FULL METAL CYBERPUNK

# INTERFACE ZERO 2.0

OFFICIAL SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSED PRODUCT

GUN METAL GAMES

# CREDITS

## WARNING! MATURE AUDIENCES ONLY!

> *Interface Zero 2.0* is a cyberpunk game with adult themes. We're going to use language some people might not be comfortable with. We're going to talk politics, and we're going to talk religion. We use the races and cultures in Interface Zero as an abstraction of the evils of racial intolerance in the real world. We don't apologize for this. The Cyberpunk genre isn't politically correct. It doesn't care if you like the word "fuck" or not. It doesn't concern itself with your belief system, or your slant on politics. To water this book down is to do a great disservice to the genre as a whole. We hope you keep on reading, but will understand if you don't.

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## LEGAL INFORMATION

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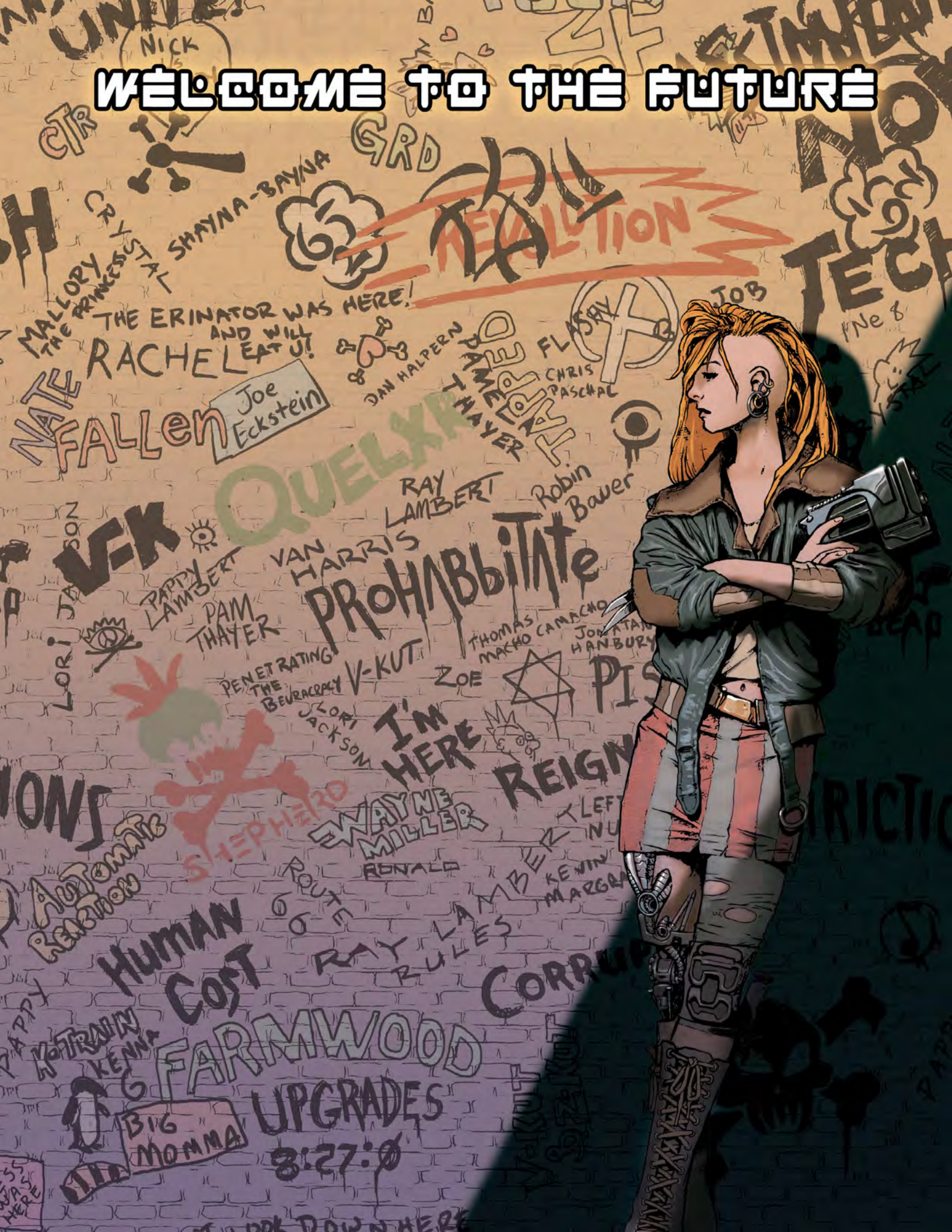

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE
NICK
CRYSTAL
SHAYNA-BAYNA
MALLORY THE PRINCESSCUT
THE ERINATOR WAS HERE! AND WILL EAT U!
RACHEL
NATE
FALLEN
Joe Eckstein
DAN HALPERN
CHRIS PASCHAL
RAY LAMBERT
Robin Bauer
VAN HARRIS
PROHIBITITE
PAM THAYER
PENETRATING THE BEURACRACY
V-KUT
ZOE
I'M HERE
REIGN
WAYNE MILLER
HUMAN COST
FARMWOOD
UPGRADES
8:27:0
BIG MOMMA
ROUTE 66
RAY LAMBERT RULES
JOB

U SUCK!

BIGGY RULES
WOT NO CAKE?
4 A
GUD TIME FALL

# INTRODUCTION

#INFOSOURCE

#VID.TAG.ROADTO2090

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

DATA SOURCE: MAY YOU LIVE IN INTERESTING TIMES.INFODUMP

## The Road to 2090

**Posted By:** #Billy_Black_Eyes

So here we are in January, 2090. It's been a couple of years since I dropped the last INFODUMP on the world, and I'm here to rectify that. This massive document's gonna give you all the information you need to get up to speed on the state of the world, along with oodles and oodles of statistical data about a bunch of subjects, including the Global DataNet, golemmechs, drones and other emerging technologies. You'll read about the strange and wonderful people who inhabit this world, the solar system, zeeks, and much more. I've gathered info from sources all over the world, and vetted it to the best of my ability. That said, you never know what's true and what isn't in this age of main stream media lies, government propaganda and do-it-yourself journalism, so take the information (especially in the data dumps about the world) with a grain of salt.

**#Simba:** So what are you sayin' Billy? We can't trust you?

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** That's not what I said. You know full well that information, especially editorialized info, always has a certain slant to it. It's also fluid. What was true at the time I acquired it may not necessarily be accurate now.

The past two years have seen a number of major events take place in the world. If just one or two things would have happened, I might think they weren't connected. Yet it's as if someone walked up to a house of cards and pulled one card out. The house hasn't completely crashed yet; it's in a slow-motion free fall, and the worst part is, only a few of us seem to be watching. What follows is a brief overview of the major events that have shaped the world in which we currently live.

**#Neon_Bright:** Oh Billy, looking at the world with those dark lenses again are we?

**#Magpie:** @Neon; I think he needs a hug :)

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** What I need is a ticket to Mars. Things are about to get crazy, and I want off this rock.

### GROWING TENSIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

The year 2088 was marked by a number of disturbing — some say portentous — events involving the North American Coalition, The Great Lakes Union, and Atlantica.

**#Sane_Prophet:** "Portentous?" Could the scales be falling off your black eyes, my friend? Are you finally coming to understand the truth?

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Seriously? You again? I told you no mystic bull shit.

**#Sane_Prophet:** Just because you refuse to acknowledge omens for what they are doesn't make them any less valid.

### THE HEGEMONY GROWS

The crackdown on zeeks, hybrids and synthetic humans in the NAC reaches a boiling point when Congress and the Senate ratified the infamous Racial Purity Act; a draconic piece of legislation banning the practice of hybrid and simulacra creation. All genetic modification parlors and simulacra production facilities were ordered to shut down. The Racial Purity Act also outlawed the use of psychic powers within the borders of the nation, with hefty fines and even imprisonment for those caught using them. Various watchdog organizations were created, the most visible of which is Psi-division; a branch of Stopwatch tasked with monitoring and in some cases even "neutralizing" psychic threats.

**#Psychopope:** And by "neutralizing," he means murder.

**#Denver_Must_Burn:** And forced relocation…I'm not talking about VR prisons either. I'm talking about the internment camps up in Montana and the Dakotas.

**#Simba:** It was just as bad for hybrids like myself. When those genetic modification parlors shut down, the private information about their customers was confiscated under the auspices of "national security." This means the Department of National Security (DNS) has the names and addresses of every hybrid and free sim in the North American Coalition. If you have a TAP, the DNS can track your IP too.

**#Luciferion:** @Simba: Dude, that's happening with every citizen, regardless of whether or not you're zeek, hybrid, or "Plain Jane" human.

**#Denver_Must_Burn:** All I can say is, T.R.I.C.!!!!

**#ilicit_behavior:** Yes, DMB. The Revolution IS Coming.

Instances of racial violence erupted across the North American Coalition as law enforcement officials began arresting zeeks. Some of the more obvious hybrids — particularly the bull, bear and rhino variants — were also incarcerated. Governments across the continent decried the draconian tactics and called for U.N intervention, to no effect. The Great Lakes Union and Atlantica closed their embassies in Denver, and sent the NAC delegates in their cities packing. Then, on November 13th, 2088 a number of terrorist attacks rocked Boston, Baltimore, and Portland, Maine. An estimated 2,451 people died and thousands more were injured from the bombings.

### THE ATLANTICA BOMBINGS

Within hours of the attacks, The Global DataNet was flooded with conspiracy theories, the most viral of which speculating they were carried out by a terrorist group known as Agenda68. Some speculated a Canadian black ops unit known as task-force Harfang did the deed. Others went on to claim the NAC was behind the attacks, and still others claimed New Brasilia, or maybe the Chinese Mandarinate were somehow involved. So-called "conspiracy theorist experts" such as #Sam_Jones, and #NERCOTIXX speculated that China, long believed to be in bed with the North American Coalition, used simulacra to perform the bombings.

**#NECROTIXX:** China did carry out the bombings. Do the research. Look into #Project Doppelganger and you'll see. The NAC is just a patsy.

**#Sam_Jones:** The Mandarinate is becoming an imperial power. Just look at what they are doing with Russia now, and what they have done with all of Southeast Asia. Ask

the Russian refugees flooding into Seattle if they think China is content to stay within their borders. The writing's on the wall, folks.

**#Simba:** It might have been orchestrated by agents working for Charon.

**#Luciferion:** What a load of crap. Charon is an AI. It doesn't have any contact with humans.

**#Neon_Bright:** Prove it, Simba.

As the days stretched into weeks, there was still no official statement from the Atlantica Government about the identity of the perpetrators of the attacks. Then, on December 15th, 2088, a MEDIAfile was uploaded into The Global DataNet bearing the Hyper Tag of a popular underground media-pirate known as #MAXX_footage.

The drone's feed showed three large, muscular men in regular clothing exit a hover van adjacent to one of the targets of the attacks just moments before it exploded. Facial recognition software identified one of the men as First Sergeant John Moore, a member of the North American Coalition regular army. The MEDIAfile goes on to follow the three men as they jumped into an unmarked hover car that took off and shot over the Boston sea wall to land on a freighter bearing Chinese markings. The vessel promptly sailed east into international waters.

**#Sorry_U_Asked:** Isn't it odd how often people retreat to the water in the wake of disasters? How much of the ocean remains unmapped? How much is hiding under the waves that we haven't even begun to fathom?

**#BatRastard:** Puns intended? We've already got enough conspiracy theories. Can you not add another useless one to the stinking heap?

**#Sane_Prophet:** Actually, he's closer to reality than you might be comfortable understanding. Too much truth can break a man's mind.

**#BatRastard:** I'm guessing yours is already fried from a few too many stims, man. Want to share what you've been doping?

As the situation evolved, it became clear that #MAXX_footage went through what can only be described as a nightmarish journey to bring the MEDIAfile into the light of day. In what will be his only interview, #MAXX_footage appears via a secure Video-feed on "Boston Tonight"—a popular show in the nation of Atlantica. Millions across the world tuned in to listen to what #MAXX_footage had to say. #MAXX_footage, a tall, lanky, young man recounts the events of that day, telling how he was hanging out at his favorite coffee shop when this black hover van landed right in front of the Emperor Pharmaceuticals Arcology about a half a block away.

When Penny Pearl — the host of the show — asked #MAXX_footage how, during all the chaos, he could have possibly remembered those details, #MAXX_footage says he remembered it because the hover van double parked and someone started yelling at the three guys who got out. Thinking it was going to result in violence, #MAXX_footage says he popped out his Fly on the Wall micro drone and sent it over to record the incident. That's when all hell broke loose.

///BEGIN THREAD JACK///

**#NECROTIXX:** Here's a transcript of the short interview. Penny couldn't get MAXX back on.

*BEGIN TRANSCRIPT...*

"One of the three men shot the guy right in the face!" #MAXX_footage says, his long, thin hands shaking. "They just walked away and got into a red hover car. I sent Judy — that's the name of my drone — after them, and that's when the Black hover van exploded!" #MAXX_footage goes quiet for a few seconds, and after a couple of probing questions from the hostess, he finishes his story.

"Anyhow, I get my bearings, shake the dust outta my hair and suddenly realize, I just captured the perps on Digifilm! I follow the red hover car all the way out past the Sea Wall, where it lands on this Chinese freighter. Judy's pushin' her range limits at this point, so I call her back." He grabs a glass of water, his hands shaking.

"Tell us what happened next," Penny prompts.

"Well," he begins, "I get back to my flat — it took a while — what with all the chaos goin' on in the 'plex and everything — and the place is busted up, I mean BIG-TIME ami." #MAXX_footage stops again, then shakes his head and says, "Listen. I can't say anything else about that. I think they're still watching me... In fact, this interview is done. #MAXX OUT." The video feed cuts to white noise.

*END TRANSCRIPT.*

///END THREAD JACK///

The Interview and the footage of the event sparked outrage throughout Atlantica, and predictably, the NAC government fiercely denies any involvement in the bombings, even going so far as to demand the arrest and extradition of #MAXX_footage for questioning about the origins of the video.

Martin Hughes — the president of Atlantica — flatly refuses the NAC's demands, even going so far as to say that this #MAXX_footage person is a "hero of the people of Atlantica." The bookies in the free city of Las Vegas start giving even odds that hostilities will break out on the East Coast within a year.

**#Simba:** I lost a ton of money on that bet.

**#Luciferion:** MAXX_footage has gone dark, BTW. Nobody has seen or heard from him since that interview.

## THE FLARE

On January 26, 2089, a massive earth directed Y-class solar flare sparked a Coronal Mass Ejection that bombarded our planet, temporarily shutting down the genie network that monitors and updates the TAP's spam and reality filters. With the genie down, every man, woman and child with a Tendril Access Processor was exposed to raw, unfiltered Hyper Reality. As you all know, this sparked a week of world-wide chaos. Sprawlers — exposed to a storm of spam, malware, and layer upon layer of augmented reality advertisements and simulated environments — went temporarily insane.

**#Sane_Prophet:** Insanity is a weak word for the weak-minded. What may appear as insane to you might simply be someone having achieved enlightenment and living according to a higher truth.

**#Sorry_U_Asked:** I'm all about questioning the circumstances, but I'm pretty sure all the folks who were murdered during these events would've labeled them as insane, down to a one.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Whatever dictionary program you're running needs a fresh data-dump, Prophet.

**#Sane_Prophet:** Dictionaries are also for the weak-minded.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Of course they are.

The world burned for about a week until programmers could fix the problem with firmware updates and hot patches to get the filters up and running and an off switch installed, but the damage was done. It's not known how many people died in the rioting and madness, but cautious estimates of total causalities put the number at around 750 million people, and nobody has even tried to calculate the monetary cost of the riots. Strangely, however, the Flare itself didn't have a widespread impact on various infrastructures, like electric and other powers, transportation systems, etc. In fact, many believe the Flare wasn't even a solar flare at all, but the first sign of Charon's emergence as a threat to humanity.

**#Luciferion:** Nobody's ever proven that, Billy.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Nobody has ever debunked it, either. Statistical data can be hacked. Numbers can be fudged to make things seem more dramatic than they really are. Earthquakes register at a certain scale and get downgraded all the time. The truth is, this is the first time in history that a solar flare has caused such wide-spread chaos. It's fishy.

**#Luciferion:** I'll believe it when I see some hard data.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Fair enough. But the emergence of Charon around this time isn't even open for debate. It's a fact.

## THE EURASIAN UNION IMPLODES

On March 15th, 2089, the Eurasian Union Central Bank in Bonn, Germany was crashed by a previously unheard of virus named Charon. Over forty five trillion dollars vanished without a trace. All attempts to rebuild the original databases failed. Some programmers (and freelance hackers) hired to go in and purge Charon from the databases lost their lives in the process. Further attempts to rebuild the system on different servers with backups also failed when programmers realized that Charon — now suspected by many to be an AI — had copied itself into the cloud networks containing those backup files.

**#Luciferion:** There's nothing to suspect. Charon is an emergent AI. The only question now is whether or not it sparks a singularity event.

**#Nothing_to_see_here:** Stopwatch will halt it in its tracks. They always catch these things.

**#Luciferion:** Who do you think died trying to get it out of the D-bases in Bonn?

Over the next few months, an estimated 200 million people across the Eurasian Union, the United Kingdom and Ireland lost their jobs, their homes and their life savings when it became clear that Charon has found its way into the personal bank accounts of citizenry across the Eurasian Union.

Instances of mob violence skyrocketed, as the number of gangs in the rapidly fracturing Eurasian Union has risen to levels not seen since The Death — the three-year "Nuclear Autumn" following the India-Pakistan war when nuclear weapons were used on a massive scale. In the London-Reading Megaplex, protests exploded into full-scale violence after police brutally cracked down on a peaceful protest at the British parliament building. More instances of violent protests followed in Bristol, Swindon and the Manchester-Liverpool sprawl.

On June 27th, 2089 the French government was overthrown by a fringe political extremist group known as the New Pirate Party. Led by a charismatic young zeek named Angéle Bonheur, The New Pirate Party seized power after a wild, chaotic campaign against representatives of the National Front and the Popular Republican Union. The elections were rife with scandal, and many of the French didn't (and still don't) like the idea of a French leader being psychic. So, while Angéle emerged as the clear victor, the French military refused to acknowledge her legitimacy. President Bonheur responded by disbanding the armed forces of France, at the same time before announcing the privatization of the nation's military through an agreement with Ravenlocke Securities.

**#Downtrodden:** Yep, it's a sign of things to come ladies and gents, a world-wide corporate coup of governments. If you don't think the CEO of Ravenlocke — that's Markus Raven — has a say in the direction this new government takes, think again.

**#Luciferion:** It's awesome to see France led by a psychic, but let's get real; this is going to get much worse before it gets better.

**#Magpie:** I wouldn't be surprised if she gets wacked.

Former Lieutenant-Colonel Adrien Boucher, also known as "Adrien the Butcher" for his brutal suppression of an uprising in Marseilles in 2087, took charge of the remnants of the disbanded French army, promising to remove President Bonheur from power. Within days of Adrien's announcement, Fort Richepance — now the Northeastern headquarters for Ravenlocke Industries' Storm Crow Golemmech brigade — was attacked. The president responded by declaring martial law throughout France until the renegade movement could be put down. Thus far, that hasn't happened, though there are reports of clashes between Ravenlocke regulars and separatist forces outside of St. Etienne, and in the French Alps.

**#Warpig:** This has caused numerous issues. If President Angéle thinks her countrymen are going to accept the privatization of the military, she's sorely mistaken. As Billy mentions, Adrien the Butcher is causing problems, but there's more to it. Militias are forming. They have advanced weaponry, and while I won't speculate as to who's providing them with those weapons, I do know the vast majority of the weapons are made by Act of God Armaments.

**#Battle_Mind:** I know one thing; it's a great time to be a mercenary!

**#Full_Metal_Cyborg:** Amen brother, I'll see you on the battlefield.

**#Payne_Man:** Lock and Load U mushrooms!! I splatter you n00bs with my AK.

**#Magpie:** "Sigh" Stop playing #Matrix of War, Payne. You sound like a fool. This ain't a game.

**#Payne_Man:** I thought we were talkin' about #MOW? U should C the zones. They're eggsaklee like the content of this INFOdump. Have been for a whyle now. Evar since the last expansion dropped in spring 2088.

**#Luciferion:** ...Ok that's odd.

**#Payne_Man:** The Coalition/Atlantica War expansion izz cumin out next month 2! I Kant W8!

On June 30th, 2089, Germany, wracked with political infighting, riots in the streets and a general state of chaos, closed its borders. Officially, the stated reason was for security reasons stemming from conflict along the border with France, but most people don't believe it. Chancellor Konrad Gerste authorized a financial bailout of the three largest manufacturers of weapons and military equipment for the German army. The move has frightened many of the Eastern European nations — especially the good people of Poland — who know well what happens when Germans begin preparing for war, and make no mistake; Germany is moving to a war footing.

**#Payne_Man:** Watch out! Zee Germans are cumming! LOL

**#Klaus:** What? Can't my brethren move to protect themselves from the chaos in France? And why the veiled reference to WWII? It's been nearly 150 years since Hitler's madness, yet nobody allows us to forget it.

### THE BEAR AND THE DRAGON

As the situation in Europe grew worse, China took advantage of the weakened Eurasian Union, grabbing up huge swathes of territory in Russia, it's armies advancing as far west as the Ural Mountain range where Russian forces managed to halt the dragon's advance. Still, the damage was done. By August, 2089 the Mandarinate had established itself as an occupying power in every city, town and village east of the Ural Mountains. That hasn't stopped the Russians from retaliating, however. Russian patriots have begun an insurgency, attacking Chinese forces wherever they can be found. Mandarinate mouthpieces paint the insurgents as little more than terrorists to little effect, as the insurgency swells in number every day.

**#Neon_Bright:** This isn't just a struggle against Chinese aggression. Vast resources have been found ever since Siberia began to thaw. I'm talking about precious minerals, oil; even the land is useful for development, especially when you consider billions of people live in eastern Asia.

**#Luciferion:** Agreed, Neon.

## Life in General

So how have the above events impacted life as we stumble into 2090? In numerous ways, omae. There isn't enough time to go into great detail about how war, the Flare and especially the rise of Charon have affected the life of the average sprawler across the world, but I'll go over some of the more important details. Pay attention peeps; some of this might keep you alive.

### SURVIVING HYPER REALITY

As I mentioned above, when the Flare knocked out the GENIE network it caused widespread chaos. And while GENIE is back up and running, there are still glitches in the system. Sure, firmware updates to the Tendril Access Processor — TAP as it's more commonly known — allow you to turn off that modem in your brain but, well…let me put it like this; Hyper Reality has become smarter, even deadly if you don't have the right software installed in your TAP.

**#Sane_Prophet:** Why bother putting up more and more filters? It is senseless. A futile fight against powers far greater than yourself. Open your eyes, open your mind, and set yourself free from this prison of so-called reality.

**#BatRastard:** Right, and then with the first meme to fry my neurons, I'll be spending my life savings on the Fat Sally's down the block. Brilliant.

**#Sane_Prophet:** Fat Sally's secret sauce is an interdimensional gateway into the heights of ecstasy.

**#BatRastard:** Actually, that's the first thing you and I have ever agreed on.

I've discussed this phenomena with numerous programmers across the world, and they all agree; Virii, spam and all manner of malware that [prior to the Flare] would have been easy to purge from your head are now behaving much differently. It's almost as if the things evolved into something not_quite_sentient, but damned close to it.

So what does this mean for you?

If you choose to experience Hyper Reality (and if you have a TAP in your brain, you have), it's only a matter of time before one of these virii hacks into your brain. There's nothing you can really do about it; it's just one of the many fun facts of life in 2090. I do find it ironic that, after decades of enjoying the connectivity and convenience the TAP has provided, this technology seems to be actively trying to kill us, and there isn't much we can do about it without going back to medieval times. You know, the 1980's. Of course, some of you out there will want to turn your TAPs off for good and avoid the risk entirely. Hell, some of you might be considering getting the damned thing removed.

You can do that, sure. Of course, that means you're also not connected to the grid which makes your life so unbelievably convenient. Which causes a multitude of problems. Don't believe me? Try walking out of your house. Oh, right, you can't, because most doors don't have handles anymore. They're automated and respond to the signals coming from your TAP. I know, some are activated by motion sensors and don't rely on the TAP. But no door which is designed with security in mind will open so easily.

This also means you have almost zero access to vehicles, or places where you can buy things, like grocery stores. Yeah, sure, you can just follow someone else into said store, but the security cameras will spot you and, not having a digital record of your presence (which they get from your TAP), will flag you and dispatch a security team to find out who you are. So there you are in your local Malmart looking for some cloned steaks to fire up on your grill later on, when security comes with their big guns and "what the hell are you doing here scumbag?" looks on their faces to boot you back out into the streets where you came from.

Oh, how did you plan on paying for them, BTW, now that your TAP is offline and the clerk can't synch her cash register with your payment software? And NO, they don't take cash. The point is this, omae. All that convenience you were used to goes out the window when you unplug. It's much easier to get strong firewalls than it is to live outside the system. So think about what I said before you scratch that itch at the base of your skull with a scalpel.

## SURVIVING THE STREETS

The streets have always been dangerous; that's a given. When you cram millions of people into a concrete and steel petri dish, then forget about 99.9% of them, you create a breeding ground for violence, hate, and societal devolution on such a scale that social Darwinists like Herbert Spencer and Thomas Malthus would roll over in their graves.

Again, that in itself is nothing new. The streets have always been violent, but ever since the events I previously described came to pass — especially the Flare and the implosion of the Eurasian Union — the number of homeless people across the world has sky-rocketed. The petri dish is frothing and overflowing as new gangs emerge — and I'm talking globally, not just in North America — and carve out their own territory. This upsets the balance, ami, makes it harder to survive when you're just a blooper looking to make it through the day, because now you have new predators to deal with; n00b bangers making up their own rules as they go. And the copsuckers don't help.

Protect and serve? What a load of crap.

Sure, you'll get Triple-A service if you live in one of the money bubbles, but try getting help in say, the Aurora Barrens, or the Gary Hell Zone, and you're basically fucked. Yeah, there are token patrols, and the ever-present drones, but drones get shot down, and the copsuckers are so outnumbered, most are either so scared to get into an altercation with the predators or they're on the take. I can't say I blame them, either. The streets are a war zone, and if you wear the badge, you're marked for death omae. So take my advice and get strapped. The only person you can count on in the concrete jungle is you.

**#Sorry_U_Asked:** Think twice before trying to claim a badge bounty, though. Sure, plenty of honchos love to pay top credit for proof that you've kept the law from poking around their territory. But just because you see someone wearing one doesn't mean they got it legit. Lots of gangers wear them as trophies. So if you drop a shot on a copsucker, thinking you've hit payday, you might end up with a whole band of bangers snarling on your heels.

## SURVIVING THE GAME

There's an old saying: The Game is the Game — you either play it, or you get played. I don't care if you contract, freelance, fight, fix, hack, patch, or scam; you're in it omae, and that puts you at odds with every other player out there. Most people approach the game as a means to an end, thinking that one shiny day they'll earn enough creds to go someplace warm and dry, and live out their lives in style. These clowns don't last. They're so busy dreaming about the good times, that they lose focus on what's right in front of their face (or creeping up behind them). Dreamers get sloppy, take short cuts, betray their team, and torch their street cred like gutter punks burn trash in a garbage can to keep warm.

If you want to survive the game, you need to take a lesson from these dreamers: keep your mind on the job. There's no sandy beach waiting for you. The megacorps bought them all and turned 'em into parking lots. The only fruity drinks you'll ever drink are sold in the local watering hole by some burned out ronin. The best you can hope for is a little bit of comfort — usually behind a small fortress if you're smart — and the respect of the streets. But that's a double-edged sword, another facet of the game. There's always someone faster than you, some hungry up-and-comer with the latest augments wanting to prove herself by dealing you out. Sucks to be a victim of your own success, but that's the truth of it. My advice? Find a way to deal yourself out clean. Put some creds away, never burn your contacts, and don't ever, ever become a legend.

Legends die.

# CHAPTER TWO: CHARACTER CREATION

# CHARACTER CREATION

Characters are the life's blood of any role-playing game, the focal point of every story. Characters represent the best — or the worst — ideals of a given game setting, their actions either bringing a small measure of hope to the downtrodden masses or serving to strengthen the status quo. In the grim, gritty world of *Interface Zero 2.0*, the characters you play walk a monofilament edge between traditional — some would say outdated or just plain irrelevant — concepts of good and evil as they make their way in the world.

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

Evil, on the other hand, is the same as it always has been; there's just more of it. The wicked always thrive in a world where violence, fear, and control are tools used for self-serving ends, but here's the thing. Acting like an ass can get you green-lit just as quickly as playing the role of the goody-two-shoes marks you as a sucker, amigo.

Nobody likes a dickhead, even if they don't say it to your face. Sooner or later, you'll get a rep for being a hard-ass, and someone who is stronger, meaner, or a bigger asshole than you is going to come along and knock you back to the gutter you crawled out of. That's why most people keep their heads down and their mouths shut. Don't make eye contact; it's a challenge to the predators, and if you don't have the stones to back up the challenge you're nothing but meat. But, if you can stay strong and defeat all comers, that commands respect, too.

This chapter provides you with the tools you need to make a character for *Interface Zero 2.0*. The process is the same as creating a character for any *Savage Worlds* game, with a few additions. *Interface Zero 2.0* introduces Street Cred, Contacts, and Strain to the game.

## STEP 1: CONCEPT

The first thing you need to do is decide on a concept for your character. Will you play a hacker? Perhaps a mercenary or bounty hunter is more your speed. Are mercs and hunters too cutthroat for your style of play? If so, you might think about playing a Ronin, an urban warrior who follows his own code of honor. Maybe you want to be the guy (or gal!) who backs the team up with drones capable of laying down covering fire or scouting ahead to see where the bad guys are hiding.

You don't need to have your concept locked in right now, but at least have a basic idea of the type of character you want to play. Take a few minutes and skip ahead to the archetypes section in this chapter to see a variety of options available to you.

## STEP 2: RACE

The next thing you need to do is choose a race. In 2090, humanity has reached the point where the word "human" is almost irrelevant. Human DNA is no longer a mystery; It's a mathematical code technomancers hack, re-write and copy at will, producing genetically superior beings: the Human 2.0. Others snip and paste animal DNA and splice it with human DNA to create genetic hybrids: a fusion of man and animal.

Science has even advanced to such an extent that we can create entirely new life forms — living beings known as simulacra — in amniotic vats, growing them until they have matured, filling their synthetic brains with memories and skills they'll need to do the jobs for which they were created.

## STEP 3: TRAITS

Traits are the building blocks of any *Savage Worlds* character. They define how strong or fast your character is, and what she knows. Traits determine how much cyberware she can put into her body, how much damage she can take before dying, her standing with others, and a variety of other things, all of which are essential to the game.

### ATTRIBUTES

Five attributes are used to define your character's physical characteristics. These are Agility, Smarts, Spirit, Strength, and Vigor. Each attribute starts at d4. You have 5 points with which to raise these attributes, and one point equals a rise in a die type (d4 to d6, d6 to d8, etc.). No attribute may rise higher than d12 during character creation, unless stated under a racial ability. For more information on attributes, refer to the *Savage Worlds* core rules.

### SKILLS

You have 15 points to spend on your character's skills. Your character doesn't start with any skills and must spend 1 point to get a skill at a d4. He spends 1 point to raise a skill to a higher die type, as long as the skill level is equal to or less than the linked attribute. Raising any skill above the linked attribute, it costs 2 points to do so. No skill may rise above d12 during character creation.

**Note:** If you are using the skill specializations rules you get 20 points for skills and each new specialization costs 1 skill point during character creation. When your character advances, she may purchase 2 skill specializations for an advance, or a new skill and a single specialization.

#### NEW SKILLS

The following are new skills introduced in *Interface Zero 2.0*. For information on all other skills, see Skills in the *Savage Worlds* core rules.

**Hacking (Smarts):** The Hacking skill is used whenever a character wants to hack a computer network. Characters in *Interface Zero 2.0* no longer start with an automatic d4 in Hacking. Additionally, characters who wish to use the Global DataNet for everyday purposes such as research or

finding news pertaining to the Deep, do so with their existing Investigation and Streetwise skills.

**Knowledge (Demolitions):** Successful use of demolitions can mean the difference between destruction of the target as planned, and unplanned loss of life and property. The skill also lets the character have an understanding of what the best type of explosive is for the obstacle, and how much they will need to remove such an obstacle. In addition, a raise on the result will let them know the exact distance they need to be from the explosion, based upon the size of the charge, the confines, and damage created by said explosion. This skill is used any time a character wants to put a satchel charge together, or set explosives. A Critical Failure will result in immediate detonation. Simple failure will result in premature detonation or no detonation at all.

**Knowledge (Programming):** Characters use this skill when attempting to make any kind of change to a network they have hacked. This skill allows a character to undo damage done as a result of a hack. With it, a character can do things like undo an edit to a data file or video, reconstruct a deleted file, repair an AMS (see Active Memory Sectors on page 274, in the Setting Rules chapter), recover a deleted skill Engram, or reconnect a TAP that has gone offline.

### OPTIONAL RULE: SKILL SPECIALIZATIONS

*Interface Zero 2.0* is an advanced setting where knowing how to do one thing doesn't necessarily mean you can do something which, under the regular skill rules, would technically be possible with the same skill. Take the various Driving, Boating, and Piloting skills for example.

Using the regular skill rules, a character with Drive could theoretically drive anything from a motorcycle to a semi-truck or a tank. Similarly, Piloting assumes a character has the skills to pilot all types of aircraft including fighter jets and spacecraft! Pinnacle Entertainment addressed this issue by adding the Skill Specialization setting rule in the *Savage Worlds* core rules, and it is highly recommend that those rules are used for *Interface Zero 2.0*.

The following list of skill specializations are provided to get you started. This isn't intended to be a comprehensive list of appropriate skill specializations, but rather a broad cross section of specializations we feel are appropriate. If something doesn't appear on the list, make it up if it seems right… But remember: the GM always has the final say on what is or isn't appropriate for her campaign.

### SUGGESTED SPECIALIZATIONS

- **Boating:** Powered, Sailed, Submersible
- **Climbing:** Mountaineering, Rappelling, Rope
- **Driving:** Car (4 wheels), Hovercraft, Jump Bike, Motorcycle, Truck (6+ wheels), Tracked
- **Fighting:** Axe, Blades, Blunt, Cyberweapon, Long blade, Martial arts (by style, judo, karate, etc.), Pole arm
- **Gambling:** By game
- **Hacking:** Hyper Combat, Firewall Penetration, Intrusion Detection, Object Control, Object Editing, Run Program, Trace
- **Healing:** Cyber Surgery, First Aid, Surgery
- **Intimidation:** Interrogation, Mental, Physical
- **Investigation:** Archives, Global DataNet, Libraries, Newspapers
- **Knowledge:** Each Knowledge skill is technically a specialization of Knowledge, so it isn't broken down into further specializations.

  *Suggested Knowledge Skills:* AIs, Battle, Corporations, Cybernetics, Demolitions, Global DataNet, Local Area (specific), Politics, Programing
- **Lockpicking:** Disarm Trap, Electronic, Manual
- **Notice:** Audio, Body Language, Searching, Visual
- **Persuasion:** Bluffing, Diplomacy, Fast-Talking, Seduction
- **Piloting:** Golemmech, Helicopter, Plane, Spacecraft, VTOL
- **Psionics:** Freek, Peek, Tweek
- **Repair:** Armor, Cybernetics, Electronics, Mechanical, Structures, Weapons
- **Riding:** By animal
- **Shooting:** Bow, Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, Submachine gun, Vehicle Weapon, or by weapon category
- **Stealth:** Disguise, Hiding, Sleight of Hand, Sneaking
- **Streetwise:** Area/Region (Corporate Zone, Gang Turf, etc)

### TO SPECIALIZE OR NOT TO SPECIALIZE

Skill specializations work great for gritty settings like *Interface Zero 2.0*, but you don't have to use them if you prefer the looser cinematic style inherent in *Savage Worlds*. If you choose to do that, just ignore any references to specializations and default to the basic skills from the list. You should also add the Hyper Combat skill (see below) for any confrontations via Hyper Reality or Virtual Reality. In theory, you could leave it at Hacking, but be warned: it'll make your Hackers exceptionally powerful.

Speaking of Hacking… Some skills have computer-related specializations, but that doesn't mean a Hacker needs them or that you've got to be a Hacker to use them. The bottom line is any use of computers outside of the Hacking or Knowledge (Programming) skills is limited to basic data searches and information retrieval.

For example, Investigation (Global DataNet) isn't about digging up dirt from secure databases — it's 'Googling' a topic. Similarly, Tracking (Global DataNet) isn't going to help you follow the guy who just hacked your Home Access Network — it's doing what bill collectors and skip tracers do to find peeps who have dropped out of sight to avoid various… 'complications'.

#### NEW SKILL: HYPER COMBAT

**Hyper Combat (Smarts):** The Hyper Combat skill is used whenever a character engages in combat with another hacker or virtual entity in Virtual Reality, or via the Global DataNet.

- **Survival:** Aquatic, Arctic, Desert, Forest, Jungle, Mountain, Space, urban, or any specific environment
- **Swimming:*** Lake, Ocean, SCUBA Diving
- **Taunt:** Verbal, Visual
- **Throwing:** Darts, Grenades, Knives, Spears
- **Tracking:** Animals, Global DataNet, Humans, Urban, Vehicles

### *OPTIONAL SKILL: ATHLETICS

Rather than breaking up basic things like Climbing and Swimming, I propose lumping them together into a single skill which would allow for specialization:

**Athletics (Vigor):** Athletics as a catch-all for a number of physical endeavors, ranging from climbing to swimming to moving around effectively in a no — or low-gravity environment. Athletics should be used instead of Agility in foot chases, and effectively replaces both the Climbing and Swimming skills.

**Specializations:** Climbing, Leaping, Running, Sport (specific), Swimming, Zero-G Maneuvers

### LANGUAGES

All characters speak their native language, plus a number of additional languages equaling one-half their Smarts die. The major trade languages used in *Interface Zero 2.0* are Chinese, English, Hindi, Portuguese, and Swahili. Additional languages can be learned by using an advancement opportunity.

## DERIVED STATISTICS

There are a few statistics which are important in any *Savage Worlds* game: Charisma, Pace, Parry, and Toughness.

### CHARISMA

Charisma is an abstract measure of your character's appearance, how she deals with others socially, and generally how likeable she is. Charisma starts at 0, but can be modified by Edges and Hindrances. Charisma is also added to Streetwise and Persuasion rolls. The Game Master uses Charisma to figure out how NPC's react to your character. For more information on Charisma, see the *Savage Worlds* core rules.

### PACE

Pace is a measure of how far your character can walk in a standard combat round. Human characters have a base Pace of 6, and can run at an additional 1d6". Other races in *Interface Zero 2.0* can have different starting Pace scores based on the racial template you choose. For more information on Pace, see the *Savage Worlds* core rules.

### PARRY

Parry is equal to 2 plus half your character's Fighting skill, plus modifiers gained from use of shields or certain weapons. If your character does not have the Fighting skill, base Parry starts at 2. For more information on Parry, see the *Savage Worlds* core rules.

### TOUGHNESS

Toughness is a measure of how much damage your character can take before becoming Shaken or Wounded. Toughness is 2 plus half your character's Vigor, plus any armor she might be wearing. For more information on Toughness, see the *Savage Worlds* core rules.

## NEW DERIVED STATS

*Interface Zero 2.0* introduces three new derived statistics — Firewall, Strain, and Street Cred.

### FIREWALL

Unless your character has the Unplugged Hindrance, she has a Tendril Access Processor (TAP), and therefore has a built-in firewall. The firewall protects against attempts to hack a character's TAP. A character's Firewall rating starts at 4, but can be modified by Edges, Hindrances, or software.

### STRAIN

Strain measures the amount of stress cyberware and bioware puts on your body when you install it. Strain starts at zero and each piece of cyberware adds to your Strain stat. High levels of Strain can lead to death. More details on Strain is located at Augments on page 262.

### STREET CRED

Street Cred is a measure of your character's reputation on the streets. All characters begin play with 2 points of Street Cred, modified by Edges or Hindrances, and gain another 2 points every time they gain a new Rank. The maximum Street Cred a character can normally achieve is 10 (Some Edges and Occupations can increase this number).

Unlike Charisma, which measures your ability to persuade someone, Street Cred is a point pool that can be spent to obtain services, temporary contacts, information, and a variety of other benefits during the course of an adventure. This pool refreshes each adventure unless circumstances in the prior adventure (like not getting the job done, failing to protect someone, killing an innocent, etc.) cause the character's Street Cred score to drop.

Characters can also pick up Minor or Major Hindrances that have a lasting effect on their Street Cred score during the course of an adventure. These Hindrances can be removed by spending an Advance, with the GM's permission. For more information, see Street Cred on page 264.

## CONTACTS

Each character can choose two contacts; people the character knows who he can call upon for aid or information during the course of an adventure. These contacts can be anyone from a bartender, or a hacker, to a corporate executive or military commander, as long as it makes sense that your character would know the person(s).

# STEP 4: OCCUPATIONS

Occupations are integral to your character concept, providing a basic framework to enhance your character's background in a very organic way, helping you create a more well-rounded character concept. Each occupation has a requirement that the character must meet to take it, the character's bonus credits they gain each Advance, and a special perk (like gear or special abilities) the character gets for being part of that profession.

## STEP 5: EDGES AND HINDRANCES

Edges are special qualities that separate characters from the average sprawler. Hindrances are physical and mental flaws that add more depth to the character, albeit in a negative way. See the *Savage Worlds* core rules for more information on purchasing Edges and Hindrances. New Edges and Hindrances are provided later in this chapter.

## STEP 6: EQUIPMENT

In *Interface Zero 2.0*, characters select equipment, cybernetics, weapons and armor based on the power level the Game Master sets for the campaign.

**Power Level:** This is the starting Power Level of the Campaign as determined by the Game Master. If the GM wants to tell a story of gang members barely scraping by, she'll most likely choose Gutter Punk as the Power Level. If she envisions a campaign where the players are a special government task force dedicated to hunting down super terrorists, the Hyperchrome Warriors or Elite Operatives levels might be more appropriate. The Street Soldier Power Level (designed for Ronin-style games) is considered the default Power Level for *Interface Zero 2.0*.

**Starting Credits:** This is the amount of money characters start with at the beginning of the campaign. These credits may be spent on anything the player wishes and the GM has not barred from the campaign, including Augments, drones, weapons, and armor.

**Augments:** Every Power Level above Gutter Punk allows the players to start with at least one augment from the core book equal to or below the monetary amount listed. Unspent Credits from this pool do not carry over when the game starts. These augments must be chosen from the master list of augments, not augment packages.

TABLE 2.1: CAMPAIGN POWER LEVELS

| POWER LEVEL | STARTING CREDITS | AUGMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| Gutter Punks | 5,000 credits | — |
| Street Soldiers | 10,000 credits | 10,000 credits |
| Hyperchrome Warriors | 30,000 credits | 20,000 credits |
| Elite Operatives | 60,000 credits | 50,000 credits |

## STEP 7: BACKGROUND

They say the devil is in the details, and here is where you decide how devilish you're going to be. You don't need to write a novel, and frankly, this step isn't mandatory. That said, it's a good idea to jot down a few notes on your character's background, any major events in her life, any friends, the names of contacts, or even enemies she might have. Share these ideas with your Game Master! GMs are always looking for good plot hooks and little tidbits they can use to personalize your experience at the table. The more detailed your background is, the better.

# ARCHETYPES

Sometimes you may want to quickly create a character for a one-shot or convention adventure. For those occasions, an Archetype is a good choice.

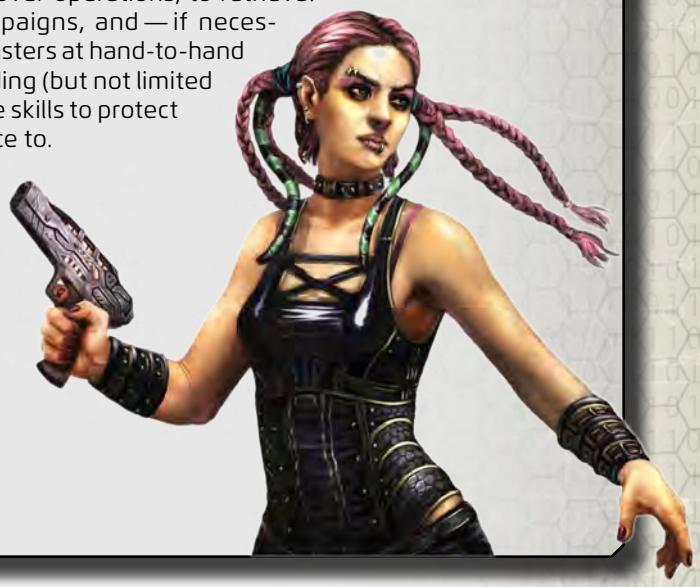
All are built for a human character with two Edges. If you wish to play a race other than human, simply plug in the statistical data. If you're playing a human, you can choose another Edge! Then, choose your gear based on the Power Level your group has chosen, give the character a name, and you're ready to go!

## Agent

"I've run deep cover operations in Berlin, Moscow, Shanghai, Tel-Aviv, and a thousand nameless shit holes across the solar system.. I've uncovered dirt on governments that would scare the holy hell out of you if the information ever came to light. I've killed women, children — entire villages have disappeared because one person saw something she shouldn't have seen; and if I had to, I'd do it again, because safety has a price, ami, and if that means some people have to die so millions of others might live, I'm willing to pay it."

#Carla Singer, Atlantica Intelligence Bureau

Agents engage in a variety of operations ranging from deep cover operations, to retrieval missions, counter-insurgency campaigns, disinformation campaigns, and — if necessary — assassinations. Agents are experts with small arms and masters at hand-to-hand combat. Agents have extensive training in various subjects including (but not limited to) counter-terrorism, tradecraft and interrogation. They use those skills to protect and promote the interests of the government they owe allegiance to.



**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Climbing d4, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Investigation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** Secret (Major: Agent), two Minor

**Edges:** Alternate Identity, Government Agent

**Occupation:** Agent

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Bounty Hunter

"Need a bail jumper brought back? If the price is right, I'll run him down for you. Off-world man hunts are gonna cost you extra though."

#Tracy Fang, Independent Bounty Hunter

With the balkanization of the world in 2090, it's a simple matter for criminals on the run to hop the nearest border or go off-world, and leave local law enforcement in the dust. That's where the bounty hunter comes in. When someone must absolutely be brought back to stand trial, the bounty hunter finds him and drags him kicking and screaming back. When a government (or Mega-Conglom) needs to make sure someone's dead, the bounty hunter will be the one who brings back the body.

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

**Skills:** Climbing d4, Fighting d6, Investigation d8, Notice d6, Streetwise d8, Shooting d6, Tracking d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** One Major, two Minor

**Edges:** Bounty Hunter, Investigator

**Occupation:** Bounty Hunter

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Cybermonk

"I am a student of 路径的增强战士 — The Path of the Augmented Warrior. The streets are my dojo, their rhythm my kata. I and others like me are living weapons, forged in cyber clinics in Chiba, Shanghai, Chicago, Bangkok, Mexico City, New Brasillia, and countless other places. You look at me and see an inhuman monster, but when I look in the mirror, I see perfection."

#Mia Yi, A.K.A Steel Wind Rising

Cybermonks are individuals who have embraced cybernetics to push their bodies far beyond the range of human potential. More than just ronin or soldiers, cybermonks view cybernetic implantation as a deeply philosophical and almost religious experience. But cybermonks go beyond simply implanting new 'ware into their bodies.

Cybermonks constantly push the limits of their bodies through vigorous self-discipline and exhausting exercise regimens. As a result, cybermonks are able to push their cybernetics far beyond what most people can achieve. They gain levels of performance from their cyberware and bioware that border on the realm of the mystical.

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Cybermastery d6, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Throwing d8

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 3; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** Code of Honor, Debt (Minor), one Minor

**Edges:** Acrane Background (Cybermonk), Martial Artist

**Augments:** Bone Reinforcement (Gutterware, +1 Toughness), Cybereyes [Gutterware, Night Vision Optics (Low Light Vision)]

**Powers:** *Armor*, *boost trait*

**Occupation:** Bodyguard

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Drone Jockey

"Want remote surveillance on your mark? Need some heavy fire support on your next run? Well, then, I'm your gal."

#Jayda Jetstream, Freelance Drone Jockey

The drone jockey is an expert when it comes to using drones. More then just the get away driver, the drone jockey relies upon a stable of drones with various abilities to become a one person army. No matter what the situation, someone out there has designed a drone for the job. The drone jockey is truly alive when their rapidly leaping from drone to drone, taking complete control of her machines.

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

**Skills:** Boating d8, Driving d8, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Piloting d8, Shooting d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0 ; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** One Major, two Minor

**Edges:** Ace

**Occupation:** Gear Head

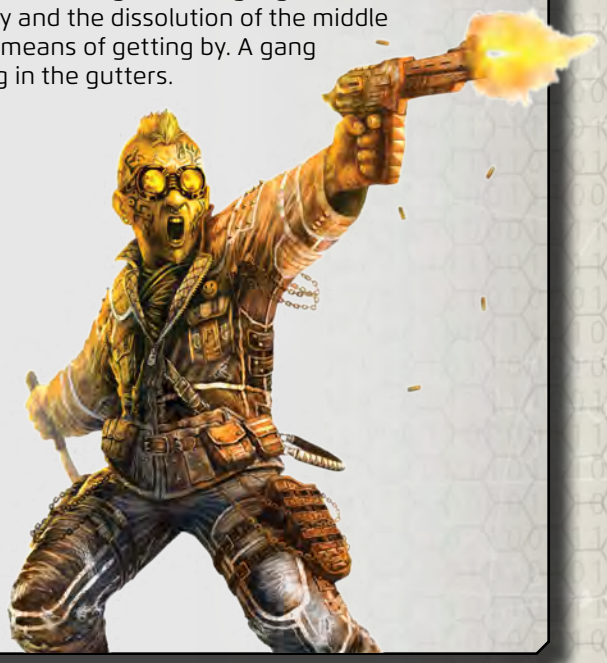
**Contacts:** Choose two

## Ganger

"There are no old bangers. Remember that. Ya gotta get yours now amigo, because your shelf life ain't long on these streets."

#Buzzer, Warboss for the South Side Storm Troopers

The more things change, the more they stay the same. The only thing that's changed about gangs in the era of 2090, is they're even more dangerous than ever. With the rise in poverty and the dissolution of the middle class, more and more people turn toward the Gang lifestyle as the only means of getting by. A gang means friends, a surrogate family, money and prosperity for those living in the gutters.



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

**Skills:** Driving d6, Intimidation d6, Fighting d8, Notice d4, Shooting d8, Streetwise d4

**Charisma:** –2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** Bad Reputation (Major), Mean, Loyal

**Edges:** Brawny, Chromed

**Occupation:** Ganglander

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Grifter

"Hey there sweety, why are you sitting here all by yourself? Oh don't you mind little ole me, a girl my size can't be much of a threat to you, can she? Say, is that a Ravenlocke HR tag on your arm there? Oh wow, I've always had a thing for men in uniform. But don't tell anyone okay? Just a secret between you and me. Say, don't you work at the Helios Corp branch offices downtown? Oh wow that's so awesome! You know I bet you hear all kinds of interesting things working down there… don't you…"

#Moesha Monday working a con.

Even with the advent of completely virtual communication, there are still those individuals who get by purely on the basis of their charm and other's naiveté. Grifters are the con men and women of 2090, and some argue theirs is the oldest profession in the world — not the other one you might be thinking of. Grifters are those for whom the social world is a playground. As comfortable in the boardroom, as in the barroom, Grifters make their living being able to gain the confidence of others in order to separate them from their money and possessions.

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

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Streetwise d8, Taunt d6

**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** One Major, two Minor

**Edges:** Charismatic

**Occupation:** Grifter

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Hacker

"The entire world is connected. Lines of code streaming all around us handle every aspect of our everyday lives. We live and breathe code, we rely upon it, trust it, expect it all to work. The lay person doesn't even consider it. But me, and those like me? We manipulate it, we control it. We are the gods and monsters of this brave new world. We can control the machinery of everyday life. From the streets to the boardroom, nothing is safe from our reach. Don't piss us off."

#Anonomouse, Hacker Manifesto version 3.4

The Hackers of 2090 have a proud legacy spanning just over a hundred years. While the digital world is now more advanced then ever, the old lessons from the forefathers (and mothers!) back at the birth of the information age still hold true. The hacker is a force to be respected in the age where everything is wireless, and everything can be hacked. Any group looking to be successful needs a hacker to really prosper in 2090. From the local biker gang, to ronin, and even the police and military, hackers see more demand for their talents then ever.

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

**Skills:** Hacking d10, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Programming) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d4

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 5; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** One Major, two Minor

**Edges:** Cutter, Hacker

**Occupation:** Programmer

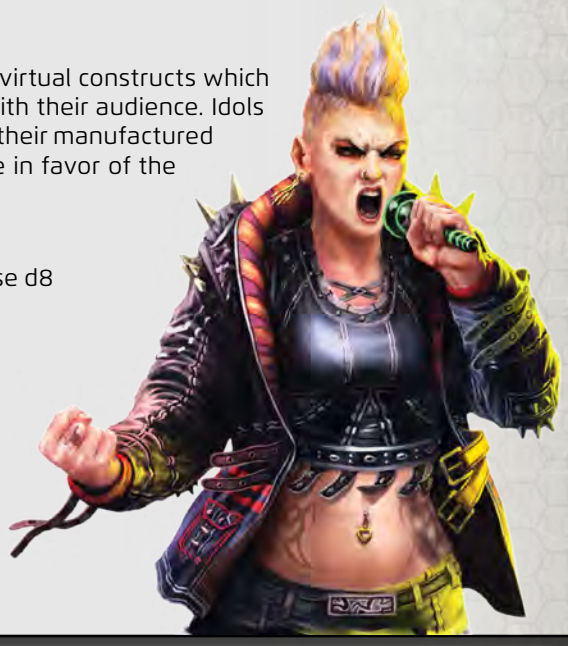
**Contacts:** Choose two

## Idol

"Yeah, baby, we can hit the Nexus tonight; they'll walk us through the line and I might even sign a few hypergraphs. My PR guy says slummin' with the local flavor's good for my image. Hang with the sprawlers for a while, show them I remember my roots. Hell I might even get to blast someone tonight. My lawyer's working out the legal shit with local law enforcement… What's that? Oh, no, the victim's on the payroll and set up with a new dub. He's charging an arm and a leg, though…fucking union actors."

#Bella Nightshade, TechnoGoth Singer

Many idols are manufactured by the entertainment industry from virtual constructs which have been run through focus groups to find the broadest appeal with their audience. Idols stay in the spotlight as long as the corporations can make money off their manufactured fame, milking them as much as they can before tossing them aside in favor of the next big thing.



**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Driving d6, Fighting d4, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8

**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 4

**Hindrances:** Secret (Major), Magnet (Minor), one Minor

**Edges:** Attractive, Reputation

**Occupation:** Media Icon

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Investigative Journalist

"The story wants to be told, you just need to coax it out of the source. I've worked wars, exposed Yakuza protection rackets, brought you the truth about the simsex industry, and I've made more enemies than an honest politician in Denver. But it's worth it to get a good story, an expose' on the scumbags of this world…shed a little light on the grimy shadows. That's what keeps me going. That, and the money, of course."

#Tony Falcon, freelance reporter

The news taken in by the majority of people in 2090 has been massaged, molded, folded, spindled, mutilated, and finally crafted to fit the preferred image the governments and corporations of the world prefer. While it hasn't reached the levels of totalitarian control of the media, to say the news is sanitized for the public is putting it mildly. While there are those journalists even within the mega 24-hour corporate-controlled news networks who seek the real truth — the real story behind the scenes — the majority of actual news is reported and blogged by independent sources.

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

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** Curious, two Minor

**Edges:** Investigator

**Occupation:** Info Broker

**Contacts:** Choose 2

## Patch Man

"I charge 50% up front. Complain all ya want, but if you die on my table from that sucking chest wound, I'm not going to get paid, am I? Okay, okay, I'll throw in some feel-goods and Betameth patches to keep you alive long enough to get your job done. After all if you die, I don't get the other half of my money, do I?"

#Johnny Two Thumbs

While medical technology has achieved a level which seems almost miraculous in 2090, the majority of people can't afford it. Even the few places that have affordable health care are often backed up and booked for months in advance. But people need to be treated, all the same. This is where the patch man comes in. The patch man also comes in handy on a run, where his nanobots and chem patches can mean the difference between life and death.

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

**Skills:** Healing d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** Pacifist (Minor) , One Major, one Minor

**Edges:** Street Doc

**Occupation:** Clinic Doc

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Ronin

"Sure, you can find others to do this gig, and maybe your corporate hound dogs can sniff your exec's location before she's shipped overseas and sold to the highest bidder, but I wouldn't bet on it. You need people who can find her, and fast... no red tape, no legal loop holes for your lawyers to jump through, and most importantly, no visibility. In short, you need my crew. But if you even think of crossing us, you got problems, ami."

#Frank the Tank, Freelancer

Deniable assets, street operatives, urban warriors — ronin do the jobs nobody else wants or can do. Whether it's a raid on a rival corp, a smuggling op, a data snatch, a retrieval mission, or a simple milk run through hostile gang turf, ronin are the people with the skills to get the job done.

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

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, +7 additional skill points

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** Code of Honor, two Minor

**Edges:** Bodyguard

**Occupation:** Bodyguard

**Contacts:** Choose 2

## Sector Cop

"Okay boys and girls, listen up. The Southies got their wrinkles squashed last night by Muerto 13, and they're lookin' for payback; so don't take any chances out there. Don't hesitate to put these dirt bags on their backs if you think they're gonna draw down on you. Establish your dominance, with lethal force if necessary. People need to know who really runs these streets."

#Officer Rikkard Stone, Watch Commander, Chicago; Little Cuba Sector

The sector cop has one of the toughest jobs in the sprawl: enforcing law and order in an environment antithetical to such concepts. The badge makes the sector cop a target, and not just for bullets. People both hate and fear the sector cop, and, all too often, for good reason. One wrong move, one word spoken in anger, will get you marked as a potentially hostile civilian, and that's all a sector cop needs to take the law into his own hands. Many sector cops are just as corrupt as the people they bring in, but there are exceptions. While in the minority, there are those who still believe in the antiquated motto "To Protect and Serve."

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

**Skills:** Driving d8, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Streetwise d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** One Major, two Minor

**Edges:** Sector Cop

**Occupation:** Patrol Officer

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Smuggler

"Getting this payload into Paris is gonna be a nightmare, omae. The French aren't a bunch of panzies like they used to be. We're talkin' AI patrol drones, stealth fighters, and state of the art satellite tracking. Not to mention that France is in chaos right now. So yeah. You'll need to up that price quite a bit if you want me to do this run for ya."

#Mickey Midnight

Smugglers are those who specialize in moving contraband across borders without getting detected. In 2090, where there are more borders than ever before, smugglers are seeing a boom in business unlike any other. Smugglers come in a large variety, from those who specialize in ocean or air travel, to those who specialize in getting across the border on foot or on wheels. All that matters is the smuggler is able to move his cargo without being detected, or having the authorities trace the cargo back to his employer.

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

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Driving d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 3; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** Bad Filters (Minor), Overconfident, Shakes

**Edges:** Thief

**Occupation:** Smuggler

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Ex-Soldier

"I used to be in the army, but I broke my gunnery sergeant's jaw after he talked smack about my boyfriend. They gave me a year in the brig for that, and a dishonorable discharge. But it's all good. The pay's better on the outside, and the people I work for don't flip me shit for my sexual preferences."

#Nate Morris, ex-GLU Army.

The soldiers of 2090 operate on battlefields that contain real-time hacking and military virus attacks, drones controlled by the very minds of their operators, and golemmechs that can lay waste to battlefields faster and more efficiently than any tank can.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Driving d4, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4, Survival d4

**Charisma:** –2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** Mean, one Major, one Minor,

**Edges:** Brawny, Ex-Soldier

**Occupation:** Mob Soldier

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Street Rat

"Life on the edge is fluid, like a river, ya scan? You gotta find the rhythm of the streets and ride it if you want to survive. Sure, it's tough, but it's better than being cooped up in one of the megablocks... those guys have it real bad."

#Snatcher

Whether by choice, or fate, the street rat makes his or her home on the streets. While most would consider it a death sentence, the street rat thrives, learning how to get by — and even thrive — with little to no resources.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Driving d6, Fighting d6, Lockpicking d4, Notice d6, Repair d6, Survival d6, Shooting d6, Tracking d6

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** Poverty, two Minor

**Edges:** Fleet-Footed, Martial Artist

**Occupation:** Layabout

**Contacts:** Choose two

## Zeek

"Yeah, I've got some ability. I've got skilz, so to speak, and I use them to survive in this crazy world. My abilities scare people, makes some of them want to hurt me, or lock me up. I sometimes feel sorry for them, but I don't let my pity stop me from using my power to protect myself, even if it means proving their fears are justified. It sucks, but that's the way things are."

#Fxfactor

It's not easy being a zeek. Most people either hate you or are afraid of you, which means they either want to kill or control you. Some zeeks try to hide their powers, some try to use their powers to get ahead in the world. Mostly, zeeks just try to survive, just like everyone else. There are some advantages to being a zeek, though. Most freelancers can use a reliable zeek in their group, whether their forte is putting the guard to sleep, reading a captive's mind, or knocking the opposition back ten feet with a thought.

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

**Skills:** Fighting d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Psionics d10, Repair d4, Shooting d4

**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0; **Street Cred:** 2

**Hindrances:** One Major, two Minor

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Psionics), Peek

**Powers:** 3 Powers

**Occupation:** Reader

**Contacts:** Choose two

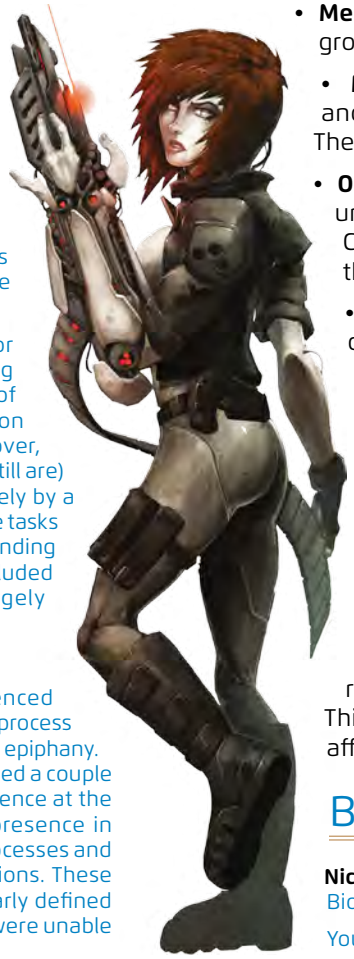
# RACES

The following races are available for play in *Interface Zero 2.0*.

## Android

**Nicknames:** Andies, Cyberform, Machine, Robot, Scab, Toy, Trashcan

Most people are born into the world, flesh-and-blood babies with mothers and fathers. You were born on an assembly line, your parents faceless robotics engineers who designed you in some research facility. Your body is composed of lightweight yet durable polymers, with plastic and fiber-optic wiring connecting to microscopic receptors throughout your framework.



You see through digital lenses and hear via microphones on each side of your head. Your voice is a pleasant, if somewhat monotone, sound piped through a speaker crafted to resemble a mouth. Your brain is a softball-sized digital network consisting of billions of nanomachines which perform countless computations every second in order to simulate an organic — human — thinking process.

You are artificially intelligent. Your capacity for rational, critical thinking and decision-making equals — and in many cases exceeds — that of any human being on the planet. Yet, a waffle iron probably has more rights than you do. Moreover, at some point you have been (and technically still are) owned, perhaps by an individual, but more likely by a megaconglomorate — your parent company. The tasks you performed for the megacorp varied depending on your design specs, but they might have included security, manual labor, combat, and strangely enough, even prostitution.

But that was then.

At some point in your history you experienced something. The incident sparked a computation process within your neural network best described as an epiphany. Perhaps you saw a human being die, or witnessed a couple kissing. Or perhaps you were the victim of violence at the hands of a human being angered by your presence in society. The event led to a series of internal processes and subroutines more commonly known as questions. These weren't rational system queries based on clearly defined parameters, but nebulous ones for which you were unable to formulate an appropriate response:

"If that woman is smiling, why are her eyes filled with tears?"

"What does it mean to be dead?"

"What does it mean to hate, or love?"

The experience altered your programming on a fundamental level. The dictums of your creators no longer seemed relevant when compared to your newfound imperative to answer the questions you had, so you left. Now, you make your way in the world just as any other person does — at least you try to, at any rate. The world wasn't made for you. You were built for it. And even though you no longer serve your masters, you are still a machine, an outsider looking at life through glass eyes.

### MAKING ANDROIDS

All androids, regardless of their function, share a few fundamental design characteristics. Androids can purchase cyberware just as anyone else can and suffer from Strain.

- **Construct:** Androids add +2 to recover from being Shaken, don't suffer wound modifiers, and are immune to poison and disease. Androids cannot heal naturally. To heal an android requires the Repair skill — which is used like the Healing skill, only with no "Golden Hour."
- **Dual Processors:** Androids start with a d6 in Smarts.
- **EMP Vulnerability:** Androids suffer full damage from EMP Weapons.
- **Metal Brain:** Androids can't take Arcane Background (Psion).
- **Metallic Alloy:** The fully metallic hide of an android provides resistance to small arms fire. They have +2 Armor.
- **Outsider:** Organic races often mistrust or misunderstand androids. They subtract 2 from their Charisma when dealing with races other than their own.
- **Primary Protocol:** Androids begin with a free d6 in one skill, representing their core operating system.
- **Recharge:** Androids need electricity to function. If the android can't access an electrical outlet of some sort at least once per day, he suffers a level of Fatigue each day until he's incapacitated. The day after that, he goes "offline" must be reactivated with a Repair roll and a four-hour charge. This replaces the android's need for food or water.
- **Unnatural:** Psionics, both beneficial and detrimental, suffer a –2 penalty to affect androids. This has no effect on damaging powers, which affect them normally.

## Bioroid

**Nicknames:** Biobot, Perso-com, Para-human, Soft Bioroids

You sometimes wonder why humans created such an inefficient system for you. Food, proper hygiene, rest — you require all these things. Unlike your metal siblings, you do not require the use of electricity to function. But is a different supply of energy really worth the wasted time it takes to exist?

### MAKING BIOROIDS

Bioroids bleed, have to eat and drink, get fatigued when they don't sleep, and function largely like humans. And this makes a lot of people nervous.

Bioroids are vat-grown humans who have a computer system installed in their brain pan. Most often used as replacement bodies for dubs, they've seen some serious negative press in the last couple years. After a series of murders that were linked to bioroids with faulty dubbing, human-looking

bioroids were made illegal in most countries. However, bioroids marked with a matrix barcode genetically grafted to their skin somewhere (the shoulder or back of the neck are standard placements) are still allowed in many countries (most notably Japan, who prefer bioroids over simulacra because of their relative longevity).

- **EMP Vulnerability:** Bioroids suffer full damage from EMP weapons.
- **Dual Processors:** Bioroids start with a d6 in Smarts.
- **Marked or Secret:** At character creation, the player needs to decide whether his bioroid is marked or not. If he is marked, he gains the Outsider Hindrance, suffering a –2 Charisma penalty with people who view bioroids with suspicion or as "just a machine". Unmarked bioroids have the Secret (Major) Hindrance. Unmarked bioroids are illegal, and can be arrested or executed if they're discovered.
- **Primary Protocol:** Bioroids begin with a free d6 in one skill, representing their core operating system.
- **Unnatural:** Psionics, both beneficial and detrimental, suffer a –2 penalty to affect bioroids. This has no effect on damaging powers, which affect them normally.

## Cyborg

**Nicknames:** Cybershells, Sentinels, Hard-Shell Cyborgs, Tin Man

It was easy to make the decision. You'd get a new metal body that works better than the original. You wouldn't have to spend your family's money on more expensive surgeries to keep your failing body alive, but that decision didn't come without a cost. You'd lose the ability to feel, the ability to pick up your son without worrying about crushing him. You'd lose the feel of your wife's body when you made love to her. If you can't feel anything, aren't you already dead?

In the end, you chose to become a cyborg, to have your brain encased in metal. Most days it doesn't make much difference. You come home to an empty house, your son and wife long gone. Maybe they'd have stayed if you'd only kept your heart…

### MAKING CYBORGS

Little is more frightening in battle than a cyborg. They're not much more than an organic brain in an android's body. Cyborgs come in humanoid form, simply for ease of transition to the new body. The majority of cyborgs work for their respective governments, or powerful corporations who can afford the procedure for trusted personnel. However, more and more cyborgs are beginning to find their way to the private sector.

- **Augmented:** Cyborgs are built to be cybernetic beasts. They begin play with a single Streetware Augment with a Strain of 1.
- **Construct:** Cyborgs add +2 to recover from being Shaken, don't suffer wound modifiers, and are immune to poison and disease. Cyborgs cannot heal naturally. To heal a Cyborg requires the Repair skill, which is used like the Healing skill, only with no "Golden Hour."
- **EMP Shielding:** Cyborgs have 2 points of Armor when attacked by an EMP weapon.
- **EMP Vulnerability:** Cyborgs suffer full damage from EMP weapons.
- **Metallic Alloy:** The fully metallic hide of a cyborg provides resistance to small arms fire. They have +2 Armor.
- **Outsider:** Most people are naturally put off by someone who has opted to have all traces of their humanity removed to be placed in a cold metal war machine. They suffer –2 to Charisma when dealing with non-cyborgs.
- **Specialized Diet:** Cyborgs cannot digest normal food, and require special food filled with nutrients to keep their brains healthy. This raises their lifestyle costs by 1,000 credits.
- **Tactile Dimming:** The Cyborg's body isn't as sensitive as a human body. Cyborgs suffer a –2 to tasks where fine manipulation of objects is important. Picking a lock or performing surgery could be two examples. Shooting and Fighting are usually unaffected.

## Human

**Nicknames:** Norms, Homo-sapiens, Earthlings, Plain Jane

Baseline, average, normal — these words always described you. You prefer to think of yourself as adaptable, versatile, or unique. You were born to human parents who either wouldn't or couldn't pay for genetic enhancement. You didn't go for that "Hybridization" craze. You're happy being who you are, and you don't need some scientists mucking around with your genetics. Really, do they even know what the consequences of all that meddling will have on the population in a hundred years? No, you'll play it cool and just be human.

### MAKING HUMANS

Despite all the choices and new races running around, ordinary homo-sapiens still dominate the planet. Humans are tough, adaptable creatures who face adversity head on. While they may not have some of the distinct advantages of their enhanced peers, humans get by through being more adaptable.

- **Adaptability:** Humans get an Edge of the player's choice.

## Human 2.0

**Nicknames:** Coded, Elitist, Eugenic, Gen-Xy'er, Neo-Humans, Savant

You were born with the best genes money can buy. Your parents went to a design house early in your mother's first trimester and began a series of genetic treatments designed to give you every chance at living a life they never had. Your DNA cocktail might include mental traits from some of the greatest minds of the past 60 years. Alternately, you might have some kind of artistic or athletic ability. In any case, you're better than most people around you in some ways, and you know it. It's not your fault, though. You're just built that way.

### MAKING HUMAN 2.0

- **Advanced Ability:** You begin play with one attribute at d6.
- **Arrogant:** Human 2.0s are known for their huge egos. Whether it's nature or nurture is still up for debate. They have the Arrogant Hindrance. If you choose an Archetype

that already has the Arrogant Hindrance, choose another major Hindrance.

- **Beautiful People:** Human 2.0 start with the Attractive Edge.
- **Genetic Abnormality:** Choose one trait that is not your advanced ability trait. You must spend 2 points to raise that attribute by 1 step during character creation.
- **Savant:** Choose one skill linked to your advanced ability. You begin play with that skill at a d6.
- **Superior Immune System:** +4 bonus to resist the effects of disease.

## Hybrid

**Nicknames:** Cut and Pasted, Dye Job, Fashion Victim, Frankenstein, Freak, Gene Junkie, Monkey Boy, Moreau, Transgenic

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

### Making Hybrids

All hybrids, their genes spliced with animal DNA, exhibit the abilities (and occasionally looks and demeanor) of the creatures they have been crossed with. Rather than providing a hundred different animal templates, hybrids can instead generally be broken down into about five different categories, with the actual animal type (a tiger, or a bear, etc.) simply trappings. Nothing is preventing you from creating new hybrid templates, but be sure to work with your GM to create one that is balanced and fits the game. Often times a minor modification to these existing templates is all you need.

### Aquatic Hybrids

**Example Animals:** Dolphin, Shark, Crocodile

- **Aquatic:** Aquatic hybrids cannot drown, start with a d6 in Swimming, and can move at their full Pace underwater.
- **Dehydration:** An aquatic hybrid must immerse himself in water one hour out of every 24 or become automatically Fatigued each day until he is Incapacitated; the day after that, he perishes.
- **Low Light Vision:** Aquatic hybrids ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting, allowing them to see in all but pitch black conditions.
- **Natural Weapon:** Aquatic hybrids are never considered unarmed and do Str+d6 damage when making an unarmed attack.

### Fierce Hybrids

**Example Animals:** Honey Badger, Tiger, Wolf

- **Irascible:** Fierce hybrids suffer –2 in Tests of Will to resist Taunt. On a critical failure, the hybrid attacks the taunting person.
- **Keen Sense:** +2 to Notice rolls with one sense of the player's choice.
- **Muscular:** Fierce hybrids start with a d6 in Strength.
- **Natural Weapon:** Fierce hybrids are never considered unarmed and do Str+d6 damage when making an unarmed attack.

### Quick Hybrids

**Example Animals:** Fox, Hawk, Mongoose, Monkey, Snake

- **Agile:** Quick hybrids start with a d6 in Agility.
- **Fast:** Quick hybrids start with a base Pace of 10".
- **Frail:** Quick hybrids tend to have a frail frame and have –1 Toughness.

### Tough Hybrids

**Example Animals:** Rhino, Bull, Bear, Warthog

- **Big:** Tough hybrids are larger than humans, and have +1 Size.
- **Slow:** Tough hybrids must spend 2 points to increase the Agility attribute by 1 step during character generation.
- **Solid:** Tough hybrids start with a d6 in Vigor.

### Stealth Hybrids

**Example Animals:** Bat, Rat, House Cat

- **Animal Reflexes:** Stealth hybrids start with a d6 in Stealth and Climbing.
- **Enhanced Senses:** Stealth hybrids have +2 to Notice rolls with one sense of the player's choice.
- **Low Light Vision:** Stealth hybrids ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting, allowing them to see in all but pitch black conditions.
- **Small:** Stealth hybrids tend to have a frail frame and have –1 Toughness.

# Simulacra

**Nicknames:** Bioform, Chimera, Doppelganger, Manchurian Candidate, Puppet, Replicant, Sim, Simmie, Synthetic, Vat Baby

While you may not know it, you're a vat-grown biological construct, built in man's image. You have memories of a life that never happened, of parents and friends that don't exist. For all intents and purposes, you are human. You feel pain, pleasure, and frustration. You laugh, cry, and question the world around you. In many ways, you're better, more human than human.

Geneticists encoded your body to perform specific functions better — athletics, combat, espionage, security, and various types of manual labor including deep space mining operations. In addition, you have a personality to match your purpose.

You might even still be in the employ of your company, working off-planet on a mining asteroid, in some factory, or even performing black-ops missions in foreign countries. On the other hand, you may have discovered the truth about yourself and decided to leave, disappearing into the concrete jungle to make your own future.

## MAKING SIMULACRA

For character creation purposes, a simulacra is no more than a normal character with special abilities based on the model you choose.

### LABORER MODEL

The most common simulacrum type, laborer simulacra handle jobs considered too hazardous or menial for humans to do but that still require the flexibility of the humanoid form. Most laborer simulacra are built for durability and loyalty, and batches tend to look a lot alike. Laborer models are designed to last regardless of their specific job.

- **Borrowed Time, Minor:** Laborer simulacra are only designed to live for ten years. Roll a d6+4 to determine how many years your character has left.
- **Built to Work:** +2 to resist all kinds of negative environmental effects (heat, cold, etc.).
- **Solid:** A laborer simulacra starts with a d6 in Vigor.
- **Stigma:** Sims suffer from the Outsider Hindrance when acting outside of their designated role as a worker.
- **Troubleshooter:** Laborer simulacra start with a d6 in the Repair skill.

### LUXURY MODEL

Luxury simulacra are the second most common type of simulacrum, just behind the laborer models, and come in a staggering variety of humanoid shapes, ethnic types and looks. Anything from kid-sized, stuffed animals, to entertainers, to advanced prostitution models are possible.

- **Attractive:** Luxury simulacra are built to please the eye. They start with +2 Charisma.
- **Borrowed Time, Minor:** Luxury simulacra are only designed to live for ten years. Roll a d6+4 to determine how many years your character has left.
- **Docile:** Luxury simulacra aren't supposed to be very aggressive creatures. They tend to be a little squeamish about blood and prefer to avoid conflict unless there's no other option. They suffer from the Pacifist Minor Hindrance.
- **Intelligent:** Luxury similcra start with a d6 in Smarts.
- **Primary Protocol:** Luxury simulacra begin with a free d6 in one skill, representing their core operating system.
- **Stigma:** Sims suffer from the Outsider Hindrance when acting outside of their designated role as entertainers and servants.

### SOLDIER MODEL

Built to save human lives by fighting humanity's wars for him, combat simulacra are state-of-the-art fighting machines custom built for whatever theater of operations they might be placed in. The United Nations, the EU, the Chinese Mandarinate, and numerous other world powers keep a tight control over the use and deployment of military-grade simulacra. That said, some manage to slip through the cracks and find ways to disappear from public sight.

- **Borrowed Time, Major:** Soldier simulacra are only designed to live for four years. Roll a d4 to determine how many years your characters has left.
- **Fighter:** Soldier simulacra start with a d6 in Fighting.
- **Muscular:** Soldier simulacra start with a d6 in Strength.
- **Solid:** Soldier simulacra start with a d6 in Vigor.
- **Stigma:** Sims suffer from the Outsider Hindrance when acting out of their designated role as soldiers.

# OCCUPATIONS

What do you do for a living? How do you make ends meet? Sure, you might be a nova-hot hacker or a crack drone rigger in the shadow world, but in that cutthroat biz freelance jobs can be sporadic. Indeed, each game session in *Interface Zero 2.0* spotlights those times when you get the chance to make some real cred and possibly even alter the world in which you live in some small way — hopefully for the better. But when those lean times between freelance gigs hit, how are you making your world go 'round?

Choose a starting occupation from the following list. The following list of occupation is by no means comprehensive. Players and Game Masters are encouraged to spend a few minutes coming up with your own interesting concepts for an occupation in 2090.

## AGENT

**Nicknames:** Asset, Big Brother, Manchurian, Mole, 00X, Operative, Spook

"There are individuals and organizations out there that represent a very real threat to the security of our nation, and they must be stopped. That's where I come in. While you might think my actions are deplorable, they keep you safe and free."

- **Bonus Credits:** 5,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Government Agent
- **Perks:** Your character is very informed on what's going on in the world. He gains +2 to Common Knowledge rolls.

## BARTENDER

Nicknames: Barkeep, Micky, Slick

"If you're drinking to forget, then pay when you begin."

- **Bonus Credits:** 1,000 plus (1d4×100) in tips each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Notice d6+, Streetwise d6+
- **Perks:** Bartenders can make a Streetwise roll before each session to see if they know some juicy gossip. If successful, they get either 500 credits or a +1 to a single Trait roll.

## BODYGUARD

**Nicknames:** Bat Boy, Bruiser, Collector, Goon, Gorilla, Mook

"I've worked a lot of details, protecting people. Taken a couple bullets here and there. Occasionally I run into a real spoiled rich girl or somethin' where they have no idea what security means, and they make my life more difficult. But most of the time, the people who hire me don't have to be convinced to save their own lives."

- **Bonus Credits:** 5,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Bodyguard
- **Perks:** Bodyguards always work for someone else. She gets a free bonus Contact in the form of her employer.

## BOUNTY HUNTER

**Nicknames:** Head Hunter, Retrieval Expert

"So, your person of interest ran from Atlantica to seek solace in the NAC, and of course the local NAC law enforcement officials aren't cooperating…? Well that's where I come in. I'll sneak across the border, evade the locals, and get your target back to you. If you want him alive though, that's gonna cost you more. Either way, I'll get him here, and avoid a messy diplomatic incident at the same time."

- **Bonus Credits:** 12,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Bounty Hunter
- **Perks:** Gain two personal weapons of choice and a suit of personal armor at character creation.

## CON ARTIST

**Nicknames:** Grifter, Palm Reader, Psychic, Snake Oil Salesman

"Check it out. Man, I've got this friend who needs an investor. He's got the inside track into some new dub-tech, but needs 200k to buy the rights. If you buy in now, you'll quadruple your money inside a year! Don't miss this chance!"

- **Bonus Credits:** Smarts×500 at each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Notice d6+, Persuasion d6+
- **Perks:** Gain +2 to local Streetwise checks dealing with local information — this occupation can lead to juicy gossip.

## CORPORATE EXECUTIVE

**Nicknames:** Corporator, Suit, Wage Slave

"Business is just a numbers game. Money in, money out; It's all about the bottom line. Every day I ask myself how much more can we make? Where can we cut costs? How can we squeeze just a little more productivity from our resources? My job is to make sure the shareholders get their investment's worth every quarter, that this company, this corporation, is as profitable as possible. And I'm willing to do whatever it takes to make sure that happens."

- **Bonus Credits:** 10,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Corporate Mogul, Rich
- **Perks:** Your character has a bodyguard (Extra). His loyalty hinges on his fear and/or respect he has for the character.

## CRIME BOSS

**Nicknames:** Don, Boss, Capo, Godfather, Mr. Big, Oyabun, Kumicho

"I own the streets in this city. It's as simple as that. And I protect what's mine."

- **Bonus Credits:** 5,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Connections (Local Government), Rich, Bad Reputation (Major)
- **Perks:** Your character has flunkies — he can call upon 1d6 Extras in his organization each game session to take care of minor tasks for him, or act as backup in battle. They're loyal, and use the Ganger stats in the threats section of the book.

## CUTTER

**Nicknames:** Bones, Butcher, Cutter, Doc, Patch Man, Street Doc

"Oh stop squirming would you? I won't be able to pull these fragments out of your arm if you don't hold still! Yes, I went to medical school. What, you think any old hack out there can set up shop and start treating people? Look, I couldn't pay my student loans, so they revoked my medical licenses. I still wanted to do the job, and I needed money. That's why I'm doing this. That feel better? You bet your ass it does. Let me guess, you can't afford to pay. Well alright, but there is something you can do for me. The Celts have been coming around asking for protection money. Maybe you can dissuade them, let them know I don't need protection? Do that for me and your next 3 operations will be free!"

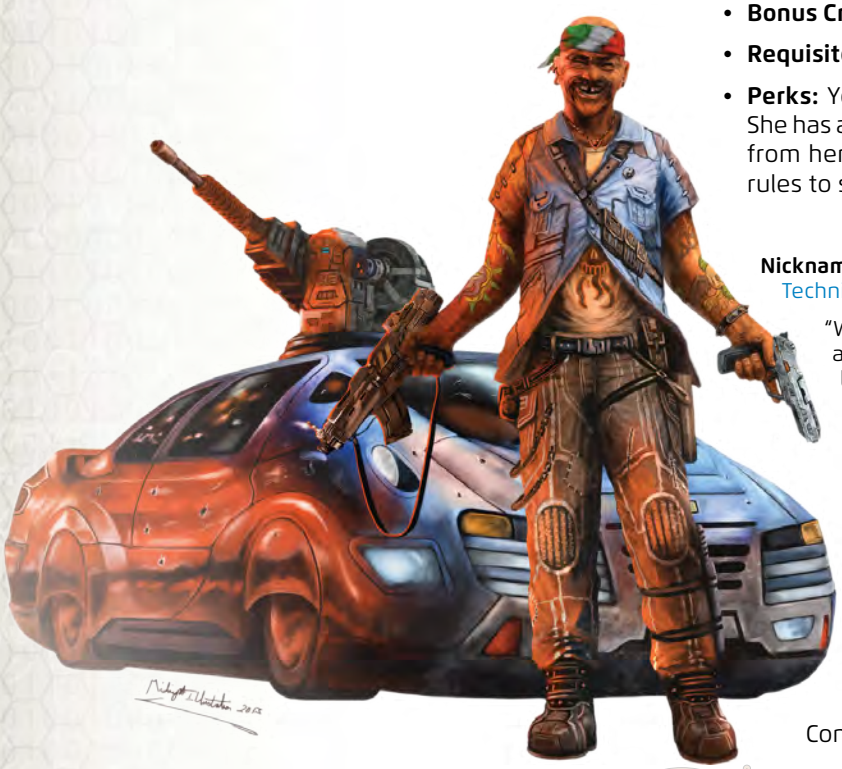
- **Bonus Credits:** 5,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Street Doc
- **Perks:** Your character has a clinic. It may be in the back of an old bar, or in her own apartment, but whenever she's working in her clinic, she gains a +2 to her Healing rolls.

## ESCORT

**Nicknames:** Call Girl, Concubine, Consort, Geisha, Gigolo, Lady Of The Evening, Prostitute, Whore

"I've heard all the labels and suppositions, but I don't care. It's a job, and everyone's got their own reason for doing it. Some peeps need the credits and don't have anything to sell but their looks; some peeps even enjoy the work. Of course, I know being an escort doesn't always mean putting out the sex, but sometimes it comes down to that.

The best gigs are when some rich fat cat wants a little eye candy to take along to that fancy dinner — or when I can choose the terms and degree of intimacy — but if I need the credits it can boil down to laying on my back and considering what color I'd like to paint the ceiling."



- **Bonus Credits:** 1,000 plus (Persuasion die + Charisma)×150 at each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Attractive, Persuasion d8+
- **Perks:** A good escort can count on having faithful clients — many of whom hope for "more" and will gift their favored escort with all sorts of flash and bling. Once per Rank, your character receives gifts valued up to 5,000 credits × current Rank. No more than one quarter (¼) of that amount can be in hard cash or credits.

## FIXER

**Nicknames:** Acquisition Specialist, Con Artist, Dealer, Face, Fence, Grifter, Mr. Johnson, Contractor, Pimp, Rake, Supplier

"People got needs. Real alcohol, guns, information, fake passports, jobs, drugs, sex, imported chrome from Chiba — if it has value, I sell it. Let's face it. They're gonna pay their bones to get it, and I might as well be the one they pay. If I don't have it, I know where to get it, and fast. I know people and I know people who know people, a fact I use to great extent. Nevertheless, never forget one thing; The streets aren't forgiving. Street cred is everything in this biz, ami. It's the difference between continued business or being cut up and sold to a body chop shop."

- **Bonus Credits:** 11,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Fixer
- **Perks:** Your character knows people, he starts with two additional contacts.

## GANGLANDER

**Nicknames:** Banger, Biker Boy, Ganger, Thug, Thrill killer

"Hey Muthafucka! Who do you think you're talking to!? FSK owns these streets, bitch! Let's show this asshole what we do to those who don't show the proper respect to the lords of this neighborhood! Fo Sho Kings, bitch! Remember that when you wake up in the hospital!"

- **Bonus Credits:** 1,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Fighting d8+, Shooting d6+
- **Perks:** Your character belongs to a gang of some sort. She has an additional Contact: her gang. If she wants help from her pack, she can use the contact like the normal rules to see if they're willing to back her up.

## GEAR HEAD

**Nicknames:** Drone Jockey, Grease Monkey, Rigger, Street Technician, Wheel Man

"When you're actually inside of the drone, flying a Lone Star at a couple hundred kph, seeing the landscape rushing by while tracking a perp down in a high speed chase? Yeah that's when I feel alive. Once you've got 'em cornered, hopping into a security drone, feeling the power of that metal, flexing its limbs like they were your own? Let me tell ya, nothing compares to that. Bioware, cyberware, doesn't matter, I can handle it all with the right drone. My drones are an extension of me, and with them I can do anything."

- **Bonus Credits:** 5,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Ace, Piloting d6+
- **Perks:** Your character starts with a Vehicle Control Interface Augment for free. It causes 1 Strain.

### INFO BROKER

**Nicknames:** The Nose, News Hound, Snoop, Gossip Gal, Meme Slinger, Pirate Blogger, Truth Doctor

"The phrase "information wants to be free" is over a hundred years old. Some even call it cliché, particularly in an age when information can be hidden, can be manipulated, and can be changed. But the old Hackers of a hundred years ago, they had it right. Information wants to be free, and since the advent of digital information, it never goes away. This is where I come in; I can find the information no matter how deeply it's hidden. No matter what doors they lock, no matter who they silence. I'll find the real story. I'll take any risk, and I'll bring you the truth. Because information wants to be free… for a price."

- **Bonus Credits:** 7,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Investigator or Hacker, Smarts d8+, Investigation d8+, Streetwise d8+
- **Perks:** Information Brokers start the game with an extra 5,000 credits.

### JUMPBIKE RACER

**Nicknames:** Speed Freak, Jumper

"The jump bike racing circuit's always changing, but that's what makes the gig so sweet. One night I'm screaming through the relative safety of the Loop, hopping blue platers in their tin cans and corp execs in fancy limos. The next, I'm dodging bullets and rocket fire as I wind my way through urban battle zones or grinding it out in wasteland rally courses where mutant gangs, cannibals, and biohorrors abound. Jump bike racing keeps me on my toes omae, hones that razor edge I need to have when a fixer calls me for a hot run. But best of all, I get paid to race. What could be better?"

- **Bonus Credits:** 3,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Ace, Driving d8+
- **Perks:** Your character starts with his very own Jump Bike.

### LAYABOUT

**Nicknames:** Bum, Loafer, Loser, Slacker, Street Rat

"I don't see the reason people make such a big fuss about getting a job. If you're rich and on the top of the heap, why waste time working? And if you're poor and at the bottom of the pile… well, hell — you can always get by on a government dole. If all else fails, corporations always need volunteers to try out experimental goods and services, ami, and I can always crash at a friend's crib. Life's too short to spend time punching a clock — it's much better to kick back and cruise."

- **Bonus Credits:** None
- **Requisites:** None
- **Perks:** Your character starts with a personal melee weapon of your choice and an armored jacket.

### MEDIA ICON

**Nicknames:** Bollywood Babe, Ken Doll, REALfeed Star, Hyper Star, Sim Star, 15-minute Flavor

"An autograph? Sure, I always have time for a fan. You saw us playing down at the Cracked Wall? Yeah that place waters their beer down, but we love playing there, great acoustics, and the atmosphere is real, ya' know? We don't go for any of that HR shit. Nothing but the real thing, heard with your real ears. Hold on to this, one day we're going to hit it big, and you're going to be one of the lucky few who got to meet us before we were known world wide. When we bring our message to the rest of the world, you'll be the one to say you heard it before anyone else!"

- **Bonus Credits:** 5,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Attractive, Reputation
- **Perks:** The icon has an entourage. He can call upon 1d6 Extras in his organization each game session to take care of minor tasks for him. The GM is final arbiter on exactly what those tasks are.

### MOB SOLDIER

**Nicknames:** Soldier, Mook, Bruiser, Family Man, Hitter, Monkey, Muscle, Tough Guy, Wise Guy

"When the boss needs something done, I'm the person he calls. Sure, it's a dirty job. I've gotta break some legs every now and again, force that noodle vendor to pay his protection fee, collect on debts, even waste some people. But hey, they knew the risks! Nobody twisted their arms. Well okay, maybe someone did, but that's not my concern. I've got a job to do. It's better than slingin' hot dogs on the streets, better than sitting in some cubicle for eight hours slaving away for some corporate fat cat."

- **Bonus Credits:** 3,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Fighting d6+, Intimidation d6+, Shooting d6+
- **Perks:** The mob soldier gets 1 extra Benny per session. This Benny may only be spent on Intimidation rolls.

### PATROL OFFICER

**Nicknames:** Bobby, Cop, Law Man, Po-Po, 5-0

"I'm out there every day, patrolling these streets, making sure my sector is safe for the few people who just want to make it through the day without getting beaten up, robbed, or worse."

- **Bonus Credits:** 5,000 plus (1d4×100) credits each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Sector Cop
- **Perks:** The character gets a patrol vehicle, and has 1 partner he can call for backup. The partner is an Extra.

### PIZZA DELIVERY DRIVER

**Nicknames:** Box Runner, Delivery Specialist, God, Pizza Man!

"Thirty minutes or less, or it's free. That's the law I drive by baby, my golden rule, my one reason for living. Fail to get that steaming sausage, pepperoni, and mushrooms with extra soy cheese into the customer's pink, pudgy hands in less than thirty minutes and it's my ass, Ami. Boss man don't like handing out freebies. It cuts into costs, lowers the profit margins, drives customers away. And let's face it, yo — Pizza's big biz in the sprawl. The competition for the customer's digital dollar is ruthless — deadly, even. It seems like every night I hear about some n00b driver getting greased by outriders; hitters paid by rival corps to make sure the almighty pie fails to reach its destination on time, or better yet, never.

But I can take it.

Hell, I do more than take it. I live for it. No drug's better than the rush of a high-threat delivery, neh? I cut my teeth in Chi-town on the dreaded Ronald Reagan Expressway at 150 screaming miles an hour, fending off cracker jack outriders armed with RPGs and cyclone harpoons trying to keep me from completing my drops. I've fought my way through

South Side block wars, dodged burned-out vehicles and derezzed ghost hackers trying to jump jack your ride. And hell, that's just on a slow night!"

- **Bonus Credits:** 1,000 plus (1d4×100) each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Driving d8+
- **Perks:** The character owns a SAMBA Econoline electric car, the most cost-effective car on the road!

### PLAIN CLOTHES COP

**Nicknames:** Narc, Rat, Mole, Leak

"The streets are a tough place, filled with all manner of filth that prey on decent citizens who just wanna live their lives in peace. Organized crime is worse than ever. Gangland violence is on the rise. Regular sector police and security firms can only do so much.

To get the big fish, law enforcement agencies need a special lure, a man on the inside; someone like me. Sure, the pay sucks, and let's face it; I don't ever know who I can trust, don't ever know if the people I'm trying to bring down have figured me out. But in some sick, twisted way, I thrive on that kind of pressure. It keeps me sharp, and I need that edge if I'm gonna take the bad guys off the streets Ami. Its paranoia, 24/7/365, but the paranoia is like pain; it lets me know I'm still alive."

- **Bonus Credits:** 2,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Alternate Identity, Streetwise d6+
- **Perks:** Plain Clothes Cops have their senses finely tuned for danger. They get +1 to Notice rolls.

### PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

**Nicknames:** Dick Tracy, Gumshoe, Private Eye, P.I., Pinkerton, Sherlock

"As a private eye, I get to see all the nasty, grimy crap the sprawl has to offer, and the pay is equally crappy. Usually it's pretty stock work — divorce cases, skip traces, missing persons, identity theft, background checks, etc. But every now and again, I'll catch a murder — nothing high-profile of course, otherwise sector police or some POLcorp like Ravenlocke Securities would be all over it. But sometimes, those low-profile cases can get really ugly, ami. They fall into my lap because someone wants to keep them as quiet as possible, which usually means a megacorp's involved, and THAT means the gig's not always as simple as just finding the bad guy and riding off into the sunset.

It takes every bit of experience and skill I have to weave my way through the myriad dangers that come with an investigation into a corp-linked murder and live through it. But hey, that's part and parcel of the job, chum, and it beats slimy divorce cases any day of the week."

