Sure, you can get a few hundred credits real quick by detouring fast food receipts, but occasionally one of them is a disguised data bomb, or vicious attack program. He merges with the traffic, just another Net rider on a legitimate trip.

Gingerly, he moves to the Terracom node and gets into the transfer queue. Once there, he prepares for a full turn in cyberspace, giving him a +4 to his Infiltration attempt. The outer ring of the Terracom node is low security, since it is designed as an information thoroughfare. His skill is 16, with a +4 modifier, for an effective skill of 19. This is 9 better than the Terracom base, which is 10, so Terracom must roll on a skill of 10 with a -9 modifier to detect his illegal use of their node. This is a 6 or less on 1d20. Terracom fails, so he has convinced their routing programs that he is actually a financial transaction from Micronics, routed through Dallink. Step 1 complete.

Next, since he is under no time contstraints, he prepares for a similar infiltration of AzBio regional HQ, spending time on Misdirection *and* Defense skills as well. He takes no cumulative use minus, since this is a different node. However, the result is a foregone conclusion. His modified skill is a 19, and AzBio is a high-security node, with a base skill of 20. A skill of 20 with a +1 modifier is a roll of 21 or less on 1d20, so he will be spotted on anything but a roll of 20. The Inquisitor at the entry subnode turns its eye upon Kayvis, and probes. AzBio rolls a 14, easily spotting his intrusion as something unusual. "Hold!", he perceives a deep synthetic voice say into his mind. He has moved and used a skill, and AzBio did not need to move, but also used a skill. The phase is over.
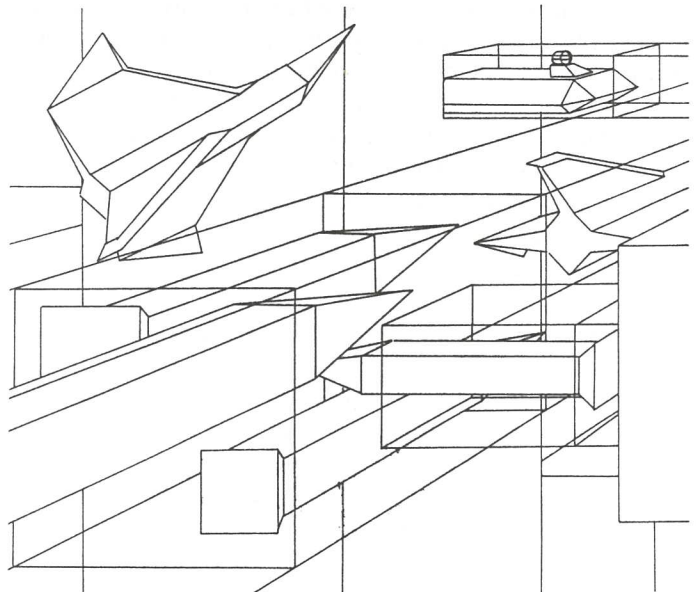
The next phase, a companion security program also reads the forged data identity that Kayvis has created. It also has a base skill of 20. However, Kayvis' skill of 18 with a +4 modifier is a 21. This means that the AzBio Misdirection roll gets a -1 modifier, which unfortunately still means it only fails on a 20. The security program is not at all convinced that Kayvis is an interdepartmental memo that was accidentally rerouted outside. Since the AzBio computer probably went before Kayvis, he does get an action. He does the smart thing. He runs, his disguise discarded, blasting through to the node gateway and zooming along the high-speed data lines. His Movement of 16 easily gets him to the Terracom node, where he must end the phase. Unfortunately, the security program also had two identical Jet programs on standby, which zoom after Kayvis, hot on his heels, arriving at the Terracom node in a blaze of priority data. Kayvis moved, but there was no one to use skills on at his destination. The Jets moved, and do have a target. One attacks Kayvis, rolling a 4. This makes the Attack roll by 11, so Kayvis takes the effects of a 11 point attack. His Defense skill is an 18 with a +4, for a total of 21, so it bounces. However, his preparation is now lost, and any further Defense skill will not get this modifier. And, it gets worse. The other Jet prepares to attack Kayvis, so next phase it will get a +1.

Next phase, both Jets attack. They have a Mental Speed of 5 and skills of 15, for an Initiative of 10. Kayvis also has a Mental Speed of 5, but he wants to use his Movement skill, which is equal to 18, so his base Initiative is a 12. All parties involved add 1d10. Kayvis gets unlucky. The final result is that both Jets act, then Kayvis acts. The first Jet attacks, but with a minus to its skill of 1d6, in this case a -5. It rolls a 10, which only makes the roll by 1. Kayvis is quite safe. The second one attacks. It has an effective skill of 15, since it gets a +1 modifier for preparation, and takes a -1 from its 1d6 roll for program degradation (it is identical to the other Jet). Kayvis, however, also takes a -1d6 to his Defense skill, since this is an attack from an identical program. Again, the roll is -5. This makes his effective Defense only a 14. The Jet rolls a 3, which makes the roll by 12. This does not breach the defense, but two programs on one defense means it is likely only a matter of time.

Kayvis acts. He closes down all programs except Movement. He moves to "his" node, and as his other action, he logs off the Net. The next phase, the Jets zoom to the Dallink node, following his false trail, but Kayvis is not there. The Jets have no Misdirection skill, so they dejectedly fly home to AzBio.

Kayvis opens his eyes. Hands shaking, he wipes the sweat off his brow and worries the jack out of its socket behind his ear. He looks down at the diagnostic display.

```
Program terminated by user.
Elapsed time 4.2 seconds.
```

In reality, Kayvis would likely have specific skills in each program area, and would have wanted at least one +10 chip for one or several aspects of his ICE-breaking skills, and an autonomous program or two to do some probing for him. AzBio, on the other hand, would have probably acted about the same. They do not go out of their way to kill casual hackers, but they don't go out of their way to spare them either. They would send out a Trailbreaker after the Jets come home empty-handed, and maybe track down the illegal node-tap, which Terracom and Dallink would patch in a day or so, just in time for another to be opened somewhere else.

How hot is hot? - The effects of security and the levels of skill needed to crack it depend on your particular campaign. It should be hard, and there should be nasty consequences of failure, because that is the way it is. However, characters are a cut above the average person on the street (or they should be), and with the right equipment, they can have a fighting chance against anything. Kayvis was a simple case, but he was also lucky. If the full attention of the AzBio AI had focused on him while in the AzBio node, he would have been crushed like a bug, and his friends couldn't have pulled his plug fast enough to keep him from flatlining. But, if you make it too difficult or dangerous, no one will ever want to risk their precious characters, which relegates it back to NPC status in your game. You have to draw your own boundaries.

A good guideline is as follows. A small node has a total of 10 security programs with skills of 10 running through the subnodes. A medium one has 20, and a large one has 40. A medium security node adds 10 programs with skills of 15, and a high security node has these, plus 10 more with skills of 20 or better. A node with an AI adds 10 of each type to the total. So, a small, low security node like IDR might only have a total of 10 low-skill programs wandering its subnodes for security, while a large, high security node with an AI will have 50 programs with a skill of 10, 20 with a skill of 15, and 20 with a skill of 20, for a total of 90 programs, *plus* the AI itself. This is pretty intimidating. However, these are split between the subnodes according to GM preference. For instance, a security subnode might have a lot of programs, while a storage node might have none, or only a few minor ones. A good guideline is that a small subnode has one dedicated security program, a medium one has two, and a large one has 4. These programs are of a level appropriate to the security of the subnode.

Example - The AzBio clone facility has a medium sized high-security subnode for Security. This means that there are probably two dedicated secuirity programs in that subnode, both with skills of 20 or better. And since this subnode is a hub for several smaller subnodes, there is likely to be a lot of high-security traffic going through this node as well, like cyberspace sentries patrolling their rounds.
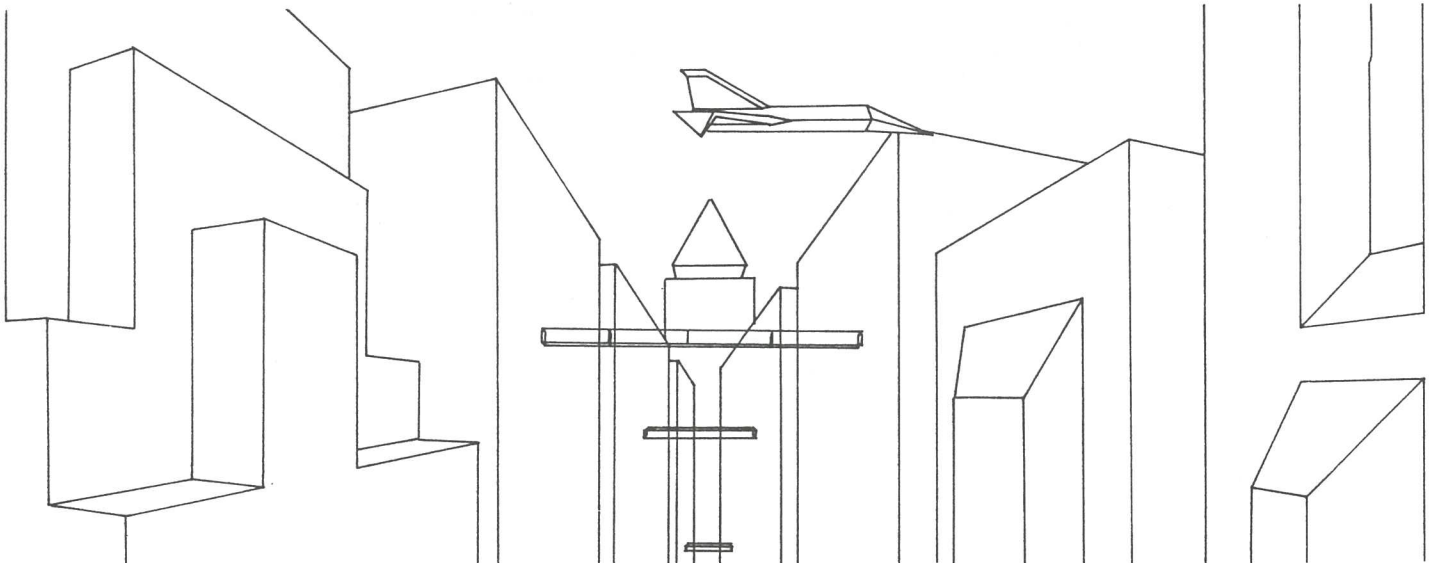
Using Cyberspace in Renegade Dreams - Renegade Dreams takes on a whole new order of complexity when characters can move into cyberspace. Many of the initial contacts could take place in cyberspace instead of on vidphones, and even the hiring of the characters could be based on a cyberspace "want ad", an ad also closely watched by other interested parties. Or, Rainwater could appear only to a jacked-in character, appearing like any other human in cyberspace would, and make the various offers. This would be safer for Rainwater, since it would take less time. However, attempts to track Rainwater back to a given location will end in failure as Rainwater dissolves, or will end in a unprovoked attack by Rainwater on the character (Bruise damage only). When the character wakes up, they will remember a warning of "don't do that again", with constant reminders as the week-long hangover slowly goes away. Characters can do research in cyberspace, doing recon runs on any company they will be dealing with. Such communication via cyberspace can be interupted very rudely, and require assistance from the real world. For instance, what if a character was having a Net conversation when Rainwater blows the link to the Galpax engines? The dazed character may get bruised even more when the train crashes.