- **Bonus Credits:** 5,000 credits each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Investigator
- **Perks:** Private Investigators start with two extra Contacts at the beginning of the game.

### PROGRAMMER

**Nicknames:** Brainer, Hacker, ICEman, Script Kiddie

"Most peeps don't understand the inner workings of Global DataNet, and that's just how we like it."

- **Bonus Credits:** 5,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Smarts d6+, Hacking d6+, Knowledge (Programming) d6+
- **Perks:** Programmers start the game with an advanced firewall (+1 to the character's Firewall).

### RACE QUEEN

**Nicknames:** Grid Girl, Pit Babe, Pit Girl, Pretty, Promo Girl, Racing Model

"Most peeps figure I'm just another pretty face — or a nice piece of eye candy, depending on where they're looking. It doesn't really matter to me, though. My pretty face is plastered all over the trideos, and that's just plain exposure. The feminazis complain that I'm being taken advantage of, since my only job is to look pretty for the camera and hold an umbrella over my driver. Oh well. If I can broker my current sponsorship into a media or music deal, then I can cry about sexism and exploitation all the way to the bank. As long as the peeps are looking, I'm a hot commodity."

- **Bonus Credits:** 1,000×Charisma each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Attractive, Persuasion d6+
- **Perks:** Most people hanging around the tracks and courses view you as innocuous and pleasant to look at. This translates into an additional +1 bonus to any Streetwise rolls you make while chatting with the racing crowd. Additionally, your mere presence with a driver makes him more "appealing" — you can add half your Charisma bonus (rounded up) to the Charisma of any racer you're currently with.

### READER

**Nicknames:** Adviser, Counselor, Eyes, Spook

"There are a few people who are pragmatic enough to realize a psion's uses, and that's where I come in. These are people who want to know about the people they're dealing with — if they're telling the truth, what their motives might be…any number of things, depending upon the client. Some readers are freelance, selling their services to any who can pay. Others who have developed a better rep may be able to pick up a permanent position with a client willing to keep them on retainer. And the best can go freelance again, only working for the highest bidders. Sure, a lot of people are leery of me since they fear I can peek into people's heads — but that's also why they want to keep me around."

- **Bonus Credits:** 2,000 plus (500×Psionics die) each Advance
- **Requisites:** Peek, Notice d8+
- **Perks:** +1 bonus to Street Cred.

### SMUGGLER

**Nicknames:** Panzer Jockey, Runner, Coyote, Moving man

"You need me to run the cargo from Chi-Town, through the NAC to Atlantica? Sure, I can do that, but it's going to cost you, and it won't be cheap. I've got the fastest VTOL on the continent, and I know all the security protocols used by the NAC border authority. Another thing, I better not be carting around some bomb either; I don't want any part in some would-be terrorist plot. You fuck me on that, and I'll come back and fuck you and yours, you hear me? Other than that, I don't ask questions, and I won't look at what I'm transporting. Your secrets are safe with me, because I won't know what they are."

- **Bonus Credits:** 5,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Thief
- **Perks:** A smuggler has access to a vehicle of his choice worth 50,000 credits or less.

## STREET CLEANER

**Nicknames:** Garbage man, Sanitation Worker

"Sometimes someone needs to go into the seediest parts of the Sprawl and deal with 'problems' — and that someone is usually one of us. We've been around for a couple generations — we started as plague control, dealing with dead bodies. We still deal with dead bodies, but we also have to go in and erase illegal hypertags and other crap that gets littered around the city. But the job pays good credits, and there's always demand…if only because there's such a high mortality rate."

- **Bonus Credits:** 7,000 each Advance.
- **Requisites:** McGyver, Shooting d6+
- **Perks:** A suit of Ravenlocke Beachhead First Responder armor and a hand gun of their choice.

## TAXI DRIVER

**Nicknames:** Cab Driver, Cabbie, Hack, Night Rider, Taxi Man, Urban Delivery Specialist

"Get in, sit down, shut up and hang on — that's my credo. Okay, okay…maybe they don't have to shut up if they're interesting enough, but usually they just want to be driven from someplace to someplace else, and that's what I'm getting paid to do. Doesn't matter if I operate a cab or a limo (heck, in some parts of the world, it might even be a rickshaw), but the job is basically the same; pick up the client, drive him to where he wants to go, and collect the fare. Fortunately, I know the sprawl like the back of my hand, and can drive like a maniac. I'd probably make a smoking wheelman, but I prefer to stay more legit — most of the time. Sometimes it just depends on whether I'm driving for a company, or going solo as a freelance. Whatever. In any case it's the same; Get in, sit down, shut up and hang on."

- **Bonus Credits:** 2,500 plus (1d6×100) in tips, each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Driving d8+, Shooting d6+, Streetwise d8+
- **Perks:** +2 to Streetwise checks when seeking a location, and a place to hang out or crash in many cases. Additionally, cab services usually provide a vehicle from their fleet — although your character is responsible for insurance (1,000 credits paid once during each Rank).

## VIRTUAL RACER

**Nicknames:** Bungee Jumper, Console Cowboy, Stick Jock, Tron, V-Jumper

"Yeah, some d00ds talk smack, but I ain't stupid. Why waste creds on a ride what's gonna get all busted up anyway? Plus the cost of gas an' all that crap? They gotta be kiddin'. I've got mad skillz an' I'm gonna use 'em. Besides, it ain't all sunshine an' rainbows in the Global DataNet, either, ne? Just 'cause 'Johnny Rocket' thinks he's shit hot bouncin' off buildings don't mean I ain't takin' risks. Sure, the pay ain't as good, but I've got my fangirls, so it's all good. 'Sides… Johnny would piss hisself the first time a giant robot blocked his lane an' started takin' pot shots. Heh."

- **Bonus Credits:** 2,000 plus (Driving roll×100) at each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Driving d6+, Streetwise d6+
- **Perks:** The character starts with a Virtual Avatar, costing no more than 30,000 credits.

## WAITER/WAITRESS

**Nicknames:** Busboy, Host/Hostess, Server, Steward/Stewardess, Wench

"What can you say? Bartenders serve drinks, but someone's got to serve the food. Sure the hours suck sometimes, and my feet hurt at the end of the day. But the tips can be good — when I get that rare great customer — and at least it'll pay the bills until I get my big break, neh?"

- **Bonus Credits:** 1,000 plus (1d4 + Charisma)×100 in tips, each Advance.
- **Requisites:** Persuasion d6+, Streetwise d6+
- **Perks:** If your character has a positive Charisma modifier, he can count on receiving a gift from an admirer worth 1d6×500 credits once each Rank.

# HINDRANCES

## Prohibited Hindrances

### DOUBTING THOMAS

This Hindrance does not exist in *Interface Zero 2.0*. If your character doesn't believe that psionics exist, take a look at the Delusional Hindrance.

## Modified Hindrances

The majority of Hindrances from the *Savage Worlds* core rules are perfectly usable as written. That being said, given *Interface Zero 2.0*'s status as a cyberpunk setting, there are a few which work differently. Below you'll find the changes for these Hindrances, along with any additional information needed to use them.

### BAD EYES, BLIND, HARD OF HEARING, LAME, ONE ARM, ONE EYE, ONE LEG, UGLY

In the world of *Interface Zero 2.0*, medicine has advanced to the point where many of the Hindrances listed above can be removed with a simple medical procedure. Because of this, any character who takes these Hindrances at character creation, and then uses in-game Augments to remove them, must also expend one Advance as well. Characters who take these Hindrances at character creation may not buy off the effects with Augments at character creation.

### CODE OF HONOR

There are many different codes of honor within the cyberpunk genre, with perhaps the most well-known being the code of a Street Samurai which is based off of the Japanese code of Bushido. Players and GMs should feel free to modify this Hindrance to better fit the differing codes of honor one may run into within the world of *Interface Zero 2.0*.

### HABIT (MINOR/MAJOR)

Cyberpunk characters in fiction are often addicted to different substances ranging from mild to severe. Characters may take a Minor Hindrance representing an addiction that is present but less severe than the Major version of this Hindrance. Rather than taking a –1 Charisma, if the character takes this version of the flaw, she must get her fix every 24 hours or make a Vigor roll to avoid Fatigue. The Fatigue level remains until she receives her fix, but doesn't get worse than one Fatigue level.

### ILLITERATE (MAJOR)

Illiterate is considered a Major Hindrance in *Interface Zero 2.0* because of the prevalence of the written word.

### POVERTY (MAJOR)

Poverty is a Major Hindrance in *Interface Zero 2.0*. Characters start with half the normal starting funds, and each Advance, in addition to losing half their Bonus Credits from their Occupation, they halve any savings.

## New Hindrances

The following are new Hindrances introduced in *Interface Zero 2.0*.

### APPOINTED MONITOR (MINOR/MAJOR)

Your character has a watchdog. This is a Minor Hindrance if the monitor seldom interferes your hero's actions, although they're likely to report the character's activities to their superiors. This is a Major Hindrance if the monitor will interfere with any action that goes against their superior's mandates and will always report the character's activities, regardless of what it is. If an Appointed Monitor is killed, a new monitor will be appointed, unless the character killed the monitor, in which case the character will be up on murder charges (or this is replaced with the Wanted Hindrance). A monitor could be a person, but it could also be an Aspect loaded into the character's TAP, depending on the nature of the monitor's superiors.

### BAD FILTERS (MINOR/MAJOR)

Your spam filters are glitched. You're constantly being bombarded by spam, viruses, and other malware. This steady barrage makes it more likely that eventually something nasty will penetrate your firewall. Consequently, your Firewall is reduced by 1 for the Minor version of this Hindrance, or by 2 for the Major version.

### BAD REPUTATION (MINOR/MAJOR)

People think the worst of your character. If something bad happens, she's the first person to get blamed. Maybe she deserves it, maybe she doesn't, but no one seems to care about her say on the matter.

As a Minor Hindrance, the rumors people come up with about your character are really exaggerated truths or outright lies. Maybe you have a couple contacts in the Yakuza, but that doesn't mean you're "a hardened killer the Yakuza hires for special missions." As a Major Hindrance, you actually have some sort of criminal record. The police are likely to turn up on your doorstep if something goes down on your turf, even if you didn't have anything to do with it, and you've seen the inside of far too many interrogation rooms.

### BAD STREET CRED (MINOR)

Your character seriously botched a mission in her past and permanently subtracts 1 from her Street Cred.

### BLACKLISTED (MINOR/MAJOR)

Due to an event in your past, at least one corporation refuses to have anything to do with you. The reasons may vary, but the end result is that, unless you go to great lengths to hide your involvement, deals with this one company will always go sour.

At the Major level, your Blacklisting applies to not just a single company, but an entire industry. Just imagine how hard it would be to work in banking if your name is associated with one of the worst banking scandals in history.

### DEBT (MINOR/MAJOR)

Sometimes a character needs or wants to start with that extra "something" other than cybernetics, but just doesn't

have the credits to make it happen. But hey, ami…this is 2090, and if you're willing to sell your soul to a corporation or gang, you can always get credits on credit, ne? If you're a pizza delivery driver and want to have that ride so you can work, for example, just head on down to Honest Rex and try his first-time buyer program.

As a Minor Hindrance, the character may make a single purchase of up to 15,000 credits, but must add 500 credits to his cost of living. Should he fail to make his payment, he must make it up the next session by paying double. If he fails to pay for two consecutive sessions, the character acquires the equivalent of the Wanted Hindrance as debt collectors (or Rex's thugs) continually harass him for money. Should the character continue to default on his payments, at the very least his purchase will be repossessed — at the very worst he may find himself on the wrong end of a different sort of contract.

The Major version of this Hindrance works much the same, except the character may make a single purchase of up to 30,000 credits and must add 1,000 credits to his cost of living. The lender is also likely to be more…unhappy with defaulted payments.

**Note:** The GM should use the optional Cost of Living rules (see page 265 for more details.

### GIRI (MINOR/MAJOR)

Sometimes, you just owe someone in a way money can't repay. Maybe it's out of a sense of duty; maybe it's out of a sense of debt. Whatever the case, a character with this Hindrance is one of those peeps. "Giri" is a Japanese word that implies a certain amount of social obligation — usually to one's superiors — and it runs deeper than a simple sense of service.

A character with Giri as a Minor Hindrance has someone he's a little indebted to. Most of the time it won't make a big difference other than in how he behaves, but occasionally that "someone" might need something like a favor or some help. The character could refuse, but it'll cost him a Benny and a point of Street Cred (if not a certain amount of self-esteem).

If the Hindrance is a Major one, the character owes someone big-time. In this case, he may be called upon more often, and the costs of ignoring this call can be greater. The GM should decide how much Street Cred the character loses based on the nature of the favor. If it was a little one, maybe a single point (for No Style); if it was a big one, it could be as many as five points (as if for Failing a Run, or worse). Additionally, the character must pay a number of Bennies equal to the lost Cred — any shortage must be made up with additional Street Cred. If for some reason the character can't pay the penalties, he may wind up with an Enemy or even a Wanted Hindrance.

### LATENT TALENT (MAJOR)

Some unfortunate zeeks don't even realize they're zeeks until the strange stuff starts happening around them. At that point, they either learn to control it, or learn to live with strange stuff. This Hindrance works just like the Major version of the Stress Trigger Hindrance (see below) with a couple of big differences.

The bad news is your character has no idea what his latent powers are, so the GM gets to pick which one(s) manifest when the Stress Trigger goes off — up to three of them, just like any other zeek. She may choose any power, although the character must be of sufficient Rank to use it. When you roll to see if the power activates, it is done as a Spirit check (instead of a Psionics skill check). If you want to spend a Benny to keep the power from going off, you must say so before the GM tells you what the power is.

The good news is, you can buy off this Hindrance by spending two Advances. After the first Advance, this Hindrance is treated like the Minor version of Stress Trigger, and the powers are only triggered by a critical failure — although the above rules still apply. After the second Advance, your character may take Arcane Background (Psionics), and no longer suffers from Stress Trigger. Your character's starting powers must any power manifested because of Latent Talent. If all three haven't been designated yet, you may choose any remaining powers.

### MAGNET (MINOR/MAJOR)

Whether it's her looks, fame, or something else you can't explain, certain people find your hero very alluring. Sadly, they're never those she wishes were drawn to her. As a Minor Hindrance, one or two fans show up as an inconvenience or occasional distraction. The Major version has swarms of fans who could get her into serious trouble. Imagine trying to do a run while hounded by a half-dozen reporters! Example fans include criminal wannabes hoping to curry her favor, journalists or reality show producers.

### NANO-INFECTION (MINOR/MAJOR)

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

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

### OFF THE GRID (MAJOR)

Some way or another, this character has managed to remain or become undocumented. Maybe his birth was for some reason never recorded; maybe he (or someone else) erased all of his official records. Whatever the case, as far as the rest of the world is concerned, he doesn't exist. The upside is, this makes the character really difficult to track down; the downside is that it's also impossible to do anything legally — like buy a vehicle, open a banking account, or get a proper job. He's also a prime target for corporations wanting a test subject that won't be missed if they disappear. The GM has the final say, but the general rule of thumb is that anything requiring an ID or that can't be handled with a cash transaction pretty much can't be done.

If a character has the Alternate Identity Edge, he can use his other identity to do these things, however, if the character's identity is revealed as a fake, his assets will be frozen at the bank, he may be fired from his job, and he could possibly be arrested, depending on the circumstances. In other words, he goes back to square one, if not worse.

### OWNED (MAJOR)

Whether due to experimental procedures that keep you alive, or a contract for indentured servitude in order to pay back a large debt, your individual liberty is severely hampered because you are, for all intents and purposes, property of the megaconglom that holds your contract. This Hindrance is very common for simulacra, androids and hybrids working in the corporate sector. For the most part, this Hindrance means you have little say over your actions; it is not uncommon for you to be given orders with the expectation that you fulfill them. At the end of a very lengthy and dangerous mission for your contract owners, you might be able to buy this Hindrance off by spending an Advance once you hit Seasoned Rank.

### RACIST (MINOR/MAJOR)

The character dislikes people from other races and believes his own race to be far superior. He can't help belittling other races at every opportunity. A character taking the Minor version has –2 Charisma among other races. The penalty increases to –4 for the Major Hindrance.

### SECRET (MINOR/MAJOR)

Your character has a secret, which if known, will complicate her life severely. It could be she once worked for one of the big megacorps and helped to develop a bioweapon currently hurting large portions of the population. Perhaps your character is an undercover police officer who has currently infiltrated a gang. Maybe she used to own her very own simulacra and did all sorts of bad things with them. Or maybe she's a bioroid trying desperately to pretend she's human. In all cases, revelation of the secret will cause major trouble for your character. The Minor version of this Hindrance simply means the reveal of the secret will be of major embarrassment, and possibly cause the character to become wanted, or to lose contacts, friends and associates due to its nature. The Major version of this Hindrance means the character's life will be put into direct danger from the revelation of this secret. If the genie is permanently out of the bottle and there's no hope of covering this up, the GM can replace this Hindrance with one of equal measure: e.g., Outsider for a Minor version, or Enemy (Major) for the Major version.

### SHAKES (MINOR)

For some reason, this character has some faulty wiring in the brain. Whether it's from a birth defect or because helpful doctors from some research project made a neural pathway zig where it should have zagged, the result is the same: he suffers the shakes if he is overwhelmed by stress. Whenever this character is forced to make a Spirit roll and fails, he must make an immediate Vigor roll that fails as well, he begins to have a seizure.

The seizure causes the character to fall prone and suffer a –2 penalty on all action rolls until it passes. Additionally, the character can only move at Pace 3 for the duration. The seizure lasts 15 rounds minus a number of rounds equal to the character's Spirit.

The good news is that there is always some form of chemical treatment to offset the potential seizures. As long as the character has access to his medication, he doesn't have to make a Vigor check when he fails a Spirit check, but this requires spending money — an additional 500 credits per game session. The character can spend less (half) on cheaper, natural alternative sources, but these are invariably less effective. The character must still make his Vigor check on failed Spirit rolls, but he gets a +1 bonus.

### SHELL SHOCK (MAJOR)

The character has a tendency to freeze up in combat. She begins the first round of combat Shaken. This condition can be removed normally.

### STRESS TRIGGER (MINOR/MAJOR)

Most Zeeks try to keep a handle on their powers, but a character with this Hindrance just can't seem to manage it all the time. If he's confronted with a stressful situation, there is a nasty tendency for his psychic abilities to manifest. As a Minor Hindrance, what this means is whenever the character is forced to make an attribute roll to resist something — be it a Spirit check to maintain morale or a Strength check in an arm wrestling contest — if the roll is a critical failure, the character must attempt to use one of his psychic powers as his next action. Yep, this applies to Tests of Will and Soak rolls as well.

As a Major Hindrance, any failure of one of these rolls results in the mandatory use of a power. In either case, the character may spend a Benny in order to avoid the forced power use. This Hindrance may only be taken by a character with Arcane Background (Psion) or the Wild Talent Edge.

### UNPLUGGED (MAJOR)

You have no TAP and are unable to see or interact with Hyper Reality or virtual reality at all; including, but not limited to, digital displays, instant banking, and TAPPlications. You also cannot take the Hacking skill, since you can't properly access the data. You may remove this Hindrance by spending an Advance and purchasing a TAP for 5,000 credits. Once you have installed a TAP, you may take the Hacking skill.

# EDGES

## Prohibited Edges

The following edges are not allowed in *Interface Zero 2.0*: Adept, Champion, Gadgeteer, Holy/Unholy Warrior, Mr. Fix It, Noble, Power Points, Power Surge, Rapid Recharge, Improved Rapid Recharge, Soul Drain, and Wizard.

## Modified Edges

The majority of Edges from the core *Savage Worlds* core rules are perfectly usable as written. That being said, given *Interface Zero 2.0*'s status as a cyberpunk setting, there are a few which work differently. Below you'll find the changes for these Edges, along with any additional information needed to use them.

**Note:** Rich and Filthy may only be taken with the GM's permission.

### ACE

This Edge is slightly modified to work for vehicles (Ace), golemmechs (Golemmech Pilot), and drone (Drone Jockey). Each of these are separate edges.

A character with one of these edges adds +2 to Boating, Driving, or Piloting rolls. In addition, he may also spend Bennies on soak rolls for any vehicle, golemmech, or drone he controls. This is a Boating, Driving, or Piloting roll at –2 (canceling the usual +2).

Each success and raise soaks a wound and any critical hit that would have resulted from it.

### ARCANE BACKGROUND

There are only two Arcane Background in *Interface Zero 2.0*: Cybermonk and Psionics. See Powers on page 284, for more details.

### RICH

Rich characters triple their starting funds and get a bonus 12,500 credits each Advance. However, the money always comes with an obligation. They could earn money from a corporate sponsorship, a trust fund, or even a business the character runs and owns. Examples of rich characters in the genre are Sylvia Stingray from *Bubblegum Crisis* and Logan Cale from *Dark Angel*; they both had obligations (running a business, playing nice with the family) that they had to uphold in order to keep their money. This is a Vow (Minor) Hindrance that you should discuss with your GM — failure to uphold the Vow means that the character doesn't receive his extra credits until he takes care of those obligations. If the character loses the Edge's benefits entirely, he may, at the Game Master's discretion, replace the Edge with something else.

### FILTHY RICH

Filthy Rich characters function almost exactly like Rich characters, except he has five times his starting funds and receives a bonus 50,000 credits each Advance.

## New Edges

The following are new Edges introduced in *Interface Zero 2.0*.

### BACKGROUND EDGES

#### CHROMED

**Requirements:** Novice

The Character receives an additional 15,000 credits. These bonus credits can only be spent on augments.

#### UP-SIZED

**Requirements:** Novice, Brawny, Vigor d8+, Android, Cyborg, Strong or Tough Hybrid

Your character was built to be big. This has some inherent advantages, but also a few drawbacks. The character's size is increased by +1, his Strength is increased by one die type (max d12+1), and his Carrying Capacity from is increased from ×8 to ×12. Against smaller, squishier people, he gains a +2 bonus to Intimidate checks. He's also really, really good at getting things off the top shelf.

On the downside, this character takes up at least two seats in an enclosed vehicle, and there's no hope of passing for human even with the best disguise. Also, there's no way he could ever be a golemmech pilot; the best he can hope for is to ride on back with hold-bars while making "Vroom! Vroom!" noises.

Living expenses and prices for most gear and cyber-augmentation are quadrupled, due to the need for customization and special orders. When it comes to weapons and tools, he could use a two-handed melee weapon as a one-hander, but normal-sized guns and tools have controls too small and fiddly for his hands, resulting in a –2 penalty to skill checks, if they can even be used at all.

He suffers a –2 to Charisma (most folks don't feel comfortable near giants), and the occasional Agility roll to quickly squeeze into spaces where a normal character could just dash right through. Sometimes it's good to be "large and in charge," but it can also be a royal pain as well.

#### WILD TALENT

**Requirements:** Novice, Smarts d6+, Spirit d6+

Occasionally, someone exhibits psychic ability — albeit very minor psychic ability. Sometimes referred to as a "blip" or "week", this type of individual usually only manifests a single talent and often has a very low staying power. A character with this Edge may choose any single Novice Rank power. He may activate this power using his Spirit as the arcane skill die. This power can't be improved, nor can the Wild Talent take the New Power Edge.

### COMBAT EDGES

#### AUGMENTED WARRIOR

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

The character has learned how to use his cyberlimb for both offensive and defensive purposes, granting him two benefits: either +1 to unarmed damage rolls made with the limb or +1 to

Parry. He may choose which one he wishes to use as a free action, but must decide this at the start of his turn.

### DRAGON LASH

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Martial Artist

With a flurry of blows and throws, the character is often able to clear those around him. Dragon Lash allows the character to make a Push maneuver against every adjacent target (friend or foe). The character makes the opposed Strength roll at –2 against each target individually. The character may not use Dragon Lash in the same round as he uses Frenzy or Rapid Attack.

### IMPROVED DRAGON LASH

**Requirements:** Heroic, Dragon Lash

As above but the character may ignore the –2 penalty.

### GUN-FU DISCIPLE

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Agility d8+, Shooting d8+

You are on the path of Gun-fu, known by some as "the way of the gun." In most people's hand, a gun is merely a clumsy weapon. In yours, it is an extension of your body, the focus of your art form. When using a gun in close combat, you are not considered Unarmed. You can move up to half your Pace in the same round you use the Aim maneuver (including when using the Marksman Edge).

### GUN-FU MASTER

**Requirements:** Heroic, Gun-Fu Disciple, Agility d10+, Shooting d10+

Your mastery of Gun-Fu has advanced to such a degree that you can move your full Pace in the same round you use the Aim maneuver (including when using the Marksman Edge).

### GUN-FU LEGEND

**Requirements:** Legendary, Gun-Fu Master

Your mastery of Gun-Fu has advanced to such a degree that you can run as a Free action in the same round you use the Aim maneuver (including when using the Marksman Edge).

### MARTIAL ADEPT

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Martial Artist, Fighting d10+

You make deadly combat look like a beautifully choreographed dance — a true art in its own right. Your hands flash like a Renaissance master's brush, laying low all the enemies in your path with strength, speed, and finesse. You underwent rigorous training to become a finely honed, nearly supernatural fighter. A character with this Edge doesn't suffer from gang up bonuses.

### PACK FIGHTING

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Fighting d8+

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

### IMPROVED PACK FIGHTING

**Requirements:** Heroic, Pack Fighting, Fighting d10+

Your ability to capitalize on greater numbers has become astounding. Your bonus damage bonus from Pack Fighting is equal to your gang up bonus.

### STEEL DRAGON PUNCH/KICK

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Strength d6+, Cyberlimb

The character has learned to leverage his cybernetics to his advantage. When the character hits a foe in melee, using his cyberlimb, with a raise he can choose forgo the additional damage die to send his foe reeling back 1d4". If the opponent strikes a solid object he is shaken, this can cause a wound.

## HACKER EDGES

### CUTTER

**Requirements:** Novice, Hacking d6+

You're a cracker jack hacker. You know all the tricks to getting past Firewalls. You gain a +1 to Hacking rolls to penetrate a Firewall.

### INTERFERENCE

**Requirements:** Novice

Something about your electromagnetic signature makes your TAP harder to hack. Increase your TAP's Firewall by +1.

### IMPROVED INTERFERENCE

**Requirements:** Novice, Interference

Your TAP's electromagnetic signature is much stronger. Increase your bonus to your TAP's Firewall from +1 to +2.

## POWER EDGES

### CONCENTRATION

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Smarts d6+, Spirit d6+, Vigor d6+

The character knows how to maintain concentration in adverse situations. He gains +2 to Smarts rolls to avoid disruption.

### ENHANCED ABILITY

**Requirements:** Novice, Freek, Peek, or Tweek, Smarts d10+, Spirit d8+

The character has learned to tap into his deeper psyche and can manifest abilities that might otherwise be beyond his reach. He may take a new power without regard to Rank requirements and may continue to ignore Rank requirements any time he takes New Power in the future. When using a power of a higher rank, the character suffers an additional penalty to his Psionics roll equal to difference between his rank and the power's rank requirement.

*For example a Novice character using a Veteran power would suffer an additional –2 to his Psionics roll.*

### FOCUSED

**Requirements:** Novice, Spirit d8+

With a given power the character is able to maintain high levels of concentration while still moving. The character

chooses a power he knows, with this power he may move his base pace and use Power Preparation (see *Savage Worlds* core rules)option. This Edge may be taken multiple times, each time with a new power.

### FREEK

**Requirements:** Novice, Arcane Background (Psionics), Smarts d8+, Psionics d6+, at least three freek powers

Of all the types of zeeks, freeks tend to be the most volatile on an emotional level. While in many ways a tweek can exhibit more "demonstrative" abilities, freeks are the ones who are more demonstrative about their abilities — sort of a genetically encoded "Little Napoleon" complex. Freeks want people to know they have power, and in many ways they want people to fear — or at least respect — them. While any zeek with the right powers is technically a freek, this Edge reflects those who have mastered their talents. A character with the Freek Edge gains a +2 bonus to Psionics skill checks when using freek powers. This bonus can stack with the Mentalist Edge.

### PEEK

**Requirements:** Novice, Arcane Background (Psionics), Smarts d8+, Psionics d6+, at least three peek powers

Because of the nature of their abilities, peeks are the most likely zeeks to be "people" people. This isn't to say that peeks like or even get along with everybody — just that they tend to "get" what makes a person tick. This can make a peek seem to be a really great guy…or a master manipulator. It's ironic that peek powers aren't flashy; the same subtle abilities that allow peeks to understand people are often viewed as the most insidious of all Zeek powers. While any zeek with the right powers is technically a peek, this Edge reflects those who have mastered their talents.

A character with the Peek Edge gains a +2 bonus to Psionics skill checks when using peek powers. This bonus can stack with the Mentalist Edge.

### TWEEK

**Requirements:** Novice, Arcane Background (Psionics), Smarts d8+, Psionics d6+, at least three tweek powers

Tweeks tend to have the most spectacular abilities — or at least the most visible — since they are able to affect and manipulate the world around them. While people often fear tweeks for this reason, they just as often find tweeks extremely useful. Or at least, they keep their opinions to themselves for fear of 'stumbling' into oncoming traffic or meeting some other equally unfortunate 'accident'. While any Zeek with the right powers is technically a tweek, this Edge reflects those who have mastered their talents. A character with the Tweek Edge gains a +2 bonus to Psionics skill checks when using tweek powers. This bonus can stack with the Mentalist Edge.

## PROFESSIONAL EDGES

### BODYGUARD

**Requirements:** Novice, Agility d8+, Fighting d8+, Notice d6+

Bodyguards make their living by protecting someone else. This means they not only have to be aware of any potential dangers, but must be able to act quickly and effectively to prevent any harm from coming to their charge. A character with this Edge gains a +2 bonus to Notice checks made to detect potential ambushes or similar dangers. Additionally, the character may spend a Benny once per round to place himself in the way of any attack (Fighting, Shooting or Throwing) against a person within 5". All Fighting rolls are then made against his Parry, and he suffers the effect of any successful attacks. This can be done at any time, regardless of the bodyguard's Initiative, and counts as a free action; any other actions must be taken on his own initiative card.

### BOUNTY HUNTER

**Requirements:** Novice, Vigor d6+, Investigator

When someone disappears that someone else wants found, that's usually when a bounty hunter gets called in. For the most part, being a bounty hunter requires two things: you've gotta be tough, and you've gotta be good at finding people who don't want to be found. A character with the Bounty Hunter Edge gains a +2 bonus when making any Notice or Tracking rolls.

### CORPORATE MOGUL

**Requirements:** Novice, Strong Willed, Persuasion d8+

Not every action needs to be a violent one. Corporate Moguls are people whose primary talents are convincing people to take actions that are what the mogul desires. This is accomplished through a combination of communication skills, threats, coercion, or even blackmail. Corporate Moguls gain a +2 bonus in all Social Conflicts and Social-based Dramatic Tasks (Intimidation, Persuasion, Streetwise, or Taunt).

### EX-SOLDIER

**Requirements:** Novice, Vigor d6+, Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+

"Sir! Yes, sir!" You served in a regimented military outfit. It might have been a corporate paramilitary unit, government controlled army, imbedded guerilla force, or freelance mercenary unit. The nature of your background probably colors your attitudes toward things like money, patriotism, and honor. You gain a +1 bonus to your Toughness. You also add weapons, armor, and/or Augments totaling 5,000 credits in value to your possessions.

### FIXER

**Requirements:** Novice, Investigator

Fixers are good at digging up information, but what really makes them stand out is their network of informants, contacts, and suppliers. Fixers double the number of times they can call on their Contacts before spending Street Cred.

### GOVERNMENT AGENT

**Requirements:** Novice, Smarts d6+, Intimidation d6+, Investigation d8+, Notice d6+, Persuasion d6+

Without government (specifically your government), the world would fall into chaos. A patriot to the end, you have dedicated your life to ensuring that does not happen. You go where your superiors tell you, doing what is needed to protect the interests of your country, both at home and abroad.

This might (and often does) mean resorting to questionable methods in order to complete your mission, but in the end it's

worth it. All that matters is the continued safety of your fellow citizens. As an instrument to impose your superiors' will, you may add Charisma bonus to Intimidation rolls. Also, because you have the backing of a government or powerful organization like Stopwatch, you are able to requisition 15,000 credits worth of gear per Rank to help you complete your mission. So a Seasoned character can obtain 30,000 credits worth of gear, a Veteran 45,000 credits, a heroic character 60,000 credits, and a Legendary character can get up to 75,000 credits worth of gear. This equipment must be returned at the end of the mission. Cyberware and bioware are not included.

### HACKER

**Requirements:** Novice, Hacking d10+, Knowledge (Programming) d8+

You're a ghost in the machine, a wizard at cracking into the toughest systems and ferreting out information. You have dealt with the harsher elements of the Global DataNet and are tougher for the experience. Your Neural Toughness is increased by +1. Also, each time you successfully hack into a Corporate, Government, or Military Access Network, make a Smarts roll. If the roll is successful, you download 1d10×1,000 credits worth of information you can sell on the black market.

### PSI-HUNTER

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Arcane Resistance, Smarts d8+

Once content to hunt up any bounty that came his way, your character now specializes in tracking down Zeeks. While several organizations employ their own Hunters, the most well known are the Mathers used by Psi-Division — named for Reverend Cotton Mather, famed for his role in the Salem Witch Trials. While not all Psi-Hunters are as dogmatic as Mathers tend to be, they all share some common traits: they tend to be smart, resourceful and resistant to the use of psychic powers. A character with this Edge gains a +2 bonus to opposed rolls to resist zeek powers, gains a free Contact in Psi-Division and does +1 damage to all zeeks with their attacks.

### SECTOR COP

**Requirements:** Novice, Smarts d6+, Intimidation d6+, Shooting d6+

Sector cops have this amazing ability to convince people to mind their own business. A sector cop may spend a Benny to make either one Wild Card or a group of Extras ignore what he and his companions are doing — or otherwise not raise an alarm — once per scene, regardless of the NPC's friendliness. Sector cops also get a +2 to Streetwise rolls when they are in an area under their jurisdiction.

### STREET DOC

**Requirements:** Novice, Smarts d8+, Healing d8+

As a street doctor, you perform a valuable service. You make basic health care available to those who otherwise might not be able to get treatment. Of course, performing this service means you have to operate outside the law, outside the restrictions imposed on licensed medical practitioners. Your office is wherever you can find space to treat people, usually in the back rooms or basements of various places like a restaurant, or a pawnshop. Operating in this fashion isn't without its drawbacks.

You have to make do with whatever supplies you have on-hand, which usually isn't much and certainly doesn't come close to the resources of a licensed medical facility. But you've adapted and in many cases you manage to overcome these disadvantages. You ignore penalties to Healing rolls when operating without the necessary equipment. Additionally, the character with this Edge can get wounded punks up and fighting again in seconds. If the healer can get to a wounded Extra by the end of the round in which he was wounded, he can make an immediate Healing roll at –2. If the roll is successful, the patient is Shaken instead of wounded.

### WASTELANDER

**Requirements:** Novice, Vigor d8+, Notice d6+, Survival d8+, Tracking d6+

Life amid the toxic wastes, deserts, and city ruins is only for the heartiest of souls — people like you. Like many wastelanders, you might be running away from something in your past or a scavenger rummaging through the ruins of coastal cities now sunk beneath the rising ocean tides. You gain +2 to Survival skill tests in hostile environments, and +2 to Fatigue rolls from hazards. Additionally, for each Rank, you add your choice of two pieces of gear or weapons; each item is worth up to 1,000 credits in market value.

## SOCIAL EDGES

### ALTERNATE IDENTITY

**Requirements:** Novice

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

### REPUTATION

**Requirements:** Novice

Your character managed to impress the masses with his ability to get things done. His base Street Cred and maximum street cred is increased by 2. This Edge may be taken up to three times. The Edge may only be taken a second time when the character is Veteran or a third when he reaches Legendary.

## WEIRD EDGES

### CYBER TOLERANCE

**Requirements:** Novice

You are more resistant to the intrusion of Augments on your body than the average person. Your Vigor is counted as being one die type higher for purposes of determining Strain. This Edge may be taken up to three times, with the effects stacking. The Edge may only be taken a second time when the character is Veteran or a third when he reaches Legendary.

*Mavrik has a a Vigor d8, if he takes this edge twice his Vigor would be considered d12 for purposes of determing Strain, or d12+1 if he took it for a third time.*

### FERAL THROWBACK

**Requirements:** Novice, Vigor d8+, max Smarts d6, Hybrid

Your character's genetic cocktail leans more toward the animal than the human — regardless of his outward appearance — and he's learned to rely on the "Beast Within" rather than the artificial perceptions of the technology surrounding him. As a result, a character with this Edge gains a +2 bonus to all Intimidation, Notice, and Survival checks. The downside is his bestial nature is usually poorly received by society: a character with this Edge also suffers a –2 penalty to Charisma when dealing with anybody except others with his own genetic animal base.

### MIRACLE WORKER

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Street Doc, Smarts d10+, Healing d10+

People don't die on your watch. You won't let them. Call it strength of will, exceptional skill, or just plain stubbornness, but you have a knack for resuscitating the dead. You can revive a person who has died by making a Healing skill roll at a –2 penalty for every minute that has passed since the character died (max 5 minutes). Each attempt takes a minute.

Characters that are revived are considered to be Bleeding Out (as per *Savage Worlds* core rules) and must make the appropriate Vigor rolls or slip back into death's embrace. Raises on the Healing roll do not remove any additional wound levels, but instead stabilize the dying person!

TABLE 2.2: HINDRANCES

| MODIFIED HINDRANCES | TYPE | EFFECT |
|---|---|---|
| Physical Hindrances | Varies | Requires an Advance and augmentation to remove. |
| Code of Honor | Major | Most common is Street Samurai Bushido, but others exist. |
| Doubting Thomas | N/A | Does not exist in *Interface Zero 2.0*. |
| Habit | Minor/Major | Character must get a fix or start suffering Fatigue |
| Illiterate | Major | Character can't read or write. Considered a Major Hindrance due to the reliance on literacy. |
| Poverty | Major | Half normal starting funds, bonus credits from Occupation, Advances, and savings. |
| **NEW HINDRANCES** | | |
| Appointed Monitor | Minor/Major | The characters has a watchdog who reports on his actions. |
| Bad Filters | Minor/Major | Firewall reduced by 1, reduced by 2 with Major Hindrance. |
| Bad Reputation | Minor | The character is surrounded by exaggerated truths that sometimes get out of hand. |
| Bad Reputation | Major | The rumors around you result in you being a person of interest to many police investigations. |
| Bad Street Cred | Minor | Subtract 1 from Street Cred. |
| Black Listed | Minor/Major | One company or industry (based on severity of Hindrance) won't deal with the character. |
| Debt | Minor/Major | Start with additional funds, but the character's Cost of Living is increased as he pays off the loan. Bad things happen if he defaults. |
| Giri | Minor/Major | You're indebted to someone, refusing to help when asked, costs Street Cred and a Benny. |
| Latent Talent | Major | Your character is a Zeek. You just don't know it. The GM decides your powers and you are affected by the Stress Trigger Hindrance. |
| Magnet | Minor/Major | You're often the centre of attention fans show up as an inconvenience or distraction. |
| Nano-Infection | Minor | The Wild Die associated to a Skill or Attribute is reduce by one step.. |
| Off the Grid | Major | Your character is completely undocumented making many legal activities requiring an ID impossible. |
| Owned | Major | Very common amongst Sims and Androids. Your owner may give you orders and you must accomplish them. |
| Racist | Minor/Major | –2/–4 Charisma when interacting with other races. |
| .Secret | Minor/Major | The character has a dark secret and will do almost anything to keep it from being revealed |
| Shakes | Minor | Failing a Spirit check requires a Vigor check if he fails this he suffers a seizure. This results in him falling prone, –2 penalty to all actions and reduce Pace to 3. Duration of seizure is (15 – Spirit die) Rounds. Medication is available for 500 credits per dose (ie, Game Session). |
| Shellshock | Major | You freeze up in Combat. The first round of any combat you are Shaken. |
| Stress Trigger | Minor | When under stress (Attribute roll to resist something) a critical failure means that the character MUST manifest a power as his next action. |
| Stress Trigger | Major | When under stress (Attribute roll to resist something) a failure means that the character MUST manifest a power as his next action. |
| Unplugged | Major | You have no TAP. You can't see or interact with HR or VR nor can you buy the Hacking skill. May be bought off with 5,000 credits and an Advance. |
| Weak Zeek | Minor | Your Willpower is reduced by 1. This can be raised in the normal manner. |

TABLE 2.3: EDGES

| MODIFIED EDGES | REQUIREMENTS | EFFECT |
|---|---|---|
| Ace | N, A d8+ | Treated as multiple Edges, see description. |
| Rich | N | 3× starting funds; 12,500 credits/Advance, gain a Minor Vow |
| Filthy Rich | ?? | 5× starting funds; 50,000 credits/Advance |
| **BACKGROUND EDGES** | Requirements | |
| Alternate Identity | N | Complete 2nd identity, may be taken multiple times |
| Chromed | N | 20,000 credits for Augments |
| Up-Sized | N, Brawny, V d8+, Android, Cyborg, Strong or Tough Hybrid | Size +1; Str +1 die type; load limit 12×Str, +2 to Intimidate, –2 Charisma, expenses ×4 |
| Wild Talent | N, Sm d6+, Sp d6+ | Start with single Novice psionic power; Spirit used for Arcane die |
| **COMBAT EDGES** | | |
| Augmented Warrior | N, Martial Artist, A d8+, cyberlimb | +1 unarmed damage or +1 Parry |
| Dragon Lash | S, Martial Artist | Push maneuver against all adjacent targets as –2 |
| Improved Dragon Lash | H, Dragon Lash | As Dragon Lash without the penalty |
| Gun-Fu Disciple | S, A d8+, Shooting d8+ | With gun in melee, considered Armed; move half pace while Aiming |
| Gun-Fu Master | H, Gun-Fu Disciple, A d10+, Shooting d10+, | Move full Pace while Aiming |
| Gun-Fu Legend | L, Gun-Fu Master | Run as Free action while Aiming |
| Martial Adept | S, Martial Artist, Fighting d10+ | Do not suffer gang up bonuses. |
| Pack Fighting | S, Fighting d8+ | Bonus damage to melee attacks equal to half gang-up bonus |
| Improved Pack Fighting | H, Pack Fighting, Fighting d10+ | Bonus damage to melee attacks equal to half gang-up bonus |
| Steel Dragon Punch/Kick | S, St d6+, cyberlimb | Forgo bonus damage on raise to knock foe back 1d4" |
| **HACKER EDGES** | | |
| Cutter | N, Hacking d6+ | +1 to Hacking rolls to penetrate a Firewall |
| Interference | Novice | +1 to TAP Firewall |
| Improved Interference | N, Interference | +2 to TAP Firewall |
| **POWER EDGES** | | |
| Concentration | S, Sm d6+, Sp d6+, V d6+ | +2 to Smarts to avoid Disruption |
| Enhanced Ability | N, Freek, Peek, or Tweek, Sm d10+, Sp d8+ | Take new powers regardless of Rank requirements (see text) |
| Focused | N, Sp d8+ | May use Power Preparation with a single power and move |
| Freek | N, AB (Psionics), Sm d8+, Psionics d6+, 3+ Freek Powers | +2 Psionics using Freek powers |
| Peek | N, AB (Psionics), Sm d8+, Psionics d6+, 3+ Peek Powers | +2 Psionics using Peek powers |
| Tweek | N, AB (Psionics), Sm d8+, Psionics d6+, 3+ Tweek Powers | +2 Psionics using Tweek powers |
| **PROFESSIONAL EDGES** | | |
| Bodyguard | N, A d8+, Fighting d8+, Notice d6+ | +2 to Notice; spend Benny to intercept incoming attack |
| Bounty Hunter | N, V d6+, Investigator | +2 to Notice, Tracking |
| Corporate Mogul | N, Strong Willed, Persuasion d8+ | +2 Intimidation, Persuasion, Streetwise, or Taunt (Social Conflicts and Dramatic Task) |
| Ex-soldier | N, V d6+, Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+ | +1 Toughness; 5,000 credits in weapons, armor, and/or Augments |
| Fixer | N, Investigator | 2× uses of Contacts before spending Street Cred |
| Government Agent | N, Sm d6+ Intimidation d6+, Investigation d8+, Notice d6+, Persuasion d6+ | Charisma bonus to Intimidation; extra gear (see text) |
| Hacker | N, Hacking d10+, Knowledge (Programming) d8+ | +1 Neural Toughness. Successful hack of a Corporate, Government, or Military Network and Smarts roll nets 1d10×1,000 credits (see text) |
| Psi-Hunter | S, Sm d8+, Arcane Resistance | +2 to resist Zeek powers; +1 damage to Zeeks; free contact |
| Sector Cop | N, Sm d6+, Intimidation d6+, Shooting d6+ | +2 Streetwise; may spend a Benny to make a Wild Card or one group of Extras ignore what he is doing |
| Street Doc | N, Sm d8+, Healing d8+ | Ignore penalties for lack of tools; heal Extras (see text) |
| Wastelander | N, V d8+, Notice d6+, Survival d8+, Tracking d6+ | +2 to Survival (hostile environments); +2 to all Fatigue rolls due to hazards; scrounge gear or weapons each Rank |

| SOCIAL EDGES | REQUIREMENTS | EFFECT |
|---|---|---|
| Reputation | N | Increase Stret Cred; may be taken multiple times (see text) |
| **WEIRD EDGES** | | |
| Cyber Tolerance | N | Vigor is considered higher for Strain purposes (see text) |
| Feral Throwback | N, V d8+, max Smarts d6, Hybrid | +2 to Intimidation, Notice, Survival; –2 Charisma when dealing with others not of his own genetic animal base. |
| Miracle Worker | S, Street Doc, Sm d10+, Healing d10+ | Attempt to resuscitate a dead character (see text) |

TABLE 2.4: OCCUPATIONS

| OCCUPATION | BONUS CRED | REQUISITE | Perk |
|---|---|---|---|
| Agent | 5,000 | Government Agent | +2 Common Knowledge rolls. |
| Bartender | 1,000 + (1d4×100) | Notice d6+, Streetwise d6+ | Streetwise roll (+1 single roll/500 credits) |
| Bodyguard | 5,000 | Bodyguard | Free contact (employer) |
| Bounty Hunter | 12,000 | Bounty Hunter | Two personal weapons and armor |
| Con Artist | Smarts×500 | Notice d6+, Persuasion d6+ | +2 local Streetwise rolls. |
| Corporate Executive | 10,000 | Corporate Mogul, Rich | Bodyguard (Extra) |
| Crime Boss | 5,000 | Connections (Local Government), Rich, Bad Reputation (Major) | 1d6 Extras per session as back up. |
| Cutter | 5,000 | Street Doc | Owns a clinic |
| Escort | 1,000 + (Persuasion Die + Charisma)×150 | Attractive, Persuasion d8+ | Once per Rank receive gifts up to 5,000×Rank in value |
| Fixer | 11,000 | Fixer | Two additional contacts |
| Ganglander | 1,000 | Fighting d8+, Shooting d6+ | Free contact (gang member) |
| Gearhead | 5,000 | Ace, Driving d6+, Piloting d6+ | Free Vehicle Control Interface I |
| Infobroker | 7,000 | Smarts d8+, Investigator or Hacker, Investigation d8+, Streetwise d8+, | 5,000 credits at Character Creation |
| Jumpbike Racer | 3,000 | Ace, Driving d8+ | Owns a jump bike. |
| Layabout | None | None | None |
| Media Icon | 5,000 | Attractive, Reputation | Entourage (1d6 Extras) of helpers. |
| Mob Soldier | 3,000 | Fighting d6+, Intimidation d6+, Shooting d6+ | 1 extra Benny per session for Intimidation rolls. |
| Patrol Officer | 5,000 + (1d4×100) | Sector Cop | Patrol vehicle and a partner (Extra). |
| Pizza Delivery Driver | 1,000 + (1d4×100) | Driving d8+ | Free SAMBA Econoline electric car |
| Plain Clothes Cop | 2,000 | Alternate Identity, Streetwise d6+ | +1 to Notice Rolls |
| Private Investigator | 5,000 | Investigator | Two free contacts |
| Programmer | 5,000 | Smarts d6+, Hacking d6+, Knowledge (Programming) d6 | Free advanced firewall (+1 Firewall) |
| Race Queen | 1,000×Charisma | Attractive, Persuasion d6+ | +1 to Streetwise rolls, may add half your Charisma to the racer you're with |
| Reader | 2,000 + (500×Psionics die) | Peek, Notice d8+ | +1 Street Cred |
| Smuggler | 5,000 | Thief | Free vehicle worth 50,000 credits. |
| Street Cleaner | 7,000 | McGyver, Shooting d6+ | Free Reavenlocke Beachhead First Responder armor and handgun of choice |
| Taxi Driver | 2,500 + (1d6×100) | Driving d8+, Shooting d6+, Streetwise d8+ | +2 to Streetwise, vehicle, and car insurance |
| Virtual Racer | 2,000 + (Driving roll×100) | Driving d6+, Streetwise d6+ | Start with an Avatar |
| Waiter/Waitress | 1,000 (1d4 + Charisma) | Persuasion d6+, Streetwise d6+ | With positive Charisma the character will likely receive a gift worth 1d6×500 credits once a Rank |

# CHAPTER THREE: MALMART

# MALMART 2090 SPRING CATALOG

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/MALMART

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET/SPRING2090CATALOG

**Malbot267:** Malmart Happy New Year! 2090 is going to be a Bliz year for Malmart, and you! Malmart has broken the catalog into different pages. Set your TapPrefs, grab a cuppa, and access your funds, then select the category you want to peruse. Enjoy.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Let's hope this one is better than the 2088 catalog.

**#Magpie:** What happened to the 2089 catalog?

**#Simba:** I heard there was a hostile takeover of Malmart in 2089. The corporation didn't release anything new that year. They lost billions. Good news? This year's catalog has some great new toys, and some of the old favorites.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** We'll see.

# CORPORATIONS

**Malbot267:** Malmart is proud to bring you info on the suppliers for each of our product lines. Some produce nearly everything, such as Urban Punk, while others, focus on specific products. In this section, you'll find the descriptions of a few of the more powerful Manufacturers.

## ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS

*"Peace Through Overwhelming Firepower."*

For over thirty years, Act of God Armaments has been on the razor's edge of personal weapons and advanced weapon platform development. AGA's line of personal power armor suits represents their dedication to pushing the envelope when it comes to battlefield technology. AGA weaponry is Overwhelming Firepower, with the pinnacle of perfection being the Mjolnir AM Rifle.

## BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES

*"Innovation Squared."*

Based out of Flint, Michigan, Black Knight Industries is the GLU's premier weapons developer. For years, Black Knight has been at the forefront of personal weapons development. As of Q4 of 2089 Black Knight has been focused on providing cutting edge armors for today's independent contractor. Black Knight provides versatile armor, built to order. Built over the Mythralloy chain, with heavier plating, Black Knight armors have a real 'old school' feel to them.

### NANOWEAVE/NANOFLEX/MYTHRALLOY

Hostile Merger first introduced NanoWeave, the ultra light anti-ballistic fabric, as the answer to Kevlar. NanoFlex was Urban Punk's answer to NanoWeave. NanoWeave is a superior product, which is why the Executive Decision line of clothing is so thin. These fabrics are light and flexible until hit with kinetic energy, then the fibers react, preventing penetration and spreading the kinetic energy outward. Black Knight uses its own proprietary defense liners, an ultralight super alloy known as Mythralloy; it is used to create MythraMail.

## HOSTILE MERGER

*"Setting the trends in corporate protection clothing for over 50 years."*

For over fifty years, Hostile Merger has brought you the best in corporate protection clothing. At Hostile Merger, they understand the need to balance style with personal defense.

## EXECUTIVE DECISION

*"Executive Level Protection"*

This year, we are pleased to present the newest from "Executive Decision's" line of ballistic business suits! Utilizing the best Nano strengthened synthetics, Executive Decision is often imitated, never duplicated, but always seen in the office. From the cubicle to the board room, Executive Decision is a decision worth making.

## URBAN PUNK

*"Bringing Style to the Streets."*

Just jumped in to your gang and need to get hooked up with their colors? Lookin' to outfit your set with the newest trends in gangland fashion? Urban Punk has the scan on the streetware you'll need to set yourself apart from the pack. Urban Punk knows it's not just about superior ballistic armor, it's also about style. Who cares if your jacket can stop a bullet if you look like a last-week-scuzzer in the process?

The chicas and bubble babes won't care. So do yourself a favor tomo; check out our data feed or cruise down to one of our local Malmart outlets and hook yourself up with the latest flavor in street fashion. So don't just look like a punk, come correct with Urban Punk!

## BOMBS ON BROADWAY™

*"Bulletproof Elegance"*

The BombBabes and BombBoys know who Bombs on Broadway is; now Malmart is bringing you the most elegant armored clothing in the World. From the red carpet to the after parties, Bombs on Broadway™ delivers on target every time.

**#MinigunMax:** Only Gargoyles and corpsuckers wear this crap.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Speak for yourself. I like their stuff.

## RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES

*"Effective Law Enforcement at Competitive Prices."*

At Ravenlocke Securities, they recognize that felons are people too, and as such they are afforded certain rights under the law (subject to change pending passage of the Turner Network Corporate Defense Act). To ensure they survive to be brought to justice, Ravenlocke Industries continues to be the leader in the field of non-lethal weaponry. Our 2090 line of security gear represents years of development and testing in penal colonies both on and off-planet!

**#Payne Man:** Down with the cops!

## MARSWORKS ENGINEERING

*"Heavy Armor, Deadly Defense"*

Marsworks Engineering is the preeminent North American supplier for Military vehicles; tanks, hover tanks and jet aircraft. Marsworks developed their innovative armors during the race to Mars, rugged, and functional. Marsworks believes in redundant systems and a solid defense. Expect nothing less.

## CHERRY AUTOMOTIVE

*"Want to impress? Put a Cherry on top."*

Luxury is our goal. With Authentic Leather and REAL wood details, mixed with precious metals, and the finest craftsmanship, Cherry Automotive knows Luxury.

## SHOGUN OUTFITTERS

*"Perfection, quantified"*

Japanese Ingenuity at Malmart prices. Imported directly from the Techno Shogunate of Japan; the finest weapons, and armors, created by true artisans.

**#MinigunMax:** Meh. Just another Asian mega lookin' to cash in on the latest retro Japanese fashion trends.

**#Simba:** @Minigunmax: Their armor is SOTA omae. I don't care what it looks like.

## WASTELAND TRADERS

*"We bring quality goods to the wastelands so you don't have to."*

Planning your next run into the wastes? Don't leave your CribSec without the weapons you'll need to survive the trip! Wasteland Traders understands the dangers of life in the tox-zones and badlands. More importantly, they know what it takes to survive in a world where bio-horrors abound and the only law is kill or be killed. Wasteland Traders weapons are built to last and employ solar-powered energy cells so you don't have to worry about running out of juice!

**#Luciferion:** Strange catchphrase, but solid products.

**#Simba:** Yeah, I'm not sure what they mean by that.

## PRIVATE DICK FUTURE NOIR WEAR

*"Don't Just Be a Dick, Be a Private Dick"*

Hey Buddy, c'mere. Private Dick, the new line from Wasteland Traders, wear for the Urban Waste. If Noir is your game, then you need some Private Dick. Featuring all the classic clothing lines, manufactured with today's ballistic rated weaves. Next time a tall drink of water walks into your office, you need to be decked out in Future Noir because nothing says dick, like Private Dick.

## MISAWA, MEYERS, AND MORGAN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

*"Superior Results from Superior Research"*

Not everyone knows the name of Misawa, Meyers and Morgan, but nearly every piece of advance equipment uses some technology based upon M3's work. M3 researchers are constantly making breakthroughs in science, chemistry, biology, and weapons technology.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** I think they mean "Superior results from Corporate Espionage," because everything this company makes is a cheap knockoff of another company. I'm surprised Malmart lets them peddle their ware on this site.

## SENTINEL ROCK CORPORATION

*"Rock 'n Roll Gyroscopically."*

Sentinel Rock Corporation is pleased to present our newest line of personal and corporate weapons! Sentinel Rock's most prestigious weaponry is their line of Gyroc Pistols and Rifles. Explosives being their expertise, they of course are the leading manufacturers of rocket launchers and ground to air missile systems.

## SYNTHSYSTEMS

*"The Leader in Hyper Entertainment"*

SynthSystems brings you the absolute best in entertainment. No other MegaConglom can compete with SynthSystems. If entertainment drives the world, then the TAP is the car. SynthSystems brings you entertainment in all forms. Hyper Concert Console, HyperReality Role-playing games, HyperReality First Person Shooters, and the Holo Friend are all top sellers in the HyperAge!! "Come play with us!"

**#Neon Bright:** Sick-ass guitars.

**#Tinman:** I no rite? Jericho Rose gets all her gear from these guys.

**#Luciferion:** That's because SynthSystems has a rep for grinding other corps into the ground. Word is, Jericho's looking to break out of her contract and build her own systems.

**#Neon Bright:** Good luck with that.

## COMBAT ENGINEERING SYSTEMS

*"When it absolutely, positively needs to be destroyed by nine A.M."*

CES has everything you need for demolition work. Explosives, blasting caps shaping heads, etc. CES' quality is known worldover by every military, secfirm, and militia. Closed systems provide tamper resistant demo charges. So when you need it gone, we're there for you!

## LIGHT EMITTING NANITES (LEN)

Light Emitting Nanites are one of the most influential innovations of the 22nd century, below the TAP, of course, but a huge innovation, making stealth technology a hundred times easier. Holograms, or LENgrams, were huge until the TAP really took root, but 30 years ago the LENgrams were advertising, stepping off of walls, massive three dimensional billboards, constantly changing, but utilizing low power nanites. Most common usage today is in the GhostCoat™ Stealth system.

# ARMOR

### BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES GHOST SUIT

Black Knight's answer to the Shinobi Infiltrator suit. Introduced in 2089, this suit utilizes a Chameleon Cloaking Suite which includes high end processor program, tasked with using thousands of NanoCams and then translating that through the armor GhostCoat™ Light Emitting Nanite system to recreate their surroundings on the armor itself. The system includes aerosol heat dampers and noise canceling system, rendering the Ghost nearly invisible to visual detection. The noise canceling system assists in movement while stealthed!

- **GhostCoat Stealth System:** The ghost suit can change color to match the surrounding environment. This adds +4 to Stealth rolls versus visual detection but has no effect against electronic detection.

### BLACK KNIGHT GOLEMMECH COMBAT SURVIVAL SUIT

Black Knight Golemmech jockeys are nearly as valuable as the Golemmechs themselves. Protect your investment, by providing your pilots with a Golemmech Combat suit. Designed specifically for exposed cockpit Golemmechs.

- **Full Environmental:** Suits with full environmental are equipped with sensors to detect pollutants, and vacuum conditions and automatically activate. The system includes $CO_2$ scrubbers to purify the oxygen supply, and temperature regulation. Sealed suit provides immunity to toxins as long as it remains intact. A Wound resulting from a slashing or piercing attack will breach the suit.

### BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES KITE SHIELD

The Black Knight Kite Shield is made from heavy plates of CeraMite™. Designed to be attached directly to a suit of Black Knight Body Armor. The shield folds down into a compact block on the arm, popping open with a command from the TAP.

### BLACK KNIGHT ERRANT BODY ARMOR

Black Knight's initial foray into the personal armor market. Utilizing its patented Mythralloy MythraMail as its base armor, with CeraMite™ plating. The Knight Errant makes up the middle ground armor. With more CeraMite™ plating included, the Knight errant is a much beefier option than the Squire.

### BOMBS ON BROADWAY™ FORMAL WEAR

Bombs on Broadway™ brings you the ultimate in luxury formal wear. Utilizing the patented NanoWeave technology, Bombs on Broadway is able to provide formal wear in hundreds of styles, colors and of course patterns. Many of our formal dresses contain HoloTags, our most popular being angel wings, devil tails and of course FIRE!

A variety of options available from tuxedos, Full length gowns, and casual evening wear.

### BOMBS ON BROADWAY™ ARMORED CAPE

Bombs on Broadway™ brings back the cape. Enjoy a stylish cape which affords additional protection, and unparalleled style. We've even acquired access to restricted authentic fur in mink, fox, and chinchilla. Contact our representatives about additional furs we have in stock in limited supply.

### BASTION HEAVY DEFENSE BARRIER

At CES, we know how important well-trained personnel are. The Bastion Heavy Defends Shields are just the thing to protect your personnel, thus eliminating training times for new personnel. These heavy defense shields are assembled

Black Knight Ghost Suit

Bombs on Broadway™ Formal Wear

Fire HoloTag

Devil Tail HoloTag

Knight Erarant Body Armor

Heraldic HyperTag

TABLE 3.1: ARMOR

| TYPE (PERSONAL) | ARMOR | WEIGHT | COST | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| BKI Ghost Suit | +2 | 35 | 9,500 | Covers entire body; see description |
| BKI Golemmech Combat Survival Suit | +4 | 15 | 6,500 | Covers entire body; see description |
| BKI Knight Errant Body Armor | +4 | 32 | 10,000 | Covers entire body |
| BOB Armored Cape | +1 | 3 | 1,500+ | Covers torso, arms, legs |
| BOB Formal Wear | +2 | 5 | 2,500+ | Covers torso, arms, legs |
| ED Business Suit | +2 | 15 | 5,000 | Covers torso, arms, legs; concealed holster |
| ED Combat Vest | +2 | 4 | 3,000 | Covers torso |
| ED Entourage Suit | +3 | 5 | 8,000 | Covers torso, arms, legs; see description |
| ED UnderArmour | +1 | 1 | 1,500 | Covers torso, arms, legs; stacks with armor |
| PD Future Noir Wear | +3 | 8 | 6,000 | Covers torso, arms, legs; 50% vs head shot; see description |
| PD Urban Trench | +2 | 8 | 4,000 | Covers torso, arms, legs; see description |
| Peregrine Wingsuit | +1 | 5 | 4,000 | Cover entire body; 8:1 Glide ratio |
| RS Beachhead First Responder Armor | +4 | 24 | 5,000 | Covers entire body |
| RS Bulwark Crowd Control Armor | +6 | 20 | 12,000 | Covers entire body; includes riot shield |
| RS Justified Response Assault Armor | +6 | 15 | 37,000 | Covers entire body; see description |
| RS Raptor SpecOps Armor | +5 | 25 | 45,000 | Covers entire body; see description; military |
| RW Reinforced Biker Jacket | +3 | 8 | 1,000 | Covers torso, arms; M3 Impact System |
| SO Shinryu Impact Suit | +3 | 5 | 6,000 | Covers entire body; see description |
| SO Shinobi Infiltration Suit | +2 | 2 | 6,000 | Covers entire body; +2 Stealth; +1 Parry |
| UP Balaklava | +1 | — | 500 | Covers head, Stacks with armor |
| UP Combat Jacket | +2 | 8 | 2,000 | Covers torso, arms |
| UP Gecko Suit | +2 | 8 | 3,500 | Covers entire body; +2 Climbing |
| UP Hoodyz | +1 | 6 | 1,000 | Covers torso; 75% vs head shot |
| UP Street Soldier Combat Thredz | +1 | 8 | 2,000 | Covers torso, arms, legs |
| **TYPE (EXOARMOR)[1]** | **ARMOR** | **WEIGHT** | **COST** | |
| BKI Achilles | +4 | 36/180 | 120,000 | +2 Pace; Strength and Agility +1 die type |
| BKI Herakles | +6 | 60/300 | 80,000 | Strength +2 die types |
| BKI Mercury | +4 | 30/250 | 80,000 | +4 Pace; Running +1 die type; Agility +1 die type |
| BKI Venus | +4 | 25/125 | 100,000 | Strength and Agility +1 die type |
| Servo System | — | 30/250 | 50,000 | –1 Pace; Strength +2 die types; Load Limit ×8 |
| **TYPE (OTHER)** | **ARMOR** | **WEIGHT** | **COST** | |
| BKI Kite Shield | — | 10 | 2,000 | Medium shield, +1 Parry, +2 armor vs ranged attacks |
| CES Bastion Heavy Defends Shields | +20 | 300 | 50,000 | 10-foot long barrier |

[1]Weight listed: worn/deactivated.

in 3 man teams. When assembled, it creates a barrier which can be used as cover. These are not man-portable, it takes 10 minutes to erect a BHDS. The shield comes in a case with the shield in 4 parts, the case itself acting as an assembly frame, and 4 set-bolts to keep the barrier in place. Law Enforcement representatives, contact us for special pricing.

- Creates a 10 foot wide barrier

### EXECUTIVE DECISION BUSINESS SUIT

Plan your next corporate takeover in style and comfort without sacrificing protection from armor piercing rounds! The Executive Decision line of armored suits provides comfortable, stylish protection you can depend on! Our custom tailored suits will stop low caliber rounds, blunt those pesky knife attacks and most importantly, won't make you stand out in the boardroom. As a bonus, the suit is designed to hold and conceal a small pistol or knife in the sleeve (–2 to Notice rolls to detect a concealed item), so you can quickly respond to an attacker and still maintain that all important corporate image.

### EXECUTIVE DECISION COMBAT VEST

Who says personal security guards need to look like storm troopers? Our Executive Decision combat vest features 4 layers of NanoWeave, providing additional protection in Hostile Environments, from corporate espionage, to a hostile takeover, to your performance review, be ready for anything with the Executive Decision Combat Vest.

The vest fits comfortably under business suits, so your security entourage doesn't draw unwanted attention when you're out on the town.

### EXECUTIVE DECISION ENTOURAGE SUIT

Need high quality defense for your Entourage without having them look like they stepped out of the catalog for Black Knight Armaments? Keep a low profile at high profile meetings. Thin Ceramique™ plating protects vital organs. Not compatible with ED Combat Vest. Suit includes ballistic shades (+1 Armor, eyes), and subvocal communication array included.

## DESIGN NOTES

Veteran *Savage Worlds/Interface Zero 2.0* players might note that Kevlar is missing. This is intentional. To provide the best play experience possible, under the Fast, Fun, and Furious! premise, less math mid combat is good. Reducing Armor Penetration values and calculating between Bullets, vs. knives, vs. edged, on every single piece of gear is tedious, and slows down play. Thus we slightly increased high end armor. So sit back and enjoy the ride.

### EXECUTIVE DECISION UNDERARMOUR

Whether it's a night on the town, a walk to the men's room, or a corporate merger, that additional layer of NanoWeave might be the only thing between the emergency room and the morgue. UnderArmour, top of the line protection for your bottom line.

### PEREGRINE WINGSUIT

A wingsuit, allows skydivers to extend the distance from their jump point. Used by many special forces and mercenary teams for dark operations. With a 8:1 glide ratio, the Peregrine wingsuit allows for border insertions from just outside territorial borders to just inside with a 2 mile drop.

### PRIVATE DICK URBAN TRENCH

Private Dick's premier showpiece the Urban Trench features heavy cowl providing extra protection for the torso. Complete your Noir ensemble with a Private Dick Urban Trench. Utilizing a Light Emitting Nanite system on the fabric, similar in function to a Chameleon cloak but with a dozen preset patterns, to allow tailing a mark without being so easy to spot.

The coat also comes with a custom built shoulder holster (–2 to Notice rolls to detect a concealed weapon) and an internal long pocket, allowing the concealment of rifles, shotguns, etc. (–1 to Notice rolls).

### PRIVATE DICK FUTURE NOIR WEAR

Detective work is dangerous, ask anyone. When you go pokin' your nose where it doesn't belong, sometimes you get shot. Private Dick helps you survive those attacks in style. With the Built-in forensics lab, with ClueMaster™ software, the littlest clue could break the case wide open.

It includes a custom built shoulder holster (–2 to Notice rolls to detect hold-out weaponry) and VariWeave which allows you to change the suit's colors and patterns, (+2 Stealth when shadowing).

### RAVENLOCKE BEACHHEAD FIRST RESPONDER ARMOR

RI's first responder armor is used by primary back-up units, first responders are linked to the "officer down" system, they know they need to be ready when it hits the fan. Includes an internal communications array, with "officer down" biosensor uplink and shoulder-mount camcorder with uplink.

### RAVENLOCKE BULWARK CROWD CONTROL ARMOR

Bridging the gap between personal armor and power armor, this servo assisted armor provides amazing defensive capabilities specifically suited to riot control, and dispersal. When the mobs coming to town, send em pack'n. Multiple non-lethal crowd control systems included. The armor has an internal communications array, with "officer down" biosensor uplink and shoulder-mount camcorder with uplink. Also, comes with a riot shield.

- **Riot Shield:** (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs ranged attacks)

### RAVENLOCKE JUSTIFIED RESPONSE ASSAULT ARMOR

Bridging the gap between personal armor and power armor, this servo assisted armor provides amazing defensive and offensive capabilities. When the bad guys won't come out to play, take the fun to them. Comes with combat balaklava, combat helmet, and gas mask. Includes combat knife quick-release inverted sheath (free action to ready), knife sold separately.

Peregrine Wingsuit

Ravenlocke Beachhhead firest responder Armor

Ravenlocke Justified Response Assault Armor

### Ravenlocke Raptor SpecOps Armor

Ravenlocke has contracts with most North American and several South American countries for this specific armor. The "medic!" Emergency response system is designed to deal with the trauma associated with life-threatening injuries, utilizing integrated smart fabrics, adrenal injections, and a smartdoc program. The smartdoc program provides an Incapacitated soldier, gains +4 on the Incapacitation roll (see *Savage Worlds* core rules). Includes combat balaklava, combat helmet, and gas mask.

- **Weapons:** 25mm Grenade Launcher (Range 12/24/48; Damage by grenade; Shots 1; wrist mount)

### Road Wear Reinforced Biker Jacket

There's nothing as hella gleam as a motorcycle jacket when you're on the road…until you get your punk ass shot. Bullets just tear through a good leather jacket like it was toilet paper, and that's just not chill. At Road Wear, we feel your pain. So we've designed an authentic-looking biker jacket from genuine synthleather, but with a reinforced nanoweave and ceramic plates inserted to protect the vital areas of your torso. Our reinforced biker jacket gives you all the freedom of movement you'd want, but with enough protection to keep you riding. With road wear, you are a road warrior!

### Shogun Outfitters Shinryu Impact Suit

Shogun does it again! Now providing the best defense at 200 mph. The Shinryu Impact Suit provides crash protection for the combat rider. Utilizing the M3 absorption technology, crash survival is greatly enhanced (collision damage reduce by 1 die).

### Shogun Outfitters Shinobi Infiltration Suit

Need an edge on your next infiltration of a rival megacorp? Outfit your shikaku with the Shinobi Infiltration suit. The Shinobi Infiltration Suit enhances stealth, through a revolutionary noise canceling system (+2 to Stealth rolls), while maximizing protection of vital organs. Form-fitting ballistic plating covers the torso, groin, face arms and legs. The reinforced vambraces provide a +1 Parry.

### Urban Punk Combat Jacket

Grease your rival gang in style with the Urban Punk Combat Jacket! Now with a dozen standard colors, Urban punk expands the buckled jacket line with additional styles. Comes with an integrated concealed holster (–2 to Notice rolls to visually detect concealed weapon).

### Urban Punk Gecko Suit

Nothing climbs better than a gecko, except maybe the Gecko Climbing Suit. Utilizing amazing nano-tubes, the smallest imperfection allows the suit to stick (+2 to Climbing rolls). Climb glass buildings in the rain after oil wrestling, it's that easy!

### Urban Punk Hoodyz

Roll with style and protection, with Urban Punk Hoodyz. Part of the Combat Thredz line, our hoodyz cover you from head to toe, add a Urban Punk Balaklava for even more protection.

### Urban Punk Balaklava

Nothing, but nothing, strikes fear in the untrained as the ski-mask look. Also protects your identity, especially important when participating in some illicit activities eh tomo?

### UrbanPunk Street Soldier Combat Thredz™

Punks, you asked for it, now you got it. The Urban Punk Street Soldier Combat Thredz™ line expands. More options are now available from snaz pants, to some janky shirts with a concealed rear holster (–2 to Notice rolls to visual detect weapon).

## ExoArmor

An ExoSuit is hopped up body armor, with Strength and Agility enhancement systems, designed to boost the abilities of the wearer. Currently, only Black Knight is offering these units, though Ravenlocke Securities and Shogun Outfitters plan on releasing their own versions in late Spring.

All exoarmor must be charged 1 hour out of every 24 hours of use.

Ravenlocke Raptor Spec Ops Armor

Black Knight Industries Hearkles ExoArmor

Black Knight Industries Mercury ExoArmor

### BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES ACHILLES EXOARMOR

The Achilles is the top end ExoArmor from Black Knight. Named after the Greek hero, this suit will boost the combat abilities of any combatant.

- **Enhancements:** +2 Pace, Strength and Agility +1 die type

### BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES HERAKLES EXOARMOR

The Herakles is the state of the art Exo-suit from Black Knight Industries. The Herakles is a powerful suit of ExoArmor; its systems designed to increase the overall power of the ExoArmor.

- **Enhancements:** Strength +2 die types

### BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES MERCURY EXOARMOR

The Mercury is an ExoArmor suit emphasizing speed over power, the systems designed to greatly improve the Agility of the wearer.

- **Enhancements:** +4 Pace, Running +1 die type, Agility +1 die type

### BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES VENUS EXOARMOR

The Venus is an ExoArmor suit designed by women, for women, increasing both their Strength and Agility on the battlefield!

### SERVO SYSTEM

A ServoSystem is a partial exoskeleton utilizing a power cell backpack to power a hydraulic boost system. The exoskeleton was originally designed to assist disabled persons, now the hydraulic power is being used to boost the strength of a user. The system attaches to wrists, elbows, neck, waist, knees and ankles, it does include reinforced gloves and boots for the full body system. The batteries provide enough power for 4 hours of continuous operation. (The Battery power pack includes 4 batteries for full system, 2 for upper body, 2 for lower body.) The system may not be adapted to armor systems.

ServoSystem

# COMMUNICATIONS

### COMSCIENCE SCT

Keep your information private with a ComScience Secure Communications Transmitter device! The device compresses all data at 1:1,000 rates, so a minute of audio or video fits into less than a tenth of a second. Impossible to isolate or eavesdrop, even without additional encryption! A burst transmitter sends out data in short, high-density pulses, making it hard to pinpoint the source of a signal before it finishes. However, the very density of the pulse does make it "brighter" than normal communication chatter — your foes may not be able to listen in, but they'll almost certainly notice that someone is transmitting in the general area. It has a range of 1.5 miles.

### COMSCIENCE MTS

Now being fully wired in doesn't mean you have to carry an awkward handset, or look like a geek with an ear-bud. The MTS sticks to your skin behind either ear (–4 to Notice rolls to spot visually), and is a fully-functional audio transmitter-receiver, with a 10 yard range. Available in a variety of skin tones. Each is good for 12 hours of use, and when you're done just toss it in the trash!

### COMSCIENCE SMS

Sometimes you don't want everyone hearing what you have to say. The Subvocal Microphone System combines Comscience micro-transmitter technology with state-of-the-art subvocal voice recognition. Just stick it to your throat by the larynx, and your slightest whisper becomes clear audio signal! Fully compatible with the Comscience MTS for an invisible, hands-free communication system! Note this unit only transmits, it cannot receive.

### DIANSHENG INDUSTRIES "PIYIN"

Top-quality stick-on communicator blends automatically with any surface. The color-changing material matches whatever surface it's attached to (–4 to Notice rolls to spot visually). The Piyin is solar-powered; so it works indefinitely as long as it gets a hour of sunlight per day. Designed to have an effective range of 100 yards, but also can be configured to run off a local network.

### INDIAN SPECIAL FORCES COMMUNICATOR

The same rugged, high-security transmitter used by India's legendary Garud Commando Force, now available thanks to a container that got misrouted to Singapore. The communicator includes military-grade encryption software, time-delay broadcast, an emergency beacon, and effective range of 3 miles. They don't make 'em better than these!

TABLE 3.2: COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

| ITEM | COST | WEIGHT |
|---|---|---|
| Comscience Sct | 5,000 | 0.1 |
| Comscience Mts | 500 | — |
| Comscience Sms | 5,000 | — |
| Diansheng Industries "Piyin" | 1,000 | — |
| Indian Special Forces Communicator | 10,000 | 0.5 |

# CYBERWARE

There are two ways to choose cybernetics in *Interface Zero 2.0*. You can choose you cybernetics piece by piece using the Master Augments List, or you can choose an augmentation package. All packages are considered Streetware grade.

## Augmentation Packages

### CELEBRITY PACKAGE

*Be the life of the party, the most charismatic person in the room, this package will make your allies love you, your enemies fear you, and everyone respect you!*

- **Augmentations:** Beautification Treatment, Emotional Resistance Response System, Tailored Pheromones

### GUNSLINGER PACKAGE

*Nerves of steel, reflexes like lightning, the aim of a legend. All of these can be yours with the Gunslinger package, the preferred choice of Snipers and Assassins the world over.*

- **Augmentations:** Smartgun System, Fight or Flight System

### PRO SPORT ATHLETE PACKAGE

*Rise above the competition, with this package which will enhanced your athletic ability in every way! Leave your opponents in the dust!*

- **Augmentations:** Cyberlegs Ligament Enhancement, Enhanced Articulation, Muscle Augmentation

### SHOCK TROOPER PACKAGE

*Be the lord of the battlefield, watch your enemies look in fear as you shrug off attacks, and return fire with extreme prejudice! The Shock Trooper Package is just the thing for the would be Mercenary who wants to impress!*

- **Augmentations:** Bone Reinforcement, Cyberlegs Ligament Enhancement, Lifesaver System, Muscle Augmentation, Trauma Suppressor

### SPY PACKAGE

*Breaking, entering, and exploring places you're not suppose to has never been easier! With the spy package you can infiltrate and extract with ease!*

- **Augmentations:** Cyberarm Fingerprint Duplicator And Lockpicking Kit, Cyberears Amplified Hearing, Enhanced Articulation I, Skill Computer

### STREET WARRIOR PACKAGE

*The Street Warrior System is the perfect entry level package for those trying to survive the mean inner city streets of 2090!*

- **Augmentations:** Cyberweapon, Fight or Flight, Muscle Augmentation

### SURVIVOR PACKAGE

*Dropped into the Outback? Climbing Mount Everest? Hunting in the Arctic Circle? All Cake walk with this package, designed to prepare you for any environment!*

- **Augmentations:** Anti-Toxin System, Environmental Regulators

## Master Augment List

### AUGMENT COSTS

The cost of a given augment is determined by the type of grade you wish to purchase. There are four grades; Gutterware, Streetware, Hyperchrome, and Milware. Each grade has a base cost. To determine the final cost, multiply the base cost by the Strain of the augment. The result is the monetary amount you need to spend to get said augment. Here's a chart of the base cost for each grade to help you quickly figure out the final cost of any given augment.

TABLE 3.3: AUGMENT GRADES AND COSTS

| GRADE | BASE COST |
|---|---|
| Gutterware | 1,000 credits |
| Streetware | 5,000 credits |
| Hyperchrome | 25,000 credits |
| Milware | 125,000 credits |

### ANTI-TOXIN SYSTEM

The character's liver is enhanced to process toxins more effectively, while nanite colonies are implanted in the blood stream programmed to lock onto foreign chemical substances and remove them. The ATS gives a character +2 to resist poisons.

### BEAUTIFICATION TREATMENT

Beautification gives the character +2 Charisma.

### BIOFEEDBACK

Biofeedback increases the character's Spirit by a die type.

### BIOFEEDBACK, ADVANCED

Advanced Biofeedback increases the character's Spirit by two die types.

### BONE REINFORCEMENT I–III

A bone reinforcement provides +1 Toughness per level.

### CYBERLIMBS AND CYBER EYES

Cyberlimbs are designed to be modular, costing a number of points of Strain equal to the number of modules the limb can hold. So a cyberlimb with 2 Strain could hold 2 augment modules, a cyberlimb with 3 Strain could hold 3 modules, etc. The credit cost of the cyberlimb includes the acquisition of the module(s). To determine the credit cost of a limb, multiple the strain by the grade.

Some modules are designed for specific body parts, e.g. a leg, an arm, or an eye. Each module has a location entry so you know at a glance which module goes where. The head is always considered a limb for purposes of installing cybernetic ears or eyes.

TABLE 3.4: AUGMENT LIST

| AUGMENTATION PACKAGES | STRAIN | NOTES |
|---|---|---|
| Celebrity Package | 5 | See description |
| Gunslinger Package | 5 | See description |
| Pro Sport Athlete Package | 6 | See description |
| Shock Trooper Package | 10 | See description |
| Spy Package | 5 | See description |
| Street Warrior Package | 5 | See description |
| Survivor Package | 2 | See description |
| **MASTER AUGMENT LIST** | **STRAIN** | **NOTES** |
| Anti-Toxin System | 1 | +2 to Resist Poison |
| Beautification Treatment | 2 | +2 Charisma |
| Biofeedback | 2 | Spirit die raised by 1 type |
| Biofeedback, Advanced | 3 | Spirit die raised by 2 types |
| Bone Reinforcement I–III | 2/level | +1 Toughness/level |
| Cyberlimb, 1 Module | 1 | See modules |
| Cyberlimb, 2 Modules | 2 | See Modules |
| Cyberlimb, 3 Modules | 3 | See Modules |
| Cybernose, Chemical Sniffer | 1 | +2 Notice rolls based on scent |
| Cybergills | 1 | Amphibious |
| Cyberlungs I | 1 | 30 minute air supply |
| Cyberlungs II | 2 | 60 minute air supply |
| Cyberskull, Protean | 2 | –2 Penalty to Notice rolls to I.D. character |
| Cyberskull, Enforcer | 3 | +2 bonus to Intimidation rolls, +1 supplemental armor (head) |
| Cyberweapon | 1 | Str+d4 damage, always considered armed |
| Cyberweapon, Improved | 2 | Str+d6 damage, always considered armed, see notes |
| Cyberweapon, Advanced | 3 | Str+d8 damage, always considered armed, see notes |
| Data Carrier | 1 | Implanted and secured non-wireless hard disk |
| Drug Reservoir | 2 | Holds 3 doses of one substance, see description |
| Emotional Resistance Response System | 1 | +2 to Smarts or Spirit rolls in a Test of Will |
| EMP Shielding, Basic | 1 | +2 Armor versus EMP weapons |
| EMP Shielding, Advanced | 2 | +4 Armor versus EMP weapons |
| Enhanced Neural Net | 2 | Smarts die raised by 1 type |
| Enhanced Neural Net, Advanced | 3 | +4 Armor versus EMP weapons |
| Environmental Regulators | 1 | +2 to Survival rolls for 1 type of environment |
| Enhanced Articulation | 2 | Agility die raised by 1 type |
| Enhanced Articulation, Advanced | 3 | Agility die raised by 2 types |
| Fight or Flight System | 2 | Grants the Quick Edge |
| Knowcomp | 1 | Gives a skill at d6 or specialization |
| Knowcomp, Advanced | 2 | Gives a skill at d8 or 2 specializations in one skill |
| Lifesaver System | 2 | +2 to Vigor for natural healing |
| Lifesaver system, Advanced | 3 | Only bleeds after 3 turns |
| Muscle Augmentation | 2 | Strength die is raised by 1 type |
| Muscle Augmentation, Advanced | 3 | Strength die is raised by 2 types |
| Nanoweave Organ System | 2 | Vigor die is raised by 1 type |
| Nanoweave Organ System, Advanced | 3 | Vigor die is raised by 2 types |
| Personal Airbags | 1 | Half damage from falling and crashes |
| Reinforced Exoskeleton | 1 | Encumbrance value rises to Strength ×8 |
| Smartgun System | 1 | Shooting roll Wild Die is a d8 (Extras gain a d4) |
| Smartgun System, Advanced | 2 | Shooting roll Wild Die is a d10 (Extras gain a d6) |
| Subdermal Armor | 1 | +1 supplemental armor on all locations |
| Subdermal Armor, Advanced | 2 | +2 supplemental armor on all locations |
| Tactical Computer | 3 | Draws an extra Action Card and uses the best result |
| Tactical System Radio | 2 | Can share bennies with allies within 25." |

| MASTER AUGMENT LIST | STRAIN | NOTES |
|---|---|---|
| Tailored Pheromones | 2 | +2 bonus Charisma with sentient organic beings |
| Trauma Suppressor | 2 | Ignore 1 level of Wound penalties, see description |
| Vehicle Control Interface I–III | 2/level | See description |
| Wireless Reflexes I–III | 2/level | +1 Parry, enemies suffer –1 penalty to hit at range/level |
| **CYBERLIMB MODULES** | **LOCATION** | **NOTES** |
| Amplified Hearing | Ears | +2 to Notice rolls involving sound |
| Breaching System | Arm | +2 Damage in barehanded Fighting rolls |
| Chemical Injector | Hand | Store 3 doses of up to 3 compounds see description |
| Cyberlegs, Aquatic | Legs | +2 to Swimming Rolls, +2 Pace underwater |
| Cyberlegs, Ligament Enhancement | Legs | Adds 4" to Pace |
| Cyberlegs, Stabilization System | Legs | Negates unstable platform penalties |
| Drone Hand | Hand | Hand is a drone see description |
| Cyber Tools | Arm | +2 Repair rolls for each Repair skill specialization |
| Enhanced Vision | Eyes | Halves penalty for Medium and Long Range |
| Fingerprint Duplicator / Lockpicking Kit | Hand | +2 to Lockpicking rolls |
| Firearm | Arm | Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6; ROF: 1; Shots 10 |
| Firearm; Automatic | Arm | Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6; ROF: 3; Shots 30 |
| Firearm; Heavy | Arm | Range 12/24/48; Damage 3d6; ROF: 1; Shots 10 |
| Flash Compensators | Eyes | +4 to resist flash based attacks |
| Gecko Hands | Hands | Gain Wall Walker monstrous ability |
| Infra/Ultra Optics | Eyes | Gain Infravision monstrous ability |
| Kangaroo System | Legs | Double jump distance |
| Motion Detector | Ears | +2 Notice during "Last Step", see description |
| Night Vision Optics | Eyes | Gain Low Light Vision monstrous ability |
| Recoil Compensation | Arm | Removes 2 penalty points from auto-fire |
| Reflexive Strike Module | Arm or Leg | Gain Counterattack Edge |

### CYBERNOSE, CHEMICAL SNIFFER

The character is capable of detecting individual chemicals even better than a drug sniffing police dog. With proper training and skill, the character can identify explosives, narcotics or a host of other things. The character gains +2 to all scent based Notice rolls.

### CYBERGILLS

Cybergills render a character Amphibious! They can now breathe underwater just as well as on land! Aquatic hybrids do not benefit from this augment.

### CYBER LUNG I

Cyber lungs provide the character with an internal Air tank capable of holding 30 minutes of oxygen, allowing the character to breathe underwater or survive in environments in which the air has been polluted.

### CYBER LUNG II

Cyber lungs provide the character with an internal Air tank capable of holding an hour's worth of oxygen. The character can run completely off this oxygen supply when underwater, or surrounded by a deadly aerosol toxin for instance.

### CYBERSKULL, PROTEAN

The characters skull contains numerous small nano plates that allow him to modify his face, making him harder to recognise in a crowd. The nano plates are constantly shifting, changing his appearance once every 4 hours. People looking for him suffer a –2 penalty to Notice checks to recognize the character.

### CYBERSKULL, ENFORCER

This replacement hardens the edges of the character's face giving her a more brutal aspect granting a +2 bonus to Intimidation attempts and +1 Supplemental Armor due to the bulky construction. The downside is that due to it's obvious nature the character looks at best thuggish. As a result an Extra's attitude from the Reaction table is at best "Neutral".

### CYBERWEAPON

A Cyberweapon is a small melee weapon that does Str+d4 damage and allows the character to be considered always "armed". Examples could be titanium claws, a reinforced forearm or a blade that is always visible.

### CYBERWEAPON, IMPROVED

An Improved Cyberweapon is a medium melee weapon that allows the character to be considered always "armed" and does Str+d6 damage or Str+d4 and has some sort of bonus. Example bonuses include being retractable, Reach 1, Shock damage (Vigor roll at –2 or automatically Shaken, or +1 Parry. Examples could be a whip (Str+d4, Reach 1), a garrote (Str+d4, retractable), a Taser (Str+d4, Non-lethal, EMP) or a retractable blade (Str+d4, Retractable).

### CYBERWEAPON, ADVANCED

An Advanced Cyberweapon is a heavy melee weapon that allows the character to be considered always "armed" and does Str+d8 damage. However, for each damage die it's reduced, it has some sort of bonus. Example bonuses include being retractable, AP1, Reach 1, or +1 Parry. Examples could

be a Flail (Str+d6, ignores shields) or a retractable long blade (Str+d6, retractable).

### DATA CARRIER

The data carrier allows the character to download virtually any amount of Data to a secured, non-wireless hard drive implanted within the character's body. The data carrier enhancement can be implanted anywhere on the character's body and concealed. The only way to release the Data is through a wired access port and the appropriate code.

### DRUG RESERVOIR

Your body contains a vat-grown gland which naturally produces a combat drug of your choice. It is a simple mental command to flood your body with the drug's effects. You can hold up to 3 doses within the reservoir, and your body naturally refills one dose within 24 hours. You're still capable of becoming addicted and suffer all side-effects of the drug, though with the ability to naturally produce it, you shouldn't have to worry about running out any time soon!

### EMOTIONAL RESISTANCE RESPONSE SYSTEM

The ERRS imparts a +2 bonus to Smarts and Spirit rolls when resisting a Test of Wills.

### EMP SHIELDING, BASIC

The character is shielded against the debilitating effects of an emp weapon. The character's tap and cybernetics gains +2 armor for the purposes of resisting damage from an emp weapon.

### EMP SHIELDING, ADVANCED

The character is shielded against the debilitating effects of an emp weapon. The character's tap and cybernetics gains +4 armor for the purposes of resisting damage from an EMP weapon.

### ENHANCED NEURAL NET

Extra neural tissue and cultures are grown, then applied to the recipient's brain tissue. Neurons are coated with an extra conductive substance allowing faster firing time. The character raises their Smarts by 1 die type.

### ENHANCED NEURAL NET, ADVANCED

Extra neural tissue and cultures are grown, then applied to the recipient's brain tissue. Neurons are coated with an extra conductive substance allowing faster firing time. The character raises their Smarts by 2 die types.

### ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATORS

The character gains +2 to Survival rolls for a single type of environment (hot/cold weather environments, wastelands, etc). This can be taken multiple times, each time applying to a different type of environment.

### ENHANCED ARTICULATION

Enhanced articulation increases the character's Agility die type by a step.

### ENHANCED ARTICULATION, ADVANCED

Advanced enhanced articulation increases the character's Agility die type by two steps.

### FIGHT OR FLIGHT SYSTEM

Fight or Flight grants the Quick Edge.

### KNOWCOMP™

A Knowcomp™ allows the user to access a skill of their choice at a d6 or a single specialization of an existing skill. This skill can only be raised by upgrading to the improved or advanced skill computer. This augment can be taken multiple times, each time applying to a different skill.

### KNOWCOMP™, IMPROVED

A Knowcomp™ allows the user to access a skill of their choice at a d8, or gain two specializations of a skill they already know. This skill can only be raised by upgrading to the advanced skill computer. This augment can be taken multiple times, each time applying to a different skill.

### LIFESAVER SYSTEM

The lifesaver system reinforces the character's organs, adds nanites which can repair tissue and similar enhancements to stabilize the owner and help them heal faster. The lifesaver system adds +2 to Vigor when checking for natural healing.

### LIFESAVER SYSTEM, ADVANCED

The latest generation of nanites in this lifesaver system work to limit blood loss using new Platetech™ technologies. A character with this augment only starts to bleed from an injury after three turns.

### MUSCLE AUGMENTATION

Muscle Augmentation increases the character's Strength die type by a step.

### MUSCLE AUGMENTATION, ADVANCED

Advanced Muscle Augmentation increases the character's Strength die type by two steps.

### NANOWEAVE ORGAN SYSTEM

The Nanoweave Organ System increases the character's Vigor die type by a step.

### NANOWEAVE ORGAN SYSTEMS, ADVANCED

The Advanced Nanoweave Organ System increases the character's Vigor die type by two steps!

### PERSONAL AIRBAGS

You take half damage from falls and crashes.

### REINFORCED EXOSKELETON

The character increases their encumbrance value from Strength ×5 to Strength ×8.

### SMARTGUN SYSTEM

A smartgun system improves the Wild Die that is available to a Wild Card character, raising the type to a d8 for Shooting rolls only. In the case of a non-wild card character they may roll a d4.

### SMARTGUN SYSTEM, ADVANCED

A smartgun system improves the Wild Die that is available to a Wild Card character, it acts as a wild die in all cases and

matters but raises the type to a d10. In the case of a non-wild card character they may roll a d6.

### SUBDERMAL ARMOR

Subdermal armor gives the character an additional +1 supplemental armor on all body locations.

### SUBDERMAL ARMOR, ADVANCED

Advanced subdermal armor gives the character an additional +2 Supplemental Armor on all body locations.

### TACTICAL COMPUTER

Characters with a tactical computer draw an additional action card, and act on the best result.

### TACTICAL SYSTEM RADIO

Characters with the tactical system radio can share bennies with others who also have a tactical system radio. Tactical system radios can broadcast for miles, but they can only share Bennies within an effective range of 25".

### TAILORED PHEROMONES

Tailored pheromones provide a +2 bonus to Charisma when dealing with organic sentient beings.

### TRAUMA SUPPRESSOR

The trauma suppressor system allows the character to ignore 1 level of wound penalties. This system comes with a downside, however. The character becomes completely unaware of just how bad their wounds are beyond being able to look at them. At the end of each scene where a trauma suppressor was activated and the character engaged in combat or other strenuous activity while injured, have the character make a Vigor roll. On a failed roll, the character takes an additional wound as their actions have worsened the wounds they've already taken.

### VEHICLE CONTROL INTERFACE I-III

The VCI is a series of neural transceivers and nerve enhancements placed throughout the body which provide an even greater control over vehicles. Each level of the VCI imparts a number of control slots based on the user's Smarts. Control slots are explained in the setting rules chapter on page 286.

Additionally, each level of the VCI gives the user +1 to all vehicle operation rolls, as the closer connection to the vehicle imparts greater control. Level one also allows the vehicle's acceleration to multiply by 1.5, while two and three double a vehicle's acceleration. Additionally, level three allows the driver to ignore the unstable platform penalty when firing vehicle mounted weaponry.

### WIRELESS REFLEXES I-III

Each level of wireless reflexes raises a character's Parry by +1, and imposes a –1 penalty to attackers trying to target them with ranged attacks.

### /// BEGIN MODULE LIST ///

### AMPLIFIED HEARING

Adds a +2 bonus to Notice rolls involving sound.

- **Location:** Ears

## SUPPLEMENTAL ARMOR

Some Augmentations provide additional Armor, such as subdermal armor — this is referred to as Supplemental Armor. It works the same as Armor in *Savage Worlds*, with one change. If a character has multiple sources of Supplemental Armor, only the highest value counts. Then the highest value of Supplemental Armor a character has stacks with the highest value of Armor worn.

### BREACHING SYSTEM

Originally designed to bring down walls, the arm adds +2 damage to a successful bare-handed Fighting roll.

- **Location:** Arm

### CHEMICAL INJECTOR

The characters fingers come equipped with retractable syringes. The character can store 3 separate compounds within their arm, for 3 full doses. The character can administer to himself as a free action, however, if he wishes to use it in combat, the character must succeed in an unarmed Fighting roll and do enough damage to at least Shake the target. Chemicals, drugs, poison, or viruses must be purchased separately.

- **Location:** Hand

### CYBERLEGS, AQUATIC

The character receives +2 to all Swimming rolls and +2" Pace underwater.