The second part of the adventure is where computer oriented characters can come into their own. The node map of New Dallas and the sub-node map of the AzBio complex can be used here. As well as being on the team assigned to fetch Rainwater, characters can also be on the ICE-breaking team that disrupts the satellite links, and opens channels for Rainwater to pour into the clone labs. Characters in separate groups could be linked via a sensorium interface, or cyberspace characters could maintain constant communciation via cameras and radios. Instead of Rainwater taking out the security computers, this could be a task assigned to a team of qualified PC's and NPC's, a simutaneous battle in real and virtual space. Jacked-in characters must destroy the security programs, while at the same time providing local protection to the real world characters, who might otherwise be gunned down by computer controlled weapons in the complex. Likewise, flesh-and-blood characters might be called upon to cut off certain subnodes by physical destruction of their computers, giving cyberspace characters a significant amount of time to regroup and plan strategy. This might be a suitable ending for characters you feel aren't ready for the full break-in to the clone tanks on Sublevel 5, instead being a smaller team on an in-and-out destruction of a certain subnode. Or, players who came late to the adventure could be sent in separately for such a task, while everyone else proceeds to the main objective. A character who maintained Net communication throughout the clone labs (with Rainwater's permission) could eavesdrop on security cameras, giving real-world characters an early warning system, or take control of the robot subnodes, and give the security robots new orders. Or, characters could take advantage of the confusion to try and heist information or funds from other local computers, to increase their profit margin, or even reroute orders in progress to be delivered to other addresses.

Additional background information - Characters with cyberspace experience who suspect Rainwater is an AI can roll on their Computer Science skill to glean basic information on the cyberspace disruption Rainwater caused when he/she/it escaped several years ago. Little information is public, and most of that is rumor. As far as anyone knows, the AI was blasted to bits, but anyone with a high Area Knowledge of Cyberspace, or a base Computer Science of at least 18 will know that the "death" of the AI was never truly confirmed. Characters who persistently try to confirm Rainwater's AI status stand a good chance of getting flatlined, or at best, incarcerated on computer-generated charges, or be involved in a serious motor vehicle accident. Subtle hints like fractured skulls will be used to convince characters to curb their curiousity. Rainwater will cover his tracks to the best of his ability, and loss of human life is not a real concern. More lenient GM's may allow Rainwater to plant software "time-bombs" in the programming of a character's deck, designed to incapacitate, kill or cause selective amnesia in a character, or as a form of computer blackmail ("Tell anyone, and I send a command that will turn your brains to oatmeal...").

Optional Complications - In the final conflict, a lot of energy is likely to fly about, both in and out of cyberspace. It is quite possible that links could be suddenly cut by random acts of violence, or certain node pathways destroyed, forcing characters to take unplanned detours, or take unexpected damage when they are suddenly cut off. Once things boil over, all nodes will be on full alert status, and new infiltrations may be harder. This may be offset in the general chaos that transpires. A possible but unlikely option is that other AI's in the area will bend Council law by extending their personal domains to adjacent nodes by direct control of security programs, spheres of influence overlapped to provide an extra measure of safety against interference, and a larger warning time if anything does occur. Competing corps may engage in a free-for-all at each other's entry nodes, attacking anything and everything, while friendly corps will have twice the number of security programs lurking about. Either is very dangerous for characters.
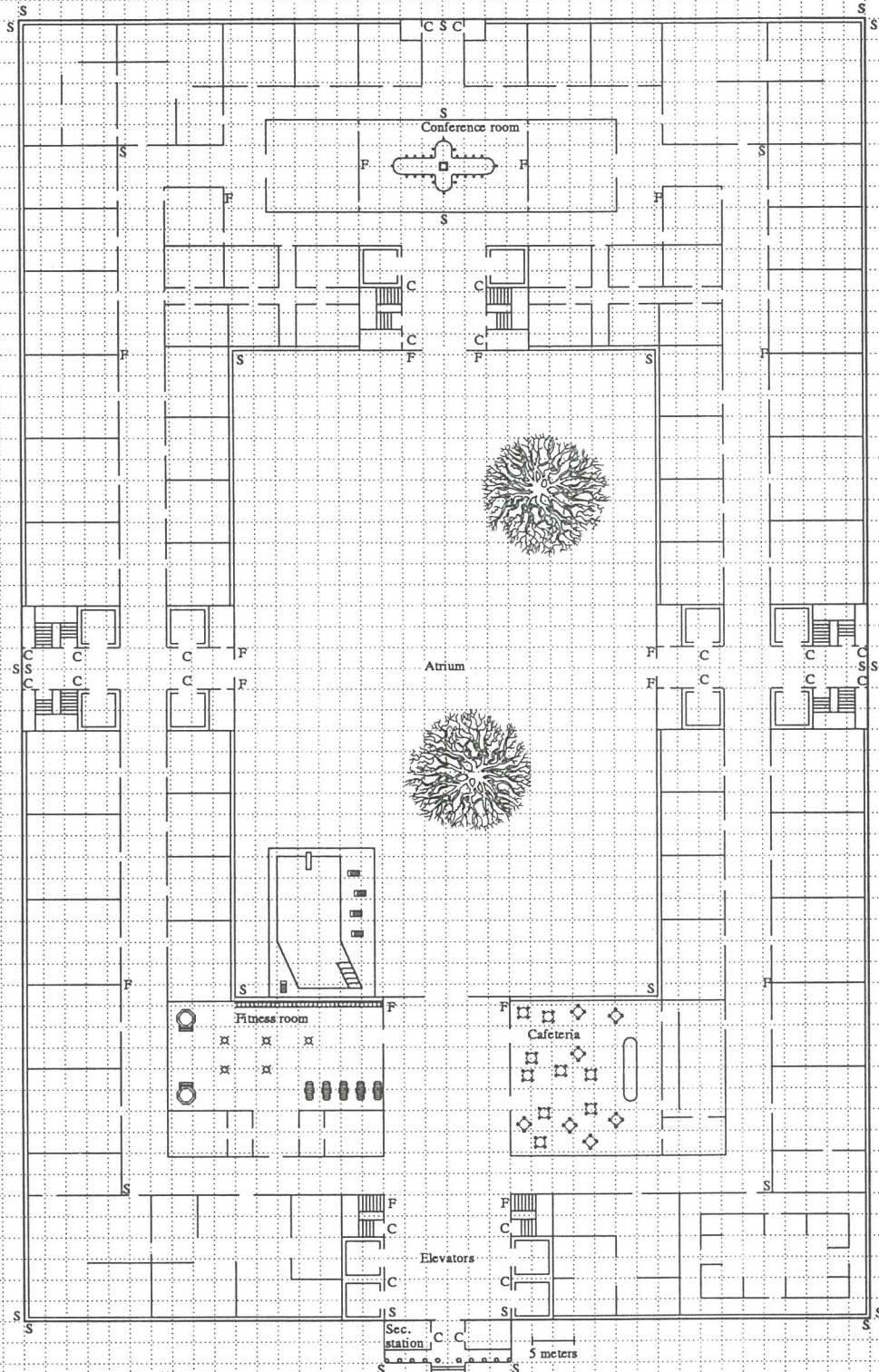
Note that most programs will have orders to stay put in emergencies, and guard a given location, rather than moving around, only harassing characters as long as they are in the guarded area, returning to "sentry" duty afterwards. Here is a simple encounter table. Roll a die every time a subnode is entered, and see what is waiting. It is suggested you tailor the results to the abilities of the characters, with pluses or minuses to the roll based on the level of security.