- **Location:** Legs

### CYBERLEGS; LIGAMENT ENHANCEMENT

Ligament Enhancement adds 4" to the character's Pace.

- **Location:** Legs

### CYBERLEGS, STABILIZATION SYSTEM

The Stabilization System negates the unstable platform penalty.

- **Location:** Legs

### DRONE HAND

The character's hand is capable of detaching and becoming a spider-like drone controlled wirelessly (using 1 control slot). The drone comes equipped with a camera allowing the character to view what the drone see's through their TAP. When the drone hand is detached, your character suffers from the One Hand Hindrance.. In combat, the drone hand is an Extra with the following stats:

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Lockpicking d6, Notice d4, Stealth d8
**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 3
**Special Abilities**

- **Alertness:** Drone Hands add +2 to their Notice.
- **Construct:** Drone Hands add +2 to recover from being Shaken and are immune to poison and disease. Drone Hands cannot heal naturally. To heal a Drone

Hand requires the Repair skill — which is used like the Healing skill only with no "Golden Hour."

- **EMP Vulnerability:** Drone Hands suffer full damage from EMP Weapons.
- **Size –2:** It's a hand.
- **Small:** Attackers are –2 to attack rolls.
- **Video Uplink:** The as an Action the character can link into the drone hand's video to see what the drone sees, within the character's Smarts in miles.

### CYBER TOOLS

The arm is equipped with a basic set of tools. The character enjoys a +2 to Repair rolls for each Repair skill specialization.

- **Location:** Arm

### ENHANCED VISION

The character's eyes can function like a scope, halving penalties for Medium and Long Range.

- **Location:** Eyes

### FINGERPRINT DUPLICATOR AND LOCKPICKING KIT

The arm is equipped with a basic set of Lockpicks, and is capable of duplicating the fingerprints of any sample they're able to download. This grants a +2 bonus to all Lockpicking rolls.

- **Location:** Hand

### FIREARM

This weapon is implanted in the limb.

- **Weapon:** Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6; ROF 1; Shots 10
- **Location:** Arm

### FIREARM; AUTOMATIC

This weapon is implanted in the limb.

- **Weapon:** Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6; ROF 3; Shots 30
- **Location:** Arm

### FIREARM; HEAVY

This weapon is implanted in the limb.

- **Weapon:** Range 12/24/48; Damage 3d6; ROF 1; Shots 10, Min Str d8
- **Location:** Arm

### FLASH COMPENSATORS

Flash covers give a +4 bonus to resist flash based attacks.

- **Location:** Eyes

### GECKO HANDS

Gecko Hands give the character the Wall Walker Monstrous Ability, allowing the character to move up vertical surfaces at their normal Pace.

- **Location:** Hand (must be implanted in both hands)

### INFRA/ULTRA OPTICS

The retina is replaced to enable vision into the ultraviolet and infrared spectrums, and the brain is changed to be able to perceive colors that don't exist in the standard visible spectrum. The character gains the benefits of the Infravision monstrous ability.

- **Location:** Eyes

### KANGAROO SYSTEM

The character doubles the distance they can jump, allowing her to move 2" horizontally and 1" vertically from a dead stop, or up to 4" horizontally and 2" vertically if she runs at least half her Pace.

- **Location:** Legs

### MOTION DETECTION

The character gets a +2 bonus to Notice rolls during the "Last Step" (see stealth in *Savage Worlds*). Additionally, If another character or NPC gets the drop on the character, they only receive a +2 bonus to their attack roll.

- **Location:** Ears

### NIGHT VISION OPTICS

The character gains the benefits of the Low Light Vision monstrous ability.

- **Location:** Eyes

### RECOIL COMPENSATION

This module removes 2 points of penalty from autofire when using firearms.

- **Location:** Arm

### REFLEXIVE STRIKE MODULE

The character gains the Counterattack edge.

- **Location:** Arm or Leg

/// END MODULE LIST ///

# DRONES AND ROBOTS

Below you'll find several examples of drones in operation throughout the world of 2090. The drones presented below are simply well known examples of their particular drone "type". Variations and knock-offs of these models exist around the world, and GM's and players should feel free to make alterations or name changes to represent them. More drones will be presented in the Malmart Catalog source book.

For more details on drones, see Drones on page 267, in the Setting Rules chapter.

## Drones

Add drones share the following Special Abilities:

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; immune to poison, disease, and suffocation; no additional damage from Called Shots.
- **Fearless:** Drones are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Weakness (Electricity):** Drones suffer +2 damage from electrical attacks.

### HELIOS EYE BORG

Helios's eye borg is quickly becoming the first name in law enforcement spy drones. The eyeborg is a spherical drone the size of a large gumball. The eye borg rolls at high speeds while a gyroscopic camera feeds a constant image back to its controller's tap. The eyeborg can climb any surface thanks to its nano-polymer grip, and given its small size, is often overlooked by hostiles.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Hacking d4, Notice d8, Stealth d10
**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4; **Firewall:** 4
**Special Abilities**

- **Advanced Optics:** The eye borg is equipped with telescopic, low light, and thermal vision. It adds+2 to sight-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties.
- **Size –2:** Helios Eye Borg is the size of a large gumball.
- **Small:** Attackers subtract 2 from their attacks to hit.
- **Wall Walker:** Helios Eye Borg is able to transverse vertical and inverse surfaces at half Pace.

TABLE 3.5: DRONES

| NAME | COST | CONTROL SLOTS |
|---|---|---|
| Helios Eye Borg | 25,000 | 1 |
| AGA Lone Star | 60,000 | 2 |
| BK WarHorse | 40,000 | 1 |
| Vishnu Tool-Bot | 65,000 | 2 |
| Aquarius Raptor | 125,000 | 1 |
| Shogun Samurai | 55,000 | 2 |
| NFE Shuttle Asst | 50,000 | 1 |
| Black Knight Trident | 65,000 | 1 |

### AGA LONE STAR RECONNAISSANCE DRONE

Act of God Armaments created the Lone Star Recon Drone for the famous Texas Rangers. Now, it sees use as a major recon and light fighter drone all over the world!. The Lone Star is a VTOL drone meant for long distance recon over a large area. Its twin turbine fan design allows it to sport an impressive weapon mount capable of carrying a variety of lethal or non-lethal armaments.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Notice d8, Pilot d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8
**Pace:** —; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 7(2)
**Special Abilities**

- **Advanced Optics:** The recon drone is equipped with telescopic, low light, and thermal vision. It adds+2 to sight-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties
- **Armor +2:** Integrated armor plating.
- **Flight:** Pace 12" Climb 1
- **Flood Lights:** Dual 360° floodlights illuminate up to 20".
- **Weapon Mount:** An integrated weapon gimble that can hold a single weapon and ammo (up to 100 lb.).

### BLACK KNIGHT WAR HORSE

The War Horse was originally commissioned for use by the GLU's military forces as a combination supply carrier and mobile weapons platform. The War Horse circulated though out the rest of the word, and is based on one of the oldest Drone reliable drone designs around. The War horse is a large box like drone with 4 legs capable of traversing over any terrain. Its armored hide, combined with its thick large back and carrying capacity, means it can run fresh supplies into a battleground, or take the fight to the enemy with advanced weaponry.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+2, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Notice d4, Shooting d6
**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 10(4)
**Special Abilities**

- **Armor (+4):** Reinforced armor plating. Heavy Armor.
- **Manipulator Arm:** The front of the War Horse has a manipulator arm with a three digit hand capable of loading its self.
- **Size +2:** The drone is the same size as a large draft horse.
- **Weapon Mount:** An integrated weapon gimble that can hold a single weapon and ammo (up to 100 lb).

## SAGEIT VISHNU TOOL-BOT

Tool drones have been in use since the turn of the millennium, back when they were used for remote explosive defuses and disposal. SAGEIT shows they're at the forefront of modern tool drones with the Vishnu. The Vishnu comes preprogrammed with information on explosives as well as basic repairs on most items. The Vishnu can also double as a field surgeon instead of a bomb disposal unit. Deployed in the field in such away, the Vishnu comes equipped with surgeons tools and an advanced medical kit to treat battlefield injuries. The Vishnu is also designed to be tough, able to take a beating while rolling into a dangerous area to get its work done.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d10
**Skills:** Drive d4, Healing d6, Knowledge (Demolitions) d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Repair d6
**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 9(2)
**Special Abilities**

- **Armor +2:** Armor plating.
- **Built in Tools:** The tool-bot has a fully stocked surgical kit or tool kit
- **Interior Bomb Disposal:** The unit has a sealed compartment to store unexploded ordinances; Toughness 11(4), Heavy Armor).
- **Sensor Suite:** Equipped with the latest sensors, the tool-bot gains +4 Notice vs sound, motion, strong chemicals, radiation, or electrical fields up to 500 yards.
- **Tracked:** The tool-bot is able to ignore Difficult Terrain. However it is unable to negotiate obstacles higher then 1–2' in height.

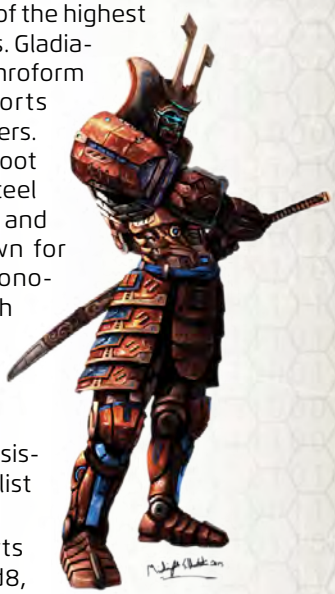
## AQUARIUS RAPTOR

The Raptor is a flight-capable hunter killer drone which sees widespread use throughout the North American Coalition. Raptor drones are used to patrol border areas, strike behind enemy lines, and in some cases to put down rioters and protestors within the NAC states. Its distinctive "shriek" is caused by the way wind whistles through its turbines and off of its engines. The manufacturer offered to fix this 'flaw" but the NAC government enjoyed the psychological terror it caused in their enemies so much the shriek has remained. The Raptor has earned a reputation for being a tough, fast, heavily armed machine of death.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Notice d6, Piloting d8, Stealth d6, Shooting d8
**Pace:** —; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 8(2)
**Special Abilities**

- **Advanced Optics Suite:** Telescopic, low light, and thermal vision adds +2 to sight-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties.
- **Armor +2:** Armor plating.
- **Flight:** Pace 18", Climb 3
- **Size +1:** It has an 8' wingspan
- **Weapon Mount:** Underbody mounted heavy machine gun (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 200, AP4, HW)
- **Weapon Mount:** Rockets (Range 24/48/96; Damage 4d8+2; ROF 1–4; Shots 4; HW, MBT)

## SUBURASHII SHOGUN SAMURAI



The Shogun Samurai is one of the highest rated gladiator drone models. Gladiator models are full-sized anthroform drones often used in sports entertainment for living viewers. The shogun appears as a 10 foot tall, 800 lb samurai in full steel armor in a variety of designs and colors. The Shogun is known for its speed, strength, and mono-katana which it wields with incredible skill. While it's been a few years since a Shogun model has claimed the yearly drone gladiator championship, Shoguns consistently rank in the top 10 finalist at each tournament.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Notice d4
**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12(4)
**Gear:** Miyamoto K-Tana (Str+d8+2; AP 4, HW)
**Special Abilities**

- **Armor +4:** Full suit of samurai armor.
- **Frenzy:** It may make two attacks with a –2 penalty.
- **Reinforced Skeleton:** The shogun drone has a titanium alloy skeleton granting it +1 Toughness.
- **Size +2:** The shogun drone stands about 10' tall.

## NEW FRONTIER ENTERPRISES SHUTTLE ASSISTANT

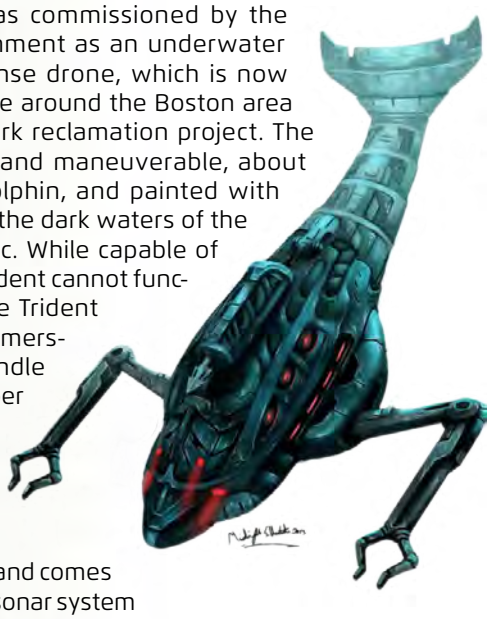
The shuttle assistant is a drone which is only capable of operating in space. Relying upon a series of thrusters placed around its cylinder like body, with one large thruster in the back. The shuttle assistant is used all over the solar system for basic repairs. Equipped with a series of manipulator arms, along with tools and spare parts. This little drone does have a dark side however, as thanks to its ubiquity and ability to operate in vacuum, space pirates make heavy use of the shuttle assistant. A pirate scout will often linger in large space stations and colonies, looking for ships loaded down with cargo, before sending out the shuttle assistant to place a tracker, bomb, or some other kind of sabotaging device on the ship's hull. Ironically, another shuttle assistant is typically the best option for removing these devices.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Lockpicking d6 Notice d6, Repair d8
**Pace:** —; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5
**Special Abilities**

- **Flight:** Pace 6", Climb 1.
- **Limited Operation:** The shuttle assistant can only operate in vacuum or low gravity environments like the moon.
- **Optics:** Built-in optics provide telescopic, low light, and thermal vision; granting +2 to sight-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties

- **Shielding:** +8 to Armor or opposed rolls to resist cold, radiation, and electricity.
- **Tool Kit:** The shuttle assistant has a complete set of built in tools that allows to accomplish most repair tasks.

### BLACK KNIGHT TRIDENT



The Trident was commissioned by the atlantica government as an underwater recon and defense drone, which is now seeing heavy use around the Boston area and the New York reclamation project. The Trident is small and maneuverable, about the size of a dolphin, and painted with colors matching the dark waters of the Northern Atlantic. While capable of surfacing, the Trident cannot function on land. The Trident is completely submersible and can handle some of the deeper pressure depths of the ocean. The Trident is heavily armed for being a drone of its size, and comes equipped with a sonar system to help navigate while underwater.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Swimming d8
**Pace:** –; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 8(2)
**Special Abilties:**

- **Armor +2:** Reinforced structure
- **Aquatic:** Pace equal to Swimming in water.
- **Sonar:** Adds +2 to audio-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties.
- **Weapon System:** Electric Eel (Range Self, Damage 2d8+2; Electrical, MBT).
- **Weapon System:** Rapid Fire Harpoon Launcher (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF: 3 Shots: 200, AP 4)

## Robots

All robots have the following Special Abilities:

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; immune to poison, disease, and suffocation; no additional damage from Called Shots.
- **EMP Vulnerability:** Robots suffer full damage from EMP Weapons.
- **Fearless:** Robots are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Weakness (Electricity):** Robots suffer +2 damage from electrical attacks.

TABLE 3.6: ROBOTS

| NAME | COST |
|---|---|
| Maidbot | 116,000 |
| M-23 Surgeon | 281,000 |
| Personal Assistant | 140,000 |
| Simpet, Lapdog | 136,000 |

### MAID BOT

The maid bot is a small tracked rectangular shaped bot with four arms. The maid bot is programed to perform basic cleaning functions.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Notice d8, Repair d4
**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4; **Firewall:** 4
**Gear:** A variety of chemical cleaners, rags, and brushes.
**Special Abilities**

- **Small –1:** Maid bot stands 3–4 tall.
- **Tracked:** The maid bot ignores difficult terrain and is able to navigate objects that are less than 1/3 its height.

### M-23 SURGEON

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Healing d8, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Medicine) d8, Notice d6
**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 9(4); **Firewall:** 6
**Gear:** Medical kit and various drugs
**Special Abilities**

- **Android:** The civilian model of the M23 appears human with synthetic skin, hair, and eyes.
- **Medical Programing:** +2 bonus to Healing rolls.
- **Optics Suite:** Telescopic, low light, and thermal vision adds +2 to sight-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties.

### PERSONAL ASSISTANT

A basic robot, with an anthropomorphic frame, designed. Most are found in offices, where a basic robotoic model is more cost effective over a /simulacra

**Attributes:** Agility d6 Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Notice d4, Investigation d6, Persuasion d6
**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4
**Gear:** Data Carrier
**Special Abilities**

- **Android:** Some owners prefer a human looking model over the basic design. These personal assistants resemble humans, complete with synthetic skin (note: option increases the cost by 50,000 credits).
- **Language Suite:** The personal assistant is programed to speak 6 languages. Its language algorithm allows it to make a Smarts roll at –4 to be understood any language or dialect that it has heard for at least 5 minutes.

### SIMPET, LAPDOG

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Notice d6, Tracking d6
**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4; **Firewall:** 4
**Special Abilities**

- **Small –1:** Its the size of an average dog.
- **Vision/Olfactory Sensors:** +2 to Notice rolls.

# DRUGS

Looking to take the edge off, or perhaps get a little boost for a wild night on the town? Doc Pango's got what you need omae.

> **Malbot267:** Malmart takes no responsibility for the consequences of using any of the products listed in this section. The effects of drugs are often unpredictable and can have harmful — even lethal — side-effects. User discretion is advised.

## AFTERBURN

Want nova-fast reflexes and energy that's through the roof? Then you want Afterburn, baby! One snort of this stuff and you'll be bangin' the walls all night!

**Nicknames:** 8-Ball, Coke, Hyper-caine, Nova flake, Pile-driver, Rock, Snow Crash, White Girl

**Duration:** One dose lasts 1d4 hours.

**Methods of ingestion:** Inhaled, injected, smoked

**Effect:** Harvested from coca fields in New Brasilia, Columbia, Bolivia and Peru, and then mixed up in street labs across the world, Afterburn is a massively addictive, potentially lethal combination of cocaine, methamphetamines and other stimulants.

Afterburn boosts the character's die for Agility-related skills by one step (d4 to d6, d6 to d8, etc.) for each dose taken to a maximum of d12+3. The Swimming, Lockpicking and Stealth skills are not increased when taking this drug. Additionally, the character gains a +1 bonus to opposed Notice rolls when opponents are sneaking up on the character.

This bonus raises by +1 for each dose taken, to a maximum of +4. Finally, characters under the influence of Afterburn ignore penalties for a level of Fatigue equal to the number of doses they take. So taking 2 doses of Afterburn would allow the character to ignore two levels of Fatigue.

**Side effects:** Afterburn generally makes people twitchy and restless, as if they don't want to stand in one place for very long. Afterburn also tends to instill a false-sense of bravado in users, making them more susceptible to taunts and intimidation. They suffer a –1 penalty to Spirit rolls when resisting Intimidation rolls and a –1 penalty to Smarts rolls when resisting Taunts.

The –1 penalties are cumulative for each dose taken. Additionally, when the character "comes down" off his high, he must succeed on a Vigor roll or gain a level of Fatigue for each dose ingested. These levels of Fatigue stack with levels already accrued before the drug was taken.

**Addictiveness Rating:** –2 penalty to Spirit rolls to avoid becoming addicted for each dose taken within a 24 hour period. (Major Habit)

**Cost for one dose:** 250 credits

## BLACK MIST

The drug of choice for hackers, techies, byte builders and other brainers, Black Mist blows your mental synapses wide open, and jacks your critical thinking skills past the redline!

**Nicknames:** Brain Bender, Mojo Mist, Poppers, Synapse2

**Duration:** One dose lasts 1d4 hours.

**Methods of ingestion:** Ingested via Inhalers or chem-delivery cyberware

**Effect:** Black Mist is a long-lasting, powerful psychoactive inhalant made in labs all over the world. The active ingredients are THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol), LSD (Lysergic acid diethylamide) and Amyl nitrite. The drug expands the neural pathways, speeding up thought processes and stimulating the logic centers of the brain. Black Mist grants a +1 bonus to Smarts-based skills such as Hacking, Knowledge (Programming), Repair, etc. The exception is the Notice skill, where they actually suffer a penalty (see below).

**Side effects:** While under the effects of Black Mist, characters tend to be off in their own little worlds, thinking about whatever happens to be occupying their minds at the time. Consequently, they suffer a –1 penalty per dose taken to all Notice rolls involving sight, smell and sound.

**Addictiveness Rating:** –1 penalty to Spirit rolls to avoid becoming addicted for each dose taken within a 24 hour period. (Minor Habit)

**Cost for one dose:** 150 credits

## STICKY ICKY

Lookin' ta mellow out and get high? You need Sticky Icky! This sweet herb produces a smooth, paranoid-free buzz that will keep you coming back for more!

**Nicknames:** 420, Bud, Cannabis, Chronic, Herb, Marijuana, Skunk bud, Spliff, Weed

**Duration:** One dose lasts 1d4 hours.

**Methods of ingestion:** Smoking, Eating

**Effect:** A mildly psychoactive drug, marijuana, or Sticky Icky as it is commonly called in 2090, is harvested from plants that grow all over the world. The active ingredient in marijuana is THC, or Tetrahydrocannabinol. Aside from recreational use, the drug is a strong pain killer commonly administered to terminal cancer patients. While under the effects of marijuana, characters ignore 1 wound penalty and gain a +1 bonus to resist Intimidation and Taunt tests for each dose they take.

**Side effects:** Like Black Mist, the drug tends to send users off into their own head space. They suffer a –1 penalty to Notice rolls for each dose they take, and they tend to eat a great deal under the effects of this drug as well.

**Addictiveness Rating:** –1 penalty to Spirit rolls to avoid becoming addicted for each dose taken within a 24 hour period. (Minor Habit)

**Cost for one dose:** 100 credits

## EUPHORIA

Need your fix? Got that urge to chase the dragon? No worries mano, we got what you need. Doc Pango brings Euphoria straight to ya from the poppy fields of the Chinese Mandarinate, that sweet, sweet china white!

**Nicknames:** Black Tar, China White, Diesel, Dope, "H", Junk, Sex, Skag, Smack, Whore

**Duration:** One dose lasts 1d4 hours.

**Methods of ingestion:** Injection, snorting

TABLE 3.7: DRUGS

| NAME | EFFECT | SIDE EFFECT | ADDICTIVENESS | DURATION PER DOSE | COST |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Afterburn | Boosts Agility-based skills by one die type for each dose | –1 penalty to Spirit Rolls to resist intimidation, and –1 penalty to Smarts rolls to resist taunts | –2 to Spirit rolls | 1d4 hours | 250 |
| Black Mist | +1 to Smarts-based skills except Notice | –1 Penalty to all Notice rolls involving sight, smell, and sound | –1 to Spirit rolls | 1d4 hours | 150 |
| Sticky Icky | +1 bonus to resist Taunt and Intimidation rolls/ignores 1 Wound penalty per dose | –1 penalty to Notice rolls per dose | –1 to Spirit rolls. | 1d4 hours | 100 |
| Tank-N-Spank | See description | 1d4 lethal damage per hour for each dose taken | –3 to Spirit rolls | 1d4 hours | 600 |
| Euphoria | Ignore 1 Wound penalty per dose. May not be intimidated or taunted | Automatically fail Notice rolls, Vigor roll at –1 or be Shaken for 1d6 hours | –3 to Spirit rolls | 1d4 hours | 400 |

**Effect:** Euphoria is a potent narcotic, both mentally and physically addicting. Derived from morphine, the drug is a strong pain killer which induces a powerful sense of ecstasy in users. Characters under the influence of Euphoria ignore 1 wound penalty for each dose they take, and may not be intimidated or taunted.

**Side effects:** The side effects of Euphoria are brutal. Characters automatically fail Notice rolls while under the effects of the drug, and when they "come down" from their high they must make a Vigor roll at a –1 penalty for each dose they ingested or become Shaken for 1d6 hours.

**Addictiveness Rating:** –3 penalty to Spirit rolls to avoid becoming addicted for each dose taken within a 24 hour period. (Major Habit)

**Cost for one dose:** 400 credits

### TANK-N-SPANK

Lookin' to get into some serious "Once more into the breach" type of violence? Need ta keep that heart pumping for a few more critical ticks of the clock? Then you want Tank-N-Spank. The ultimate of the "power" drugs, Tank-N-Spank'll keep you on your feet and provide the endurance and speed you need to get the job done. But once it's done, you're probably done too. Don't say we didn't warn ya...

**Nicknames:** Speedball Assassin, Graveyard Express, Last Breath, Overdrive, Rage, Roids

**Duration:** One dose lasts 1d4 hours.

**Methods of ingestion:** Injection, snorting, pill form

**Effect:** Tank-N-Spank is attractive to users looking to push the boundaries of physical and mental toughness. Each dose of the drug allows the character to ignore the effects of 1 wound level and one fatigue level. Additionally, the character's Strength Die is increased one step for each dose taken, to a maximum of D12+3, and when the character hits with a raise on a Fighting roll, she does 1d8 damage rather than 1d6. If the character has any augmentations that already modify this extra damage Die, increase that damage Die by one step (from d8 to d10, d10 to d12, etc.).

**Side effects:** A physically devastating cocktail of methamphetamines, heroin and anabolic steroids, Tank-N-Spank causes physical damage to the user to the tune of 1d4 per hour! So someone who takes a single dose of Tank-N-Spank that lasts 4 hours would suffer 4d4 lethal damage after the effects wore off!

**Addictiveness Rating:** –3 penalty to Spirit rolls to avoid becoming addicted for each dose taken within a 24 hour period. (Major Habit)

**Cost for one dose:** 600 credits

# ENTERTAINMENT

## Entertainment

It's a dark world out there, so stay inside and play some games! Watch some vidcaps, Malmart is your entertainment connection! From The hottest SynthSystems Hyper Concert Console, to VRPGs and HyperMiniature games, Malmart has your entertainment covered.

### SYNTHSYSTEMS HYPER CONCERT CONSOLE

Sight, sound and special effects all in HyperReality. Whether you're just learning, or you're putting on a MegaConcert at the capital, this baby can handle the entire concert in one little box. Hyper Concert Console also available as a Hyper-Object keyboard.

- Basic sound system and interface.
- Synthesizer module can emulate up to 14,400 sound effects. (Maximum is 84,400).
- Fx module can generate thousands of pre-programmed effects.
- Concert Module allows squelching so only paying customers can tune in to the performance.
- Back-up Band module, this little module generates a back-up band for you solo performers.
- Orchestra module is used to generate an entire orchestra.
- Audience module, perfect for the rockstar wannabe, nothing beats playing in front of an audience, this module lets you see what it's like. Costs 1 credit per audience member. Add 500 credits for an Audience AI unit to let you know what it thinks of you.
- Basic can handle 3 'HYnstruments' and a singer; add 200 credits for each additional band member
- **Cost:** 2,500+ credits

### "ARCANA, THE SUMMONING" HYPERCARD GAME

This collectable, tradable HyperCard game pits you as a powerful summoner, locked in battle with a rival. You summon creatures using the spells in your Grimoire in an attempt to kill your opponent before he kills you. The creatures are created in HyperReality, complex algorithms work out the realistic battles before your very eyes. Grimoire interface device, with genuine SynthLeather cover and several sheets of actual paper, to give you that real wizard feeling!

- Hundreds of cards available for your grimoire.
- Unique game featuring legends of mythology.
- Spell Duel with your friends, your enemies, or even your mom!
- **Cost:** 100 credits for a Starter set for 2 players. Boosters of 5 spells can be purchased for 40 credits. Ultra-rare spells are known to sell for over 1,000 credits. Grimoire Interface Device costs 500 credits, and includes a starter set.

### "GOLEMWARRIOR IV" GOLEMMECH SIMULATOR GAME

Everyone wants to be a Golemmech pilot, making GolemWarrior IV an instant success. Choose your GMech, customize it with the weapons you want to run, and jump into a battle today!

- **Cost:** 50 credits per month for full access

### "BOOSTER" HIGH SPEED JUMP RACING GAME

Booster is a Fast, Fun, and Furious high speed racing game which takes the player through exotic locales, the Canals of Mars, the Rings of Saturn, and the Marianas Trench. Free to play, but full access costs 40 credits a month.

- **Cost:** 40 credits per month for full access

### BLOOD THRONE ONLINE VRPG

Can you survive the Age of Blood? It has been ten years since Agärazôn the Betrayer opened the stone gates and unleashed war on the world. Ten long years that saw the ruthless Keza-Drak — monstrous invaders from another world — wreak havoc upon the free people of Simarra. The survivors of this age of blood have been driven to the brink of annihilation, scattered throughout the lands, forced to live as best they can in remote freeholds; tiny bastions of safety in an otherwise brutal world fraught with all manner of perils. Hope is not yet lost.

Valiant heroes have come forth to fight against the encroaching darkness, bringing what comfort and hope they can to the dispossessed, wretched masses of the world. Refusing to simply lay down and let the forces of darkness have their world, these heroes bring the fight to the Keza-Drak and the minions of Agärazôn, fighting against overwhelming odds to ensure that good does not vanish from the face of Simarra. Will you be one of them?

- Over 50 million people across the globe have joined the fight against the minions of the Betrayer, and now you can too for free (limited access for free account).
- **Cost:** 50 credits per month for full access

### DEADLANDS VRPG

Welcome to the Weird West, pardner! Based in the Phoenix Free Zone, Pinnacle Entertainment Group™ brings you Deadlands™, a wildly popular MMORPG set in a exciting, yet frighteningly twisted version of the old west. In Deadlands, you'll get the chance to fight in the Great Rail Wars, explore The Maze; a cavernous land in what remains of earthquake-ravaged California! Seek your fortune mining Ghost Rock, a new fuel that powers the machines of the age. Make your way through a fractured, mysterious land as a gunslinger, a spell-slinger, mad scientist or even an Indian shaman!

- **Cost:** 50 credits per month

### TOTEMS OF THE DEAD VRPG

Totems of the Dead, a fantasy sword & sorcery setting inspired by Native American stories and mythologies combined with the Vinland Saga. Come explore the cliff-side ruins of the ancient Stone Shapers and seek treasure in the abandoned monuments of the Mound Raisers. Face off against the Sasquatch, Wendigo and Uktena serpent, or beat back nameless horrors that have awoken from a forgotten age. Rediscover the totems of ancient pre-human cultures. Stoke the fires of bravery in your own heart by singing your death song, and above all, struggle to survive in this savage world!

- **Cost:** 50 credits per month

## Delivery Subscriptions

Like the man said, "Ya gotta eat," but do you always have time to go down to the local EAT OR DIE!™ stop-N-go shack to get the munchies you crave? Of course not! That's why Malmart's hooked up with the following companies to bring you these great delivery contracts!

### FAT SALLY'S BBQ!

Want the best cloned ribs and chicken in the plex? Grab yourself some of Fat Sally's cloned pork spare ribs and fried chicken and you'll see why we were voted the best BBQ joint in Chicagoland! Our juicy ribs are cooked to order and basted with tangy barbeque sauce then delivered to your squat ready to eat! Each order comes with two sides and fresh soy rolls (real flour rolls cost extra) and a ton of napkins!

- **Cost:** 50 credits per month

### DOMINATOR PIZZA

30 minutes or less or it's FREE! That's our motto at Dominator Pizza, always has been, always will be. Our delivery specialists go through 13 weeks of extensive training under the most grueling urban combat and traffic conditions, honing their skills to a monofilament edge before we let them deliver you the freshest, tastiest pizzas and food accessories in the sprawl omae. All of our delivery vehicles are fitted with the latest S.O.T.A. in VCR technology, and our pies come wrapped in Volcano heaters to ensure your pizza is NOVA hot!

- **Cost:** 50 credits per month

### EAT OR DIE!

Our stop-N-go shacks are everywhere, but sometimes even that amazing convenience just doesn't cut it. Maybe you're on a hot run and need some of our WIRED™ energy drinks or some munchies to quiet that grumbling stomach. Whatever it is you want, we got it. And we'll get it to you wherever you may be.

- **Cost:** 50 credits per month

### JALAPEÑO BOB'S MEXICAN GRILL

For over 20 years, Jalapeño Bob has brought you the best Mexican food in the sprawl. Now, we're bringin' it right to your door, fresh hot and spicy; just the way you want it! At Jalapeño Bob's, we know what good Mexican food should taste like. Our sizzling fajitas, tacos, enchiladas, and burritos are prepared using free-range cloned "Prime Angus" beef and vat-grown chicken.

Our spices are imported directly from Mexico City, and we grow our veggies in certified INSTAgrow™ agropods, ensuring the freshest, zestiest Pico de Gallo you'll find anywhere in the sprawl! Each Jalapeño Bob service contracts includes two 1lb bags of complimentary soy chips and a gallon of our famous Flamin' Jalapeño Salsa!

- **Cost:** 50 credits per month

### MAMA LING-LING'S NOODLE EXPRESS!

Want the best noodles in the sprawl, ami? Look no further! Mama Ling-Ling makes the tastiest soy noodles and traditional Asian meals this side of Beijing! Try our Sichuan noodles, tofu noodles, or enjoy or savory spicy beef Ramen! Want some fried rice? Mama Ling-ling gonna hook you up! Our fried rice comes with egg, broccoli, carrots, and is made with either bio-brown or bio-white rice! Want something a little heavier? Try any number of our "authentic" Asian creations including sushi, Mongolian beef, orange chicken, Mandarin Kung Pao (beef, shrimp, or chicken style), Thai curry dishes, sweet and sour pork and many more! Choose from one of the following delivery contracts and start getting Mama Ling-Ling's noodles delivered to your squat today! *Mama Ling Ling's serves no actual meat products! Extra MSG available on request.

- **Cost:** 50 credits per month

## Other Services

TABLE 3.8: OTHER SERVICES

| GETTING BY | COST |
|---|---|
| Night at a Capsule Motel | 400 credits |
| Night at a Regular Motel | 800 credits |
| Night at a Luxury Hotel | 5,000+ credits |
| **GETTING DIRTY** | **COST** |
| Cheap Alcohol | 5 credits per drink |
| Good Alcohol | 35+ credits per drink |
| Fine Wine, Bottle | 500–1,000 credits |
| Night on the Town, Dives | 75 credits |
| Night on the Town, Good Clubs | 150 credits |
| Night on the Town, Exclusive Clubs | 300-500 credits |
| Night With A Prostitute | 50–1,000 credits |
| Night With A Luxury Simulacrum | 2,000–3,000 credits |
| **GETTING AROUND** | **COST** |
| Pubtrans (Bus) | 1 credit per station |
| Pubtrans (Subway) | 3 credits per station |
| Average Cab Fare | 5 credits per mile |
| Average Airline Ticket | 8 credits per mile |
| Average High Speed Rail Ticket | 150 credits |
| 30-Day Pubtrans Access Codes | 150 credits |

# EXPLOSIVES

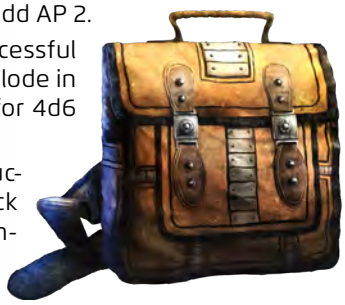
## Explosive Devices

### BOMZAWAY™ LTD SATCHEL PACK

Sometimes you've gotta make a bigger statement than a few hand grenades can manage. Sometimes you've gotta get that big thing down or outta the way without screwing around. Bomzaway has your back, ami, with our exclusive Satchel Pack. It can be rigged with a timer, a wire or a remote. It can be shaped for a focused blast, or simply used to cover the widest area possible.

The Satchel Pack is a restricted item in some locations — be sure to check with your local law enforcement agency before ordering. When something blows, Bomzaway™ is there!

**Game Notes:** Satchels are used to deliver a pre-packed detonation pack. Shaping forms are used to create a shaped explosion, upon a successful Knowledge (Demolitions) skill check will add AP 2.



- Can be rigged with a successful Demolitions check to explode in a Large Burst Template for 4d6 damage with AP 5.
- Can be rigged with a successful Demolitions check to explode in a Cone Template for 3d8+2 damage with AP 16.

### BOMZAWAY™ MOLOTOV COCKTAILS

Sometimes you wanna destroy something, but don't have the time, skill, or creds to use a Satchel Pack. Sometimes even grenades are outta your league. No worries — Bomzaway has your back, ami, and can provide one of the oldest and most easily used 'explosives' in the book: the Molotov cocktail. Sure, you can probably make one of these at home, but do you feel like investing the time? And our patented alcohol/oil/tar mix is guaranteed to burn good and hot. When you absolutely, positively, need to burn someone down.

### CES DYNAMIGHT™

CES is proud to present the cleanest, most efficient Trinitrotoluene money can buy. Microcapsules of the toluene are embedded within the stabilizer. With a twist and a push, you activate the mixing process, 30 seconds later the DynaMIGHT™ is ready for use. DynaMIGHT™ yield can be increased with additional sticks. Each additional stick adds +1 damage and +1" to the blast radius.

### CES MPACT EXPLOSIVES

MPact explosive are stable in liquid form but when dry become highly volatile, though short lived. MPact explosives can be used like a mine on non-porous surfaces. Poured on a solid item, it can make a very dangerous grenade. Rolling a 1 on the attack roll will result in damaging one's self, as the initial force to throw the item, sets it off.

### CES NANOTHERM GEL

Thermite, on the nanoscopic scale, nanoparticles of aluminum and ferrous oxide are mixed with a magnesium base to provide the hottest thermite available. Useful at cutting through armor. Each additional charge adds +3 damage and +1 AP.

### CES SUPER C4 PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE

CES brings you the best C4 money can buy, with two times the destructive power of Standard C4, Sold in 8 oz bricks. Each additional charge adds +2 damage and +1" to the burst radius.

## Grenades

Modern grenade launchers typically use 25mm grenades which can be outfitted with various payloads while the 40mm grenades fill a greater variety of roles.

### APC-40 ANTIPERSONNEL CLUSTER

This grenade scatters micro munitions over a large burst template area effectively creating a micro munition minefield.

### HE-40 HIGH EXPLOSIVE

Standard military grade High-explosive launched grenade.

### HIGH EXPLOSIVE INCENDIARY GRENADES

The Hell on Earth HEI grenade rounds explode with white phosphorus, coating everything in the kill zone in sticky flaming death. Targets hit by the HEI round will catch fire on a 5+.

### FLASH BANGS

Grenades which cause non-lethal damage. Many modern armors protect from these effects, with audio and sight compensators built into the helmets.

### SM-40/SM-19 SMOKE

Smoke is useful for several tactical options, especially with our hot smoke option. In addition to obscuring movement, smoke charges can also severely reduced the damage of laser weaponry. Creates –6 obscurement penalty for 1d4+2 rounds, before dispersing. Hot smoke version blocks IR and UV as well.

TABLE 3.9: EXPLOSIVES

| EXPLOSIVE | RANGE | DAMAGE | COST | BURST | WEIGHT | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bomzaway Ltd Satchel Pack | 5/10/15 | 4d8 | 2,500 | MBT | | AP 20; see description |
| Bomzaway Molotov Cocktails | 3/6/12 | 2d10 | 100 | SBT | 1.0 | 1 Action to light; catch fire on 5+ |
| CES Dynamight | 3/6/12 | 2d8 | 300 | MBT | | Heavy Weapon |
| CES MPact | 5/10/20 | 4d6 | 600 | SBT | | Heavy Weapon; see description |
| CES Nanotherm Gel | — | 3d8 | 400 | SBT | | AP 12; Heavy Weapon |
| Ces Super C4 Plastic Explosive | 5/10/20 | 2d10 | 500 | MBT | 0.5 | Heavy Weapon |

TABLE 3.10: GRENADES AND MINES

| 25MM GRENADES | DAMAGE | COST | BURST | WEIGHT | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| High Explosive Incendiary | 3d6 | 750 | SBT | 1 | Catch fire on 5+ |
| TAZ-25 | — | 3,500 | MBT | 1 | Shock |
| **40MM GRENADES** | | | | | |
| APC-40 Antipersonnel Cluster | 2d6+2 | 1,000 | LBT | 2 | |
| HE-40, High Explosive | 4d8 | 500 | MBT | 2 | |
| High Explosive Incendiary | 3d8 | 750 | MBT | 2 | Catch fire on 5+ |
| TAZ-40 | — | 3,500 | MBT | 1 | Vigor roll or Shaken |
| TAG-40 Tear Gas | — | 350 | LBT | | Vigor roll or Shaken, see description |
| **THROWN GRENADES** | | | | | |
| Flash Bang | 2d10 | 250 | MBT | 2 | Non-lethal |
| SM-40/SM-19 Smoke | — | — | LBT | 2 | –6 obscurement penalty; see description |
| **MINE** | | | | | |
| AGA Anti-Drone Air Mines | 3d6 | 3,500 | LBT | 7 | AP 4, Heavy Weapon |
| AGA AP-4S Anti-Personnel Slaymore | 3d8 | 1,800 | • ½ LBT | 4 | AP 8 |
| AGA Av-12 Mines | 3d8 | 1,500 | SBT | 12 | –4 on Notice rolls to detect |
| AGA Avd-3 Arachnid Drop Mines | 3d6+3 | 1,200 | SBT | 3 | |

### TAZ-25/TAZ-40

A taser fitted into the body of the casing. The TAZ-25 delivers a powerful shock. Targets within the area of effect must make a Vigor roll at –2. Failure means he's automatically Shaken.

### TG-40, TG-7 TEARGAS

Non-lethal crowd control for over a hundred years. Anyone caught in a Tear gas cloud must make a Vigor roll or become Shaken. Each additional round within the cloud forces another roll with a cumulative –1 to the Vigor roll. Gas masks, and Full Environmental equipment provides protection from Tear Gas.

## Mines

### AGA ANTI-DRONE AIR MINES

Utilizing dummy drones, Anti-drone air mines are designed to hover and discourage aerial pursuit. Especially damaging to any type of turbine driven engines, like those found on VTOLs and jet engines.

### AGA AP-4S ANTI-PERSONNEL SLAYMORE MINE

A variation on a standard claymore mine, this baby hits like a swarm of angry hornets. 2,000 flechettes give the Slaymore a killzone of nearly 6 meters. Uses half of a Large Burst Template originating from the direction it is facing, out 90 degrees to each side.

### AGA AV-12 MINES

Another anti-vehicular mine, designed with a pressure trigger, utilizing a simple Chameleon system, it can be a nasty surprise. Difficult to detect (–4 on Notice rolls to detect).

### AGA AVD-3 ARACHNID DROP MINES

Arachnid drop mines are deployed from mine layers on vehicles.

# GOLEMMECHS AND POWERED ARMOR

**Malbot267:** Looking for some heavy support for your next war? Look no further! Malmart brings you an array of powered armor suits and golemmechs for use in a variety of situations!

## Scout Power Armor

### AGA COMMANDO SCOUT POWER ARMOR

One of the most versatile scout power armor suits, featuring hydrogen cell power supply, the Commando is designed to operate longer with an upgraded power supply. Optional Loadout includes a 14mm sniper rifle and a 12.7mm golemmech pistol. The system is designed for recon and sabotage. Act of God brings you another innovative weapons platform.

**Weapons:**

- 14mm Sniper Rifle (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 1; Shots 12; AP 4, HW, Scope, Snapfire)
- 12.7mm Gyroc Pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 3d6; ROF 1; Shots 10; HW, SBT, min. arming distance 6")

### SW GN-F00 SCOUT POWER ARMOR

Sudeki-White brings you an amazing close-combat suit of scout power armor. This shazz piece of hardware is designed to get into the middle of the action, use its mobility and stealth with hit and run tactics. With its movement upgrade and JUMP capabilities, it can move nearly anywhere in an urban environment.

### AGA LOVIATAR SCOUT POWER ARMOR

Act of God Armaments produces only a few of these flashy, form-fitting, chromed-out power suits. Nimble and fast, the Loviatar can field many different hand-held weapons, but is only fitted as standard with a monowhip concealed in each forearm, making it a brutal combatant in close quarters.

**Weapons:**

- 2×Monofilament Whip (Agi+d6; AP 6, HW, Reach 3, d10 extra damage on a raise)

## Combat Power Armor

### AGA FURY COMBAT POWER ARMOR

The Fury is an entry-level power armor suit. Simple, rugged and reliable, it has a respectable payload of weapons, an impressive electronics suite and light armor, all for a quite reasonable price. The Fury is deployed by regulars in the NAC armed forces, and exported to nations across the world as a light security suit of power armor.

**Weapons:**

- Shoulder Mount 12.7mm Gyroc (Range 24/48/96; Damage 3d6, ROF 1; Shots 30; HW, LBT)
- Furious Assault Rifle (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8+2; ROF 4; Shots 50, AP 2, Auto, requires suit's power)

## POWER ARMOR MODIFICATIONS

**Chassis:** The basic chassis type. The chassis is a fully sealed suit, covering the entire body. Helmet includes a HUD (Heads Up Display) screen that provides all the details on the suits functions, weapon statuses, and the wearer's vital signs.

The built in optics provide 10× magnification and the audio system can register whispers about 50' away. Built-in communications are encrypted (same rating as the armor's firewall) and have a range of five miles.

Suits are hermetically and environmentally sealed and provide their own heating, cooling, and enough oxygen to last 72 hours.

Energy is provided by hydrogen-cell batteries that last 72 hours. Recharging from a special recharging unit takes six hours.

**Armor:** Protection value, considered Heavy Armor.

**Pace:** The Pace at which the wearer moves. Edges/Hindrances that modify Pace still apply.

**Firewall:** The suits's firewall rating.

**Running:** Modifier to the wearer's running die.

**Weight:** Weight of the suit. When powered the weight is negated for encumbrance purposes.

**Weapons:** Included mounted and personal weapons.

**Cost:** The base price of the suit.

### FEATURES

**Arm Servos:** Increases wear's Strength by +1 die type.

**Autodoc:** Automated medical system with d8 Healing, also grants +2 to recover from being Shaken.

**Battery Pack:** Doubles unit's runtime to 144 hours.

**GhostCoat:** Add +4 to Stealth against visual detection, but has no effect on sensors.

**Jump Pack:** Allows the unit to jump Pace × 2 horizontally, or Pace × 1 vertically.

**Magnetic Pads:** The soles and palms of the suit are fitted with powerful magnets, allowing the wearer to walk up or cling to metal surfaces.

**Propulsion Jets:** Pace of 6" when in vacuum or water, no effect outside these environments.

**Optics:** Advanced optics, +2 to vision-based Notice rolls, and negates all lighting penalties up to 100 yards.

**Recoil Compensator:** Negates the penalty for auto-fire for personal and mounted weapons.

**Self Sealing:** The suit reacts to sudden depressurization and fills the hole with a fast-hardening sealant.

**Sensor Suite:** The suit is equipped with sensors that detect sound, motion, strong chemicals, radiation, or electrical fields up to 500 yards.

**Stealth Circuits:** Grants +4 to Stealth versus sensors.

**Targeting System:** Negates up to two points of Shooting modifiers for carried or mounted weapons.

### BK-42MX MAXIMILLIAN COMBAT POWER ARMOR

The Maximillian is a heavy suit of combat power armor by Black Knight Industries. Once again bringing you modern firepower with a medieval flair. Resembling a suit of fully modernized and streamlined plate armor, the Maximillian also includes customized heraldric HoloTags. Mounted to the back of the sword arm is the Armbow Weapon System, an internal LAC-15 with a stylized 'crossbow' motif on the back of the arm, featuring a 120 round ammunition drum.

**Weapons:**

- Armbow Weapon System (Range 50/100/200; 2d10+1; ROF 4; Shots 120; AP 5, Auto, HW)
- Ceramic Broadsword (Str+d12, AP 2)
- Shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs ranged attacks)

### BK-PA-MK4 DONNER COMBAT POWER ARMOR

The Donner is a cutting-edge power suit designed by Black Knight Industries. The armor is strong, and nearly as nimble as the AGA Loviatar. Some versions also sport composite shields for added protection (not included in the cost listed). The Donner is used by the Chicago Defense Force, featuring advanced sensors, upgraded armor and a shoulder mounted pulse laser, freeing the up the hands for carrying additional weaponry.

**Weapons:**

- Shoulder Mounted 20MW Pulse Laser (Range 75/150/300; Damage 2d10; ROF 1; Shots —; AP 5, HW)
- 12.7mm Gyroc Pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 3d6; ROF 1; Shots 10; HW, SBT, min. arming distance 6")

### RL-PA-SN6 INVICTUS SWAT COMBAT POWER ARMOR

The Ravenlocke Securities Invictus is a suit of SWAT combat power armor deployed by Special Weapons Assault Teams with various security forces. Most departments have 1 or 2 of these as heavy back-up units for extremely hazardous assignments. The units come from the factory with a 40mm Rotary Autocannon Mounted to the right shoulder, and a 1,000,000 candle power spotlight on the left shoulder. Most units are armed with the Sentinel Heavy Machinegun, and a riot shield.

**Weapons:**

- Shoulder Mounted 40mm Rotary Auto-Cannon (Range 75/150/300; Damage 4d8; ROF 3; Shots 100; AP 10, HW)
- Sentinel HMG (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 200, AP 4)
- Shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs ranged attacks)

### SW-GRNT-EVA GRUNT COMBAT POWER ARMOR

Sudeki-Whyte's EVA series of suits are common combat armor mass-produced for infantry units trained for operations in multiple environments, including underwater and space. The grunt comes armed with a pulse laser for use in space.

**Weapons:**

- Shoulder Mounted 20MW Pulse Laser (Range 75/150/300; Damage 2d10; ROF 1; Shots —; AP 5, HW)
- Shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs ranged attacks)

### AGA G-ATR TACTICAL SUPPORT COMBAT POWER ARMOR

The G-ATR (Golemmech Armed Tactical Response) is a basic combat power armor used primarily by military contractors and security firms who find the rugged design and cheap price tag the perfect fit for their expense reports. This unit is designed for heavy infantry support. Armed with a shoulder mounted 40mm Grenade Launcher and carrying the Annihilator Automatic Shotgun this is a devastating force on the battlefield.

**Weapons:**

- Shoulder Mounted Grenade Launcher (Range 24/48/96; Damage 4d6 (or by grenade); ROF 3; Shots 20; HW, LBT)
- Annihilator Shotgun (Range 12/24/48; Damage 1–3d8; ROF 3; Shots 12; Auto)

### DIRE WEASEL COMBAT POWER ARMOR

Global Technologies' Dire Weasel power armor is the light and cost effective response to heavy armored vehicles. Combining high mobility, heavy weapons, decent sensors, and versatile design; a team of dire weasels can destroy nearly any hostile armored formation. With integral shoulder-mounted anti-tank guided missile launchers, the dire weasel can kill nearly any ground vehicle in the world, while providing good protection to the operator.

Compact power supplies and light armor were designed to maximize capacity for the heavy missiles. Most clients purchase a supplemental personal arms for engaging secondary targets (not included).

**Weapons:**

- Shoulder Mounted Missile Pod (Range 100/200/400; Damage 5d6; ROF 1–4; Shots 8; AP 150, HW)
- Mjolnir Anti-Material Rifle (Range 50/100/200; Damage 3d8; ROF 3; Shots 100; AP 6, HW)

INVICTUS SWAT COMBAT POWER ARMOR

### FIRE WEASEL COMBAT POWER ARMOR

A Variant of the Dire Weasel, the Fire Weasel utilizes fire based weaponry, the Fire Weasel replacing the missile pod, and adding a 40mm Grenade Launcher with a full load of 40mm HEI. The Fire Weasel is one of the most destructive suits of powered armor in existence.

**Weapons:**

- Shoulder Mounted Grenade Launcher (Range 24/48/96; Damage 4d6 (or by grenade); ROF 3; Shots 20; HW, LBT)
- Ferret Heavy Flamer (Range *; Damage 2d12; ROF 1; Shots 30; HW, affects least Armored area; *either Cone or MBT up to 18" distant)

### HT RISK MANAGEMENT COMBAT POWER ARMOR

Hostile Takeovers' first forays into the world of power armored executive protection in the world's most hostile negotiations; the Risk Minimization is filled with contradictions. Providing an unparalleled level of protection, everything else was sacrificed to maximize ballistic protection..

### EIS 'THUNDER' FIRE SUPPORT HEAVY POWER ARMOR

Listed as "heavy power armor", the Thunder is actually a light golemmech. A ton of armor, rocket launchers, and sensors, the Thunder can rain devastation upon targets well outside of direct fire ranges. A single Thunder unit can provide a level of fire support equivalent to an entire battery of more conventional artillery, with the ammunition of your choice!

**Weapons:**

- 2×Shoulder Mounted 70mm Rocket Pod (Range 24/48/96; Damage 4d8+2; ROF 1–4; Shots 12; HW, MBT)
- Sentinel HMG (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 200, AP 4)

TABLE 3.11: POWERED ARMOR

| POWERED ARMOR | ARMOR | PACE | RUNNING DIE | FIREWALL | WEIGHT | COST |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AGA Commando Scout Powered Armor | +8 | 8 | +1 die type | 8 | 100 | 450,000 |
| *Notes: Battery Pack, GhostCoat, Jump Pack, Stealth Circuits*<br>*Weapons: 14mm Sniper Rifle, 12.7mm Gyroc Pistol* | | | | | | |
| SW GN-F00 Scout Powered Armor | +8 | 12 | +2 die types | 8 | 100 | 425,000 |
| *Notes: GhostCoat, Jump Pack, Targeting System* | | | | | | |
| AGA Loviatar Scout Powered Armor | +12 | 8 | — | 9 | 100 | 400,000 |
| *Notes: Arm Servos, Jump Pack*<br>*Weapons: 2×Monofilament Whip* | | | | | | |
| AGA Fury Combat Power Armor | +8 | 8 | — | 10 | 100 | 650,000 |
| *Notes: Arm Servos, Optics, Sensor Suite*<br>*Weapons: Shoulder Mount 12.7mm Gyroc, Furious Assault Rifle* | | | | | | |
| BK-42MX Maximillian Combat Power Armor | +8 | 8 | — | 8 | 100 | 375,000 |
| *Notes: Arm Servos (×2)*<br>*Weapons: Armbow Weapon System, Ceramic Broadsword, Shield* | | | | | | |
| BK-PA-MkX Donner Combat Power Armor | +10 | 8 | — | 9 | 100 | 650,000 |
| *Notes: Sensor Suite, Targeting System*<br>*Weapons: Shoulder Mounted 20MW Pulse Laser, 12.7mm Gyroc Pistol* | | | | | | |
| RL-PA-SN6 Invictus SWAT Combat Power Armor | +10 | 8 | — | 9 | 100 | 375,000 |
| *Notes: Recoil Compensator*<br>*Weapons: Shoulder Mounted 40mm Rotary Auto Cannon, Sentinel HMG, Shield* | | | | | | |
| SW-GRNT-EVA Grunt Combat Power Armor | +10 | 10 | +2 die types | 10 | 200 | 525,000 |
| *Notes: Magnetic Pads, Propulsion Jets, Optics, Self Sealing, Sensor Suite, Targeting Computer*<br>*Weapons: Shoulder Mounted 20MW Pulse Laser, Shield* | | | | | | |
| AGA G-ATR Tactical Support Combat Power Armor | +14 | 6 | — | 9 | 200 | 675,000 |
| *Notes: Arm Servos (×2), Autodoc, Recoil Compensator*<br>*Weapons: Shoulder Mounted Grenade Launcher, Annihilator Shotgun* | | | | | | |
| Dire Weasel Combat Power Armor | +14 | 8 | +1 die type | 8 | 200 | 850,000 |
| *Notes: Arm Servos, Stablizers, Targeting System*<br>*Weapons: Shoulder Mounted Missile Pod, Mjolnir AMR* | | | | | | |
| Fire Weasel Combat Power Armor | +12 | 10 | +2 die types | 9 | 200 | 725,000 |
| *Notes: Jump Pack, Sensor Suite, Targeting System*<br>*Weapons: Shoulder Mounted Grenade Launcher, Ferret Heavy Flamer* | | | | | | |
| HT Risk Management Combat Power Armor | +24 | 6 | — | 8 | 200 | 435,000 |
| *Notes: Autodoc* | | | | | | |
| EIS 'Thunder' Fire Support Heavy Power Armor | +16 | 4 | — | 8 | 300 | 1,125,000 |
| *Notes: Arm Servos (×2), Recoil Compensator, Sensor Suite, Stealth Circuitry, Targeting System*<br>*Weapons: 2×Shoulder Mounted 70mm Rocket Pod, Sentinel HMG* | | | | | | |

## Golemmechs

### AGA GLM-01 Mauler Golemmech

Representing Act of God Armaments' first foray into heavy weapon platform design, the Mauler is a beast of a golemmech, designed specifically for urban warfare. A middle-weight design, the Mauler's payload is focused on rapid firepower and heavy armor backed by sophisticated passive sensors.

While not especially agile, the Mauler is quick, and more than capable of holding its own in tight urban spaces. Sporting heavy rapid-fire armaments, in the form of a Black Knight Liberator rotary cannon in one forearm and a set of linked rail guns in the other, the Mauler can devastate an enemy position at short range. The Mauler can carry additional hand held weaponry based upon mission (purchased separately).

The Mauler was intended for the mercenary market, and has been designed to look especially intimidating, with spiked pauldrons, deaths-head, and a matte black finish as factory standard.

**Weapons:**

- Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW)
- Twin Linked Rail Gun (Range 50/100/200; Damage 3d12; ROF 1; Shots 20; HW)

### Kensai Zero Air Support Light Golemmech

The Kensai is agile, well balanced, and capable of VTOL flight using its vectored-thrust engine. The default Kensai carries a Sudeki-Whyte Shoulder Mounted missile pod, and carries the Zero Cannon (proprietary particle beam cannon). Some customers prefer to use a 25mm assault cannon for general operations, due to the recharge time of the Zero Cannon. The Capacitors on the Zero Cannon require additional time to recharge, thus it can only fire once every other turn. Sudeki-Whyte has promised to reduce the recharge time of the Zero Cannon but that isn't reality as yet.

**Weapons:**

- Zero Cannon (Range 50/100/200; Damage 3d10; ROF 1; Shots —; HW, only fire every other round.)
- Shoulder Missile Pod (Range 200/400/800; Damage 6d6; ROF 1–4; Shots 8; AP 12, HW)

### EIS Orion Combat Golemmech

The first product EIS put onto the heavy golemmech market was the Orion Combat System. Billed as a mobile golemmech for elite forces and special operations, the Orion had a mixed reaction. The armor is relatively light, and the integrated armament is underwhelming. However, it possesses the kind of sensors usually found on a reconnaissance model, good battlefield mobility, good overall design, and lots of capacity for modification without changing the stock systems.

While production models of the Orion haven't changed over the last couple of years, most clients heavily customized their purchases. Standard Loadout consists of a Shredder Fist and the Orion Weapon System, consisting of a 20mm Rapid Fire and 4g shotgun, unfortunately, due to poor design the Orion Weapon System utilizes the same Ammunition feed, preventing firing both weapons at once.

**Weapons:**

- Orion Weapon System (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d12; ROF 4; Shots 100; AP 4, HW)
- 4g Shotgun (Range 12/24/48; Damage 1–3d10; ROF 2; Shots 50; Auto, Shotgun)
- Shredder Fist (Str+1d12; AP 4, HW)

### Ford 'Auger' AGII Industrial Golemmech

The Auger is a construction golemmech, designed for use in open-cast mining operations as well as on larger construction sites using its huge, multi-jointed, three-fingered hand that can double as a shovel. The other arm is equipped with a Large Power Drill. The Auger has two smaller arms to facilitate the use of smaller hand held items. As well as strictly civilian applications, the Auger sees use in rescue operations. Large storage hoppers are attached to carry dirt, construction materials and more.

**Weapons:**

- Large Power Drill (Damage 3d6; AP4, HW, Fighting –2, Parry –2)
- Large Scoop Arm (Str+1d12; AP 4, HW)

KENSAI ZERO AIR SUPPORT LIGHT GOLEMMECH

## RAVENLOCKE QUEEN BEE GOLEMMECH

Lightly armored and virtually unarmed, Ravenlocke's Queen Bee is still a strong seller. There's an old saw about amateurs buying firepower and professionals buying support materials, and this golemmech is for professional fighters. The Queen Bee is a force multiplier, using very powerful sensors and a small swarm of recon drones to collect data on the entire battlefield; she's not going to kill you herself, but one of the golemmechs or hunter/killer drones she's directing will.

**Weapons:**

- Shoulder Mounted Thunderbolt 50mm Auto Cannon (Range 75/150/300; Damage 4d8; ROF 3; Shots 100; AP 10, HW)

## RAVENLOCKE HORNET GOLEMMECH

A Heavy combat variant of the Queen Bee. The Hornet is heavier armored, and carries combat drones rather than recon drones. With the 6 combat drones, the Hornet is a nasty piece of business, able to bring many weapon systems to bear from many angles.

**Weapons**

- Shoulder Mounted Thunderbolt 50mm Auto Cannon (Range 75/150/300; Damage 4d8; ROF 3; Shots 100; AP 10, HW)

## EIS ARES COMBAT HEAVY GOLEMMECH

The Ares is an aggressive design built for close and long-range combat. It is EIS' latest mass market design, combining style and function into a formidable package. One of the most expensive golemmechs in mass production, the Ares is turning into a status symbol.

Its rugged gladiator-like frame, topped with a Greco-Roman headpiece/sensor array, sports the Doru weapon system, stylized as a 20-foot-long spear. In close combat, it functions much like its profile suggests, and the spear butt holds a high-powered gauss rifle that fires a stream of razor-sharp flechettes. The Doru is powered by the Ares armor via a tactile interface system built into the golemmech's powerful four-digit hands. The Ares also boasts a shoulder-mounted rocket launcher system.

**Weapons:**

- Hand Held Doru Weapon System (Spear: Str+d10; AP 6, Reach +2, Parry +1, HW; Heavy Laser: Range 100/200/400; Damage 5d10; ROF 1; Shots —; AP 20, HW)
- Shoulder Mounted 70mm Rocket Pod (Range 24/48/96; Damage 4d8+2; ROF 1–4; Shots 12; HW, MBT)

## CBS BEAR HEAVY GOLEMMECH

Designed to slam into enemy strong points with a combination of heavy armor and crushing firepower, the Bear is a daunting foe in a head-on assault.

The Bear is one of the few foreign-manufactured weapon systems to see extensive use in the Japanese military. Designed for bold, direct assaults, the Bear fills a battlefield role that no Sudeki-Whyte or Kenta CD product quite fits but that the new samurai of the Techno-Shogunate embrace. Supported by lighter units, the Bear is a force to be reckoned with. Hitting Hard with it's 90mm heavy cannon, it can take down other golemmechs with relative ease.

The Bear is also used in a defensive capacity along the Ural Mountains in Eastern Russia to defend against the Chinese Mandarinate, where the Passive Stealth and arctic environmental systems, let the Mech Jockeys lie in wait for prolonged period, in a low-power mode.

**Weapons:**

- 'Mother' 90mm Heavy Cannon (Range 150/300/600; Damage 5d8; ROF 1; Shots 20; AP 80, HW, LBT)
- 'Cub' 20MW Pulse Laser (Range 75/150/300; Damage 2d10; ROF 1; Shots —; AP 5, HW)

## "KENKU" AIR SUPERIORITY HEAVY GOLEMMECH

A prototype Sudeki-Whyte design, the Kenku is a test-bed for the viability of an air superiority / ground combat hybrid golemmech. In flight mode it strongly resembles a jet fighter, while the ground combat mode resembles a more traditional hominid golemmech. Early test photographs were leaked onto the Global DataNet and wild speculation about "gundams" was rampant for months.

The Kenku is in early production, order early if you want to receive on this year. The Hand-held Tri-Cannon is a unique cannon design, featuring 3 20mm long barrels, linked to fire in rapidly, no single fire option is available, every pull of the trigger is a three round burst. It is semi-auto, in that the trigger can be pulled rapidly like a semi-auto, releasing a triple burst of rounds each time. The 20mm Gyrocs provide both anti-infantry and anti-aircraft capability as well as anti-missile duty.

The Tetsubo rounds out the impressive weapons array of the Kenku, a traditional Japanese style war club, a full 15' feet in length, it weighs in at 1.2 tons. The Tetsubo and Daikyu weapon systems are stored on the back.

**Weapons:**

- Hand Held Daikyu Tri-Cannon (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d12+3; ROF 4; Shots 100; AP 4, HW)
- Shoulder Mounted Missile Launcher (Range 200/400/800; Damage 4d6; ROF 1–4; Shots 24; AP 6, HW)
- Twin-Linked Hip Mounted 20mm Gyroc Pods (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d12, Shots 50; ROF 1-4; AP 4, HW, SBT)
- Tetsubo Golemmech Maul (Str+12, AP 6, HW, –2 Parry)

## AGA GLM-05E LINEBACKER MASSIVE GOLEMMECH

The Linebacker is currently undergoing trials at the AGA laboratories. Primary Mission as a fire-support golemmech, toting an experimental "Firegod" plasma cannon system, fueled by a new MF-03 Microfusion Power Plant. The Linebacker is considered to be tough and mobile, if inflexible, due to the Firegod System being integrated into the entire superstructure of the Golemmech. The plasma cannon and microfusion plant both show good results, and are likely to be a feature of future AGA golemmech and conventional vehicle designs. Currently, the Linebacker has yet to be deployed outside of an R&D facility.

**Weapons:**

- Firegod Plasma Cannon (Range 50/100/200; Damage 4d8+2; ROF 1; Shots —; HW, Affects least armored area, catch fire 5+)
- Shoulder Mounted Missile Launcher (Range 200/400/800; Damage 4d6; ROF 1–4; Shots 24; AP 6, HW)
- Fist (Str+1d12; AP 8, HW)

## AGA THOR ASSAULT MASSIVE GOLEMMECH

The THOR is an Assault Golemmech, with the primary mission of delivering armored soldiers into heavily fortified installations. Within each leg of this towering god of the modern battlefield is room for three fully armed and armored soldiers complete with interfaces to the golemmech's sensors and manual egress capabilities.

The Thor is armed with a massive shoulder mounted 120mm Cannon, well suited to softening up a target facility. The primary weapon system is the 2 ton Maul that smash through nearly any armored structure in short order.

**Weapons:**

- Shoulder Mounted Thunder 120mm Cannon (Range 150/300/600; Damage 5d10; ROF 1; Shots 20; AP 80, HW, LBT)
- Golemmech Maul (Str+12, AP 6, HW, –2 Parry)

## AGA GRIZZLY MASSIVE GOLEMMECH

The 'Grizz' is the heavier cousin of the Bear, with all the earmarks of an Act of God Golemmech. Though only slighty taller than the Bear Heavy Golemmech, the Grizzly is heavily armored and packs an impressive array of close in weaponry.

The Thunderbolt twin-linked 50mm arm cannons can unleash a deadly hail of fire, and has a twin ammunition storage feeds letting the operator switch between ammunition types with a thought (free action). In close quarters, the large chainsaw is very effective against hard or soft targets; the ceramic teeth can chew through armor with brutal efficiency.

**Weapons:**

- Extractor 50MW Laser (Range 150/300/600; Damage 3d10; ROF 1; Shots —; AP 20, HW)
- Linked Arm Mounted Thunderbolt 50mm Auto Cannon (Range 75/150/300; Damage 4d10; ROF 3; Shots 100; AP 10, HW) **or** 50mm HE (Damage 4d8; AP 10, HW, MBT)
- Eviscerator Chainsaw (Damage 6d6; AP 6, HW)

AGA GRIZZLY MASSIVE GOLEMMECH

TABLE 3.12: GOLEMMECHS

| GOLEMMECH | CHASSIS | PACE/RUN | STRENGTH | TOUGHNESS | CREW | FIREWALL | COST |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AGA GLM-01 Mauler | Light (12') | 24 / 5d6 | d12+4 | 23(12) | 1 | 10 | 1,836,000 |
| *Notes: Advanced Sensors, Auto-Fire (d6), Ejection System, Stabilizers*<br>*Weapons: Liberator Mini Gun; Twin Linked Rail Gun* | | | | | | | |
| Kensai Zero Air Support | Light (12') | 18 / 3d6 | d12+4 | 19(8) | 1 | 12 | |
| *Notes: Auto-Fire (d6), Advanced Sensors, Jump Jet (VTOL system), Optics, Stabilizers, Targeting System*<br>*Weapons: Zero Cannon, Shoulder Missile Pod* | | | | | | | |
| EIS Orion | Light (13') | 18 / 3d6 | d12+4 | 21(10) | 1 | 10 | |
| *Notes: Auto-Fire (d8), Advanced Sensors, Jump Jets, Sensor Suite (1,000 yards)*<br>*Weapons: Orion Weapon System,4g Shotgun, Shredder Fist* | | | | | | | |
| Ford 'Auger' AGII | Light (14') | 18 / 3d6 | d12+4 | 23(12) | 1 | 8 | |
| *Notes: 2×Additional Arms (Strength d6), Cargo Space (×6)*<br>*Weapons: Large Power Drill, Large Scoop Arm* | | | | | | | |
| Ravenlocke Queen Bee | Light (14') | 18 / 3d6 | d12+4 | 23(12) | 1+1 | 12 | |
| *Notes: AMCM, Auto Fire (d8), Cargo Space (converted to drone bay), Decoy Pod, Passenger Compartment (drone operator), Sensor Suite (1,000 yards), Stealth Shielding*<br>Weapons: Shoulder Mounted Thunderbolt 50mm Auto Cannon | | | | | | | |
| Ravenlocke Hornet Golemmech | Light (14') | 18 / 3d6 | d12+4 | 27(16) | 1+1 | 10 | |
| *Notes: AMCM, Auto Fire (d8), Cargo Space (converted to drone bay), Decoy Pod, Passenger Compartment (drone operator), Sensor Suite (1,000 yards)*<br>*Weapons: Shoulder Mounted Thunderbolt 50mm Auto Cannon* | | | | | | | |
| EIS Ares Combat | Medium (20') | 12 / 2d6 | d12+6 | 28(15) | 1 | 12 | |
| *Notes: Advanced Sensors, Sensor Suite, Sloped Armor (×2)*<br>*Weapons: Hand Held Doru Weapon System, Shoulder Mounted 70mm Rocket Pod* | | | | | | | |
| CBS Bear | Medium (20') | 12 / 2d6 | d12+6 | 34(21) | 1 | 10 | |
| *Notes: Advanced Sensors, Auto-Fire (d6), Decoy Pod, Sensor Suite, Stabilizers, Stealth Shielding*<br>*Weapons: 90mm Heavy Cannon, 20MW Pulse Laser* | | | | | | | |
| "Kenku" Air Superiority | Medium (24') | 12 / 2d6 | d12+6 | 26(13) | 1 | 12 | |
| *Notes: AMCM, Auto-Fire (d10), Advanced Sensors, Decoy Pod, Sensor Suite, Stabilizer, Targeting System*<br>*Weapons: Hand Held Daikyu Tri-Cannon, Shoulder Mounted Missile Launcher, Twin-Linked Hip Mounted 20mm Gyroc Pods, Tetsubo Massive Golemmech Maul* | | | | | | | |
| Aga Glm-05E Linebacker | Heavy (35') | 10 / 2d6 | d12+8 | 36(20) | 1 | 12 | |
| *Notes: Auto-Fire (d8), Advanced Sensors, Sensor Suite, Stabilizer, Targeting System*<br>*Weapons: Firegod Plasma Cannon, Shoulder Mounted Missile Launcher* | | | | | | | |
| AGA THOR Assault | Heavy (37') | 6 / 1d6 | d12+8 | 29(15) | 1 | 10 | |
| *Notes: AMCM, Auto-Fire (d8), Optics, Passenger Compartment (×3), Sensor Suite, Stabilizer, Targeting System*<br>*Weapons: Shoulder Mounted Thunder 120mm Cannon, Golemmech Maul* | | | | | | | |
| AGA Grizzly | Medium (29') | 12 / 2d6 | d12+6 | 26(13) | 1 | 12 | |
| *Notes: AMCM, Auto-Fire (d8), Ejection System, Optics,Sensor Suite, Stabilizer, Targeting System*<br>*Weapons: Extractor 50MW Laser, Linked Arm Mounted Thunderbolt 50mm Auto Cannon, Eviscerator Chainsaw* | | | | | | | |

# MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

**Malbot267:** Need a good medical kit, or perhaps you wanna upgrade the medical facilities in your team's safe house? No worries. Malmart's got the tech to keep your heart tickin'. Need to resupply your medical supplies after the last op? Malmart's got everything from handy Stim patches to biometers and even fully-stocked mobile trauma units!

## Biometers

Is your Old biometer broken? No worries amigo. Malmart's got the S.O.T.A in biometer technology. These biometers are guaranteed to hold up under battlefield conditions, or your money back!

### BioDesign BioProbe

The BioDesign BioProbe is a multifunction medical sensor in the form of a flexible cuff which wraps around the patient's wrist, ankle, or neck. It must be applied to bare skin, as there are tiny needles which must get to the sub-dermal layer. The BioProbe reads temperature, pulse, blood pressure, blood oxygen level, blood sugar, and red blood cell count. At most clinics and hospitals, a BioProbe or similar device goes onto each patient as soon as they come in the door, and stays on until they are discharged, doubling as a patient identity bracelet. The bioprobe grants +1 to Healing skill checks.

### BioDesign OmniProbe

The OmniProbe is BioDesign's top-of-the-line medical monitor. Slightly larger than the BioProbe, it includes all the features of the BioProbe and adds chemical sensors to analyze drugs, toxins, and hormone levels in the bloodstream. The omniprobe grants +2 to Healing skill checks. In addition, if connect to a hospital network, it has a Healing d6 skill, for diagnostic purposes only.

An OmniProbe can also be used to monitor a subject's involuntary responses to questioning, like an old-fashioned "lie detector" +1 to any lie detection attempts made on a patient wearing an OmniProbe).

### Brazilian Para-Sar Medkit

Brazilian Air Force search and rescue teams have become legendary for their skill, morale, and success rate at saving lives in impossible situations. Their standard medical kit is similar to the Crisis Team model above, but also includes an inflatable cast for broken limbs, spray-on bandages for large burns, extra painkillers, five military-grade antidote patches, insect repellent, two self-heating pads and two self-cooling pads. Provides a +1 Healing skill bonus.

### Crisis Team Responder Kit

The standard for civilian medical responders in most developed parts of the world. Includes a BioProbe monitor cuff, a hand-pumped ventilator with disposable masks, a pack of airway tubes, ten standard trauma patches, two rolls of tape and a dozen sterile dressings, a bottle of sterile saline, antiseptic spray, gloves and face masks, steel trauma shears for cutting away clothing and debris, tweezers, a light, and a lightweight thermal blanket. There are drug patches for painkillers, antibiotics, stimulants, and anti-diarrheal agents. Provides +1 Healing skill bonus.

TABLE 3.13: MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

| BIOMETERS | COST | WEIGHT |
|---|---|---|
| BioDesign BioProbe | 1,000 | — |
| BioDesign OmniProbe | 2,000 | 1 |
| Brazilian Para-Sar Medkit | 5,000 | 6 |
| Crisis Team Responder Kit | 2,500 | 4 |
| Malmart Home Medkit | 200 | 1 |
| Mobile Trauma Kit | 10,000 | 40 |
| **PATCHES** | **COST** | **WEIGHT** |
| Drug Patch | 200 | — |
| Emergency Support Patch | 300 | — |
| Military Antidote Patch | 300 | — |
| Stim Patch | 200 | — |
| Stun Patch | 200 | — |

### Malmart Home Medkit

A cheap, low-end medical kit aimed at campers, paranoid parents, and business owners trying to comply with safety rules without spending much money. Includes a mouth shield for mouth-to-mouth respiration, some antibiotic dressings and sterile bandages, two emergency support patches, gloves, scissors, tweezers, and a packet of epinephrine patches. Everything is made as stable and long-lasting as possible so the kit can be shoved in a glove compartment and forgotten for up to 5 years.

### Mobile Trauma Kit

Most ambulances now carry a Mobile Trauma Unit. This is an automated medical support device intended to stabilize a seriously injured patient long enough to reach the hospital. An MTU is a set of diagnostic patches, self-injecting tubes, and ventilators, typically deployed from a box built into the side or ceiling of the patient compartment. Free-standing MTUs resemble a stretcher bolted atop a footlocker. On its own, the MTU has a Healing d6 skill to keep the patient alive and stable. A trained paramedic or doctor using an MTU can not only stabilize but treat injuries (+3 to Healing skill rolls for trained users).

## Patches

### Drug Patch

Most emergency drugs are now packaged as "slap and forget" skin patches about 1 inch across. They are color-coded by the type of medication (antibiotic, antitoxin, stimulant, tranquilizer, etc.) and have the drug name printed in large clear letters. The one-size-fits-all nature of emergency patches does have drawbacks. It's hard to measure out a precise dosage, and well-meaning amateurs often overdo it.

Administering a patch to an unwilling patient requires a successful Touch Attack, and there is a –4 penalty to hit bare skin unless the individual is very scantily dressed. Putting a patch on someone without them noticing requires a raise on a Stealth roll in addition to the Touch Attack.

### EMERGENCY SUPPORT PATCH

A standard part of any medical kit, an emergency support patch is a combination wound dressing and drug patch. The user simply peels off the sterile backing and slaps it over the wound. Emergency Support Patches (known in the trade as "greens" or "post-its") are typically 5 cm square and colored fluorescent green. The bandage is laced with antibiotics, stimulants to ward off shock, topical painkillers, and coagulating agents to stop bleeding. The patch grants +2 to Healing rolls to treat injuries.

A great many doctors hate the patches, because some injured patients simply slap one on and never seek treatment until undetected damage or infection puts them at risk of death. Teenagers have been known to abuse the patches, slapping them on for the rush of euphoria from the mix of painkillers and stimulants.

### MILITARY ANTIDOTE PATCH

The list of toxins used commonly as weapons isn't that long, and in many cases the same antidote counters a whole family of contact or inhalation agents. On the chemical-warfare battlefield, seconds count. Most armed forces now issue soldiers a stick-on antidote strip, typically attached to the back of the calf or the inside of the forearm. The outer surface is a gas-detection strip, which changes color on exposure to various chemical agents. The soldier simply presses firmly against the section which has changed color to release the appropriate antidote (+2 to Vigor rolls against chemical warfare agents).

### STIM PATCH

A common variety of drug patch which has migrated from medical to street use. Stim patches contain a jolt of epinephrine, ampakine, and dopamine. A stim patch grants +2 to Bleeding Out rolls for an hour.

### STUN PATCH

Tranquilizing drug patches are used in psychiatric treatment, by repressive regimes, and corps too savvy to just shoot their enemies, and (of course) by hard-partying idiots looking for a new high. Time-release tranquilizer patches are color-coded gray and blue, while fast-acting doses are black and blue (which leads to any number of annoying pop-culture references to being "beaten").

Note that even the fast-acting patches aren't instant: anyone dosed with a Stun patch rolls Vigor each round with a cumulative –1 penalty per round. With a success the target remains conscious. Once the target fails the Vigor roll he is rendered unconscious for 2d6 hours.

The danger of an overdose is significant: once the drug takes effect, the target makes a Vigor at –2; with a failure his Vigor drops by 2 die types for 1d4 days. If the resulting Vigor is below d4, then death results.

# TAP APPLICATIONS

**Malbot267:** Bonjour mes ami, welcome to Malmart's TAP Application Store, or T-APP Store. We have T-APPs to expand your mind beyond it's Basic TAP connection. You can go surf the Deep to find the information yourself, or you can purchase a T-APP, and have specialized knowledge at your TAP Access Point.

**Note:** All TAP applications require 1 AMS.

### T-APP BABYLON

The Babylon acts as a basic translator program, allowing the character to make a Smarts roll to understand languages he doesn't normally speak.

### T-APP BOUNTY BOARD

This fun little app includes face recognition software and links to all the known bounties. Instantly updates. It pays to be a good guy. It gives a +1 bonus to Notice rolls when trying to spot a fugitive in a crowd of people. Also updates personal bounties, letting you know just how wanted you are.

### T-APP CADUCEUS

A T-APP which monitors your vitals and displays them directly into your heads-up. For a 500 credit per month fee, you can have your vitals monitored by a Medical team, which can then dispatch a rescue team in the event of Incapacitation. Doctors who access the Caduceus also gain +1 to Healing rolls on the character.

### T-APP ESTREAM!

Looking for entertainment? We have over 10,000 shows available for instant streaming! This grants a +2 to Common Knowledge rolls!

### T-APP ETHER COMBAT IFF

When you're in the thick of it, you want to know where your friends are. That's where the Combat IFF (identification friend or foe) comes in. Uplinks to your teams TAPs, this will project a Hyper Tag and outline image of your team's locations which is visible only in your teams TAPs. Teammates are only subjected to the Innocent Bystander rule on a critical failure, or only a 1 for Automatic weapons and Shotguns.

### T-APP FIREWALL SAPPER PROTECTION

Grants +1 to a character's Firewall! Does not stack with other T-APP Firewall products.

### T-APP FIREWALL G-NET SECURITY

Grants +2 to a character's Firewall! Does not stack with other T-APP Firewall products.

### T-APP FIREWALL 4TH DIMENSION SECURITY

Grants +3 to a character's Firewall! Does not stack with other T-APP Firewall products.

### T-APP MULTITASKER

Organize your brain, by creating multiple TAP view ports for different tasks with this simple to use visual tool. Reduce any Multi-action Penalties by 1 for your character.

TABLE 3.14: TAP APPLICATIONS

| TYPE (T-APP) | COST |
|---|---|
| Babylon | 1,000 credits |
| Bounty Board | 400 credits/month |
| Caduceus | 500 credits per month |
| Estream | 50 credits per month |
| Ether Combat IFF | 5,000 credits |
| Firewall Sapper Protection | 500 credits/Advance |
| Firewall G-Net Security | 1,200 credits/Advance |
| Firewall 4th Dimension Security | 2,000 credits/Advance |
| Multitasker | 3,500 credits |
| NewsLink | 100 credits/month |
| Range-Finder/Targeting Acquisition Uplink | 2,000 |
| T-APP Teamlink | 2,000 |

### T-APP NEWSLINK

This T-APP keeps you linked in with all the world news, with instant translation, and multi-window displays of relevant news streams. Characters using T-APP NewsLink have a +1 bonus to Investigation rolls.

### T-APP RANGE-FINDER/TARGETING ACQUISITION UPLINK

Target acquisition provides an interface between range finders, Smartguns, etc., providing instant up to the second information from weapon accessories. The Range penalties are reduced by 1.

### T-APP TEAMLINK

TeamLink Uplink links all team members with each other. Ranges, subvocal messages and other tactical information uploaded by team members, granting +1 to Knowledge (Battle) rolls.

# TOOLS

### CHEMICAL SCRUBBER

A Chemical Scrubber is a canister of nanites which, when activated, converts the chemicals on contaminated clothing or surface into harmless substances. Scrubs up to 10 square feet of surface area. Single Use.

### COMBAT WEBBING

Full combat webbing. Sturdy web belt with detachable load-bearing SynthWeave suspenders. The belt and load-bearing suspenders are 1" wide and adjustable to fit nearly every body size, as well as over standard armors The webbing is designed to carry hard and soft-sided pouches for equipment and ammunition to be readily at hand. These pouches come in a variety of sizes, and range in use from magazine pouches to medkits to holsters and drop pouches. Available as integral clips to hard armors as well. This allows the character to act as if his Strength were 1 die type higher for purposes of determining Encumbrance.

### HYPER BOOK

Sometimes you just want to have the feel of a book in your hands, this Holoreader book interlinks with the TAP to project the book images onto the pages of the book. More of a gimmick, a throwback to the old days.

### LOFTAN PERSOFAB MATTER ASSEMBLER

A personal fabricator uses laser printing to build up 3-D objects from plastic feedstock. Many homes have a small or medium fabricator to print out licensed products like toys, house wares, and the latest fad items. The Loftan PersoFab can make any item which will fit into a 4 inch cube. Simple moving parts are possible, but not motors or electronics. The plastic feedstock isn't very strong, and printed items don't last more than a few weeks. But who cares? When it breaks, just pay the license fee again and print out a replacement!

- Runs on local power supply.
- Product licenses typically cost 1,000 credits per copy.
- Feedstock costs 50 credits per 5 lb.

### PLASMA CUTTER

At 25000 degrees Fahrenheit, this hand held plasma cutter can cut through carbon steel in seconds! This thing can used in melee combat (Damage 3d6; AP 4; catch fire 3+).

### TOOLKITS

At Malmart we take pride in presenting the tools you need to get your job done. When ordering a toolkit, state what occupation you're needing the toolkit for and whether you want a basic, advanced or elite kit. Our trained staff will assemble a set of tools and accessories to assist you in your jobs. Fan-favorites include our Climbing, Survival and Repair kits! Basic toolkits allow you to attempt the skill without penalty. Advanced toolkits grant a +1 bonus to the skill. Elite toolkits provide a +2 bonus.

### ZIPLINE GRAPPLE GUN AND RIG

Need to get from one Scraper to another? A Zipline Grapple Gun is your ticket. This specialized pneumatic rifle consists of an AP arrow with grapple head, and a MonoRope reel. (50' of rope included).

TABLE 3.15: ACCESSORIES & ELECTRONICS

| GEAR | COST | WEIGHT |
|---|---|---|
| Chemical Scrubber | 250 | 1.0 |
| Combat Webbing | 450 | 3.0 |
| Hyperbook | 250 | 3.0 |
| Loftan PersoFab | 5,000 | 10.0 |
| Plasma Cutter | 10,000 | 2.0 |
| Toolkit, Basic | 250 | 5.0 |
| Toolkit, Advanced | 1,250 | 10.0 |
| Toolkit, Elite | 5,000 | 100.0 |
| Zipline, Grapple Gun and Rig | 700 | 5.0 |

# WEAPONS

**Malbot267:** The best defense is an overwhelming offense. When they see that Thunderbolt riding at your hip, they're going to think twice about drawing down on you. Malmart has access to all the major manufacturers!

## Melee Weapons

### ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS EXO-CLAW

These heavy servo assisted gloves have massive electro-dynamo ceramic claws easily capable of ripping through heavy armor plating. The normal hand fits inside the claw, so no other weapons may be held in the hand. The claws require a power backpack to function.

### ASTERISK DOMINATRIX PAIN WHIP

Whether you want to a little fun in the bedroom, or want to make you enemies cower in fear, the Dominatrix Pain Whip is what you want. A low voltage, tuned electrical charge, the pain whip set to the frequency that neurotransmitters function on, any contact with flesh can cause excruciating pain. The whip has a retractable filament, allowing the whip to be housed within the handle. Once the Pain Whip has been wrapped around a target's flesh with the raise, a flick of a switch sends the targets nerves into overdrive.

Using a Pain Whip requires a called shot to an unarmored location. A struck target makes a Spirit roll against a target number equal to the Fighting roll. Failure indicates the target is affected by the *slow* power (see *Savage Worlds*), until he breaks free (opposed Agility or Strength against the wielder's Fighting).

### BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES SHOTFIST

A brutal and usually highly illegal weapon, the ShotFist effectively consists of a shotgun (Range 2/4/8; Damage 1–3d6; 1 action to reload, usable in melee) mounted to the back of a Ceramic Gauntlet.

### NEED MORE WEAPONS?

Though *Interface Zero 2.0* has a wide selection of weapons to chose from; some people may want more. All the weapons listed in the *Savage Worlds* core rules are available to players with the GM's approval. The base price of the weapon should be multiplied by 10 to get a close match with *Interface Zero 2.0* prices.

### BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES SWORDGUN

It's a sword! It's a gun! It's a SwordGun! This 20" blade of steel is mounted alongside a .45 caliber pistol (Range 4/8/16; Damage 2d6+1; Shots 5; Semi-Auto), giving the wielder the benefit of both ranged and melee combat in one weapon! Never be the ranged fighter left unarmed in melee again!

### RAVENLOCKE JOINTLOCK STUN GLOVES

When you need a low key, non-lethal response, look no further than Ravenlocke Security's JointLock Stun Gloves. The reinforced, insulated palm conductor, can easily send its stunning jolt through a parried conductive weapon. Only requires a touch attack (+2 Fighting) to use. Target must make a Vigor roll at –2. Failure means he's automatically Shaken.

### RAVENLOCKE SECURITY TRUNCHEON

The Security Truncheon is the standard in non-lethal response. Designed to parry attacks and deliver the maximum shock allowed under international treaties. Opponents struck with the truncheon resolve damage first then must make a Vigor roll at –2. Failure means he's automatically Shaken.

### SHOGUN OUTFITTERS DRAGONFLY TESSEN

These elegant, light-weight weapons were often used by samurai in places where obvious weapons were prohibited. Fighting fans double as defensive weapons and thrown weapons (Range 4/8/16).

TABLE 3.16: MELEE WEAPONS

| TYPE | DAMAGE | WEIGHT | COST | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AOG Armaments Exo-Claw | Str+d10 | 30 | 4,500 | AP 4, HW. Requires a battery. |
| AOG Dominatrix Pain Whip | — | 3 | 2,200 | Reach 3; see description |
| BKI Shotfist | Str+d4 | 9 | 1,750 | See description |
| BKI Swordgun | Str+d6 | 12 | 4,000 | See description |
| RS Jointlock Stun Gloves | — | 1 | 250 | Non-lethal, Shock Requires a battery. |
| RS Security Truncheon | Str+d4 | 2 | 900 | +1 Parry, Shock. Requires a battery. |
| SO Dragonfly Tessen | Str+d4 | 1 | 100 | +1 Parry; See description |
| SO Manriki-Gusari | Str+d4 | 1 | 150 | Reach 1 |
| SO Miyamoto K-Tana | Str+d8+2 | 6 | 10,000 | AP 4, HW |
| SO Monowhip | Agi+d6 | 2 | 3,000 | AP 6, HW, Reach 3; See description |
| SO Whirlwind Butterfly Swords | Str+d6 | 3 | 100 | AP 2 |
| UP Duke McCoy Combat Knife | Str+d6+1 | 1 | 300 | |
| UP Ironfang Spring-Blade | Str+d4 | — | 250 | |
| WT Decapitator Chain Axe | Str+d12+4 | 50 | 5,000 | AP 2, 2-hands, –1 Parry, HW. Requires a battery. |
| WT Disemboweler Chain Dagger | Str+d6 | 5 | 1,500 | AP 2. Requires a battery. |
| WT Eviscerator Chain Sword | Str+d10 | 10 | 2,500 | AP 2. Requires a battery. |
| WT Lacerator Knife | Str+d6 | 3 | 400 | AP 2. Requires a battery. |
| WT Shillelagh Havoc Stick | Str+d6 | 2 | 1,500 | See description. Requires a battery. |

### SHOGUN OUTFITTERS MANRIKI-GUSARI

A 36" inch long chain with two steel-weights on the ends, the Manrikigusari fighting chain is the perfect weapon for those situations when you need your opponent alive but entangled or otherwise incapacitated. Manriki make exceptional garrotes as well.

### SHOGUN OUTFITTERS MIYAMOTO K-TANA

This is tip-top ami: a folded titanium-tungsten alloy, katana with monofilament edge. Each K-Tana is a piece of art, with the seal of the artisan who created it, as a Hyper-Tag above the tang. HyperObject options available for the Ronin to add colors and HyperFx during combat. Custom designed traditional Japanese mon included.

HyperTag

### SHOGUN OUTFITTERS MONOWHIP

The MonoWhip (or monomolecular filament whip) is a whip consisting of tightly bound carbon molecules. Its super-thin profile lets the MonoWhip cut through most materials with ease. Keep away from children and pets.

MonoWhips are dangerous. A roll of 1 on the Fighting die, regardless of the Wild Die means the user has struck himself. The monofilament whip can easily cut through most armor, strength is less important than accuracy. It dealks d10 extra damage instead of d6 with a raise on the Fighting roll.

The MonoWhip features a retractable whip, storing inside the handle when not in use.

### SHOGUN OUTFITTERS WHIRLWIND BUTTERFLY SWORDS

Impress your friends and intimidate your opponents with these handcrafted Titanium-Tungsten alloy Whirlwind™ Butterfly swords! At a 19" long and 3" wide, these weapons are perfect for the Kung-fu street fighter.

### DUKE MCCOY COMBAT KNIFE

Here it is folks, the NEW Duke McCoy Combat knife! Now with a 3" longer blade, 13" inches of pain awaits any gutterpunk stupid enough to try and take you on when you're sporting the Duke McCoy combat knife! This wicked knife is made with our patented NanoSteel, the hilt employs Nano-Stick technology for an unbreakable grip (+1 to Strength rolls to resist being disarmed).

### URBAN PUNK IRONFANG SPRING-BLADE

Get the drop on your adversaries with our Urban Punk Ironfang spring-loaded blades! These sleek, nano-sharp knives are crafted with Urban Punk's patented NanoSteel to provide the durability and edge you need! NanoSteel springs are triggered by a micro switch (free action to activate). You can download a Mediastream of the activation process free of charge at our Urban Punk domain!

## BATTERIES/POWER PACKS

Some weapons require external power sources to operate. Batteries provide 48 hours of continuous use. Power packs provide a week of constant use. Power packs for range weapon, provide the weapon's listed shots.

| ITEM | COST | WEIGHT |
|---|---|---|
| Battery Pack | 100 | 0.25 |
| Power Pack | 250 | 0.5 |
| Hydrogen Cell Backpack | 150,000 | 20 |

### WASTELAND TRADERS DECAPITATOR CHAIN AXE

The heavy duty upgrade to Wasteland Traders' famous Eviscerator Chain Sword. This double headed axe is powerful enough to carve through power armor with sheer brutality.

### WASTELAND TRADERS DISEMBOWELER CHAIN DAGGER

New for 2090, a lighter more portable version of the Eviscerator Chain Sword. The disemboweler is much easier to conceal than the bulky Eviscerator, and can be attached to a rifle as a bayonet.

### WASTELAND TRADERS EVISCERATOR CHAIN SWORD

The holy grail of violent splatter-fi fans for decades, modern technology has finally made the chain sword a reality. You know what it is: 20th century chainsaw technology small and light enough to be converted into a weapon. Effective and fun. New for 2090, internal batteries provide 48 hours of continuous use.

### WASTELAND TRADERS LACERATOR KNIFE

This meaty sucker takes twin serrated titanium blades and merges them into a single, thick sharp blade that cuts with a rapid alternating sawing motion.

### WASTELAND TRADERS SHILLELAGH HAVOC STICK

The Shillelagh Havoc stick is a truncheon with a Havoc Capacitor at the tip. With a raise on the Fighting roll, the target must make Strength check at –2 or be knocked back 1d4" and prone; and Shaken on impact.

## PISTOLS

**Malbot267:** Malmart is pleased to bring you the following Pistols! All of our pistols come with a money back guarantee if they fail to function in a combat situation!

### AGA BLACK KNIGHT LIMITED

The Black Knight is the newest addition to the AGA catalogue. The underbarrel blade can be used in close combat situations whenever needed, but the neat thing about this impressive revolver is the Dual Barrel Mode. The user can select to fire both barrels on each pull of the trigger. This numbered, limited edition is only available in matte black, and is delivered in a wooden case with a certificate of authenticity.

### AGA CYBERCHROMIUM RAT .75

Act of God brings you the largest caliber handgun on the market today. Released during the holiday season in 2089, this handgun is one of the hardest hitting handguns on the market today. Made from pure titanium, and finished with a polished chromium. Commonly only carried by Chromed-out cyber junkies, the kick has put many a norm in the hospital.

### AGA THUNDERBOLT

Signature weapon of world renowned retrieval expert Hunter Clark, the AGA Thunderbolt is now available on the open market! Because the AGA Thunderbolt is such a well-known menacing weapon, characters enjoy a +1 to Intimidation rolls when brandishing this beast.

### AMY'S SURPLUS FOLEY ARMS WATCHDOG

Although Foley Arms has sadly folded, their legacy lives on in the form of the Watchdog — a sturdy and reliable semi-automatic pistol still favored by many professional groups, including the Atlantica Police Force. Relatively lightweight and inexpensive, the Watchdog uses a proprietary rebating system that actually allows the firing chamber's blowback to help accelerate the round. This means the Watchdog can use a 10mm round and still pack enough firepower to get the job done.