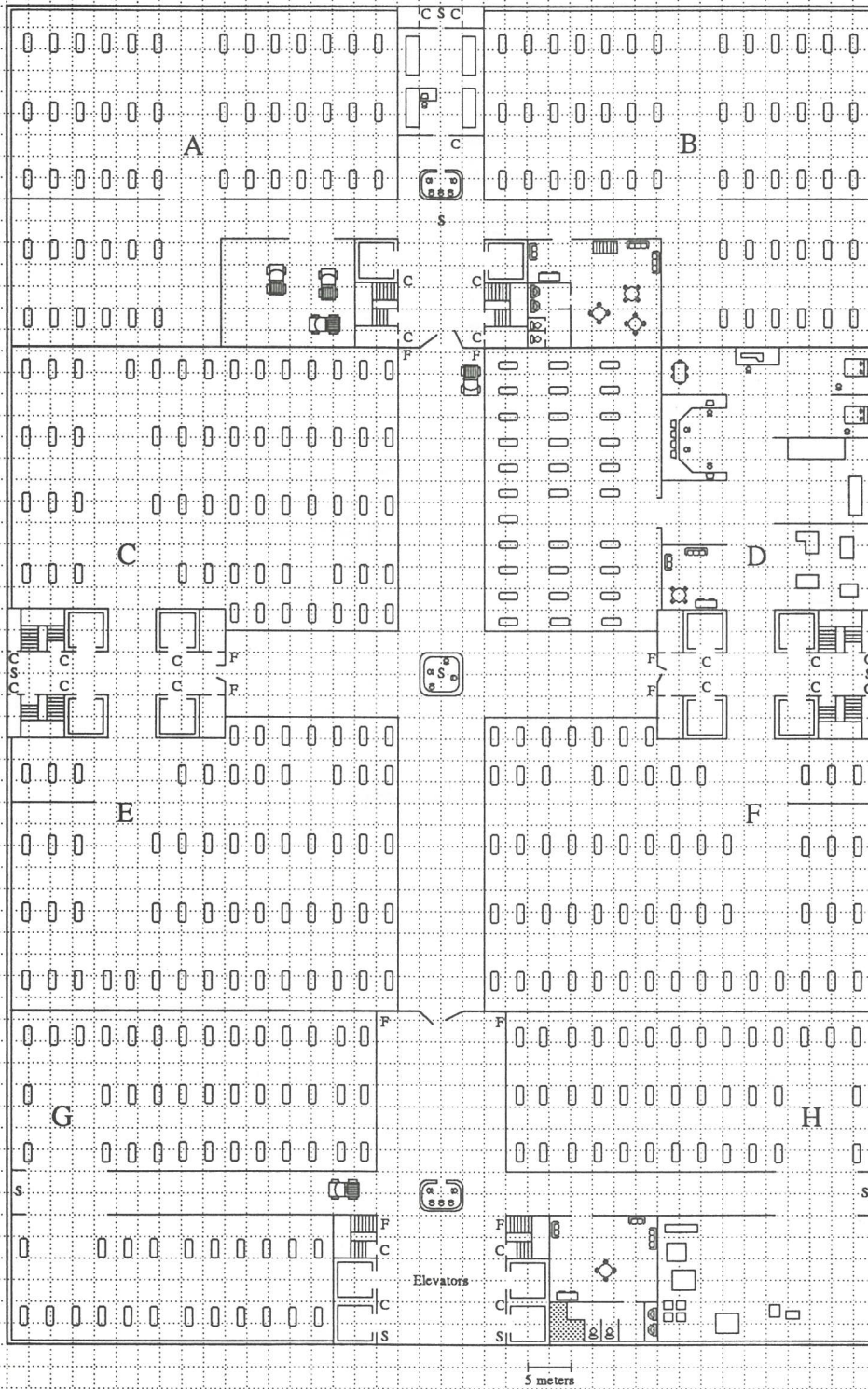| Roll	Result
1	None
2	1 Jet, 1 Viper
3	1 Inquisitor, 2 Jets
4	Inquisitor pillbox (Attack-20, Misdirection-15)
5	1 Trailbreaker, 4 Jets
6	Minor AI (if within 3 subnodes of regional HQ)

AzBio Hospital Complex - Ground Level

Conference room

Atrium

Fitness room

Cafeteria

Elevators

Sec. station

5 meters

Guard

A

B

C S C

C

S

C

C

C

C

F

F

D

C

S

C S C

C

S

C

C

F

C

F

C

F

C

C

E

F

C S C

S

G

H

S

S

F

F

F

C

F

C

Elevators

C

S

S

5 meters

Information Profile

Full name: Associated Biotechnologies, Inc.
Founded: 2211
Total corporate worth: approximately 15% of GPP (Gross Planetary Product)
Council votes: 7
Principal business: Genetically engineered organisms, custom pharmaceuticals, cloned body parts
Notable facilties: AzTec One, L-5 research and vacation colony

                    Darkside, Class V bioresearch, Luna

                    Hercules, orbital research and administrative space station, Mars

Transport resources: Exact figures unknown, but is known to possess a variety of orbital, interplanetary and interstellar ships, including dedicated high-speed couriers and interstellar frieghters.

Military resources: Exact figures unknown due to diversity of holdings, but is known to have grav armor, ballistic and cruise missile submarines, ground-to-orbit interceptors, ABM defenses and a number of interplanetary and interstellar "research" vessels of suspicious design. Ownership of atomic weapons confirmed. Ownership of antimatter technology unconfirmed but extremely likely.

Owns or has controlling interest: Galpax – Gravity levitated rail frieght

(list incomplete)

Galpax – Gravity levitated rail frieght	SouPet – Petrochemical synthesis
Texas Military Industries – Bodyguard/paramilitary equipment	Appalachian Airways – Regional commuter service (E.NorAm)
Osmogene – Specialized biotech equipment	Kamatron – Communications equipment
Digisent – AI research lab	Canpac – Regional frieght line (N.NorAm)
Octagon Entertainment – Holomovie studio	Burke Bio – Custom microorganisms

Major rival: Nax Chemie (pharmaceuticals)
Minor ally: PolSci (security equipment)

    AzBio was formed in 2211 by Carlton Fisk and several other genetics engineers. It was a small concern, but independent, and had several of the best brains in the business. Earth was very much still recovering from The War, and they saw a great deal of potential in high-yield, extreme-tolerant crops. The company fared well, but available records would seem to show that it was never a major player. This changed with the Intervention. The "benevolent" Mars government bought and sold technology and brainpower, and those who were in favor had access to technology a generation ahead of that available on Earth at the time. AzBio got a lucky break, and made the biggest sales coup of the entire Intervention period. This claim to fame was the development of Ironlock plants, for which the Martian government paid very generously in credits, brainpower and technology. Ironlock is a genetically altered desert grass, which absorbs iron oxide ($FeO(OH)$) from the Martian soil. It converts this into an iron sulfide and oxygen, the latter being released into the atmosphere, the former staying in the plant. Several times a year, the ironweed is harvested and reseeded, the plants being smelted to recover the iron, which is then used in Martian industry, the recovered sulfer being used to fertilize the ironlock fields. It was a simple way to turn solar power into breathable atmosphere, and was probably a major factor in the terraforming of Mars.