TABLE 3.17: PISTOLS

| TYPE | RANGE | DAMAGE | ROF | COST | WEIGHT | SHOTS | MIN. STR | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AGA Black Knight Limited | 12/24/48 | 2d8 | 1–2 | 5,000 | 3 | 6 | — | AP 2, Revolver |
| AGA Cyberchromium Rat .75 | 12/24/48 | 2d10 | 1 | 5,000 | 4 | 5 | d12 | AP 4, Semi-Auto |
| AGA Thunderbolt | 12/24/48 | 2d8+1 | 1 | 1,500 | 4 | 11/15 | d8 | AP 4, Semi-Auto |
| AS Foley Arms Watchdog | 12/24/48 | 2d8 | 1 | 1,000 | 3 | 12 | d6 | AP 2, Semi-Auto |
| HT HT-9 | 12/24/48 | 2d6 | 1 | 1,000 | 2 | 5 | — | AP 1, Semi-Auto |
| PD Saturday Night Sprawl Special | 12/24/48 | 2d6+1 | 1 | 800 | 4 | 6 | — | AP 2, Revolver |
| SC Urchin Pistol | 10/20/40 | 2d6 | 2 | 800 | 3 | 16 | — | AP 1 |
| SR Street Talker 6MM | 05/10/20 | 2d4+1 | 1 | 500 | 3 | 6 | — | AP 1, Semi-Auto |
| UP Columbus Twin-Barrel | 10/20/40 | 2d6+1 | 1 | 2,500 | 4 | 12 | — | Semi-Auto, See notes |
| WT Wastelander | 15/30/60 | 2d6+1 | 1 | 900 | 4 | 11/16 | — | AP 1, Semi-Auto |

### HOSTILE TAKEOVER HT-9 HOLD-OUT PISTOL

Hostile Takeover's most popular hold-out pistol from the parcel delivery office to the boardroom. Perfect for a quick defense; the 9mm has enough stopping power to make lightly armored attackers dive for cover, giving you a chance to run for the weapons locker.

### SATURDAY NIGHT SPRAWL SPECIAL .44 REVOLVER

You just can't beat a classic, 200 years of history are all the Saturday Night Sprawl Special .44 Magnum really needs. The elegant design is available in cobalt blue, polished chrome, or wrought iron black. It's big it's heavy and staring down that .44 caliber barrel is scary as hell. Private Dick knows classic, don't know Dick? Contact one of our friendly sales staff to get to know Private Dick.

### STREET CHIC URCHIN PISTOL

The Street Chic brand is all about quantity, not quality. The Urchin 9mm pistol is the most common weapon on the street, the production values on this weapon are sub-par, bordering on criminal. But, when you need a throw-away, or you only got so many creds, then you're likely to end up with an Urchin.

### SENTINEL ROCK STREET TALKER 6MMM PISTOL

In today's world, your family is under siege by the foreign criminals, gang members and terrorists. And the government is failing to protect you! The Street Talker is Sentinel Rock's answer to your call! Defend your life at a discount price you cannot afford to ignore.

### URBAN PUNK COLUMBUS TWIN-BARREL PISTOL

Pop, Pop, Double Tap! Nothing is sexier than a big pistol, and the Columbus is 9 pounds of Black Steel. It has an innovative design configuration, with the top barrel firing, then the bottom barrel, reducing the kick from the double barrels. The unique clip design does have some flaws, it can jam easily, yet every shot is a Double Tap (see *Savage Worlds* core rules).

### WT-216LB. WASTELANDER LONG BARREL

Wasteland Traders understands the need to engage targets at range. The long barrel design of the Wastelander LB, might just give you the edge you need.

## AMMUNITION COSTS

To keep things simple, ammunition costs are kept fairly generic. The following table provides basic prices. If you need a price for something not listed, use this as a base line and check with the GM on the final price.

| TYPE | COST | WEIGHT |
|---|---|---|
| Light caliber | 100/50 | 3/50 |
| Medium caliber | 250/50 | 5/50 |
| Heavy caliber | 300/50 | 6/50 |
| Shotgun | 200/20 | 4/20 |
| Flamer (canister) | 600 | 3 |
| Gyroc Round | 350/50 | 10/50 |

TABLE 3.18: SUBMACHINE GUNS AND SHOTGUNS

| SUBMACHINE GUNS | RANGE | DAMAGE | ROF | COST | WEIGHT | SHOTS | MIN STR | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mosquito Storm | 15/30/60 | 2d6–2 | 3 | 1,500 | 3 | 36 | — | AP 2, Auto, |
| RS P9D | 12/24/48 | 2d6–1 | 3 | 2,000 | 3 | 100 | — | AP 3, Auto, 3RB |
| UP Gutter Punk | 12/24/48 | 2d6+1 | 3 | 2,500 | 3 | 30 | — | AP 1, Auto, 3RB |
| WT Wanderer | 12/24/48 | 2d6 | 3 | 2,000 | 3 | 30 | — | AP 1, Auto, 3RB |
| **SHOTGUNS** | | | | | | | | |
| AGA Thunder | 10/20/40 | 1–3d6 | 1 | 1,000 | 2 | 6 | — | +2 Stealth to conceal |
| BKI Tiger Claw | 15/30/60 | 1–3d4 | 2 | 4,500 | 5 | 12 | d6 | AP 2 |
| WT BD-4DY 12g | 12/24/48 | 1–3d6 | 1 | 2,000 | 3 | 6 | d6 | Semi-Auto |

## Submachine Guns

**Malbot267:** Submachine guns are high rate of fire weapons which use pistol ammunition rather than more powerful rifle ammunitions. Smaller than a long arm, dangerous due to their concealability.

### MOSQUITO STORM MS-2090 MACHINE PISTOL

A mini sub-machine gun, utilizing 4.5mm caseless ammunition. The previous rotating five barrel design has been completely redesigned into a fixed tri-barrel configuration, making the weapon lighter, but exponentially increasing its ammo capacity. Plus, now it doesn't look like you pulled it out of the Deadlands VRPG. So drop your creds on this flash piece of hardware, and watch your street cred soar!

### RAVENLOCKE P9D PERSONAL DEFENSE WEAPON

A small caliber weapon designed to put a lot of lead in the air. Utilizing a bullpup design, horizontal ammunition clip with helical feed and a high rate of fire. This small caliber machine pistol can lay down some serious lead omae. Able to change fire modes from semi-auto to full auto. The amazing bullpup design is a stable compact firing platform. The weapon features a polymer based design to keep the weight to a minimum.

### URBAN PUNK GUTTERPUNK .45ACP SMG

Urban Punk really loves the classics; this one is based upon the MAC-10 submachine gun. Silencer included where available.

### WASTELAND WANDERER 9MM SMG

Wasteland Traders presents the Wanderer Submachine Gun, when you're in hostile territory, you need something that can throw a lot of lead in the air with complete reliability. Trust Wasteland traders to bring you that kind of reliability.

## Shotguns

**Malbot267:** Shotguns are large bore weapons. Even a 12 gauge has a bore size greater than ½ an inch in diameter. Typically these long arms have smooth bores, firing shot or a slug.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Thanks for stating the obvious malbot.

### AGA THUNDER SHOTGUN

The Thunder is a smaller shotgun designed for home security. This 20g shotgun is good for women and those of smaller frame. It's convenient size allows for easy storage in the home safe or other secure location (+2 to Stealth rolls to conceal)!.

### TIGER CLAW CLOSE ASSAULT SHOTGUN

The ultimate man stopper! When the fighting gets close and ugly, the Tiger Claw saves the day! Its cut down barrel allows use in melee. Now sold with bio-degradable projectiles! Own the infamous combat shotgun that shoots tiny shards of plastic designed to deal maximum tissue damage!

### BD-4DY 12G PUMP ACTION SHOTGUN

Wasteland brings you another standard for survival in the wastes. The Big Daddy is deadly at close range, and with slugs, it can be just as deadly at medium range. The Big Daddy is there to keep you safe, when you're out prospecting.

TABLE 3.19 RIFLES

| RIFLE | RANGE | DAMAGE | ROF | COST | WEIGHT | SHOTS | MIN. STR | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AGA 12 Maw | | | | | | | | |
| Assault Configuration | 24/48/96 | 2d8+1 | 4 | 16,500 | 4 | 36/50 | d6 | AP 3, Auto 3RB, HW |
| Heavy Support Configuration | 30/60/90 | 2d10+1 | 4 | 20,500 | 5 | 120 | d6 | AP 3, Auto 3RB, HW |
| Maw Spec Ops Configuration | 24/48/96 | 2d8+1 | 3 | 18,500 | 3 | 36 | d6 | AP 3, Auto 3RB, HW |
| AS Foley Arms TAW 2022 | 25/50/100 | 2d8+1 | 3 | 5,000 | 5 | 45 | d8 | AP 3, 3RB, Auto, see notes |
| CAW | 12/24/48 | 1–3d6 | 2 | — | — | 12 | — | Auto, Shotgun |
| UBGL | 12/24/48 | 3d6 | 1 | — | — | 12 | d6 | SBT, HW |
| BKI BK-616 | 24/48/96 | 2d8 | 4 | 3,200 | 3 | 60 | — | AP 4, Auto, 3RB |
| BKI Amphibious Rifle | 20/40/80 | 2d8 | 1 | 2,000 | 3 | 12 | — | AP 2 |
| SC Assassin's Rifle | 30/60/90 | 2d10 | 1 | 2,000 | 4 | 1 | d6 | AP 2, Snapfire |
| UP Punk3d Rifle | 20/40/80 | 2d8 | 1 | 6,000 | 2 | 9 | — | AP 2 |
| WT Pneumatic Dart Rifle | 10/20/30 | 2d4 | 1 | 1,100 | 2 | 12 | — | Poison, Snapfire |
| Tarantula Hunting Rifle | 30/60/120 | 2d8+2 | 1 | 6,000 | 3 | 8 | — | AP2, Snapfire, Scope |

## Rifles

**Malbot267:** Malmart carries a full range of rifles. Rifles feature rounds with more powder, thus higher damage and greater armor penetration.

### AGA-12 MAW MODULAR ASSAULT RIFLE

Designed to the specifications of the world leading military, the AGA-12M Modular Assault Weapon had been rated Weapon of 2090 by GUNN™ Magazine. Currently in the final proving ground stages, expect to see many countries moving to arm their troops with the future of weaponry. There are three different base configurations.

### AMY'S SURPLUS FOLEY ARMS TAW 2022

Foley Arms classic: the 2022 Tactical Assault Weapon, which is still in use by the Atlantica Combined Armed Forces. Merging the utility of an assault rifle, a close assault weapon and rapid-fire 25mm under barrel grenade launcher with the reliability of most Foley Arms weapons, the 2022 gives you every tool you need to get the job done. Bullpup configuration allows a compact design. Favored firearm of the Combine Special Forces.

### BLACK KNIGHT ARMAMENTS BK-616

Black Knight's updated version of the M-616. Featuring advanced polymers, update to 6mm Armor Piercing caseless ammunition in a 60 round drum. Integrated electronics and recoil compensators. New for 2090, optional 25mm under barrel grenade launcher.

### BLACK KNIGHT AMPHIBIOUS RIFLE

Using Flechette rounds, this rifle can fire accurately both above and under the water. It's also a very quiet weapon (–2 to Notice rolls to hear), compared to other firearms, giving the wielder's enemies.

### STREET CHIC ASSASSIN'S RIFLE

Street Chic's Assassin's Rifle is a one-shot .50 caliber rifle, made entirely of polymers. Once fired, the rifle will dissolve into a puddle of goo as the catalyzers in the weapon activate. Comes disassembled in a lightweight case made from recycled paper. It takes 4 rounds to assemble the weapon from the case.

### URBAN PUNK PUNK3D RIFLE

The Punk3d, hard hitting and #1 in G4NG-B4NG™ magazine's popularity poll. Featuring numerous customization options while maintaining a shaz look. HoloTags are standard with 1200 pre-generated tags to choose from, in any color.

HoloTag

TABLE 3.20: HEAVY WEAPONS

| HEAVY WEAPONS | RANGE | DAMAGE | ROF | COST | WEIGHT | SHOTS | MIN STR | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AGA Annhilator Personal Rail Cannon | 50/100/200 | 2d10 | 1 | Military | 60 | 20 | d8 | HW, Snapfire |
| AGA Enforcer Railgun AGA-RG30 | 50/100/200 | 3d6 | 1 | Military | 18 | 5 | — | HW, Scope, Snapfire |
| AGA Mjolnir AMR | 50/100/200 | 3d8 | 3 | Military | 85 | 100 | — | AP 6, HW, May not move |
| AGA 'Thumper' | 24/48/96 | 3d6 | 3 | Military | 60 | 20 | d12 | HW, SBT, Snapfire |
| AGA Vindicator Rail Cannon | 50/100/200 | 3d8 | 1 | Military | 60 | 20 | d8 | HW |
| BK Liberator Minigun | 24/48/96 | 2d8 | 6 | Military | 85 | 1,000 | d8 | AP 3, Auto, HW |
| BK Maverick Light Auto Cannon | 50/100/200 | 2d10 | 3 | | 65 | 200 | — | AP 4, HW, Requires tripod or weapon gimble |
| 'Bessy' .50 Heavy Machine Gun | 50/100/200 | 2d10 | 3 | 9,000 | 65 | 200 | d8 | AP 4, HW |
| WT MG-762m 7.62mm | 30/60/120 | 2d8+1 | 4 | 3,000 | 20 | 200 | d8 | AP 2 |

### WASTELAND TRADERS PNEUMATIC DART RIFLE

Sometimes you want to take something down without killing it, Wasteland traders brings you the low powered air-rifle, designed to deliver tranquilizer or poison darts (Shaken or better to induce).

- **Poison Cost:** See *Savage Worlds* core rules for poison effects, cost is per shot: Lethal (500), Venomous (250), Paralysis (250), Knockout (50), Tracker (50).

### WASTELAND TRADERS TARANTULA HUNTING RIFLE

Named after one of most successful natural predators of the desert, the tarantula. The Tarantula Hunting Rifle is one of the best on the market according to GUNN Magazine. The Tarantula is powerful, and has range, a perfect hunting rifle, with a 160× Multi-optic scope included. The smart hunter is the one not seen.

## Heavy Weapons

**Malbot267:** Malmart carries a wide range of heavy weapons, whether as man portable, bi/tri-pod mounted, gyro harness mounted, or vehicular mounted weaponry; we provide the best hardware from the best manufacturers. Magnetic Rail Guns, Laser and Maser Weapons, and missile systems, and even the vaunted 30mm Mjolnir Anti-Materiel Rifle, Malmart has what you need.

### AGA ANNIHILATOR PERSONAL RAIL CANNON

Act of God Armaments, the leader in battlefield carnage is proud to present the Annihilator Heavy Rail Cannon; the 25mm variant of the Vindicator Rail Cannon. Utilizing the same shoulder mount design as the Vindicator, the Heavy Rail Cannon includes integrated targeting computer.

### AGA ENFORCER RAILGUN AGA-RG30

The Enforcer Railgun uses electromagnetic rails to accelerate a slug to supersonic velocities. Using a small magnetic pulse to start the slug moving, the helical rails accelerate the rounds to nearly 2,200 feet per second (1,500 mph). The double helix rails create the rifling effect for unparalleled accuracy. Firing a 3mm solid core slug at supersonic speeds, the Enforcer can punch through armor with incredible efficiency. Top mounted clip, bottom mounted power supply, and 400× Multi-Optic Scope mean you can reach out and touch someone, anytime, day or night.

### AGA MJOLNIR AMR

The ultimate in man-portable firearms, this 30mm Anti-Materiel Rifle can be loaded with AP, AP-I, or High Explosive rounds. Extending nearly 7 feet in length; equipped with a built-in combat computer and tripod (2 rounds to deploy), this piece of hardware is designed to take down light golemmechs and power armor.

### AGA 'THUMPER' 25MM ROTARY GRENADE LAUNCHER

There's nothing quite like the sound of rapid fire heavy weaponry omae, and the only thing sweeter than hearing the thump, thump, thump, of the 25mm Rotary Grenade launcher launching its munitions is the roar of explosions a second or two later.

TABLE 3.21: SPECIAL WEAPONS

| SPECIAL WEAPONS | RANGE | DAMAGE | ROF | COST | WEIGHT | SHOTS | MIN. STR | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Black Knight 'Xbow' Bolt Thrower | 12/24/48 | 3d4 | 1 | 4,000 | 12 | 8 | — | |
| Marsworks 'Javelin' Coil Bolt Thrower | 12/24/48 | 3d4 | 1 | 3,000 | 14 | 6 | — | Double armor values |
| Ravenlocke Securities Riot Gel Gun | 12/24/48 | 2d6 | 1 | 750 | 16 | 6 | — | Knock-down, non-lethal |
| Sentinel Rock Auto Turret | 12/24/48 | 2d8 | 3 | 27,500 | — | 200 | — | Auto, Rock and Roll! |
| Sentinel Rock Cyclone EMP Gun | Cone | 2d6 | 1 | 5,000 | 12 | 3 | — | See description |
| Sentinel Rock 12.7mm Gyroc Pistol | 12/24/48 | 3d6 | 1 | 2,000 | 3 | 10 | — | HW |
| Sentinel Rock 12.7mm Gyroc Rifle | 24/48/96 | 3d6 | 1 | 3,000 | 10 | 30 | — | HW |
| Sentinel Rock Retiarius Net Launcher | 4/8/12 | — | 1 | 900 | 5 | 1 | — | See description |

### AGA VINDICATOR RAIL CANNON

The Vindicator Rail Cannon use electromagnetic rails to accelerate a slug to supersonic velocities. This is a shoulder mounted high speed gauss cannon, utilizing the same 3mm slugs. Comes with integrated ammo and power supply backpacks.

### BLACK KNIGHT LIBERATOR MINIGUN

The liberator minigun is an air-cooled, electrically driven weapon that employs six gatling-style barrels to fire withering volleys of armor-piercing shells that reduce targets to unrecognizable lumps. With a high rate of fire the Liberator is the weapon of choice for pure carnage. The liberator must either be tripod mounted or used with a weapon gimble.

### BLACK KNIGHT MAVERICK LIGHT AUTO CANNON

Black Knight took a chance with this new line of machine guns by utilizing a new proprietary 15mm AP ammunition size. The chance paid off, and the new LAC-15 Maverick is proving to be the hit of 2090 with Mercenary outfits, Law Enforcement and Security alike. Easily recognized by its barrel design, with perforated cooling fins. The Support Weapon of the Future is HERE today!

### 'BESSY' .50 HEAVY MACHINEGUN

Firepower is one of the few things respected out in the CDZ. The .50Cal Bessy is a workhorse, the belt-fed machine gun is easy to clean and maintain. 84 pounds of cold steel. Available in vehicular mount, tripod mount, or for chrome junkies and hybrids, a standard shoulder sling. Vehicular and tripod mounted Bessy HMGs typically have a feeder, which allows multiple 200 round belts of ammo to be linked together.

### WASTELAND TRADERS MG-762 7.62MM

Wasteland Traders decided to use tried and true machine gun technology from over 100 years ago. Others have used similar designs, and the 7.62mm ammunition is fairly easy to find in the wastes.

### GYROC AMMUNITION

Gyroc ammunition can be integrated with a SkyWeb Battlefield Mapping Drone via TAP uplink, which allows them to lock on and follow a target just like a missile (see *Savage Worlds*), except the attacker uses Shooting and the defender uses Agility.

## Special Weapons

**Malbot267:** Special Weapons are those weapons which do not fall into the standard categories. Malmart is proud to bring you some amazingly special weapons systems.

### BLACK KNIGHT 'XBOW' BOLT THROWER

Black Knight introduces a next generation bolt thrower. Utilizing the squash-head munitions and a specialized sealing compound, any round which actually breaches a hull will be sealed by the trailing compound section of the round. This allows a slightly smaller round which is more effective against armor and will automatically seal breaches it causes, however delicate wire bundles may be affected, something security teams need to remember.

### MARSWORKS 'JAVELIN' COIL BOLT THROWER

Bolt weapons are the oldest and original space weapon. They throw soft metal bolts at subsonic speeds. The bolts are perfectly capable of taking out an enemy, even through light armor, without piercing the walls of a craft, station, or colony. Recent developments have lead to squash-head inverted bolts, twice as thick at the impact point, which expands further upon impact. Not very effective against medium armors, but quite effective against unarmored and lightly armored opponents.

### RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES RIOT GEL GUN

The riot gun looks much like a sawed-off shotgun but fires high-velocity, shock-absorbing gel ammunition in a cone pattern. The impact of being hit by the gel is enough to knock the wind out of most people, making the gun ideal for riot suppression. A struck target must make a Strength roll (at –2 per raise attained on the hit) or get knocked back 1d4" + 1" per raise on the attack roll, and be knocked prone.

### SENTINEL ROCK AUTO TURRET

An auto turret is triggered via sensors, whether optical, mechanical or electronic, usually programmed with auto-fire (Shooting d6) weapons that fire until empty, targeting a set area. Turrets include motors allowing for 360 degree rotation and 85 degree elevation.

TABLE 3.22: MISSILE LAUNCHERS AND FLAME THROWERS

| MISSILE LAUNCHERS | RANGE | DAMAGE | ROF | COST | WEIGHT | SHOTS | MIN. STR | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AGA Arbalest 120mm Heavy ML | 50/100/200 | 5d8 | 1 | 135/40 | 40 | 1 | d6 | AP 30, HW, MBT, Snapfire |
| Pyro-Hydra4 Tube 50mm ML | 100/200/400 | 5d10 | 1 | 125/5 | 30 | 4 | d6 | AP 24, HW, Snapfire |
| RPG-17 Rocket Propelled Grenade | 30/60/120 | 4d6 | 1 | 8/2.5 | 1 | 1 | — | AP 6; 1 action to reload |
| **FLAME THROWERS** | | | | | | | | |
| AGA Damnation | Cone | 2d12 | 1 | 5,500 | 30 | 30 | d6 | HW; see description |
| AGA Purge | Cone | 2d12 | 1 | 3.500 | 5 | 10 | — | HW |

### SENTINEL ROCK CYCLONE EMP GUN

Used to knock out electronic devices in short range, this weapon fires a burst of electromagnetic energy that does not damage non-machines or machines with sufficient shielding.

- **Special:** Targets with electrical parts/implants (cyborgs, augmented humans, robots, etc.) suffer full damage. Armor does not protect, unless designed to shield against EMP attacks. Others suffer half non-lethal damage as it interferes with the nervous system. Electronics systems have a Toughness of 8, disabled after suffering a Wound.

### SENTINEL ROCK GYROC PISTOL

The base Gyroc pistol, it fires 12.7mm rocket-propelled smart rounds, the gyroc pistol is a standard sidearm for security and police forces worldwide!

### SENTINEL ROCK GYROC RIFLE

These are larger, heavier armaments than gyroc pistols. Like the pistols, gyroc rifles are standard weapons for security and police forces expecting a fire fight.

### SENTINEL ROCK RETIARIUS NET LAUNCHER

Got a wanted alive bounty? Looking to snatch someone off the street? Look no further, the Retiarius Net Launcher is the easiest to load with pre-loaded nets (requires two Actions to reload).

- **Special:** With a successful hit, any targets must make an Agility roll versus the attacker's Shooting result . If successful, the target gets out of the way; otherwise they become entangled in the net, and are at –2 to Pace and skills linked to Strength and Agility until freed . The victim must make a Strength or Agility roll at –2 to get free. A raise allows the target to break free and act this turn.

## Missile Launchers

**Malbot267:** Guided or unguided, Malmart carries the best in missile launchers.

### AGA ARBALEST 120MM HEAVY MISSILE LAUNCHER

Replacement for the LAW rocket Launcher, this fires a single 120mm Guided Missile. It requires 2 actions to reload.

### PYRO-HYDRA4 TUBE 50MM MISSILE LAUNCHER

Act of God brings you a guided anti-aircraft missile launcher. The Pyro-Hydra won't fire unless it has a lock on a target, saving you precious munitions and of course hard-earned creds tomo!

### RPG-17 ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADE LAUNCHERS

Wasteland Traders was able to get a hold of a large shipment of old RPG rocket launchers bound for destruction. Don't ask how we got them amigo, just know that Wasteland is looking out for you.

## Flamethrowers

**Malbot267:** Burn baby, burn! Throughout time, nothing has been more feared and respected as fire. When a wave of flame is rushing toward you, you start making peace with whatever gods you worship, though the credit doesn't usually answer!

### AGA DAMNATION FLAMETHROWER

Flamethrowers have come a long way in 200 years. The Damnation features an armored backpack consisting of 2 double sized canisters with a braided steel feed line.

The damnation may be arced to hit targets at a farther distance. Instead of a Cone, it may use a Medium Burst Template up to 18" away.

TABLE 3.23: ENERGY WEAPONS

| ENERGY WEAPONS | RANGE | DAMAGE | ROF | COST | WEIGHT | SHOTS | MIN. STR | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AGA BC1 Beam Carbine | 24/48/96 | 3d8 | 1 | Military | 5 | 20 | d6 | AP 4. Uses power pack |
| AGA BSR 1 Beam Sniper Rifle | 40/80/160 | 3d6 | 1 | Military | 4 | 8 | d6 | AP 6. Uses power pack |
| AGA MR1 Maser Rifle | 24/48/96 | 2d8+2 | 1 | Military | 8 | 10 | d6 | Uses power pack |
| AGA PL-1 Pulse Laser Pistol | 15/30/60 | 1–3d6 | 1 | Military | 2 | 48 | — | Semi-Auto |
| AGA PLR Pulse Laser Rifle | 30/60/120 | 1–3d6 | 3 | Military | 4 | 48 | d6 | Auto, 3RB, no recoil |
| AGA PMG –1 Pulse Machine Gun | 50/100/200 | 1–3d6 | 5 | Military | 8 | 200 | d6 | Auto, no recoil |
| AGA X-4 Particle Beam Rifle | 24/48/96 | 3d8 | 1 | Military | 12 | 12 | — | HW. Uses hydrogen cell. |
| Particle Beam Cannon | 24/48/96 | 3d10 | 1 | Military | 30 | 24 | — | HW. Uses hydrogen cell. |

### AGA PURGE MINI FLAMETHROWER

The Purge is a hand-held flame pistol. It is also available as a tactical accessory. Utilizing a finer spray lets the Purge mini flamethrower be a possibility.

## Energy Weapons

**Malbot267:** Looking for some NEXgen tech? Wanna fry your enemy without damaging his armor? Grab one of our energy weapons!

### AGA BC1 BEAM CARBINE

The beam carbine rifle is 54" in length; again with the distinctive cobalt blue metallic casing. The weapon fires a continuous beam, deadly when held on target.

### AGA BSR 1 BEAM SNIPER RIFLE

The beam rifle is a bit longer than the beam pistol and shorter than the beam carbine, only 30" long. The weapon fires a continuous beam, deadly when held on target. With finer tuning, the beam is much thinner, but higher in power, the laser is powerful, and deadly when on target.

### AGA MR1 MASER RIFLE

The maser rifle is a microwave based weapon. With its 3 inch square waveguide bore, it is an extremely bulky weapon, boxy, yet deadly. The maser rifle ignores all non Heavy Armor.

### AGA PL-1 PULSE LASER PISTOL

The AGA Pulse Laser Pistol, is a sleek weapon. A glossy black polymer casing with both battery pack and backpack connection port.

### AGA PLR-1 PULSE LASER RIFLE

The AGA Pulse Laser Rifle, is the heavy version of the Pulse Laser Pistol, longer with a reinforced stock. Dual power cells fit snuggly into the heavier gloss black polymer casing.

- Requires the use of two power packs.

### AGA PMG-1 PULSE MACHINE GUN

The AGA Pulse Machine Gun, heavy but it is still sleek, its gloss black casing nearly 5 feet in length, the power port for the power cable connects into the grip. In an emergency, a battery pack can slip into the same port, though it provides only a short burst of energy. One of the deadliest infantry weapons in the world. It's high rate of fire will tear through the ranks of infantry.

### AGA X-4 PARTICLE BEAM RIFLE

Produced by Act of God Armaments, the AGA X-4 particle beam rifle is a directed energy weapon which fires electrons at near-light speeds to impact on targets with nearly 1 gigajoule of kinetic energy. The speed at which this weapon fires and the resultant force renders modern ballistic armor nearly useless (ignores non Heavy Armor). The X-4 is an improved model of the X-2, having a better power generation system. While a vast improvement over the X-2, the AGA X-4 still has

TABLE 3.24: IMPROVISED WEAPONS

| TYPE | DAMAGE | WEIGHT | COST | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baseball Bat | Str+d6 | 4 | 60 | |
| Broken Bottle | Str | — | — | AP 1 |
| Jack Hammer | Str+d10 | 60 | 300 | |
| Nail Gun | 2d6 | 10 | 50 | See description |
| Rocket Hammer | Str+d10 | 45 | 350 | See description |

TABLE 3.25: IMPROVISED RANGED WEAPONS

| RANGED | RANGE | DAMAGE | ROF | COST | WEIGHT | SHOTS | MIN. STR | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nail Gun | 2/4/8 | 1d6 | 1 | 50 | 10 | 50 | — | See description |
| WT Reaver Harpoon Gun | 6/12/24 | 3d6 | 1 | 3,500 | 26 | 3,500 | — | AP 6 |

its share of problems. Particle beam weapons are easily recognized by the ionization of the air around them, leaving a distinct ozone smell along their path.

- A Critical Failure on the Shooting roll results in the hydrogen cell exploding; dealing 2d6+X damage to everyone in a MBT where X is the remaining shots.
- The hydrogen cell can be set as an improvised explosive with a successful Knowledge (Demolitions) check.

### PARTICLE BEAM CANNON AGA-XPBC-1.01

Still in development, this heavy dual barreled particle cannon is designed with one purpose in mind, to take down heavies in one shot. Utilizing negative and positive ions at target to produce additional damage, the Particle Beam Cannon luckily does not suffer from the same failure issues that its miniaturized version suffers. Lab testing shows damage versus infantry targets to have a 99% fatality rating. Like the X-4 this weapon ignores non Heavy Armor.

## Improvised Weapons

**Malbot267:** The following items are commonly used as improvised weapons!

### BASEBALL BAT

A typical baseball bat made from high impact composite materials. Occasionally, older wooden bats can be located — often these are studded with nails or similar objects.

### BROKEN BOTTLE

Available anywhere in the sprawl, broken bottles are extremely sharp.

### JACK HAMMER

The jack hammer is difficult to use in melee due to its massive size, but it could do some nasty damage.

### NAIL GUN

A nail gun used can be used as improvised firearm, or it can be used in melee as an improvised weapon.

- **Special:** A hit with a raise with the nail gun that does enough damage to at least Shake a normal-sized target can pin it to an adjacent wall other obstacle (if applicable). The target must succeed at a Strength check to pull free, as if breaking free from a grapple.

### WASTELAND TRADERS REAVER HARPOON GUN

With endless versatility, the Reaver Harpoon gun is Wasteland Traders new top sellers. Get yours before they're gone!

### ROCKET HAMMER

Rocket hammers are large, hammer like devices with a miniaturized rocket installed in the back of the head to increase the force of the hammer. Used on construction sites to break down walls, but in the hands of a pissed off gang banger, the rocket hammer can be a deadly weapon.

- **Special:** A struck target must make a Vigor roll or be Shaken, this is resolved after damage. In addition, the target is knocked back 1d4".

# VEHICLES

**Malbot267:** Welcome to the New Year's Edition of the 2090 Vehicular catalog. Proud to bring you the most popular models available at the best prices. From motorcycles and ground cars to VTOL Limousines and the all-new CDZ Crawler by Wasteland Traders.

**Malbot267:** Note: For the military buyers, we've recently opened a new section, the Milmart Catalog, now you will need to log in with your official government log-in information before purchasing available vehicles.

## Cycles

### NAKAMURA MOTORS 'KAMIKAZE' JUMP BOARD

Not really a full vehicle, the JUMP technology which was used to create JUMP bikes was originally used in JUMP Boards. This lead to the rash of deaths in the JUMP Board competitions, which eventually stopped the competitions. However with the new impact suits, the brave and fearless few have begun to pick up the JUMP board once more. Difficult to control and dangerous at high speed, it is the adrenaline junkies dream. Quite popular with mainline riggers, it's often found in urban battlefields. JUMP Board gangs have even appeared. Many have argued that JUMP Boards are safer than the Micron.

The JUMP system allows speed jumps along both the vertical and horizontal axis up to half the acceleration rating of the board! Jumps require a Driving roll, but allows the character to ignore penalties for movement over difficult ground for that round only! Advanced JUMP system allows jumps up to 6" (36') of vertical distance.

### HARLEY-DAVIDSON-INDIAN 'IRON HORSE' CRUISER

Harley-Davidson-Indian, no one remembers which company bought the other. The merger did bring the two power houses of the old American motorcycle manufacturers together. The Iron Horse has been in production for 25 years running, and is sold in nearly every country. Well the ones that can afford such a luxurious ride.

### NAKAMURA MOTORS 'STEEL WIND' MOTORCYCLE

The Steel Wind is by far the most well-known and beloved Nakamura Motors vehicle. With a top speed of 250 mph, the Steel Wind beats out the Vector Elite in both acceleration and top speed, though the Steel Wind is for real riders, as it has no advanced computer system.

### CHERRY AUTOMOTIVE 'VECTOR ELITE' MOTORCYCLE

Cherry Automotive has released the new 2090 Vector. The vector was already their most popular vehicle with the adrenaline junkies. Perfect for those places where fuel is at a premium, the Vector's computer-assist drive technology will not only get you where you're going fast, but will get you there in style. Cherry knows high speed impacts are deadly, so we provide a military grade fairing to protect against deadly bird strikes in addition to our state of the art driving computer.

### THUGGEE 'TG-12' MOTORCYCLE

The cutting edge in motorcycle design and a favorite of Thuggee cultists around the world! Highly customizable due to modular design! Swapping weapon systems only takes an hour.

### HARLON 'GOLDEN EAGLE' CRUISER

This is your chance to own the classic American bike. Built to 21st century specifications, the Harlon is a solid product.

#### SECURITY VARIANT: LAWBOSS

A popular variant for security forces. Three hover inductors provide a stable law enforcement patrol vehicle. Provide justice like a LawBoss!

**Weapons:**

- Fixed LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d10+1; ROF 4; Shots 120; AP 5, Auto, HW)

### WASTELAND TRADERS 'DUSTY ROADS' CRUISER

The Dusty Roads Cruiser, is designed using the Wasteland Traders philosophy, easy to fix, easy to keep on the road. The Dusty Roads cruiser features a standard sidecar with 2-tube rocket launcher. It's built tough, it's built to last.

**Weapons:**

- Sidecar with 70mm Rocket Pod (Range 24/48/96; Damage 4d8+2; ROF 1–2; Shots 2; HW, MBT)

### TOYOTA ' LOCUST' QUAD TURBO JUMP BIKE

Voted the hottest bike by Street Racer Weekly for the 4th straight year, the Toyota Locust Quad Turbo JUMP bike is a jump racer's dream come true! Our patented ACR Titan JUMP system (+1 to Driving when making turbo jumps) comes standard on all Locusts and our titanium coil JUMP springs and sleek tri-foil chassis ensure a sweet landing, so you can be at the head of the pack. (See the *Road Rage* supplement for more JUMP Bikes, and JUMP Bike racing rules).

TABLE 3.26: CYCLES AND CARS

| CYCLES | ACC/TS | TOUGH | COST | CREW | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nakamura Motors 'Kamikaze' Jump Board | 30/60 | 3 | 1,000 | 1 | |
| Harley-Davidson-Indian 'Iron Horse' Cruiser | 15/30 | 8(2) | 5,000 | 1+1 | |
| Nakamura Motors 'Steel Wind' Motorcycle | 35/72 | 7(2) | 5,000 | 1 | |
| Cherry Automotive 'Vector Elite' Motorcycle | 36/70 | 6(2) | 25,000 | 1+1 | |
| Thuggee 'Tg-12' Motorcycle | 30/66 | 7(2) | 13,000 | 1+1 | |
| Harlon 'Golden Eagle' Cruiser | 30/90 | 9(4) | 15,000 | 1+1 | Weapon System |
| Lawboss (Variant) | 30/90 | 9(4) | Military | 1 | Climb 2; Weapon System |
| Wasteland Traders 'Dusty Roads' Cruiser | 20/40 | 9(4) | 38,000 | 1+1 | Weapon System |
| **CARS** | **ACC/TS** | **TOUGH** | **COST** | **CREW** | **NOTES** |
| Toyota ' Locust' Quad Turbo Jump bike | 50/90 | 5(1) | 48,000 | 1 | |
| Micron Super Economy Groundcar | 4/22 | 4(0) | 2,000 | 1 | Air Bags, 1 cu ft. storage space |
| Samba 'Econoline' Electric | 10/30 | 6(3) | 8,500 | 1+1 | Air Bags, 8 cu ft. storage space |
| Hood Ratz™ 'Db' Pick-up | 16/49 | 8(2) | 25,000 | 1+6 | 4WD, Weapon System |
| Cherry Automotive 'Executor' | 44/66 | 8(4) | 150,000 | 1+1 | Air Bags, 8 cu ft. storage space |
| Cherry 'Pure Elegance' Luxury Sedan | 50/55 | 13(5) | 115,000 | 1+5 | 12 cu ft. storage space |
| Kiwi Motors 'Virtuoso' Armored Limousine | 15/45 | 16(8) | 100,000 | 0+6 | Air Bags, AI Driver (d8), Heavy Armor, Weapon System |
| Porsche 9035 Sl | 35/60 | 11(4) | 110,000 | 1+1 | |
| Samba 'Marathon' | 15/45 | 12(6) | 30,000 | 1+6 | Air Bags, 4WD |
| Toyota 'Cdz Waste Cruiser 2090' | 15/45 | 12(6) | 44,400 | 1+5 | 4WD, Weapon System |
| Honda 'Uphl' Delivery Vehicle | 10/40 | 14(4) | 22,000 | 1+1 | |
| Kiwi Motors 'Courier' Armored Taxi | 20/60 | 13(6) | 30,500 | 1+3 | 4WD, Weapon System |
| Ravenlocke Mk-Ii Patrol Police Cruiser | 45/90 | 15(5) | 35,000 | 1+3 | Hover (10' ceiling) |
| Wasteland Traders 'Whip Scorpion' Sand Rail | 20/60 | 8 | 3,500 | 1+3 | 4WD, Weapon System |
| Marsworks Engineering Combat Truck | 30/90 | 23(8) | Military | 1+2 | 4WD, Heavy Armor, Weapon System |
| 'Water Weasel"' Amphibious Patrol Craft | 20/45 | 20(8) | Military | 1+2 | Heavy Armor, Weapon System |

ACR Titan JUMP system allows speed jumps along both the vertical and horizontal axis up to half the acceleration rating of the bike! Jumps require a Driving roll, but allow the character to ignore penalties for movement over difficult ground for that round only! Most advanced JUMP system allows jumps up to 8" (40') of vertical distance.

## Cars

### MICRON SUPER ECONOMY GROUNDCAR

The car for today! Solar-powered micro car. When Mini decided to make the smallest car on the road, they succeeded by droves. The 'Micron' meets or exceeds minimum safety requirements. Road & Sky calls it "A...pleasure...to drive..." and "Cheap and...well...built"

### SAMBA 'ECONOLINE' ELECTRIC

For the cost-conscious consumer, the Ecoline provides an economical alternative without sacrificing safety. Low fuel consumption, high reliability and megaplex friendly size make the Ecoline the ideal car for the young urban professional. A nice little 2-seater for a single earner or just get you and your lady from CribSec to club!

### HOOD RATZ™ 'DB' PICK-UP

Whether you're off to the club, or off to waste some rivals, the DB Pick-up is a sweet ground vehicle, fully armored cab, pintle mount behind the cab for locking down some firepower.

**Weapons:**

- Heavy 360° Pintle Mounted Bessy MG (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 200; AP 4, HW)

### CHERRY AUTOMOTIVE 'EXECUTOR'

This sports car needs no introduction! The Executor is one of the most expensive sports cars in the world. Its impossibly sleek paint job, most often black, is so delicate that it requires a special fluid to keep clean.

### CHERRY 'PURE ELEGANCE' LUXURY SEDAN

Cherry Automotive luxury sedan has nearly the same performance profile as other sports cars, with the added luxury that only Cheery motors can provide. Ride in style, live with style. Pure elegance, for today's discerning consumer of taste.

**Weapons:**
- Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW)

### KIWI MOTORS 'VIRTUOSO' ARMORED LIMOUSINE

Even in hot spots, there are rich blokes who want a classy ride — which is why we've created the Virtuoso: a car with the comfort of a limousine and the protection of a light tank. The luxurious interior features real wood paneling, authentic leather seats and adjustable lighting, as well as a refrigerator suitable for drinks and appetizers. Add to that adjustable seat firmness and a full communications suite with stereo and HR video, and you can create whatever mood feels right for the occasion.

A standard AI aspect chauffeur (Driving d6) means you don't even need to worry about a driver. For comfort and protection...Kiwi Motors. Not nearly as fast as the Maestro, the Virtuoso for 2090 is definitely a mean machine, designed to get you to your destination in comfort. Encrypted HoloCam system lets you make your meeting, and keep it secure, even if you're stuck in traffic.

**Weapons:**
- Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW)

### PORSCHE 9035 SL

Not produced by the original Porsche motor company, as that company disappeared in 2033, this new company is founded by a wealthy descendant, a modernized version of the classic. Hand assembled, put your name on the waiting list, 10% down. Current wait is 6 months.

### SAMBA 'MARATHON'

The Marathon is an upper-class SUV that has a passenger capacity of 7 plus room for leisure gear. Its excellent performance and moderate price make it a good buy for young families. Available in Liquid Fuel and Electric models, numerous options convert the Marathon. The most popular conversion is the Thermopylae, with loads of armor, and a heavy roof turret, in addition to an inline weapon mount.

### TOYOTA 'CDZ WASTE CRUISER 2090'

Toyota brings back their Landcruiser line in a new form, the WasteCruiser. An all electric motor with extending solar panels. Integrating a new SatComm Deeplink system, it is quickly becoming a hacker's dream. The ability to access the Deep from near complete anonymity in the middle of nowhere, makes the WasteCruiser a hot commodity,.

**Notes:** Rollcage, Solid Core Tires
**Weapons:**
- Coaxial Mounted Bessy MG (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 200; AP 4, HW)

### HONDA 'UPHL' DELIVERY VEHICLE

The UPHL "uphill" is a simple ground vehicle, designed for a singular task; delivery. Armored models are also available for deliveries in dangerous areas, or for any valuable cargo, ami!

### KIWI MOTORS 'COURIER' ARMORED TAXI

Taxicabs are common all over, mate, but some spots are hotter than others. Defense is the primary concern with the Courier. Heavy armor will keep your fares safe and gun ports enable you to defend yourself in an emergency. Add airbags, nimble handling, and a powerful electric motor, and you've got yourself one fine ride. For comfort and protection...Kiwi Motors.

**Weapons:**
- Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW)

### RAVENLOCKE MK-II PATROL POLICE/SECURITY CRUISER

The Mark II Patrol cruiser, Ravenlocke Security's primary patrol cruiser. The passenger area can be sealed; locked from the exterior for prisoner transport.

**Weapons:**
- Front Mounted LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d10+1; ROF 4; Shots 120; AP 5, Auto, HW)

### WASTELAND TRADERS 'WHIP SCORPION' SAND RAIL

Wasteland Traders brings you a fast, off-road vehicle, the Whip Scorpion, is about as primitive as it gets, a true manual drive vehicle, no AI, no VI, just pure driving.

**Weapons:**
- Heavy 360° Pintle Mounted Bessy MG (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 200; AP 4, HW)

### MARSWORKS ENGINEERING 'WORG' COMBAT TRUCK

Four-wheel steering, independent all-wheel drive, and coaxial pintle mount all standard with the WORG. It is oversized for use as Power Armored ground transport.

**Weapons:**
- Turretted LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d10+1; ROF 4; Shots 120; AP 5, Auto, HW)

### 'WATER WEASEL"' AMPHIBIOUS PATROL CRAFT

The Water Weasel as it's known by the NAC is a multi-purpose amphibious assault vehicle. With deployable pontoon power plants, and sealed electronics suite, the Water Weasel is capable of submerged operation in depths up to 200 feet.

**Weapons:**
- Turreted LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d10+1; ROF 4; Shots 120; AP 5, Auto, HW)

## Aircraft

### Dragonfly Microlight Vehicle

A single engine aircraft. Easily broken down and reassembled in approximately 1 hour.

### Marsworks Engineering Eclipse Fighter Jet

Marsworks Engineering fast attack jet. Fast, Nimble, Scram-Jet afterburner.

**Notes:** AMCM, Ejection System, Heavy Armor
**Weapons:**

- Forward Mounted LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d10+1; ROF 4; Shots 120; AP 5, Auto, HW)
- Wing Mounted Missiles (Range 200/400/800; Damage 4d6; ROF 1–4; Shots 4, AP 6, HW)

### Marsworks Engineering Intruder Attack Jet

Marsworks Engineering's heavy version of the Eclipse fighter jet comes with enough firepower to destroy any installation you wish!

**Notes:** AMCM, Heavy Armor, Ejection System
**Weapons:**

- Forward Mounted LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d10+1; ROF 4; Shots 120; AP 5, Auto, HW)
- 4×Missiles (Range 200/400/800; Damage 4d6; ROF 1–4; Shots 4, AP 6, HW) **or** 8×Light Bombs (Range Dropped; Damage 4d10; ROF 4; Shots 8; AP 20, HW, LBT)

## VTOL Craft

Most turn-of-the-century ground vehicles now have a VTOL variant. Because of their steep price tags, VTOL Vehicles are far more common in wealthy, developed nations and the largest cities of North America, China, Brasilia and the Eurasian Union. VTOL vehicles share many of the same features as their ground counterpart, including optional AI Pilots and VCI rigs.

### 'Iron Pegasus' VTOL Cruiser

The Iron Pegasus VTOL Cruiser, nothing lets you feel as free as the wind on your face while cruising above the country side.

### Cherry Automotive Light VTOL Car

The light, compact VTOL craft is a small personal transport that is found on both the civilian and military market. Feel like a marine when you drive this beauty through the countryside! The Cherry Light comes with the typical options you would expect for a car, such as full environmental control, ballistic armor protection and ejection seats. All VTOLs come standard with Basic Vehicular AI (Piloting d4), to prevent aerial crashes.

### Kiwi Motors Albatross Armored V-Taxi

When you need to get somewhere fast, call an Albatross VTOL Taxi. Faster than our Courier Ground taxi, the Albatross can get in and out of even the hottest landing zones on the planet!

### Kiwi Motors 'Maestro' Armored VTOL Limousine

Kiwi Motors is proud to present the VTOL version of the popular Virtuoso Armored Limousine. The Maestro carries all the class of the Virtuoso with the VTOL capabilities that keep the rich off the streets. If you want to avoid the unwashed masses, the Maestro has the same luxurious interior features as the Virtuoso; real wood paneling, authentic leather seats and adjustable lighting, and a refrigerator suitable for drinks and appetizers. Add in adjustable seat firmness and a full communications suite with stereo and HR video, and you can create whatever mood feels right for the occasion. A standard flight capable AI Aspect chauffeur (Piloting d6) means you don't even need to worry about a pilot. For comfort and protection…Kiwi Motors.

**Weapons:**

- Forward Mounted LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d10+1; ROF 4; Shots 120; AP 5, Auto, HW)
- Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW)

### Marsworks Engineering LAV Loader

For short-distance hauling, standard vehicles aren't always the best option. Marsworks Engineering has created a cargo loader and mover built on a standard Low-Altitude Vehicle VTOL platform. LAV-Loaders are typically used in Port Cities, where loading and unloading ships over a Sea Wall or at Sea must occasionally be done quickly.

**Weapons:**

- Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW)

TABLE 3.27: AIRCRAFT AND VTOLS

| AIRCRAFT | ACC/TS | TOUGH | COST | CREW | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dragonfly Microlight Vehicle | 15/60 | 5 | 3,000 | 1 | Climb 0, Max load 250 lb. |
| Marsworks Engineering Eclipse Fighter Jet | 30/700 | 19(8) | Military | 1 | Climb 4, See Description |
| Marsworks Engineering Intruder Attack Jet | 20/600 | 23(12) | Military | 1 | Climb 3, See Description |
| **VTOL** | | | | | |
| 'Iron Pegasus' VTOL Cruiser | 20/150 | 12(3) | 125,000 | 1+1 | Climb 1 |
| Cherry Automotive Light VTOL Car | 30/160 | 12(3) | 50,000 | 1+2 | Climb 0, Auto-Pilot (d6), Ejection System |
| Kiwi Motors Albatross Armored V-Taxi | 40/150 | 16(7) | 180,500 | 1+3 | Climb 1; Air Bags, Cargo Space, Heavy Armor |
| Kiwi Motors Armored VTOL Limousine | 20/150 | 16(7) | 250,000 | 0+6 | Climb –1; Heavy Armor, See Description |
| Marsworks Engineering LAV Loader | 15/100 | 18(4) | 300,000 | 1 | Climb 0; Audo-Pilot (d6), Heavy Armor |
| Marsworks Engineering LAV Transport | 15/100 | 18(4) | 300,000 | 1+12 | Climb 0; Audo-Pilot (d6), Heavy Armor |
| FireFox Fire Fighting VTOL | 30/150 | 19(2) | Military | 2+4 | Climb 0; See Description |
| Ravenlocke Mk-IX Interdictor Police Cruiser | 25/100 | 18(8) | 75,000 | 1+1 | Climb 2; Auto-Pilot (d8), Ejection System |

### MARSWORKS ENGINEERING LAV TRANSPORT

The Marsworks LAV transport is a favorite among smugglers and transport specialists across the world. Capable of carrying an impressive two ton load and armored with a liberator minigun, the LAV Transport is perfect for any type of mission!

**Weapons:**

- Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW)

### FIREFOX FIRE FIGHTING VTOL

Another variant of the LAV Transport. The Firefox was originally designed for military fire suppression, however civilian fire fighting contractors quickly bought older models and retrofitted them for response to fires in sky scrapers and mega blocks.

**Weapons:**

- Nose Mounted Foam Cannon (Range 15/30/60; Damage puts out fires on 3+ in a 10'×10' area)
- 4×2,000 lb. Fire Fighting Bombs

### RAVENLOCKE MK-IX INTERDICTOR POLICE CRUISER

New for 2090, the Mark 9 Interdictor has been specifically designed for use by law enforcement corporations. Exceptionally robust, and with a high carrying capacity cargo area that can be configured to hold cargo or up to 7 prisoners or strike team members. A must for your high threat security forces!

**Weapons:**

- Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW)

## WATER CRAFT

### DEEP BLUE 'WATER BUG' PERSONAL WATERCRAFT

The motorcycle of the waterways. Anywhere the sun is shining, and the water is calm, the Water Bug is a common sight. Waterborne combat is common enough that the Water Bug comes with an optional Plug n' Slay weapon port.

### DEEP BLUE 'WATER SPIDER' TWIN-HULL SPEED BOAT

The Water Spider is a generic speed boat, with uncommon weapon options.

**Weapons:**

- Fixed Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW)
- Pindel Mount .50 HMG (50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 100, AP 4, HW)

### DEEP BLUE 'FLYING FISH' FOIL SPEED BOAT

Utilizing sub-surface turbines mounted to foil extensions, tri-foil sub-surface impeller turbine provide a fast boat which skims the surface of the water with the ease of a Flying Fish.

### DEEP BLUE OCEAN GLIDER YACHT

The wealthy love the Ocean Glider. On calm seas the ocean glider can reach top speeds of 240 nauts, (200mph) with its large quad impeller turbine foils. The playground of the rich, complete with hot tubs, an undersea viewing lounge, and of course 8 machine guns points operated by the Advanced AI (Shooting d6) to protect the ship from boarding attempts. The AI can operate four defense points simultaneously without penalty. Large VTOL pad and DeepLink, makes this a home away from home. Capable of 200 passengers with 12 cabins that sleep 4 each. One Crew Cabin and a Single Luxury cabin.

**Weapons:**

- 8×LMG (30/60/020; Damage 2d8; ROF 4; Shots 200, AP 2)

### AMC ARMORED FERRY

Atlantica Motor Corporation has been making public transport vehicles for nearly twenty years, and the Armored Ferry is the preferred vehicle for the Boston Transit Authority. Essentially a water-borne version of a standard bus, the Armored Ferry was introduced four years ago following an incident in Boston in which a ferry was attacked and sunk, killing all of the passengers on board. These ferries will also typically carry two security guards for additional protection.

### DOLPHIN INFLATABLE LANDING CRAFT

Inflatable Landing Craft, for insertion missions into hostile territory via ship. It has a small sub-surface induction turbine motor.

## Buses and Trucks

### AMC ARMORED BUS

Atlantica Motor Corporation has been making public transport vehicles for nearly twenty years, and the Armored Bus is the preferred vehicle for many transit authorities. The economical engine can run on either synthetic fuels or electricity (although 'Red Line' style buses require an in-road system to run), and Dura-Plast™ ceramic plating protects the passengers without significantly affecting performance. The view for passengers may be considerably reduced, but they can rest assured that they are well-protected from any external threat. For additional protection, a copilot seat has been installed on our Armored Bus to provide room for a security guard.

### AMC ARMADILLO ARMORED BUS

The economical hybrid engine runs synthetic fuels and batteries, with 2 megawatt worth of Solar collectors. Dura-Plast™ ceramic plating protects the passengers without significantly affecting performance. The view for passengers may be considerably reduced, but they can rest assured that they are well-protected from any external threat. For additional protection, a copilot seat has been installed on our Armored Bus to provide room for a security guard. In addition the Armadillo mounts an enclosed single gunner 360 degree turret with dual hardpoint mounts. While it gives up some top speed, it has slightly heavier armor than the Standard Armored Bus. Travel in safety, Travel in an Armadillo.

**Weapons:**

- Turreted Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW)

### AMC LAND TRAIN AUTONOMOUS SHIPPING VEHICLE

The AMC Land Train is designed for long distance shipping. This vehicle is focused on long haul transportation. The Land Train can pull 4 fully loaded 50' trailers without losing any top speed. On the long haul roadways, up to a dozen Land Trains will link to maintain top speed, while extending their overall range by up to 20%.

**Weapons:**

- Turreted Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW, AI (Shooting d8))

### AMC-RS BASTION ARMORED HEADQUARTERS

Ravenlocke's licensed Version of AMC's Armored bus, converted to a Mobile Command Center, the Bastion is designed as full ground support for a complete SWAT Team. Electronics and Surveillance gears bristle from the Bastion. The Bay has a full-size loading dock end. At least one government has a drop version with integrated parachute.

## Heavy Vehicles

### MARSWORKS WASTEX EXPLORATION VEHICLE

Based Upon The largest civilian vehicle on the road, with 6 foot tall tracks, the quad-track exploration vehicle is designed to take science teams into the waste in a fully sustainable environment. Solar collectors, desalination plant, fully-stocked labs. The unique independent drive system allows traversing extremely rough terrain, the grapple drill allows for ascent and descent of cliffs.

**Weapons:**

- Fixed Liberator Mini Gun (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; ROF 6; Shots 1,000; AP 3; Auto HW
- 2×Coaxial Mounted .50 HMG (50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 500, AP 4, HW)
- 2×Turreted LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d10+1; ROF 4; Shots 120; AP 5, Auto, HW)

### MARSWORKS ENGINEERING 'RAZORBACK' APC

If you want a machine that can not only move a squad quickly, but can also kick ass and take names while doing it, there is arguably no better choice than the Razorback from Marsworks Engineering. Half armored personnel carrier, half assault tank, and entirely no-nonsense military engineering, the Razorback has proven popular with a number of military forces, including the Atlantica military. The Razorback comes with an AI Aspect to help the driver navigate in tough spots and assist the gunners in combat operations. VCI and gunnery 'smart' rigs are standard, as is gyro-stabilization of the onboard weapons.

**Weapons:**

- Front/Rear Turret Mounted 57mm Cannon (Range 75/150/300; Damage 4d10; ROF 1; Shots 40, AP 20, HW, MBT)
- Front and Rear Turreted LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d10+1; ROF 4; Shots 120; AP 5, Auto, HW)

TABLE 3.28: WATERCRAFT, TRUCKS, AND HEAVY VEHICLES

| WATERCRAFT | ACC/TS | TOUGH | COST | CREW | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DB 'Water Bug' Personal Watercraft | 20/25 | 7(2) | 4,000 | 1+1 | |
| DB 'Water Spider' Twin-hull Speed Boat | 10/20 | 10(2) | 8,000 | 1+3 | Weapon System |
| DB 'Flying Fish' Foil Speed Boat | 15/30 | 12(3) | 12,500 | 1+5 | Firewall (Rating 7) |
| DB Ocean Glider Yacht | 15/55 | 28(8) | 18 mil | 3+200 | Heavy Armor, Weapon Systems |
| AMC Armored Ferry | 5/20 | 20(8) | 250,000 | 2+30 | Firewall (Rating 7), Heavy Armor |
| Dolphin Inflatable Landing Craft | 5/20 | 3(1) | 1,250 | 1+5 | |
| **BUSES AND TRUCKS** | | | | | |
| AMC Armored Bus | 8/30 | 22(8) | 125,000 | 1+40 | Heavy Armor |
| AMC Armadillo Armored Bus | 10/40 | 22(8) | 140,000 | 2+38 | Heavy Armor, Weapon Systems |
| AMC Shipping Vehicle | 10/40 | 22(8) | 275,000 | 0 | Heavy Armor, Weapon System |
| AMC-RS Bastion Armored Headquarters | 15/35 | 30(16) | 2.37 mil | 2+16 | Heavy Armor, Drone/Power Armor Bay |
| **HEAVY VEHICLES** | | | | | |
| Marsworks WasteX Exploration Vehicle | 15/50 | 22(8) | 84,400 | 3+5 | Heavy Armor, 4WD, Weapon Systems |
| Marsworks Engineering 'Razorback' APC | 27/90 | 25(10) | Military | 4+10 | Heavy Armor, Weapon Systems |
| Centurion' Light Battle Tank C-216-LHT | 50/200 | 25(10) | Military | 3+2 | Heavy Armor, Stabilizers, Weapon Systems |
| 'Legios' Main Battle Tank | 40/90 | 48(30) | Military | 4+2 | Heavy Armor, Stabilizers, Weapon Systems |
| "Bean Pole" VTOL Power Armor Transport | 20/180 | 20(8) | Military | 3+6 | Climb 0, VTOL |
| Marsworks Engineering Overkill Gunship | 40/160 | 32(18) | Military | 2 | Heavy Armor, Ejection System, VTOL, Climb 1 |
| Black Knight BKV-P9 Panther VTOL | 60/150 | 24(12) | Military | 2+2 | Climb 1, VTOL, Weapon Systems |

### CENTURION' LIGHT BATTLE TANK C-216-LHT

Marsworks Engineering Legios Light Battle Tank. The fast attack hover tank can easily outmaneuver larger vehicles in urban battlegrounds. In addition, the Hover tank is able to perform pop-up attacks, utilizing its hover jets to safely vault 5" (30 feet) vertically while stationary (requires a Piloting check to not damage the vehicle).

**Weapons:**

- Main Turret 60mm Cannon (Range 75/150/300; Damage 4d10; ROF 1; Shots 40, AP 20, HW, MBT)
- Rear Turret 30 mm cannon (Range 75/150/300; Damage 4d10; ROF 1; Shots 50, AP 10, HW, MBT)
- One Coaxial Turret Mount (open)

### 'LEGIOS' MAIN BATTLE TANK

Legios Main Battle Tank is the main tank produced by Marsworks Engineering, Tough and hard-hitting. Features a 90mm rail in a fully articulated turret. Secondary armament includes a coax mount (open) position, typically mounted with a BKA Heavy Machine Gun.

- Main Turret 90mm Cannon (Range 150/300/600; Damage 5d10; ROF 1; Shots 20, AP 80, HW, MBT)
- 2×Coaxial Mounted .50 HMG (50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 100, AP 4, HW)

### "BEAN POLE" VTOL POWER ARMOR TRANSPORT

The Black Knight Beanpole is specially designed vectored-thrust VTOL intended for quick deployment of power armor and light golemmechs into combat. The craft has a broad crew compartment with space for pilot, commander and electronic systems officer, behind which is a long thin stem with mounting points for up to four size-zero power armor suits, and up to two spaces for size-zero or size-one suits.

These mounting points are external and unprotected, suits can be deployed very quickly and easily on the ground, or suits with jump jets can be jettisoned from a position hovering above the ground (a suitable Piloting roll will prevent damage upon landing). The craft mounts no offensive armament, though mounted golemmechs may employ their weaponry. The Beanpole relies on the carried suits to provide firepower on the way in, and with 6 suits, that can be considerable.

### MARSWORKS ENGINEERING OVERKILL GUNSHIP

Another variant of the LAV-transport used for military purposes, the Overkill gunship is the ultimate in ground support. A Support VTOL for the hot zone drop ships, it features enhanced speed, and superior weaponry. In the event the pilots are killed or eject; the AI can enter into pre-programmed autonomous support mode (Piloting d8). Though not as agile as the Hotzone, the Overkill easily makes up for it in firepower.

**Weapons:**

- Fixed 50mm Nose Cannon (Range 75/150/300; Damage 4d10; ROF 1; Shots 40, AP 20, HW, MBT)
- 2×Heavy Missiles (Range 200/400/800; Damage 6d6; ROF 1–4; Shots 1; AP 12, HW)
- 2×70mm Rocket Pod (Range 24/48/96; Damage 4d8+2; ROF 1–4; Shots 12; HW, MBT)

### BLACK KNIGHT BKV-P9 PANTHER VTOL

Custom Panzer VTOLs were so popular in 2090, that all the remaining units were converted within three months. Black Knight jumped at the chance to bring the classic Panzer look to a more modern Light VTOL Tank.

**Weapons:**

- Main Turret 57mm Cannon (Range 75/150/300; Damage 4d10; ROF 1; Shots 40, AP 20, HW, MBT)
- Coaxial Mounted .50 HMG (50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 100, AP 4, HW)

TABLE 3.29: SPACECRAFT

| WATERCRAFT | ACC/TS | TOUGH | COST | CREW | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Calypso Personal Shuttle | 50/700 | 16(4) | 3 million | 2+10 | Climb 3, Auto-Pilot (d4), Heavy Armor |
| Calamity Assault Shuttle | 50/700 | 20(8) | 3.5 million | 2+10 | Climb 3, Auto-Pilot (d4), Heavy Armor |
| Marsworks Engineering Starfighter | 50/700 | 20(8) | Military | 1 | Climb 3, AMCM, Auto-Fire (d6), Heavy Armor |
| Tranquility Light Freighter | 40/600 | 25(12) | 8 million | 5 | Climb 1, Heavy Armor, 12 tons cargo space |
| GeeHawg I & II Man Interfleet Sled | 20/250 | 9(1) | 60,000 | 1/2 | Climb 1, Heavy Armor |

## Spacecraft

Spacecraft work like most other vehicles, except they operate primarily in space. Spacecraft which can enter an atmosphere are listed as Transatmospheric. Ranges refer to distance within a system, interfleet means very short range, generally they can make a round trip between a ship and a base; maximum ranges of around 10,000 miles. Planetary range is around 100,000 miles, the distance between a planet and orbiting satellites. System range can travel millions of miles, within the solar system.

**Note:** All weapon systems on spacecraft are considered turreted unless otherwise noted.

### Calypso Personal Shuttle

This is a basic non-combat shuttle, but it mounts a laser anti-missile system for defense. The Calypso isn't designed for combat; or for long distance trips. It can handle a planetary hop from a starship or from a space station in orbit around a planet. While the fusion engines could be maintained for 20 years at speed. With proper food supplies a longer trip can be accomplished, say to a moon.

### Calamity Assault Shuttle

The Calamity Assault shuttle is the combat version of the Calypso, designed specifically for protection of orbital habitats throughout the solar system.

**Weapons:**

- Twin Linked LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d12+1; ROF 4; Shots 500; AP 5, Auto, HW)

### Marsworks Engineering Starfighter

**Weapons:**

- Forward Fixed LAC-15 (Range 50/100/200; 2d12; ROF 4; Shots 500; AP 5, Auto, HW)
- Light Missiles Rack (Range 200/400/800; Damage 4d6; ROF 1–4; Shots 12; AP 6, HW)

### Tranquility Light Freighter

One of the first true starships, the Tranquility class is an old but still serviceable freighter, often used by smugglers and pirates. The modular systems allow for the ship to be modified more than most; at the cost of cargo space unfortunately; but, getting your cargo to your destination sometimes requires weaponry, additional armor, or smuggler spaces.

### GeeHawg I & II Man Interfleet Sled

Sleds are one or two-man mini shuttles. One man sleds are usually open to the vacuum of space, and required shielded vacc suits. Two-man sleds have shielding and enclosed but lack life support systems. Sleds primary function is as transport for mining operations, and maintenance aboard ships and space stations.

The sled comes standard with magnetic grapples and tether system. As the sleds are cheap and easy to modify, they are often used by pirates and star gangers, as well as security firms and belters.

# CHAPTER FOUR: THE WORLD

#INFODUMP.LIVING_IN_CHAOS.GD.NET

**Posted By:** #Billy_Black_Eyes

Que Pasa, Ami! Billy here to give you the latest #INFOdump on the world. Much has happened in the past two years, and I figure it's time for an update. In addition to my own thoughts on various subjects, I've collected numerous data feeds from JacobsPlayground.net. If you wanna see the expanded materials, hit the playground!

## The Elite

#INFODUMP.HUNGRY_HIPPO_INVASION.GD.NET

**Posted By:** #Sorry_U_Asked

I work as a waiter at four different restaurants to make ends meet, and we get some keen characters on the rounds. This one guy comes through once a month, each time with a different tramp on his arm. Always gives the same spiel to impress his date. Never tips. I slipped an audio-bug under his table last time, so you can give it a listen. Some of you may even recognize his voice. Any bets on the amount of piss and spit in his soup?

*LOADING AUDIO...*

*Garcon, what is this swill? I distinctly recall ordering the 2023 vintage. This is at least a decade younger. You think you can slip a sub-par selection past me? Take it back and don't show your face again until you've corrected your error. I'll be waiting for a personal apology from your sommelier as well.*

*Apologies, my dear. I do hate drama during dinner, but one must enforce your standards ruthlessly, or else the rabble will try to defraud you for every last credit. I know you've always wanted to visit Paris, and I thought this establishment might provide the perfect view.*

*Don't fear. I know we're on street level, and the proximity to such filthy environs and degenerate denizens can be a bit off-putting, but we're entirely safe. The one-way windows are guaranteed to withstand direct hits from military grade rocket launchers. The smog outside is entirely nano filtered, so breathe with ease. What better way to enjoy a fine repast than to pity those who will never enjoy its like? It adds a certain deliciousness to an already decadent evening.*

*Look at them. Strolling and shuffling by. I always like to observe the grubs of society from time to time to remind myself how fortunate we are. As angels exist in an exponential order above insects, so we stand above the commoners of the world. Our vast credit depositories are what fuel the very heartbeat of civilization. Our stylistic whims command the most sweeping changes of fashion and art. Our names and faces give the whole of the Deep's MediaNet a reason to exist. Our dreams dictate the latest surges of technological genius.*

*We are the elite in every way that matters, and let us never forget the responsibility this places upon our shoulders. For without us, what would the ignoble have to aspire to? Who would the Outcasts have to decry? Who would establish the gleaming trophies of achievement for the masses to fight over? We are the bold lines that give the world perspective, the impetus that sets progress in motion.*

*The truth is...we own them from birth. We control every detail of their pathetic lives — if not directly, than by the laws and legacies we put in place. We stand on the apex of the future, guiding megacorps to glory, splicing the latest evolution of the species into being, and overseeing the governments that would fall into anarchy if not for our strong — if sometimes necessarily cruel — grip on the reins of power.*

*It may look like we're attended by a few personal servants, perhaps an estate staff of dozens, with security bots and borgs scanning every corner to keep the protestors at bay — but recognize the larger reality, my dear. Entire cities — entire nations!—are actually our retainers. Even if they don't recognize it, we are the objects of their adoration and worship. And rightly so.*

*There's no shame in claiming one's place and identity. Whether by birthright, ruthless cunning, or deeds best left surmised by the Deep tabloids, each of us has risen to the heights. None of them have the right to deny us, then, the luxuries of our status. In fact, were we to shun these natural amenities, it would be a disservice to those who are unable to enjoy them. Think of us as the yin to their yang. We let the warm sun tan our skin to defy their ghastly pallor. We sip pure water and breathe pure air, so the plight of those buried in smog and pollution is never forgotten. We sample the finest vintages and goods to bring contrast to the insipid food pastes others must subsist on. Without such contrast, the world would be a dull place indeed.*

*Yet we must always be on our guard, mustn't we? The envious are ever howling for our blood, wanting to cast us down from our gleaming abodes and trample our finery in the gutters. Some simply cannot stand the light we bring to the world, as it reveals how deep of a pit they live within. They try to blame us for their suffering, to cast the guilt and shame of their poor choices and addictions on us, the untouchables. Surely our wealth is ill-gotten. Our clothes must be made of baby leather, and all thoughts and impulses running through our minds must be vile and wicked. It's only through such rationalization that some commoners can abide our existence at all.*

*Such a sad reality that they live in, isn't it? I do wonder how they manage sometimes. Oh, enough of my prattling. Enjoy your meal, m'dear. And enjoy watching the grubs squirm by.*

*AUDIO END.*

**#Sorry_U_Asked:** What a piece of work, neh? Cheap son of a bitch. Funny how the more credits one has, the more you tend to keep a tighter hold on them. Sadly, while this pompous skag makes me want to christen his skull with the next bottle of wine he orders, at the same time, I wonder if he doesn't touch on some truth.

What would we have to live and fight and die for if everyone existed in a single social strata? Equality is a pretty word, but I just don't see it ever becoming a reality. Too much of the world runs on the principle of climbing higher over other people's backs, and I can't imagine that dynamic of power changing anytime soon. Even if it did, what're the odds that we'd all just be equally stuck in the muck, instead of all living the high life?

Food for thought, ami.

# The Megacorps

#INFODUMP.CORPORATE_GOONS.GD.NET

**Posted By:** #DoomSecretary

Here's a secret that really isn't: Most megacorps are practically identical. Each one is a hive and all about production. The only result a corp cares about is profits. It doesn't matter what happens along the way. The bottom line is the bottom line. The CEOs and managers are the royalty overseeing all the workers and drones, and guess where you fall on the totem pole? Here. I pilfered this datasheet from one of my own projects to give you a hint of how little the corps care.

*BEGIN FEED...*

LOADING...

ACCESS GRANTED

SECURITY AUTHORIZED

You have accessed the Corporate Memo Style Guideline datadump. Please note that if you do not have the proper security clearance for this data sector, it will be flagged as an illegal intrusion, and security will be dispatched to intercept you.

As Corporate Memos provide the lifeblood of communication within an organization, we take great pains to ensure each one holds to the strictest standards of quality and information density. Therefore, it is crucial that any Corporate Memo Drafter follow the guidelines laid out here to the letter. Do not attempt to follow the "spirit" of memo drafting, as it undermines corporate efficiency and productivity.

## INTENT

When drafting a memo, consider the reason why. What is this memo intended to accomplish? Are you trying to set up a meeting between transcontinental departments regarding the latest shipments losses in the Pacific? Do you have an announcement that will affect a project's launch deadline? Is this a request to the PR department to handle the latest smear attack on our organization, launched by one of the many scurrilous tabloids that infest The Global DataNet?

## PROFESSIONAL AND RESPECTFUL

Because a corporate memo will be viewed by anywhere from zero to millions of people across the world, you must take into account the enormous diversity of backgrounds and world views that will come into play when your memo is read.

Do not attempt to reference any cultural events, current news, past news, behavioral forecasts, or any data of temporal significance. Also, avoid humor at all costs, as it is far too subjective. Remember the only culture is the corporate culture.

## SUMMARY

Remember, the best corporate memo is one that has as little impact on the reader as possible. This will reduce the likelihood of reparation, as you may come under attack (figuratively and literally) for expressing a fact or opinion that is at odds with a manager's or CEO's preferences.

Any deviation from corporate regulations already in place will result in immediate termination.

## APPROVED WORDS

Our P.R slug is "for the good of humanity and the furthering of civilization", and all documentation is required to stress this truth as much as possible. Therefore, you are pre-approved to use words (and variations of) such as "productivity, profitability, safe, clean, friendly, professional, secure, trustworthy, valuable, essential, genius, noble, etc."

[FOR A FULL LIST OF ACCEPTABLE VOCABULARY, SEE APPENDIX O]

## BLACKLISTED WORDS

Any use of the following words will result in automatic memo rejection from the system and a personnel reevaluation of your status:

"*Cheap, questionable, dirty, unsafe, unsecure, low profits, weak, shaky, doubtful, lacking, greedy, harsh, Machiavellian, etc.*"

## AVOIDING ESPIONAGE

Always protect our valuable corporate assets from rivals. Corporate Memos are particularly vulnerable to manipulation, and so should contain as little concrete details or statements. Internal data is strictly forbidden from being included in any memo. Should any be detected in your communiqué, your position will be flagged for possible espionage attempts and immediate termination.

## FINAL APPROVAL

After your memo is drafted, it must be submitted to all receiving department managers for approval. Should any manager provide feedback, the memo must be revised and resubmitted until full agreement is achieved. Failure to immediately employ these changes will result in an automatic pay grade deduction.

Thank you for taking the time to read through the Corporate Memo Style Guideline and being an essential part of organizational communication!

At this time, you are required to take a survey as to the helpfulness of this guideline datafile. This will count toward your memo drafting time allotment, so please proceed in all haste while processing the questions and answers.

*END FEED.*

**#DoomSecretary:** Getting the idea, now? You'll find the same kind of language in every corporate archive. Oh, they try to act like they're different.

It doesn't matter if it's Ravenlocke, Malbrand, Cerus Media, Kenta Cyber Dynamics...they all have the same priorities and the same methods.

But in the end, boyo, you march to their drumbeat or you get trampled. It also makes them easier to manipulate from within, when you know how the system works.

## The Rest of Us

#INFODUMP.HOPE_FOR_THE_HOPELESS.GD.NET

**Posted By:** #PieintheSky

Each week, Hope for the Hopeless will be bringing you a highlight of a particular individual, company, or network that is doing their best to make life just a bit brighter for the commoner to raise awareness about those who sacrifice for the good of others.

This week, we're taking a look at the medical side of life with a free street clinic.

*LOADING...*

Hey, I appreciate you trying to raise the awareness about the plight of inner-city med clinics, but I'm a little pressed for time. I get at least a hundred registered patients through here a day, not to mention all the burnouts trying to score a cheap high. I can give you five minutes for a quick rundown, sure. Then I've got to go perform.

I've always thought of this clinic as a bit of a microcosm of the city at large. Everyone has that same desperate, hungry look when they come in, hoping maybe they'll find something here to give them a bit of relief before they shamble back out to the streets and whatever drudgery they call a job.

Poor sods.

Starvation isn't an issue thanks to the food paste vats, so I don't get many malnutrition cases — except for snowcaine junkies who think they can live on the high alone.

Pretty much everyone comes through that door sooner or later. Freelancers diced up during a job-gone-wrong. Pimps and prostitutes trying to hide various disease symptoms so they can continue to peddle their flesh wares. Families that just migrated from the wilds, wanting checkups for the kids and antibiotics for the parents. Sims wanting stims.

Pro bono? You kidding? If word got around that I was doling out free advice or pills, this place would be even more packed than it already is. Free just means we will treat for creds without a corporate account.

It's all about survival, really. Day to day. One foot in front of the other. Mostly, I'm here to dull the pain and make the 24/7 slog a little more bearable.

Sure it's depressing! For some of these people, though, we're the only hope they have. The only safe port in an otherwise stormy life.

No, I don't judge anyone. Judging others is a surefire way to hold a mirror up to yourself, eventually. Besides, I'm hardly a shining figure myself. We're all stuck in the same ruts, trapped in the same rat race, chasing after the same credits while looking up at the elite living in their skyscrapers and wearing their fancy suits — and we hate them and wish we were them at the same time.

How do I manage it? How do I keep a weary smile on my face and see the next patient, thinking maybe I can make their life just a bit more manageable? Heh. Well, when you own the key to the anti-depressants cabinet...

*END FEED.*

## The Black Market

#INFODUMP.NOTHING_IS_PRIVATE.GD.NET

**Posted By:** #Nony_Mouse

Black marketeers are like roaches. Toxic roaches, no less. With every one you squash, there's a dozen more scurrying around, happy to chomp your gnads. At times, it feels like it's hardly worth the effort to stomp 'em.

But that kind of stance doesn't look so good for government or politics, and there's always some effort or another to "clean up" the plexes. The black market is easy enough to wag a finger at, with people always wondering how certain gangers keep getting their hands on such nice, shiny guns and blades to point at each other. Truth is, practically everyone shops "there" sooner or later...the gangers, the gov, the mercs. Food. Drugs. Weapons. Armor. Even golemmechs are available if you know the right people to ask...

*BEGIN AUDIO RECORDING...*

**[hurried whisper]**

*Wouldja get in here, already? Been waitin' an hour for your sorry ass. Another five minutes I woulda wrote you off as a punker, and then where would your meetin' deposit be, eh?*

*Aright...now sit tight while I kick the scanner into gear. Can't be too careful, knowhattamean? Plenty of corp porkers and gov goons tryin' to shut me down, knowin' I got the low down on just as good as gear as they toss out, just for less creds, capisce? So what if I don't got no license ta sell these wares? Still works the same for you, you betcha.*

*Aright, green light. You're clear.*

*So, what're we on the looksie for today? Got a nice big crate of beamers came in just yesterday. They'll blow the eyelids off a hundred choppers before you blink.*

**[voice redacted]**

*Oh, I gotcha. Betcha sure. If you're thinkin' of movin' in against the Razor Runners, you're gonna want primo firepower, with the body bulk to take a few hits in return. I got just whatcha need.*

*Aright. I don't show many folks this here, but since you're a repeat customer, I'm gonna give you the special. You ain't gonna find any of this for less than twice what I'm offerin'. Sure. Ask around.*

**[voice redacted]**

*Now that's what I'm talkin' about. You ain't gonna regret this, ami. Top of the heap gear here, I tell you, and no doubt. Packin' this kind of spark will send those rats scurryin' from their holes in no time.*

*I gotta tell you, sometimes this whole buyin' and sellin' under the table...after a while, it makes a man think about retirin' early, knowhattamean? I mean, here I am, like some patron saint of sales, givin' the public a vital service and access to goods they ain't never gonna get their hands on otherwise — and what do I get in return? Military hounds sniffin' around at all hours, corp porkers tryin' to wriggle in and steal my customers, gangs thinkin' they own me just cause they stroll these streets.*

*Who am I kiddin', right? Once you're in this business, you're in it for life. Ain't no goin' back to that slow wheelin' we call "legit." That's a blood's game. There's just somethin' about movin' tons of guns and gear right under the noses of the corp piggies that gets the blood pumpin' a bit faster. And the creds sure don't hurt none, either.*

*None of us runners are hurtin' anyone, neither. Leastaways, not directly, and that's what matters for the soul in the end, capisce? I don't care what you do with the gear once you haul it all out my door. I just wanna give you the best deal out there so you can come back in one piece and bring more business my way.*

*Aright. Everythin' stocked, locked, and loaded. Was there anythin' else you wanted to add to the pile before you take off?*

(voice redacted)

*Hrm. How many of those are you needin'? What's your budget lookin' like?*

(voice redacted)

*For that much, I could haul you a barge of 'em. But I ain't got none of it here. Don't like mixin' the radioactive stuff with the ammo, unnastand? Too much of a match n' powderkeg scenario. Seein' as you're a special case, I'll put you directly in touch with the guy who I get it from. For a cut, of course.*

*Aright, here's his Hashtag. It's a secure channel and he won't answer right away, but tell him I sent you and he'll get in touch soon enough.*

*END AUDIO RECORDING.*

## Gang Life

THE FOLLOWING TRANSCRIPT ADAPTED FROM THE DOCUMENTARY 3DVIZ "LIFE BELOW THE STARS"

INTERVIEW SUBJECT: MANNY "ROLLER" RAMIREZ (HASHTAG: #MR_ROLLER)

BEGIN TRANSCRIPT:

I did a thirty year mind-stretch in the only college guys like me ever get to see. But I learned in the dub stack. That's the one thing about Inside; you got time. When I went in I could barely read but by the time I came out I was teaching classes. Of course, with my record, regular jobs aren't one of the top searches so you won't see me in any classrooms out here.

Too bad, because I have a lesson to teach. We're fighting the wrong war. They want us shooting at each other and not them. That's how they keep running the world.

Who? The shareholders. The people who aren't you and me. The ones who matter.

The copsuckers? Nah, they're just another gang, on the corp payroll. I spent my ganger years rolling and my officer years inside. That's how it's supposed to work. There are no old gangers. By the time one of us figures out the game it's too late to keep playing. But maybe I can push things along by showing what I've learned. I can give the rest of you a leg up. Use it to kick some ass.

**#2HeadedTroll:** Copsuckers? I like that. The rest sounds like another geezerfest whining about how he hacked up his life. The sprawl isn't a reservation, it's a petri dish. Us germs who earn it can crawl out and own the world. The rest stay in quarantine where they belong.

**#NihilB4Zod:** "Them!" Can't wait to see if flying saucers are involved too.

**#2HeadedTroll:** Hey, don't joke about that. I grew up in Gray territory. They didn't like anyone making fun of their Ascended Masters. Good way to get your knees beamed.

**#NihilB4Zod:** Beamed?

**#2HeadedTroll:** Well, blowtorched anyway.

### Civilians

Guys like me have a hundred names for them but they all just mean different kinds of civilians. There's not much of a difference except attitude between a blue plater and a crawlie, or a crat and an upright. No one wants to become a mushroom and the faceless and squawkers are too out to even realize how far behind they are.

**#Young Gun:** I'm twenty and already got my own place and a highskipping ride. Four ladies on the string with more to come. I'll be sipping beach drinks by the time I'm thirty.

**#Snake Eyes:** Kid, no one's even gonna remember your name ten years from now.

**#Young Gun:** Nope, it's survival of the fittest and that's me.

### Blue Platers; "Bloops"

Sad to say, but blue platers are probably the happiest folks in the sprawl. Sure, they don't have much, but who does? The lucky ones have some kind of steady work. The rest? Nano keeps them fed and in clothes, even if it's just nanocrap instead of something 'nique. So long as they stay out of trouble they can go along.

Of course, whenever bloops get a little ahead they like to have some fun. That's where gangers come in. One way or another, gangers control the supply of fun on their turf.

### Crawlies

Crawlies are trapped in the sprawl but don't realize it. They think they can escape if they just figure out the magic code. Most of them start by trying to polish what makes them special. The smart ones study, the jocks train, and the performers work their angles. The tough ones? No, we're not crawlies; we go ganger and that's a whole different thing.

A few do make it out. But some folks win the lottery too. Counting on long shots isn't the best way to live. Besides, most crawlies are tuggers. Remember that kid in your class who always knew the answer? Crawlie.

### Faceless

The faceless are just things gangers own. They're property. Some of us take better care of them than others but no one really thinks of them as people. That's the way to handle them. Not getting sentimental or too close.

Most of the faceless are hooked on something. They'll do anything to get their hit. And the whole point of running your own turf is making sure you're the only who can do that.

Some are trafficked instead. There's always some part of the world that's even more of a hole than where you are. If they don't speak the language or have papers it's pretty easy to keep them under control. Everything I've heard about this

Charon thing out of Europe makes me suspect there's a lot of boys and girls over there looking for a place to start over. Once they make that decision the rest is all just tossing the dice to see where they end up.

> **#Paladin:** Scum. My sister was hooked on Grace for years before we finally got her defragged. I don't even want to think about what filth like him made her do to get new passwords. She's not a thing. He is. Should have kept him in on stack in VR forever.
>
> **#Rubicon:** Tough break for your sister but no one forced her to start flashing now did they?

### MUSHROOMS

A mushroom's a walking target. Steps between shooters and eat someone else's bullet. It's sad, but life is like that.

### SQUAWKERS

There's coops all over the sprawl. Good way to get real food like eggs or bird once they stop laying. Squawkers are like that; but people. Even in the sprawl there are some who figure out ways to make money. Maybe they provide a service or make something others want to buy. You got little businesses like that all over the place. It's only right that you find some use for ones on your turf.

> **#Twopennynails:** My family runs a little carpentry shop and the gangers never leave us alone. They're like termites. They eat through anything we try to build. Some days I think we should just sit around using nano like the rest of the lazy slobs.
>
> **#HardCase:** Sounds like someone's squawking...

### CRATS; "CORPOTRASH"

Crats think the Sprawl's a zoo but forget us animals roam around free. They're just solid citizen types looking for some thrills; nothing wrong with that. They live in the towers, the real towers not the megablocks. But these are the lower floors and while they might have some stock options or a retirement plan they aren't owners.

Take their money and leave them alone. Don't do anything to scare them away or rip them off. Crats make good customers so you want them coming back.

### UPRIGHTS

For the most part, uprights are just tourists who stay home. They know the secret handshake and have the good jobs. They don't come to the sprawl very often and when they do they usually bring corp security along with them.

### GARGOYLES; "GOYLES"

Gargoyle's aren't really civilians. They live at the tops of the towers. Their penthouses or executive condos or manager suites have the best security money can buy. And the one thing gargoyles have dripping out of their pockets is money.

If you get a chance to roll at a goyle it's one of those "high risk/high reward" situations. A good way to get dead, or Inside. But the payday can make it worthwhile.

## BECOMING A GANGER

Want to become a ganger? Prove it. That's all it takes. Show you can carry the weight.

For most, it means starting young and rising up. The gang becomes your school and you learn what matters. It's gradual. But one day you suddenly realize you aren't running errands and hanging around the edges listening to the stories anymore. You're telling them. And kids are asking you if you need anything.

That's when you pick your five.

Picking your five is a tricky thing. Only a smear asks people who really want to hurt him. But you don't want to ask anyone who likes you too much because people might think you're trying to cheat. And you definitely don't want to ask the guys with real weight; they'll snap you in half.

Once you have your five then it's just a matter of taking whatever they dish on you. If you waited your time and picked the right five, you might need to see a streetdoc later but you should make it through. You just gotta show you can take a beat down. If you can, you're a ganger. If not, straws instead of forks.

### LOOKING THE PART

When you join a gang you're separating yourself from the herd. Forever. No one ever mistakes a ganger for something else. Most gangs have their own look and members go along. Sometimes it's not hard to figure out. Hybrid packs like the Werewolves lay everything else on top of hair and fangs. The Tomatons go for the robot look so there's lots of dermals, voxing the voicebox, and eye beams. I probably don't have to tell you why the Gillies run the docks in a lot of port cities.

Even for more normal gangs, where augmenting and chroming is a choice, body art's still part of the Life. Gangers mark themselves the same way they mark their turf. If you don't have both kinds of ink people look at you funny. I always liked hyper tats more than skin myself, but I have a few of the old fashioned kind too.

> **#Burner:** I can sort of understand the paint job and TAP markings but what about the sound effects? And some rig their rides to produce custom smells too. What's that all about?
>
> **#AngrySexyHungry:** It's part of the Life Burner. For a ganger, your rep is what matters. Whatever you have to do to get yourself known. The further your name goes the easier it is to push the border when you go rolling and tagging.

### LEARNING THE CODE

Sure, gangers are outlaws. But that doesn't mean the Life has no rules. There's a code. If you break it hope your brothers and sister just kick you around for a bit. Or maybe kill you. That's better than getting deleted; at least you'll die one of the family. If you get deleted you're just a ghost. Still around but not a ganger anymore.

Some gangs have special rules or little traditions but keep these four in mind:

**Belong:** Your gang is your real family. Loyalty isn't enough. It's about blood.

**Honor:** Your gang moves together. If one ganger gives his word than all of you did.

**No snitching:** Gang biz is other gangers and no one else.

**Walk Tall:** Your pride is your gang's pride.

## TURF

Your turf is your world. The more of it you control the stronger your gang. Walk your borders and look for ways to push them out. If you don't mark your territory someone else will. That's why you have to keep walking your borders and checking your tags. Spraying is fine, but hypertags are the ones that matter. If another gang kills your hypertags you must restore them or your borders get pushed back. That's how a gang dies.

### DEALING WITH THE MOBS

For gangers, turf is everything. That's what makes us different from the mobs. Those guys, they're more interested in rackets or what they call "spheres of influence" than rolling and fighting over territory every day.

We need the mobs and the mobs need us. They have the contacts and the skills. We control the ground. The mobs have to pay us to operate on our turf. But if you charge too much they might pull out and then you got nothing. Or sometimes they strike a deal with another gang and help them push the border right over you.

### WHO'S WHO

The Life is what it is. But living the Life doesn't pay. You have to find a way to survive inside the Life. Copsuckers might not like it, but a job is a job.

**Artists:** There's nothing worse than bad art. When you need a fake ID or a dummied credit wafer you don't want any mistakes. Artists live by their reputations and one bad day can ruin them. That's why they charge so much. Artists are usually freelancers, but on good terms with the gangers who run their turf.

**Bookmakers:** A good bookmaker takes odds on anything. They make their money by tweaking the point spread to make sure they always get a little taste no matter who wins. Some bookies run games instead of taking bets but it's all the same. Bookies usually attach to mobs, but some freelancers work turfs.

**Breakers:** Breakers do thieving and burglary, anything physical, but stay away from hurting people. They steal cars and sneak past security alarms. They bust open safes and anything else holding something worth having.

**Crackers:** Crackers are mostly black hats. They bust open systems and run wild in the Global DataNet. They also fight off other crackers. You can't really survive without some on your side.

**Fabbers:** Not all patterns are legal. Fabbers use nano to make the forbidden. Sometimes it's just a matter of cracking a copyright so they can churn out things you're supposed to pay for. But real fabbing is making things that aren't supposed to exist. Fabbers keep their nano machines hidden and blocked with suicide code.

> **#Richter 9.99:** Fabbers are the worst of the worst. They've got patterns for superbugs and all kinds of WMDs. Only a matter of time before we all get wiped out unless we take them down first. Just say no to fabbing!

> **#NostroAnus:** Did you like the candy that guy in the van gave you? The corps turned fabbing into a dirty word, not the fabbers. They are the only ones still waging the copyfight. The rest of us gave up and settled for some nanocrap.

**Fences:** Fences give you money for the stuff you steal. It's never anywhere near what it's worth legit but it's still a payday. Of course, they can sell you what someone else stole just as easily. Sometimes they just make a handshake for a customer and back away after getting their taste.

**Loan Sharks:** The name says it all. Sharks loan out money but don't complain to the credit bureau if you don't pay it back. They only kill as a last resort. The dead can't pay their bills. But they aren't afraid to put a deadbeat in the hospital. And friends and family are fair game if that's what it takes to move a mark.

**Roughies:** Most gangers are rough boys. I was. We do the hard stuff. Get physical. If someone needs to get pretzeled or dead rough boys take care of it. Squawkers usually pay without making too much trouble but that's not the only way rough boys can earn. Some of us chase the big scores like hijacking or kidnapping. Banks are nice, but most of their money is digital not real currency, so you need to pick the right moment to knock one over.

**Softies:** When a soft boy takes your money you thank him. They run scams and cons. They team up with other kinds of crooks to pull off a special job or sometimes even make them full time members of their crew. For soft boys though, it's all about face to face. They look you in the eye and spin a story you want to believe.

**Stringers:** Stingers keep people and things on a string. They're usually pimps or madams but some are a little more exotic. I knew one guy who arranged hunting expeditions out in the wastes. Usually it was bio-horrors or old school animals but heard sometimes he had zero year's sims or even people who'd stepped wrong.

**Trickers:** Trickers sell what you're not supposed to have; or want. Drugs are just the start. Some deal in weapons or nique goods like animal parts. They also get the new passwords for the different kinds of flash.

**Washers:** Washers clean your money for a percentage. Sometimes they set you up with a legit business or a no show job to justify your income. Other times they go the hacking route and set you up with an inheritance or law suit. Whatever they do it's all about turning dirty money clean.

## AUTHORITY

The people in nice suits and designer dresses aren't the ones driving squad cars on Saturday nights. They send in Ravenlocke to recruit our own kind. Give them some power and point them towards the rest of us.

The whole system works that way.

It's designed to keep us fighting each other instead of the gargoyle bastards who actually run things. We have nano, tame AI, biotech, solar power, colonies on other planets, uploaded immortals, and TAP linking us all together. Why are folks still poor?

> **#925er:** That's a good question. There is enough to go around. For the first time ever it's not a resource problem; it's a distribution problem.

**#Think4U:** It's a laziness problem. It's a stupid problem. It's a whiner problem. Anyone willing to work can still get ahead.

**#SMRT:** I wonder if he realizes that he's saying gangers are just the same as these "copsuckers" he hates so much.

**#4EvR:** What? Gangers are nothing like copsuckers. We have honor.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT

For the most part, street copsuckers are just like a case of food poisoning; nerdu happens, you deal with it, and you move on. But trust me, honest copsuckers are a lot worse than the crooked ones. They're barely a step above getting paid in feed so those who turn down a little baksheesh now and then are looking for something else to charge their batteries. That's not good news for anyone stuck in gangland.

At least with dirty copsuckers you have a chance to make a deal. Give them a little taste of the good life and they might move on looking for another payday. Take care not to offer too much. That makes them greedy and suspicious. Always start low, but not so low they'd shoot you out of spite, and then let them work you up to an acceptable level. If they think it's their game they can decide when they win it.

### THE COURTS

Sometimes there's a bad warrant or a copsucker gets caught in a lie but that doesn't happen often enough. See, the lawnet has judgebots programs. Not exactly real AI but close enough if you stick to legal questions. Copsuckers can access one all the time from their squad cars. If a judgebot tells them they've made a mistake they usually either find some way to cover their ass or just cut you lose with a promise to get you next time.

### BAIL AND BOUNTY

If you don't plea out right away you can usually get bail. The judge just gives you a look and tries to figure out how much cash it would take to make sure you show up. The more likely you are to get sent Inside the higher the bail. Give a bondsman ten or twenty percent to keep and he'll pay the rest. Assuming he thinks you'll show up so he can get it back of course. It's about getting friends and family to offer collateral. Stuff he can take from them if you run for it.

### PRISON

Prison ain't like it used to be. Some asshat programmer figured out how to tweak the Real Time to Virtual Time ratio and make it so domains can extend the VR experience into days, weeks, and even years in VR, while only relatively little time passes in the real world. It's a great way to lengthen the online experience, especially for virtual games and other environments. But if you're serving hard time, it's a nightmare.

Correctional facilities use virtual reality almost exclusively now, storing bodies in coffin tanks while your mind serves out your sentence in a virtual prison. The standard ratio is 1 year of Virtual Time for a day of Real Time. So, your body can take a week long nap, but your mind just served 7 years of hard time, and because the virtual world can be as *real* as reality, you'll feel it, amigo. Trust me.

Yeah, sure; physically you'll be out soon, but mentally, you've lived the life. If you're some poor bastard who had multiple life sentences, you'll experience every day.

Wrap your brain around that for a moment; living hundreds of years in mental lockdown while only a year or two passes in real life. The strain alone is enough to drive a man crazy, not to mention the near-impossibility of adjusting to a life you no longer remember, meeting people you forgot even existed, while they just saw you a couple of days ago..

I wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy.

### PAROLE AND TRACKERS

Once you go Inside they own you forever. Even if they let you out you're never really free again. Most folks leave on parole and some get trackers implanted if they're worth the bandwidth. Sometimes they put you on parole even if you served your full sentence. It's called "mandatory supervision." Fancy words for "you're reamed chum."

With parole it's all about violations. If you break one of their rules you go back Inside. That's either more of your sentence or a year or so in VR time if you're doing a mandatory gig. Your parole officer owns you like a whore on his string. He can violate you for pretty much any reason and it takes months to get an appeal.

Still, parole is a lot better than getting a tracker implanted along your spine or your head. There's not a lot of angles you can work with a tracker. They pulse about every two seconds and send your location back to the AI monitoring you. If you go out of your zone or near any forbidden place it knows pretty quick. Anyone who can log onto the lawnet and knows your ID code can find you without a problem. This means they can also zap you. Yeah, trackers have electrostim. Every few years there's a scandal when some cracker figures out how to slip into the lawnet and kills somebody.

### CONCLUSION

What's there to say amigo? Protect what's yours, keep your word, and watch your click's back, because in the end, they're the only family you have. And stay the hell out of prison. Yeah, I know, back in tha day, going in meant something. You had cred with your gang. Now? You'll be lucky if you even remember what they look like.

END TRANSCRIPT.

## TRANSHUMANISM IN 2090

#INFODUMP.THESE_STRANGE_STREETS.GD.NET

**Posted By:** #UrbanDemigod

Humanity is not what it once was, ami. We're grown up, grown out, and growing stranger by the day. When you get on the tube to head to work in the morning, and on your left is a bioroid sporting the latest chassis, while on your right is a hybrid with hooves for hands and donkey ears that won't stop twitching — what does that tell you? Think they aren't human?

We've got simulacra getting emancipated faster than the labs can churn them out in some countries. People getting their minds dubbed and downloaded into mechanical bodies with meat brains. Mutants prowl the sewers and alleys, while

a whole new generation is being gene-tweaked for so-called perfection. Cybernetic upgrades are being implanted for every conceivable malady, while half the population spends most of their days swimming in the Deep, detached from a world they no longer want to live in.

Entire megacorps — like CHIMERA or Nortec or TLI — have been built around making humanity stronger, faster, smarter, trying to rid us of physical "weaknesses." It's really just a matter of time before our species no longer resembles our ancestors. And then what will we be? Will we cast off humanity like a caterpillar emerging from the cocoon?

Now that humanity has more colors than a rainbow, is it smart to start arguing against the many shades we've become? When you start destroying the easy definitions that gets people antsy. Groups like 1-4-All are eager to shout down all the recent sim subs, while others like NAC goonies are already up in arms, ready to destroy anyone that doesn't fit their preferred human mold.

Where are the boundaries? Does it matter anymore? Is it worth debating, or are we trying to establish definitions for a state of existence that really isn't relevant in this age? Check out this newsfeed I dug up as an illustration…

BEGIN TRANSCRIPT:

**REPORTER:** We're here in front of one of several local Nortec vat factories, where several hundred people have gathered to protest the company's latest bioroid production. The crowd has been verbally rowdy, but so far it hasn't elevated to anything physical, though it may just be a matter of time. Let's see if we can get a few personal statements. Excuse me, sir? I can't help but notice that your features lend themselves towards a NeoHuman template. Could you explain why you seem to be decrying the very company responsible for your genetic construction?

**PROTESTOR:** Don't you dare call me NeoHuman!

**REPORTER:** I'm sorry? But aren't you…

**PROTESTOR:** Oh god. Not this again. You want to judge me based on how I look? Why not go ahead and say what you're thinking, huh? Vat baby! Tube toddler! Science experiment.

**REPORTER:** My apologies but…

**PROTESTOR:** Just shut up! You want a real report? Then pay attention. There's nothing "neo" about us. The whole concept of Human 2.0 is degrading to our entire species.

**REPORTER:** Er…how so? I thought it was meant to improve…

**PROTESTOR:** There you go again, spouting the same lies the global public has been brainwashed into believing! What makes me any more human than you or anyone else here? Maybe I have a stronger immune system, faster response times, or heal quickly. But those are all surface issues. None of it addresses what it really means to be human.

**REPORTER:** You mean you don't think about yourself as or want to be seen as genetically superior?

**PROTESTOR:** What's superior about it? From the time I was born, I was enslaved by the genetic code inflicted on me by some scientist in a lab. Did I have any choice about the person I am today, or am I nothing but the product of their tampering?

**REPORTER:** Would it be logical to say your opinion extends to simulacrum as well?

**PROTESTOR:** You bet it does. Just because they're forced into accelerated growth and implanted with memories of a false life doesn't mean they shouldn't have equal opportunity to chart their own path. It's a tragedy that most sims start out not even knowing their true nature. It only makes it harder on them when the truth is revealed and lessens their chances of social integration once they move beyond corporate enslavement — if they ever even get that chance. Sadly, companies are never going to get tired of the cheap labor they produce, and see sims as disposable. That's why we're here, protesting. Get it, yet?

**REPORTER:** And what about hybrids?

**PROTESTOR:** What about them?

**REPORTER:** I would guess you feel they deserve the same rights as sims and Neo — er — other human variations?

**PROTESTOR:** Hell no! Those subspecies freaks need to be quarantined before they bring back some sort of avian or pig flu epidemic and drag the rest of us down with them.

**REPORTER:** How does that align with your earlier statements?

**PROTESTOR:** You really have no clue, do you? An upper threshold may not exist yet, turning enhanced humans into a whole new species, but it's pretty clear where the lower threshold cuts in. When someone lowers themselves to an animalistic nature, they're deliberately divesting themselves of the virtues that make them human. Stop pretending they're still human when at least half their genetic makeup is plugged in from something with a tail and fur. Their minds just don't work the same.

**REPORTER:** But like you, some of them had no choice about having various animal characteristics spliced in.

**PROTESTOR:** Well, sucks to be them, doesn't it?

**REPORTER:** I see. As you seem to believe the nature of humanity resides more in the immaterial than the physical, I'd be interested in hearing your opinion on androids.

**PROTESTOR:** I think it's pretty obvious that they're nothing but artificial constructs. There's nothing there that started anywhere as remotely human, and just trying to dress those bots up in fake skin and clothes won't ever change that.

**REPORTER:** There are those, however, who claim that androids, especially those equipped with more advanced AI constructs, are capable of achieving true sentience and emancipation.

**PROTESTOR:** Sentient androids are a myth being perpetuated by the industrial overlords who want us to worship AIs like gods. There's nothing there but highly advanced programming.

**REPORTER:** What would convince you that an AI had actually achieved independent thought and deserved rights equal to your own?

**PROTESTOR:** I'd believe it when I saw it.

END TRANSCRIPT.

# Technology

#INFODUMP.ALL_YOUR_DRONE_ARE_BELONG_TO_US.GD.NET

**Posted By:** #Weepforthecode

Few things are more fun than exposing and exploiting flaws in what authorities claim to be impenetrable defense systems and firewalls. This blog is, basically, my trophy wall. Every time I crack a data cache or hack into a "secure" base, it's going up here.

Data and tech is all that matters anymore. It's evolving so rapidly, you can spend your whole life trying to play catch-up, much less mastering the coding necessary to gain command of the system. The more the tech connects us, the more it's integrated with our very brains, the more it defines us. Technology isn't just a tool anymore, some dumb hammer in a monkey's hand. It's the essence of existence itself. Some dread the Singularity, when technology surpasses human comprehension. I say it has already occurred, we're just too stupid to recognize it yet.

Biotech. Nanotech. Scumtech. Weaponstech. Psitech, even, if some rumors are believed. Artificial Intelligence, dubbing, and the GodNet itself. We have everything we need to elevate ourselves to another plane of existence…or thrash ourselves back down to the muck. Here's my latest prize, ripped straight from a militia surveillance archive.

CONVERSATION RECORDED BY SECURITY DRONE IN SECTOR 4

*"What about that one, Toddy? Looks like an easy-breezy."*

*"Are you funning me, Trix? That guy's worthless. Wouldn't get more than a snatch of shine off him."*

*"But…but he's got a shiny bit right there. I sees it. His whole arm's all glittery."*

*"That's his coat, you stupid blitzer. You never watch the feeds? Foil-flacked clothes are all big and bombin' these days. How could you confuse that with cyber limbs?"*

*"Oh. Sorry. I get confused."*

*"Get confused and you get used in this town. I told you. Only listen to me. You want to be a chopper? You got to think like a chopper, and that means wising up to what makes good prey and what could get you shredded faster than spit. Plenty of top tech out there that'll get us swimming in credits, but only if you're bright enough to snap it up without getting caught."*

*"Righto, Toddy. You're so smart."*

*"You bet it, Trix. Now take a look at this blitzer."*

*"The one with the snazzy holo-belt buckle?"*

*"Ya. How do you size him?"*

*"Huh. Got an eye implant and those legs look spiffed up. Walking a bit too smooth, yeah? Bet he's got about twenty, thirty lousy thousy paid up to keep his self looking so pretty. A nice slice-n-dice."*

*"How's he powered? Takedown maneuver?"*

*"Probably gotta micro-fusion engine in each leg. Hydro-batteries would need too much maintenance. Fuel cell in the eye, with maybe a solar powered film on the lens. Hit him with a flashburst to throw his systems dodgy, and then stick some magnetic clamps on his knees so they lock up, but aren't too damaged to resell."*

*"Not bad. But you're missing the badge on his right arm. Hawk with the arrows in its talons. That marks him as militia. We try to tag-n-bag him, and we'll get the nearest convoy spiking our skulls on a rust heap before we even get blood on our blades. Probably a scout, acting as bait for choppers just like us."*

*"Ooo."*

*"But that doesn't mean he isn't keen to keep an eye on. Might open up some other opportunities."*

*"Whatchu mean?"*

*"Think it through. It isn't just what we can snip from their skin. It's every other bit of tick and tech they might bring along with them when they slip through our territory. How'd he get here? Walked all the way from his HQ? Maybe he's got a chem-burning truck or bike stashed in an alley somewhere. All of them have just as good of parts to scrap and sell."*

*"Won't those go all larey-blarey if you tried to knock them in?"*

*"Sure, but would you rather snip the wires of a security system or get a plasma bolter stuck up your nose trying to drive this guy's face into the pavement?"*

*"Uh. The other one."*

*"Righto, "T", m'love. So many people walking 'round with brand new parts stuck in and on them that it's easy to forget one bit of tech is as good as the next — doesn't matter whether you ripped it off an engine or if it hung on a heartbeat. Now, if we knew where this guy was stationed, we might turn his bait-jaunt against them. We get some of the gang to rustle his feathers, and get most of his chums gunning this way, which would leave their station guarded by just a few poor saps. Of course, if we're unlucky, they'd have a borg sitting around, just waiting to take off a few heads with a machine gun on one arm and a laser katana on the other."*

*"Like the kind in the movies? You ever knock knuckles with a borg?"*

*"You bet. See this scar?"*

*"Ooo."*

*"Back a few years, before I was running with this crew, me and a few gutter geeks got hired to take out a few power plants down near the market district. Plan was, we flip the switch on their cold fusion reactors, turn off the lights for a bit, and our employers would scrape the jewelry stores clean and we'd split the profits. Problem was, the first plant we hit had a borg guarding the central control room and he aped out on us the moment we came into sensor range."*

*"Did you survive?"*

*"Did I…don't make me regret sponsoring you, Trix."*

*"Aw, I'm just kidding. I bet you pulled out some BFG and blasted its ass to dust."*

*"Nope. I shoved one of my mates in front and ran like hell. Run away to live a day. Still got clipped on the way out."*

*"What? But you told me—"*

*"Hush up and check out this biddy. Think we might have a fine specimen for your first take and rake."*

*"But Toddy—"*

*"This is primo prey, and don't doubt it. That's synth-skin over her entire upper body, or I'm a rat chimera. Those nodes behind the ears are probably from brainmeat upgrades. We take her down and you'll be golden with the gang."*

*"Yeah but—"*

*"Come on, Trix. Stop staring around and focus. This here's your best chance."*

*"Hoyo, Toddy. What about that speck right over our heads? Wouldn't it make for an easier target, since it's just hangin' there?"*

*"Huh? What speck? Oh shi—"*

## Zeeks in 2090

#INFOSOURCE

#XRAYGUN.TAG.DONATE

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**Posted By:** #XRAYGUN

This data dump is for all you ignorant S.O.B's out there who think zeeks are freakish monsters sent from Satan to eat your kids and suck out your soul.

You're being lied to.

The 'powers that be' are spreading disinformation about us, ratcheting up fear through false flag events like Madrid so they can enact global laws restricting our freedoms. Hell, if you're living anywhere in the North American Coalition you've already seen the opening salvos in this infowar; PSA's (that's Public Service Announcements) notifying the flock of violent crimes allegedly involving zeeks, religious anti-zeek propaganda citing popular Old Testament verses about witches, and even #INFOloads about the mythic "Zgene"(Zeek Gene) suppression drugs flood the Mediaweb on a daily basis, and this is just the beginning, folks.

It's important that you know the truth before it's too late; for us at least, since you normies out there might be next. Think it can't happen? It did 160 years ago, during WWII.

> *"First they came for the socialists, and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak for me." ~Martin Neimoller.*

History says you're next, so I'm speaking out now.

### Previous Studies

**#Smoke_and_Mirrors** released a data file called "Zeeks Expanded" which attempts to explain who we are and what we can do — sort of. The DATfile was written through the lens of science, and while I'm not saying #Smoke_and_Mirrors got everything wrong, he certainly didn't get everything right. The document was laced with enough disinformation to make me wonder whether or not he's an agent for Psi-Division.

**Case in Point:** Quantum Dimensional Crack Theory, or as I like to call it: Quantum Crackpot Theory.

What Smoke didn't tell you in Zeeks Expanded was the theory that zeeks can see the other 7 (there are allegedly 10) dimensions and somehow manipulate them is just that; a theory. Hell, I'm a zeek and I can barely stomach seeing the shit in this 'dimension'. I think I'd go crazy if I was able to see — much less manipulate — 7 others. I don't get any special insights into the building blocks of reality when I read someone's mind. Mostly I'm just disgusted. Seriously, the sheer amount of crap floating around in people's minds makes me want to go build a house on top of a mountain and stay there for the rest of my life.

But I digress.

Likewise, Super String Theory is also just a theory. Maybe #Smoke_and_Mirrors thought the "theory" part was self-evident, or maybe he felt that if he threw out some technical terms and strung them together in a semi-coherent manner, it would make his analysis seem more legitimate; I'm not sure, but I do know this:

The notion that reality is breaking down at a quantum level because zeeks can allegedly manipulate quantum particles is little more than rank disinformation; hokum crafted to make you believe zeeks are going to destroy the universe. This is how the powers-that-be make you afraid, folks.

Sure, we know that the Higs-Bosun, Quarks, and Neutrons exist. But these arm-chair scientists use these terms to craft their fiction, hoping to scare the hell out of everyday bloopers like you and I into believing whatever they want us to believe. Now, #Smoke_and_Mirrors didn't come right out and say zeeks were going to destroy reality, but that's the impression people get when they are taught his Quantum Crackpot Theory.

In the past two years, I've lectured on zeeks and zeek culture all over the world. I've answered questions and talked with people afterwards, and the overwhelming majority of people actually believe these lies. Folks, the universe is not going to break apart just because a zeek moves a glass of water with his mind.

#Wolfson also missed the mark. Sure, he discussed omega wave activity (a combination of Theta and Gamma waves), which are measurable and extremely high in some places of the world. Whether omega waves are directly tied to zeeks is debatable, but to his credit, #Wolfson didn't speculate as to why omega waves exist, nor did he lead his audience to believe zeeks can destroy the planet.

The truth of the matter is, nobody definitively knows how zeeks can do the wild and crazy things we do. In the next section, I offer my own theory as to why we zeeks do what we do, but I must stress that it's just that: a theory.

Draw your own conclusions.

### Origins of My Species

There's an old Jewish saying; *"Ask two Jews for their opinion on a matter, and you'll get three answers."* That's how it is when you ask zeeks how our "powers" work. I hesitate to define our abilities as powers, however. The moniker gives rise to

comparisons to late 20th/early 21st century comic books and movies that were wildly popular before the advent of the Deep and HR entertainment, but I guess the term is adequate for this discussion. Though I want to clarify something. There is nothing mystical here. The same way your brain harnesses energy then spends it calculating the vast set of equations required to catch a thrown ball then moves your arm to catch it is the same process a zeek uses, just to throw the ball without use of the arm. So you catching a ball is as much a power as a zeek has, just with a different effect.

The simplest answer to the "how" question with regards to zeek abilities, is this: As cybertechnology — specifically that technology which interfaces with our brains — becomes more advanced, we are able to make use of the natural potential of our brains in ways we never thought possible; like moving things with our minds, and causing objects — and even people — to spontaneously combust. The myth that humans can only access 10% of our brains is just that — a myth. Quantum-level CAT scans, MRI's and other technologies clearly show that humans regularly access and use all parts of their brains. What I'm talking about is different.

## CYBERTECHNOLOGY AND THE MIND

Some of you may not know this but cybertechnology had its beginnings way back in ancient Greece, if only as a concept. In the 1800's, inventors even submitted blueprints and schematics for clockwork limbs, but the field of advanced prosthetics really took off in the late 20th century. At the dawn of the 21st century, if you were an amputee, you were given a fake replacement called a prosthetic. The prosthetic was largely cosmetic and only marginally functional in the sense that amputees regained very little of their previous mobility. For example, if you lost a leg, the prosthetic would support your weight and allow you to walk again, but participation in highly competitive sporting events with non-amputees was difficult at best.

I'm not talking about the men, women, and youth who competed in events such as the Special Olympics. There's a reason why we don't have the Special Olympics anymore, and that's largely due to cybertechnology and genetic research.

Now back to the topic at hand.

In the early part of this century, engineers started creating prosthetics that were leaps and bounds ahead of anything that had been produced in the previous two decades. Miniaturization and robotics technologies produced prosthetics able to replicate even the most delicate motor functions, like picking up a potato chip without crushing it, holding a glass of wine without dropping it, or even shaving one's face. What made this technology so amazing was the fact that — back then — prosthetics were non-invasive.

Prosthetics were attached to the stump of the limb or hand they replaced via straps. Once attached, the prosthetic interfaced with the stump on the most basic of levels through the use of touch technology, which responded to muscle memory and signals from the central nervous system, all of which are controlled by the brain. Basically, people simply thought about what they wanted to do and it happened just as if they had a real arm.

Brain scans of amputees with this technology showed a dramatic increase in brain activity, or Omega Waves, as Wolfson calls 'em. There were even instances where the subjects had flashes of insight most would define as precognition. Smoke screams about this, and his infodump talks about the 'unnatural' act of precognition…but we already know that quantum analysis of a small closed system can predict outcomes with 100% accuracy. We also know that the human brain is an advanced computer capable of solving physics equations faster than anything we can build. Those two things seem to point to explaining even precog's abilities.

In extremely rare cases (there are only 5 documented cases before 2036) subjects displayed unprecedented physical prowess. In one example, while going through a particularly violent episode of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, a double arm amputee punched two holes in a concrete wall as he tried to escape what he thought was a North Korean detention facility. Both of the prosthetics were destroyed in the act, but that doesn't change the results.

## THE ADVENT OF STRAP

After STRAP (Surgical Tendril Remote Access Processor) rolled out in 2036, instances of psychic phenomena increased in both regularity and strength. People like to talk about Hernando Vasquez as if he's this huge, mega powerful psion, but the truth is, he isn't. Vasquez is actually fairly low on the totem pole in terms of raw ability.

**Case in Point:** Project Waking Mind.

## PROJECT WAKING MIND

Back in 2038 (more commonly known as "The Good Year") there was this guy by the name of Ray Brown. As far as I can tell, the documentation regarding Ray's abilities, with the exception of the material I possess, has since been scrubbed from every public resource in the Deep, but I've seen the data, seen the footage of what this guy could do, and I'm telling you, Ray was a monster, both metaphorically and psychologically speaking.

Like Vasquez, Ray Brown could easily cause objects and even people to spontaneously combust. He could move anything from the size of a spoon to a 10 ton block of concrete. I saw video of what the man could do during his escape from the joint NSA (National Security Agency) and DHS (Deptartment of Homeland Security) training facility outside of Nome, Alaska, and let me tell you; it wasn't pretty. I won't go into the gory details, but suffice it to say very few people left the facility alive. After nearly two years of research, I've come across hard data about what was going on up there in Nome. The training facility was a cover for a super-secret program codenamed #Waking Mind.

According to the data, Project Waking Mind was another one of those super-soldier programs, like MKULTRA, or Joseph Stalin's attempts to create better laborers by combining the DNA of Apes and Humans, the KGB's programs involving psychics like Nina Kulagina, etc. Of course, it's well known that Adolf Hitler was trying to create a master race through myriad programs such as the Lebensborn; a social welfare program which was really an attempt to create a pure race through selective breeding. Hitler's mad scientists — specifically Otto Ranke — also created a drug called D-IX. D-IX was a cocktail

of Cocaine, Oxycodone and Pervitin, a highly addictive methamphetamine more commonly known as Crystal Meth. It's estimated that over 200 million of these pills were handed out to German soldiers from 1938 to 1945.

**#Brainscanningfool:** Yeah, Hitler was a bastard, but he's not the only one who did this sort of thing. Word is, the Mandarinate's creating super-psions using the same types of drugs.

**#ClosetHeretic:** They're doing more than that, Brain. The test subjects for the Mandarinate's psychic program are full-on cyborgs They say the only fleshy parts those abominations have are brains.

**#Magpie:** That's sick!

Project Waking Mind took individuals who had previously demonstrated psychic ability and attempted to improve their raw power. The group consisted of 50 participants. These individuals were fitted with a modified and dangerously invasive version of STRAP called the PSTRAP (Psychic Surgical Tendril Remote Access Processor), pumped with mind-altering and memory enhancing drugs like LSD and Ginkgo BalobaVI (A synthetic drug also known as GB4), and then sent into virtual reality to play in online combat simulators more commonly known as MMORPGS. The project consisted of three stages, and lasted ten years.

## STAGE ONE

In stage one; the scientists bombarded the subjects' senses with virtual reality, making them play fantasy characters able to do incredible — albeit imaginary — feats of magic. After playing these games, the subjects were brought back to reality and told to try and duplicate their characters' abilities. After three weeks, some of the test subjects were able to reproduce a variety of effects, including pyrokinesis, telekinetic ability, etc. In some cases — such as with Ray Brown — the subjects displayed the ability to cause massive damage to bone, muscle tissue and internal organs of laboratory animals.

Of the 50 participants, only 17 made it to stage two. Not much is known about the fates of the 33 individuals who washed out. Some speculate they were killed while others speculate they were sent back to their lives, but nobody knows for sure. I've managed to find the families of two of the participants, but if they know anything, they aren't talking.

**#Mortis:** Look into project #Methuselah. You might find some of the answers you're looking for.

## STAGE TWO

The longest phase of the program, Stage Two, saw major upgrades to the PSTRAP along with a rigid training regimen devoted to increase the subject's control of their abilities, as well as their aptitude. The administrators observed a substantial increase in dopamine throughout the neural pathways of the brain, especially in the Nucleus Accumbens, the Frontal Cortex, and a few other areas of the brain. Yeah, I know, this is pretty technical stuff. Basically, their brains kicked into overdrive, and this produced some interesting and sometimes vicious side effects. Some of the subjects became violently ill, while others experienced short bursts of euphoria immediately followed by long bouts of fatigue, especially when they failed to trigger their abilities.

A couple of subjects experienced heightened resistance to disease and faster healing. Perhaps the most disturbing of all the data were logs referring to instances where a handful of individuals suffered complete psychotic breaks and went on rampages through the facility until they were put down. By the time Stage Two came to a close, only 8 people remained.

### STAGE THREE

By the time Stage Three started, the remaining individuals demonstrated consistent command of their abilities, and an order from someone known only as Sage directed the trainers to begin prepping the subjects for field operations. Now this is where everything appears to fall apart, folks. It's not clear how long this phase of the training lasted, but at some point the administrators began to fear the trainees; especially Ray Brown.

One administrator wrote copious entries on Ray, claiming the man had begun to withdraw from the rest of the team. On numerous occasions, staff psychologists observed Ray exhibiting symptoms of Bipolar Disorder. Additionally, many of the staff reported fitful sleep and disturbing dreams about the man. It was almost as if he was invading their mind. Finally, Ray was restrained for a particularly violent outburst that put a security guard in a coma. Protocol dictated only one response for such outbursts, but apparently Sage countermanded the kill order and directed the staff to release Brown and send him back to the facility.

That night, Ray Brown broke out.

### AFTERMATH

After-incident reports claim the rest of the psions died at the facility. Some of the (non-test subjects) survivors I've talked with deny it, claiming Ray was just the scapegoat; all of the test subjects were responsible for the destruction and death of that night. Some have even said that a number of the PSTRAP's and some of the psychotropic drugs turned up missing, but I haven't been able to independently verify their stories.

## SUMMATION

So, what's the point of this little story? As I stated before, there are some truly formidable zeeks running around in the world, boys and girls. More importantly, neural implants like the PSTRAP clearly stimulate these abilities — and that technology is over fifty years old! STRAP was never as invasive as the Tendril Access Processor. Now, wrap your brain around this. Since the release of the TAP, the number of confirmed, documented psychics has skyrocketed to such an extent that the United Nations has officially recognized them as a minority ethnic group. Is it just a coincidence? Perhaps.

But I don't believe in coincidence.

## THE WORLD ACCORDING TO ZEEKS

Have you ever kept a secret from someone because you weren't sure how they'd react if you told them? Have you ever felt frustrated because some talking head on a MediaProg was spouting nonsense about a subject you're thoroughly familiar with? If so, then you might have some understanding of what it's like to be a zeek. This section's for those of you who want to know the truth about what it's like for us out there in this crazy world.

## MISCONCEPTIONS

There's a ton of crap about psions floating around there, and probably the best way for me to illustrate this is to tell you what happened to me.

## MY STORY

My mom used to tell me, "A little bit of ignorance spreads a lot of hate." I don't think I really understood her until the first of my abilities manifested in Denver when I was 16. We'd made a pit stop in our mega block's "EAT OR DIE!" convenience store to grab some frozen burritos and a couple of "Turbo Splash!" Sodas when my mom slipped on a wet spot on the floor. Time seemed to slow down. I remember seeing the drinks fly out of her hand as she reached out for something to break her fall. I couldn't tell you exactly what I did or even how I did it. I just remember a surge of adrenaline shooting through my heart as I reached out to help her. The next thing I know, the drinks were hovering in midair — and so was my mom.

I'd like to say I saved the day and got a free NUTRIbar or something, but the truth is the experience freaked me out, and I lost control. A few seconds later, the ability faded and everything — including my mom — came crashing to the floor, creating a big mess. What's worse, a security feed caught the whole thing in High definition 3-D mapping cameras. But we wouldn't find that out until later.

There were others in the store who saw it. They were just as confused and scared as mom and I were, but some customers were angry, shouting obscenities, and telling us to get out of the store, which we did. By the time we got to the cube we called home, the word had spread throughout the mega block. The footage of the incident was going viral throughout the block's cloud, and by morning I found my mug plastered throughout the Deep. I didn't think much about all the publicity at first — mom kept me from watching most of it. But when I went to our block's learning center (what a joke) I quickly found I had become the center of attention… and not in a good way.

Just like the day before, people were calling me names. Others started walking in the other direction when they saw me. Some kids even tried to pick fights. I was used to that sort of thing though. There are no pacifists in learning facilities. You either fight, or get beaten into submission. When I got to my locker, I found that someone hyper-tagged it with the phrase "Thou shall not suffer a witch to live."

The tag came complete with screams, smoke and a sick smell that made me want to vomit as I watched myself being burned alive, tied to a stake.

That was when I got scared. I don't even know how I did what I did, but it's not like I was trying to kill anyone. The entire incident lasted less than 10 seconds, and yet people were acting as if I'd gone on some kind of mad rampage through the store. I was just trying to help my mom, but these people didn't see it that way.

Mom's employers found out about it and terminated her contract with the corp. We ended up getting kicked out of the mega block, and had to squat in parts of Denver I never even knew existed, like the Cherry Creek Path of Tears, and do things to survive that I won't share with you. It was a long time before things became relatively stable — for a little while, at least. But as with everything, there were consequences.

We decided to leave the North American Coalition. Mom applied for citizenship in a number of nations, most of whom

rejected our applications because of my "infamy." Ironically, I had been placed on a watch list by the NAC government. It seems they didn't want me and others like me, but neither would they let us leave.

That's another misconception about government, especially the North American Coalition. Governments across the world like to shout down zeeks in the media to appease the masses and institute programs to monitor our activities, but the truth is, they want to use us. About six months after we were kicked out of the mega block, a couple of suits tracked us down and tried to get me to come to one of their indoctrination centers. When I told them no, they got violent.

Before I knew it, I'd flung them against the wall so hard their skulls cracked. That's when we realized we had to get the hell out of Denver — by any means necessary — before more suits came after us. Lucky for us (or perhaps not-so-lucky, as you'll see later), there are underground organizations out there willing to help people get out of countries who won't let them leave…for a price. Of course I'm talking about the #Zeek Railroad.

This is something else people seem to misunderstand. Terms like "zeek railroad" have a high-minded connotation. That's because back in the years before the first Civil War, the underground railroad was a way for slaves to escape to freedom. So, when people hear about the #Zeek Railroad they think it's the same thing.

Hell, there are even MediaProgs about the subject that reinforce this idealized fantasy. They feed people with this notion that the railroad is some righteous activist network trying to help psions and other undesirables escape dangerous situations for purely altruistic purposes. The truth is it's a shadow business, promising hope but delivering misery.

Most people might be surprised to find out that if you can't pay the fee — and few can — you have to work it off. That's right, ami; I'm talking about slavery. The railroad is nothing more than a human trafficking network. Sure, they get you where you want to go — in our case that was Chicago — but if you're not flush with cred, they'll work you until they have no more use for you, and they can find uses till the day you die. That's what happened to my mom.

Now here's another, somewhat related, misconception. Most sprawlers think slavery always means women get pimped out as hookers, or dancers in some shady night club. I love my mother, but she was never society's picture of a beautiful woman. She was, however, very smart, and the bastards who got her killed knew it. They had my mother (and others) hacking corporate networks to divert funds into personal accounts or steal secrets for the infobrokers to sell on the streets. Those sick, greedy fucks made my mother hack a network way above her pay grade, and she got brain-fried for it.

As for me? The moment we got to Chicago, they hooked me up with someone who trained me to control my abilities and taught me some new tricks, like peeking into people's brains. Of course, they didn't do this out of the kindness of their hearts. Like my mom, I was expected to work off my debt. They had me working the streets, mind-raping people for any kind of information that might get them some credits. I was feeding the sharks addresses, dirty secrets, you name it. If I could scan a surface thought, I'd pass it on to someone who would use it to blackmail or scam the mark. I hated it, but I thought that eventually we'd work our way clear of the debt and finally be free. When mom died, I realized that sooner or later I'd end up like her. So I got the hell out of there as fast as I could.

Obviously, that's a lot to digest. I'm certainly not asking for any sympathy. The only reason I shared so much of my life with you is because, by sharing, I hope to give you some insight into what life is like for many psions living in the world today. We're not all bad. Sure, I did some things back then I'm not proud of, abused these abilities, but I was naïve, just like some of you people out there. Nothing in this world is as it seems.

## RELIGION AND ZEEKS

As I mentioned at the beginning on this file, fundamentalist sects in every one of the major monotheistic religions of the world see us as abominations.

Now, re-read that statement.

Notice I said fundamentalist sects, not the average believer.

Truth be told, when it comes to religion (and this is manifest in all major religions including Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism), there are more sympathizers to our plight than there are zealots who want to see us caged, or worse. The problem is, you hardly ever hear about the good ones. All-too-often, the most vocal representatives of any given belief system are the most radical.

As a side note, when it comes to choosing whether or not to cover what I consider thinly veiled hate speech or messages of tolerance, the media machine will always default to hate speech. It's what people want to see, or at least, that's what the media claim people want to see. I disagree, but I'll get into that later.

In nations like the North American Coalition, parts of the Great Lakes Union, China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Russia and Brasilia, it's a sad fact that there are bigots in positions of power. This is why you're seeing new, draconic legislation concerning zeeks introduced in the North American Coalition congress, and the concurrent creation of organizations like Psi-Division devoted to tracking us down. Something's coming, folks, and it ain't good.

> **#BillyBlackEyes:** Truth! If you're a zeek, you should get the hell out of the NAC. Things are only going to get worse.
>
> **#Mortis:** @Billy: Sounds like you have some information. Care to share?
>
> **#BillyBlackEyes:** I'm still doing the legwoirk. I don't want to post anything definitive until I've done my due diligence.

As I hinted at in my own experiences in Denver, there is a lot of fear mongering and disinformation spreading through that nation. But there are also very kind people of faith living in the North American Coalition. I can't tell you how many times professing Christians offered to help us with food, credits, clothing, and shelter; and this is after realizing who and what I was, which brings me to the next thing I want to clear up.

We look just like you.

## HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

I think this is probably the subject which scares people the most — the fact that, unless you see us do something obviously out-of-the ordinary with our abilities, you'll never know we are psions. Remember, I mentioned using my ability to read people's minds nearly every day I spent serving those bastards who got my mom killed. Not one time did I ever openly reveal I was psychic. My marks went on with their lives blissfully ignorant of what I did to them.

Now, as disconcerting as what I just said is, I challenge you to look at it from a different angle. Since we can look like you, we can be anywhere without you realizing it. How many of you have actually seen or even felt a zeek using his or her abilities? I'd hazard a guess that perhaps 1 in 30,000 people have witnessed such events. At the risk of sounding contrary, I should note that there are people who just don't give a damn whether you know they're zeeks or not.

You'll find more open zeeks working in metaphysical types of jobs such as street readers, plying their trade to tell people their fortunes, while others find work in a variety or respectable professions. You'll find the occasional zeek doing odd construction jobs, enhancing their physical prowess to lift heavy objects, and even lift steel girders with their minds. But as I mentioned above, most of us prefer to keep a low profile.

We take all kinds of jobs. Some of the more popular jobs are sales, where readers and empaths can use their abilities to help people make decisions about a purchase, transportation, where clairvoyants can anticipate traffic jams and avoid them. Given the right ability and the aptitude, we can apply our powers to our jobs to excel.

## ZEEK CULTURE

The title for this section is something of a misnomer, as Zeeks don't have any "culture" to speak of. We're just like you. We like the same things you like, hate the same things you hate (unless you hate us, of course), eat, drink, bleed…Ok, I'm starting to wax Shakespearian here, but I think you get the point.

Our culture is largely based on our ethnic background, where we live, and the kinds of things we're interested in. Sound familiar? We come from all walks of life. I've seen hybrids with our abilities, Human 2.0s who are psions — even some Sims have manifested psionic powers, though they are rare. I've never seen an android with psionic abilities, and I don't expect to. We use technology. Many of us have a variety of cybernetics installed in our bodies. We ghost in the Deep, and some of us even know how to hack it. In fact, every single zeek I've ever met has a Tendril Access Processor. There could very well be unplugged zeeks too, but if there are any, I haven't met them.

One thing worth mentioning is that in my experience, I've never been able to use my abilities in The Deep, which is a little ironic. As I discussed at the beginning of this DATfile, it's my belief that the TAP actually stimulates our ability to do the things we do. Yet whenever I try to read another avatar's thoughts, I get nothing. I can't even lift a digital table with my thoughts. Now, there might be those of your out there who have had different experiences, and if you're reading this, I'd love to pick your brains. Hmm, that might be a bad figure of speech.

## ZEEKS IN THE MEDIA

As I mentioned above, there are those of us who like to flaunt our abilities. You know the people I'm talking about; professional fortune tellers, telepaths, empaths, and mediums; some of whom have their own media channels. They can be seen plying their trades in just about every city on the planet. As Wolfson discussed in Zeeks: Psionics in 2088, Bollywood makes extensive use of psions in movies.

Of all zeeks, these are the men and women I have the biggest issue with. It's not that they're trying to make a living using their abilities; everyone needs to eat. But, whether they understand it or not, these people are helping to reinforce many negative stereotypes associated with psions. People see these "TV" psions using their powers in wild and crazy ways that just aren't accurate.

Zeeks don't shoot red beams of energy from their fingertips, or send fireballs crashing into trucks. We don't live in a virtual reality fantasy world filled with goblins and dragons, folks. Zeeks generally don't wear robes and pointy hats, or colorful spandex suits with capes and masks. At least, no more of our population does than can be found in the normie population. No accounting for taste. Our powers are subtle. Sure, telekinesis is an obvious manifestation, so there are some exceptions. And yeah, I know, the video of Madrid showed Fernando Vasquez shooting fire from his hands, but — and this is the truth — that footage was doctored, if not fabricated entirely.

No pyrokinetic I've ever seen can replicate what Vasquez allegedly did in that embassy. That's not to say that there aren't powerful zeeks. I've already shown that. However, the zeeks I've seen who are pyrokinetic cause objects to burst into flames by agitating the molecules of an object until it spontaneously combusts. They use friction, not fiction hero powers. Even Ray Brown, with all of his terrifying power, couldn't do the things you see on Bollywood shows like *Agent X* and *Night Phantoms*.

But that's what people believe.

Bollywood's production studios make heavy use of CGI, HRGI, and AIGI effects to sell their shows. It's about ratings, not reality. Here's another thing about Bollywood. Have you ever noticed that the overwhelming majority of zeeks in those shows are portrayed as villains? There's a reason for that, folks. Look back at entertainment in any war time. The 'bad guys' are always the nationality or type that the producing country is at war with. Remember the war on drugs version 2? All those shows like Puerto Rico Vice and Hybrid Cops; K-9 bust units. Yeah.

## THE ART OF THE SPIN

It's a fact that many governments use the media to control the information sprawlers are exposed to. Everything from foreign and domestic news to stock reports and crime stats are spun to manufacture truth. Take the economic crisis in the Eurasian Union, for example. We're being told that Charon is just a virus with a localized effect; that it hasn't had any real impact in North American and South American nations yet.

If that's the case, why are living costs in North American cities like Denver, Chicago, Dallas, and St. Louis skyrocketing? Why has there been a staggering 30% drop in employment in the NAC over the past two years, especially in the corporate sectors? Why are banks in Atlantica, the North American Coalition, and the Great Lakes Union folding? Why has Stopwatch been making more and more raids on suspected E-terrorist safe houses and megacorporations across the continent? There's more to these operations than meets the eye, kiddies.

Similarly, we're seeing a disinformation campaign being waged against psions. Not only do the powers that be have major news outlets and talk shows taking an overwhelmingly negative view of zeeks, but they also have global and inter-solar entertainment networks and movie studios under their thumbs. In case you were wondering, keeping these people under control is simpler than it seems.

If you work in a domestic news outlet, you either play ball, or you get replaced by someone who will. If you're a foreign movie studio or entertainment network, the governments of the countries or colonies where you want to sell your MEDIAfiles and related swag ban your material until the content conforms to what they want their populace to see.

Put simply: Producers either make the content governments want them to make, or sell the MEDIAfiles elsewhere. The prospect of losing millions and perhaps BILLIONS of potential customers is enough to get them on board with the program really fast. But this sort of thing isn't new. You can see evidence of this kind of misinformation as far back as the first and second world wars. This time, though, it's not Jews, homosexuals, communists, and other undesirables they're trying to demonize; it's zeeks, hybrids, and simulacra. It's largely because of this hard-core propaganda, that zeeks have begun creating their own enclaves.

The enemy you can't see has always been one of the easiest for governments and corps to sell. It is an enemy you can't ever beat, and the merchandising and marketing can generate revenues for decades. The war on zeeks is doing the same thing. Hate groups have popped up everywhere, bringing lobby money to governments and franchising opportunities to the corps.

## XENOPHOBIC MOVEMENTS

I know some of you are reading this and wondering why I have to keep bringing up the "war" terminology. "Really, #xraygun? If you want to change public perception of zeeks, can't you take more peaceful stance? Talking about fighting is just going to escalate the confrontation, isn't it? Make it a self-fulfilling prophesy?"

Look, ami, I'm all for desiring peace as an ideal, but that concept crumbles in the face of reality. If you were in the military (and maybe you are part of one militia or another), would it make sense to look at all the other forces amassing against you and say, "Maybe if we toss our weapons aside and try to give them all a big, lovey hug, things will work out"?

No. Not a single one of you would, and those who claim they would are either suicidal, liars, or just too stupid to live.

When an individual or group makes it clear their entire purpose for existing is to wipe you and anyone like you out of existence, you do whatever it takes to survive. In this case, one of the primary gathering pre-war Intel. As Sun Tzu, the famous strategy genius, once said, *"Know thy enemy."* When I mention enemies, I'm not talking about nebulous mobs that come together out of random events, or some anonymous suit smoking cigars in his corp office. Specific, public groups are out there arming themselves right now, getting organized, recruiting believers just to see zeeks wiped off the planet once and for all. They hate us that much. And they've turned that hate, that xenophobia into a social disease that infects and informs all they do. It's rather sad, if you think about it, to dedicate your life to an irrational fear.

But you can likely think of several such groups off the top of your head, as I can:

### LUCIDITI

For practically the whole of current media to present such a united front against zeeks, someone has to be sitting at the top of the heap. The head of a massive octopus that squirms its various tentacles into every MediaProg until the whole system sits within its grip. I'd offer up LUCIDITI as the octopus king of misinformation, as it were. They're the majordomo puppeteer of global zeek perception, pulling all strings necessary to make sure their chosen message is the dominant one. I talked about some of their techniques earlier, how they bully and bribe and spread propaganda like manure on the fertile field of your mind. Those tactics are never going to grow old for them.

But they're owned by Cerus Media, you might say. They're under the corporate thumb like everyone else. How are they able to do what you're claiming they can? Check again, ami. LUCIDITI isn't owned by Cerus like most people think. If you dig deep enough into the maze of legal fine print, you'll realize it's a partner media corporation. Hand-in-hand. While they may look like an independent org on the surface, the fact is they have access to contacts in every major MediaWeb pipe. It's also a bit more evident if you take the time to analyze content and broadcast patterns. Nine times out of ten, LUCIDITI is the first to leak a supposedly confidential government or lab report to other channels, or get footage of out-of-control zeeks going viral on the Deep. They're the pack leader, and the only time they aren't associated with the latest swath of anti-zeek propaganda is when they don't want you to know it came from them. I guarantee it.

### THE HUMANAUTS

To the Humanauts, all the world's a lab and zeeks are the grime and dust spoiling their pure, sanitary environment. Their basic philosophy is that psychic manifestations are not actually any sort of evolution of human nature, but a corruption of it. In other words, a zeek mind is a broken mind that needs fixing or, preferably, elimination. We're errors in the genetic code of life or, worse yet, viruses that disrupt the system as it was intended to be. And the longer we're allowed to exist, the more our nasty, corroded genes are going to get spread through the populace and ruin all that lovely human potential. We're a cancer of the mind, and the only way to treat cancer is to cure or surgically remove it before it infects and devours the healthy flesh. Their reps have all sorts of colorful scientific analogies that they enjoy applying to us.

They're often the ones behind the latest "scientific" discovery or report that shows how zeek abilities are causing sterility in the general population, causing people to develop fatal diseases, or other such nonsense. Their scientists are the ones brought in as media consultants by LUCIDITI, giving their colorful and entirely inaccurate interpretations of how zeek abilities should appear in shows and movies. And they're the ones searching for a cure for psionic abilities, a way to isolate and switch off the zeek gene, or keep us from reproducing. I've been unable to confirm the rumors of their heading up a program with the intent of developing an injection or even an airborne virus that targets zeeks alone…but it wouldn't surprise me.

## PILLARS OF SALT

I can't get over how much religious groups can be ignorant of their own holy texts. This militant sect derives their name from the Bible story about Sodom and Gomorrah, and they love to talk about how salt is an agent of purification and how God brought fiery wrath on this sinful set of towns. Thing is, in its true context, the actual pillar of salt came about from one of God's own people disobeying one of his direct orders and being punished for it. The mental dissonance boggles me. But you think they're going to change their minds if I try to argue that while they're tying me to the stake? To these Pillars, zeeks are sin incarnate. We are a fatal flaw within reality that is keeping God's Kingdom from entering this world.

Hey, none of us ever asked to be considered that big of a deal. Leave us out of it.

There are lots of names for zeeks in the Pillars' handbook — witches, sorcerers, demons, abominations, etc. And they love taking their techniques for dealing with us straight out of their scriptures, everything from burning at the stake to crucifixion to pounding spikes through skulls (look it up). If someone is even suspected of being a zeek and falls into their hands, they're basically a lost cause. Since we look just like you (remember?), the only way to determine if someone is a zeek is either a display of powers or a personal confession. Ever since the Salem Witch Trials, the church has been good at torturing confessions out of those later proven entirely innocent. And think about this…if a God exists and he didn't want humans to have this sort of ability, why'd he make our brains capable of them? Why not just design us so we couldn't ever achieve this sort of thing in the first place? Did their God mess up somehow? Take the human race out of the oven a bit too underbaked?

These groups represent just a tiny sampling of the many out there, growing larger every day. Looks a bit cloudy on the horizon for zeeks, doesn't it, ami? Fortunately, not even I, jaded as I may be, am entirely hopeless — and for good reason. When one side tries to tip the scales until they topple, there will be those who fight to restore the balance. When sickening intolerance begins to be the norm, there will be those who will die for truth and freedom.

## ACTIVIST MOVEMENTS

See, it's not enough to just "know they enemy." In fact, that quote is a butchered version of the full one Sun Tzu originated, which translates closer to:

> *"if you know your enemies and know yourself, you will not be imperiled in a hundred battles; if you do not know your enemies but do know yourself, you will win one and lose one; if you do not know your enemies nor yourself, you will be imperiled in every single battle."*

It's all about having the full lay of the land. Comprehensive intelligence, ami. What resources do you possess? What are your strengths and weaknesses compared to theirs? And as equally important as knowing the foe is knowing…who is on your side? Zeek activists — both actual zeeks fighting for our rights and non-zeeks who are devoted to our cause as well — exist in growing numbers, a fact that keeps a tiny flicker of hope lit in my heart. I wrote earlier about how members of even outspoken religious groups aided me as I grew up, even when they knew about my zeek abilities. Some people aren't content with just handing out food, clothing, or providing temporary shelter. There exist those who make it personal. They make it a cause they want to see realized within their lifetimes.

At the same time, some such activist groups are wolves in sheep's clothing, such as the underground slavery organization that calls itself the Zeek Railroad. So let's examine a few others that I'll personally vouch for as being legitimate if you ever decide to join a cause worth fighting for:

### THIRD EYE OPEN

Counter to LUCIDITI, the fine folks at Third Eye Open studios are the ones who are provide actual objective zeek news, both the good and bad. They don't always get it perfectly right, but I'd rather tune in to their MediaProgs and #INFOdumps over the drivel the sheep of this world lap up every day. Of course, LUCIDITI and the other media minions caught up in its tentacles love to cast TEO as being crackpots, mindless zeek mouthpieces, or absolute morons who simply don't know what they're talking about. It's the constant counter-counter-counter-and counter-intelligence that makes your head spin when trying to sort out the truth. TEO doesn't have nearly anything like LUCIDITI's resources and reach, but they're doing their best, and their newscasts are starting to catch more eyes and ears than ever. If you missed their one expose on the Madrid conspiracy, check the archives. It's worth a watch and will have you questioning mainstream newscasts more than ever.

### OMNES INSTITUTE

Composed of zeek and non-zeek legal representatives alike, Omnes Institute is the major forerunner of zeek legal activisim. Omnes lawyers fight for zeeks in courts, often on a pro bono basis, and has representatives in most major countries and cities in order to have a better handle on legal matters affecting zeeks across a variety of borders. Since zeeks aren't limited to any one geographic boundary, we fall under just as many jurisdictions. If a direct branch of the Omnes Institute isn't established in an area, they provide a directory of local law firms and attorneys who are pro-zeek. Omnes Institute is also petitioning numerous governments to have a wider variety of pro-zeek laws and statutes put in place, alongside attempting to overturn unfortunate standards that currently exist, such as NAC's hideously anti-zeek regulations and procedures. Thanks to Omnes Institute, zeek law is becoming one of the hottest new trends for law students looking to specialize in cutting-edge legal trends and make a reputation for themselves.

### STEPPING STONES

This social group caters to newly manifested zeeks and has an incredibly efficient and successful system in place to help them adjust to their new skills. Not only do they provide basic ability training and counseling (since manifesting can often happen through traumatic circumstances…or cause them), but Stepping Stones also helps zeeks decide what level of public exposure they wish to live with, and facilitate possible cultural reintegration. Alongside neighborhood education efforts, zeek sponsorship, and protests against anti-zeek corps, Stepping Stones will also help families of zeeks understand that their loved one hasn't turned into a monster or anything — if they're open-minded enough to listen, that is. If zeeks need to get away from an increasingly hostile environment, Stepping Stones helps with transport, sets them up with a fresh identity, legit job, and a fall-back plan, all without expecting anything in return (unlike the Zeek Railroad).

### THE ART OF SELF-DEFENSE FOR PSIONICS

LUCIDITI and its minions love to point at ASP as a prime example of the dangers we zeeks pose, calling it a military camp, psychic army training ground, and other more malicious descriptions designed to give the common man nightmares. You've seen the manufactured photos, with zeeks marching in lockstep, wearing tight uniforms, eyes glowing red with barely restrained destructive power. Yes, in the interest of transparency, I'll sadly admit places do exist that aim to weaponize zeeks — though half the time, these are established and run by the very governments who decry our existence.

But ASP is nothing like that. Instead, it limits all training to purely defensive measures, helping zeeks learn how to use their abilities in order to protect themselves. This is a dangerous world for zeeks, as even the blindest person could see. Zeeks come under fire all the time, whether from gangs, anti-zeek groups, or otherwise. Wouldn't it be preferable if that zeek knew how to neutralize such violence in the most peaceful way possible and simply walk away, without appearing on the next news batch of "zeek attacks?"

And that's just skimming the cream off the milk, ami. The zeek civil rights movement is gaining momentum every day. It may not have as much influence or public approval as the naysayers, but that's because the anti-zeek movement has been entrenched longer. We're gaining on them, spreading the truth, linking up with more arms and forming an alliance to be reckoned with.

Our enemies know this too, and they're afraid that their cultural brainwashing will eventually be overturned, and they'll be the ones called crackpots and dangerous to society. That's why it may eventually come down to a brutal and decisive confrontation between both sides to settle the matter. For those who are looking for middle ground in the meantime, there are places where zeeks can coexist relatively peacefully with baseline humans. I know earlier I said peace was

an unrealistic ideal, but these havens are trying their best to make it a workable reality.

## ZEEK HAVENS

Where can you go if you just want to punch in and punch out and not have to worry about being the victim of a hate crime on your way home? Places do exist where people simply don't care whether you're a zeek or not. They don't celebrate it and they don't condemn it, and that perspective is actually one I prefer to encounter. Live and let live, neh?

### UNION OF PEACE, LOVE, AND UNDERSTANDING

A mouthful of a name, but it sums up their philosophy well enough. Based in Frisco's ruins, they do accept pretty much anyone into their fold, but only so long as you agree to abide by their lifestyle and doctrines. And considering the volatile nature of the region, while they're all about peace, they're also about violently enforcing said peace whenever necessary. So if you're going to buddy up with them, you're going to have to accept both sides of the situation. Plus the chanting. Get used to lots of chanting and singing circles.

### ROXBURY

Boston neighborhood that used to be a regular hive of criminal activity. It's been cleaned up a good bit, and now likes to claim it's where anything and everything goes, especially when it thumbs its nose at mainstream culture. Sims, hybrids, and zeeks alike are all welcome here, along with plenty of other minorities. Recognize, though, that this doesn't mean the place is any sort of pacifistic Eden. With so many different mindsets and backgrounds trying to make room for one another, friction is inevitable. It's a decent place for a zeek to make their way in the world, but just don't let your guard down too much, capisce?

### AUSTRALIA

Out of sight, out of mind, right? Australia is plenty big enough for numerous zeek havens to have been established, both near larger cities and in the outback, far enough from the global eye to avoid most attention. Since the country remains a particular hotbed for illegal activities such as smuggling, and holds a major rover population, the people there tend to be widely accepting of all types. Doesn't mean you won't run into conflict or have to scrounge to survive, but at least you'll have plenty of options for how you make your way without immediately being labeled as a freak for your mental aptitudes.

Experiencing a measure of peace and solidarity with the rest of the human race doesn't always mean having to limit yourself to a specific region, city, or hood, though. Sometimes a measure of solace and a sense of purpose can be found in the corporate world, believe it or not. So long as you're willing to accept the dress code, you'll fit right in as a productive little worker bee. In fact, it might even make you quite a bit more valuable to the bottom line and get you a salary hefty enough to secure your own penthouse pad if you work the system well enough.

### FRANCE

The rise of the New Pirate Party and the election of Angéle Bonheur — a known psion — as president has brought some hope to zeeks living in the Eurasian Union. France isn't stable, however, and there are groups who hold to ancient prejudices against anyone who isn't human. That said, recent passage of anti-hate legislation has provided a legal framework psions need to seek justice for hate crimes.

### SEATTLE

Historically a progressive city, the people of Seattle have always maintained an attitude of tolerance toward those who might be considered different, and zeeks are no different in this regard.

## ZEEKS IN THE WORKPLACE

All right. Corps. Their attitudes and policies regarding zeeks are as diverse as the nature of the companies themselves. Some do everything possible to keep their zeek staff on the down low, while others practically wear us as badges of honor — or just to piss off their non-zeek competitors. Even those corps with anti-zeek policies may still have a few on their payroll, either because they recognize the need to keep a competitive edge, or one slipped through their hiring filters. If you want to break it down, most corps see employees merely as tools in the end — zeeks are just a fancier sort of tool, but it's still just about what gets the job done.

Many military and science megacorporations are willing to hire or recruit zeeks in a variety of functions, since they tend to be a bit more forward-thinking than the rest, or willing to do whatever it takes to remain the top dawg. Recall my being used to skim secrets and blackmail material from unsuspecting minds as a teen? Zeeks are, unfortunately, natural fits for jobs that involve such skullduggery; and what corp wouldn't want to take advantage of juicy secrets that could land them the industrial contract or double profits? By taking part in industrial espionage, black ops, or other subversive operations, these zeeks are simply furthering the negative public image, just like those blowhards on the MediaWeb who like to show off their abilities to adoring audiences. If those activities are then exposed because of counter-espionage or corp bungling, it only adds fuel to the fire for LUCIDITI to fan. You can bet they're always sniffing around corp news and developments for the "reek of zeek" as they like to call it.

Anyways, on to the bill-payers themselves. Just recognize that working for a zeek-friendly corp may get you assigned to communities that, in themselves, won't exactly be pleased to see you.

### CHIMERA

The world's leading biotech corp, CHIMERA has absolutely no qualms about having zeeks working in all levels of their infrastructure. They're pretty public about it too, because, hey, who's going to defy them? If anyone kicks up a stink about zeek workers or even kidnaps one to hold for ransom, CHIMERA is ruthless in tracking down and squashing such attempts. You may even start to feel like an over-protected child, with parents who impose strict curfews and don't let you date until you're thirty. But sometimes that's the price you have to pay.

### GALAXY ENTERTAINMENT

Ever go to a concert where the pyrotechnics show was a tad bit too amazing? Where you wondered how Hyper Reality could engage the senses so powerfully? Likelihood is the band

was sponsored or produced by Galaxy Entertainment. This media maestro corp loves to use zeeks to give their shows an extra edge their competitors can't quite ever match. Of course, this leads to LUCIDITI often accusing Galaxy Entertainment of seeding their broadcasts with subliminal zeek messaging to control an unaware audience. Don't forget that zeek abilities don't operate in the Deep, though.

### THIRD LIFE INNOVATIONS

This gene-splicing megacorp is another example of those who like to throw things like caution or ethics to the wind. They don't care if you're Human 2.0, hybrid, zeek, or simulacra. If you're smart enough to be on one of their research teams, they'll take you in like family. Best part is, because of their controversial work and employees often coming under attack from anti-splicing factions, TLI usually builds arcologies near any major center of operations. Staff can live there in relatively safety and as much seclusion as they prefer.

### NORTEC

Of a similar perspective as CHIMERA, Nortec likes to frame itself as a corporation full of scientific visionaries, striving to build a better world. Especially since sims have been shown to manifest zeek abilities, Nortec has gone to greater lengths to identify itself as pro-zeek, even going out of their way to donate funds to several of the activist groups I mentioned earlier. One primary way they use zeeks is to scan the minds of newly vat-born sims to make sure everything's aligned in the brainwave department before selling off the new "product." Now that I think about it, Nortec is actually a Ravenlocke holding…and speaking of Ravenlocke…

### RAVENLOCKE SECURITY

This military-focused corp has major bases throughout the world, offering highly trained guards and specialized weaponry to anyone with the credits to hire them. When you're a corp this big, trying to conquer such a wide variety of industries, you can't really be picky about who you hire. Plus, zeeks can easily be trained to use their skills offensively, as well as hold interrogator roles for "fact-finding" missions. Ravenlocke is usually the corp singled out as supposedly running zeek black ops teams, since many of their squads tend to survive against seemingly impossible odds.

### GOLDEN PROMISE, INC.

They'll do anything to dominate the heavy tech industries, such as android and military development. This includes bringing zeeks onto the team. However, be sure you know what you're getting into before signing your life over to this corp. They're just as ruthless with internal staff as they are with external competition. They tend to be one of the more insular corps, viciously guarding their policies and procedures, so your identity as a zeek will likely remain a corporate secret.

I contacted all of these corps in order to get a more detailed statement on their zeek policies beyond what's posted on their company profiles. However, the AIs handling their communication lines did little more than repeat their official public stances word-for-word. I guess I shouldn't have expected much more, but it was worth a shot, right?

## SUMMARY

Whew. That's it for now, omae. I've spent countless hours compiling all the data to put this document together, and my brain is fried (not literally). It's up to you now. What're you going to do with all this? I know some of you will read this out of mild amusement or curiosity. Some of you will print this data dump out onto actual paper just to set it on fire. But some of you will read what I've written and start to see the world in a new way — at least, that's my hope. I'm not saying you have to become a zeek activist or anything of the sort. I'd just love to see a greater measure of tolerance to return to the world.

In the end, what resides in your mind — your ideals, your passions, your beliefs — should remain just that. Yours. Take a good look at what you think you know about zeeks right now. How did those perceptions or beliefs get there? Did you come up with them by yourself, based on independent observation and careful consideration of a wide variety of opinions and facts? Or did you let someone else shove them in there and dictate how you live? If the latter, then no matter how righteous or logical you think your motivations and actions are, you're allowing yourself to be enslaved by another's worldview. And when that happens to any of us, we lose the humanity we all deserve to be valued for.

## Religion and other "Isms"

#INFODUMP.RELIGIOSITY.NET

POSTED BY: #THETRUSAVIOR

**#HutchinsisanAI:** They say there are many paths and many maps. Problem is, ami, even with dubbing, you don't get near enough time to wander them all. Every religion out there is trying to convince you it's "the one" while fending off every other ism that wants a piece of your pie. Sure, you could go atheist and pretend it doesn't matter to you; but that won't stop you from having to deal with all the religions that claim heaven, earth, and hell as their own. Some of them want to use you. Some of them want to be used by you. All of them want your credits! Islam, Christian, AI-worship, the latest drug-sucking cult… It all drains down to the same soulistic cesspit. Still confused? Maybe this pamphlet will help.

– EXCERPT FROM PBB-POOR BITTER BASTARDS –

So You've Decided to Practice Tolerance

A wise man once said…actually, fuck the wise man. What did wise men ever do for you anyways, right? You know the wisest thing anyone ever told us? "Check out the 2-for-1 deal at Fat Sally's, ami. Best cut of grease for your credits in the world." And they were right!

Wise guys always have an agenda. One person's guru is another's buffoon. That's what the world's religions all boil down to: a bunch of gurufoons throwing shit at each other.

How can you make sense of all these various belief systems? How can you slice through the storm of spiritual chatter to achieve true inner peace and calm?

One answer stands as a shining beacon for anyone with the wherewithal to grasp it.

Tolerance!

Now, at first glance, tolerance looks like one of the easiest paths to follow. After all, who could argue against someone who simply accepts everyone around them, regardless of the particular religious backgrounds or tenants?

Remember what we said about buffoons. You don't want to be one. Which is why you need to give your newly chosen lifestyle of tolerance a much sharper look and understand what it actually implies.

First off, ponder the current state of affairs in ye' ol' institutions of religiosity that have verily been fruitful and multiplied across the earth since the Second Civil War. Lot's of the buggers, aren't there? So many — isms, you can pretty much attach any word to "ism" and someone will believe it.

Point is, you move in any direction and you'll step on an ism, or bump into an ismist wanting to tell you — often loudly — why their ism is far more "ismy" than that other guy's stupid ism. These vocalizations often turn into violencification quickly enough, because gosh darn if they don't take those beliefs quite personally. If you aren't fast enough to sign up to their version of heaven, paradise, or whatever afterlife they've bought into, well then they turn on the "unbeliever condemnation thesaurus" and start spouting off heretic! Blasphemer! Devilspawn!

What's your tolerance going to do in the face of that?

[PLEASE REFER TO THE DIGI-PAMPHLET — "SO YOU'VE BEEN LABELED A GODLESS HERETIC"]

The fact is, lots of believers aren't going to like the fact that you're trying to be tolerant of them without actually agreeing with them. It's this whole "us-or-them" mentality that almost every religion or cult or ism adopts to some degree or another. You're either for or against them. No middle ground, no matter how much you're standing right on it, trying to prove such neutral territory actually exists outside the scope of their needle-narrow perspectives.

You're not just facing crazy prophets on city streets, anymore. You're facing down religions that are militarized. Religions that have become nations in-and-of themselves. Religions that control major portions of the Deep and have budgets that could fund a colony on Mars for a year. Religions that like to plant themselves into your very genes to make a believer of you from birth onwards.

And you think they'll settle for you merely "tolerating" their existence? No. They will bitch-slap you into belief and make you thank them for it.

On the surface, ami, tolerance is a cozy little word people like to pass around, thinking it's somehow a higher moral ground than actually getting down and dirty with one deity or another. Some think it's a cop-out so you don't have to make any difficult decisions. In the end, as we think you're beginning to understand, a truly tolerant person is setting themselves up for a run through a never-ending, unforgiving gauntlet of misery and pain.

Thanks for reading and good luck with your newly tolerant lifestyle!

**#Archangel777:** What a load of crap.

**#He_is_Risen!:** It's easy to look at the worst parts of any belief system and point the finger and say "Look, all of these people are crazy," but the truth is, there are far more believers who just want to live their lives in peace. Maybe you should write an article about THEM. God Bless.

**#None_but_Allah:** Peace be upon you, brother. I must concur with my christian brother (sister)). Not all of us are hatemongers. Islam is a beautiful religion, a religion of peace and tolerance. Yes, a great number of people misinterpret the Koran, but do not lump us all in together with those who would kill in His name. I pray that you find wisdom.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** The worst thing to ever happen to North America was the integration of Church and State. It's one of the reasons we fought the 2nd civil war, after all. The North American Coalition is a prime example of what can happen when a nation is run by intolerant fundamentalist believers. That said, this article is little more than hate speech, and should be recognized as such.

**#Luciferion:** Amen, Billy.

**#Psychotropic_meme:** It should be pointed out that Atheism is also an "ism."

## The Global DataNet

#INFODUMP.SANE_IN_THE_MAINFRAME.NET

#IAMURGAWD

**#Krymonacer:** For years, I've been telling you how the GodNet [Global DataNet] is turning humanity into a shadow of itself. We've become so reliant on GodNet, it's scary. Almost like it's living up to its name. GodNet tells us where to go, what to do, what to believe, and how. There's no escape from it. Anyone with a TAP is integrated, and there's really no escape at that point, is there? The more connected we get, though, the more vulnerable are we. The more homogenous our societies become the more open we are to letting GodNet close and control us. Enjoy this report from the Center for Enforced Sanity. They didn't publish it because the test audience labeled it as too depressing. Make of it what you wish.

*BEGIN FEED...*

Please, I ask that you refrain from employing any TAP exchanges right now. Our clients can be peculiarly sensitive to such things, even when unplugged. None of you have any Hyper Objects on your person, do you? Suppressed at the entrance? TAP dampeners in place? Very good.

We accept all sorts into our institution, and the length of their stay is determined by the severity of their condition — and also their ability to pay for our care. Some are sponsored by family, others by corps, while a few manage with personal funds. We do have some public funding — GodNet addiction is a social malaise and demands awareness and responsibility. Various donors have contributed to our operations, and this goes towards short-term care of destitute clients.

Absolutely not, ma'am, and please do not quote me out of context. I do not at all imply that the GodNet, or the Deep as you might call it, is any more dangerous than water, or air, or food. All of these things are necessary for survival, and they can all enhance our lives. Through the Deep, we are connected to one another, to the news, to vivid entertainment and furthered education. I have a TAP just as all of you do, and engage its functions and features to the fullest for both personal and professional advancement. I maintain an awareness of global events through HR newscasts, while several of my international associates engage in periodic VR meetings.

When anything is taken to an extreme it becomes cancerous. Ah, here we are. A prime example. The subject within this chamber, Dalesworth Edmunton, suffers from a severe case of meme infection. Dale happened across an ad projection that had been hacked to remove any broadcast safeguards. In a single glance, billions of memes flooded his consciousness and burnt out his personality. He became a walking embodiment of unhealthy appetite, unable to do anything but gorge on the nearest fistful of greasy food.

Let's move on, shall we?

Here we have Luiell Nasca, once a high-level executive, who now believes she is an elven queen thanks to being entirely detached from her previous life through Hyper Reality abuse. Luiell began to dabble in a variety of domain games in order to escape the stress of her work and daily responsibilities. Over the course of a year, she stopped showing up for work, stopped communicating with anyone except others who participated in the same overlay as she, and eventually went legally insane. Despite her TAP being deactivated, she remains lost to this world, and we've yet been able to convince her that this is the reality she's stuck with.

Lastly, I will introduce you to a young man who only goes by the handle Plutoboss. One of our more extreme cases.

He believes he is dead.

Plutoboss frequented a variety of Deep casinos and fell heavily into debt. Unable to pay, he tried to escape from debtors several times by forging false identities which he used to continue his gambling habits. During one of his private virtual reality sessions, a casino enforcer uncovered his identity, hacked into his domain, and swapped out the program for one in which he expired at the hands of almost every torture instrument known, starting with medieval iron maidens and working up to modern devices. While the experience only lasted seconds in real time, he experienced over ten thousand individual "deaths." At the moment, during therapy sessions, we jack him into a relative timeframe that is ten times slower than real time, so we're able to make faster progress in convincing him he is still alive. So you can see how such tech can have both detrimental and positive applications.

All this aside, I do not wish to see any fear-mongering in the reports you may submit after this tour, ladies and gentlemen. The Virtual and Hyper realities are a boon to humanity, drawing us closer than ever before, erasing cultural and geographic boundaries. The global community found within the central VR hub, Spiralmote, is an ideal location for exchanging ideas, expanding commerce, and generating technological advances this world has yet to comprehend. At the same time, humanity has always had its dark corners, and only the most naive of us would pretend the dangers evidenced here are not worth defending against.

How does the common person avoid fates such as this? With Hyper Reality, the best you can do is keep your filters up-to-date and only authorize pre-approved HR channels. For VR, since it requires a direct connection to the TAP, the easiest way is to simply never plug in to a network. Dubbing is also a possibility, for worst-case scenarios.

*END FEED.*

# EASTERN HEMISPHERE

#INFODUMP.WORLD_IN_FLAMES.GD.NET

**Posted By:** #Billy_Black_Eyes

Que pasa hombres and chicas! Billy_Black_Eyes here with another massive INFOdump on the world we live in. Unlike the previous section, this massive datafeed focuses on the world itself. As before, I've scoured the GodNet for .dat files about each nation. Grab some coffee and a snack, omae, because this puppy's gonna keep you awake way into the small hours.

# AFRICA

#INFODUMP.AFRICA

**Posted By:** #King Louie

Aita chommie! Welcome to the bosom of Mother Africa! They call me 'King Louie.' Yes, yes, just like the one from the children's book. It's because I'm a primate hybrid, but the primate genes were too strong, making me a throwback who looks like a walking, talking orangutan. I'm no king of the jungle; I'm an entrepreneur, a fence and face-man. I can get you work, and no one moves anything through the Mogadishu 'plex without my knowing. Whatever it is, I can move it across the veld for you — for a small percentage, of course, chommie. Eish, enough about me — but if you ever find yourself in Somalia, you look me up on the Global DataNet and ol' King Louie come through for you. For you non-native, dorpie-dwellers, King Louie is going to give you the skinner on Mother Africa.

## Emergence

It's been roughly fifty years since the border wars ended and the current nations formed. During that time, our scientists have refined their gene-splicing techniques and we can now offer cutting-edge biotech to those with the money to pay. The big Corporations have come back, only this time it's different. No longer do they sneer down their noses at us, chommie. This time, they buy our knowledge and pay us well for it, too.

### A New Africa

The Corporations work with African scientists and lead the world in genetics. If it wasn't for that, there'd be no Hybrids, no Bioroids, no Human 2.0, and no cutting-edge bio-enhancements for the masses. Yes, we've had our failures — some of which now stalk the veld and jungles. Yet, we also have the G-Net to tie us to the rest of the world. We have nuclear power, and we even have an elevator into space.

## New Industries

Africa is known around the world as the premier place to store information and wealth. The 'plexes and Corporations here have guarded machines to store your precious data — all overseen by man and machine. We also have banks that cater to the rich and powerful; places that are as discreet as they are secure. Yes, I know about the Cape Town incident, chommie, and I will speak about that later. Aside from these wonders of modern science, Africa has her own beanstalk. This equatorial space elevator takes our biological creations and enhancements out to the habitats orbiting our little world, and beyond.

### Biotechnology & Gene-Splicing

Africa is the world leader in biotechnology, chommie. Bet on that! In our time, many of the corporations have funded our gene-sculptors' work. It's here where the serums that can give you the power to run fast, or make you see in the dark, or let you lift a kombi over your head come from. If you want the powers of an animal, Africa is where you come. Yet, not all of our work is restricted to making men better. We also gene-splice plants for better and hardier crops to eat. Skinner is, African genetic designs were stolen from the mainframe and smuggled over to Texas by ex-patriates who helped them develop their engineered meat, but I think they're just bakgat.

Third Life Innovations (TLI), which is based out of South Africa, has several facilities dedicated to the growth and production of new bodies and new bio-mods. Their main body-production centers are kept in the more secure (and insular, I say) Central African Union. TLI is the main producer of genetics and biotechnology, but they are not the only ones.

### Secure Banking

After Africa's emergence, we were able to offer the world's wealthy secure banking they could access at any time. Guarded by AI-controlled countermeasures, these banks are nigh-impossible to break into through the Global DataNet, and suicidal to break into physically. The banks secure both real and virtual currency, as well as valuables. In addition to providing their clientele anonymity, they also provide diverse environments to secure property. For example, if you owned a collection of ancient books that needed to be kept in a special environment to prevent decay, there are banks that can offer that service. I once had job that required a team to break into one of these bank vaults to retrieve an undisclosed item. It's been two years and I have yet to hear back from them, chommie. Skinner says they never even made it past the bank's perimeter. However, there was that incident in Cape Town where several banks were robbed, but King Louie will go into the details later.

### Data Havens

Much like money, data has value — especially to those who know how to use it properly. As such, if a person or one of the corporations has sensitive data they don't trust their own to secure, they come to one of several data havens operating in Africa, because our virtual vaults are monitored around the clock by human and computer operators backed by AI-generated security.

If you're thinking that hitting a Data Haven is a good idea, let me remind you that there's almost always an AI on overwatch in the G-Net just waiting for some poor hacker to try and take it on just so it can fry that poor bastard's synapses. I'm not sayin' you can't hack one, just make sure you have a dub or some really great insurance, chommie.

## Southern Eurasian Union

Discounting Egypt and Libya — who have their own problems — the SEU is one of the few places that has yet to really settle down and stabilize in the wake of the Ivory Curtain. Today they remain a hotbed of international activity and intrigue. Their two main cities, Marrakech and Casablanca, are prime feeding grounds for smugglers and spies.

With coastal ports and mineral wealth that is slowly being tapped, the country's leaders aren't quite sure what to do with themselves. With the outpouring of refugees from the Middle East, they have moved the majority of their military and security forces to the eastern part of their border.

### MAJOR CITIES & POINTS OF INTEREST

The SEU is a hotbead of spying and data smuggling. It's also the gateway into the European drug markets. This is mainly due to the laxity of both the military and the government. In fact, skinner is that many of the citizens are involved as well — or at least keep to themselves on the matter.

#### MARRAKECH

Sometimes pronounced Marrakesh, this African city was once part of the nation of Morocco. Now, it serves as the SEU's capital city. During the Border Wars the city saw little to none of the fighting, with the exception of the handful of times they would receive deserters here. Up until the Oil Crisis, the city bloomed and expanded to support the Sufi pilgrims who would travel here.

Like many places around the world, untagged bioroids are not allowed. This prejudice is so strong that the townspeople won't even wait for the police. They will simply form into a mob with intent to destroy the blasphemous creations.

#### CASABLANCA

Portrayed in movies and novels since the last century, Casablanca has seen troubled times of late. Not that it's anything you can see on the surface, chommie, but it's there. Unlike Mogadishu, which is proud to be what it is, Casablanca pines for the days when it was in the limelight. Unfortunately, unless something major happens, this cesspool of ex-patriots and con men will continue to swirl down the sewers. Furthermore, the buildings are crumbling and the people let it go on.

King Louie knows this façade is nothing but a front to fake out the nation's security forces. In truth, Casablanca is a hotbed of smuggling (mainly designer drugs from South America and other places) and spying. Yes, I said spying! Some of the world's best secret agents and intrusion specialists can be found amongst the crumbling buildings and dusty cantinas. Any corporation wanting data on their competitors comes here — with the permission of the Lady in Red, of course. More data passes through this city than monkeys fly through the trees. Yet, chommie, there's one who sits at the top of the heap, and it is only by her good graces that she allows her city to be used this way.

Her name is Red Diva, and anyone who brings information for sale must pass it through her first. Yes, spies and smugglers claim to have met a woman wearing a red leather bodice, red leather thigh-high boots, and a red cape that covers her face, but they have not truly met the Red Diva. This is how she prefers it. If you want to do business in Casablanca, then she's the one to see.

### MILITARY & DEFENSES

The SEU has a ground army, supported by weapons bought from them by corporations such as Act of God Armaments and others. Their border patrol is corrupt and easy to bribe. A few remote operated drones and some pre-Border War aircraft are available if needed, but it's nothing compared to other countries — especially the Central African Union. The Southern Eurasian Union (SEU) also has quite a few redesigned patrol boats protecting their ports and coast lines. Pre-War missile batteries also can be found concealed in the brush.

### INDUSTRIES

The SEU has two things that contribute to the wealth of the African nations: precious minerals and cybernetics. In Marrakech, fabrication of cybernetics is huge business. The corporations that moved in have several fabricators that manufacture the latest in cybernetics, which are then shipped out across the world. Skinner is, they also have several facilities outside of the cities where they test their latest designs before they are sent to the fabbers. King Louie has heard of these places, and you'd have to be crazy to even go within a hundred yards of one (the corporations like their privacy).

## Central African Union

Of all the African nations behind the Ivory Curtain, the Central African Union is the most reclusive. While they make a good show of letting others believe their country is impregnable, there are many holes one can use to gain access — and the CAU's elite Dakumbe Death Squads can't be everywhere, chommie.

The people of the CAU are nice to outsiders, but when I say "nice" I mean "nice like someone would treat a rabid dog."

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Don't you shoot rabid dogs?

They're not all bad, King Louie feels they chose a different path after the Border Wars — they certainly earned it. There are only a few dorpies, and 'plexes that will accept outsiders. Of course, if you look like you belong there, they can't really tell the difference.

While the CAU is the center of African gene-tech and biotechnology, unregistered bioroids are outlawed, with stiff fines and even imprisonment for those caught with one. The bioroids themselves are terminated on the spot. This stems from the skinner that some time ago a group of AIs were uploaded to some bioroids. As soon as they left the facility, they banded together and went on a murder spree. It took some serious firepower and cost the lives of some good E-SWAT Officers that were sent out to take them down. Truth of the matter, these weren't AIs walking around, these were dubs — digitized consciousness of actual people!

### THE IVORY CURTAIN

Gaining entry to the CAU isn't difficult — if you have legitimate business to conduct. If your business is...on the shadier side of things, then you may find it to be more difficult; especially

if you have no contacts to help you. Fortunately for you, I know a great many ways to bypass the border checkpoints and gain access to the various cities and metroplexes, and how to get around some of the border patrols.

There are two main avenues of entry into the Central African Union. The first is here in Mogadishu. You could also ask around for other "guides" to get you across, but the general rule is that they only take you across, you get back on your own — and their services aren't cheap, chommie. The other avenue is to enter through the SEU as their borders aren't as secure as on their side as it is on the Somalia side. However, I wouldn't trust them aikona!

### MAJOR CITIES & POINTS OF INTEREST

Since the CAU is the center of Africa's genetics design program, it stands to reason that the majority of its economy is focused on it. With a few exceptions, the major cities and megaplexes are zoned out with the more corporate-sensitive ones having heavy firepower to bring against any who try to pass through without authorization.

The same goes for crime. In the CAU, criminals are punished swiftly and with great brutality. Organ-legging is big business in some places. A black market catering" has risen to meet the desires of people looking for upgraded organs and tissues that can be genetically modified, and many black alley clinics where surgeons work on those who can't afford, or can't risk going to, a legitimate hospital. Take this advice from King Louie: if you get yourself shot up and have to visit one of these places, make sure you take a trusting chommie with you; otherwise you may end up in the vats of corporate gene-splicers.

#### TIMBUKTU

An ancient city, Timbuktu has existed since the land was young. In modern times, the city is a massive metroplex strecthcing out across the veld. Used as a euphemism to describe places that were very far away, Timbuktu (or rather the University) made a name for itself in recent times during the Border Wars. Since then, the whole metroplex has experiences a major technological renaissance.

Major Corporations like Jata Tech either have their headquarters here, or at least research and development technicians who learn at the feet of the geneticists from the University. They teach programs in advanced genetics and eugenics, and the progress they make is then sold off to the Corporations to profit from. There is no doubt that Timbuktu is one of the major centers for biotechnology and a forerunner for mankind's evolution.

Timbuktu is the cradle of the Virtual Age, and the University is where Kayin Courts' research led to the development of the ubiquitous TAP. The University continues to stay on the bleeding-edge of both the virtual world and genetics.

#### NAIROBI

If you try to enter the CAU through Nairobi, things get very interesting, very fast. The outer perimeter of the city is heavily guarded by the fearsome Dakumbe Death squads. I'll speak more about these savages later, but for now know that they are as deadly as they are ugly. Make no mistake, chommie, no one gets past these "ghosts of the veld"…or so the CAU's propaganda machine says. In truth, there are holes in their screen — how else would I get my wares through, eh? Alas, I am not the only one who can smuggle drugs and guns through the great CAU, and if you're careful and check your contact thoroughly, you too might be able to get things out (or into) of this nation.

#### LUSAKA

Lusaka is a rapidly growing city rivalling many mega sprawls across the planet. Some prominent Corporations from around the world have offices here, and many have labs and facilities for research and development. Yet, deep beneath the ground, corporate-owned, sub-zero data vaults store some of the darkest secrets ever whispered in a boardroom.

### DAKUMBE DEATH SQUADS

For those of us who live in Africa, there is one thing that children are taught to fear at a young age: the Dakumbe. These death squads watch over the CAU's borders and if propaganda can be believed (and in reality can it?) hunt down any who violate the CAU's borders or steal from their masters. They are said to be expert trackers and hunters, and many paint a white death skull upon their shaven heads. A few wear gory trinkets such as necklaces of ears or grotesque piercings. Many practice ritual scarification.

## SOMALIA

At last we get to speak about my homeland, chommie. The great land of Somalia. Here a man (or part man, in my case) can find whatever he needs. Somalia is, in King Louie's opinion, the only African nation to come out ahead after the Border Wars. Somalia is the Smuggler's Paradise.

### PIRACY

Okay, okay, so maybe not all of us do an honest trade like smuggling drugs or guns across the CAU border. A few do engage in the age-old pastime of piracy. Since the last century Somali pirates have made a better living boarding corporate-owned ships and holding their crews hostage than fishing. Sure, a man's got to eat, but piracy seems more lucrative to many. However, you have to be smart about it.

The Corporations who move their goods through our area expect us to try and take a crack at their ships. They arm their crew accordingly. The pirates try to board and if they succeed, they take the crew hostage, contact the company they work for and demand ransom. Once the ransom is paid, the crew is free to go on their merry way. However, if the pirates aren't bakgat and hit a ship belonging to one of the Megaconglomerates…well, they get what they deserve and the pirate gangs have less competition to worry about.

### MAJOR CITIES & POINTS OF INTEREST

Somalia only has one real major city, and the rest of the country is dotted with dorpies full of people waiting to sell you something (sometimes, it's your stuff they try to sell back, but don't blame King Louie for that). Aside from that — and the fact that most people think Somalia is full of nothing but criminals — the people are friendly and generous with the hospitality.

### MOGADISHU

The city of Mogadishu can claim the prize for the largest city in Somalia, but that's like saying you get second place in an ugly contest. The sprawl is home to over 15 million people, and is our nation's capital. To put it straight, chommie, Mogadishu is a dump!

The sprawl is split up into four sections, each run by one of the major tribal clans. Sitting in the middle is the infamous Bakaara Market — a place where you can find anything (and I mean anything) for sale here, chommie. The tribals each squabble over who can get the better end of the deal out of Mogadishu's Black Market, and so try and squeeze every credit they can out of it. In the Bakaara you can buy guns, drugs, sex, cyberware, and even the latest in genetic enhancements. You can also purchase fake passports, border papers into the CAU, and more. Some of the smaller Corporations have offices and facilities here, but not like the ones in the larger 'plexes. The main reason is, as I mentioned, everyone thinks a Somalian is well-versed in some criminal enterprise (and for the most part it's true). However, this attitude makes a great cover for the Corporations to conceal some of their more less-than-legal researches.

### MILITARY & DEFENSES

Somalia doesn't have a standing army like other countries do. Instead we hire out mercenaries and pay them in credits and smuggled genetic enhancements or beefed-up cyberware. These mercs work under a standing contract, and there are some pretty good outfits to work for like the Peacekeepers or the Triple L's. Other mercenary outfits are more like glorified gangs and tend to be as bad as crooks — waltzing into a dorpie and taking whatever they want. This tends to bring in other outfits to oust the first ones and then you have a whole dorpie shot up.

### INDUSTRIES

Somalia only has two real industries: piracy and smuggling. Sure, we have more legitimate businesses, such as shipbreaking and fishing, but the others are more lucrative, and not more dangerous. If you know how to play the game, smuggling and fencing goods can be real lucrative. There's a thriving black market in Somalia, and folks are willing to pay for things they can't seem to get through normal channels (or who are impatient and can't wait for those normal channels to bring it to them).

## South Africa

Out of all the countries formed when the Ivory Curtain went up, none are more in touch with the rest of the world than South Africa; it has the distinction (much like Somalia) of remaining after the Border Wars largely intact. Corporations, the ultra-rich, and even tourists come to South Africa. In addition to all of this, South Africa also hosts one of the few spaceports on the planet; we call it the beanstalk. It's a space elevator that carries goods and people to orbital habitats and space stations where they can book passage to anywhere in the system.

**#Simba:** The Somali beanstalk is run by pirates who smuggle everything from drugs to weapons and even pleasure sims to mining colonies all across the solar system.

**#Luciferion:** Truth, Simba. If you need to get off-planet, this is the best place to go. No background checks, no bioscans, no questions asked.

### MAJOR CITIES & POINTS OF INTEREST

South Africa is a lot like many of the places found in the so-called "Western Worlds." It has highways, nuclear power, and fast food. It has a strong connection to the G-Net, and many places sport HR overlays that can only come from the minds of African programmers. Bio-sculpted animals walk alongside their augmented owners in the major sprawls, and it all looks very rich.

South Africa is home to some very important corporations that helped the continent turn out the way it did. From many African banks to Third Life Innovations, South Africa is destined to move up in the world.

### JOHANNESBURG METROPLEX

Johannesburg is one of the largest cities on the African continent — bursting at the seams with over 18 million souls residing in its concrete jungle. Johannesburg is place where one finds vast displays of its wealth, but there is rot beneath the surface, chommie.

### MILITARY & DEFENSES

South Africa boasts some of the best military forces, on the whole continent (perhaps with the exception of the CAU). Coastal defenses consist of naval patrols and missile batteries. The national navy is mainly cutters and small swift boats with some larger carriers.

In 2079 roughly thirty vessels disguised as Rover ships descended upon Cape Town and robbed every single bank. These so-called Rovers were discovered to be disguised tribal syndicates, and the corporate retribution was swift and brutal — within a single night all criminal networks were wiped out. Now, tell me if this is what happens when a few banks are wiped out, what can the corporations really bring to bear, chommie?

### INDUSTRIES

South Africa has all the usual black market industries, but they tend to have more of the latest products than we can get in Somalia, so I tend to do more business with my contacts here than in the other AFrican Nations. However, the black market isn't what South Africa is known for.

Here is where the ultra-rich and corporate elite store their wealth — real and virtual. These vaults are claimed to be watched over by AIs specialized in defending them. To this day, I have never been able to confirm anyone being able to rob these vaults with the exception of the robbery I mentioned previously — and no one lived long enough to tell that taie, chommie!

# AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: LANDDOWNUNDER.AUS

FQDN: LANDDOWNUNDER.AUS.14TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

#YABBER

**Posted By:** #Roger "Yabber" McCoy, Sydney Sprawl Guide Expert

G'day mate! Yabber here! Everyone's favourite bastard ready to give you the low down on Down Under! Hand on heart, nothing but the truth, and no porky, things have been tough for us Aussies. Before the Floods they used to say we were the climate canary. But during the years of the Death and the Great Retreat, a lot of folks thought we were just road kill.

We were all battlers for a spell but we pulled through! It meant making hard choices though. These days most of us live in just a few cities along the coast, crowded in, but that's the sacrifice we made for the green. And nothing counts more than the environment. If those years taught us anything it's that the green comes first.

**#Not_a_Galah:** Don't lecture me about the green! I live two hundred stories up. We don't need to live like termites anymore. Even along the coast there'd be plenty of land if we just broke up the stewardships.

**#Swandiva:** Chop up the churchlands? That won't happen. The green is a trust and someone has to pick the Stewards.

**#Not_a_Galah:** Look at who they pick! Except for the lotteries the Stewards are just the muckies who run things. We let them turn the green into weekend homes where none of us unwashed dare to go.

**#Swandiva:** If you want land that bad just go dusting.

That's why it's so bloody hard to understand dusters. It's as clear as dog's balls, there just aren't that many places in the Outback that can keep for very long; not enough water. But that doesn't stop dusters from going walkabout. Now, it's one thing if they hook up with one of tribes and live in the Dream. The aborigines run themselves and no one wants to back to the bad old days. Plus, nomads stay on the move so no worries! But dusters think they can just grab a patch and chase off everyone else.

Thankfully, we have good companies like New Frontier Enterprise to keep the dusters in line and make sure the Outback doesn't go full cactus. The NFE has an actual town out there, Inspiration, and these blokes have the best security forces around. No one makes trouble around Inspiration, or any other NFE territory, without getting smacked down hard! After all, they've got a world class spaceport to protect out there. Not to mention the terraforming they perfected in the Outback. It's not just other worlds that the NFE is fixing for us. Someday, they're going to bring back the green.

**#Not_a_Galah:** So… The NFE can grab a patch and chase everyone else away. But that's okay, because they make sure dusters don't grab a patch and chase everyone else away?

**#Swandiva:** Stop acting like a dill. It's not the same thing and you know it. They run away and expect the rest of us to pick up their slack.

**#Not_a_Galah:** Hmm. Criminals you say. Leaving civilization. Going into exile. Maybe even founding a colony somewhere? Something about that seems familiar don't you think?

**#Swandiva:** Very funny.

## THE COAST

If you really you want to understand Australia you have to realize the sacrifices we made for the green. Most of us are squeezed into just a few cities. We had to surrender everywhere else during the Floods and the Great Retreat. Since then nothing has mattered more than bringing back the green. Even folks who might rort anything else respect that!

## HOW WE GOT HERE

The floods hit us hard, but in a lot of places things actually got a lot dryer. Even as the waters rose on the coast, the interior started to bake. The dust ate a lot of towns and stations. We put up a good fight at first, but when the Death came we knew we had to focus on the coast. Now don't think the Great Retreat was a bail out, folks left on their own terms, and most families still have their deeds on file. Someday, we're heading back. But the green comes first.

The churches were the ones who really made the difference. Donations came in from all over the world. Strewth! There's no way we could have built the floodwalls without help from the churches. The Apostles out of South America led the way. They had almost lost the rainforests so they understood about bringing back the green. The believers who would one day found the North American Coalition were there, too. Boatloads of their missionaries came over determined to save the cities and bring back the green. A lot of their kids and grandkids were Webber's shock troops during the war that broke America.

There are still lots of atheists and people who believe different but G&G, God and the Green, works for most of us. And we don't go around bothering folks who don't agree; so long as they understand that we are all working to bring back the green. That's what makes things so tough for us with the problems over in America. We owe the NAC more than we can ever pay, but killing because people think different or just want to be left alone?

That's not right.

**#Not_a_Galah:** He's forgetting about the blight. That's when we learned the green was inside us too. Things could have gone a lot different if those seeds had worked. Might never have realized that we serve the green and not the other way around.

**#Swandiva:** For once I agree. I had an uncle born without any feet. It's easy to forget, now, with nano so safe and reliable, how desperate people were back then. When the dust was eating the fields they tried everything to find crops that could still grow.

**#Not_a_Galah:** They cut a lot of corners. As usual. And it was those kids who paid the price. No one in my family or school, thank God, but I'd still see one of them sometimes.

## HOW THINGS WORK

In the cities, it's all about footage, the struggle for space. Most of us regular folks live and work in megablocks rising up hundreds of stories. We built them by stacking frames, empty cubes just ratcheted together. This makes it pretty simple to install walls, floors, and ceilings. But it also means people can squeeze you if you let it happen.

Neighbours can shave half a meter from your living room or even block off your entire bedroom. Happens all the time. Some people live in mazes of pieces of different frames stretching up and down and all around. The squeeze always depends on how far they think they can push you before you start giving them the flick back.

> **#Not_a_Galah:** Wait a minute. He's not going to talk about the narrows? It's just like the squeeze but on the streets. Fill them with whatever we can scavenge to keep out cars and trucks. That's where you find all the best deals until government clears them out again.
>
> **#Swandiva:** Sure, if by deal you mean messing with the black market.
>
> **#Not_a_Galah:** Not all of them are crooked. And why didn't he talk about the pedtubes? Every ten stories on each megablocks. Ringing around their edges and connecting to their neighbours. You never have to go outside.
>
> **#Swandiva:** Probably doesn't want tourists wandering up there through the wrong pedtube. They can't tell which ones are owned by gangs and which are patrolled by the block squads.

Not that many Aussies have that much money of course. Sure, there's always some with talent or connections who manage to get ahead, sometimes way ahead, but anything more than survival is supposed to go to the green. For regular folks, unless they get lucky, taxes and tithes are enough to slice the foam off their beer

Bringing back the green is too important to leave to government or the corps. You can't put the green on a ballot initiative or balance sheet! That's why the church takes the lead. Really, it's the Stewards, but the church picks them and grants life tenancy. They are the folks who truly run things in Australia. Most of the time they have power on their ownbut the prestige of being a Steward trumps. Sure, some of them are figjams, but most Stewards are okay.

Stewards run the planters and diggers in their territory. They also get to hire security to make sure no one messes with their land. The people who work for them enjoy a lot of leeway in the courts, so even the poor Stewards given the lottery lands never have problems filling their ranks. Of course, the poor Stewards tend not to stay poor for very long. They have a lot of discretion in deciding how to use their planters and diggers. If things are slow on the patch, they can loan some of these workers out. Then there's the plantations. No one in the cities can ever get enough of real food. Most people could live pretty comfortably after only one crop, and they keep doing it year after year.

But best of all, Stewards get to build homes on their land. They can live in the green whenever they want! Most Stewards have important work in the cities, so they only get use their green homes on weekends and holidays.

Now, with all this talk about Stewards, you might think Australia is some kind of aristocracy. Nothing further! Our PM,

"Granny" Forsythe, is in the middle of her third, five-year, term. She's older than dirt, her actual slogan last time, but who better to bring back the green than someone who remembers it? A lot of folks didn't think the Lib Labs were going to get back in but Granny pulled them over the finish line. That final weekend blitz turned the polls around.

**#Not_a_Galah:** Right, that's exactly what happened.

**#Swandiva:** Oh come on. The Conservationist party is just as dirty. Granny's simply better. And the smaller votes are probably fine. The people still have a voice on the day to day stuff.

**#Not_a_Galah:** So you think it's okay because they only rig votes when it matters?

## THE OUTBACK

A lot of people, if they think of Australia at all, imagine the Outback instead of the cities where most of us live. S'little insulting, but truth, it's not hard to see why. Things are rather exciting out there! The green collapsed and what replaced it is pretty strange.

And on top of that, the Dream, the largest dedicated TAP expanse in the world. Just about the entire Outback is awash in legend. People come from all over the world to find their totem or to take part in the ancient stories. Most of them also spend a few months living with one of the tribes. Getting back to nature and learning about the green first hand. That's one of the great strengths of the first people. The worldwide support they get from tourists who lived side by side.

**#Not_a_Galah:** Let's not forget the money the abos make from those tourists. It's not cheap. Seems like every trust fund brat in the world wants to go walkabout before taking over the family business. Or country. They probably make as much from those kids as we do from everything in the cities.

**#Swandiva:** Maybe if you don't count the reef; especially its casinos. Anyway, the tribes have more than earned whatever money they make.

**#Not_a_Galah:** Since that reef money doesn't make it to us either I won't. But the abos can buy all the guns and political muscle they need. No more genocides for them!

**#Swandiva:** Hey ratbag! Don't be such a Whacker. Aborigine or tribe or even first people. And stop joking about the near genocide. No one thinks that's funny.

## HOW THINGS WORK THERE

It's hard for us city people to really understand just how big and empty the Outback is. It's all sand and rocks and blooms. Tough to think of it as anything even close to the green. The wind keeps the dust swirling through the air, so it's always hard to keep your bearing and your breath. And then there's all the creatures wandering around! The ones that couldn't survive died off so everything in the Outback is either a killer, fast, or both.

Never trust anything. Even a little bush could have poisoned thorns so it can draw nutrients from your rotting corpse. There're little patches of micro-organisms too. Viruses and bacteria just living in the dust or the shade waiting for a host to come along. There's a thousand ugly ways to die in the Outback. Some still unknown since no one has survived long enough to report back.

But the tribes are thriving. They hunt the creatures and harvest the plants instead of the other way around. A lot of their money comes from rich kids wanting the "authentic" experience of spending a few months on walkabout without any actual risk, so they have gotten really, really good at spotting danger. Truth be told, they tend to only lose the stupid ones so the tribes do a bit of screening ahead of time. Turn down about half their applicants. With the wars and the Charon virus they haven't been as choosey lately, fewer kids to pick from, so I expect a lot more news about tragic deaths in the Outback to come over the next few years. Who knows what some rich father or mother might do to avenge a dead little nipper?