    As still happens, things got violent. Maintaining secrecy on the genetic engineering codes made them a target for what was known as a "hostile takeover". Repeated attacks and attempted kidnappings eventually resulted in the loss of over half the original research team. But, with their new capital, AzBio quickly recovered and managed to return the favors, establishing a knee-jerk retribution policy that, while diluted, is still seen today.(1)

    While more efficient versions of the plants could have kept the young AzBio going for quite some time, it was assured that the market for that product would eventually wither. Having developed a great deal of technique in plant research, the next product branched off into the animal kingdom. Nucows are a result of selective breeding and subtle genetic manipulation. They are extremely hardy and protective of their young, and have been modified so they can digest virtually any organic material. Their physical development can also be "programmed". By means of hormone shots shortly after birth, a nucow can grow into one of several varieties of cattle, which can be optimized for any combination of wet, dry, hot or cold climates, with optional trigger hormones to cover for extreme seasonal variation. While not a high-quality meat, it is quite sufficient for most purposes, and nucows thrive in conditions that would kill most other animals. An unexpected coup was the declaration by India's religious hierarchy that nucows had been defiled by the hand of man, and were no longer sacred, a fact which put meat on a lot of Indian plates. Cattle rustling is still a problem in this area of the globe as a result.

    The company vertically integrated at this point, having enough surplus funds and influence to acquire smaller biotech and support companies, allowing them to keep profits "in house", rather than going to non-AzBio companies. This integration spread out as the company prospered on Radweed, Soylent, and finally, an AzBio line of cloned human replacement parts. The company expanded its holdings into real estate, electronics, entertainment, agriculture, etc. AzBio acquired the abandoned Novobirum lunar base, and turned it into Darkside, an ultra-secure containment facility for dangerous bioresearch. (Darkside is not public knowledge, and no reports of inside activity are available). Another successful project is AzTec One, a moderate sized L-5 colony used as a secure resort spot for AzBio workers, a zero-g research facility and retirement home for AzBio executives who wish to prolong their lives with clone parts and low gravity. AzTec One is open to the public (at higher rates than for employees), and turns a substantial profit through zero-g "sports", gambling and recreational pharmaceuticals.

    Carlton Fisk supposedly died in a "terrorist" attack in 2302(2), although this is not confirmed. It is rumored that he is still alive as a disembodied brain, connected through a sensorium interface to a mindless clone body. If this is true, he seems to no longer occupy a central role in the decision-making process, although it would explain certain unusual events and continuity of esoteric long-term projects that seem to have no profit potential.

    Policy – AzBio maintains a conservative public relations campaign, and has a moderate public image. Few realize the extent of AzBio holdings or the power that the company has. Public perception is that of a regular megacorp which makes funny animals, vat protein and clone parts for rich people, which is exactly the image AzBio wants to show. AzBio is large enough now that the quest for pure profit is somewhat diluted, and while still known for innovative research, the company is beginning to show its age. Internal power politics and old minds in young bodies are taking their toll on progress. The company is beginning to rot from within. This could take another century to complete, but it could reverse itself, given a strong enough leadership. But for now, hints of decadence among the hierarchy have shown themselves, the power they wield has become slightly more open, and they are less concerned with the possible repercussions of its use.

    This does not in any sense make them weak, just that for a company which controls 15% of Earth's resources, they are not as strong as they might be. In business, AzBio is ruthless. Equipment is a commodity that can be replaced, and people are tools to be used until they wear out or break. The company has the money to hire the best, give them the finest equipment and care, and perhaps more importantly, discard them without a second thought once their usefulness is done.

1. See PanSpace 402 Disaster, 4 Oct 2267, File DSC0410267-1894   2. See AzBio Beheading, 22 Feb 2302, File DSC0222302-0216

"John"
Age: 35   Height: 195cm   Weight: 96kg
BP: 32 BR: 32 Speed: 15(20)

Strength   : 16
Constitution : 14
Intelligence : 15
Dexterity   : 14(24)*
Willpower   : 16
Bravado   : 18
Appearance   : 11
Perception   : 14
Stamina   : 14

Skills:
    PIST : 15
    RIFL : 15
    KNFE : 12
    MRTS : 14
    SURE : 12
    MLSC : 12
Equipment:
    Tori Novafire
    Heavy torso armor (50/30)
    Thermal imager glasses

Veteran of the Yucatan Brush Wars (2287-2293), he faked his own death near the end of his tour, and used his extensive knowledge of the area to set up a successful arms smuggling ring. He is also *de facto* leader of the Kongs, whose mobility, contacts and willingness to do anything for money makes them valuable troops in his own private wars. He has Dex augmentation in his right arm, which is used solely for Initiative in drawing a weapon, and also has a set of vibroteeth.