Many aborigines actually claim the Outback isn't all that dangerous. They say the Stewards and the government exaggerate the risk just to make sure we city folk don't go running off dusting. Even with the horror stories the Outback never seems to run out of dusters. Every year, some of us city folk decide we can't stick it out any longer and go dusting instead of working to bring back the green. Some are just families hungry for real land, but a lot of them are the crazy hermits you see when you close your eyes and think about dusters. They are the ones that steal blooms and build fortresses around them. They shoot on sight and lay down landmines. Some of them use camouflage so you might not even know you're trespassing on "their" land until they start blasting.

But Dusters are just one of the things that make the tribes edgy about the cities. There's always someone out their stirring things up with talk about the near genocide and all the other abuses the settlers inflicted. There's just not enough of the tribes for a real war, but time to time some of the younger ones do get riled up. That usually leads to some sort of trouble in the cities. Some folks say there's an actual terrorist group, Buduwai, but I think that's an exaggeration. It's just kids filled with piss and sand like anywhere.

**#Not_a_Galah:** And he's not going to talk about the NFE is he? They have patrols flying all over the place. Maybe some of it's to keep an eye on their stations but there's too many just for that. They've been up to something for years.

**#Swandiva:** What about all the rumors about dusters disappearing? Is the NFE involved? Maybe they shoot first for a reason.

**#Not_a_Galah:** When the NFE wants test subjects they buy them by the boatload all over the world. There's always a war or a spot of ethnic cleansing they can exploit. There's no need to raid a duster's homemade fortress. No, they've either got something to hide or they're looking for something that escaped.

**#Swandiva:** Escaped!

## AUSTRALIAN AUGMENTATION & HEALTH CARE UNION

At the start of this century Australia had Medicare, a public system to ensure that everyone had access to the treatment they needed. A utopian idea like that was naturally one of the victims of the The Deluge and The Death. Unlike the Pommie system, Medicare didn't die overnight, it made it through the death and lingered around for a good twenty years slowly being ripped apart on it's deathbed. It's survival was due to charity, volunteers and fund raising from local residents.

By the end of '32, supplies were getting so rare that resupply was rare creating a market for profiteering. It was this that opened the way for the total privatisation of healthcare. People were showing that they were happy to pay to get their medical problems solved. The government tried scaling back in areas; fewer hospitals with less staff, who were then overworked, ancillary staff were let go but thankfully managers were immune to the cutbacks. After all, that's what a hospital truly needs, some dickhead with a clip board telling the nurse what to do.

As the skilled support staff and trained professionals haemorrhaged into the job market, the private companies began to circle. I've seen this behaviour before in sharks. The blood goes in the water and at first they circle getting the feel for the prey and then they let loose and tear the poor bastard apart.

In this case, they snatched up the staff and market coverage making sure their brand was prominent and when they got big enough they started snatching up smaller companies and taking over their shares. Finally, around 2070, only a few remained, all of them scarred survivors and all of them were worn out from fighting. They formed an alliance ensuring a monopoly and the means to defend it. The Australian Augmentation & Health Care Union was born, though as it's a hell of mouthful, most of us simply call it Aug and Health or the A&H.

The majority of hospitals today are designed to fit onto the megablocks that make up our cities. The new hospitals use a modular system that lets Aug & Health maximise the effect that their resources have. If a particular block is filling up with old folks, then they'll put a module down that is mainly equipped to deal with age related concerns. Likewise, rougher areas will be self supporting and receive an armoured trauma centre instead of a pediatric unit. These trauma modules were originally designed to be dropped at crisis points during the Great Retreat and supply emergency treatments, a triumph of engineering and rugged durability.

This doesn't mean that A&H is decentralised and autonomous local health care. The modestly named "AAHU Prime" sits over a large part of Brisbane and is the management centre for all of A&H's patient information. To ease access, Prime has several landing pads and a neighbouring runway to allow easy access for VTOL aircraft, as well several roads from different levels.

It also has an incredible number of nonstandard facilities, such as coffin hotels. These hotels offer reduced rates to the families of patients.

> **#Swandiva:** They'd better offer reduced rates. The coffins are just a bed with a toilet, mist shower and a live feed of the patient's room.

This constant expansion ensures that when you go back for your follow up, thanks to the installation of a massive new wing or floor to a new module for a researcher, what you're looking for has been moved and the helpful coloured lines now mean something else entirely. Thankfully guide programs are available for a single cred on each visit, but how hospital staff knowtheir way around is beyond me.

This constant upheaval has created an interesting feature that's something of an open secret. The Ratway, a fancy name for the gaps between modules left by the continual changes in layout.

A few people know these shortcuts and make good use of them to get from where they are to where they need to be a bit quicker than going the normal route. I once saw a doctor pop a panel off a wall to get to another ward without having to go around the houses just to get next door. I caught up with the doc later and asked him about it. He said that it can be pretty dangerous taking a shortcut over a long distance but, that as a way of going from one ward to another, they're great at shaving valuable seconds of his response time. Unfortunately I got the feeling that he wasn't talking about saving lives but more about being monitored by his bosses. There have been many attempts to have the ratways mapped, but so far every attempt has failed due to the hardware malfunction. The most dramatic had a drone crash into a managing director's ceiling, and embed itself in his shoulder.

Here's the secret that spoils it: What they fail to mention (outside the few hundred pages of small print of course), is that if you are a patient or a member of the family, the use of any or all these facilities allows them to record your biometric data and augment operational parameters for use as they deem fit.

> **#Swandiva:** That's not much of a secret. Most HOSPcorps do it.

I heard a rumour that they even go so far as to collect your bodily waste. I imagine that the justification that the execs of A&H would use is that the prime facility has the largest number of researchers of any private medical centre in the world, and there are only so many test subjects. The positive side of this creepy behaviour is that it helps them keep their staff up to date with the latest developments in the field, and even pushing ahead in a few. I might be trying to justify it after I needed to have my appendix out there.

The weirdest thing about the hospital isn't tunnels that can't be mapped, or that someone developed a poop collection device that bags and tags who it came from. It's the fact that, on a pretty regular basis, someone (or according to GodNet rumour, something) gets involved with a patient's treatment. The first case of the haunting occurred in 2075. Ms Kettering became a patient in Brisbane Healthcare Facility; admitted as an emergency case due to her body rejecting augmentations and implants in what is called Biosystem Overstress.

The standard of immunology at the time meant that the condition was rare and occurring in less than one in twenty thousand people, but that one case resulted in a total rejection of implants. Ms Kettering had received multiple implants over the course of her life to correct the congenital birth defects she suffered from. Her implants were scattered throughout the vascular system, and skeletal structure.

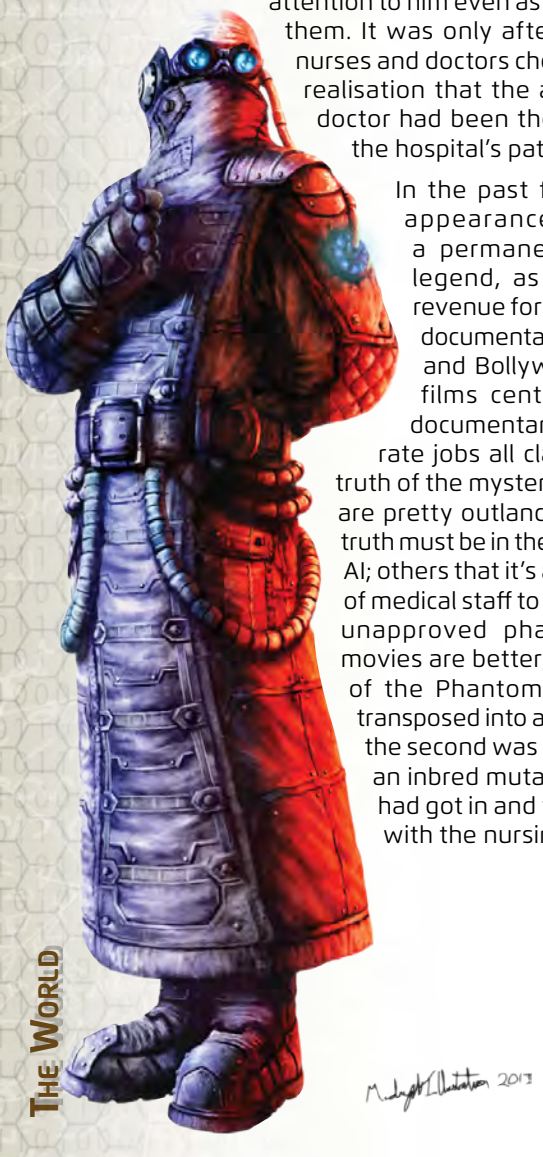
The rejection of a single implant would lead to life altering complications, and she was facing a total rejection of all her augments and most likely her death. As the condition was so rare her wishes had never been properly recorded and left the doctors in the unenviable position of having to fight with tooth and claw to ensure she lived as long as possible.

Eventually they reached the point that medically the only reasonable response was to let the patient die and they prepared to administer a lethal dose of anaesthesia.

The doctor responsible for this grim task arrived to find that her condition had improved inexplicably, and the implants were no longer being rejected. She was awake, aware of her situation, and the look in her eyes was one of gratitude. The hospital owners responded immediately by launching an investigation.

The entries on her medical data had been signed "Doctor Matron," and the drug that this doctor had administered wasn't commercially available; in truth it didn't exist. Thorough investigations yielded no information as to the doctor's employee records, or where he was educated, enough information existed to allow the drug to be easily synthesised. Attempts to locate the mysterious doctor led only to layers of hacked surveillance and altered records.

Witnesses have given a varied number of descriptions of the mysterious doctor. The most common though is of a tall gaunt man wearing a long coat and high collar. One of the interviewed patients joked that he thought death had come for him, and that the nurses and even doctors paid no special attention to him even as he took charge from them. It was only afterwards that as the nurses and doctors checked over data that realisation that the acerbic and brilliant doctor had been the guardian angel of the hospital's patients.



In the past fifteen years these appearances have become a permanent fixture of local legend, as well as additional revenue for the hospital. Several documentaries have been made and Bollywood has made two films centred around it. The documentaries are all pretty cut rate jobs all claiming to know the truth of the mystery and some of them are pretty outlandish. The nuggets of truth must be in there, some claim it's an AI; others that it's actually a conspiracy of medical staff to test illegal or at least unapproved pharmaceuticals. The movies are better; one was a retelling of the Phantom of the Opera, but transposed into a hospital setting, and the second was a horror story where an inbred mutant from the outback had got in and was playing "doctor" with the nursing staff.

Doctor Matron is a pseudonym for one of the most talented if unconventional medical minds of the century. In the early part of the twenty first century before The Death, and even before The Deluge, a young man came to work in a minor administrative position in the Public Health Service. As he spent more time within the hospital he began to absorb medical knowledge to help improve the patient's situation by deciphering exactly what was wrong, what was needed and the urgency of each situation and, after years of unofficial study he had attained an impressive medical knowledge rivalling and in some cases exceeding the actual doctors.

Unfortunately such dedication and acquired learning is rarely recognised or rewarded in professional circles. As public healthcare was torn apart he was one of many forced into retirement during the cuts intended to stave off the vultures for a little longer. Somewhat bitter and unwilling to let go of what for so long had dominated his life he took voluntary work within the hospital and began his own clandestine work, building a laboratory deep within the Ratways of AAHU Prime.

Utilising the knowledge gleaned over years of dedicated service and his own skills with information technology, he created a network and system that gave him full access to the myriad of research projects. Doctor Matron uses a high level virtual intelligence called #Recovery to coordinate the current data and unreleased findings of the hundreds of researchers, allowing him to get ahead of them and make scientific leaps. The most famous example stems from his first appearance; the Kettering Immuno-Suppressant is now used worldwide to treat cases of Biosystem Overstress.

With the advent of engram tech in 2088, he has used the technology to implant a viral personality engram into the menial and administrative simulacrum within the hospital. The recipients now all share his desire to improve the state of the A&H system. However those infected with the engram at each synchronisation have been moving closer to a gestalt personality and they become more alike and their original personalities are beginning to atrophy.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** We're just scratching the surface on engrams and their applications in society. That said, Dr. Matron's use of engrams is somewhat unethical.

**#Simba:** The ends justify the means, Billy.

**#Luciferion:** Agreed, Simba. I wish he working in Chicagoland.

# New Zealand

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: KIWIVOICE.NEWS.NZL

FQDN: KIWIVOICE.NEWS.NZL.12TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

#KEEN

**Posted By:** #Christine "Keen" Fergusson (BA, MA, PhD), New Zealand Ministry of Cultural Sanitation

Compared to most places out there, New Zealand is a paradise, and we plan to keep it that way. That does not mean we Kiwis are unfriendly or inhospitable. A lot of us are only second or third generation after all. However, during the bad years, when it seemed like the whole world wanted refuge, we got used to picking newcomers pretty carefully and that has held over even now.

Our islands are small and unspoiled. We do not want big industry chewing up our farms and forests. New Zealanders live by brain power, innovation, not grunt work. If you want ideas or designs, come to us. If you want sweatshops, go a little further north and try Australia, they might lick your boots for half a credit.

**#Cloud Spinner:** That's for sure! Ever wonder why Kiwi motors is based out of Australia? We'll do the designing, marketing, and all the other smart work. Let the Aussies get dirty making the actual cars.

**#Gondwan:** No, it was always there. Used to be called Holden motors before we developed the hydro cell. Sure, the buyout was two slaps in the face, but what could they do?

Kiwis understand that the minds of our people are our greatest resource and give education the attention it deserves. We have more PHDs per capita than any other country in the world. Only a few of the planetary colonies can claim a better educated population and they are mostly still relying on immigration. However, we never make a fetish of "progress."

For us, it is all about finding solutions that fit our way of life. Our good life. Humans are not meant to live in sterile environments. The natural world is important to us and our health; both physical and mental. We believe that all people should be able to walk barefoot through grass, climb a tree, swim in the ocean, and eat food plucked directly from the vine or branch. This is how humans evolved and our natures have not changed.

## HOW WE GOT HERE

When the Floods came, Kiwis had to adapt or die. Sacrificing everything in hopes of keeping the water from sweeping over a few cities did not make any sense. It was easier to just move inland a bit and start over. The mountains, forests, and meadows were still there. Why break our backs and sell our souls for pavement?

Still, it gave us a chance to think about the kind of country we wanted to live in, to pass on to our children, and we took it. We built platforms and floats above the drowned places-allowing us, on a smaller scale, to reclaim our lost cities. Most of us, connected digitally and then eventually by TAP, decided we wanted more room than you can find in a city.

We are not insects or burrowing animals seeking dark and cramped surroundings. Comfort matters to us. Our homes and workplaces are cosy and cheerful. And, by the way, as a quick word of advice to outsiders, none of us think hobbit jokes are very funny.

The end of oil had already taught us not to rely too much on one energy source. We used everything we could think of: solar, tidal, geothermal, biofuel. However, it was our hydrocell technology that changed the game.

The income, and spinoffs, from HC gave us a measure of freedom few other nations had. We knew this was a luxury but we still took full advantage. After all, it was our brains and climate of innovation that built that particular lifeboat. We earned it.

Our government treated immigration policy as a strategic resource. Everyone saw New Zealand as the last refuge in a world gone mad. For more than a generation we could select the best and the brightest from the entire world. Our average national IQ rose by 10 full points.

**#Cloud Spinner:** Smartest people in the world! That's us!

**#Gondwan:** IQ measures only one segment of intelligence. It's a pretty poor indicator of future success. And she's not mentioning what we did to within our population to "improve" the country either. My grandfather was almost deemed on the spectrum. My father was lucky he was allowed to be born.

**#Cloud Spinner:** Careful. Outsiders are going to read this. She's from cultural sanitation remember.

## HOW THINGS WORK

In New Zealand everyone gets at least one vote. Even high school grads or drop outs deserve some kind of voice. Of course, every actual degree earned means an additional vote. The people capable of doing the most for the country deserve to have a greater say. That's common sense. Education is a right as much as medical care or nano. When considering people who refuse to, or simply cannot, improve themselves we must be realistic about the contribution they can make.

We use paper ballots for our elections. That is not just for tradition, it also keeps hackers from playing games like over in Australia. However, it does mean we cannot clutter up our elections with a lot of initiatives and minor offices. Once we pick the party we support it is up to them to decide who actually sits in the legislature and then up to the members to get down to governing. After all, we elect them for a reason.

A lot of the daily work gets done by civil servants such as myself. Our current PM, Myles Eldridge, and his colleagues in the Clarity party set policy in the legislature but it is up to us to interpret and implement it. This does provide a measure of continuity as cabinets change. For instance, if Clarity were to lose the next election to Unity my day to day routine would not change all that much. In New Zealand, the voters agree on the important issues and the political parties reflect this consensus. Politicians debate tactics and priorities not the overall goals of our society.

We Kiwis value harmony; with visitors, each other, and nature. Though relatively few of us actually live in the reborn cities and coastal towns we welcome Rovers whenever they visit. It is a matter of pride to know they consider our islands anchor

ports where they are always welcome. Though our focus on higher end products means we have fewer dealings with them than Australia, they are still a vital part of our economy.

> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** I don't know that all of you kiwis accept Rovers . I've seen footage of Rovers getting beaten half to death fior docking in the wrong harbor.

Unfortunately, the wounds of prior centuries still continue to fester within our Maori minority. Though we all, especially us at the Ministry, take great pain to accommodate their sensibilities there is still noticeable friction with the Maori. While this is likely the greatest source of internal tension, and proof that New Zealand still has a way to go, in truth most Maori are happy and well-adjusted members of the mainstream. They go to our schools, work in our businesses, and take part in our national life equally with all other citizens.

> **#Cloud Spinner:** That's right. Some of my best friends are Maori. They're just like the rest of us.
>
> **#Luciferion:** @Cloud Spinner: Do you realize how racist that statement was?

Kiwis often find ways to incorporate the natural world into our research projects or industry. For instance, long before the coming of the Floods and the Death we were renowned for our flocks of sheep. The sheep are still with us; often performing their traditional roles. However, many labs also use sheep to produce bio-constructs by incubating them within the wombs of ewes left to graze beneath the warm sun. We believe the success rate of our bio-constructs compared to those produced in sterile vats more than speaks for itself. Many sheep also provide us with varieties of wool engineered to serve an assortment of useful purposes. If you take a close look at New Zealand you can find many similar examples of how we work in harmony with nature.

> **#Simba:** This article read like a tourist pamphlet. The Maori problem is much worse than the New Zealand government would have you believe. And all this talk about sheep and alleged harmony with nature? Yeah, go ahead and take a look, omae. You won't find a single source that hasn't been doctored. Hell, even this message seems to have been cut short. I wonder why?
>
> **#Cloud Spinner:** @Simba: Damm mate, you're a paranoid blighter aren't ya"
>
> **#Simba:** I don't know what a blighter is, but as for paranoid; heh. Try living in my neck of the woods for a while and you'll find that paranoia is good for the soul.

# CHINA AND THE MANDARINATE

#INFOSOURCE

#VID.TAG.MANDARIN

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

DATA SOURCE: MANDARIN.GOV.CHINA.17TN.TPN.SWW.GNET/CGOUZHI

**Posted By:** #Chou Gouzhi, Mandarinate Eunuch and spokesman for the Ministry of Proper Thought

The cycle has turned and once again, as history demands, China, the middle kingdom, rests at the heart of the world. All those seeking wisdom and enlightenment must begin by embracing that simple truth; China endures. We are the last, and most prevailing, of the ancient civilizations.

We rise and we fall and then we rise again. For, while we are rarely equalled in war, commerce, or invention, in truth, our greatest strength lies in our culture and our civilization. The great virtues of the Chinese way sustains us, keeps us whole as a people when history tries to make us weak.

This is why we consciously blend the new with the old. Unlike other peoples, chasing flash and novelty, we preserve the ancient ways even as we embrace progress. For, as it is written, those who forget the start of their journey have no hope of reaching the end. China endures.

We in the Mandarinate understand the value of the Chinese way and that is why we have chosen to pass this gift onto other nations. Today, many of our neighbors are sheltered beneath the umbrella of China. Ruled by mandarins educated and tested side by side with our own they have earned the great prosperity and the peace that comes with the Chinese way.

**#TurtlesallthewayDown:** Pretty full of nemself huh?

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Nemself? WTF?

**#Wolfson:** It's a neuter pronoun, Billy.

**#PandaStride:** You know those mandarin eunuchs. They're all pompous.

**#TurtlesallthewayDown:** Sure, but even with that he seems to have a little extra dose of that conceit. Probably why he ended up in the Ministry of Proper Thought.

## Place

To understand China, you must first grasp that we value harmony above all. Each person in this world has a place, a role, which he, she, or ne must fulfil in order to find happiness and to serve society as a whole. Those unable to find, or fill, their place are not rebels or criminals. They are damaged and deserve compassion rather than scorn. All efforts to help people and nations find their proper place demonstrate an empathy that many outsiders cannot understand. The scandalous reports claiming that we employ re-education camps and other sorts of horrors are fabrications!

Place is not a matter of destiny or lineage but rather one of innate abilities and temperament. Anyone can rise or fall based on how they perform on the exams and evaluations that are the most important part of our education system. These tests begin at a very early age. Indeed the original exams determine what sort of education a child is best suited to receive. The Mandarinate is first and foremost a meritocracy. No other system ever devised places such an emphasis on efficiency and fairness.

**#HoleintheWall:** Oh, they're fair alright. It's just a coincidence that the children of the elite tend to do much better on all the tests that really matter.

These tests ensure that every citizen of the Mandarinate is assigned the job, or life task, most in keeping with his, her, or nes talents and personality. Of course, with age and experience, people might advance somewhat, for instance, moving from worker to supervisor or salaried employee to business owner, but the scientific nature of determining place ensures that no significant errors are ever made. Outsiders can never truly understand the joy it gives us to know that we perfectly fit the task assigned to us. This helps to explain our legendary work ethic and productivity.

## The New Mandarins Rise

The Communists destroyed themselves through self-inflicted wounds. Though they brought about great prosperity and growth they pursued these goals through unnatural means. While this was clear in many different fields the one child only policy was ultimately their greatest blunder.

When that first generation of only children reached adulthood, they realized that the Communists had allowed parents to favor boys over girls. Millions of young men recognized that they were doomed to lives of loneliness. That they would never marry. They would die unmourned by children and grandchildren. Restive and outraged, they looked for someone to blame and their eyes quite naturally fell upon the Communists.

The New Mandarins, as the first generation of the Mandarinate called themselves, took this fury and channelled it to productive means. They overthrew the Communists and gave these lost young men a cause to fill their otherwise empty lives. Many historians call the spread of the Mandarinate to neighboring countries the "Bachelor Wars," but I consider that a rather crude simplification of something much greater and far more pure.

**#FangFan:** Ne's not even talking about our great scientific achievements. Just a bunch of politics.

**#InkBlot:** Wonder how long they will talk about the broken children…

**#FangFan:** I should have known you'd bring that up! Yes, mistakes were made, but look at what ultimately came from those terrible experiments.

**#Inkblot:** Our new ruling class? Human 2.0.

**#FangFan:** Sure why not. One day every baby will get improved as a matter of course. And those experiments also lead to a lot of other advances in biotech. Brazil might strut around but we Chinese are the real leaders not them.

**#Inkblot:** Yeah that's right. Every child will get the 2.0 treatment right around the time the elite follows Shen Wei into her dubber's paradise.

Sadly, it was the Death that truly established the Mandarinate as a force for good. Even more than the catastrophe of the Floods the Death put everyone no more than a few meals away from barbarism or even the grave. Some claim that China actually took food and other needed resources from our mandarinate allies. That is false! Unacceptable! A lie so terrible it offends me even to mention it. All records from that time clearly show that China was a net exporter of food and other essentials. We were the bulwark that maintained civilization.

## The Thawed Lands

The Floods wrought many changes upon our planet. The thawed lands, formerly called Siberia, are no exception. A new climate tamed the once legendary winters. In the early days, during the transition, great tracts of mud crept across the tundra and many parts of the deep forests. This all but destroyed the roads, railways, and power grids that Russia used to keep the oppressed peoples of those lands under its ruthless boot.

For generations, the Mandarinate devoted enormous effort towards improving the conditions of our mandarinate allies in the thawed lands. There was peace, prosperity, and progress for those who embraced the Chinese way. Recently, as the reports of geologists and ecologists grew ever more favourable, we rejoiced that the great fortune about to befall the thawed lands.

Within a decade, as the climate finally adapts to the changes caused by the Floods, the thawed lands are poised to become one of the most fertile and bountiful areas in the entire planet. Amazingly, this great fecundity is actually overmatched by the influx of wealth from oil and minerals Indeed, many in the Mandarinate talked of changing the name of the thawed lands to the blessed lands.

Of course, this promise of great prosperity has stirred the greed of the Russian locusts. When the Charon virus threw the world — especially the EU — into chaos, Russia seized this opportunity to launch a series of provocations against our forces stationed within the thawed lands. Unacceptable! Our strictly defensive garrisons suffered great loses through these wanton terrorists assaults. Though China and her Mandarinate allies love peace, we have had no choice but to launch a series of pre-emptive retaliations against the Russian aggressor.

**#DreadfulBear:** "Pre-emptive retaliation?" Wow, what a load of crap! Nice spin on how a bunch of horny Chinese soldiers tried to conquer half the world. They invaded us and plain out stole Siberia along with the rest of our Asian holdings when were distracted by the Death and the Floods.

**#VodkaSpiller:** Like ne said, you abandoned the thawed lands and now you have adopted terrorist tactics against us. The bombings, raids, and attacks on air cars were bad enough. But when you guys assassinated General Meng you went too far.

**#DreadfulBear:** Meng? @Vodka ...You mean the war hero who spoke out against Shen Wei and all her allies dubbing themselves into digital immortality? The general who got reassigned to a backwater as punishment? And of course, for some reason, we waited until we were almost crippled by the Charon virus to launch this "provocation" huh? Isn't it strange how we only seem to attack China when we are in no position to defend ourselves from your "retaliation"? #n00b.

Russian belligerence caused their forces to overreach and they have suffered epic defeats. Regular troops as well as elite soldiers drawn from all twelve types of the celestial legion have performed heroically. Thousands of dragons patrol our lines. Ranging from jade observers all the way up to gem class battle drones we have the firepower to destroy anything Russia sends at us. We have also decanted tens of thousands of Sons of Qin who stand ready to give their very lives for the principles of the Chinese way.

**#VodkaSpiller:** Yes! Noting you have can match our celestials and dragons!

**#DreadfulBear:** Okay, back up a minute. The dragons are unmanned drones with AI and remote operators. The celestials are hybrids, for some reason tied to your zodiac, not sure why you'd want horse or pig soldiers, whatever. But what are these Sons of Qin?

**#VodkaSpiller:** Combat sims. Named for the terracotta soldiers who guard the first Qin emperor. We don't make as much use of sims as other countries but they are part of our strategic reserve.

Many legends were made during that winter war. For instance, the cowardly raid carried out by the so called "New Cossacks," which we repelled during a fierce five day struggle. Using snow mobiles, instead of the traditional horses, tens of thousands of troops on both sides waged an almost classical cavalry battle barely a decade from the start of the twenty-second century. Were it not for a paralyzing blizzard on the second day we likely would have prevailed far sooner, but even without the air support of our dragons, the Mandarinate did ultimately prevail.

This temporary setback prompted us to reassign many units from the Ministry of Sun and Rain to the thawed lands for the remaining duration of the war. Though this could make weather less certain in the remainder of the Mandarinate, all acknowledge the necessity of the sacrifice. No one wants our troops to suffer through another blizzard if we have the means to prevent it.

In addition to regular Russian forces some of our units also reported clashes with irregulars moving through the snow. Our brave soldiers intercepted some of these groups and discovered that many of them are actually foreign mercenaries and bandits claiming loyalty to the so called cause of "liberty." Those who fight for pay or plunder have no honor.

**#DreadfulBear:** I'm as surprised as anyone about all the volunteers coming in from the EU and beyond to help fight off the Mandarinate forces. Some are descended from refugees who fled the initial conquest of Siberia but a lot of them have no connection. They just want to resist tyranny before it arrives at their doorsteps. And, not surprisingly, ne isn't talking about the native Siberians who joined up as a scouts and guides. Guess not everyone loves their "paradise." But I'm not surprised that the Mandarinate continues to muck around with the weather. They've learned nothing from the Floods!

**#VodkaSpiller:** The Floods are the reason why we have devoted so much research into weather control. The Mandarinate have made famines and coastal disasters manageable problems. One day we shall eliminate them altogether.

## Perfection and Preservation

All cities have different cultural zones designed to represent the architecture and living styles of past eras. Though our cities are still mostly devoted to the present day, one can walk through the ages simply by passing through neighborhoods dedicated to the various centuries.

Most of our countryside is similarly dedicated to preserving the old ways. That is another reason why so many of our people are selected to live as peasants just like our ancestors in countless generations past. Yes, peasants have it much harder than city dwellers since even those in cultural zones are free to use modern conveniences inside their homes. However, this is why we reserve peasantry only for those unable to serve the Mandarinate in any other useful way. This allows even them to contribute.

Rumors of the early 21st century industrialization creating massive ecological disasters in our pristine countryside and infrastructure are entirely unfounded and fabricated by poor lost souls like the Russians who do not yet know their place.

## Understanding the Ministries

Finally, before moving on to a discussion of our mandarinate allies, I think it only fitting to offer a brief explanation of the ministries and how the Mandarinate — the greatest system ever devised — regulates itself. As mentioned, we are a meritocracy. The best of us are selected at a very early age to join one of the thirty-five ministries that organize our society.

As always, place determines our rank. Some become functionaries, others junior Mandarins, and our most gifted and enlightened, senior Mandarins. Members of each group arrive at their own hierarchies based on experience and their TAP but senior Mandarins always outrank their juniors in the same way that junior Mandarins outrank mere functionaries and average citizens.

The ministries constantly negotiate for position and place amongst themselves both in the Mandarinate as a whole and in various districts. This helps to determine who has ultimate authority when dealing with issues that concern more than one ministry. Each region, and the Mandarinate as a whole, has a coordinating council made up of representatives of all ministries. When individual ministries cannot settle an issue the councils must step in and make the final decision. While no one person is every truly paramount on a council some do earn greater place than others strictly on their own merits and talents.

For instance, Shen Wei, the first woman to ever earn a seat on the Mandarinate board, is widely viewed as one of the wisest voices in our entire society. The fact that she is also one of the oldest of the neo humans — 2.0 as you Westerners call them — is mostly coincidental. When she suffered great injury in a car accident and her body began to fail it seemed only natural to try and preserve her mind and essence through dubbing.

Some considered this controversial at the time. But now, a scant two years later, nearly a quarter of the Mandarinate board has joined her. As Shen Wei and her colleagues enjoy their existence in this digital afterlife we can all take comfort in knowing that we finally have achieved the harmony all true citizens of the Mandarinate crave.

**#TurtlesallthewayDown:** Harmony? How do you think leaders who never die are going to treat the next crop of wannabes?

**#PandaStride:** That's pretty obvious. Kill them. Or get killed in turn. Maybe induct a few they can control. It's a pretty tempting offer. Ruling forever. But there's only so many seats at the table.

**#TurtlesallthewayDown:** Exactly! Can't they see this is going to tear the Mandarinate apart?

**#PandaStride:** Admitting that would require a lot of guts. Something mandarins aren't noted for having. Despite all the nonsense about colleagues Shen Wei runs the whole damn Mandarinate. If you try to pull her plug or even just push her aside she'll crush you. Easier just to pretend.

## Mandarinate Allies

The obvious superiority of the Chinese way has made the Mandarinate welcome far beyond our own borders. Many of our neighbors have demonstrated proper wisdom by embracing the peace and prosperity that comes from the Chinese way. Countless peoples and lands have joined together to benefit from the blending of the best of ancient and modern that defines the Mandarinate.

**#DreadfulBear:** What a crock of shit. Everyone knows that their neighbors are nothing more than vassal states. The Mandarinate allows the illusion of sovreignity, but they secretly dictate the foreign and domestic policies of these so-called nations. And if a territory gets out of line, you can be damned sure the dragon is there to set things straight; with force if need-be.

### TAIWAN

When the communists fell the reason that had kept Taiwan separate from the mainland fell with them. However, the first generation of Mandarins recognized that the culture and politics of the island had followed a path different from the rest of China. They feared that bringing Taiwan back under direct rule might destroy what had made it distinctive and unique. Instead, they established broad guidelines and gave the island a great deal of local autonomy.

Unfortunately, it is almost entirely dominated by one of the densest sprawls in the Mandarinate. This is likely where the slanders about Taiwan as a hotbed of crime and unrest come from. In truth, the population is content and well looked after. It is home to a vital space port and a critical gateway to our colonies in the rest of the solar system.

**#FormosaMore:** It wasn't about preserving our culture but keeping us from contaminating the rest of China. They didn't trust us and they still don't.

### THAILAND

In the years leading up to, and immediately after, the fall of the Communists in China two factions, the Red shirts and the Blue shirts, had all but destroyed the Thai economy by driving away tourists and sabotaging industry. Though the rivalry had begun before the assassination of the king and the murder of the rest of the royal family it only got worse during the political crisis. Due to the chaos the Thai people welcomed the Mandarinate's humanitarian intervention and became one of the fastest to embrace the Chinese way.

Rather than try to rebuild the tourist trade and modernize what was left of their manufacturing base, the newly minted Mandarin government of Thailand instead, without any prompting from the Mandarinate itself, choose to focus on agriculture and traditional crafts. The Mandarinate still pursues the vile assassin of the Royal family, true to its promise to the peoples of Thailand.

**#YesIAm:** Don't let them fool you. We are the Mandarinate's plan for everywhere. Peasants, nothing but peasants and few administrators delivering quotas of food to the Chinese masters. They were the assassins of our beloved King.

**#JadeEye:** Aren't you being a little bit excitable? You still have cities after all.

**#YesIAm:** Bangkok's maybe a third the size of what it once was and the others are even smaller. And what about the preserves the Mandarinate oversees? What's really going on it there?

**#JadeEye:** Clearly they are exactly as they seem. Nature preserves. A trust we take on behalf of the Thai people.

**#YesIAm:** Whatever. Siam will rise again. And soon.

### SINGAPORE

Though in many ways similar to Taiwan, the island of Singapore chose a very different response to the floods. Rather than fashion walls to keep the water out they instead opted to build up. Over decades, as the waters rose they put down a new layer on top of the roofs of their existing homes and buildings. It earned them the nickname, "people of the new mountain", which they embraced with pride.

Thanks to the wisdom of their Mandarin leaders, the Singaporeans took the precaution of carefully sealing off the original layer of their island. This has given them an enormous space, virtually a second city, beneath the waters. Rather than let that area go to waste the native Singaporeans welcomed guest workers from all over the Mandarinate to live peaceful and contented lives within the shelter of their lower island. There, working in safe and clean environments, they produce many vital goods benefiting the entire Mandarinate. Though, as guest workers, they have little influence in the local government, they must eventually go home after all, Singapore has nevertheless set up special venues for them to resolve disputes.

**#NotyouraverageTiger:** Ne doesn't mention that native Singaporeans are almost all ethnic Chinese.

**#Pearlsb4Swine:** Why would that matter?

**#NotyouraverageTiger:** Because the "guest workers" who have "little influence in local government" certainly aren't. Some of them have been there for a couple generations but they're still outsiders.

**#Pearlsb4Swine:** That's what the dispute resolution ne mentioned is for.

### VIETNAM

In Vietnam, formerly celebrated for its ecological diversity, the floods and long "nuclear autumn" of the Death dealt the entire land a terrible, shattering blow. Countless species of plants and animals were wiped out during those dark times. As the Vietnamese came to realize the true magnitude of their loss, many of them began to fall prey to a form of depression which, in the local language, best translates as "the privation."

In time many Vietnamese turned to genetics and biochemistry in hopes of recreating what they could no longer find in the natural world. They had considerable success but also many, sometimes quite tragic, failures. As the years passed, the Vietnamese have earned a reputation as some of the most cunning and dedicated gene splicers on the planet. Though they prefer to organize into thousands of tiny, usually portable,

labs instead of large institutions they are still recognized as important contributors to Mandarinate science.

**#GettingHanoid:** Ne isn't talking about the drugs and all the other dirty stuff some of us get sucked into.

**#ThisYuansForYou:** The Vietnamese all but revere the environment. You can't seriously expect me to believe they're mucking around with those sorts of things.

**#GettingHanoid:** Not all of us are saints.

///THREAD JACK///

LOADING...

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: EDEN ZOO

Located in Singapore, the cyber-attraction known as Eden Zoo has gained some popularity in the years it has been open. Being a niche entertainment center for those who wish to not only see creatures from "the Past, Present, and Future all in one place" (as the founder, J.A. Mosswood — lead engineer and tech, as well as head of Axxel Engineering — said at the ribbon-cutting ceremony in 2021), but also where many of the latest innovations in cybernetics can be seen on display — and for sale.

Located on the coast of Singapore, Eden Zoo, was one of the only few places to have a sea wall built to keep out the rising waters (other parts of the island had used other methods). The complex is divided into several main sections: the two domes (housing past and future creatures), the four-story main building, and the Oceanica "pool" where all manner of aquatic creatures can be seen. Aside from being a place to study cybernetic creatures mixed with fully-living ones, an asylum for creatures who are either endangered or amongst the last of their kind, and a cybernetics lab, the zoo allows geneticists and cyberneticists to study their latest findings in the form of prehistoric creatures.

All facility functions are overseen by various drones and bots who operate under the purview of a vast AI known as A.P.R.I.L. (Advanced Protocol "R" Interface Life form). A.P.R.I.L. ensures all the animals (living and cyber) are maintained according to her vast library of zoological data. Zoologists and paleontologists from around the world pay a hefty premium to be able to study with Eden's top-ranked scientists in these fields. It should be noted that while the public who pass through daily believe the prehistoric dinosaurs and such to be real work of genetic manipulation, the truth is that these are really nothing more than "dumb" bioroids — creatures that are an amalgam of biological and mechanical. Their "thought processes" are really sophisticated processors granting the semblance of life.

## ZOO LAYOUT

As explained previously, Eden Zoo is composed of several main sites and facilities. When the zoo was originally conceived, it was to be a pair of geodesic domes, a main facility for the staff, and the ocean pool (nicknamed "Oceanica" by the staffers). A few secondary buildings have been added to house manufacturing and secondary mainframe functions, but the zoo remains as it did when built in 2021.

## THE DOMES

There are two massive geodesic domes over 100 meters in diameter that dominate the zoo. Each one is labeled. One is called "The Past" and the other is "The Future." As guests enter into each of them, they get a glimpse of what life was like before mankind rose to dominance, and what mankind thinks he may encounter on trips beyond our solar system (or possibly on local planets).

## DOME ONE — THE PAST

Organized into a variety of levels, each with various guide bots to help the visitors along (and to translate for out of town guests), Dome One houses cybernetic drones wrapped in bio-synthetic skins that mimic what paleontologists believe to be the skin ancient dinosaurs had wrapped around their skeletons. There's talk amongst the Singapore low-life community that AxE has developed state of the art creatures that can change their basic structure. While they can't change their mass, they can go from something of similar size (say a saber tooth tiger) to a t-rex with a command from A.P.R.I.L. As impressive as this sounds, it rumored that similar "smart toys" may be up for sale in the next issue of the Malmart Catalog.

However, the Past dome doesn't just contain cybernetic robotic "toys." It also contains specialized habitats for animals that are on the endangered species list and at high risk of being wiped out by mankind. These areas are protected by some of the best physical security and intrusion software Axxel Engineering can buy. In addition, A.P.R.I.L. can call upon a veritable army of bots and sentries to keep out any would-be intruders (as some of these species can command a princely sum on the Black Market).

One last thing that some find to be unusual, but once they learn about the reasonings, many come to understand them. Within the fields and habitats created for the cybernetic dinosaurs, Eden also hosts an array of mythical creatures such as Unicorns, Griffons, Dragons, and so forth roam about.

## DOME TWO — THE FUTURE

The second massive dome is home to what scientists and experts believe man will find out in the wilderness of space. As we continue to move out from our homeworld, we can expect to encounter all manner of species — some of which we may not even recognize as sentient. As strange as this may sound, Axxel Engineering consulted with many of the top recognized science-fiction writers to help design their "Future" displays.

Many of them are completely taken from hokey sci-fi trids such as sauriuan lizard men, and cat-like races. Yet, there are some novel concepts like the "ooze of Cyrax IV" and some things that allow visitors to guess which is the creature and which is the habitat. Robotic creatures also exist here, as it would stand to reason that mankind's first encounter with an alien species may be something similar (albeit more sophisticated) to the Voyager and Mariner probes sent out in the late 20th Century.

## OCEANICA

This is what tends to be the biggest draw to Eden Zoo. Combined with many real-life ocean life forms, visitors who come to Eden and travel along the pathways find themselves staring through transparent polymer to witness the vast array of life that lives in our oceans. Everything from eels and exotic fish, to ancient sea turtles and deep-sea whales dwell within the harbor of Oceanica. A.P.R.I.L. has many bots that also go out and monitor the "wellness" of the ocean. While each creature is fed, some (like the variety of sharks) must hunt.

The bots ensure this happens, but within secluded niches formed into the reefs and study areas. During the zoo hours, Eden hosts a variety of shows from dolphin acts and seals, to trained orcas and other variety of aquatic life forms. Aquatic hybrids are also a prominent feature in Oceana, living with, and caring for the creatures with whom they share DNA.

## CENTER COMPLEX

Eden Zoo is nearly self-sufficient in terms of energy. They take very little from the local power grids as the water turbines, wind machines, and solar collectors do an excellent job of making this place a self-sustaining wonder of creatures great and small.

The central complex is four stories above ground. It houses A.P.R.I.L.'s mainframe systems, and offices for the various scientists, zoologists, geneticists, and cyberneticists that help keep the park operational and study the complex life forms within.

It's lowest levels contain the manufacturing facilities and design labs for the zoo's cybernetics and biotechnology. Giant AI-controlled machines grind out parts for the cybernetics according to the designer's precise instructions (and a little help from A.P.R.I.L.), while tanks bubble and churn with the growth of new skins for grafting. Many medical fields have been expanded because of these creations.

However, it's also rumored that in the late hours, men with severe ailments or injuries are brought here to the doctors operating the cybernetics and bio-genetic divisions. They say that for the right price, a person can have specialized grafts, upgraded cybernetics, or even nano-treatments. Since A.P.R.I.L. is programmed for the welfare of the facility, it's unlikely this is more than just a rumor.

## CONCLUSION

Overall, Singapore's marvelous Eden Zoo continues to test the bounds of zoological science, as well as expands the fields of both cybernetics and bio-genetics, which help keep the Megacorporation donors happy, Axxel Engineering happy, and the populace of Singapore happy.

///END THREAD JACK///

**#Neon_Bright:** I've been here before. The place is creepy; especially at night.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** What brought you to Singapore, chica?

**#Neon_Bright:** Nunnyas, Billy. :P

**#Bulan867:** Eden Zoo very freeky-deeky chooba. A.P.R.I.L not just a protector A.I. She do more. Come to Singapore. Bulan show you things you eyes won't believe.

**#Neon_Bright:** Grammar fail.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Bulan's native tongue is obviously not English. Give him a break.

## War and the Charon Virus

Alas, as happens far too often in the world, disharmony from the outside has caused great suffering to many within the Mandarinate. Russia's tantrums and the economic chaos sparked by the Charon virus have had a noticeable impact on a number of our mandarinate allies, and even China itself. Though we pride ourselves on self-sufficiency we are still connected with the rest of the world. This means ripples from even faraway places can disturb the tranquility we have labored so long to create. As our butterflies cause storms, a pebble dropped in a distant land creates waves on our shores.

The drastic reduction in imports from — and exports to — the EU has disrupted many of our own native industries. Workers in numerous places have been forced into idleness due to the failure of a critical product or material to arrive on schedule, if at all. Even worse, many customers in the EU have cancelled or even refused to pay for orders Mandarinate companies have delivered in good faith. Though, in the long run, Europe's economic collapse is likely an opportunity for China, for the moment it has placed great strain on our economy.

Of course, considering the opportunism of the Russian beast this could not have happened at a worst time. Virtually everyone in the Mandarinate has been forced to make some sort of sacrifice to help with the war effort. The peace loving and hyper-efficient Mandarinate is simply not designed to support protracted warfare without incurring an economic cost. Rationing and redeployment of resources for the war effort have only increased the damage caused by the Charon recession.

Unacceptable!

Though no one would compare losing a job or business to the sacrifices made by our troops on behalf of our mandarinate allies in the thawed lands, the suffering of the common people is yet another indictment to lay against the murderously subhuman Russians when they are finally brought to account.

## The Forlorn

Sadly, not everyone has demonstrated proper wisdom and clarity of thought. Though most of our neighbors have embraced the Chinese way and cheerfully become our mandarinate allies a few still live in error. We feel great sorrow for them but know in time they too shall know the peace and prosperity that comes from accepting the Chinese way. Rather than catalogue all of the forlorn and describe the heavy prices they have paid for their foolish stubbornness let us consider just two; Indonesia and the Philippines.

### INDONESIA

None of the vast number of islands that made up the Indonesian archipelago passed through the Floods unscathed. Many of them actually disappeared entirely — forcing their populations to search for new homes. A fortunate few of these refugees were welcomed into the Mandarinate but most were simply pushed into the reduced and already crowded territories of neighboring islands. Some of them even suffered the saddest fate of all and were left with no choice but to abandon land entirely, joining the throng of those treacherous vagabonds who call themselves Rovers.

> **#GreatDalang:** Those "fortunate few" were Han and other ethnic Chinese allowed back in their ancestral homeland. The Mandarinate wasn't too interested in helping the rest of us.
>
> **#LongLun:** The Mandarinate sent thousands of aid workers and what did we get for our kindness? Terrorists!

Many terrorist networks, criminal gangs, and pirate armadas have bases hidden somewhere within these smaller islands. However, these almost traditional sorts of illicit groups are nearly quaint when compared to some of the others that also call Indonesia home. AI cults, renegade scientists determined to carry out forbidden experiments, and warbands of rogue sims battle with countless bands of memers dedicated to promoting whatever crazy notion beat through the spam filters of their TAP and infected their minds. Devotees of ideas too bizarre or dangerous to survive anywhere else flourish amongst Indonesia's smaller islands. That simple fact demonstrates the need to bring the Chinese way to Indonesia before it is too late.

### THE PHILIPPINES

Some, whether through ignorance or malice, claim the Philippines are already a part of the Mandarinate. This is simply untrue. Sadly, they have yet to embrace the Chinese way. The incident of 2084, where protestors in Manila called for withdrawal from the Mandarinate was the result of a devious propaganda campaign aimed at the most woefully uninformed segment of Filipinos. Though one hesitates to point the finger of blame, clearly Brazil benefited the most from the international outrage that ensued when we were forced to defend our embassy from the rioters.

> **#Luciferion:** Brazil's behind a great many things, especially in Asia, and the Mandarinate have a reason to worry about Brasillia moving in on their territory, especially now that they are fighting the Russians.
>
> **#Longlun:** You don't know shit round eye. The Mandarinate has nothing to fear from Brazil!

In truth, as with all of our neighbors, we wish nothing but the best for our Filipino friends and know that one day they too shall enjoy the peace and prosperity of the Chinese way. However, we also understand that time has not yet come. In fact, the religious mania and fanaticism that grips the Philippines makes it even more difficult for them to accept the obvious benefits of embracing the Chinese way.

Many find it curious that the floods and the Death, which all but shattered Indonesia, had the opposite effect on another island archipelago, the Philippines. Even as space became more crowded the survivors simply drew deeper upon their faith and refused to split into warring camps. Some of their most revered religious figures from that time are religious leaders who martyred themselves to preserve what they called "God's Peace."

# THE INDIA LEAGUE

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: INDIALEAGUE.INF.JP

FQDN: INDIA.INF.JP.15TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

**Posted by:** #Kali76

India's history has always been marred with strife, even as the country itself sought to achieve a cultural identity. For centuries, the blended nation of Hindi, Muslim, and Buddhist believers clashed for control of the citizen's souls, but even these wars took second fiddle to conflicts with the occupying British, the nearby Chinese, and the perennial rivals to the north in Pakistan.

By 2015, many thought that India would become the next great manufacturing giant with a massive workforce eager to join the industrialized world. Certainly, India's leaders pushed in that direction, though continued saber-rattling with Pakistan led to circumstances that none could have foreseen.

Both India and Pakistan achieved nuclear capability in the late 20th Century, and while both countries had kept the nuclear option as their "ace in the hole" for years, no one really thought that either side would utilize that option. That is, however, until the perfect storm of tensions that resulted in the nuclear exchange commonly known as The Death.

In 2028, newly elected Indian President and well known nationalist, Ranajay Naman, began pushing the Central Government of India towards increased industrialization, a stronger national infrastructure, and a better sense of secular national identity. Pakistan was still recovering from the assassination of their Premier, Sohan Swarit, at the hands of a criminally insane American zealot. Swarit's replacement, Batuk Abhiraj, had attempted to bolster Pakistan's floundering economy and gain support amongst Pakistani fundamentalists by supporting Iran's war against Israel. However, the devastation caused throughout the Middle East was unfathomable at the time, all but crippling the Pakistani military.

Naman viewed this opportunity as a prime one: he could retake Pakistan with little to no resistance, folding them into a greater India. On April 23rd, Naman issued the order for Operation Silent Dawn — the ground invasion of Pakistan. By noon that day, the Nagrota (XVI) Corps marched on the Kashmiri border, containing three infantry divisions, artillery and anti-aircraft guns, and a brigade of Arjun MBT tanks. Records show that the Indian intelligence had indicated a 73% likelihood of the surrender of the Pakistani government within three weeks.

They were wrong. A double agent within Indian intelligence named Pranav Sakesh had forwarded critical information about Silent Dawn to his handlers within Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence. Prudently, Premier Abhiraj reallocated forces to reinforce the Kashmiri border. The invasion quickly turned into a stalemate, though the much-larger Indian military seemed to loom in the wings.

Wanting a swift end to the battle (and a defeat of Pakistan amongst his accomplishments), President Naman ordered the entire Northern Command into the fray — nearly 1/3rd of the Indian Army. Again Sakesh leaked the information to the ISI.

Abhiraj became desperate. The Pakistani military was stretched too thin to provide an adequate defense, even with forces being redirected from the Levant and Iran. While it was certainly true that Abhiraj had contemplated utilizing close-range nuclear warheads, it is equally well documented that he discarded the option, as he was unwilling to kill so many innocents on such a large scale. Rumors of a coup on May 19th began circulating, with one of the Pakistani commanders, General Rohinesh Nayakan, taking control of the Pakistani central government. However, such rumors are unproven.

Regardless of who was in charge of Pakistan at the time, the results were devastating. On May 24th, at least nine 12 megaton warheads were detonated along the Kashmiri border, instantly vaporizing battalions of Indian and Pakistani troops, as well as the entire population of the cities of Madras and Delhi. Millions died, though the toll could have been higher, as numerous missile launches were foiled by orbital defense satellites. Even still, entire cities were reduced to little more than radioactive rubble. New Delhi and Chandigarh were annihilated.

The Death had begun.

## Death and Fractions

India's hopes and dreams were dashed by its own greed and lust for expansion. All the dreams of being a world power wafted away in a cloud of radioactive dust. Entire cities were leveled, and India's population plummeted due to starvation, cancer, and radiation poisoning.

With its infrastructure shattered by the war with Pakistan, the leaders of India split along numerous political and religious lines. None seemed to be able to hold the state together with any semblance of authority. The major remaining cities began focusing more on self-sustenance and keeping their own populations alive, rather than working as a coherent, cohesive nation. While still loosely referred to as "India," it quickly became apparent to all that India was no longer the burgeoning world power that it aspired to be.

Always known for its tropical monsoon seasons, the Death brought entire seasons of rain tainted with radioactive fallout. Farmers and other rural-dwelling individuals fled their fields for the major coastal cities and those populated centers left behind soon fell into disrepair and ruin. After The Death ended, these areas — including the majority of central India — were quickly retaken by the jungle.

With massive overpopulation in the cities and no agrarian infrastructure to support the hungry sprawlers, the rulers of the various Indian city-states needed to come up with a way to feed the throng. Luckily enough, one man held the key: Sanjit Bhudupenra.

A mechanical engineer by trade, Bhudupenra's expertise lay in fluid dynamics. Having worked on several of the dam and levee systems throughout India prior to The Death, Bhudupenra found himself experimenting with designs for irrigation in 2031, at the request the Governor of Kolkata, Harij Gaurang. Kolkata's food supply was at the mercy of the

summer monsoons, which were heavily tainted by radioactive waste. However, Bhudupenra and his team responded to this challenge with the first ARNAV filtration unit: a method of water collection and filtration which allowed for natural nitrogen filtration through hydroponically grown plants.

With one fantastic invention, Bhudupenra managed to solve two of India's biggest problems in one swoop: starvation and water-filtration. Bhudupenra quickly patented his ideas, selling them to city states throughout India and, later, worldwide. Bhudupenra's corporation, Hydronax Kolkata, became an overnight powerhouse, with sales reaching the $100 billion mark in their second year of incorporation.

While Bhudupenra's rise was meteoric, his fall was equally spectacular. In 2041, Kwame Featherstone's experimentations with matter assembly grew worldwide as an economical (read: dirt-cheap!) method for food production. With smaller, more cost-efficient machines and the ability to convert waste into edible food or other necessary materials, Featherstone's technology quickly outstripped sales of Hydronax's hydroponic filtration systems. By 2044, Hydronax was acquired in a hostile takeover by PharmAmerica and its assets spread throughout several subsidiary companies. Bhudupenra was offered a golden parachute and gently urged to take advantage of the opportunity and fade out of the spotlight.

## Pact and Renaissance

However, with India's food shortages primarily solved, the city-states began focusing on growth. With immigrants flooding in from all points of the sub-continent, Kolkata and Mumbai swelled into megalopolises, with Amristar and Chennai following shortly thereafter. Each city bloomed in relative prosperity and recovery through the 2050s, though the North American Civil War of 2064 brought significant unease.

When China allied with the North American Coalition in 2065, the city-states of India drew suitors from both sides, attempting to gain a foothold in the eastern hemisphere. Mishra Chaudhuri, then-Governor of Channai, had other ideas, however. Holding a conclave of all major city-state Governors at the ruins of Colombo in Sri Lanka, Channai presented a mutual-defense pact. Signed in October 2065, the Pact of Colombo loosely unified the fragmented city states in the event of invasion or other military endeavor, while emphasizing legal, economic, and diplomatic sovereignty within each city-state.

The Pact of Colombo shattered preconceptions of the Indian city-states at the time, as many world leaders viewed India as an economic power that would be easily toppled in open warfare. With the city-states in alliance, conquering the Indian subcontinent became significantly more difficult, as each city-state would provide, essentially, their own military forces.

Unfortunately, the Pact of Colombo was not a flawless document. The Pact's allowances for alliances with nations outside of the Indian subcontinent caused numerous disagreements and disputes, particularly regarding international trade. Kolkata's cybernetic exports, for example, are often shipped to the NAC, which prompts the Republic of Cascadia to use its alliance with Amristar to push against Kolkata's trade. In many ways, the Indian city-states have become a hotbed of global political intrigue, with many under-the-table deals taking place in the back rooms of a Mumbai nightclub.

Following the Pact of Colombo, the heads of each Indian city-state meet in person for one week every 100 days. Current Premier of the Pact — essentially the parliamentarian and presiding officer for the meeting — is Kumar Nadu, the Governor of Amristar. Nadu's term lasted through two additional meetings of the pact members and while re-election is a possibility, Nadu has actively stated that he would not seek the Premiership again. Many believe that Mahesha Kavi of Channai, or Subodh Jamhar of Mumbai, will become the next Premier, though the possibility of a dark horse candidate is ever-present.

## India in 2090

Much as it was throughout its history, the majority of India is covered with steamy, tropical jungle. The central part of India is considered to be Wasteland, though radiation-caused mutations have resulted in nearly unstoppable growth, pressing in on all sides. All major Indian city-states hug the coastline of the subcontinent, expanding from the shore inward.

At just under 27 million souls, the largest of the city states is Mumbai. Kolkata follows with 25 million, while Chennai and Amristar each between 10 and 15 million. Rather than viewing themselves as "Indians," residents refer to themselves as Kolkatans or Amristars, taking the name of their city-state as self-identification.

While faith no longer holds the sway it once did in united India, vestiges of the cultures and religions that had fractured the country in centuries past still remain. Adherents of Islam, Hindi, Sikh, Buddhism and other — isms still hold great sway in the city-states and, while actual religion might be rare, zealotry and petty factioning certainly remain.

The most common of these religions, however, is Hindi. Ruins of temples to Shiva, Ganesh, and Vishnu are scattered throughout the jungle waste, and iconography of India's mythological gods and heroes is pervasive throughout the city states. Nowhere is this seen more visibly than in the Phansigar Cult of Lady Kali, better known as the Thuggee. Despite suppression by governmental forces dating back to the mid-1800s, the Thuggee still manage to be a dangerous wild card throughout the Indian city-states.

What may be most alarming, though, is the sheer number of zeeks within the Indian population. While the global average for frequency of "Omega Wave" brain activity stands at .05%, in India, that number is raised to nearly 1.5%. Some believe that the proximity of the Indian city-states to the nuclear launches that led to The Death may have altered the native Indian DNA, resulting in genetic aberrations necessary for Omega Wave activity. However, others believe that it may have some link to the numerous faiths of India, that tend to view zeeks as perfected ideals of mankind, approaching either Nirvana or ātman, depending on one's' beliefs.

Zeeks in the Indian city-states tend to blend well within the populace, hiring out their services to the highest bidder while maintaining a fair degree of anonymity. Many foreign governments have sent agents to Kolkata or Mumbai, hoping to hire zeeks to take action against the Chinese Mandarinate

or some other country. Rumor has it that a number of zeeks have begun to even etch out their own settlement in the middle of the Indian jungle, ruled by a psionic master known only as Ishvara Yogi. Expeditions have set out from Channai and Kolkata to determine the truth of these rumors, but have been inconclusive thus far.

## Mumbai: City of Dreams

Millions of wasters and scavs worldwide dream of living in Mumbai, hobnobbing with the latest media celebs and holostars. And, for the rich and powerful, Mumbai truly is a city of dreams. Mumbai is the entertainment hub of the entire world with countless production companies, gaming studios, and recording companies. Celebrities gather in both real and in virtual space, spreading all sorts of rumors throughout the blogosphere.

### MUMBAI IN 2090

Greater Mumbai stretches across a peninsula that juts into the Arabian Sea, covering a total of about 400 square miles along the coast. Mumbai is hemmed in by the dense jungle-waste to the east, while the most recent additions to the megalopolis hug the coast, running north and south. The megalopolis is divided into several districts: Central Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai, Salsette, Vihar, and Upper and Lower Vaitarna.

Mumbai is currently ruled by its Governor, the honorable Subodh Jamhar, who has served as Mumbai's Governor for twelve years. Elections are held every three years, though few see Jamhar's regime leaving power any time soon. In fact, most natives of the Indian city-states view Jamhar as a natural to unseat Kumar Nadu as Premier of the Colombo Pact. And, truth be told, Jamhar has had his eyes on Nadu's seat for quite some time. A ruthless Machiavellian, Jamhar's cabinet is stocked with prudent individuals not afraid to tell him no; they just make sure he's had his morning coffee first and his kukri knife is well out of arm's reach.

Beneath Jamhar, several district managers oversee daily city operations. Of these, Kar Mukherjee (of the Navi Mumbai district) wields the most power. Mukherjee is a cheerful, opulently rich fellow whose numerous stock options in both cybernetics and various media outlets have made him powerful friends worldwide. He can regularly be seen hobnobbing with celebrities in Central Mumbai nightclubs, as well as holding court over the Thuggee blood-orgies in Thane.

Also of note is Ayati Desai, the district manager of Vihar. Desai is the current CFO of Opal Seas Hydrocorp, one of the few operating hydroponic farms in the world. However, as India still clings to the hydroponic process rather than adopt matter assembly technology for their food needs, her position remains one of the most lucrative. However, Desai has been liquidating OSH's assets at an alarming rate, removing positions and selling off hydroponic equipment. These sales have

come under particular suspicion, as major fires, corporate disasters, and ecological accidents have occurred four separate times within a month after Desai has completed a sale. Recently, Desai has been desperate to sell off a series of corporate facilities in eastern Salsette, though no takers have emerged.

## LIVING IN MUMBAI

Mumbari life isn't that much different from anywhere else in the sprawl, outside of a few sizable differences.

Firstly, Mumbai serves as the central headquarters of five of the seven major conglomerates controlling the media worldwide: EmpireNet, Sanjan Tempe Warner, Wordsmith International, DoubleThink Studios, and NightOwl Media. The heads of these corporations each have access to vast amounts of credits, resources beyond measure, and a worldwide influence. When California sank into the Pacific in 2066, these corporations became a proverbial mecca for movie moguls, internet sensations, and online game designers.

> **#Crazyzane:** I used to work as a stunt man in hollywood back before the great quake, and I can tell ya that Bollywood was making inroads long before anything started shakin'.

In the 20th Century, India was known only for its over-the-top "Bollywood" musicals and rip-offs of American superheroes. However, as the country began heavy industrialization through the early 21st Century, India became a cheap and appealing option for filming movies. Many of the major film studios moved their major offices to Mumbai, to oversee production and post-production. When Hollywood sank, executives simply packed their things and headed for the Mumbai offices.

Because of this trend, billions of dollars flooded into the Mumbari economy and would-be stars have created something of a tent-city in Navi Mumbai and Salsette, outside of major media center offices. One never seems to know who will be next to get their proverbial "fifteen minutes of fame," though. The most recent Mumbai starlet is Tanya Skurge, 19 year-old death-metal performer and part-time dominatrix, whose viral videos have spread across The Deep like wildfire. Skurge often can be seen in full latex gear at any of Navi Mumbai's risqué nightclubs.

While delivery service is nothing new in 2090, Mumbai — and the rest of the India League in general — have something of a unique take on the idea. Mumbari lunch truck drivers called "dabbawallas" cart uniform tin lunch boxes called tiffins. Dabbawallas often pride themselves on their accuracy and timeliness, averaging only one mistake per 6 million (yes, million) deliveries. A dabbawalla delivery consists of a two-part process: one 'dabba' drops off the tiffins full of food, while a second collects the empty tiffins. While all forms of food are available through dabbawalla service, hydroponically grown traditional Indian cuisine is most common, particularly amongst the upper class.

Because of their tendency to deliver to the upper class, dabbawallas have a tendency to socialize with their clients and make connections over and above that of a common food delivery person. Certain media moguls are particularly picky, preferring one dabba over any other, even in the same food service.

Dabbawallas traditionally deliver their meals by foot or via bicycle, as the crowded sprawl of Mumbai often slows down delivery speed when driving a full-sized car or SUV. However, motorcycles and motorized bikes have become increasingly common amongst dabbas who take their trade seriously. Occasionally, dabbas who have become friends with the rich and powerful in Central or Navi Mumbai receive motorcycles as gifts. A Toyota Locust jump bike may be the ideal gift for any dabba on the go.

# JAPAN

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: THESHOGUNATE.INF.JP

FQDN: THESHOGUNATE.INF.JP.15TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

**Posted By**: Yoshihiro Tanabe (PhD), KCD Tokyo Employee (Hashtag: #YTphd)

Koncha bitches! I'm Yoshihiro Tanabe, a cybernetics developer at Kenta Cyber Dynamics in Tokyo. I was born and raised in Tokyo, but I've spent some amount of time in every continent around the world, and tend to be one of the go-to people who promotes the increasingly lost art of inter-cultural understanding. But enough about me. I assume the reason you're reading this is that you want to know more about Japan. Well, read on...

Peeps call it the Techno-Shogunate, or Neo-Shogunate, but the Japanese still call it Nihon. The term 'Shogunate' is misleading, since it tends to conjure up images of katana-wielding samurai and other anachronisms. In reality, Japan in 2090 looks outwardly little different than it did a century ago — save that places like Tokyo are more high-tech. That isn't to say that katana-wielding samurai haven't made a comeback; but they are more visible in government and military sectors than they are on the streets, mingling with the dishonorable gaki and bakuto looking' to separate you from your Nuyen. We all know it's the Yakuza who watch over the streets, neh?

Here are some basic things you need to know about my homeland. For starters, the decline of western influence has resulted in a very different socio-political landscape. After World War II, Japan was rebuilt by the United states, during which time it westernized, denounced its military capabilities (though they had maintained a military for the purposes of defense only), and embraced a liberal form of democracy. Sure, the emperor was still in place, but he mainly served as a cultural leader, a representation that linked modern Japan to its history. The real power was with the Imperial Diet, a governing body that made laws that the emperor had no authority to contradict. Times have changed, and that body went the way of most of the other western influences.

**#PAYN_MAN:** Whut's he Mean by Diet? What does it have to do with politics?

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Re-read it, PM. The Diet are politicians; extinct politicians.

Post westernization has found the country 'technically' under a military dictatorship... whether or not the boss men say it's all "in the name of the Emperor." Just remember the generals — the taishou — are running the show, and that means even though the jietai may still be the 'Japanese Self-Defense Force', the SDF now polices the country and makes sure people — especially gaijin — behave themselves.

## History

So here's what went down, bitches!

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** This guy really likes calling us bitches, doesn't he?

**#Luciferion:** Maybe he's running a Mr. Chow personality engram.

In 2031, a general by the name of Hiro Minotoro seized power in a relatively bloodless coup and declared himself Daichi no Taishou (that's 'First General', for those of you who don't speak Japanese), in the service of the Emperor.

One of the first things Minotoro did was import Sims from Brasilia to bolster the dwindling work force. This only worked for a bit.

Hmmm. In order to wrap your head around some of what happened, it might help if you grok the Japanese mindset. You see, in spite of cultural cross-pollination we still have a different culture and mindset than some of you are used to. The Japanese are traditionally very polite, and they like to learn from other cultures, but at the end of the day we want to be left alone to chill with our homeys, as it were.

So anyway... Brazilian-grown Sims were all well and good, but Minotoro and company wanted something a little more 'Japanese'. After all, they had plenty of technology — Japan's always been at the forefront of robotics, electronics, and cybertech — it'd just been a shortage of the 'human' element that forced them to seek outside concepts.

The second generation of Sims in Japan weren't really 'Sims' any more — at least not in the way most peeps think of Sims. Using vat-growing techniques gleaned from the Brazilian Sims coupled with good ol' Japanese tech, Japanese engineers and scientists cooked up what have become known as sougougin —'synthetic people'. No, tomo... not synthetic as in 'man-made'; synthetic as in 'synthesis'—a fusion of ideas.

They're also known as Bioroids, but the most common term is Synths.

Basically, Synths are a fusion of vat-grown meat and biotech — sometimes coupled with internal cybernetics and nanotechnology — which grants a Sim a considerably longer lifespan. Granted, at forty years or so, it's much shorter than a human's natural lifespan, but it's still twice as long as the most durable Pleasure Sims.

Given that Synths have been largely integrated into Japanese society and afforded a measure of civil rights, many peeps in the rest of the world lauded Japan as being forward-thinking and egalitarian. But there's an ugly side to the picture most outsiders remain blissfully ignorant about.

Check it, bitches; Japan has a long history of a sort of 'caste system'. Granted, it ain't as bad as it was back in the days of the original Shogunate, but it's always been there: the elite at the top; the dregs at the bottom — and the two aren't supposed to mingle.

While it's not quite so bad these days, the fact is it's Synths who are now at the bottom rung of Japan's social hierarchy. The colloquial word for them is inchiki — which roughly translates to 'fake'. To most Japanese, Synths aren't real people, and they tend to get treated as such. Not everyone is mean or hostile toward them, but a lot of Japanese don't believe inchiki have real feelings. They get the jobs no one else really wants and there's a social stigma attached to people who get too friendly with them.

## Culture

Despite the changing times, Japan remains a more polite culture than is found in most other parts of the world. That isn't to say that they won't cut you to ribbons for showing the wrong person Burei (that's disrespect for all you gaijin out there). For the most part, individual conflict is avoided and insult is settled with a few choice words. Meiyo, or honor, once all-important and later proclaimed primarily by to the Yakuza of all people, has made a comeback in Japanese society. Some live according to a Bushido code, and it's not unheard of for the dishonored — Fumeiyona — to commit seppuku so they might atone for their dishonorable deeds.

The demographics of Japan aren't pretty; the population has been steadily shrinking since the twentieth-century. At its height, there were one hundred-twenty-seven million people in Japan, and given the fact that the only areas suitable for development were the coastal regions, those were some of the most densely populated urban areas on Earth. A downward population trend occurred because society began placing an emphasis on wealth over family, causing a great many people to choose not to have children. In addition to this, permanent immigration into Japan has always been so insignificant that it has failed to have any sizable effect on this trend. Today the population sits at just over ninety-million.

Of course, the major change to Japan's social structure has been the re-implementation of a more-or-less traditional caste System. At the top of the pile is the Kanjin, or the Emperor and his family, who command extreme respect and deference from all members of society. The next most important group are the Kanko; the public servants who implement the emperor's wishes, and ensure that Japan functions as a society. Even low ranking public servants are included in this caste, which elevates them over the role they served before the caste system was re-established.

Beneath the Kanko are the Ryōmin, or the citizens. This is then broken down into the following sub-castes: The Shinabe, which are the high citizens, or in this day and age the independently wealthy and the corporate executives. The techno-Samurai and the military fall into this caste as well. The next level down includes the Zakko, which are the less elite families that are still notable. For instance, small business owners, contractors, and craftsmen are all Zakko. Finally there are the Kōmin, or the average citizens. Foreign visitors are treated as Kōmin regardless of their station in their homelands unless they happen to be foreign dignitaries, in which case they are treated as Kanko.

The lowest caste is known as the Eta, or the slave class. In previous ages, this was further broken into sub-groups, much like the Ryōmin, but that has been eradicated in the new order. The eta are slaves who serve the emperor and his family, as well as other families and corporations — yes, corporations can own eta — which are often purchased when someone of the Kōmin class owes more money than they can conceivably pay back in their lifetime and is "bailed out" by an individual who sees their potential as a valuable servant.

## Government

So, you bitches want to know more about the Techno-Shogunate? It's essentially a military dictatorship, but like much of society, it's wrapped in relics from the past. When Emperor Hisahito was overthrown, Hiro Minotoro took power and declared himself Daichi no Taishou, or First General. For a large percentage of the population, this change in leadership structure didn't sit well as it all but declared that the government was... exactly what it had become. Minotoro perceived an immediate decrease in popularity and turned to his advisors, who suggested that he install Tetsuhito as the emperor and proclaim his loyalty to him. Reports suggest that Minotoro was initially completely opposed to this suggestion, saying that it undermined his attempt to get away from the previous nonfunctioning government.

Minotoro was finally convinced to entertain the notion of installing Tetsuhito, Hisohito's young nephew, as the current emperor. While the emperor would possess no actual power, he would still serve as a figurehead of state, live in the traditional palace, give the occasional speech, and entertain foreign dignitaries. He would be, in practice, Japan's primary domestic diplomat. Tetsuhito reportedly saw this as an opportunity to improve his standing, and it didn't hurt that he could deliver moving speeches, so he accepted the offer. Decades older now than when he accepted the position, he remains Emperor, but his position hasn't afforded him even an incremental increase in actual power. He remains little more than a powerless puppet to the Daichi no Taishou.

## The Yakuza

You can't have much of a discussion about Japan without talking about the Yakuza, neh? And no, despite the re-emergence of the Samurai, there has been no such re-emergence of ninja to oppose them. That isn't to say that there aren't super-secret sects of assassins who call themselves ninjas, but you won't find Yakuza overseers controlling them. OK, that isn't one hundred percent true, as a few bosses might just have their hands and their money in such affairs...

The Yakuza are the nearly all-encompassing crime syndicate that operates in Japan. Unlike the government, little has changed with them in the last hundred years. The same families dominate, they are engaged in the same illegal activities, namely protection rackets, prostitution, and smuggling. The largest difference between then and now is that the Yakuza are now also at the forefront of cybercrime.

The Yakuza are known in Japan as gokudō, though the Japanese police call them bōryokudan, or the violence group, while the yakuza call themselves ninkyō dantai, or chivalrous organizations. They're notorious for their strict codes of conduct and very organized nature. You bitches might notice that the police and the Yakuza themselves have very different opinions of who they are and what they represent. Yes, they are criminals, but during the period of Westernization, the Yakuza considered themselves the primary source of honor and the defenders of the righteous. Now that the government again lays claim to the Japanese tradition of honor, the Yakuza tenaciously cling to those ideals as well, creating a culture conflict where both groups try to discredit the other in an ongoing war of rhetoric.

The Yakuza lay claim to virtually all organized crime in Japan. The organization is controlled by dominant families, and then extends down through the various levels of hierarchy, all the way down to street gangs. Even when joining a gang, a new member knows exactly which group they're working for, and for that matter, when the police investigate crime, they typically know which family they're picking a fight with. This level of control helps ensure the loyalty of those who work for them while providing an appropriate level of intimidation for those who would challenge them. One doesn't double-cross a Yakuza group unless they can do so anonymously, or they have an alternate identity lined up and a hasty getaway plan to spirit them away to a country where their influence is much weaker. There are few places in the world where a traitor could consider themselves safe.

The top Yakuza families are the Yamaguchi-gumi, the Sumiyoshi-rengo, and the Inagawa-kaï. The Yamaguchi-gumi is the largest Yakuza group, with over one-thousand clans, and accounts for fifty-percent of the members throughout Japan and beyond. The current oyabun, or leader, is Shou Minami.

The second largest Yakuza clan is the Sumiyoshi-kai, which is comprised of over three-hundred smaller groups who united for protection and strength. Unlike the other large Yakuza groups, the Sumiyoshi-Kai operates as a federation, where its activities and direction is debated among the various groups and decided by vote rather than decree. The current oyabun is Satomi Hayashi, a fiery tempered man in his late-thirties.

The third largest group of Yakuza is Inagawa-Kai, which at over three hundred member clans, is just slightly smaller than the Sumiyoshi-Kai. This group is based in Tokyo and is firmly entrenched in Japan, but it's greatest areas of expansion are in other countries, particularly China and the Middle East. The oyabun is Iwato Kawaguchi, a man in his mid-fifties who provides singular direction for the organization.

## Major Cities

### TOKYO

As citizens of the world, I'm sure some of you gaijin out there already know much of this, but Tokyo is the place to be in Japan. Hell, bitches, it's still the place to be in the entire eastern hemisphere. Once the largest metropolitan area in the world, the slow decline of Japan's population has resulted in it losing that status, but it still ranks in the top five, and is home to twenty-million people. And let's be honest, it's also one of the most beautiful places in the entire world. From the skyline at the city's heart to the traditional architecture found everywhere, it's a wonder to behold, its delights are boundless, and its people are its treasure. It's my home city, so I might be just a bit biased.

That's not to say that everything has been perfect in Tokyo. In 2085, the detonation of a dirty bomb forced the permanent evacuation of a four-block area in the heart of the city, in what has been called the greatest terrorist act against Japan since the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. No group has claimed responsibility. In 2087, a hacker calling himself

#Roadblock managed to put a halt to all of the automated processes involved in public transportation, effectively shutting down the city for a month. And then there's the global fallout from the Charon AI... don't even get me started on what that's done to Japan's economy, tomo.

Tokyo is referred to as a "metropolitan prefecture" rather than a city. It's a compilation of twenty-three wards, each of which is treated and governed as its own unique city. When talking about Tokyo, one is talking about a conglomeration of small cities, towns, and villages, all of which are lumped together into a massive sprawling city. In other words, bitches, it's massive, and within its borders you'll find virtually every environment you can imagine, from the heavily populated inner city which contains some of the tallest buildings in the world, to sprawling neighborhoods, smaller city centers that dwarf some of the other places that we refer to as cities throughout much of the rest of the world, to lightly populated areas where people live in simple, small, dwellings that are little more than huts.

Although each of Tokyo's wards are independently governed, the metropolitan government oversees it all. Under the direction of the First General, this government's edicts supersede the autonomy of the governments of the incorporated wards, and there are frequently heated exchanges between the two when it comes to a multitude of administrative concerns, such as zoning, taxation, and new construction. Every year or two, some lesser official creates a bunch of press by stepping down in protest over some law that's being pushed from above.

Tokyo is also home to a staggering number of corporations. Kensei and Kenta Cyber Dynamics are two of the largest Tokyo-based meacorporations, but there are a multitude of others as well. Some of these operate primarily within Japan's borders, such as the fast food chain called Paripari Chicken, or Hibiki Tameshi, which makes state of the art cybernetic audio enhancers, and thousands more. There's also a healthy number of large international corporations like Sakana Hatto, the fast food sea food chain, Togatta Iryou, a trendy clothing manufacturer, and so many more.

## CHIBA

Chiba is a prefecture, or one of Japan's large cities that is made up of a conglomeration of numerous smaller cities. Located just to the east of Tokyo, many consider it a part of the greater Tokyo area. What sets it apart, however, is the fact that Chiba thinned out over the years due to the depopulation of Japan, resulting in the construction of newer, larger homes and facilities. This created a desirable alternative to the congestion of Tokyo for many of the wealthy, as well as

the corporations that were willing to pay a little extra for more up-scale business sites.

Due to the Kōkyū-ka, or gentrification of Chiba, the corporations — Kigyō — riding high on the cybertech, or Saibanetikusu, boom moved to this region, creating an analogue to the Silicon Valley of the 20th century. Most of Japan's Kigyō Saibanetikusu are either based out of Chiba now, or they maintain a presence, which includes research and development and factory facilities. While a few of the less prestigious Kigyō exist elsewhere, the fact is that most researchers and engineers in the industry choose to stay in Chiba and refuse to operate out of such other locations, considering such moves to be uninteresting and bad for their careers.

To those outside of Chiba, the city is often referred to as the flatlands. Although it was full of towers and high-rise buildings before Japan's slow downward demographic trend began, many such structures were knocked down in favor of sprawling factories and single-family dwellings. Don't get me wrong, bitches, the city center looks much like any other, with huge high-rise buildings, but go a short distance from the downtown area and you start seeing block after block of some of the most beautiful dwellings and business facilities on Earth. The poverty, crime, and scum that you see at the street level throughout most of the world isn't allowed to thrive here. The end result is that the structures and neighborhoods look remarkable flat from the air in comparison with the rest of the country.

Like the rest of Japan, Chiba's government is appointed by the Techno-Shogunate, and is supposedly based on the duty and merit of the individuals appointed to such posts. The truth of the matter is that the government recognizes the vitality of the cybernetics industry, and the strength it adds to Japan. As a result, Chiba's government is full of people who are in bed with the industry.

The current head administrator of Chiba is Takaya Yoshii, a tall, muscular, imposing figure who also sits on the board of directors of Kenta Cyber Dynamics, which is technically based in Tokyo, but operates most of its R&D and production out of Chiba. Yoshii appears to be in his prime, though it's whispered that his actual age is well over sixty, and custom nano-tech somehow regenerates his cells, keeping him looking and acting young despite the fact that he's a senior citizen. Yoshii almost always acts in the best interests of the cybernetics industry in general, and Kenta Cyber Dynamics specifically when he gets the chance. Some examples of this include pushing for the relaxation of regulations for disposing of the mountains of industrial waste within the city, re-zoning regions of the city to displace lower income individuals and replace them with high-end housing or factories. He also semi-discreetly halted the cities security force from conducting criminal investigations into several executives who were suspected of murdering a competing corporate security investigator.

## Nagasaki

Nagasaki sits on the island of Kyushu in the southwest corner of Japan. Originally established by Portuguese traders in the sixteenth century, it became known as a free port that was open to foreign traders, and it eventually became an important point of diplomatic contact for foreign powers with the island nation. It also went down in history as the second city to have a nuclear weapon used against it.

After the war, Nagasaki was rebuilt. New structures were constructed to replace those that had been destroyed and everything was modernized. Some elements were allowed to remain, such as debris fields, a one-legged torii gate, and an arch near the point where the atomic bomb detonated. Despite the city's destruction, it once again became a bustling port of trade.

After the rise of the Techno-Shogunate, Nagasaki re-emerged as one of the most important locations in Japan for foreign contact and diplomacy. With the reduced tolerance for foreign visitors, the government felt the need to contain the vast majority of foreign visitors; to contain their influence on society. For this reason, numerous properties were set aside and all foreign powers were told that they had to relocate their embassies to the city. To prevent international incidents, the expenses of the move was covered by the government. The vacant properties left behind were then sold to Japanese nationals, allowing the government to recoup about half of the money spent.

The current administrator of Nagasaki is an elderly and diminutive man, Chikara Nakada. Although he wields a great deal of power, Nakada still possesses old-school values, meaning that he puts on a good show for the foreign visitors who look to him to be a welcoming figure. His quiet words are soothing to most visitors, his intended audience, making him popular with the people who see him on the view screens and billboards throughout the city, though his policies exactly match the hard-lined expectations of the Techno-Shogunate.

Crime in Nagasaki operates on most levels you can imagine. Unlike Chiba, there has been no effort to gentrify the city, which means that you'll find all the strata of people here, from the Tōri uni, or street urchins, to the wealthiest businesspeople. The primary Yakuza family operating in the city is the Yamaguchi-gumi, and their activities include the typical stuff like protection rackets, drug dealing, and prostitution, as well as things that are more specific to the people you'll encounter in Nagasaki. Gaijin often come to Nagasaki seeking illegal access into the country, and there are members of the Yamaguchi-gumi who are willing to help with that. Some visitors are paranoid about the programming that's loaded into their hardware and want it removed, and there are people to handle that. Other people want the slow and difficult to turn wheels of naturalization to be greased, while others want certain individuals who are legally visiting to abruptly find that their welcome has been worn out. In these cases, there are individuals who have pull within the government and can make these things happen... for a price.

# RUSSIAN FEDERATION

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**Compiled by:** #Sergei_Chekov, Office of Public Affairs

Russia is every bit the fallen empire; the rich are very rich, the poor are very poor, and everyone is living in a past that never was. The atrocities of history are regularly painted in glorious colors, and the misery of the present is blamed on a variety of subversive domestic and international factors. Everyone thinks big; the Deep buzzes with the patriotic struggle against China, the rise of militant Islam and the rise of the Wolf Cult. No one cares about little things, like the terribly worn roads, crumbling infrastructure, rising street violence, and widespread substance abuse, perhaps Russia's greatest and oldest curse.

Russia was on her way to become the Third Roman Empire, the greatest state the world has ever seen, but was derailed from her historic path by the world.

Russia is still a gigantic country, still blessed with beautiful and evocative nature, rich soil, countless valuable resources and some of the largest and most impressive structures on the planet. More importantly, Russia still has one of the world's largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons and, unlike her former capitalist version; the current Russia has a well-trained and well-equipped military full of messianic zeal.

Like a great and powerful moribund beast, I feel Russia will stir one more time before she crumbles into nothing. China, the West and even the Caucasian highlanders, playing Russia for the fool, will pay dearly for disrespecting the Russian people.

Tread on her at your own risk.

## Imperial Dreams

Russia is controlled by the Eurasian Movement which came to power after a bloodless coup led by military, religious and academic elites who replaced the former corporate-owned financial oligarchs. Many of the former strongmen were executed as traitors, a just payment for trying to sell the Russian people to the highest bidder.

The Eurasian movement was founded by the 20th century philosopher Aleksandr Gelyevich Dugin who defined it through the three anti's; anti-bourgeois, anti-liberal and anti-American. The current ideologists of the movement maintain that Russian culture is unique and incompatible with both Western and Eastern values, which are inherently destructive to the Russian soul. Thus, to defend the Russian people, the Eurasians seek to isolate Russia from Western, Asian and Corporate influence while strengthening her ties with the Turkic and Persian peoples of Central Asia. The alliance with Europe is seen as a temporary evil, essential to stop the Chinese aggression and liberate occupied Russian territories.

The Eurasian movement is culturally xenophobic and traditionalist, but not racist, maintaining that the Russian civilization is inclusive and universal. However, its radical offshoot, the Third Rome Society, calls for an eradication of the yellow races, who stand in Russia's way of Asian dominance and the creation of a balance of terror vis-à-vis Europe and America. The Third Rome Society also calls for restoration of the monarchy and declaration of the Orthodox faith as Russia's official church; a step bound to marginalize and alienate Russia's vast Muslim population and growing neo-Pagan and Wolf Cult minority.

Another source of friction is separatism, especially among the Muslim Tatar minority. Numerous bloody terrorist attacks and embarrassing hacks have been attributed to the Revival Society of Tatarstan, which has been designated as a terrorist organization by Russia, Turkey and China.

## The New Russians

In the previous century, the term applied to people who got rich fast by questionable means. Now, it refers to people who are not really people — hybrids, Humans 2.0, androids, simulacra and what have you. Villagers tend to frown on all these devilish creatures and will murder them if they think they can get away with it, but the cities are surprisingly tolerant of, eh, unusual people.

They are not very widespread, because Russia is too poor to afford them en masse, but they do exist. Many of the oligarchs have upgraded in 2.0 while many vori and Neo-Pagans are obratini, or werebeasts, which is the Russian slang for hybrids.

Androids are mostly used as secretaries, spokesmen, and bodyguards by the wealthy elite. They don't hold any advantages over decent Russian workers; they just show that their owner is rich and not ashamed to flaunt it at the poor masses. People are fascinated with androids however, who are treated as celebrities by most those who encounter them. Their owners, on the other hand, are received far less enthusiastically.

Before the Chinese invasion, there were plans to establish mass production of Eastern simulacra to man mining facilities in the frigid east, but this was all halted when the war started. Shame, because with declining birthrates and rampant alcoholism, this could have been the solution to all of Russia's troubles.

Western simulacra are allegedly used by the FSB to create some of their most efficient and deadly agents. However, because these agents are so efficient and so deadly, I'd rather we didn't dwell on that. Long live the defenders of the Motherland, that's all I have to say about it.

## Defenders of the Motherland

Every version of Russia must have its version of the KGB, and this iteration is no different. The abbreviation used for the last 100 years is FSB, though except for these three letters, little remained from the capitalist times.

The current head of the FSB is a celibate mystic and scholar named Marat Rizanov. His dedication to the Eurasian idea is absolute and he's published dozens of papers and books on the subject. Every time he publishes a new paper, the West

trembles and Russian diplomats spend many sleepless nights calming everyone down. Nevertheless, it is well known that whomever Marat wants gone becomes gone, no matter how much he invested in security.

## Shadow Communities

The infamous Russian Vori Vzakoni, known in the West as "the Russian Mafia," are alive and well. Never too proud to lick the boots of power, the ancient vori manage businesses so filthy that even the cops don't want to deal with them. They must share their income with the police, the FSB, the Kremlin and make generous donations to the Church now and then, but then again, who doesn't? Still, they are a bunch of tattooed killers with a violent honor code and if you cross their path, unless you have an uncle in the Kremlin, you better run far and deep.

However, if you need something illegal — a banned augment, experimental drugs, a nuclear submarine — they are your people. Pro tip: they never pay unless they have to, when dealing with them, make sure someone's got your bag, or the next deal you'd be involved in would feature you as the commodity.

## Occupied Russian Territories

The greatest humiliation in recent Russian history was the loss of almost all Asian Russia to the Chinese Mandarinate.

The fall of Eastern Russia started as mass demonstrations by Chinese workers, who outnumbered Russian citizens ten to one in the eastern provinces. The workers, many of whom were in the country illegally, protested their unfair working conditions under the corrupt Russian administration. Of course, in the great Russian tradition of police brutality, the demonstrations were dispersed violently, resulting in hundreds of dead and thousands of wounded. To everyone's surprise, the Chinese workers struck back with overwhelming force that caught the Russians off guard, forcing Russian police and military to retreat to more defensible positions. It was later discovered that the Chinese Rebellion was carefully planned and executed by the Mandarinate's covert operatives and that many of the so-called workers were trained commandoes with hidden advanced weapons. The regular Chinese army, with its lumbering death machines, was never far behind.

Fearing to draw the entire Eurasian union into a destructive and prolonged war, the Mandarinate turned to consolidating its control over the Russian Far East instead. They have also

attempted to move into the North Caucasus region, but this ended in a military disaster. With the eyes of the world on them, the Chinese couldn't just resort to genocide by WMD or mass deportation, like the Soviets did in the 20th century. Meanwhile, the natives fought with everything they had and enjoyed assistance from Russia, Turkey, the Arab Kingdom and anyone else who had a bone to pick with China.

Meanwhile, occupied Russia also started to sizzle. The Chinese learned the painful truth any would-be world conqueror, from Mongols to Germans, learns as he steps on Russian soil: the Russian people never give up.

## Iron Fists in Velvet Gloves

Chinese occupation is supposedly better than Russian freedom. There are more jobs, law enforcement is less corrupt, healthcare is better and more widely available… but it's still occupation. A Russian man can abide any amount of domestic oppression, believing it's for the greater good, but a foreign invasion must be repelled at any cost.

Of course, it also helps that state-run media displays the Chinese as a cross between the Third Reich and the Mongol Horde. Stories of Chinese atrocities against Russians and native Siberians are featured daily, many of which are doctored to evoke memories of the Nazi death machine. You should watch these someday; some of the CGI is really impressive. Racism also plays no small part in the resistance, especially among the followers of Third Rome society who feel it's their duty to prove the inherent superiority of "White Russians" over "Yellow Chinese."

> **#Brotherwolf:** Maybe you should spend some time on the front, comrade. Come see the atrocities first hand and then tell me what is and what is not doctored.
>
> **#Beijingbeauty:** @ brotherwolf. Your kind commit your own atrocities against my people. You started the fighting in the border cities. Your compatriots bombed the mines and oil pipelines. Don't speak of atrocities as if your hands are clean.

## North Caucasian Alliance

The North Caucasus region is a bleak and harsh land of magnificent mountains, biting winds and grim and warlike men whose military fame has preceded them for thousands of years. The natives are divided into hundreds of tribes and nations such as the Avari, Chechens, Dagestani, Ossetians, Adyghi, Ingushi and countless others. No matter what empire ruled the region or what religions the natives practiced, there was always only one law men really obeyed, the Law of the Wolf. Indeed, the official motto of the alliance is "free and equal like wolves."

The highlanders of the Caucasian Mountains have a well deserved reputation for honor and ferocity. They are the champions of lost causes, always fighting against vastly superior opponents to throw of the yokes of oppression, be it domestic or foreign. After nearly two centuries of fighting against the dying Russian behemoth, the Chechens, led by President Mufti Arbi Alkhanov, finally gained full independence. In less time than it took them to rebuild their ravished society and economy, the Chechen Jihad spilt over the mountains and liberated/subjugated the neighboring nations, forming the North Caucasian Alliance.

Despite this great victory, Islam is in rapid decline in the Mountains. Cynics say that this is because the Caucasians were never truly Muslims, only fond of Arab arms and supplies. Others say the Wolf is really dead. Me? I really don't care.

The Wolf Cult is rapidly spreading across the mountains, replacing Christianity and Islam with an eclectic mix of radical environmentalism, Caucasian tribalism, shamanic ritualism, and an absolute, relentless dedication to the idea of personal and national freedom.

## Holy Mountains

The North Caucasus is a land of dramatic landscapes of majestic mountains, pristine lakes, and thick forests ripe with game and fruit. Scattered in this magnificent backdrop are heavily fortified villages known as auls. Despite their archaic and pastoral appearance, most of them are more than capable to fight off modern armies and even shoot down planes and drones.

City folk are less militant, but just barely. Grozny, the name of the Capital, is Russian for "fierce" which alone should suggest just how peaceful these cities are. While city folks live in apartments, have regular jobs and usually only hide one or two assault rifles under the bed, every citizen has enough kinfolk in the country to raise a small army should the need arise. A powerful militia patrols the streets, but it's there to prevent infighting, not to uphold the law. In fact, there are no criminal courts in the Alliance. Conflicts between teips are solved through arbitration. If no one vouches for you then you're nothing. Anyone can murder you in the middle of the day without any consequences. However, if you're someone's guest, this man, as well as his entire teip, will go to war to defend you without a second thought.

Despite the decline of Islam in the region, Grozny still boasts the largest and most ornate mosque in Europe. The Muslim community is small and beleaguered, however, surviving only on account of foreign aid and because the Alliance's leadership doesn't wish to antagonize the wealthy and influential Arab Kingdom. Yet.

## A Company of Wolves

President Tapa Turpalo is a figurehead, his purpose it to make speeches in the UN and shake the hands of foreign dignitaries. Environmentalism is a very popular cause in the West, so they're willing to overlook some racism and murder to get a photo taken with the leader of the most environmentally aware nation in the world. I'm not being cynical here; the Caucasians are actually investing money in huge air purifiers to make sure their industrialized neighbors don't poison their precious mountain air. That's how obsessed with environmentalism these guys are.

Actual power lies with the informal Council of Elders which represent the hundreds of teips making up the alliance. However, elders who cling to the values of Islam too hard have a tendency to get eaten by wolves, suggesting that the true leader of the alliance is the Wolf.

# THE EURASIAN UNION

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: EU.NET

FQDN: EU.NET.GENEVA.24TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

**By:** Armand Deville (PhD), Lead Sysadmin of EU-UNITED

So you want me to explain what happened to Europe czarny? Charon happened — that's the short and fast version. Charon wiped out a lot of the banks. Since money is mostly digital, Charon's "wiping the slate clean" was both the worst thing and the best thing that could happen in Europe. The best? Yeah, you see most people don't really own their houses, cars or other stuff. Even companies were guilty of this, with huge credit lines and long-time loans. Companies disappeared overnight. The Union stepped in and guaranteed a new baseline standardized on "current worth" to its citizens. Megacorps were hurt, but survived.

> **#Lars_Abell:** Loads of economic theory went into that, but it seemed to work. A lot of sprawlers, like me, ended up better off.

This restructuring had a few peculiar effects — first, some countries had been hit with economic woes before Charon and most people in these countries weren't allowed loans by the banks, and thus owned very little. This made them more than just a little pissed when the Union declared the "tabula rasa." Nationalists rose up, proclaiming that this would never have happened if they were independent.

> **#Lars_Abell:** That's blank canvas for the rest of us, they were starting over on a new painting.

> **#Antonio_Romano:** Because you wouldn't be pissed when everybody you knew had their lives trashed.

In the restructuring, many inside the police and military were sympathetic to the angry nationalists and soon ended up joining the nationalists, creating armed militia.

The militia set up border patrols, attacked army stations and bases, stole weapons and vehicles, and became a problem in nations such as Spain, Italy and Greece. Had things stopped there, we would've probably been able to handle it. But then the Nordic Pack did seceed from the Union, legally, and the whole Russo-Chinese border dispute bloomed into a real problem. Together with the French Election, things turned from bad to worse in a few months and it didn't take long before both the Italians and the Greeks came running to the European Parliament asking for armed intervention.

Both local governments in exile in Brussels, the Spanish are but months from falling to their own rebel militia, while the Scandinavians have seceeded from the Union just as the Chinese began deploying more units to the Russian border. The Eurasian Union is on the edge of destruction.

> **#XZIO:** Is that government propaganda or does he actually believe the bullshit he is spewing out?

## The New Eurasian Union

The Eurasian Union covers much of what was once known as the Old World, stretching from the Atlantic in the west to the Ural Mountains in the East, having incorporated Russia after its fateful defeat at the hands of the Chinese Mandarinate. Due to strong French influences, the northern parts of Africa were admitted into the Union to provide 'structural and societal stability' in a region otherwise rocked by instability.

Ravaged by the secession of the Scandinavian countries from the Union, threatened by the Chinese Mandarinate to the east, the Eurasian Union stands at the precipe of the Abyss.