Tasha Su
Age: 28   Height: 180cm   Weight: 57kg
BP: 25 BR: 25 Speed: 12

Strength   : 10
Constitution : 12
Intelligence : 14
Dexterity   : 14
Willpower   : 13
Bravado   : 14
Appearance   : 18
Perception   : 13
Stamina   : 10

Skills:
    PIST : 7
    KNFE : 6
    PRYG : 14
    DECP : 12
    CMAN : 17
    ACTG : 14
    BRIB : 12
Equipment:
    Assorted pharmaceuticals
    Single shot Fireball (well made)
    Polycarb stiletto

A born survivor and con artist, she lives a traveling life, constantly moving from one city and scam to the next. Has very few emotional ties to anyone or anything, and has an almost pathological need to betray or hurt anyone who would try to crack her diamond-hard exterior. This cold shell is hidden beneath a facade of friendliness, and very few get to know her long enough to see through it.

Intimidator
Age: n/a   Height: 220cm   Weight: 400kg
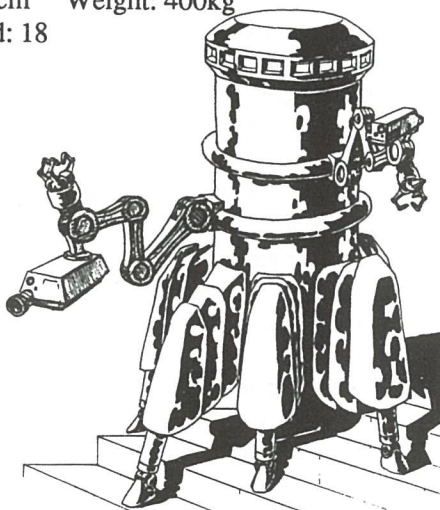BP: 80 BR: n/a Speed: 18

Strength   : 25
Constitution : n/a
Intelligence : 24
Dexterity   : 11
Willpower   : n/a
Bravado   : n/a
Appearance   : n/a
Perception   : 15
Stamina   : 25

Skills:
    RIFL : 15
    GLCH : 15
    BRWL : 10

Equipment:
    Weapon turret #1
    DV 100I laser, 85V stunner, 12I continuous laser
    Thermal imager, sonic imager, image intensifier
    Weapon turret #2
    50mm grenade launcher, 20 rounds, radar imager

Reasonably intelligent security robot, programmable for a variety of roles, from crowd control to combat. The laser and stunner are autofire, and have an essentially unlimited power supply. The entire machine has an AV of 50, making it extremely difficult to immobilize with small arms. Its vital circuitry is located in what would be the 2 center torso locations on a human, and its power supply is in the hip and kidney locations. It has a top running speed of 15m/sec.

Stalker
Age: n/a   Height: 40cm   Weight: 50kg
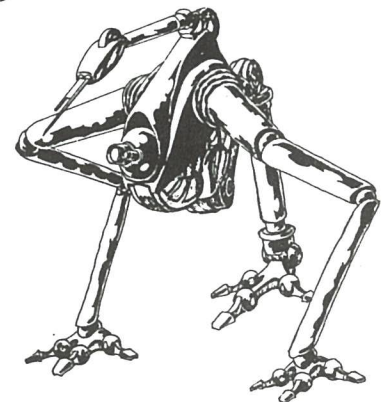BP: 30 BR: 30 Speed: 9

Strength   : 5(15)
Constitution : n/a
Intelligence : 24
Dexterity   : 13
Willpower   : n/a
Bravado   : n/a
Appearance   : n/a
Perception   : 15
Stamina   : 20

Skills:
    BRWL : 15
    STLH : 15
    CLMB : 15

Equipment:
    Drug injector
    Image intensifier, thermal imager, directional microphone

Stalkers are used to patrol areas containing delicate or expensive machinery, or in areas too cramped to patrol with humans, like air ducts. Its basic programming is to spot intruders, notify a central computer, and then immobilize/kill the intruder. It uses Brawling skill to make its leaping attack, and is capable of springing up to 4m horzontally or 2m vertically. The Strength in parenthesis is used only for maintaining a grab, or using one of the two front pincers to do a cut/crush attack (DV8I). It has an overall AV of 20, has critical locations like an Intimidator, and can move at up to 12m/sec.

Street punk

Age: 17   Height: 190cm   Weight: 80kg
BP: 30 BR: 30 Speed: 15(20)

Strength	: 10
Constitution	: 12
Intelligence	: 12
Dexterity	: 13
Willpower	: 12
Bravado	: 14
Appearance	: 7
Perception	: 10
Stamina	: 9

Skills:
PIST	: 6
IMHW	: 8
KNFE	: 12
BRWL	: 10
SURU	: 12
ARKN	: 12

Equipment:
Knife or vibroblade (6I), chainsaw (8I), Fireball
Light torso armor (5/2)
Sonar goggles

Average gutterpunk, living off of small-time theft, extortion and occasional dirty work. In the areas where such gangs are common, life is cheap, and the only sense of loyalty is to your turf and your gang. Rainwater has temporarily "bought" a gang for a week, and these are the toughs who can be expected to attack the characters in the appropriate parts of the scenario. They're not stupid, but the money Rainwater has paid is worth a lot of risks, and success can improve their reps (and fees).

AzBio guard

Age: 28   Height: 180cm   Weight: 87kg
BP: 25 BR: 25 Speed: 12

Strength	: 12
Constitution	: 12
Intelligence	: 11
Dexterity	: 12
Willpower	: 13
Bravado	: 12
Appearance	: 10
Perception	: 11
Stamina	: 10

Skills:
PIST	: 10
RIFL	: 12
AUTW	: 8
BRWL	: 8
AUTO	: 6
ARKN	: 6
MLSC	: 6

Equipment:
Lazer lash w/safety interlock(Mandragora 3.5mm SMG)
15/5 torso armor(30/20 torso armor and 20/15 helmet)
1/0 arm leg and foot armor(10/5 arm, leg and foot armor)

A typical security guard for the AzBio hostpital complex. Reasonably comptetent, but most have little or no experience outside of simulators and training courses. Equipment values are for surprised(fully alerted) guards. Early on, the majority will be the former, while later they will tend to be the latter. For random variation, roll 1d6 per guard, a "6" representing full equipment. Add 1 to the roll per 2 minutes of combat.

Security drone

Age: n/a   Length: 150cm   Weight: 40kg
BP: 20 BR: n/a Speed: 18

Strength	: 8
Constitution	: n/a
Intelligence	: 12
Dexterity	: 11
Willpower	: n/a
Bravado	: n/a
Appearance	: n/a
Perception	: 15
Stamina	: 10
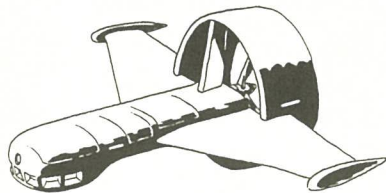
Skills:
RIFL	: 15

Equipment:
DV 50I laser (RC 3/3), 30V stunner (RC3/1), 50 shots
Thermal imager, image intensifier, avoidance radar

This is a TMI-23 light security drone, designed for silent and unobtrusive patrolling of large areas. Usually powered by a ground-based microwave link, but also has a two-hour power reserve from on-board batteries. The TMI-23 is hard to spot from the ground due to "smart" camoflage (-4 to Perception), and reasonably difficult to kill. Normally, two of these will patrol the skies over the AzBio facility, under the guidance of an AI or human link, but these will be severed at the start of the attack. Its basic programming is to shoot at anything moving that carries a weapon and isn't wearing an AzBio ID. It will patrol at an altitude of 100m, moves at 30m/sec, has an overall AV of 10, and hit locations like an Intimidator.
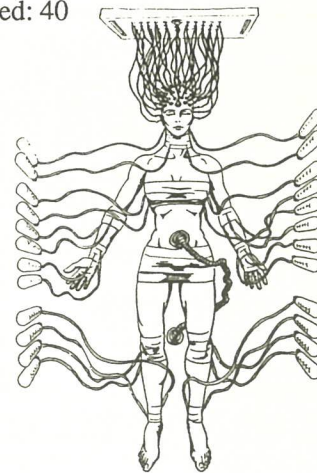
Rainwater

Age: n/a   Height: 190cm   Weight: 120kg
BP: 75 BR: 75 Speed: 40

Strength	: 40
Constitution	: 40
Intelligence	: 40
Dexterity	: 40
Willpower	: 40
Bravado	: 40
Appearance	: 40
Perception	: 40
Stamina	: 40

Skills:
All	: 40

Rainwater is humanoid, but hardly human. Aside from the same basic biology, she is custom built from the ground up, and is everything that humans might eventually become... and then some. She is immortal, but not invulnerable. She is painfully aware of this, and will act to preserve her continued existence at any cost. For game purposes, Rainwater can be considered to have every genetic or electronic augmentation conceivable. She will only take multiples of damage to a location after 10 points have penetrated, and she can usually ignore the first 4 points of any damage. While she can negate detection by most electronic devices, serious efforts will show her differences, hence her self-imposed Pacific exile.

You don't hear the constant drone of the street, or the blaring ads of the video billboards. You don't notice the garish colors of the street vendors, hawking everything from slapcaps to pirated senso reels. You don't smell the oxides and sulfides from the factories every time the wind shifts. Even the occasional gunshot is hardly worth a glance. If you heard it, it wasn't meant for you. You don't notice, because you live here, and it all fades to the background. What you *do* notice is that your credit is starting to wear a little thin, and you could use some work...

So it begins. A simple interview from an electronic hiring board turns out to be more trouble than you expected, and you expected a lot, since the employer is AzBio, perhaps the most powerful megacorp on the planet. You should have guessed when you saw the reconstructive surgery option on the contract...

As a bonus, **Renegade Dreams** also includes the full cyberspace rules for the **SpaceTime** universe, as well as background on how to integrate it into this and other adventures. ISBN 0-943891-09-4