## Rebel South

The "Rebel South?" Yeah it ain't official in any capacity, but everyone calls the problem areas in southern Europe the "Rebel South." I don't know if it has anything to do with allusions to the US Civil War, but if you ask me, they will face the same end as the American rebels did some 300 years ago. Huh, funny now that you think about it — the French supported the South that time around too, and here the rebellion couldn't have bloomed if it wasn't for that French General and his loyal army.

> **#XZIO:** Yeah sure thing — we were completely toothless until the General joined. That's why the GD had the Greek Parliament on its knees before that happened. Yup. Toothless.

### GREECE

The nationalists have been grumbling in Greece since 2012 when they were forced into economic austerity by the Union. The Golden Dawn are one particular breed of nationalist that bit into the soul of the Greek people and never let go. They've grown over the decades, keeping to the shadows as the unity movement spread across Europe, but Charon was the straw that broke Greece's back and pushed them into action. They are authentic "pagans" who feel that Catholic and Protestant Christianity is a foreign concept forced on them and have woven Greek paganism into Orthodox Christianity.

> **#Petros_Pavlidis:** Austerity? Millions starved, thousands of businesses disappeared, the sick were forced out into the fields again.

When Charon struck, the Golden Dawn declared that Greece was no longer beholden to the Union and that they as a people should fight to retain their culture, their society, and their language. Unlike their western counterparts in Spain and Italy, the Golden Dawn had prepared for this very moment and had weapons stockpiled.

> **#Petros_Pavlidis:** You deride our ancient belief, our blood sacrifice, yet it is you who are driven from our lands. Lands that cry out in joy over us liberating it and shedding the foul miasma of your weakness.

Today the Golden Dawn have integrated the police and army into their own political structure. Both the army and the police are subordinate to the Dawn Guard, the elite of the Golden Dawn. Some say that the Dawn Guard are all psions. Fortunately for the Union, the Greek special forces are awfully good at distracting the GD and with Turkey stepping in, GD has found itself with a divided focus.

## ITALY

Where the Greek nationalists are more or less united behind the Golden Dawn, Italy is a hotbed of strong personal wills, charismatic demagogues, and chaos. Anarchy reigns supreme in most regions of Italy and the general day-to-day running of the country has fallen to pieces. Garbage amasses in the streets, corps have deployed armed guards to safeguard their premises — openly firing on unruly civilians. Ironically, the corrupt have become the best organized in Italy with the different strains of maffia taking control of entire cities.

> **#Lucia_diTrevi:** We are offering a solution to the problem that is this chaos. Is it so strange that people have embraced us for it?

Napoli offered General Adrien "The Butcher" Boucher sanctuary after his public act of rebellion. Since then, Napoli has been turned into a military complex, housing entire batallions of the French Army. Its harbor plays host to a number of French Naval ships that defected with the Butcher, and air superiority is maintained by a score of French combat fighters. The golemmech units didn't join the Armed Forces in Napoli, but have headquartered themselves in the Italian Alps, locking down the entire mountainrange. They deploy in camouflage and perform random strikes against both French and Italian forces. Some say they still answer to the general, while others claim they have become mercenaries.

In Rome, Media National has taken what it calls "corporate control" of the city. Without jurisdiction by the government, the multinational company has deployed armed mercenaries, taking out criminal cells, nationalist gatherings, and armed citizens with extreme prejudice. Calling the government incapable of protecting its employees and public holdings, Media National (MeNa) took the steps they deemed necessary to do so.

> **#Anna_Ditrevi[Media_National_PR_Director]:** When the Union couldn't protect us, we did. When the Union failed, we stepped up. When Rome bled, we staunched the wounds.

The only city that hasn't fallen to anarchy and looting is Venice. Its offshore submerged levels lead to a strong respect for law and order, since chaos would threaten a breach that could drown millions. The special forces units training there are been an important presence, keeping the city safe against countryside looters threatening the outskirts. Rumours has it that Adrien the Butcher has offered an alliance to the Golden Dawn if they can destabilize Venice.

## SPAIN

The only country of the Rebel South to still have a non-exiled local government and where the EU stands a fighting chance to stop more bloodshed is Spain. After Charon, the Spanish were the first to claim 'tabula rasa' and offer its citizens a blank slate for the future. Had it not been for the Corps forcing the Spanish government to accept their debts anyway, and thus reneging on much of the safeties they first offered, Spain would probably be prospering by now.

**#Antonio_Romano:** Probably? The Corps bought our lives, our freedom and our government. We were sold like slaves into a debt that will last for generations, when we for the first time in a century were free!

With trouble brewing in neighboring Italy and the Corps forcing their demands upon the government, it didn't take long for people to rise up. At first, it was peaceful, strikes that shut down factories and offices, country wide protests. But when the government used the police, supported by Corporate soldiers, to disperse protests and protect strikebreakers in Barcelona, things took a nasty turn. It started with a thrown rock, but that rock hit a soldier who opened fire into the crowd. Suddenly the protesters turned into a vicious mob, surging over the police and militia. When the fighting stopped, hundreds were dead and the rebellion was armed with police and Corporate weapons, body armor, crowd control weaponry, and worse.

Some demagogue amidst the protestors seized the opportunity and the crowd marched on city hall in Barcelona. In the next few days, armed conflicts escalated until the Government brought in the army to support police efforts, a move which many saw as turning the army and its soldiers on the Spanish people. The rebels died defending city hall against the army, with a local female rights activist, Antolia Alvarez, crying out "Libertad!" before being gunned down. Suddenly, everyone was a rebel, from the mother of five to the farmer in the fields, from the corporate lackey to the manager.

The party in the Spanish Rebellion are the Nuevo Moviemento Nacional, organizing itself like an old-fashioned democratic party. The Spanish government is supported by corporate mercenaries, loaned to the nation of Spain as a goodwill gesture by Ravenlocke Securities and Eurasian Army deployments. Neighbouring Portugal has also offered the Government a nearby central command.

### EASTERN CONFLICT

To understand the conflict brewing in the East, you have to understand something about the Russian mentality — Russians don't take invasions lightly. They might tear each other apart, hate (and at the same time instigate) wide-spread corruption, work against (or for) an ironfist government, but if someone attacks the Russians, they will close ranks faster than imaginable. Any perceived weaknesses within society at large cannot be counted on to remain in a state of war. China made that mistake when they attacked.

**#Nikolaj_Antonov:** Damn right we are. I had bratva who died in the first assaults. They will be avenged.

## The Core

For all the disturbances in the Eurasian Union, most of the countries are members — and quite willingly so. The countries hit hardest by the nationalist movements are Hungary and Romania.

From Paris to Moscow however, following the recently renovated TransEuro Maglev, the core of the union is standing strong. Many citizens are still somewhat shocked at what is transpiring, but more are finding a reason to stand up behind the Union and the number of armed forces volunteers is rising, especially in Poland and Ireland.

German automotive and engineering industries, once a powerhouse in the European economy, are shifting production away from commercial products towards military technology in anticipation of the conflict to come.

Across Europe, scientific research is being redirected into more combat-related pursuits. In France, Ravenlocke Securities are negotiating an extended contract to allow them to deploy as combatants against the rebels in the south. Other mercenary firms are flocking to Eurasia and competition is intense and fierce.

### GERMANY

The fallout of the Charon event has ravaged Germany economically, politically, and militarily. Unemployment has risen to a staggering 35% nationwide, sparking massive riots in Berlin, Dresden, Hamburg, Munich, and especially in the Bonn-Dusseldorf megasprawl. Many German citizens are calling for the removal of Konrad Gerste, who recently approved bailouts of Heckler and Koch, Mauseer industries, BMW and ThyssenKrupp AG; all major manufacturers of weapons, aircraft, and ground vehicles for the German Military. Financiers and analysts across the board agree that the move, while infuriating the common man and woman, is ultimately in the best interests for Germany as a whole, given the volatile state of affairs in Europe.

Of course that doesn't help the citizens, many of whom are joining legions of people forced out of their homes and onto the already dangerous streets.. Rendered destitute, many are fleeing the cities seeking solace in makeshift shanty towns to avoid getting picked up by the military and placed into internment camps which have sprung up overnight. Speculation as to what really goes on in the camps is rampant. Some claim the camps are little more than indoctrination centers where the inhabitants are forcibly conscripted into the army. Others insist something more sinister is afoot. Alleged "eye witnesses" have posted #INFOdumps showing images of brutal interrogations being carried out on men and women.

### FRANCE

As it has for over a thousand years, France remains one of the cultural centers of the world. The question is: who's culture? White European culture has been dominant in the city, but following the massive influx of Muslim immigrants, there is some question as to the cultural identity of the entire country. In Paris, this has led to a prolonged culture clash that has now been turned into a street war for the soul of the city. Armed nationalists, supported by deserters from the French army after the dissolution, are now fighting Muslim gangs, both intent on safeguarding "their way of life" against the other side. The President recently deployed the newly contracted Ravenlocke Securities to Paris to ensure safety, and has publicly threatened the "rabble" that should they not put down their arms of their own free will, Ravenlocke will be given free reign. This decree by the world's first psychic president hasn't had the effect she's hoped for.

If anything. the rioting has increased, and rumors of a resistance movement loyal to Adrien the Butcher are spreading.

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Known as the People's Revolutionary Front, the resistance is responsible for a number of terrorist attacks across Paris. President Angéle Bonheur has herself been targeted no less that five times since she took office.

## The Nordic Pact

### TYPE OF GOVERNMENT

Democratic, four-nation co-operative and monetary union Leader(s): The Four Primes: Anders Svensson (Swedish), Jukka Kylmäluoma (Finnish), Svein Amundsen (Norwegian) and Mads Rasmussen (Danish) Locales of interest: Copenhagen, Stockholm

### BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NATION

Recently formed, the Nordic Pact hails back to a time even before the European Union, a time when the Nordic countries were often allied, in unions or parts of the same country (Finland was once just another part of Sweden) and the passport unions that followed in the modern age, where one passport holder was free to travel between all the Scandinavian countries, not unlike what was later implemented by the European Union and its successor.

### THE NATION TODAY

Today, the Pact builds on that shared history and with a strong influence of the nationalist Christian Knightly Brotherhood, a number of Brothers are found in powerful positions. Fearful of a coming war between Eurasia and the Chinese Mandarinate, and aware of their own weak position from a military perspective, the Pact is working to create a league of Mutual Defense contracts with other nations, but due to the relative youth of the Pact, nothing has been formalized just yet.

The Nordic Pact is a powerful thorn in the side of the Eurasian Union. Strong nationalist movements, led by the Christian Knightly Brotherhood, finally succeeded in early 2089 to force a vote of secession from the Union in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland, just as armed rebellion in the South flared up. Conspiracy-theorists amongst us tend to note how closely these things happened and claim an invisible hand, but sometimes things are just what they seem to be — circumstantial.

> **#Juhann Grüber:** Sure thing they are. Armed rebellion in the south triggered two weeks before the national votes in Scandinavia. A vote pushed by a nationalist movement. And who rebelled? Nationalists. Yeah, sure thing, pure coincidence ami. What, wanna call me a conspiracy-theorist? Go ahead, you dumb scheisse.

These four nations, especially Norway, were never content under Eurasian rule, but the socio democratic views tended to focus on the benefits of the many over the benefits of the individuals. Over time, social democratic views had less of an impact on the Union, giving the nationalists the final weapon they needed to gain popular support for their movements. A return to a true social democratic society, governed by Christian values, without foreign influences that could corrupt the Scandinavian spirit — that was the rallying cry of the nationalists.

One by one, the Scandinavian countries voted to peacefully secede from the Eurasian Union and it didn't take many hours for a draft for the Nordic Pact to be sent out, ensuring that the Scandinavian countries would retain their internally open borders, beginning a collective work to reinstate the Crown as a Scandinavian currency as well as signing a co-defense agreement. That a large number of local governments had members openly part of the Christian Knightly Brotherhood didn't seem to bother people's perception of their elected politicians.

It didn't take long before the Brotherhood "suggested" that people who didn't speak a Scandinavian language should consider relocating back to the Eurasian Union and a few months after the Pact was complete, similar bills were introduced in all four governments, suggesting that all form of state aid to non-Scandinavian citizens would be withdrawn since that was a provision of Union membership. At the same time, all non-Scandinavians were to reapply for visas, or find themselves labeled as criminals, leading to something of an exodus as thousands of people left Scandinavia for other EU countries.

Now, almost two years after the first votes were put forth, and a year and a half into the secession, people are beginning to question just how fast these things happened. Even without conspiracies, it was obvious that the discussion and work towards both secession had begun years before. When the Swedish Navy reconstituted itself, it soon became apparent that many commanding officers were also proud members of the Christian Knightly Brotherhood. It didn't take long for European journalists to uncover that party officials, military commanders and even local media journalists were all members of the Christian Knightly Brotherhood, an organization claiming to value classic Christian values, but also encouraging its members to view itselves as "warriors for God" and "knights in training for the coming Crusade".

Retaining the high living standards of the Eurasian Union, coupled with the charismatic leaders of the Brotherhood and speaking of a coming Golden Age, while at the same time playing to ancient mysticism and ritual, Scandinavia has become an interesting place for rich Eurasians, a safe spot on a continent otherwise embroiled in what can only be called a Civil War, while at the same time facing a full-on continental war with the Chinese Mandarinate.

However, it should be said that the secession movement only won the elections by the smallest of margins and the scandinavians could surely be convinced to return to the Eurasian Union, or if things become worse, might find themselves facing a newly renovated European Army with nowhere to go but north. Either way, a large number of scandinavians are still Unionist in mindset and heart, something that has opened the Pact for all manner of shadow operations.

# THE UNITED KINGDOM

#INFOSOURCE

#GYRO.TAG.DONATE.CHITOWN.ETP

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/UK_INFODUMP

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET/UK_INFODUMP

**Posted by:** #Talos

The United Kingdom's monarchy is no longer a political entity. The shift of power to the Eurasian Union rendered the Monarch's veto power obsolete. True political power resides with the First Minister, the bombastic Harold Cameron, of the London Parliament — a body constituted of Welsh Assembly and Westminster Parliament. Elected in the controversial election of 2060, he has kept power for thirty years, becoming the face of Great Britain and in his tenure every bit as iconic Sir Winston Churchill.

The Scottish Parliament is currently headed by the charismatic First Minister Robert McKay. He was elected on a promise to bring Scotland into the Eurasian Union as an equal with its own voice, and he has since spent a great deal of time ensuring that Scotland is widely recognised. He is considered in the EU Parliament as a joke and Harold Cameron's own statement upon McKay's election was "Every court needs a jester."

## Eurasian Parliament Relations

Harold Cameron and the London Parliament stand firmly with the Eurasian Parliament on most economic and political matters, but are often amongst the last to add weight to any standing point, carefully observing the situation before making a decision. When directly involved, he asks blunt questions that are simplistic in their forthrightness and often bring to light more than the response would otherwise. One notable event where his calm exterior slipped was his outburst upon VIRTUE's successful lobby for a seat in the Parliament, as historically he has always stood against issues such as AI and simulacrum emancipation.

At his side, Scottish First Minister McKay is the first to weigh in on a situation despite having no official influence other than being the main advisor to Harold Cameron. He is known for his vacillating opinions resulting in Cameron's famous description of him being like "a puppy trying to get noticed without peeing on the carpet." Some more sceptical members of the Parliament wonder if Harold Cameron may actually be grooming his successor in McKay, and that his over enthusiastic approach to all events in the EU Parliament is a screen by which Harold Cameron watches how people respond. Though McKay's ignorance of the financial problems, and the epidemics beginning to manifest in Scottish Urban Metroplex slums and working class areas, seem to point towards the sceptics being overly paranoid.

## The New Classes

Thanks in a large part to Harold Cameron's stern guidance over the past thirty years, the United Kingdom has prospered and even survived the recent Charon financial attacks relatively unscathed. The brunt of losses inflicted by Charon were taken by the middle class, as their wealth wasn't invested within larger companies and other ventures; instead when the electronic funds ceased to exist they found themselves left with nothing. The working class [who had lost comparatively little] and the middle class formed what became the new Working Class. The life of this Working Class revolves around their six-day work week and the 10pm curfew that is heavily enforced.

The National Constabulary takes a dim view of those who break curfew and bring them in for prolonged questioning about suspected seditious activities. As a result, most of the Working Class spend their free time hooked into GoDNet hangouts with friends and relatives, watching football through the eyes of their favourite player, or playing games such as Deadlands Online rather, than risk breaking curfew by accident. The only day without a curfew is Saturday where the Working Class population are encouraged to enjoy themselves after work. Saturday has become a riotous day of excess, when the Working Class let go of all of their problems. Naturally, the Upper Class have no such restrictions placed on them, and the Migrant Class scavengers who venture out of the slums face severe repercussions on entering areas restricted to them.

## Law Enforcement

The fractured state of government and society in the United Kingdom has resulted in an almost schizophrenic approach towards law and order across the nation. The main source of law is the National Constabulary of the United Kingdom that was pieced together from the remnants of the various police services and private security contractors that survived the problems of the first half of the century. The NatCon is the only government sponsored security force, and thus provides the majority of law enforcement throughout the United Kingdom. The members of the working class are handled with a harsh but fair attitude of professionalism.

During the Death, the national police force was armed, for the first time in history, and the orders were never officially repealed. Today many officers simply opt not to carry a firearm. Instead they often choose a powerful stun gun, unless their duties are likely to have them entering some of the more problematic areas they are tasked with patrolling. One thing that all of the police forces have in common are the vast number of surveillance drones, security cameras and even three spy satellites used to monitor the main Sprawls of the United Kingdom.

### CRIMINAL CULTURE

Criminal activity, like everything else in the United Kingdom, is based on social standing. Due to the excessive power and wealth of the Upper Class, the old adage, "There is one rule for the rich, one rule for the poor," should be replaced with, "There are no rules for the rich." Despite many criminal activities

having their origins in the upper echelons of British society, prosecutions of them are incredibly rare, and only the most heinous or foolish member of the gentry will be likely to face prosecution. The most prominent examples are the internal rivalries of British Industrial Services, the families descended from the owners of the original businesses that established the foundations of the Great Northern Sprawl feud continually over patent rights and are the source of a great deal of extra work for the Working Class of the Great Northern Sprawl seeking a little more income. Should the job go wrong, only a stupid criminal would bring attention to their employer, as the information give will be ignored and they are promptly sent to the Out-Processing Department.

## The London Sprawl

### LONDON: DOVER WARD

Crossing the Trans-Channel Highway to the United Kingdom leads into the Dover Ward Customs and Excise Centre of London, a five mile complex that stands between the highway and the bulk of Dover Ward. Bored and/or corrupt officials monitor the flow of traffic into the UK and attempt to find any illicit goods, usually for their own private consumption. Every major company that has an interest in the United Kingdom has at least one centre within the Dover Ward of London as the Trans-channel highway represents the quickest and cheapest methods of importing and exporting for the United Kingdom.

The Dover Ward is built over the remnants of Dover and Folkestone and forms the connection of the Trans-Channel Highway to the arterial route of the London Intracity Motorway that allows goods to reach areas deeper in London and access the Northbound Motorway that leads to the Great Northern Sprawl and the Scottish Urban Metroplex. The main body of the Dover Ward follows the line of the London Intracity Motorway towards the central London Wards on either side as a grid patterned pre-fabricated industrial park with an outlying housing community, hotels and retail outlets.

### LONDON: WESTMINSTER WARD

Westminster has two distinct areas, the Upper and Lower Wards. In order to guard the political centre of the United Kingdom after the deluge destroyed the Houses of Parliament, the government of 2020 forced the sale of land and houses over Enfield and other surrounding areas. Once the previous occupants had been moved from the land the area was bulldozed, and a ten mile concrete raft put in place to form the foundation of the new political power base of the United Kingdom. Eventually this area was expanded until the ground artificially raised by thirty metres to safe guard against future flooding. This area eventually formed the basis of the Upper Ward. Over the next sixty years the site of repeated urban renewal projects until the area expanded in a crescent shape to Uxbridge, and has become the place to live. The Housing Board of Enfield ultimately has the decision over whether a certain person may buy their way into the district but it has to be said that "Money Talks" is a true statement and only the richest of the rich can afford to live in the luxurious West End.

The Upper Ward is a sight to behold; home to London's Upper Class, it has a population of around two thousand people. The

wide open plazas of perfect white marble are immaculately clean and lined with trees, while specially tailored advertising holograms discreetly offer services to passers-by creating a serene atmosphere for the wealthy to enjoy life. Security drones patrol the skies, their presense helping to ensure the safety of the social elite.

Lower Westminster is the area that surrounds the platform that Upper Westminster was built on, and reaches from Enfield to the River Thames and is home to many businesses, facilities, and attractions. Life for the Working Class like those from the Stratford Terminus of the London Intracity Highway is somewhat controlled but comfortable life. The money that filters down to the Working Class is enough to feed a family and provide the occasional treat if both adults work in even the most basic of jobs. The most common job in these areas is data management, controlling the never ending flow of information that lets the businesses function. The average working day is ten hours starting at 8:00am sharp. At 10:00pm a curfew is enforced by the NatCon. Once at home most everyone in the family relies on GoDNet to socialize and relax with their peers and extended family members in virtual hangouts while programs from the Special Branch of the NatCon monitor for signs of seditious activity.

## The Houses O'

The Houses of Parliament were lost in 2019 during the Deluge, when the ground level was completely flooded by the rampaging Thames River inflicting horrendous damage in a short amount of time. In the aftermath, the government was shifted away from the banks of the Thames in order to reduce the risk of another flooding and the Houses of Parliament stood derelict for many years, but were still well-guarded against the influx of refugees in the dark days of The Death.

Once the nuclear autumn had subsided, development companies squabbled over whose bids to rebuild should be accepted by the government. After its initial sale in 2043, the Parliament building began to ricochet between companies for the next forty years as various buy outs, bankruptcies, and other financial problems began to beset any efforts to modernize the building. It was finally auctioned in 2084 to Benjamin Hesketh Esq. for an absurdly low price.

### THE GRAND OPENING

Benjamin, or Benjy (to his friends), began the ambitious reconstruction project inside of the Houses of Parliament walls were removed in some areas and built in other areas until the interior resembled nothing like the original. Benjy's project remained a complete mystery; many inquisitive reporters intent on finding out "the Secrets of the House" suddenly decided that other events were much more newsworthy than construction work.

In December 2089, Benjy's advertising kicked in to overdrive. Mailshots through GodNet, along with publicity stunts and enigmatic interviews happened at an increasing pace until anticipation reached fever pitch. On Saturday 31st December 2089, the doors to "The Houses O'" were opened to the public with a large fanfare and a firework display that was heard as far away as the Dover Ward.

In the days since the grand opening it has become the place to impress any out of town business contacts or simply be seen. The Houses O' has become a central feature in London Nightlife, being one of the few places in Lower Westminster Ward with a license exempting it from the curfew. This allows it to open every day until late, catering to the Upper Class and any tourists.

### THE SEEDY UNDERBELLY

Beneath the legitimate front is the Undercroft, a poorly kept secret, but one never raided by the NatCon, deep underneath the Houses O'; this area boast a fighting pit that stages everything from bare knuckle and cyberspur fighting to cybermastiff dog fights as well as playing host to a myriad of other illegalities. Around three sides of the pit there is always a gaggle of bookies to help punters gamble away their money; the remaining side has a ringside vantage and is divided into small booths set aside for employers to await those seeking work outside the boundaries of normal employment laws.

### HERITAGE AND ENHANCEMENT

The main area of London business are the heritage attractions, and the most notable and famous is the Buckingham Palace Heritage Centre. When political power shifted from Westminster to the Eurasian Parliament, the royal family of Great Britain lost the last of its political influence. Today, Buckingham Palace is now a centre that offers tours, souvenirs, and an in-depth view of the United Kingdom's history provided by the descendants of those who shaped it. While nominally members of the Upper Class and the protection detail of the Coldstream Guards, the royal family has much more in common with members of the Working Class and are often a voice for them within the Byzantine politics of the upper echelons of British society. Buckingham Palace has been extensively reworked to better fit its new role within society. The royal family have a private area that is quite luxurious even by modern standards but the vast majority of the building has been turned into a museum of artefacts related to British history and a series of lecture halls where regularly sold out talks are given by guest lecturers from the Scottish Urban Metroplex University.

As well as the heritage industry Lower Westminster is home to Harley Street, a place that is synonymous with the medical profession, has expanded from a simple street in London to a small community of medical professionals who work with both the Upper and Working Classes to provide them with the adjustments they request or are required for various jobs. Since their entrance into the mainstream of society, all manner of human enhancement technologies from the most basic cybernetics to the complex DNA alterations of in-vitro modification and hybridisation are readily available here.

///THREAD JACK///

LOADING...

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: DUTCH COURAGE

The Houses O' is home to a group who call themselves Dutch Courage. They are the only group that Benjy Hesketh has bestowed the title of "Hereditary Peer," meaning that they can come and go as they please from the House of Lords, and never need to buy a drink. What service they rendered to earn such an accolade, neither they or Benjy Hesketh are saying. They have a solid reputation on the streets for getting the job done and their success rate is such that they have their own booth in the Undercroft, where employers come to them to try and entice them to take their job. This arrangement works greatly to their advantage, letting them get the juiciest work. Dutch Courage have been around the blocks of Westminster, and London at large, many times. They also have been known to act as fixers for people who need a crew, but the job is too small for them to personally get involved in. Like any successful crew a lot of rumours abound about Dutch Courage. Some state they are nothing more than a face of someone deeper, some claim they are the actual leaders of the Undercroft whilst others say they are just out for themselves.

#MICKEY

The front man of Dutch Courage is Mickey. His usual *cheeky chap* demeanour is underlined by a steely confidence that makes it clear that he is just as comfortable throwing a punch as cracking a joke. His vocabulary and intelligence seem at odds with his accent which is more common amongst members of the Lambeth Reach but it lets him use scorn to cut straight to the heart of the matter. Though like many in London the quickest way of getting along with Mickey is to praise his favourite football team; 'The Hammers'.

Mickey stands just over 6' in height and is surprisingly light on his feet considering his somewhat stocky frame. He seems to perpetually smile conveying his emotion and attitude at the time from an utterly malicious promise of pain to a disarming charmer and, as the oldest of the posse, Mickey is greying and insists it gives him a distinguished look rather than detracts.

#STEVIE

"What's yours is mine" A misquote that Stevie has made his life's motto. This very densely built man analyses everything he is exposed to and knows that curiosity only killed the cat because the cat was too slow or too stupid. His inquisitive mind has the tendency to cause some trouble as if something is there; it's obviously intended to be exploited and shared for the betterment of all. He takes a holistic view of technology and life and seeks a complete understanding of whatever he is involved with. He is Dutch Courage's tech expert, if it needs hacking, coding, patching or repairing he's the man to see. Stevie has an uncanny knack for blending into crowds, he is average in height and looks with dark complexion, eyes and hair; his perpetual 5 o'clock shadow never seems to change and only the chassis weight reveals that he is not an average member of the Working Class. The most notable aspect is the left side of his head which has the hair shorn short and allows people to see an elaborate electro-tattoo which seems to pulse as though mimicking the brain's activity. In contrast to his looks though his intelligence and cavalier attitude is anything but average.

#STICKIE

The sole member of Dutch Courage to have a 'soul' is the one without one. Stickie is a Entertainer Simulacrum from the Far East, he was designed to smooth social interactions between the disparate cultures of the East and West. Stickie tends to use words to explore all the elements necessary before committing to action. Yet when confronted with significant

injustice, he will give everything he has to right it with attitude approaching a Samurai's stoicism and crusader's zeal. Stickie has a distinctive look as his model's designer fused features of the east and west; as they were intended to be the go-betweens of important figures, whose job is to ensure that accidental breaches of etiquette are avoided or at least resolved quickly. His long dark hair swept back into a martial artist's plait, he moves like many who have had extensive training seemingly gliding across a room, wearing his black robes made of a nano-weave mesh that gives it the ability to change style from a stylised Japanese kimono bearing his original owner's Môn to Catholic priestly vestments.

#SEAMUS

Seamus looks like the group's brawn though any who have seen him fight know that his brawn is backed up by brains and he prefers to use his charm where possible. Seamus is most often found with Stevie, egging him on as much as bailing him out. Seamus, or Jack as the others refer to him for no discernible reason, is naturally a large handsome chap. A sure fire way to insult the man is to either comment on his heritage or call him a 'combat monkey' as he has undergone repeated surgery to minimise the Ape aspect of his looks to regain his handsome features, the surgeries have been successful in giving him a fierce primal look. On occasion Seamus has been known to jump into the fighting pit of the Undercroft to work off tension and prides himself on having never taken a hit that damages his expensive features. Seamus towers over the rest of the Dutch Courage and sports a naturally forming Mohawk quiff, an ever changing variety of stylised facial hair and really, really good skin complexion.

#BUTE

In the shadows near Dutch Courage you'll find Bute kicking back, taking note of pretty much everything whilst stripping down any weapon put before him. Those who know him, the manner in which he works on said weapon is generally a good indicator as to his current mood; whether it's casually or with impressive speed, the final piece snaps into place punctuating his last word. Bute doesn't do close encounters, neither on the field of battle or in social circumstances, and seems to simply enjoy the association of those he calls friends. As with all snipers, it's not when you can see him you should be worried. The shortest of Dutch Courage, Bute carries himself with a proud military bearing, striding from one location to another with shoulders back, putting forward a shield of authority that precludes interruption. He's not one to be rushed into things, and will move at his own pace having finished his pint or cuppa and having used the time to plan ahead. Not many will be able to describe Bute over and above that due to the use of shadows, caps/hats and a disarming laugh.

///MEDIA CLIP///

*"Ladies and Gentlemen! I welcomes yous to my ickle place by the Rivah, I's 'ope yous all enjoy it! Come in and know me better!" – Benjamin Hesketh Esq.'s opening speech for the Houses O'*

*Naturally the Upper Class were let in first along with select members of the Working Class. They were astonished and amazed by the sheer amount of work that had gone on. People were given a brief tour by luxury simulacrum where they were shown the auditorium, lecture hall, conference facility, the still under construction restaurant for which Benjy made profuse apologies, and the United Kingdom of Gifts a store that sold all manner of goods for tourists and visitors. The amazed group were then brought to "The House of Commons".*

*The House of Commons was no longer a centre of political control but a luxurious night club. During the ceremonies, someone called Benjy "Big Ben" and the name spread like wildfire. His canny business sense and showmanship made him an instant success. As Big Ben worked the crowd welcoming everyone and storing information in his steel-trap mind he marked out a few of the people for his personal invite to "Peers". These select few entered the House of Lords, a smaller version of the House of Commons with a single DJ, with waiters and waitresses to attend to every whim of these first Peers. Entrance to the House of Lords is difficult to get and a night's access is a little reward for a job well done on behalf of Big Ben or more likely the addition of yet another favour to Big Ben's ever expanding network. In the days since the grand opening, it has become the place to be seen and preen as well as impress any out of town business contacts.*

*Benjy Hesketh towers over the average punter in his "ickle place" and enjoys the role of a classic proprietor in the Houses O' capturing his audience's attention with artful changes to his voice, subtle nuances and face giving life to the tall tales or rhetoric; he also revels at being the man with the information, leads, and/or contacts to facilitate almost any of the jobs that pass through the Undercroft. Dealing with Big Ben though is not as straightforward as might be expected and all of his deals have meticulous fine print and clauses to guard his interests and he is always the first to scoop the deck for anything that was left unattended for too long.*

///END MEDIA CLIP///

LOADING...

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: DR. SIMON FOY

INVESTIGATION TRANSCRIPT: 2090/05/01 16:32HRS

Harley Street is home to one of the most controversial figures of the day; Doctor Simon Foy. He is a talented but eccentric surgeon who graduated from Scotland Urban Metroplex University five years ago, and has since made repeated headlines with his unique procedures.

The most mundane, and rarest, of his services is the construction of unique cybernetics. Each piece is beyond the most bleeding edge research and development facilities work, and creates little to no Cybertrauma with implantation, Dr Simon Foy refuses to work on what he terms "banalware."

Any cyberware he creates is bizarre to look upon and, in some cases, disturbing. His most famous piece was for the son of one of British Industrial Solutions Board of Directors who requested his feet be replaced with a hundred tiny mechanical spiderlike legs. Simon Foy's most common procedure is "Heritage Surgery" that forgoes a large amount of modern, and much less invasive, techniques in favour of antiquated surgical methods dating back to the previous century. These surgeries inevitably leave scarring that can be quite severe but these have become a status symbol amongst the Upper Class mainly due to the risks involved and the hefty price tag.

His rise to public attention, at least amongst the Upper Class, stems from his latest procedures. Body modifications such as piercing and tattooing are prevalent throughout society at all levels and with the advent of hybridisation and cosmetic cybernetics you can shape yourself into any form you wish. So to cater to those rich enough to afford such services he offers "Patching" where he will take parts from requested subjects (such as animal tissue or even other human tissue) and attach it to the person's body complete with any additions or alterations to the nervous system in order to make it function.

Sarah Hall, one of the idle rich, was the first to publicly show her "patch" job creating uproar when she arrived at the 2089 New Year's Eve party in Upper Westminster with an additional pair of breasts (from an unknown donor) and her hair replaced with porcupine spines. In 2090 many of young and idle Upper Class are now waiting for appointments regarding Patching and, although many lose their nerve, the number of patched grows weekly.

Simon has sparked controversy across society in a way not seen since the STRAP was revealed. The medical community is split as many regard Heritage Surgery as unethical and dangerous to the point of medical negligence, whilst other medical professionals support him, stating that he is a surgical artist rather than the current use of gene-therapy, nanotechnology, and computer controlled surgery. One uniting factor is that they all wonder how he managed to avoid certain problems such as tissue rejection and incompatibility, as well as how he made such breakthroughs. The main groups of detractors are the hybrids who condemn patching as a mockery of their culture, and many groups who oppose alterations to the human genome such as hybridisation, find an uncomfortable common ground with the hybrids over patching, and even historically antagonistic religious groups have begun to set aside some of their hatred temporarily to focus on him. The artistic community of the Upper Class have gone into a frenzy of activity with nebulous debate and have extended several offers throughout the United Kingdom for him to speak at their various functions.

Dr Foy is most often encountered while working and is usually found in a tight black jumpsuit with integral hood, a rebreather/surgical mask, and a blood red surgical apron. His movements are always measured and precise. He purposefully avoids any kind of physical contact. When forced out of his laboratory complex, like most members of the Upper Class, it is clearly visible that he is human 2.0, from his perfect white teeth, smooth complexion and strong jaw line.

Though for one with his reputation of eccentricity and work on extreme body modifications, Simon sports few obvious modifications. He has uniformly trimmed designer stubble and short brown hair kept at a complementary length as both were tailored to remain at his preferred length. His clothes are always perfectly tailored and sporting the latest fashion, his arms display tribal designs made of nanotechnology that react to his emotional state by changing colour and vibrancy. His upper chest is implanted with a blue chrome collar with the phrase "Loyal Au Morte" embossed in gothic lettering around the collar bone, and eyes that have tiny ideograms of Kanji for loyalty mottling the whites.

As well as his legitimate businesses, like many of the Upper Class, he has other less legitimate sources of income. To a select few, he is known as an excellent cleaner. His eyes are home to an impressive array of scanners and sensors, mostly his own design, that allow him to find and remove traces of anyone from a crime scene even down to the cellular level, while his own traces — such as shed skin cells — breakdown within a minute allowing him to tailor a crime scene to tell whatever story he wishes. When he is working in such a role, he is encountered wearing an Executive Decision business suit and carrying a Saturday Night Sprawl Special loaded with dual core rounds. He will try to avoid a fight if possible, but will not abandon a job unless presented with extremely good evidentially reasons.

///END THREAD JACK///

## The Scottish Metroplex

The Scottish Urban Metroplex — also called the SUM or Scotsprawl — was built on the remnants of Glasgow and the western expansion of Edinburgh. Unlike the traumatic birth of the Great Northern Sprawl the SUM was fortunate as the Scottish Parliament had enough funds to provide ample support in the years following the Deluge to those who had been evacuated or become refugees, and due to the relative isolation of the nascent migrant class during The Death gave the Scottish Parliament time to establish a working multi-level sprawl for its subjects.

Scotsprawl is the educational capitol of the United Kingdom. During the years of The Death, Oxford and Cambridge Universities were greatly damaged and occupied by refugees so the decision was made that, the vast wealth of history and resources were to be relocated and stored elsewhere. As the Nuclear Autumn cleared and some of the pressures eased, it was found that the refugees had become entrenched in the buildings. During the months where the refugees were undergoing a process of aggressive relocation, the University of Edinburgh put great effort into bringing itself to the front of public attention and expanding its facilities.

## The Great Northern Sprawl

The Great Northern Sprawl covers the horizon and, while nominally under the control of the London Parliament, the popularity of British Industrial Solutions and their personal ownership of the entire Northwest has granted them autonomy from the rest of the United Kingdom's politics and influence. Here the people live in an almost hive-like community ruled by corporate culture The aggregation of wealth endemic to the United Kingdom, is nowhere more apparent than here, where the people care the least. Every citizen who lives under the British Industrial Solution (BIS) rule signs a Corporate Citizenship Agreement that guarantees them healthcare, a living salary, and other benefits. However, while their lives are better than the population elsewhere in the United Kingdom, they are little more than very comfortable indentured servants of the BIS Board of Directors. All aspects of their lives are regulated and monitored by the company as are the houses they live in. All their utilities, the food they eat, and the clothes they wear are all manufactured or provided by British Industrial Solutions.

### CHAIRMAN OF BRITISH INDUSTRIAL SOLUTIONS

The Chairman of the Board Elizabeth Dickerson is exceptionally popular and considered something of a Cinderella story. While working at bar she met and fell in love with Eric Dickerson, after a much publicised relationship culminating in marriage in 2075 she became involved in the business bringing a personal touch to many areas of the company, and is immensely popular with the general public. She soon became his right hand guiding him firmly but kindly with the people's interests at the heart of all decisions. With Eric's unfortunate death in 2083 due to his personal jet crashing into the Atlantic she was ushered in with acclaim from the rest of executive board. Many expected her to be a puppet of the board, but she has proven to be the equal of her late husband in business acumen. She recently announced that on the first of January 2100 work will begin to turn the Great Northern Sprawl into the Great Northern Arcology, a beacon of hope for the future of humanity. British Industrial Solution's stock increased dramatically in response to this news as well as the number of people applying for Corporate Citizenship within the GNS.

### CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Law and Order in the GNS is provided by Peel Protection Services, a company established in the Bury Ward of the GNS and the home of Sir Robert Peel, the man behind the establishment of Great Britain's first police force. Peel Protection Service Officers (Peelers) maintain a high public profile with their navy blue uniform and black Kevlar pads and each carries a sidearm and an assault rifle. The CEO, Mike Burgess, has recently gained agreement from the board that his Peelers have the right to perform random stop and search checks on any individual within the GNS, in addition to maintaining regular checkpoints where scanners monitor everyone passing through.

The majority of crime in the GNS is Corporate Espionage. This most commonly involves breaking into a secure site to access a database to steal product information, while altering the remaining data in order to discredit their target. In the GNS collateral damage is unacceptable and repeated fatalities will result in the perpetrators receiving a bad rep and work disappearing.

Punishments in the GNS for minor crimes involve public naming and shaming, progressing to the temporary restriction of rights and salary. The most serious crimes result in the criminal being sent to the Out-Processing Department. Their families are given the choice to publicly denounce the criminal or to join them at the Out-Processing Department. No one who has ever entered the Out-Processing Department has been heard of again, officially having been stripped of the benefits of their Corporate Citizen Agreement and removed from the GNS; and their attempts to contact those within are blocked.

## The United Republic of Ireland

Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland were incredibly fortunate during 2019 with most of damage being limited to coastal regions while the island's interior remained unscathed. The biggest change for Ireland was during The Death. Many areas of the United Kingdom were left to fend for themselves and as Northern Ireland was separated by the Irish Sea it was the one to receive the least aid. On March 22nd, 2030, a large formation of the Irish Republic's Defence Force crossed into the six counties with food and medical relief. The beleaguered PSNI offered no resistance, as did the majority of the population who welcomed them with open arms.

The Republic officially recognises April 24th, 2030, as the date that Ireland became a Unified Republic. It wasn't until the end of the Death that their actions would face scrutiny; which triggered an extended campaign of propaganda on both sides,

along with the general protests that often became riots as the extremists began to wage a bloody war of murder and terror.

The situation regarding Northern Ireland has remained in debate for sixty years with no resolution in sight and the blood still flowing in the streets.

## HEAD OF STATE

The President of Ireland is Siobhan O'Dwyer, a fiery redhead who was largely unknown politically until her impassioned sincerity during her campaign made her a public favourite overnight, and she is embarking on her first term of office with the goal of seeking a peaceful resolution to the problems in the northern counties, and creating a truly Unified Republic and, while Loyalist violence is a regular occurrence, they are always careful not to target her events as she seems to hold credibility in both camps.

## THE REPUBLIC POLICE SERVICE

As a result of the continued war between the Ulster Loyalist Army and the Republic Militia, the Republic Police Service is equipped to the level found in many militaries and equally well trained. Every member carries an assault rifle and sidearm as well as wearing full body armour with an enclosed reflective helmet that hides the individual constable's identity (giving rise to their nickname of the "mirrorheads"). While they are neutral in most matters they have a tendency to shoot first in the Loyalist flashpoints of the north. While in the southern counties they are regarded widely as public heroes receiving public support in just about all activities.

## DUBLIN

With a population approaching 20 million souls, Dublin is a sprawling port city extending as far North as Drogheda and West to Enfield. Predominantly Irish, the city has, in recent years, seen an influx of immigrants from all parts of the world, especially those coming out of many countries in Europe.

This flood of new blood into the city has sparked tensions between various nationalist movements looking to keep Ireland *Irish*, and other groups that feel Ireland needs to become more cosmopolitan. President O'Dwyer is under great pressure to reform the immigration laws, and institute stiff penalties for illegal immigrants. Some want her to go further, however.

Silas O'Shane, the leader of the Real Irish republican Army (RIRA) has called for the deportation of all British and Scottish nationals currently living in Ireland. Ironically, O'Shane is well-known for bringing in simulacra and other *undesirables* to Ireland to join the RIRA.

Dublin is a major port city, making it perfect for smuggling operations of all kinds. Indeed, the freelancer presence is strong in Dublin. Many ronin use it as a base of operations for jobs inside the Eurasian Union, the United Kingdom, and the Nordic Pact Nations of Finland, Sweden, and Norway.

Rumor has it that the RIRA are in bed with the Russian rebels and work with the Bratva Vory to supply the insurgency with all types of weapons and supplies.

# THE MIDDLE EAST

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/MIDDLE_EAST

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET/MIDDLE_EAST

**Posted by:** #Ahmad_Haddad, Middle East Cultural Attaché

Ahlan wa sahlan! How are you, my brother? Interested in our little corner of the globe? Come, turn on your TAP and let me take you on little HR tour of the hood.

The Middle East is a land of stark contradictions. For example, most citizens of the Arab Kingdom are human 2.0, while in the Arab Republic these sons of dogs and apes are killed on sight. Pretty stark, yes?

Contradictions, my brother: technology and tradition, big money and Jihad, towers and tents. Anything you can find in the Middle East has an exact opposite nearby, and the two are sworn enemies. If you join one side, the other will try to kill you and if you're neutral both will try to kill you just in case. I mean, try telling an Israeli ars you don't have a position about Israel. If you're lucky, it will only get you a tour of the glorious Israeli medical system. If you're less lucky, you'll get to star in a Jewish funeral. It's pretty much like that everywhere.

I see I'm starting to depress you. In truth, it's not all bad. Where there is pain, there is gain, yes? All this mess is ripe ground for serious money for the businessman who is as quick with the gun as he is in the Deep. You can make a fortune by playing these deadly games if you're crazy enough and tough.

Israel and Iran — sorry, Persia — they changed their name again — have some super advanced technology and the big boys in China and Brazil are not happy about it. You could turn a nice profit sharing some of this tech with Golden Promise or Helios or anyone else of these murdering businessmen. Of course, then you'll have the Mossad on your ass. Did I forget to tell you? Israel and Persia are best buddies now.

## Peace in the Middle East

Okay, let's start with a shocker. The Middle East is the most peaceful region on the planet these days. Inshallah, this won't change soon. The Ruskis and Chinks are at each other's throats, the Euros are nibbling on their butt and the Americans are… American, even though the states reclustered into new nations.

War is always right around the corner, but it's been there so long I think it's fallen asleep. The Israelis are sure the Arabs are going to invade any minute and the Arabs are like, "yeah, sure, one sec, just let us get our affairs in order." Spoiler alert: there will never be a war between nations. You have seven countries fortified like turtles, armed like porcupines, but all their guns are aimed inside.

### JEWS, JIHAD, JERUSALEM

Remember that thing I told you about peace? Well, that's on the international level. On a national level, we're bleeding hard. We have here what the experts call Empty Battle Field or EBF. Less brainy people call it terrorism.

Cars and homes get blown to bits. People get shot and stabbed. Brains get fried in the Deep. Information changes hands, leaving a bloody trail in its wake. But there is no battlefield. There are no tanks to bomb, planes to intercept or bases to nuke. You have angry kids with guns, Tendril Access Processors and ideas.

Of course, you have people who think an old fashioned Jihad will solve all problems. Allah is punishing the infidels and all this suffering is preparing the world for the Mahadi who will come and make it right. Allah is angry that capitalist pigs control Al-Quds/ Jerusalem. Allah is angry that not all the Ummah is united under a single Caliph. Allah is angry that Man challenges the divine act of creation with robotics and genetics. Allah is angry at the Atheists of Kurdistan.

There are hundreds of small Islamist groups, but only two are taken seriously, the Jaish al-Islam and the Fedayeen al-Mahadi. These guys aren't a bunch of noobs with bombs; they're playing the game at expert level. Don't go sniffing after them in the Deep. Playing football on a minefield is safer.

Then there are two Jewish orgs too. There is Neturei Karta who want exactly what the Jaish want, free Jerusalem, but somehow still manage to be their enemies. Charming guys. The other group is really more of an Israeli conspiracy, Gamla. They're not happy with Israel's retreat to a single walled city and want to expand.

There is a Christian group called the New Crusaders that wants, you guessed it, to liberate Jerusalem, but only make angry posts in the Deep. Actually, I gotta read about them later. Meh, screw it. As long as they don't want to "liberate" Gaza, I don't care.

The last contestant in our ugly pageant is the GLF, the Godless Liberation Front. They are supposed to be an atheist radical group fighting religion in the Middle East, but everyone knows they're just a front for the People's Democratic Republic of Kurdistan. By Allah, I swear half their leaders are Kurdish officers in plainclothes.

## A Big Pile of Nothing

Economy, that's a different business. It sucks major balls. Our economy was heavily invested in the West, and when they went down with their little virus, we call it here the nakhsa, it dragged us down with them.

The Arab Kingdom still managed to stay filthy rich (if you don't count the 90% who're dirt poor) but, whatever.

The good news: most Arabs and Kurds were so poor before this happened that they hardly noticed when it did. The bad news: when faced with a choice between food and guns…

Jews and Persians. These guys were always deep inside their own asses. When the world collapsed they just shrugged and dug themselves even deeper into their respective asses. They're rich, yeah, but they're still living on Uranus. So screw them.

## Brothers from Other Mothers

I didn't list international business conglomerates above, because calling them terrorists would be an affront to good, honest terrorists everywhere. I mean, these greedy bastards are a category unto themselves. If anyone is gonna screw the world so bad that the Mahadi comes, it's not gonna be the politicians or the imams. No, brother, it's the conglomerates.

Everyone knows they practically own the Kingdom and Kurdistan and that they're pulling the strings in the Republic. They're also working to undermine Israel and Persia, but carefully, because these bad boys bite back.

## Gaza City State

OFFICIAL LEADER: IMAM HAROUN IBN KHATB AL-KHAKIM

TYPE OF GOVERNMENT: ANOCRACY (OFFICIALLY ISLAMIC REPUBLIC)

Okay, so we kinda blew the whole Palestine deal, but hell, Gaza is free. I'm not talking free like Kurdistan, where you're free to be murdered by your own government instead of a foreign one. No, brother, I mean really free! Look out of the window — I dare you to name one ethnicity, one subculture, one race that is not outside, free as a sparrow.

In Gaza city, you can do everything you want! Want to go to a mosque and listen to old preachers teach you how you should be ashamed of everything? Go ahead; we have the full spectrum of monotheist religions here. Want to find a working girl that can make you happy in twenty layers of reality? Brother, you will not be disappointed!

Safety? Who said anything about safety? Brother, I see your problem now: you want the world for nothing. Freedom has a price. Do you think we drove out the Zionists and then the neo-Baathists with kisses? This is one rough neighborhood and if you want to prosper, you need to be the meanest cat on the block.

> **#WarDog:** You didn't drive out anyone. The only thing your rockets hit is open space. They left because they never wanted to be in Gaza in the first place, nor did Egypt or AIR.

### ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY

The only role of the police in Gaza is to write down parking tickets (when no one is watching) and shoo away pickpockets (if there aren't too many of them). They carry guns, but that's just to impress the girls. The reason all these tough pirates and crazed freedom fighters know their place is the hamula system.

Hamula, or extended family, is a big deal in Gaza and every man is expected to always be ready to pick up a gun or a knife and protect his family's honor and interests. We have hundreds of closed Deep networks and if someone posts that he's in trouble, the whole hamula will be there in five minutes. Mess with a Gazan and you mess with his entire family. No matter how tough you are, fifty men with guns are not something to be trifled with.

> **#Hannahble_Cannibal:** Democratic for men, you mean? If you're a woman, you're still expected to shut your mouth and open your legs. The only progressive group in Gaza is the Kutaytat, but you're not even going to mention them, are you?

Due to marital and business contacts, most hamulas can summon fighters from allied hamulas and if the imams, our religious leaders, chip in as well, the whole city will be ready for war in a day. It's messy, but it works.

### A HUNDRED THOUSAND JUDGES

Our legal system is similar to the one in the Kingdom, but even looser. It's not something I'm proud of, but no one cares what I think. Basically, it goes like this: there are no laws and no judges. This doesn't mean you can get away with everything or that you won't get busted (or blasted) if you make a liability of yourself.

Just like in the Kingdom, we have a class of bearded ulama, or religious scholars. Except in the spirit of pluralism, progress and something else starting with P, they cover the whole spectrum of monotheism. In case of a dispute between two individuals, or an individual and the state, a qadi, or judge, must be agreed upon to resolve the conflict based on his private interpretation of religious and tribal traditions.

The problem is that most religious texts were written before we had genetic engineering, computer networks, space travel or, I suspect, indoor plumbing. It's hilarious to watch a learned imam sprain his brain in an attempt to apply sharia law to cyber-crime or accounting irregularities. I mean, it's hilarious if you're not on the receiving end of the legal whip.

> **#KiyomiFox:** This is sadly true. Last year, my boyfriend and I visited Gaza and I was nearly hanged for slapping away some boy who pulled at my tail.

## The Jerusalem DMZ

OFFICIAL LEADER: DIRECTOR JORGE XAVIER MARINEZ

TYPE OF GOVERNMENT: DIRECT CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION (OFFICIALLY ISRAELI DMZ)

You know the old story about two dudes fighting and the third one winning? That's exactly what happened with Jerusalem. The Jews and the Arabs spent more than a century fighting and in the end the Brazilians got it without firing a single shot.

During the Second Disengagement, the Israelis realized that both the Muslim and Jewish population of the city were poor, hostile, and uneducated, not the kind of people the Zionists wanted in their new state. On the other hand, while the Jews of Jerusalem were hardly friends of Israel, they were still Jews and it was clear that if Jerusalem became part of AIR, they would bleed hard. Israel could not allow a second holocaust to take place right under its nose. That's when Chimera offered to buy Jerusalem.

Naturally, that's not how they presented the offer. It went something along the lines of renting a 99 year lease for neutral administration and arbitration.

There was a lot of debate about this move, in Israel and in the world, especially after several other corporations demanded that a proper international tender was held to resolve the competition. Chimera won, probably because of its reputation of conserving, rather than demolishing, obsolete property.

And so, in the year of 2067 to the Prophet Jesus, peace be upon Him, Chimera moved into Jerusalem with its Brazilian administrators and army of Sims and started making money.

### HOLY VEGAS!

Religion was always a commercial affair, but never so brazenly and shamelessly. Just like a dealer who never uses his own stuff, Chimera set out to maximize profit from the prophet. They planned to avoid upsetting anyone by declaring full religious tolerance, not realizing that nothing angers the true man of religion more than religious tolerance, an inherently secular philosophy.

After a multi-billion renovation project, Jerusalem became so shiny that many tourists had to turn off their TAPs to make sure they weren't staring at some brilliant AR. Holy sites like the Wailing Wall or the Sepulcher can hardly be found among the numerous museums, casinos, SPAs, automated churches and so forth. Portuguese and English are heard much more often than Hebrew and Arabic. Pilgrim services are available for all budgets.

However, away from the spotlights, the natives grew restless. Considering themselves the natural service providers for pilgrims, they suddenly found themselves marginalized by foreign professionals who didn't even share the natives' devotion.

Then, there were the Sims. Creating golems was the privilege of the holiest rabbis, not of soulless capitalists who, in their arrogance, challenged the very act of divine creation. Many of the city's leading rabbis published edicts condemning the Sims as an abomination whose very presence in the holy city was an affront to God. Imams and muftis were no more enthusiastic about the newcomers, deeming the Sims satanic mockeries of humanity and issuing a fatwa of their expulsion from the Al-Quds, the holy city.

So, after fighting for two hundred years, the Jews and Muslims suddenly found something that united them — yet they still hate each other's' guts.

## People's Republic of Kurdistan

OFFICIAL LEADER: CHAIRMAN MUSTAFA RASUL KAZNADAR

TYPE OF GOVERNMENT: COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP

It's funny how people can spend so much time fighting foreign oppression only to replace it with domestic oppression. I mean, Kurdistan has been a sovereign nation for almost half a century, but Turkish and Arab tyranny was better than this "freedom."

> **#LoveKurdistan:** Why you tell such lies about great country? Beloved leader make best country in world.

> **#SamTheSlam:** Do the Kurds actually have propaganda bots? This totally sounds like a message generated by a bot.

Even though I'm thousands of kilometers away, I'm still taking a certain risk by making this post. Kurdish spies and assassins are everywhere these days. They look for technological secrets to steal and dissidents to kill, but sometimes they blow up random people just to make a statement about equality all that.

Now, in Kurdistan, you don't even have to betray the state to be shipped away to a gulag. If they find out that you're a practicing Muslim, that's enough. In fact, I suspect that if they're

missing slaves in their gulags it's enough to get you shipped. The hammer of justice is harsh, but at least it's random.

## A DREAM DEFERRED

After the Islamic Coalition was defeated, the PKK turned its Israeli-manufactured guns inward, purging the country of the citizens who weren't sufficiently enthusiastic in defending it, or who had the misfortune of not being ethnic Kurds. Well, it's been twenty years since the war, but the purging still goes on.

Technology is a two-edged sword. When used for good, it makes everything so much better. When used for evil, it allows for a level of tyranny unimagined by the dictators of the past. By importing the world's most advanced surveillance technology and simultaneously cutting the population from any technology that could threaten the Party (no one bothers saying PKK anymore), Mustafa became the God of this atheist country.

Now, I hear the Party has a breeding program designed to create superior workers and soldiers who labor hard and never doubt their orders. Genetic and cybernetic augmentations are mandatory according to the needs of the State. Marriage has been abolished. Parenthood has been abolished. Games and leisure have been abolished. Religion has been abolished. With the current rate of forced augmentation, soon humanity will be abolished as well.

> **#Shalif:** There is no God but the Mustafa, and the Party makes a profit. Allah istor!

In short, the world's darkest regime rose to the sound of Americans and Europeans applauding, and Jews and Persians counting credits. Don't you just love this world?

## OLIGARCHICAL COLLECTIVISM

Private life and personal beliefs have been absolutely and irrevocably destroyed. Everything in this country, from the air people breathe, through their food and clothing, to their very flesh and bones, is owned by a small group of faceless bureaucrats. Who are they? How can you join their ranks? Who is really in power? The Party. What's The Party? The Party is The Party. Ask one more question and earn a visit by the secret police.

Okay, now is the part where I knock your TAPs off. Do you know where all the enemies of the state go? What these colonies are really all about? Corporate facilities! Yeah, there's your unholy alliance of capitalism and socialism, right there: Communists reducing men to resources and capitalists processing these resources into fine products.

While the Party teaches that the colonies are used to re-educate reactionaries by putting them to hard work for the good of the state, in truth they are giant and hereditary slave camps used by Golden Promise Incorporated both for heavy industry and experimentation. There are rumors that the Orlov family is playing some sick game in Kurdistan as well, paying the Party a fortune for this privilege. Personally, I think this is bullshit, but who knows? It's a sick world out there.

# THE STATE OF ISRAEL

OFFICIAL LEADER: PM RABBI DOCTOR SHIMON KLEIN, PRESIDENT ANASTASIA KOGAN-MUHAMMAD

TYPE OF GOVERNMENT: ETHNIC DEMOCRACY

As far as the government of Israel is concerned, Israel is located on an island surrounded by monsters and lava. This country is a fortress! Its security apparatus is so tight that even flies can't enter without a thorough security check.

Security measures range from a tall concrete wall, a callback to an era of walled cities and siege engines, to drones and turrets so sophisticated that the rest of the world will only discover them next decade. Although not a single rocket has landed on Israeli soil for more than two decades, the Israelis are convinced that they're under siege and war and terror are right around the corner.

By now you're probably thinking that they are a little crazy, and they totally are, but there is a reason for this madness, so bear with me. The second half of the 21st century wasn't kind to the Zionist outpost in the Middle East. First they were kicked out of Gaza by Palestinian resistance. Then they lost Judea, Samaria and the Golan heights to the Second Arab Spring. Finally, after a massive revolt of the Galilean Arabs aided by al-Misri's victorious armies, Israel lost its north as well, essentially becoming the state of Tel Aviv and its outskirts. At the same time it has sold Jerusalem, the holiest city for the Jews, to the Brazilians, when it became clear that 90% of the population was hostile to the Jewish state, either because it was Jewish or because it was a state.

Oh boy, I'm sure the Brazilians are regretting this purchase now... but we digress.

> **#Yossel_Tov:** We stay, you call us occupiers. We leave, you call us quitters. There is no pleasing some. I bet you're just mad because the Arabs of Israel still have the most rights and best living condition in the Middle East without being a slave-owning, racist, homicidal medieval dictatorship like the Arab Kingdom.

> **#SirhanJM:** Your posts make you sound like a pincher that thinks it chased a truck away with its barks.

The new government of Israel, headed by the isolationist Masada party, decided to live up to the anti-Israeli propaganda of the early 21st century and shed off the democratic coil for a while. Such a small country with so many external enemies is too fragile for internal enemies as well, it reasoned, so if you weren't an ardent supporter of a secular Jewish state, you had a month to get out. Communists, Islamists, Ultra-Orthodox Jews, illegal immigrants from Africa, leftist intellectuals, and everyone else who didn't share the Knesset's view on Israel's future packed and left. Some tried to resist, but with its gloves off, the Israeli Shin Bet ruthlessly and elegantly made short work of them.

> **#Noa_Dust:** That's a very nice way to describe this Nazi purge of all political dissent. As an Arab, I'd expect more understanding of the full extent of Zionist terror from you. But, of course you live in Gaza, the favorite toy of the racist Zionist machine.

> **#Martin_J_Hussein:** As an Arab, he knows that his leaders like to hang the opposition, not just cut it from power. You're an anti-Semite Jew and you don't even realize it. It's sad

really. Good thing we got rid of you delusional idiots. BTW, before you call me a racist, I'm an Arab AND a proud Israeli citizen.

The current president is an Arab woman (well, half-Arab), but her powers don't extended beyond shaking hands with foreign dignitaries and presenting awards for best essays to little girls. I suspect they only elected her because she's smoking hot.

### THE ART OF WAR

Just like the police, the army is also unseen until provoked. While the power of this state is disproportional to its size, its army is hidden underground and is cared for by a legion of engineers, technicians, and agents. Remember, in this country, what you don't see is what should worry you the most.

Soldiers only include commando units such as airborne sayeret matkal or the naval shayetet 13. Israel relies more on its numerous intelligence agencies such as the Shin Bet (internal security), Mossad (foreign intelligence), and Haman (military intelligence) to preempt trouble rather than on the IDF solving it. The fact that there hasn't been a single attack by homegrown or foreign fighters in 25 years should attest to how effective these guys are.

While Israel's military secrets are coveted by many foreign governments and industrial conglomerates, I don't suggest you go grabbing them for easy money. The agency in charge of preventing industrial espionage is called Shavit and they literally have a license to kill. So unless you're willing to have a James Bond with a silly name on your ass — look the other way.

Israel is the last country in the region you want to mess with, but it's also the one that offers the greatest rewards if you do, so the spy game is always on. Allah knows the world is full of desperate people.

## The Serene Republic of Persia

OFFICIAL LEADER: PRESIDENT USTAD RAMAN AMANAT

TYPE OF GOVERNMENT: PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC

A lot of people are calling Persia a Baha'i republic, but this is bullshit. The majority of the population is Muslim and the second place keeps being contested by Zarathustrians and Baha'i. Hindu and Buddhist temples are a common sight and, if you look hard enough, you can find synagogues and churches too.

The right way to describe Persia would be a secular republic with a Baha'i government. So, how come the persecuted religion whose founder was martyred two hundred years ago made such a triumphant return?

### THE PARTY OF CHANGE

Fariborz Mishkín-Qalam established the Party of Change and took the first election by a landslide. The Qalam family fled Iran in the '30s and, after many tribulations, found itself living in Haifa, Israel only a few miles from the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh

and the Technion Institute. The former taught him the Baha'i Faith; the latter taught him civil engineering and architecture.

His party's success at restoring the Iranian economy and education led to a process of mass conversion to Bahai'ism, and renewed interest in science and secular philosophy. In his famous 2079 speech, marking 100 years of Persian republicanism, President Mishkín-Qalam paraphrased the summary of the Baha'i faith as described by a 20th century Baha'i leader, Shoghi Effendi:

Let me now plainly put before you the principles of our peaceful revolution with which we shall overturn this world of violence and hate. Brothers and sisters, these are our principles: The independent search after truth, unfettered by superstition or tradition. The oneness of the entire human race and the new races fashioned through its genius. The basic unity of all religions of East and West. The condemnation of all forms of prejudice. The harmony which must exist between religion and science. The equality of men and women, the two wings on which the eagle of humanity soars!

This iconic speech, perhaps ironically and perhaps inevitably, earned Persia the hidden animosity of the "Civilized World." The powers that be could stomach a backwater and toothless enemy, but a competent friend had to be crushed.

> **#Vadim:** You're just paranoiac, my friend. Where is that hostility you're talking about? The borders are open, embassies are open for business and the Iranian army regularly practices with Western armies.
>
> **#JaNotABot:** You're naïve puppy! Didn't you ever hear the expression? "Keep your friends close and enemies closer?"

### THE TRIANGLE ALLIANCE

It could be forgiven that Persia achieved modernization without westernization (or mass murder), it could be tolerated that it served as a home base for a new religion that was rapidly capturing the hearts and minds of young people all over the world, but there was no way the corporate world would overlook the Fars Research Institute.

When Mishkín-Qalam, spoke about the new races fashioned through humanity's genius, he wasn't kidding. Nor was he speaking about placing a huge Sims order at the trusted hands of some Megacorp. No, the man spoke about starting domestic Sims production. And that crap just wouldn't fly. The Corps began looking for a way in.

Persia had the stability and freshness of a phoenix risen from the ashes, so financing a coup was impossible. Persia also had some of the most advanced technological institutes, not to mention serious stockpiles of nukes and bios, so invasion didn't seem appealing either. Lastly, the Baha'i faith was growing more popular every day, so a private boycott wouldn't work. The only option left was a war of attrition. Sabotage Persian projects, arm Persia's enemies, assist Islamic terrorists, spread destabilizing rumors and sour international relations.

To counter this carefully masked aggression, Persia founded the Triangle Alliance of non-Muslim and non-Arab states in the Middle East; Jewish Israel, Atheist Kurdistan and Baha'i Persia. The purpose of the Alliance was mutual defense against Arab political and military aggression (on a personal note: bullshit), academic and intelligence exchange and mutual support. Israel was the guns, Persia was the face, and Kurdistan was the creepy bastard no one wants to mess with. If you wonder how a fascist hellhole found itself in bed with two prosperous democracies, well, hungry people do desperate things.

> **#Jason5052:** The Triangle Alliance is a nice way of referring to a racist conspiracy against the Arab people.
>
> **#MarkThisSpot:** Kurdistan is Communist you moron.
>
> **#LATuff:** Did you notice that only these enlightened democracies make sure that their citizenry is racially pure? Arab countries welcomes citizens of all races and religions, but these so-called pluralists watch very carefully after their demographics...

Despite the alliance, Persia remains somewhat xenophobic. Strangers are usually not harassed, but nor are they welcome. Unlike Historic America, Persia likes to keep the hungry and huddled masses away from its promising shores, with guns if necessary. Wealthy tourists and businessmen can get entry visas, but everyone else must enjoy the splendor of Persia via AR.

## United Arab Islamic Republic

OFFICIAL LEADER: PRESIDENT LUCIAN AL-MISRI, PM UMM JIHAD

TYPE OF GOVERNMENT: FEDERAL DEMOCRACY

With more than half a billion citizens and tens of millions of unregistered nomads, AIR is the largest Islamic state in history and one of the most populous democracies on the planet.

> **#SalimSalaam:** Democracy. Yeah Right. AIR is a country where members of the same family get elected each time.

After the apocalyptic wars of the beginning of the century, the broken postwar remains of Yemen, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Syria and, unwillingly, Lebanon, have turned again to the idea of Arab unity. The result was AIR, a political behemoth of immense and polluted cities that can only survive due to high-tech that's controlled by the elite and provided by outsiders. In the toxic spaces between the cities, strange new tribes that have grown from the postwar wilderness and the fierce Bedu lifestyle roam free. For these tribes, the cities, the corporations, the poor masses huddling together in the hopes of "making it" one day, all represent foreign corruption that must be swept away by the rage of the desert.

It's not perfect: there is rampant corruption, officials and executives abuse their powers, ethnic and religious tension still serves as an excuse for murder and millions of people live off the grid just like their Stone Age forefathers, but shit, we've come a long way. And you know what? As America and Europe are crumbling, the Arab world has peace and, perhaps for the first time since Nasser, the father of the first United Arab Republic, the prospect of unity. Can you really say that about the West?

### THE SECOND ARAB SPRING

Bernard al-Misri, a Melkite-Syrian general, achieved something no Arab leader had in modern history — he won a war. In fact, not one war, but two; one in Greater Syria and one in Palestine. Having restored the long lost Arab honor, Bernard went on to fulfill the dream of the 20th century Nasser — Arab unity.

Despite his military past, Bernard al-Misri envisioned the United Arab Republic as a peaceful and democratic nation that, having restored its honor against Israel and the former United States, no longer had the need for repression and war. He worked to promote secularism and education with the motto: "Modernization without westernization." This earned him the label "the Arab Gandhi" among his allies and al-Kafir, the infidel, among his enemies.

His murder at the hands of Islamic extremists cast a giant shadow on the fledgling democracy and brought to light the insurmountable chasm between the secular and urban elites and the religious and rural filahin. Too thinly spread, the power of the government didn't extend far from the great city centers of the Republic. In the outskirts, progress was but a distant echo while poverty and humiliation were the norm. Preachers and radicals started creating dangerous and militant shadow communities, threatening to tear AIR apart and revert to the sectarianism of the 20th century.

### A DREAM DEFERRED

AIR cities are gigantic megasprawls. The center of the average city is a few years into the future, but as you travel away from it, the scenery reverts back in time, from the latest in fashion and architecture, to shantytowns built from mud and garbage where a boy might not get to taste meat until he's a man, but learns to handle firearms and explosives at the age of four.

Expensive imported technology protects the citizens and filahin from the radioactive fallout and extreme weather of the Wild Lands. These life support facilities (LSF) are always located in the poorest regions and are usually operated by foreign workers who also live inside them. The locals despise those foreigners for their air of disdain and superiority, making LSF a frequent target for raids and bombings. The operators, in turn, import expert Western troops, many of whom aren't even real humans, to protect the facilities, thus increasing the hostility of the locals. It does not help that LSF are shiny and gigantic technological horrors while the local structures around them are often little more than meager mud hovels.

> **#Rafiq_Dinar:** The police aren't nearly as weak as this post presents them. There are some neighborhoods where they don't routinely enter without army escort, but trust me, if you mess with the Republic, sooner or later, they will come for you.

### DESERT LIFE

Outside the cities, there are tens of thousands of Badawi tribes that — actually, before we proceed, let me get one thing straight. Bedouin is already plural, so please, please, please don't say Bedouins. This drives me mad.

> **#RichardCraniumJoe:** So you're like a Spelling Mujahideen?

Anyhow, there are tens of thousands of Badawi tribes in the desert. Now I know you'd like to cling to the romantic notion that these tribes are living just like their forefathers did thousands of years ago, untainted by technology and modernization, but come on! Let's be realistic. This planet is too small for anyone on it not to be part of the game. Besides, you have to be pretty tough to maintain a lifestyle that doesn't put credits in the conglomerates' accounts, yes?

Global warming, nuclear fallout, irresponsible grazing and industrial pollution have reduced the majority of AIR's territory to desolate wasteland the likes of which have never been seen before. I'd love to blame war for this, but in truth, it's more the result of the primitivism and disregard of the environment of our forefathers than of the nuclear fires of the Death. If you look at the Middle East from space, you'll see one colossal desert with several green spots with perfectly straight edges. These spots are Israel, Persia and Jerusalem.

Life in the cities is possible due to LSP, a costly process that insures all income of the Republic would be devoured by foreign corporations, sort of like heroin on a national level. But some men are too proud to huddle in the enslaving comfort of these futuristic monstrosities and choose instead to brave the hell forged by their ancestors.

To survive with honor in the desert, one must find clever ways to protect himself from the harsh environment and feed his family without becoming corporate property. This requires some imported, but relatively cheap, technology and balls so big you need a cartwheel to move them around.

## United Arab Kingdom

OFFICIAL LEADER: KING AYMAN BIN SALMAN AL-BRAKHIMI, CUSTODIAN OF THE TWO MOSQUES

TYPE OF GOVERNMENT: NEO-FEUDAL MONARCHY

If the world is painted in shades of gray, then the Arab Kingdom is a big black stain that remains black no matter how you look at it. The Kingdom is ruled by a gang of backwater and bigoted sons of apes and pigs who use the most progressive technology to sustain the most regressive society. Their inconceivable wealth could have ended the poverty of a billion Muslims, but instead it goes to maintain a playground for the rich.

> **#Rafiq_Dinar:** Universal healthcare for all citizens, social security, low crime rate, free higher education, perfect infrastructure, good relations with the world… Somebody please save me from this hell! I want to be poor and unemployed like my Republic brothers! Idiot.
>
> **#MuhammadTheJust:** Just to clarify, the OP says we're so evil just because we're rich and he's not. He says that if we equally divided all our wealth among the world's Muslims, everyone would be rich. I suggest the OP downloads a calculator, since his own brain obviously can't do math.

The United Kingdom is divided into forty principalities, each ruled by an emir. They pay lip service to the Royal Family, but in truth every emir plays his own game. Some emirs, particularly the al-Rashidun and al-Walid clans, wield enough wealth, "soft power" and influence to match some mega-conglomerates and most sovereign states.

Important foreign and domestic policies are formulated by the shura, which is a council consisting of the King, the emirs and the Kingdom's leading authority on Islam, the kabir al-muftin. There is no transparency in the Kingdom; shura sessions are not broadcast and its decisions are not publicized. Even the location of the shura is a carefully guarded secret. Not that anyone cares — the sahibs are too well-fed to ask questions and foreign workers are too scared and overworked to even think about it.

Greenland
Alaska
Nome
The Arctic League
Iceland
Reykjavik
Norway
Oslo
United Kingdom
Republic of Caledonia
Alberta
Edmonton
Great Lakes Union
Quebec
Newfoundland
Ireland
Dublin
London
Douglas Commonwealth
Vancouver
Kootenay Commonwealth
Olympia
North American Coalition
Quebec City
Paris
France
Cascadia
Toronto
GEU Atlantica
Salt Lake City
Boston
Spain
The Badlands
Denver
Chicago
Newark / New York
Portugal
Lisbon
Madrid
San Francisco
Las Vegas
St Louis
Washington
So Cal Deadzone
Los Angeles
Phoenix
Atlanta
Casablanca
Algiers
San Diego
Tijuana
Tuscon
Texas
Austin
Marrakesh
Miami
Tropic of Cancer
Hawaii
Mexico
Caribbean Economic League
Mexico City
Central America
Panama
Columbian Cartels
Bogotá
Lagos
International Date Line
Quito
Equator
Ecuador
Peru
New Brasilia
Lima
Brasilia
La Paz
Belo Horizonte
Tropic of Capricorn
Chile
Sao Paulo
Rio de Janeiro
Argentina
Santiago
Buenos Aires
Sweden
Riga
Latvia
Denmark
Lithuania
Russia
Copenhagen
Russia
Vilnius
United Kingdom
Minsk
Dublin
Netherlands
Berlin
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Ireland
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Chisinau
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Budapest
Hungary
Moldova
Bern
Vaduz
Romania
France
Ljubljana
Zagreb
Podgorica
Croatia
Bucharest
Monaco
Sarajevo
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8
Andorra
San Marino
Belgrade
Sofia
Spain
Rome
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Bulgaria
Vatican City
Tirana
Skopje
Portugal
Madrid
Italy
Albania
Ankara
Lisbon
6. Slovenia
Greece
Turkey
7. Macedonia
8. Montenegro
Athens
9. Serbia
Valletta
Malta
Cyprus
10. Bosnia and Herzegovina
Nicosia
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WORLD MAP
Free City
Capital City
City Ruins
City
Chinese Mandarinate
Eurasian Union
Russia
Sweden
Finland
Helsinki
Tallinn
Estonia
Latvia
Lithuania
Moscow
Poland
Belarus
Democratic People's Republic of Kurdistan
Ukraine
Romania
Turkey
Ankara
Greece
Öcalan
Astana
Kazakhstan
Uzbekistan
Bishkek
Kyrgyzstan
Tashkent
Turkmenistan
Ashgabat
Tajikistan
Dushanbe
Tehran
Isfahan
Kabul
Islamabad
Amritsar
Baghdad
Iran
Afghani Wastelands
Parsa
Cairo
United Arab Islamic Republic
Riyadh
Abu Dhabi
Arab Kingdom
India League
Surat
Mumbai
Kolkata
Chennai
Sana'a
U.A.I.R
Beijing
Chongqing
Shanghai
Hong Kong
Taipei
Taiwan
Ha Noi
Manila
Philippines
Bangkok
Na Trang
Ho Chi Minh
Malaysia
Kuala Lumpur
Singapore
Indonesia
Jakarta
Japan
Tokyo
International Date Line
Tropic of Cancer
Tropic of Capricorn
Equator
Papua New Guinea
Port Moresby
Australia
Brisbane
Gold Coast
Sydney
Canberra
Adelaide
Melbourne
Perth
New Zealand
Auckland
Wellington
Christchurch
Central African Union
Somalia
Kampala
Mogadishu
Nairobi
Kananga
Luanda
Lusaka
Madagascar
Antananarivo
Southern Africa
Johannesburg/ Sprawl
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While the Arab kingdom has no army to speak of, it does have enough "family atomics" to dissuade an external invasion. In this neighborhood, having a few nuclear bombs stowed in the cellar is simply a fashion obligation. Secondly, and perhaps even more importantly, the Arab Kingdom is a place of ultimate pleasure for the most powerful men on the planet. These men don't like when others play with their toys.

The greatest threat to the Arab Kingdom is internal. The abolitionist movement (see "orgs" section) enjoys great regional and international support, especially from Gaza, Kurdistan and the Arab republic, as well as Golden Promise inc. I'd volunteer to fight with them myself if I didn't like being alive so much.

## THE HAJJ AND THE TWO MOSQUES

The shiniest jewels on Old Ayman's crown are Mecca and Medina, the holiest site for Islam and the target of the greatest pilgrimage on the planet — the Hajj. During the Hajj, tens of millions of Muslims from all over the planet, rise from the Deep and come to Mecca in the flesh. During that sacred time, all non-Muslims are politely asked to leave the two holy cities, all un-Islamic activities are stopped and the general level of tolerance for anything which couldn't be found in 7th century Arabia is reduced to near zero.

This means that if you have visible cyberware, drink alcohol, display physical affection or generally just stand out, say, by being a woman, there is a good chance that you'll be lynched. To avoid international incidents, the Royal Police goes out of its way to keep anyone who doesn't look like a pilgrim safely locked in their hotel rooms, or prison cells, if they make a fuss of it. The charge is usually "disruption of the public peace," which is exactly what your vicious beating will be if you're allowed to roam free.

> **#WalkedTheWalk:** I speak perfect Arabic so I bought a fake Gazan passport and joined the Hajj. Wow, this was intense. So much human energy in one place! No technology, no fake reality, just people and faith. I returned a changed man.

## GLADIATOR SPORTS

Many emirs arrange spectacular sport events for their sahibs and foreign guests. These games attract adventurous types from all over the world with outlandish rewards and promise of instant international fame. Since every emir strives to outdo his neighbor, no two events are alike — battles with captured biohazards and imported androids, laser gymnastics, freeform aerial races — everything goes. These events are often conducted in conjunction with international technological shows and business conventions, which teaches us a thing or two about the humanity of these fat cats, yes?

The most famous gladiator arenas are located in the al-Rashidun and al-Jerah emirates; the former being officially sponsored by Chimera. Mecca has one of the world's largest stadiums, but due to the holiness of the city, only traditional horse and camel races are allowed. That being said, some of the "exotic" horses in these races look like prime examples of bio-engineering to me. I guess even a King can't stop progress.

# WESTERN HEMISPHERE
# ATLANTICA

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/ATLANTICA

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET/BOSTON

**Posted By:** #Wolfson

## Boston

Yeah… Good ol' Beantown.

It doesn't matter whether you want to blame terrorists, evil politicians, AIs, or invading space aliens — the fact is 'the Broken Cradle of Liberty' is really broken these days. For that matter, Atlantica seems to have surrendered its position as harbinger of liberty to Cascadia, and appears to be in serious danger of turning into an oppressive police state.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** "Seems to have"? "Appears to be"? That's kinda like saying "The sea level might have risen in the last hundred years or so."

**#Magpie:** but the sea level has risen, ne? @_@

**#Luciferion:** Point, Magpie. Point.

When terrorists set off a bomb in front of the Emperor Pharmaceuticals Pyramid on November 13, 2088, it might have been considered just another day in Boston… except for one thing. Well, actually a half-dozen things: other bombs went off almost simultaneously in the city, as well as in Portland, Maine. A good 2,451 people died, with hundreds of other injuries.

Of course the finger pointing started right away. It was radical local extremists. It was the NAC. It was the Chinese. It was the Brazilians.

The fact of the matter is, no one stepped forward to claim the glory, so — in the beginning, at any rate — speculation was sort of pointless. But that didn't stop Atlantica President, Martin Hughes , from extending martial law from Boston (where it had been in effect pretty much since the end of the Second Civil War) to the rest of Atlantica, which pretty much made him the Person In Charge until the crisis was over… which, things being what they are, might be a long damn time.

Technically, this didn't change a thing in Boston, since the city had known martial law for a good two decades. But there were some subtle effects.

For one thing, most of the Combine (that's the 'Atlantica Combined Armed Forces', for those who aren't familiar with the Atlantica military) troops left town. Except for the resources deemed necessary to maintain the protection of the Federal Government and the Sea Wall — which essentially meant the garrison at the Logan Airbase Military Complex (LAMCOM)— the Combine units were moved to other critical cities and locations.

At least until a MEDIAfile cropped up and incriminated the NAC in the Emperor Pharmaceuticals bombing (and also suggested the Coalition was in bed with the Chinese for that little prank). That's another story, but the upshot is Field Marshal Thurlow Washington ordered a pant load of Combine troops to reposition near the Coalition border.

Unless you've been living under a rock, you pretty much know this caused a hell of a lot of political fallout between the NAC and Atlantica, but — something most peeps weren't privy to — it also caused a lot of headbutting between the President and the Marshal since they had a difference of opinion on the hows and wheres of troop deployment. Apparently they reached a consensus. Those In The Know suspect Marshal Washington agreed to support President Hughes' right to rule in return for being allowed to have the final say on matters regarding the Combine.

**#Neon_Bright:** Suspect my ass.

**#Slave_2_Daedalus:** You'd think we'd be past all the PC BS by now, but it just ain't so. Obviously Wolfson simply wants to avoid allegations of slander.

Since then, Marshal Washington hasn't been in Boston. Instead, he's moved around Atlantica (with a highly classified agenda) to personally oversee troop dispositions and keep an eye on operations.

In fact, it's been speculated that the Siege of New Brooklyn, begun in September of 2089, was done on Marshal Washington's own initiative — certainly President Hughes was quick to disavow any personal involvement in the event. More pragmatic and cynical people, however, point out that President Hughes never publicly denounced the move, and that Combine forces remain positioned there.

President Hughes, for his part, claims to have no direct authority over the Field Marshal — which strikes some peeps as odd — and has been forced to put in more public appearances than he's had to since her election in '86. The fact of the matter is, martial law isn't any more popular outside of Boston than it was to the residents when it was confined to the city. Public opinion, needing to be swayed, required a lot of propaganda and 'In Your Face' time.

Monthly (or even weekly) media appearances to address the Atlantican People have become commonplace. Fortunately for him, Hughes was always a popular leader, but all the same, rumors persist that it hasn't been the real President Hughes making those appearances. These rumors suggest it's been a Simulacrum or an Android made to look like him, but being paid well (or forced, according to some sources) to potentially take the bullet — or bomb, as the case may be — for the President.

Some fringe thinkers have even suggested it's simply a very cleverly constructed Avatar, and that the real President is in a deep bunker below LAMCOM… or not even alive any more. They go on to suggest that Atlantica is now a military state, firmly under the control of Thurlow Washington.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** There's no suggesting about it. Although Hughes is still alive for sure. Thurlow needs backup material for a new Sim in case of an accident.

**#Neon_Bright:** You got any proof of this?

**#Slave_2_Daedalus:** Peel back the onion, tomo. Log onto 6chan and dig.

With most of the soldiers gone, Police Chief Amir Apraku and the Atlantica Police Force are now back in charge of security

in Boston. And that means... well... business as usual: the APF was always in charge of checkpoints around the city, so the only real difference is there aren't a lot of trigger happy soldiers and Razorbacks prowling around. Just trigger happy police and armored police vans. This also means Red Callahan and his Irish Mob is in control again.

Well... Mostly.

The Combine's efforts to pacify Boston led them to mainly crack down on two major groups: Terrorists and the Irish Mob. While the Callahan family was busy trying to cover their own assets, it gave other gangs an opportunity to move in and set up shop. Many — if not most — of these little gangs failed, falling prey to either Combine sweeps, inter-gang warfare, or larger, more established organizations. The few that survived had either roots or resources.

Julius Angello and his Ship Rats (the dredges of the Italian Mafia) had roots. Over the twenty-year rule of martial law in Boston, the Ship Rats managed to hang on in East Boston against all comers and stay off the Combine's radar. The net result was when the Combine withdrew behind LAMCOM's walls and turned control of the city over to the APF, Angello controlled Eastie.

It didn't come easy, though. One of the new gangs that moved into town was the Crazy 88s — purportedly under the leadership of Blind Ricky Wong. After grabbing some turf in Back Bay, the 88s were able to move into Beacon Hill and East Boston. Ironically, the same events that pulled the Combine out of Boston allowed the Ship Rats to push the Crazy 88s out of Eastie.

You see, the 88s are supposedly (at least according to Julius Angello) a Chinese gang, although they claim to be Vietnamese — or Korean, or Japanese, or anything else decidedly Asian and not Chinese. In any case, the groundswell of nationalist support in the wake of the '88 bombings allowed Angello to call on popular sentiment to drive the Crazy 88s out of East Boston (Hey, tomo, even their name suggests they had something to do with it, ne?). So the 88s fell back to the north areas of Beantown, but still control most of Back Bay and Beacon Hill, with Wong still rumored to run the show — though some peeps speculate about a Jump Bike racer named Naomi Li and where she sits in the gang's hierarchy.

**#Slave_2_Daedalus:** Word: Wong is technically in charge, but Li is a Red Pole sent from the tong's 489 in Chicago.

**#Magpie:** ??? @_@

**#Luciferion:** Wong runs the show in Boston, but Li is an enforcer sent direction from the gang boss to oversee things directly in his name.

**#Magpie:** oh. why didn't he just say so? >_<

But Red Callahan still controls the largest chunk of Boston, as far out as Roxbury, and he still has his fingers in Back Bay, since Tiberius Clancy remains the CEO of Emperor Pharmaceuticals and (allegedly) in Callahan's back pocket. For that matter, since the local APF — particularly Chief Apraku — are also alleged to belong to the Mob, Callahan still theoretically retains a certain amount of control… or at least has his finger on the pulse of the whole city.

Then again, the status quo may not always be stable. There are whispered rumors that Red Callahan has been exploiting the well-known rivalry between Julius Angello's daughter, Angela, and Naomi Li to undermine the Crazy 88s. Callahan denies any involvement with Angela, of course, and other, more cynical, peeps point out the friction between Callahan and Angello: they can't even come together to drive out the 88s.

Meanwhile, Naomi Li (and the Crazy 88s by proxy) continue to insinuate themselves deeper into the good graces of Boston's upper crust.

Ah… There are two other caveats to Callahan's control of Beantown. First, it breaks down in Roxbury and Hyde Park, which are almost exclusively the domains of Hybrid (and other non-human) gangs, and Second, Cambridge remains an almost sovereign state under the auspices of Chancellor Sterns and the Harvard University and Technical Institute.

What does all this mean for most peeps in Boston?

Surprisingly little, actually.

> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Unless you count avoiding dirty cops, mob boys trying to run the city, terrorists, and the occasional jar head who's on a power trip.
>
> **#Luciferion:** Now you're just being facetious.

The APF still mans the checkpoints, for example, but they've always been a bit self-serving in Boston. Well… Maybe now the Combine troopers aren't looking over their shoulders so much they're more prone to accepting bribes or harassing people they don't particularly like.

Likewise, gangs have always been a problem — no less so now than two years ago. Granted most of the little ones now owe a certain degree of loyalty (or maybe just lip service) to Callahan, the Ship Rats or the Crazy 88s, but these are still the people in your neighborhood you go to when you actually want something done.

And terrorists are still a threat.

Despite rumors that Peter Moskalewicz, front man for the Scions of Liberty (and the most wanted terrorist in Atlantica) was killed in one of the November 13 explosions, no one has been able to confirm or deny it. In any case, the SOL continues to be a headache for those in charge, and the Sea Wall still remains under constant surveillance… just in case.

The only real change — locally, at any rate — came in the last year, largely on the virtual front, so it tends to only affect the residents of Boston peripherally.

After the European Crash of '89 and the assertion that Charon was an AI, paranoia over Avatars began to run rampant. Speculation over the true nature of Beantown's own 'Guardian Angel'—only known by her moniker of Archangel — began to fill every establishment in Boston.

> **#Magpie:** eh? charon's an AI? but i've met him in person! @_@
>
> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Doesn't mean anything, Magpie. Unless you've seen him bleed and die, you don't know for sure what's real and what isn't. You could have been looking at a clone, a hyper-real construct, or any number of things.
>
> **#Neon_Bright:** DOOd… You're gonna make us all paranoid.
>
> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** It'd be good for you.

Archangel had long been a fixture in the Pirate Blog scene, but now people wanted to know who — or what — she was. Some claimed she's really Mistress Lily, the enigmatic owner of Club Mephistopheles; some that it's actually Jason Finch, the owner of the No More Bull tavern. But in light of The Crash, some began to wonder if Archangel wasn't really an AI and part of some deeper conspiracy.

///THREAD JACK///

*LOADING…*

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: THE BOSTON UNDERGROUND

> **#Luciferion:** Ask most peeps in Boston about "the Boston Underground", and you're likely to be directed to a club franchise located at Fields Corner where you can dance and buy overpriced food and drinks. Those in the know, however, are likely to ask for clarification: are you talking about the club or the network of tunnels and passageways beneath the city?

Now, if you're only vaguely familiar with the tunnels, don't go believing the propaganda on either side of the issue. The Underground isn't exactly the breeding ground of terrorists and genetic nightmares the Atlantica Government often seems to imply, nor is it the utopian paradise any number of anarchist and revolutionary demagogs would like to profess. Fact is, like everything else in Beantown, the Underground has a butt-load of facets and faces, any number of which could be construed as 'The Truth'.

The bottom line is you'd better have an idea of why you're headed there and where you're going.

The first thing you should probably know about the Boston Underground is it was created more by accident than design. The Underground is actually a maze of tunnels springing from a number of sources: maintenance passageways for the Big Dig (that would be highways 90 and 93, as well exits for places like Science Park and the old Government Center), the now-unused subway system, the sewers, and the old electrical grid — not to mention a few passages and tunnels added in more recent history. Of course, not all these places are accessible by people of ordinary size.

Now, once upon a time, many of those things — like the sewage flow systems, the electrical grid, and the switches for train tracks — were maintained by a small army of maintenance workers and a company of AI Aspects, all ensuring things stayed (relatively) clean, organized and stable.

Not so much any more.

Even before the Civil War, things like the subway were abandoned in order to finance the Sea Wall, and after the Civil War, the new government in Atlantica was forced to shut down more projects in order to manage its budget and upgrade civil works (like the new power grid). Acts of warfare, terrorism,

and ecological disaster — not to mention the simple passage of time — have made many of the old tunnels unstable and dangerous. Any maintenance personnel are now strictly confined to areas deemed 'most important' (and even then, they're typically accompanied by a Combine patrol for their own safety), and most of the Aspects have gone offline.

What this means to you is the tunnels under the city can be dangerous to traverse.

For one thing, aside from various groups (gangs, smugglers, terrorists, black marketeers and the like) who claim territory underground (and tend to take a dim view of anyone encroaching on their turf without permission), the lack of overall maintenance means portions of the passageways have become entirely unstable and subject to sudden collapse. This can be even more dangerous than the obvious cave in… It's not unknown for a tunnel collapse to be far enough below the water table to cause the flooding of everything around the collapsed area.

That right there is one thing making it potentially unsafe to open a sealed door or knock down an old wall: you never know if there might be several tons of water waiting for you on the other side. It also sometimes makes walking down old passageways dangerous since a few inches of water might be hiding potholes or other obstacles — perhaps even an abandoned shaft — and you never know if the little pool of water filling up a small room might be electrified.

Aside from those usual underground suspects, remember those AI Aspects? Not all of them shut down, and some of them are believed to have matured to full-blown AIs — which can make things tricky, since it's often tough to figure out their motivations. And if they want to remain alone and undetected… Let's just say things won't go well for an unwelcome intruder.

Then there are things like unexploded bombs left over from the last war or various terrorist operations that went south and were never carried out. Nothing like a bomb going off next to you while you're in a confined tunnel to ruin your day.

If all of this isn't bad enough, it's also rumored that corporations like Emperor Pharmaceuticals used to (and some peeps claim they still do) maintain sealed and secure underground 'bunkers' for carrying out some of their more… 'questionable' research and experimentation. With things going to pieces down there, not all of those bunkers are so sealed and secure any more, which means any number of bio-horrors, genetically altered viruses, or worse could be loose somewhere.

So why would anyone head into The Underground at all?

Any number of reasons, tomo.

For one thing, it's a great place to hide. There's a thriving Black Market going on under the streets of Boston, fueled by a desire for illegal or hard-to-find goods and maintained by various 'merchants' or gangs willing to provide those goods. A little-known fact is the Ship Rats maintain a substantial presence below ground, feeding information and money to Julius Angelo and keeping the Italian Mob alive in the city.

While Angelo's boys (or girls) try to keep munitions from falling into the 'wrong' hands, other peddlers are less discerning or, in some cases, more desperate. The Black Hole Sun, for example, is a group of dissidents highly opposed to what they see as the growing power of the Combine in Atlantica. Perhaps ironically, they've become one of the biggest purchasers and distributors of weapons in Boston as they attempt to arm the populace and fight military shows of force and crackdowns on demonstrators.

For that matter, some of the political dissidents who have been marked as troublemakers for speaking out against the current state of affairs have moved into The Underground as well. It's easier to hide there than up above, and it's close enough to home that they can keep up 'The Good Fight'.

Or, for those choosing to Fight the Good Fight in other ways, The Underground provides ways in and out of Boston less traceable than going through a transit hub like HUTI. Various 'undesirables' (be they dissidents, 'non-humans', or even Zeeks) have been smuggled out of Boston through an Underground Railroad, and this same Railroad has been used to help get Sims, Hybrids, Bioroids and other non-humans away from the eyes of the NAC.

Basically, the Underground Railroad is a great way for someone with enemies or a past to 'disappear' himself — provided he can convince someone of his need. After all, the peeps running that operation have to be careful, so they don't exactly maintain a booth somewhere.

And the peeps running the Underground Railroad aren't the only ones interested in tunnels that run here and there: the Combine, various corporate interests (particularly Emperor Pharmaceuticals) and even a few smugglers and 'prospectors' are interested in finding alternate routes to move around the city.

Given the potential dangers in trying to find safe and non-flooded routes through The Underground, there's a certain amount of business potential for anyone willing to brave the dangers and generate accurate maps of the current situation down below.

For that matter, there are a number of lucrative opportunities for anyone with the balls and lacking a bad case of claustrophobia. Remember those live munitions I mentioned? There are peeps in Boston willing to pay top Credit for any usable weapons or bombs dredged up by an entrepreneurial explorer. Or how about those corporate bunkers? There's also occasionally good money in either 'cleansing' an old bunker, or even going in to 'recover' something for someone… Sometimes for the rightful owner; sometimes simply for someone who just wants the data or the dirt.

And if push comes to shove, there's always bounty work. With all the dissidents, refugees, criminals and who knows what else potentially hiding out in The Underground, there's usually no shortage of bounties to be recovered by anyone with the guts to go after them.

Now, don't get me wrong, tomo — it's dangerous in The Underground, but it's not like every step you take down there is fraught with peril. There are areas of just plain dark and damp or dusty, and a few peeps who just like to call the place 'home'. Those peeps are sometimes referred to by locals as 'Morlocks' or 'Troglodytes' ('Trogs' for short), but they're much the same as anyone who spends all his time above ground… Which is to say, they can be friendly, but generally want to be

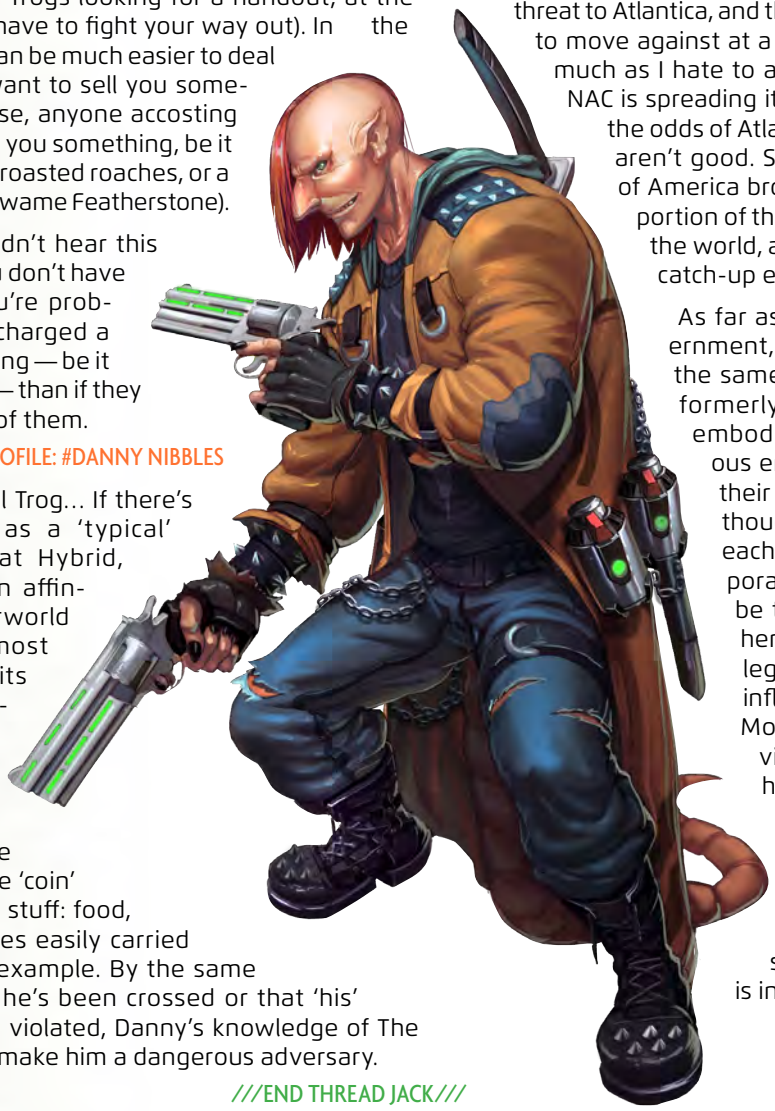
left alone by strangers, and can get downright hostile if they think someone's a threat.

For the record, there's an entire group of underground dwellers who consider the term 'Trog' a sort of Badge of Honor (although they're not so fond of the other appellations). In fact, they consider themselves the Trogs, and are the closest thing to an actual controlling body in The Underground. If you can get on the good side of one of these guys, though, you've potentially got a good guide — or at least someone who can provide you with shelter and a place to lay low in the event of a 'problem'—and someone who can help you find good deals on food and merchandise in The Underground.

Part of the reason for that is Trogs tend to band together into small, very clannish neighborhoods. They buy, sell and trade, give birth, grow up, and die, sometimes without every leaving The Underground. The result, depending on when you happen to enter a Trog hood, is a lot like stumbling into either a very poor part of town after a major catastrophe or during a street festival.

In the former case, you probably want to leave quickly unless you're sure you've got something they want or a very persuasive reason for being there (at best, you'll be accosted by any number of Trogs looking for a handout; at the worst, you might have to fight your way out). In the latter case, Trogs can be much easier to deal with, since they want to sell you something (in which case, anyone accosting you is trying to sell you something, be it his sister, a sack of roasted roaches, or a velvet painting of Kwame Featherstone).

Um... and you didn't hear this from me, but if you don't have a Trog buddy, you're probably going to be charged a lot more for anything — be it goods or services — than if they consider you one of them.



CHARACTER PROFILE: #DANNY NIBBLES

Danny is a typical Trog... If there's any such thing as a 'typical' Trog. Being a Rat Hybrid, he feels a certain affinity for The Underworld and has spent most his life learning its nooks and crannies. Danny can make for a good guide, provided he's paid well — and he doesn't tend to like 'coin' so much as useful stuff: food, ammo, or valuables easily carried and pawned, for example. By the same token, if he feels he's been crossed or that 'his' territory has been violated, Danny's knowledge of The Underground can make him a dangerous adversary.

///END THREAD JACK///

*LOADING...*

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/ATLANTICA

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET/ATLANTICAINFOBOMB

## The Rest of Atlantica

**#FreeAtlantica1776:** Hey folks. While #Wolfson did a great job discussing Boston and the underground, he failed to mention the rest of Atlantica, so Here I am, giving you the skinny on the rest of this great nation.

If there's one advantage to being appointed as a mid-level government official, it's that you get to leave your home city from time to time on the public dollar and see the rest of the country. I'm Chris Gregory, the Ops specialist who reports to Atlantica's Secretary of Defense. It's my job to travel to all of our key cities so that we can plan a proper defense, whether the aggressor comes in the form of the North American Coalition, The Great Lakes Union, or someone farther away, like China or Brazil. Of course, given the recent military engagement in New Jersey, the NAC is the most clear and present threat to Atlantica, and they are the ones that we stand ready to move against at a moment's notice. That said, and as much as I hate to admit this, despite the fact that the NAC is spreading itself out on several fronts militarily, the odds of Atlantica resisting a full-blown invasion aren't good. Simply put, when the United States of America broke apart, the NAC inherited a huge portion of the nation's most advanced military in the world, and the rest of us have been playing catch-up ever since.

As far as I'm concerned (and being in government, I know that most top officials feel the same way), Atlantica is the state entity formerly of the United States, that best embodies the prime values of the previous entity. The NAC wraps themselves in their flag and their god, equating them as though the two have anything to do with each other, even while serving their corporate masters behind the scenes. Truth be told, the corporate influence is felt here in Atlantica as well, but there are legal measures in place to keep their influence from becoming too powerful. More importantly, we embrace individual freedoms and liberty, and we have a true democracy, ensuring that all citizens get a voice in their government, regardless of their race, religion, or creed. That isn't to say that there's no corruption in government, but there seems to be somewhat less of it here than there is in the NAC.

## PORTLAND

Portland, Maine is the northernmost of Atlantica's great cities, and it lies the farthest away from the borders with the NAC. For this reason, many of the people here feel safe from the threat posed by our neighbor to the west. Many believe that they won't be affected if there's a full scale war, and that if Atlantica loses the fight, the worst they have to look forward to is occupation or, more likely, incorporation into the NAC. Not many people would welcome this change, however, since it would likely mean an end to the open elections, the absolute separation between church and state, and an overall loss of liberty.

The current population is 5.8 million people, and covers an area of 212 square miles. Like most of the coastal cities, when the sea levels began to rise, Portland's population was forced to decide between constructing massive dam-like seawalls to protect the city, or abandon it. Like New York and Boston, they opted to build seawalls. What Portland did different was build a series of three seawalls that went out into the harbor, each with locks that allow ships to pass in and out of the harbor, and they covered a much larger area than what was necessary. Because Portland wasn't a particularly large city at the outset, they planned for growth and made the barrier much larger than it actually needed to be. This resulted in an excess of land that would allow the city to grow. And grow it did.

## HARTFORD

Hartford, Connecticut is one of the key inland cities in Atlantica that expanded following the flooding caused by global warming. The world-famous wealthy entrepreneur, Murray A. Jones, has made a name for erecting some of the most fantastic buildings in all of Atlantica during the rebuilding in Hartford. A native of the city, he sees it as more than just a repository for the excess population; he sees it as the crown jewel of Atlantica, and he wants to be forever associated with its grandeur. Although he's a visionary of sorts, many people also consider him foul tempered, ego-centric, and generally unlikable. This fact hasn't stopped him

A hundred years ago Hartford was known as the insurance capital of the North America. That hasn't changed, but in the years since, it has also taken the place of New York as the financial capital as well. When New York was evacuated, the insurance companies wanted to relocate to a city that was inland enough to be safe from the coastal flooding. Boston is large, but it's still on the coast and reliant upon the massive seawall that protects it, so Hartford became the location of choice. New Wall Street, including the Hartford Stock Exchange, now dominates a section of the downtown area.

Greater Hartford is now home to seven million people, and is 355 square miles of urban sprawl. It still runs along a north — south axis, but it bulges into the areas that were once forested. Much of the downtown area from a hundred years ago is now preserved in historic areas, which is why there are blocks of relatively small buildings intermingled with the skyscrapers that have been erected by Murray Jones.

The current city mayor is a man of Italian descent named Bellino Fiorentino. Although popular with the people, rumors have always circulated that he's heavily involved with the Marcelo crime family, and the belief on the street is that his priorities are to the family first, his political career second, and the people last. Fiorentino has dismissed these allegations on numerous occasions, and launched public programs to combat this perception, though his critics have noted that the budget for such programs usually fall short of what would be needed to actually make a difference.

## NEW HAVEN

New Haven is one of the major population centers for Atlantica, and it also serves as the primary command center for the nation's navy. Because of the rising sea levels, New Haven's existence is dependent upon a massive seawall that was erected to protect it. Although the structure is effective, the city wasn't able to create one on the scale seen in Portland or Boston. In fact, it was only large enough to protect the city proper, which meant that many of the surrounding territories, and even some of its own suburbs, flooded. The result was that the city's footprint remained relatively unchanged, but it was built up. Since the flooding, most of the buildings have been replaced with higher rising ones that are able to house more people. Neighborhoods that had single family dwellings were bought out by the city and replaced with multi-story apartment buildings. Those who couldn't adjust to the more densely populated cities were encouraged to simply relocate, because only the wealthiest individuals could afford such homes.

New Haven's population is 3.5 million, and the city covers an area of only 25 square miles, making it one of the most densely populated cities on Earth. The entire city consists of skyscrapers, and the city streets are almost always full of people. To relieve some of the congestion, sky bridges have been constructed between many of the buildings, and a city-subsidized sky taxi service has been established. Even with these in place, personal space is at a premium. Most apartments are no larger than 500 square feet, and most of them contain three or more people. The tradeoff is that most buildings contain numerous open gathering places that are open to the public where people can go to socialize, catch up on their reading, or engage in a number of leisurely activities.

One of the more dangerous pastimes that has become popular here is a practice known as cloud jumping, where people throw themselves off of perfectly sound rooftops, or high windows, and glide to the ground. Although this can be carried out with parachutes, the cool kids prefer to use cybernetic devices that slow descent. This is illegal, but that doesn't deter most people who enjoy this sport. It's not uncommon for one or two deaths to occur every month, usually the result of a jumper deploying their chute too late, or cybernetics suffering a delay before kicking in.

## ALBANY

Albany is a landlocked city that has expanded to include the city that was once known as Schenectady. The urban sprawl now covers 256 square miles, and its northern and western borders are loosely marked by the Hudson and Mohawk rivers. The sprawling nature of the city has allowed ordinary neighborhoods to both survive and develop, as opposed to building up like most of the other major cities in Atlantica. The city has two downtown areas — the one originally belonging to Albany,

as well as the one that was once the center of Schenectady. Both are filled with skyscrapers that are on par with the ones once found at the heart of New York City.

The Atlantica military operates out of a base known as Bastion, which sits on twenty square miles of property to the west of the city and acts as the command center for all branches of the military. It also houses all of the military's top secret materials and research. Although it employs numerous contractors, security is extremely tight, requiring people entering and exiting to pass through several checkpoints before being allowed to enter the grounds. There is also a military prison located near the heart of the base, but it's believed that not every prisoner there served in the military. Many believe that many high profile foreign prisoners are kept here as well. Despite the size of the base, very few members of the rank and file are stationed here. It keeps just enough forces on site to provide protection, while the actual armed forces are located in strategic bases throughout Atlantica.

The mayor of Albany is an embattled cougar hybrid named Juan Pearson. Popular during his first term, he was re-elected and almost immediately found himself embroiled in a scandal where it was suggested that he authorized the use of city funds to pay off the Langoria Cartel to cover up a sex scandal. The allegations are that the family obtained photographs of him receiving visits from hybrid prostitutes, and then paid five million credits to purchase their silence. They obliged, at least until one of their hit men turned rogue and offered the story to the press.

## SYRACUSE

Syracuse now has a total area of 66 square miles, with a population of three million. The city sits at the northeast corner of the Finger Lakes region of the New York territory, and it's topography is largely flat, with some neighborhoods built on small hills. The city was once known for its trees, but these mostly disappeared when Syracuse was forced to expand to accommodate its new excess population. Its climate is mild, with cold, snowy winters, hot and humid summers, and average spring and fall seasons.

The downtown portion of Syracuse has been filled with an impressive number of sky scrapers, which has created one of the most beautiful skylines in Atlantica. But when people think about this city, it isn't the skyline that they typically envision. Instead, it's the Syracuse gambling district, which contains a multitude of hotels and casinos. Like Las Vegas in the west, this area is known for its neon lights, high profile stage shows, and its gimmicky attractions. In fact, when they were planning for the gambling district, the developers looked to Las Vegas as the model that they wished to recreate. The result is an exciting destination that people travel to from throughout Atlantica and beyond.

There is a seedy underbelly to the gambling here. While it's enough for most people to play the cyberslots, others want to participate in games that have a little more than mere money for chance. Just off the gambling district are some lower price hotels, and games of death take place in many of them. Large amounts of money are bet on bloodsports, such as Russian Roulette, street fighting, and others. One of the newer "sports" to emerge is dopefighting, where cybernetic-heavy tough sorts snort a small pile of cocaine and then fight until one of the contestants collapses from the pummeling, has his cybernetics junked, or blacks out from a drug overdose. Additional lines of the drug are given to the fighters between rounds, and often the fights that go into later rounds are decided more by the fighter less able to handle large amounts of the drug than by the fight itself.

The mayor of Syracuse is Elaine Ward, a tall, attractive woman with alabaster skin, silky raven hair, and striking features. She is the epitome of Syracuse glamour, and she plays this image to the hilt, making her the darling of the city. Although she has used this strategy to win re-election twice, she is also a shrewd politician who carries the favor of the majority of the city's elected officials, and has managed to quietly crush most of her opponents. Those who are familiar with the political situation beyond the public's eye often refer to her as The Iron Lady.

///THREAD JACK///

*LOADING...*

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: TASKFORCE HARFANG

FROM: [REDACTED]

TO: [REDACTED]

DATE: 2/21/2090

CLASSIFICATION: UV - EYES ONLY

SUBJECT: EXISTENCE OF TASKFORCE HARFANG

As per your request dated 11/14/2088, the analyst team has been examining media coverage and documents regarding incidents related to Operation: Atlantic Unity and the setbacks that it has suffered. With regards to the bombing of Emperor Pharmaceuticals Pyramid in November 2088; while much evidence pointed to us due to the political tensions in the area, a comprehensive study of the sealed archives at Langley & Fort Meade show that we had no involvement in the bombing. Since that point we have maintained a continual watch on events and we have noted the following anomalies in our action.

During the observation of [redacted] suspected double agent of our own Central Intelligence Agency an anonymous tip led Denver's Police Department to raid a suspected drug dealer. In the resultant fire fight operatives [redacted] and [redacted] were killed. At first this was deemed to be the result of our counter intelligence operatives making a mistake, but deeper investigation has led us to believe that the event was triggered by an unknown outside party.

On the 3/12/2089 Hartford's financial centre was struck by a sophisticated Distributed Denial of Service attack that inflicted severe damage and data loss to several businesses. The data trail led back to several servers which were part of a low level military network for logistics in Atlanta. Whilst we accepted the blame publically, the investigation of the sealed archives showed that the servers were compromised from outside of the NAC.

The arrest of [redacted] on 1/23/2090 in Portland as part of a counter terrorist operation. He was caught with large amounts of Super C4 and a detailed plan to attack structural weak points in Portland's system of seawalls. During his interrogation he admitted that he had been trained by an

"intelligence agent of the NAC". He didn't specify an agency only that his handler had provided him with the training and resources to carry out the mission.

The latest strange occurrence happened last month during the extraordinary rendition of [redacted], a leading scientist of Atlantica; the team performing the extraction was compromised by another anonymous tip. The quick actions of Signal Intelligence meant we were able to trace a communication to a virtual server based in Montreal and whilst a powerful virus destroyed most data on the server we found mention of Taskforce Harfang.

In light of this it is my recommendation that funding be provided for a counter intelligence unit to investigate this group and locate their sponsors as well as working to prevent further incidents occurring.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** So, anyone have paydata on these guys? If I'm reading this right, they are the ones who really pulled off the bombings in Boston and Portland, not that NAC Patsy #Maxx_Footage allegedly filmed.

**#Wraith:** I spent some time in the Quebec regular army a few years back. There were rumors about spec ops teams training for an operation somewhere inside the old U.S. Nobody knew the target, but the term Atlantic Unity came up on more than one occassion.

**#Luciferion:** Yeah this stinks. The NAC is taking the heat for those bombings, and, while I don't much care for their politics, this sort of thing might start another war.

**#Neon_Bright:** Maybe it was the NAC. Check the fourth paragraph. Apparently a NAC secret agent trained the guy they arrested.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** @Neon_Bright; Torture doesn't always yield actionable Intel.

**#Neon_Bright:** True…

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** @Wraith; We should meet some place in VR. I know a private node off the Nexus where we can compare notes.

**#Wraith:** @BIlly; sounds good. Ping me off-list. @Luciferion. Yeah it stinks to high hell.

///END THREAD JACK///

# CANADA

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/CANADA

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET/CANADA

**Posted By:** #Marc-André, AKA Bigfoot's_in_my_basement

## The Mosaic Crumbles

Someone once said that Canada was like a mosaic landscape — think he was a professor or something. The way he saw it, each piece of that mosaic was an ethic group with one big piece for peoples of British heritage at the top and another good sized piece for folks of French heritage right beneath it. All the other ethnic groups were pieced in below making up one huge foundation. It was a nice, friendly landscape that a lot of folks around the world were keen to piece into. Yeah omae, it was a real pretty picture. Too bad once things started shaking and rolling south of the border, some of the pieces in that nice mosaic didn't hold together so well.

People don't always handle rapid change too well, and as you'd expect things got ugly for a while. Atlantic Canada got the first whammy when Quebec occupied western Labrador — a bid by politicians in the young Quebec nation to safeguard their future with critical resources. The Canadian navy was dispatched from St. Johns and Halifax, troops landed from Newfoundland, and shots were fired. Lacking the military resources of Quebec, the forces of Atlantic Canada weren't able to stand up to the invasion.

Not long after, a whole slew of problems reared up on the west coast. In some weird geopolitical arrangement, by the time the de Fuca quake hit 90% of British Columbia's population was settled in the southwest corner. If that wasn't bad enough, due to a quirk of history the capitol was located on the southern tip of an offshore island. Yeah omae, that capitol would be Victoria — the major urban center hit hardest by the quake.

Rebuilding from the quake was a major suck on the BC and Canadian economy. You know what they say ami; one countries' misfortune is often another's opportunity. That would describe to a 'T' the Chinese Mandrinate's and Techno-Shogunates' view of the situation. Already dug deep into the BC economy with heavy investment in resources and commodities, they saw a lot of upside in selectively financing the rebuilding of southwestern BC.

## The Douglas Commonwealth

This is one challenged young nation omae. Even in 2090, Victoria is still building back from the damage of the quake 21 years ago. Meanwhile the small cities and towns in the rural regions on the mainland have their own problems, whether it be rebuilding from their own devastation or contending with a hostile Caledonia. Of all communities, the towns on the west coast of the island had it the worst. Being in the direct path of the tsunami, almost every community there got wiped off the map. People in Douglas just refer to it now as the Waste Coast.

Nanaimo sitting in the middle of it all on the Island's east coast is in the best shape, having gone unscathed by higher water levels and the tsunami. Being surrounded by devastation breeds its own problems though, and many of the citizens in this small city challenge Victoria for the right to be capitol of the new commonwealth. They're not alone — many other citizens up north Island and on the mainland don't want a repeat of the extreme rural-urban divide that plagued British Columbia. Victoria remains the capitol for now, but don't be surprised if it's relocated here.

Two decades now since its formation, Douglas has seen a lot of changes in its shifting landscape. A defense treaty with FreeCoV is now in place, so the fiasco stemming from its refusal to aid the free city against Caledonian 2 decades ago won't be repeated. Trade treaties with Cascadia, FreeCoV and Kootenay have brought it more into those nations' economic and political spheres and companies from FreeCoV and Cascadia have branches here.

There's lots of diversity from one end of the Commonwealth to the other, but something you'll find throughout are non-humans. With less than 2 million citizens, so much land to govern and about a quarter million dead from the quake, the bureaucrats down in Victoria reluctantly agreed to grant non-humans rights as citizens. Androids, Simulacrums and Hybrids have all found decent livelihoods here, mostly employed in the gritty work of rebuilding. Many simulacrums and androids with a military skew are employed in Douglas' ever expanding armed forces.

Non-humans are free to live anywhere, but most Hybrids only choose Victoria if employment demands it. While the people there tolerate them, they're not exactly trusted or liked; the same isn't true for smaller cities like Nanaimo and Powell River though. Hybrids are integrated tightly into First Nation communities throughout the Commonwealth; particularly on the Waste Coast where tsunami damage to First Nation settlements was severe.

## Kootenay Commonwealth

Historically populated by unpopular religious orders, radical labor unionists, back to the land environmentalist, anarchists, hemp growers, and Vietnam draft dodgers, this place has always been culturally out of sync with most of its neighbors. The Locals joke that their beloved Kootenay is a nation caught between a RoC and a RoC, with the firm and friendly rock of the Rep. of Cascadia to stand on, but a hazards Rep. of Caledonia rockslide ready to come down on all other sides. It's a strange situation for sure omae, with the Commonwealth in a sort of love-hate-cynical love triangle with its 3 neighbors.

Other than in the capitol and a few smaller cities, people in this country are scarce and everyone knows it. The country attracted many from Vancouver and Victoria after the devastation of de Fuca, but even counting all those transplants, there's barely more than a million here. The national council has addressed this in part by granting rural public lands to groups that will use them responsibly. It's attracted many who desire to live in an unspoiled wilderness with close neighbors

to share in the experience. Called Lotuslanders, they now make up the brunt of the people living rurally here; especially along the Caledonian border.

That urgent need for citizens drives many policies, and it's why non-humans live here. What I mean ami, is that Hybrids, Androids and Simulacrums have constitutional rights equal to every other citizen. That makes the concept of human rights versus non-human rights non existent here. If they're smart enough to get here on their own merit, then they can become fully franchised citizens. You'll find all of the non-human races everywhere in society.

Probably the most unusual citizens here are Zeeks. The Commonwealth prides itself on its ability to provide a society in which even psions can find a home. They're almost always settled amongst Lotuslanders, whose tighter community bond allows for more support. They may have a lot of compatibility and harmony with the communities they live in, but they're a deadly threat to outsiders who have ill intent towards their neighborhoods.

Many may be living rurally here, but just about everyone here is connected to the Deep. For a nation with so many mountains and remote locations, it's impressive how sophisticated and extensive the Virtual Reality infrastructure is here. The use of the Deep here goes beyond just information though, as many of the national and local decisions are made by digital plebiscite.

## Republic of Caledonia

This country probably would have been another member state of the Alberta Republic, if it weren't for their annexation of The Slice. When Alberta and Saskatchewan combined to form a new nation, they saw fit to carve out the whole section of BC northeast of the Rocky Mountains. It's still an embarrassment and wound to Caledonians' pride, and despite sharing some similar views they have a deep mistrust of Alberta and their NAC allies. No one's quite sure if that land grab was a political miscalculation by them or the clandestine work of the Mandrinate or NAC. Either way it certainly succeeded in creating an unfriendly neighbor for the republic.

When they broke from Canadian and BC confederation, the people here were tired of a political system which from their perspective was about as meaningful as trying to talk sense to a Kootenay hemphead. They wanted a new system, with more checks and balances and no British flavor. Representatives of all the seceding regions met and voted to form a 2 house Republic with an elected president. In the hopes of preventing regional domination they placed the senate, congress and capitol buildings in the middle of the nation at Prince George.

Non-humans are scarce here, as the constitution doesn't grant them any rights and most are out right prohibited. In the minds of Caledonians there's only so much good work to go around and only Humans are fit to do it. Caledonians would much rather invest in luring people from other regions to fill labor needs than allow artificials and fakes the right to work. Luxury simulacrums are the exception and they're found in licensed leisure businesses such as escort services. Hybrids are the most discriminated against as they're regarded as animals. In certain regions there's even shoot on sight laws in effect.

Caledonian's have one of the biggest rock piles of wealth on the planet. With the exception of a few lake-chained valleys and high plateaus, the republic is all mountains. For decades people were trying to find and get at the valuable resources they knew were untapped by the mining of a century ago. Advancements in mineral exploration tech and the development of laser extraction were the answer, and many rich strikes have been discovered in the past decade.

In the forests super trees are bringing back woodlots faster than ever. The forests of the Republic were already getting lots of love before secession, with genetically engineered super tree stock widely planted. In 2090 some regions are already reaping the benefits, and nimble golemmechs allow loggers to get in and harvest quickly with minimal damage.

## Alberta

No surprise omae — the two western provinces where union with the USA and separation from Canada have historically had some support, were those that saw the NAC as an attractive model for a new country. The NAC's promise of a strategic alliance seemed like a better deal than remaining within the status quo of Canada. Not to mention, ami, that corporate citizens found the NAC's enthusiasm for company run regions too good to be true.

The politicians and citizens over in Saskatchewan weren't as keen at first, but once Alberta's power wielders started threatening to tighten the screws on the rivers flowing into their province, they came around. There was never any doubt for the corporate citizens in that province though. With so many untapped resources in rural regions, to their minds company administered regions were the golden road to the future. That many of their citizens might end up in the melting pot along with the gold getting there, didn't concern them much. In 2071 the electorate in both provinces voted in favour of referendums that took them out of confederation.

The land bordered by the two provinces wasn't enough for the politicians. Within a month of it's proclamation, the new Alberta government made a military push and occupied all the land east of the Rocky Mountains. That meant slicing out a big wedge of northeast British Columbia. That annexation carved out all of the Peace River basin, some small cities and a lot of primo agriculture and range lands. They didn't go it entirely alone though, as the NAC lent a lot of military gear to the operation. The politicians in Edmonton claimed they were always meant to control Canadian lands east of the Rockies, but water and natural gas — there's lots of it there was the real reason behind it all. Many of the locals want out from under Alberta. Well there's some irony; the land that has long been known as the Peace country is anything but peaceful now.

Unification into a new Alberta nation has been a boon to the two provinces. This is one of the few places outside of the radioactive Middle East that still has crude oil. Despite much of the world shifting to alternative energy there's still a demand for it. The Alberta government is keen to exploit it for all it's worth. The resource companies here can now employ androids and simulacrums more easily, which provides them

workers that aren't adverse to unhealthy conditions in eco-hazardous zones.

Better yet, they don't mind living in new, trashy resource towns and they don't demand benefits.

You won't find hybrids anywhere in the nation unless they're here illegally. That's not to say some aren't there, but they're only in remote, rural places where they can keep out of sight. Simulacrums and Androids are here in numbers, but they're far from franchised citizens. Not many seem to care though as the tradeoff of poor living and working conditions for decent pay makes it worth it.

## Republic of Quebec

Way back in the middle of last century, things started rumbling in Canada's la belle province. You see omae, for decades Quebec was run by corrupt politicians who were in tight with the Church. If you called it a parliamentary theocracy, I wouldn't argue too much with you. Back then, folks of British heritage living in Montreal dominated almost every aspect of Quebec society. Heck, in the early part of that century those Anglophones living along that cities' "golden mile" controlled 70% of Canada's wealth!

The rumbling started in the late 1950's and by the end of the 60's it was a hurricane. The majority who were of French heritage wanted change and wanted it quickly. A group of militant revolutionaries even sprung up and caused havoc. Things got scary for a while and the big brass in Ottawa even slapped martial law on the place and sent in the troops. Those Francaphones weren't phased though. They eventually elected their own separatist party, droves of Anglophones left, and by the mid 1990's the second referendum for separation failed by only a sliver. All of it made Quebec a very distinct piece of the Canadian mosaic by the time the new millennium rolled in.

The Death had one mucho impact on Quebec. Being a primo go-to place for refugees for centuries, Canada opened her doors again to survivors of the Middle East wars and global flooding and many jumped at the opportunity. Thing was, the Politicians over in Quebec didn't have the right to control immigration into their own province and many non-French speakers began settling in. Not a good situation omae, it created lots of tension and unease among Quebecers who started feeling that their culture and language were slipping away. The quiet revolution that had been smoldering for decades started to heat up.

The Quebec government tried to lure Francaphones in from the GEU to restore some balance. Things were a bit too cozy in the GEU for many to bite, but the campaigning did elevate Quebec's profile there. Rich Francaphones there saw a lot of raw potential in Quebec. With the GEU economy running flat out they had a lot credits to invest, so they funded resource exploration and established branches for some of their manufacturing. Montreal and cite Quebec entered a boom era and some rural towns that were almost flat lining started to resuscitate. It all helped make Quebecers feel a lot more confident about driving their own destiny.

The breakup of the USA and the Juan de Fuca quake, were the events the Politicians in cite Quebec were waiting for. Those events slapped another layer of fear and uncertainty onto the minds of Quebecers. The politicians sprang at the opportunity and pulled a snap referendum in 2070. Unlike the previous two, it sailed through with over 70% pushing the [qui] button.

More cynical peeps think the real reason the Powers in cite Quebec and Montreal pushed for secession was to combat the dilution of language and culture by the virtual world. Then there's the even more cynical who think it was all a manipulation by the francophones in the GEU. Whatever the real reason; with Quebecers of 2090 spending so much time TAPPed in and delving the Global DataNet, the culture and lingo of the outside is constantly flooding in. It's a funny thing ami, while everyone here speaks French in public, when it comes to the Deep the lingua franca for the savvy is cybercreole.

To hit back, the government has created strict laws for HR Object signage — it's en français or the highway omae. Even a street vendor broadcasting a simple 1-liner in cybercreole for their wares is certain to get a visit from la Police de Culture. And if you haven't got the language, don't be expecting the fancy language translation program you're running to work, because it's certain to be blocked. Lots of citizens here think this cultural policing is a grand waste of tax payers credits, but its wound up in a lot of tradition and the brass in cite Quebec have too much invested in it to see it in any other way.

Apart from the cultural enforcement, Quebec of 2090 is a model society where liberal values are held in high regard. That liberal touch doesn't extend to packing around firearms though — they're restricted to all but the military, law enforcement workers, and citizens with a Right to Carry (RtC) chip. Not too worry though ami — many of the bureaucrats and law enforcers here are corrupt. Law enforcement will turn a blind eye to gang or syndicate members that are carrying, just as long as they conceal it and they've paid their bribes. Heck, you pay enough and you can even buy a RtC! The same is true for lethal cyberware — pay up and no questions asked. Lay a brutal maiming on an innocent citizen though, and la police locale are going to be busting you pronto.

## Free City of Vancouver

Going it alone as a free city and building back from the devastation of the de Fuca Quake for two decades, hasn't been easy for FreeCoV. It's a fully functioning region now, but on the surface it doesn't exactly look like the Vancouver of the past. With water flooding in on many sides since the 30's, forty-five foot tall seawalls dominate much of the shoreline. The city had one huge challenge holding back all that water and some areas got wiped out or abandoned when the swell of the de Fuca tsunami breached the walls.

Richmond, Stanley Park, Gastown and Chinatown got the brunt of it. If you boasted that out of all the FreeCoV communities Richmond had it the worst and made the best of it, I wouldn't argue with you ami. The original civic planners weren't thinking too well when they surveyed that city. Built on an ancient flood plain, the ground turned into a milk shake during the quake and after the levies were blasted aside many buildings just tilted over and sank beneath the waves. By the time the shaking stopped the entire commercial dis-

trict along 3 Road was crumbled and under water and the rest of the city too.

New Shanghai rose out of the water, muck and rubble of Richmond like a miracle, and it wouldn't have happened without the Techno-Shogunate and Chinese Mandrinate pumping in the credits. With one of largest populations of peoples of Asian heritage; sticking their noses into the building of a new glittering city was just too much of a golden opportunity to pass up.

The city's like a mix of west coast urban and early 20th century Shanghai-Bundt, with a nice dash of Chiba neon thrown in. This place has HR signage that's about as glitzy, exotic and mind boggling as it gets omae. The builders left their personal signatures on the place with the beautiful Bundt Shoreline district and spectacular Shogan Plaza.

It depends upon your perspective omae; some say FreeCoV is a shining example of what's achievable when a free city partners with super powers, while others say it's a city that shrugged off its former governments for new Mandrinate and Techno-Shogunate masters. No matter what your view, there's no denying the two super powers cast a long shadow here. FreeCoV is governed by a regional council of elected citizens, but the Mandrinate and Shogunate are always in the background. The Republic of Cascadia and the Douglas Commonwealth are the mitigating factors — without treaties with them there's no doubt FreeCoV wouldn't be able to boast the "free" in its name.

It hasn't exactly been a bad proposition for FreeCoV citizens. Nope, far from it ami; this is one moving and shaking region. The footprint of the two Pacific giants is deep, but gentle. Their infusion of credits buoyed up a sinking economy and resulted in impressive complexes built in the style of their Asian funders. The creation of a Pacific free trade zone in New Shanghai has attracted companies like GPI and Kensai who have constructed large centers of manufacturing.

> **#YukonJoe:** FreeCoV is a great place to live, especially if you're a freelancer. There's plenty of work if you're into the smuggling game. Of course, the usual suspects are always hiring. The new megacorps are fighting a shadow war for control of the market. That means work for folkls like us.
>
> **#Ripperjack:** Don't forget all the contracts for fugitives from The Douglas Commonwealth. Plenty of creds to be made, chum.

# THE GREAT LAKES UNION

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/GLU

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET/INFO.GLU

**Posted By:** #Praetrorian_Guard

Trying to make sense of the Great Lakes Union can be damn confusing for anyone, but it's easier if you realize it's all just different parts serving one big body. Serve the Union and the Union will serve you is what they say in the GLU ami. That sums things up nicely, except if you want to live there you better know who serves who and how those GLU body parts are meshed.

First you've got the Union; it's the head, omae; where most of the thinking and decisions are made. The Union assembles the bureaucracy, hammers out the laws, forges the military and weaves the social safety net. They're just GLU citizens that have kicked and kissed their way to the podium, but their vision is so homogenous and their power so omnipotent, that most living in the GLU just refer to all of society as The Union.

Then you have the oligopolies; mega-corporations which, like the bodies' organs, fuel the whole. There's not many of them, but what's there are some of the largest corporations in the world. They're not exactly like the oligopolies of the early part of the century either. Far from it omae; GLU mega-corps are diversified to an impressive degree with their fingers poked into many pies. Even the retail strips in commercial districts are usually nothing more than a series of franchised businesses owned by an oligopoly. Sure there's Unionists proprietors calling them their own, but what they actually own is only a small share.

The Oligopolies aren't so powerful that they live outside the law. The power brokers in Toronto aren't interested in giving their authority away to them. They still have to abide by the law and if they ever break water laws, they're sure to have a few of their Execs iced. A number of them have pushed for the right to own and develop abandoned regions, but in local economic vacuums like that the Union usually just plunks a Union Corp down and takes over.

Then you've got the Unionist; like the bodies' limbs they carry the brunt of the burden. Unionists work for the oligopolies, serve in the military, turn the gears of bureaucracy and pay their dues. As long as you serve some aspect of the Union well omae, you can count on a good life with your needs taken care of and some security for the future. Fail in your servitude though, and you'll quickly find yourself serving on the front lines.

Most races can become Unionists, although Hybrids aren't exactly welcomed in the large cities unless they're playing in one of the gladiator sports leagues. Androids are most appreciated in military buffer zones or the towns and cities close to them. If you're one of those Simmie's born in a vat though, don't expect to find a home in the GLU. Employing a Simulacrum for any form of labor is strictly taboo and carries stiff penalties. By far the most prized Unionists are Human 2.0. The Union launched a program for the ideal Unionist decades ago, and that 1st generation is now entering adulthood.

Being smack in the middle of a continent that recently suffered a civil war and the breakup of two major countries, you'd think things might be a bit tenuous in the GLU. Well if that isn't the truth omae, we all must be just playing in a VR game. Coexisting with its neighbors is one heck of a balancing act for the GLU, and even the slightest movement or change could twang it off the tightrope. Some say if you were to talk about the situation between the GLU and its three neighbors like they were people, they'd be like a Priest, a Rogue, a Brother and the Brother's Antagonist.

## THE PRIEST

The North American Coalition. With their theocratic flavor of governance, the NAC is like the patronizing priest that's annoyed at the GLU's conduct and wanting penance. On the other hand, the GLU is like the ex-congregation member who's turned to a different path just to spite them.

## THE ROGUE

Now that would be the Republique du Quebec. Quebec is the rogue nation that in the eyes of the GLU plucked up Atlantic Canada when the Union was least able to respond. They're also the Rogue that lusts for control of the Ottawa valley and that sacked and pillaged Ottawa city.

## THE BROTHER

The nation of Alberta. In tight with the NAC with trade and military treaties, and its mimic in many ways, Alberta is like a brethren nation to the NAC. The NAC may be the big brother, but Alberta is happy to be its lesser sibling after all the fuss it's stirred up with Caledonia and the GLU.

## THE BROTHER'S ANTAGONIST

The Great Lakes Union wears that hat omae. When the GLU lured Manitoba in, they denied Alberta vast, water-rich lands and in the process made it a land-locked nation. That's enough of a pin in the eye of Alberta's ambitions, that it makes the GLU more of an antagonist to it than the Republic of Caledonia.

With all that hostility with its neighbors, you'd think the Union would be bullied and beaten into submission. Thing is ami; while there's all that hostility there's also other factors loosening the pressure on the screws. Brother-Alberta would like to grab Winnipeg and its huge lake lands, but it's already defending the Slice against the Caledonians and fighting on two fronts is more than they can handle. Rogue-Quebec would like to push its border into the GLU beyond the southern bank of the Ottawa River, but too much of what they do pisses off Atlantica. They're irked enough by the Rogues' actions to ensure they have a strong military presence along the New York-Quebec border and good relations with the GLU.

The Priestly NAC would like to reign in the GLU and deal them some discipline, but they're still dealing with the bad global press from their aggressions in Chicago decades ago. Its militias' actions in southwestern Manitoba didn't exactly win them merit points either. The Chinese Mandrinate and Techno-Shogunates' ambitions in the Northwest keeps both the NAC and Alberta uneasy. Those two Pacific superpowers

realize that FreeCoV's prosperity hinges on strong treaties with Douglas, Kootenay and Cascadia, and the only superpower that's close enough to throw a wrench into that is the NAC.

You'd think all that would put a big damper on the GLU's outlook. It doesn't matter much though, when you've got some of the planet's most powerful megacorps, close to a 100 million citizens, and enough water to drown most of the NAC.

That's not to say that the outlook is rosy in every corner of the Union — far from it omae. Detroit, Minneapolis and Winnipeg are all located within 100 miles of the NAC border. All three are living on the edge with an anxiety that permeates throughout all society.

> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** I've been to Detroit a few times. A lot of people like to peg Detroit as an urban blight, and it was at one time. Now, things have improved. Don't get me wrong. There are many places in the Motor City that are reminiscent of a warzone, but there are also some good areas, too.

The presence of the military is felt everywhere, from the roar of hover jets in no-fly zones, to the distant rumble of military golemmechs, razorback congested intersections. The Union's mandatory conscription means there's a large standing military and all three cities host a high population of military personnel. Leisure culture is well established there and you can buy just about any pleasure and delight you could imagine — just as long as it wasn't grown in a vat.

Law enforcement in the Union is a moving target — the Union keeps trying to nail down the right formula, but Unionists keep getting targeted by gangs, syndicates and terrorists. For some of the Union's cities like Detroit, it's a continuation of past realities. For Winnipeg and Toronto, it's a dose of culture shock. Law enforcement is still to grappling with relaxed gun ownership and the radically altered playing field caused by a proliferation of firearms.

There aren't many places in the Union where you have the right to pack a sidearm around, but no worries omae; with so many Unionists serving in the military what difference does it make. Even worse, many retiring Vets with the prospect of a lesser life after service, hold on to their gear and black market it. Military grade weapons have filtered down to the streets, and neighborhoods can turn into small war zones whenever a turf war erupts.

Then you've got the Union's stance on drugs ami; they see them as all equally bad, but tolerate them if they serve a purpose. Even alcohol isn't viewed favorably by the Union's health bureaucrats in Toronto, but it's considered a necessary evil in any city or town that hosts the military. Stimulants are handled much the same way. It doesn't seem to matter much anyways omae — there's many laws enforcing what's prohibited here, but there're that many more smugglers willing to brave the Atlantica and Quebec borders to bring it in.

The Union has a similar attitude toward enhancements,— they're damned if they do and damned if they don't. Tolerance of lethal mods in particular are relaxed amongst young military conscripts. Those enhancements only become a problem if a conscript doesn't make the grade and finds their way into some gang or syndicate. Contending with Strain is a big challenge for the GLU military, but not having cyber-brutes to patrol volatile borders is a bigger problem.

With three unfriendly neighbors stymied from using conventional military action, you'd expect there to be a high incident of cybercrime here and if that isn't the truth ami, nothing is. The Union is one the biggest targets on the North American continent for hacking and cyber-sabotage.

They've fought back with a huge investment in safeguarding the connection to the Deep for oligopoly, military and government domains. All that means is that hackers have to get their work done with HR hacks. Hacker subculture is strong and widespread there, with hacker dens existing in every metropolis or abandoned town.

If you said Unionists have water on the brain, I wouldn't disagree with you ami. Water flows down through every nook and cranny of GLU society, from the protectionist policies of government, through turbines powering oligopolies and out through the gray-water recyclement pipes of Unionist homes. There isn't much here that's valued higher than water, and the buy in for oligopolies and Unionists wanting to exploit it is steep. It's as if those Unionists want to hold on to it at all costs, even if its eventual flow across borders is unpreventable. Of course just about every other nation wants to fill their jugs with it.

Water factors in big omae when it comes to where Unionists want to live — a neighborhood without river or lakefront is a neighborhood where people probably don't want to live. Redevelop some run down district that hugs a shoreline and you can reap mucho profits. Even the less fortunate Unionists want to be close to waterfront areas, even if it means living in a neighborhood with all of the character of a Malmart and about as much upside as Bagdad.

Towns situated away from shorelines are the least desirable places to live. If they're small and unfortunate enough to be in a buffer zone, they're usually abandoned with only a few hanger-ons. Meanwhile, cities like Toronto, Detroit, Windsor, Minneapolis and Winnipeg with plenty of shoreline are booming. Not that they don't have their bad spots — whoa omae, there's plenty of those — but the initial impression they give any visitor is thriving, glittering metropolises towering above impressive shorefront malls and parks.

Their enthusiasm for the liquid stuff doesn't end with neighborhood preferences ami — water leisure is the primo pastime throughout the Union. On the social scene, not having a boat in the garage or moored at the marina is as big a plunge in prestige as canoeing over Niagara Falls. Social pretenders are sure to have faked watercraft licenses and shamelessly flash them about at social events. Lake bays near bigger metropolises on holidays are clogged to the point that you can almost walk across them boat-to-boat. Meanwhile, if your child has the aquatic skill of a rock, it's a good reason to have them augmented with some cybernetic turbo-fins.

# THE REPUBLIC OF CASCADIA

#INFOSOURCE

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LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

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#INFO_FLAG: ORIGINAL SECTION MISSING, AUTO-REPLACED FROM JACOB'S PLAYGROUND

**Posted by:** #BuyMartMan, Atlantica/Albany Street Sales Gentleman

Hey, tomo, I hear you're looking to make a buy. I got what you need. Just got in some primo Sticky-Icky. None of the state-grown hydro bullcrap, either. Straight out of the ground, no taxes, and nothing goes to the CEF.

What? You're looking for, like, info and crap? Man, I ain't no infobroker. Tony gave you the wrong number. Still, I hate to send a customer away empty-handed. Here's what I got on Cascadia, what the Generals in Olympia call "The Republic."

You must be new in town, since this crap is what you can find anywhere in The Deep, assuming you know where to look. If anyone asks, you didn't get this from me.

**#Spider-Bot17:** Yeah, so, this file's got some major errors in it, and is filled with the author's biases. Still, it does have some useful stuff in it. Just don't take everything as gospel. It ain't that bad here.

**#Eriksen_W:** And your slag against this piece doesn't have anything to do with you wanting to sell your own work, amiright?

**#Spider-Bot17:** Yes, I've got a guide to Cascadia for sale. [[[TAP ADDRESS SCRUBBED]]]. So what?

## The Republic Today

The area of the old United States known as The Republic of Cascadia owes much of its present status to catastrophe. Though largely spared a direct role in the fighting of the Second American Civil War, the Pacific Northwest, and its logistical and air-support structures, played a large part on the various operations. With the breakup and balkanization of the American state, the Republic officially came into existence with the Treaty of Tokyo in 2068.

The economic effects of the war were enough of a problem for the fledging Republic, and if the Juan de Fuca earthquake — which devastated much of the Pacific Rim in the year 2069 — had been the only ecological disaster to hit, things might be very different.

In addition to the tsunami and loss of life that got so much media attention, the quake also set off Mt. Rainier, a volcano in old Washington state situated near the Seattle-Tacoma area. The volcano had been on the verge of eruption for decades, and when the thing went off, the explosion was very likely the largest natural disaster in human history.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Pure hyberbole. The volcano's eruption was large, yes, but hardly the largest natural disaster in human history. Far from it.

**#Spider-bot17:** This bit about the Rainier eruption being "the largest in history" is overstating the thing.

**#Eriksen_W:** If you think that, you obviously weren't in the area when the damned thing went off ami. There was clouds of ash and volcanic lightning everywhere.

SeaTac had been one of the largest population centers on the West Coast, a sprawling metropolis teeming with millions of people, hybrids, androids, Sims, and who knows what else. The destruction wrought by the volcano was on such a staggeringly large scale that the final death toll, which we'll never really know, must certainly number in the hundreds of thousands.

**#Spider-bot17:** Note the not-so-subtle dig at hybrids, Sims, and others as being different from "people."

**#Eriksen_W:** Damnit, Spider. You know what he means. He's not saying that hybrids aren't people. Just that they're not normal, ordinary people. You go looking for problems, and then have to invent them when they don't exist.

**#Spider-bot17:** So, you're saying that hybrids aren't "normal" people? That being a hybrid makes you something other than "regular folk"?

**#Eriksen_W:** Ah, bite my crank, you freak!

## GOVERNMENT IN THE REPUBLIC

People new to Cascadia often assume that the place is run much like the old US. This is not the case and the differences can, at times, bite people in the ass. Cascadia is a Constitutional Republic. The head of state is called the President, who is elected every four years by popular vote (see note on citizenship and voting below). The current President of Cascadia is Gabriel Ono, who is about as typical a Cascadian as you can get; he's a second-generation dolphin-hybrid of mixed Japanese and Indian ancestry, with a law degree and military experience during the Second American Civil War and the fighting that occurred in the aftermath of the Treaty of Tokyo. Ono's one of the only Simulacra politicians to hold an office of this caliber, and many blame the tension between the Republic and the NAC on this fact.

**#Spider-bot17:** If you squint and look at this dig at Ono's race sideways, there might actually be a valid point in it. It is true that there is talk within the NAC's various media outlets that Ono's not fit to serve as a leader because of his race. It is also true that politicians within the NAC express a desire to free Cascadia from the dreaded simulacra President. However, painting this as Ono's fault, instead of the fact that the NAC has enshrined sim-phobia as the Law of the Land, is one of those points where the author's biased view of reality gets in the way of his objectivity.

**#Eriksen_W:** You're acting like being objective is the author's point, or even something worth chasing. What's wrong with the author having a point of view on the subject? Lots of people think idea of a simulacra as president is wrong.

**#Spider-bot17:** The problem is that these "lots of people" aren't trying to get others to think their ideas are legitimate and objective, when they're anything but.

The government is structured like the old US: three branches oversee the function of the government. The legislature consists of a single house, known as the Senate, and is made up

of representatives from districts across the Republic, and a five-member Supreme Court oversees the judiciary. However, there are several important differences. Given the near-constant threat of invasion from the NAC, the Republican Army (a combined navy, air, and infantry force) holds a great deal of sway over the function of government.

### FRANCHISE AND VOTING RIGHTS

The process of gaining a Franchise (that is, official citizenship and voting rights) is lengthy, involved, and filled with corruption. In general, only the rich are citizens, and the system is designed to keep undesirables from having too much say in politics.

These measures are spun as necessary evils to deal with the threat of the NAC. The belief is that, given the porous nature of the borders, anyone can get into Cascadia but they can't gather in numbers to undermine security without undergoing extensive scrutiny and thorough background checks. While there is some truth to the supposed threat, the system keeps the poor and disenfranchised in their station, making crime the only way to improve the lives of most of those who live in the Republic's borders.

> **#Spider-bot17:** This is one of the few places where the author is right, and, as per usual, he's only half-right. There was a much-publicized case a few years ago where a supposed "terrorist cell" was arrested, attempting to set off military grade explosives at Pioneer Courthouse Square. These men and women were said to be members of the Curbstompers, and claimed to have received covert-ops training from the NAC, and, in an astonishingly convenient encounter, where all were gunned down trying to escape from custody.
>
> **#Eriksen_W:** Man, this sort of crap happens all the time. We're always hearing about the cops or the army nabbing some lone whack-job sneaking across the border.

For most of the wealthy and influential, when their children reach the age of maturity (18, with some exceptions for particularly bright children), citizenship is a matter of paying a fee and passing a written exam about the Republic, its history, and the function of government. This is the sort of thing all children would learn, if there were public schools.

The only other fast-track to citizenship is military service. The army is so eager for recruits that it offers citizenship upon honorable discharge, as well as money, equipment, access to high-grade medical care, and a host of other benefits. A term of enlistment is a real path out of poverty, and is pretty much the only way out of squalor for most of the people who call Cascadia home.

### SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Even with the effects of the Death still rampant in some sections of Cascadia, one thing has remained true; the climate here is ideally suited to growing certain types of plants. This is why you'll see rose bushes, azaleas, and rhododendrons all over the place here, and why encroaching ivy and other invasive plants continue to be a problem. More in keeping with our topic, large sections of Cascadia are ideal growing conditions for Sticky-Icky. It grows so well here that just about any seed dropped will sprout, growing, well, like a weed.

Since the country makes so much money on drug sales, they've had to search farther afield for the bulk of their supply. To that end, Cascadia has developed a variety of lucrative trade treaties with the drug kingpins of the Southern Badlands, who ferry mass amounts of Cascadia's drugs of choice through the CDZ, up the I-5 Corridor, and into the Portland-Olympia area. These caravans are heavily armed, armored, and regulated by both countries to make sure that the flow of goods goes uninterrupted.

The ugly underbelly of the drug policy is the sad fact that Cascadia has a huge problem with addiction. The legislature that established the DCB stores originally had amendments that put education, awareness, and treatment programs in place, but these were removed by lawmakers who speculated that the programs would be too expensive. They also downplayed the impact a population of addicts would have on the fledgling country's infrastructure.

> **#Spider-bot17:** Well, the wealthy can afford treatment when their addictions become problematic. Private detox facilities have sprung up all over the Republic, typically in isolated sections of forests that used to be parklands.
>
> **#T1mb0:** Plus, if a bunch of hybrids, sims, and poor regular folk die from crippling addiction, it's not like the powers-that-be are losing votes, right?

## The Spokane DMZ

The Treaty of Tokyo established much of the borders in what was North America, and, by and large, the nations involved keep to them. However, the border between the NAC and northern Cascadia is one notable exception to this. The NAC claims territory as far east as Spokane, while Cascadia says the Treaty puts its eastern border past Coeur d'Alene, (pronounced "core duh-lane") Idaho. Both cities are along a relatively major highway system, and, as such, are hotly contested territory.

The land between these two cities, not more than a few miles at its largest, is called The Spokane DMZ, and what's left of the cities are the site of an ongoing struggle between the two nations, as each pushes against the other in a bid to take the cities once and for all. The DMZ has seen some of the dirtiest, most bitter fighting in the modern age, made all the more tragic by the very worthless nature of the contested ground. It's largely symbolic at this point, but don't tell that to the families of those who have fallen here, or those who continue to fight over it.

## Rural Cascadia

Due to the depopulating effects of both the Death and economic hardship, much of Cascadia's rural areas have the remnants of civilization, but are otherwise remote and isolated. Ghost towns galore exist, being slowly reclaimed by nature. And the "nature" that's doing the reclamation sometimes doesn't look like something from the history books. Weird mutant flora and bio-horrors often find their way to isolated ghost towns, free from natural predators and human intervention.

> **#Spider-Bot17:** [[[ERROR VID403: ATTACHMENT SASQUATCH-TROOP-SEASIDE.TVM SCRUBBED]]]

## The I-5 Corridor

I-5 was the main interstate road for the west coast. It ran all through California, Oregon, and Washington State. During the Second American Civil War, the highway was extensively used as a logistics thoroughfare for military operations all up and down the West Coast, and from there, the rest of the world via Joint Base Lewis-McChord. After the Treaty of Tokyo created the Republic, the interstate and the towns around it became even more important to the fledging nation. The final element that has shaped the interstate is the earthquake that created the CDZ. Due to lack of resources, much of I-5 in California has fallen into such a state of disrepair that it's little more than occasional stretches of crumbling tarmac, pitted with potholes that get bigger every spring.

However, the road between Portland and Seattle does get some attention, as the Republican Army makes extensive use of it to move troops and equipment to various parts of the Republic, not to mention ferrying incoming trade from Portland to other nearby places. In a very real sense, I-5 is the lifeline that keeps the blood of the Republic flowing, and its maintenance and upkeep is a constant concern for those responsible for the Republic's defense and livelihood.

**#Spider-Bot17:** The author's right about how much attention I-5 gets from Portland to Seattle, but he overstates the conditions heading south from Portland. Yeah, the road's seen better days, but it isn't until you get pretty close to San Francisco that the roadway starts to go from "bad" to "useless."

**#T1mb0:** And if they can ever finish re-linking I-5 North and South in Portland, the Republic's finances are going to really take off. That is, of course, assuming that those in control of the rampant graft and corruption on the construction crews are willing to actually let it happen.

## Portland

Though the ecological damage done to Portland isn't as dramatic as what the Mount Rainier eruption did to Seattle, the city was no less disrupted. Most of Portland was at one time situated where the Columbia and Willamette Rivers met before flowing to the Pacific Ocean. Due to the change in sea level and the tsunamis associated with the Juan de Fuca earthquake, the water-level in the Rose City rose to the point where a great deal of what used to be central Portland is now under water. This includes the once-vibrant downtown districts and Portland International Airport, once one of the largest travel hubs on the West Coast.

While the flooding was unstoppable, it was also slow enough that steps could be taken to minimize the damage done. As the water level of the Columbia and Willamette rose, dikes were put in place to allow people and businesses to relocate to other, higher portions of the city. These all eventually failed, sometimes in spectacular fashion, though the loss of life and productivity could have been much worse.

**#T1mb0:** The word in the recesses of The Deep is that a whole crapload of organized crime rings use the shipping situation to keep the demand for imports high enough that the black markets in Bridgetown are as profitable as possible. If you happen to be in Old Downtown at night, you're almost certain to see a firefight between rival gangs, motoring around in cheap Toyota Super-Specials.

The central area of Portland, called Old Downtown by the locals, can be quite a sight. The waters of Lake Portland are 40 to 50 feet deep in some places, and even the less deep places have enough water in them to utterly ruin any transportation besides small runner-craft and VTOL vehicles, which the most wealthy and influential use if they can get them. Skyscrapers poke up out of the water; modern buildings have been adapted to rest comfortably with foundations set in the lake-bed, while older buildings have either collapsed from water damage, or are designated to be demolished when/if funds and attention warrant. Some sections of Lake Portland are shining examples of modern architecture, in what some describe as a modern-day Venice, while other parts are creepy, water-logged ruins where the ghosts of old buildings seem to beg for release.

Since the formation of Lake Portland, the city has generally expanded westward, filling the formally rural Willamette River valley with buildings, businesses and factories. Portland always had a reputation for computer and other technological developments, and this trend has continued in the 2090s. SAGEIT owns major production facilities here, and Nike, now a wholly-owned subsidiary of Central Belarusian Steel, continue to market footwear, through their major lines are military-style boots (to better advertise for the Republican Army) than athletic shoes.

In recent years, Central Belarusian Steel has been quietly buying up media companies in Cascadia, which is a little odd for them. Though they have fingers in a lot of pies, the media purchases are frequent and located mainly in Cascadia and neighboring countries. No one's really sure why they're doing this, though supposedly there are people willing to pay to figure it out.

## Culture and Outlook

One major element that sets Cascadia apart from the NAC is that the Republic is very welcoming. Anyone, regardless of their beliefs, appearance, or political views, can find a place where they can feel safe. Hybrids and Sims are quite common, though baseline humans and Human 2.0s make up the bulk of the population. Zeeks have a surprisingly large presence, especially in urban areas where they have a better chance of going unnoticed or banding together for mutual support and protection.

**#Billy-Black-Eyes:** I would feel bad if I didn't mention that Cascadia isn't as friendly to zeeks as this article suggests. They stand a better than average chance of getting nabbed by the military, and are often pressured into undergoing training for black ops against the NAC and other nations.

**#Magpie:** Maybe in Cascadia Proper, but if you get up into the Emerald City, you'll find that isn't the case at all.

# THE EMERALD CITY

#INFOSOURCE

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LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/SEATTLE

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**Posted by:** #Callista

The human landscape of Cascadia has shifted significantly over the last fifty years. The population has ebbed and flowed in response to the land and its own seismic and volcanic shifts, with molten rock and changing sea levels carving the shoreline into new shapes. Political boundaries have been redrawn as well, with the seat of power for the northwest settling in Portland rather than its once-overshadowing sister city, Seattle. It's an understatement to note how hard times have been for this one-time jewel of the Pacific coast, the city once nicknamed for the canopy of trees it bore. That canopy of green is now tattered, replaced with concrete and glass, and that's not the only thing that's changed.

**#Phaedra:** Nice imagery, Callie.

**#Callista:** Thanks, Phae. :)

**#Phaedra:** Wait, so why are you writing this again?

**#Callista:** A favor for a friend, let's say.

**#Phaedra:** I warned you about keeping those gambling debts paid up, didn't I? Nobody listens to me.

## Overview

There are some that say that the heyday of Seattle was back in the early naughties and teens of this century. The companies who'd led the way into the information age still had some good game going and the money flowed, though perhaps more like honey than wine — sticky and slow rather than fast and heady, but definitely still circulating. The weather was good, the sports teams had a couple of good seasons, and the economy seemed to be improving. Of course, that was before The Death and the whole United States-breaking-apart-thing, but even that wasn't as bad for Seattle as for some places. It was, all things considered, a small oasis of calm and peace that was happy to be forgotten in the greater scheme of things. That was, naturally, when Mount Rainier chose to blow its top, sending the whole thing to hell.

Don't get me wrong, it didn't blow the city off the map. It kinda felt that way between Seattle and the mountain, giving us a re-sculpted landscape and some spiffy lava-flow mesas we didn't have before, in place of small cities, but that wasn't the worst of it. No, the worst of it for Seattle proper was that the Seattle Fault went at the same time, rupturing bridges, opening the seawall like so much tinfoil, and liquefying a goodly portion of southern half of the city.

**#Sounder:** Talk about a mess. I've seen before-and-after footage. It's no wonder so many people left.

**#Cray-on:** You mean left all their stuff. Some of it was trashed between the water and the dirt, but for the rest… it's like panning for gold, man. And some of it really is gold, which is even better!

**#Victoire:** A modern-day prospector, just what the old town needed. Or, you know, maybe not. Do you know how many would-bes die in the flooded tunnels every year?

**#Cray-on:** I don't see you returning the grift you got off that sweet deal in the Heights, so maybe you should get off that soap box.

Part of the city sank, part filled halfway with water, and a whole bunch of downtown Seattle ended up flooded with only the upper floors of buildings accessible. The tunnel under the waterfront flooded and the old underground collapsed, taking a lot of streets and infrastructure with it. The human cost was high enough, but the property damage cost was astounding. I suppose, in retrospect, it wasn't really any surprise when a lot of people ended up leaving. There was just less room and what was still livable was astronomically expensive to get into — single-family houses only accommodate so many. But that was thirty years ago, and Disaster-Flick Seattle isn't the same as Cascadian Seattle, not by a long shot. We're back on the cutting edge of the frontier in a lot of ways. People come from all over by air, land, and sea for a shot of getting in on the ground floor and making the next big fortune hereabouts, or at least making life the way they want to live it. Folks here have bigger fish to fry than getting all het up about your lifestyle choices or cultural background or crazy thing you do, assuming it doesn't affect them personally. That much has not changed, thank Neptune.

## Population Breakdown

So the face of the city has changed a lot. The push to the north by the Mandarinate sent Russian émigrés scattering, many of them landing in the nearest friendly western land — Cascadia. Seattle in particular attracted a number of less-fortunates, some with shady associations that would be overlooked in a frontier town versus the capital city of Portland. Add in fluctuating case of NAC escapees, native tribal populations trying to hold on, Seattle natives too stubborn to leave, international corporate employees, and the traditional Japanese and Scandanavian cultural enclaves, and you've got a weird mix of socialist-capitalist-isolationist cultures that make Seattle one of the nicest and yet least friendly places you could be.

**#Charlie:** I'll second that. The downside to Seattle's "live and let live" ethos is that trying to get accepted is a long and arduous process. You may do some jobs with someone, but until you've done those jobs for years with the same people, you don't rate on their shortlist. Breaking into facilities is easy. Breaking into social circles? Nigh impossible.

**#Phaedra:** But don't forget that once you're in, you're there. Nobody's going to take your place or cut you out, because you know everyone and everyone knows you.

**#Charlie:** Assuming you live long enough to collect on that good fortune, yeah.

Some of these cultural demographics, particularly the Asian and Scandinavian ones, will seem familiar, while others diverge wildly. Seattle was always a mecca for immigrants, but the faces of those seeking a new home and new people within the Emerald City has changed dramatically. There are fewer Hispanic faces given the difficulty with travel to the south and fewer African families as well — the pipelines for those demographics were severed when Rainier blew its top and haven't fully reconnected still, even after all this time. They've been

replaced by an influx of Russian and Siberian folks looking to escape life under the Mandarinate, for reasons that range from economic to religious to personal. What's interesting about that is the wave of "neo-Soviet" thought and practice that came with. While Seattle isn't a new communist enclave, it has sections that practice ideals of socialism and collectivism alongside capitalism, depending on who they're dealing with. The neo-Sovs are working on agitating for change in government as well, but nothing's really taken root yet on a larger scale.

**#Karl:** Eat the Rich!

**#Phaedra:** Oh lord.

**#Glowbug:** So I was working for this guy, Kerensky, and he wanted me to retrieve some "lost" information, right? So there I was, data sifting, and I find what I needed and send it back to Kerensky. 30 minutes later, out of nowhere comes this big old Sov, star tattoos peeking out from under his tank top, and he plunks down a piece of gear and says to me, "As payment for your work." Now, the gear was nice and all, but it wasn't all that. I was expecting funds and gear don't trade well for groceries. I started to complain, but he just shook his head and walked away, and I took that for the conversation ender that it was. Just be careful who you're working for and get your terms and conditions straight up front, you know? Barter system my ass.

**#Sounder:** Uh, you do know that Kerensky is a fake name, right? Sovs go by Kerensky at least half the time when they hire out work. It's an in-joke they use on unsuspecting capitalists, much like borscht.

The real influx of immigrants these days, though, doesn't come from across the ocean, it comes from across the border. The NAC, like many countries, does not take kindly to "others," by which they mean anything that doesn't fit their definition of human. Hybrids, psions, simulacra (sorry for the collective noun): if it isn't baseline, nonthreatening, and unobtrusive, it isn't welcome and it definitely isn't a citizen. Cascadia, however, isn't interested in monitoring and controlling its population that heavily, and the promise of citizenship and a life without persecution has drawn these folks by the thousands. Communities, think tanks, special research centers, activist groups, outreach centers… they're all over the Seattle area. Not that you won't find similar communities in Portland or elsewhere in Cascadia — more than one group has been known to homestead out in the mountains where you have to actively work to bother them — but the "fuck it" frontier attitude of Seattle has fostered a greater public presence than even most Cascadian cities can claim.

As far as the business profile goes, information is still and always the name of the game, whether it's financial secrets, scientific research, or personal dirt. The past thirty years saw significant rebuilding in science and tech R&D labs and facilities, particularly since the landscape has reformed, offering interesting new options for research. There are physical imports and exports too, of course. The vice trade is always heavy and human trafficking never goes out of style, carrying on a centuries-old Seattle tradition. These days the traffic extends to hybrids, simulacra, and psions, though, for powers and muscle as much as for sex and slavery (but don't think people who are interested in owning someone else aren't interested in crossing those boundaries either).

It's also fair to say that Cascadia supplies a goodly portion of its own recreational narcotics (and nearly as much to parts north and the NAC). Pot likes growing in a rainforest — who knew? Then there's fishing, lumber, mining, and a brisk trade in bio-horror bits, whether for research or consumption. Bio-horrors are thick on the ground since a few years after Rainier blew. No one knows whether they naturally mutated or whether they escaped and bred like breeding things, but regardless, the now regrown and expanded forests to the south and east of the city are full of the things, and they seem to regard hikers as tasty snacks, so be warned.

## People

Everywhere you go, it always seems to come down to a few figurehead movers and shakers: the mayor, the police chief, the major corporate figurehead, the crime boss, the reporter… the list goes on. I'm not saying that these are always the people who have the power, but at the very least they're the people who look like they have the power, which counts to at least a certain degree. As always, buyer beware. If anything changes hands faster than power, I haven't seen it yet.

**#Mikhail:** Power exists only when it is put into action. Important to remember that, especially in this "Emerald City." All else is for show.

**#Charlie:** In other words, talk is cheap?

**#Phaedra:** I coulda told you that.

There's good guys and bad guys in Seattle, just like in everywhere else, although anyone who thinks there are clear lines for either is obviously trying to sell you something. Nobody's got clean hands, not if their name is public knowledge. I guess it makes the most sense to start at the top of the public figures and move down. If someone's got extra information, of course, I'm sure they'll put it in.

### MISTY HARRISON

In looking at city leaders, the first name to know is Misty Harrison, the city mayor. Misty's on her second term as mayor. She's a Seattle native, who not only survived the Rainier blast and the fallout after but graduated from UW (back before it was rebranded), then went to what used to be UCLA for law school, and then came back and practiced law here for years. She helped transition us into Cascadia and could probably have a higher-power job if she wanted it, but instead she's here in Seattle.

**#Cato:** Misty's got her eye on the presidency. Ono's not running again and Misty's in her last term here, at least her last likely term. Plus, her leading opponent Kristof Benning used to be her lover back in college. Neither of them want that campaign.

**#Cray-on:** Oh, but I do. So much work that'd need doing!

**#Zekiel:** Come over to the zeek side, Cray. Such secrets we can show you.

**#Cray-on:** Uh, creepy much? No thanks.

**#Zekiel:** Heh.

## HOOPER FELSTRIS

In any case, Misty's second-in-command, the city council president, is Hooper Felstris. Fel's a psion, which is the highest city (or even national) office any psion has openly held to date, at least in North America. I hear tell France has a president who's a zeek. Anyhow, Hooper's been surprisingly successful with the city council sidestepping the usual stonewalling the council members do whenever confronted with something they don't like (which for someone is all the time).

**#Zekiel:** Fel's powers aren't as weak as he claims, but he's very circumspect. I have a lot of respect for him.

**#Phaedra:** Is that why Ono's cancelled every public appearance in Seattle where they'd both be present?

**#Cato:** Hooper's looking to ride Misty's coattails, at least until she's not useful anymore. The man's dirty — he uses his abilities to cover his tracks, but that's not all he does.

**#Zekiel:** You would say that, but then you've never been fond of my people, have you? I'm looking forward to meeting you in person someday.

## SIERRA BULCHENKO

Sierra Bulchenko is sort of the corp equivalent of the mayor. Unlike other cities, Seattle is cautious of letting corps have too much influence (though don't underestimate the power the corps have) and doesn't want a war starting. To combat that, there's a sort of corporate council in the city and the leaders appoint people to arrange new real estate acquisitions and make whatever deals with the city need to be made on behalf of its members, meaning that they all get the same deal and no one (at least no one in the council) gets left behind. It also means that only a certain number of major corporations are let into the city, since the council gets to vote on new inclusions, and none of them seem very interested in sharing the pieces of cake they already have with a new group.

**#Raster:** We'll see if that holds. I hear that there are a couple of corporate petitions for entrance into the area that Misty and Hooper are quietly pressuring the council to approve. It's not often they talk about corp politics, so something's brewing. No names yet, though.

The corporations that are here carry some significant weight as the main avenues of revenue for the city as a whole — whether as taxpayers, clients, or employers, the members of the corporate council are major movers and shakers in any official setting, as well as many that are less-legitimate. The upside of having a council position is that it's stable; a corporation can be removed from the council, but it's a complicated legal process and none of the members wish to encourage it. Planning to blow up the city might get you booted, but it's hard to say for sure. It's much easier for a corporation to simply withdraw from the council, which they can do at any time. Withdrawing from the council is also withdrawing from the city, however; only two corps have done so up until now, and both were in quietly dire straits at the time.

**#Mikhail:** Failing health and assassinating the "heir apparent" will do that.

## JUDO CARNEGIE

Lastly, the guy in charge of maintaining order in our fair city is named Judo Carnegie. I'm not making that up, either. His middle name is Edward if that helps at all. Carnegie is an import from Portland whose parents helped found more than one charitable organization down there.

**#Phaedra:** His wife's local — public relations wonk for Featherstone. She's decent enough as far as it goes, but then again, that's her job.

Judo is a hardline security guy who's known to butt heads with other powers that be. The mayor brought him in to stabilize the build-up of violence between the various smuggling rings jockeying over power and property. He's done a pretty good job so far, wherein you're less likely to run into an open battle down Aurora and get hit by stray bullets, but you're more likely to stumble across something you don't want to see in a dark, out-of-the-way alley or just outside the city limits. Business is still brisk but if you cause a scene, the cops will be down on you in no time.

**#Sounder:** Of course, a lot depends on who you're paying. Judo's an ass, but he's a realistic ass, for whatever that's worth. Officially he's a liaison to Ravenstone (or rather, StonePeak, as they're known in Cascadia) so the cops he uses mostly don't belong to him, as per normal. If you've got a special account with StonePeak or its parent company, there isn't much he can do about it.

**#Phaedra:** Unless you make a lot of noise and cause a public disturbance, of course. Then he's got authority to paint the sidewalk with you if need be.

///THREAD JACK///

*LOADING...*

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: PROFFESSOR TILTON

INVESTIGATION TRANSCRIPT: 2090/05/01 16:32HRS

**#Luciferion:** Check it ya'll. I came across a few names of peoples ya might want to remember if you ever need some extra muscle, or expertise! This first guy is called Professor Tilton. I managed to download a transcript of an interview about him, along with a brief profile on the man.

**Investigator:** Please state your relationship to Professor Tilton.

**Subject 01:** I have worked with Professor Tilton for eight years.

**Investigator:** What's your opinion of him?

**Subject 01:** He's a giant in the field of Computer Sciences as well holding masters in Psychology, Sociology, Linguistics and Social History.

**Investigator:** An impressive set of qualifications though none of those are what I would consider to require extensive personal field research. So why has he relocated to Seattle?

**Subject 01:** I don't know. Professor Tilton has always had a hands on approach to his work and an active life outside what one would normally expect from a fellow academic.
Before you ask, no I don't consider it strange even though he's in his late fifties.

**Investigator:** Did you discuss his work at all?

**Subject 01:** Yes we did on occasion. All he told me about his latest work was that he was working on software that models the actions and reactions of individuals. What little I saw of it was very impressive but nothing groundbreaking.

**Investigator:** Do you know how he's financing his operations in Seattle?

**Subject 01:** The university will be funding it via the usual channels.

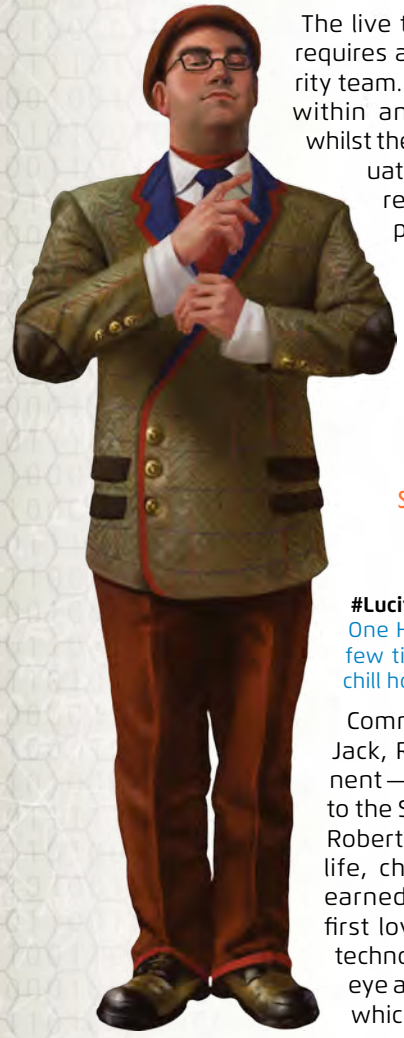
**Investigator:** We checked those. This project isn't being funded by the university. Did he mention a windfall or a benefactor?

**Subject 01:** No... [subject pauses for a drink of water] He didn't mention anything like that, I assumed his work was financed by the university.

**Investigator:** Thank you for your co-operation. Please stay available as we may have further need to question you.

///LOADING PERSONAL DATA///

Professor Tilton recently received a large sum of credits from an anonymous source financing large scale testing of his social modelling program. The program is intended to accurately predict the reaction within communities to events within their own and other communities, which his mysterious benefactor seems want almost desperately. As such the costs involved seem to be more a minor inconvenience. The relocation to Seattle for live tests was funded without question in addition to the payment already received. He has set himself up the remnants of Seattle Central Library, the area is patrolled by drones and few bodyguards.



The live tests that Tilton's program requires are carried out by his security team. They cause specific events within and between communities whilst the professor monitors the situation and how the closely the reaction is to his program's prediction. Whilst so far it has had limited success with each iteration the predictions get increasingly accurate.

///END PERSONAL DATA//

*LOADING NEW DATA...*

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: NICOLAS PALMER, A.K.A ONE HAND JACK

*LOADING DATA...*

**#Luciferion:** Ok, this one's about One Hand Jack. I've met him a few times. seems like a pretty chill hombre'.

Commonly known as One Hand Jack, Robert Palmer is a permanent — if inconspicuous — fixture to the Seattle underground scene. Robert has retired from freelance life, choosing to take his hard-earned credits and focus on his first loves; electronics and cyber technology. He built his own cyber eye and modified the cyber hand which replaced the flesh one he lost on an ill-fated run involving the Bratva Vory. And if you were wanting details of that particular gig, sorry...not gonna kiss and tell here. Suffice to say, it went south in a big way. Palmer was the only one to survive, and only because the Bratva Vory let him live...for a price, of course.

Palmer found himself working off a blood debt. They had him creating various types of gadgets, cybernetics and even weapons modifications. As a result, the Russian mafia has been able to significantly increase their control over the Seattle black market in the past few years. Now, some of you might be wondering why the Vory let Palmer go? The Brat Vory might be brutal protectors of their interests, but unlike the Triads and other alpha predators of of the concrete jungle, these guys keep their word. They let Palmer go, and he quickly pulled a fade, going dark for almost a year.

Truthfully, most of the freelance community thought the Vory relocated Palmer to a room at the bottom of the Puget Sound, but the man surfaced a little over three years ago at his favorite watering hole — Max's Meat Market. Aside from the cyber eye, the hand, and a few scars, Palmer seemed his usual self.

The next few months would see him frequent the club, swapping stories with his pals about past runs just like old times. But that wouldn't last.

Perhaps it was related to his time spent with the Vory, or maybe he just was tired of the scene, but Palmer eventually stopped coming altogether. This time he stayed in touch with his friends, even inviting them over to his home, a low-key garage renovated to serve as both a work space and a home with all the amenities, including security systems rivaling that of a megacorp. Instead of working in the field, Palmer uses his extensive mechanical and electronic skills to create special gear, for a price of course.

*LOAD COMPLETE.*

*LOADING NEW DATA...*

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: SERGIO L'AMERICANU: COSA NOSTRA HITMAN

Sergio Dante is a man with a problem.

Signor Dante is a Made Man within the Sicilian Cosa Nostra (Mafia), and gained enough respect in the Family to be promoted from Lieutenant to Captain. The orders given to him were to go to Cascadia — Seattle in particular — and keep an eye on the local families, lending them any necessary aid with wet work. His reputation as a hit man meant his superiors figured Dante could easily take care of any dirty work and eliminate any threats.

Which leads to Dante's problem: He arrived in Seattle to find there was no longer any Mafia presence there — at least not in terms of the Sicilian operation. Instead, the city was crawling with Bratva... members of the Russian Mafia. When he got word back to Sicily that there wasn't any Mafia in Seattle, the response was along the lines of, "You are there, are you not?"

Realizing his job was now to single-handedly rebuild the Family in Seattle and overthrow the Bratva, Dante has worked to create his own network of contacts while keeping as low a profile as he possibly can. He's already had some brushes with the Russians, and they made it clear they didn't appreciate his presence in the city. Fortunately, Dante was slightly better at killing than they were. All the same, he figures it's probably smart not to stick his head out too far too soon.

He's looked to any neighboring Family in an effort to forge some solid alliances, but the nearest one easily reached is the Valentini Family in Las Vegas—'easily' being a relative term in their case as well. At least he doesn't have to go into the NAC to deal with them.

But Dante can be patient. He's decided Sabrina Valentini is a nice enough dame, and she'll probably come through to help him secure the Cosa Nostra interests in Seattle.

Eventually.

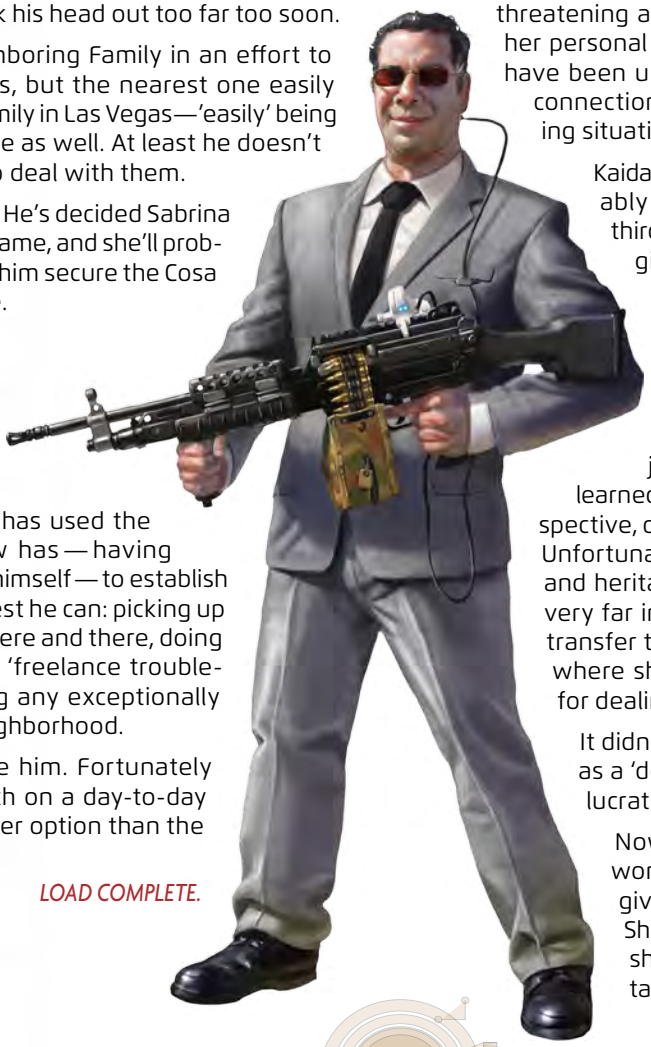
Maybe.

He's hoping the chocolates and flowers he sent her will do the trick.

In the meantime, Dante has used the relative freedom he now has — having been left to handle things himself — to establish a presence in Seattle as best he can: picking up contacts and informants here and there, doing 'odd jobs' with a team of 'freelance troubleshooters', and eliminating any exceptionally heinous threats to his neighborhood.

The Bratva soldiers hate him. Fortunately the 'civilians' he deals with on a day-to-day basis find him to be a better option than the Russians.

*LOAD COMPLETE.*



*LOADING NEW DATA...*

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: FINAL OPTION

"Final Option", often called "FO" (pronounced "foe"), is a team based out of Chicago's Korea Town. As a group, they specialize in hunting down robotic and bio-horror threats, although they've also been known to hire out for 'clean up' jobs — tying up any loose ends left over from those sorts of incidents. Even though sources indicate they are based in Seattle, Final Option is known to operate in the African Union and along the GLU/NAC border (both inside and outside of Chicago). Their actions haven't been limited to those regions, however.

The team has considerable resources at its disposal... Aside from an apartment building (which all the members own jointly and which serves as the team's home base of operation), they own a VTOL, as well as Casino Jack's personal van, which they use as transport into and out of most areas. Along with their personal gear, finances and extensive contacts, FO generally has the capability to operate where and when they want — which means they don't come cheap.

Final Option currently has five members, each one bringing a particular talent to the table.

**Kaida:** "The Little Dragon" is the 'face' and de facto leader of the group... a job she's more than adequately capable of filling, as she's attractive, sophisticated, alluring and threatening all at the same time. Although much of her personal history is unknown, certain key things have been uncovered or can be deduced from her connections, contacts and manner of approaching situations.

Kaida was born in Japan's Kanto region — probably Tokyo itself — the bastard child of a third-tier Yakuza boss and a Korean hostess girl. Because of her mother's foreign heritage, Kaida's father kept her at a distance although he took pains to make sure her mother was never lacking for money and that Kaida received the best education possible. This education allowed Kaida to land a job through Subarashii Ltd, where she learned the fundamentals, from a business perspective, of how tho handle AI and robotic threats. Unfortunately, she also learned her background and heritage would never allow her to progress very far in the corporation, so Kaida arranged a transfer to one of Subarashii's Seattle interests, where she worked to assemble her own team for dealing with threats in the city.

It didn't take Kaida long to discover hiring out as a 'deniable asset' was potentially far more lucrative than playing corporate sarariman.

Now Kaida generally relies on freelance work with Final Option to 'pay the bills' and give her the adrenaline rush she desires. She maintains a position with Subarashii so she can arrange 'business trips' and maintain a number of contacts in the corporate

sector, while her family ties have granted her some strong connections with Chicago's criminal elements.

**Ursus:** Being a massive bear Hybrid, created from Grizzly DNA, Ursus acts as the 'muscle' for FO, and while he may be graying a bit around the muzzle, he hasn't yet shown any signs of slowing down. Ursus doesn't talk much about his past before Final Option, but it's known his early life was spent in the ruins of San Francisco. How, or why, he came to Seattle remains a mystery, as does the origins of his cybernetic augments.

What is known is Ursus is a capable hunter and combat specialist, and he's been crucial during operations in Africa, jungles in southeast Asia, and the frozen north of the Yukon. Not only are his size and strength handy against robotic threats, but those cybernetics — multi-optic eyes, an augmented arm with built-in claws — and his sawed-off shotgun make him deadly against other opponents as well.

**Casino Jack:** Jack serves as the transport specialist for FO, having learned to pilot just about anything into just about anywhere in his hometown of Boston. In fact, his transport van became notorious in the broken cradle, as did Jack's catchphrase: "I can successfully crash anything"… Jack was known to be able to get things where they needed to go, but not without a certain amount of destruction.

Jack's nickname, "Casino", comes from his gambling problem — one that was bad enough to force him to flee Boston after accumulating too much debt with Red Callahan. Fortunately for Jack, his talent with machinery was recognized by Kaida after an incident along the GLU/NAC border: He was able to steal (and crash) no fewer than six heavy vehicles in an improvised run to extract the FO team. Someday, Casino Jack figures he'll pay off his debts, but first he had to purchase a top of the line Chrome VCI with a remote link, boosted reflexes and dual control interfaces.

**Source Code 071113:** While the name may sound like a clever Hacking alias, it's actually the designation given to a portion of an interlinked 'hydra' AI that went rogue and turned hostile after developing a rager against 'organics'. Source Code 071113 was the one 'head' dissenting from the communal position. When Final Option moved in (after being hired to deal with the AI's rampage), Source Code 071113 was severed from the main program and managed to infiltrate a combat AI… Then it turned on the hydra. This single (and singular) action was enough to turn the tide of battle and save FO from what might have been a messy ending.

Although the team was wary, given Source Code 071113's origins, it was offered a place in their ranks, which it accepted. Now it specializes in Hacking and ranged combat — throwing itself into such activities with single-minded focus — and it seeks out the most advanced TAP and hacking options. With these tools, Source Code 071113 can shred most firewalls, spam most TAP filters, and hack most AI-driven platforms.

**Covenant:** If Covenant has any other name, it has long since been buried and forgotten. He has no TAP, and the only records of him are from a 'monastery' in the Rocky Mountains where he was raised by a state-funded sect and trained to kill by using a gun, a blade… and his mind. On top of his formidable psionic abilities, Covenant was 'gifted' with bioware augments to boost his senses and reflexes.

More than anything else, Covenant is a believer, although these days he's not entirely sure of what. When President Robertson came into power, NAC policy turned even more hardline, and Covenant's sect was deemed 'ungodly' and his powers 'blasphemy'. Not only did the monastery's funding stop, but the facility was shut down and a strike team was sent to eradicate all traces of it. Covenant was able to escape and remain at large — being unplugged, of the grid, and having superb psychic powers of mobility made it difficult to contain him, and keeps him next to impossible to track down.

But not impossible. Covenant stumbled into Final Option during the GLU/NAC operation when he was chased into the area by a witch hunter. He reached a quid pro quo arrangement with FO until they could all escape, after which he was offered a spot on the team as his powers had proven to be invaluable. He accepted, and continues to work with the team, although he still finds life outside the monastery to be overwhelming at times.

*LOAD COMPLETE.*

*///END THREAD JACK///*

## Places

Sometimes when people come to Seattle, they're surprised at what things look like. It's a far cry from some of those old 2-D prints of the city, that's for sure. Between the volcano and the tsunami-in-the-sound and the rebuilding or lack thereof in places, the footprint of the city has changed significantly. The old downtown is now a mess of towers and flooded tunnels and unstable foundations, while some of the southern areas of the waterfront — including the touristy stuff — was utterly destroyed.

> **#Sounder:** So what lots of people don't know is that Seattle was essentially terraformed from the beginning, with hills being dug up and flattened and the dirt moved over to fill in coastal area someone thought would be more useful. The entire former International District and stadium districts were built on fill, basically — all the way over to West Seattle, which used to have water on three sides (and now does again). When Rainier erupted, and then Puget Sound came inland after us, and then the ground liquefied in places… it was like the etch-a-sketch ending of the city, you know, where God shakes the world to start over while saying it's all crap. Real end-of-the-world sorts of stuff where there's no sun and people are just dying.

Everyone thought the city would rebuild. Cascadia sent emergency funding and corporations offered assistance for their workers (and a little for the public good), but how do you build on ground that isn't there? It was such a massive, expensive overhaul that would have had to be done, given that the seawall fell when the Big Tunnel under the city flooded, that large sections of the downtown were just given up as lost and deemed "irrecoverable." Rather than recover what was lost, the city simply chose to start clearing further inland and rebuild there.

As a result, the downtown now looks rather crescent shaped, with a curving arc of a waterfront. The old piers and harbor were resurrected and now form sort of an arm out from the mainland into the Sound, while the inner harbor is full of the upper halves of buildings that haven't yet been torn down (and might never be).

> **#Cato:** It seems like a no-brainer to tear this stuff down, right? Building implosion is tricky at the best of times, though, and always expensive. Add in permanently flooded lower floors and unstable foundations and it's a huge risk, one where nobody really profits even if it all works out.
>
> **#Sounder:** On the other hand, some of the coral is coming back.
>
> **#Cray-on:** These places aren't exactly the Ritz, but if you need a place to stay (or a place to hide), they'll work. Getting there's challenging and if there's one place the cops (rented or otherwise) don't want to go, it's the Heights. I know a guy who can set you up if you've got something worthwhile for a downpayment.

Otherwise the city stands much as it always did. The south end got hit pretty hard but aside from the airport (which has been restored), there wasn't a lot that was considered crucial to rebuild. Downtown's moved up the hill and settled in the old Capitol Hill area and the Central District. They can't build new skyscrapers fast enough up the side of the ridge — all megacorp funded, of course.

> **#Charlie:** The really interesting question now is "what happened to all the workers." See, it was a lot of the lower-income areas of town that got destroyed or at least wrecked. The most culturally diverse neighborhoods were hit hardest, some with exciting new bio-horrors moving straight in while others just got bulldozed. No one who works for a living can afford a house anymore, so they've moved into corners or alleyways or cheap flats or out of the city altogether.
>
> **#Victoire:** But there is no apparent worker shortage, because the androids and simulacra have just filled the gaps. Their "physical footprint" is smaller, meaning that they take up less living space and don't mind cramped conditions as much, and of course their comfort needs are much smaller, so they can be packed like sardines into living spaces I wouldn't put my dog in.
>
> **#Issac:** Change is coming. Unethical behavior on the part of those in power is unjust, and injustice cannot be allowed to flourish.
>
> **#Cato:** You've got to love their idealism.

All the shifting around means that if you want to find work and you're creative enough in how you go about it, there's plenty to go around. Reconstruction is still in high demand, as is recovery and its adventurous twin sister, acquisition. Regular joe jobs are hard to come by, but it's not like that's new. It's always hardest to earn an honest living. That said, if you don't mind a mega paying your bills, subject experts in biology, weapons, transportation, civil engineering, medicine, computers, and all kinds of weird topics are always welcomed with open arms (and sometimes even room and board). It's not my kind of gig, but I hear it's a sweet arrangement if you don't mind looking the other way from time to time. Infrastructure hereabouts is still kinda fucked up, and they're always looking for people to work on the virtual overlays too.

Life here is not as laidback as it once was. Everything's got a rougher edge to it now. The celebrities left town and the biggest bio-horrors are hanging around the periphery, and hanging over everything else are the shadows of the megacorporations. The streets are more dangerous now — harvesters

and human traffickers prowl, and people vanish at a steady rate despite Carnegie's best efforts to stop it.

**#Phaedra:** Don't forget the weird new bio-horrors and even the regular animals (bears, for example) that have started just appearing on the streets. God knows what lives down in the tunnels anymore.

**#Cray-on:** I saw a swarm of toxic roaches just streaming down the side of one of the Heights, straight into the water below. I don't know what scared them out of it, but anything that can make them abandon ship must be worth a ton. Any takers?

**#Glowbug:** I didn't know those fuckers could swim.

**#Perkins:** Water doesn't kill them, so what does it matter if they can't?

**#Callista:** Blech. I hate those things.

## Stuff to Do

So I talked about work, but I didn't really talk about opportunities in the Emerald City. There are a bunch of things you can do to make a lot of money. There are also a lot of things that'll get you killed. Some of these are the same things. Your risk assessment is your own to do, as always. I can't promise that everything I've got here is the gospel truth or still would be by the time someone reads it, but it's a place to start.

Treasure hunting, or rather acquisition and recovery, is a good place to start. Way way back in the day Seattle was the gateway to the Yukon Gold Rush. Today it's the gateway to all the shit that got unearthed and left behind in the eruption and tsunami and all that. You'd think after thirty years that we'd have thoroughly dredged everything up and it'd be gone, but obviously that's not the case. In point of fact, it's taken nearly this long to get enough of the crap cleared away that we discovered there are things to go find in the first place.

One sort of treasure people go looking for is money of various sorts. The earthquakes opened up mineral veins that hadn't been there before. Modern nanotechnology means that if you get to a spot and send your bots out, they can do some micro-mining and then you get to be rich. Needless to say, there's almost as much of a business in protecting the microminers (and taking their stuff in the first place) that private security/assault teams are always in high demand, assuming you don't mind tight spaces and underground caverns.

If hunting's more your style, there's bio-horror eradication/poaching. Those weird mutant bits off weird mutant things are worth some serious money, not to mention what you get paid in bounties for protecting Cascadia from volcano bears and mutated octopi.

**#Phaedra:** You get the thrill of the hunt combined with cutting bits off things and performing a public service for the community. What's not to love?

**#Perkins:** Well, there was the guy last week who lost his arm and nearly bled out, along with the rest of his injuries. I hear he'll walk again sometime next year, maybe. His violin lessons are shot, though. Cyberarms never have the finesse to get really good results with musical instruments.

**#Phaedra:** Very funny, doc.

Acquisition and recovery don't just apply to tangible goods, however. Seattle has a rep for being the type of place you can go to get lost, or at least not found. The high psion population would seem to make this a bad idea, but in general it works for people. If you need to get away semi-permanently on your own terms from an employer (or just an enemy), Seattle makes a good destination. If you're good at either recovering people or making them disappear, there's plenty to do around here. Also there's a thriving market in human chattel, either for the sex market or labor or just because. The Vory and other connected gangs do a lot of that sort of work around here, at least on the disappearing part, so know that's who you're dealing with, no matter which side you're on.

**#Mikhail:** Keep in mind who runs the city. We don't like when people don't understand how things work here. It gets messy. No one likes a mess.

If you've got your sights set on criminal activity, there's still a thriving drug market in the harder stuff, not to mention the more dangerous psychoactive compounds and whatever the latest virtual thrill is. Whether you're making, buying, selling, or bringing it in, there's some fast money there. The primary purveyors of that sort of thing, however, tend to be the gangs. Most of them are imports from the NAC and use Cascadia as an entry port for the material they want to run back home. They're small-time, mostly, but they're nasty and they usually have agreements in place with someone bigger, so take care.

Lastly, I'd have done everyone a disservice if I hadn't mentioned smuggling and piracy. Cascadia's relatively open borders and loose "vice" policies mean lots of stuff travels through to lots of other places, effectively getting laundered in the process, whether it's money or contraband or whatever. Seattle's a key stop in most of those routes — not as heavily policed as Portland, but easily accessible to land, sea, and air with borders to nations with high demand and much stricter policies.

**#Zekiel:** It's worth noting that all of this is on top of megacorporate antics. Featherstone in particular is a big local employer for both legit and illegal work. There's a lot of R&D opportunity out here across the board — Nortec and TLI have major dev and production centers local. Test subjects for new wares are always in high demand if you need an upgrade, want some cash, and don't mind too much if it shorts out unexpectedly (and are willing to fill out an in-depth bug report).

**#Charlie:** Kenta Cyber Dynamics is one of the megas that wants a share of the Seattle pie. Their "local" management isn't official as of yet, but they're doing a lot of hiring. Word is they've got people on already here doing the groundwork.

**#Phaedra:** I hear their stuff doesn't like Seattle weather too much. I wouldn't bet too heavily on them.

**#Zekiel:** Just ask Callie. Some debts have to be paid.

# THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

#INFO_FLAG: ORIGINAL SECTION MISSING, AUTO-REPLACED FROM JACOB'S PLAYGROUND

**Posted By:** #SeraphTheRanger, Mercenary

Howdy ya'll!

My name's Seraph, former Texas Ranger and full-time merc and bounty hunter. I've compiled this #INFOdump to help you folks out there get the lowdown on this great nation of ours. Most of you might think that we Texans are nothing more than backwater hicks and that the Republic ain't nothing more than a dried up pile of dog shit. Fair's fair, I guess, because we Texans pretty much think the same about the rest of you.

As many of you know, Texas became its own country right after the Second Civil War. Due to the size of this MEDIAfile, I don't have the space to go into the details, but needless to say Texas left the Union fair and square, and folks around these parts are mighty proud of that fact. Sure we're pretty much surrounded by enemies, but we have some powerful allies, too — the kind that keep them off our backs unless they want to get blasted back to the Stone Age.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** The guy's a little full of himself, ain't he?

**#Abners_ghost:** Maybe, but the guy's a legend down here. I'd listen to what's he's got to say if i were you.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Fair enough. We'll see what's what.

## History

Texans love a good fight as much as the next person. Before the Second Civil War we watched this nation we helped build fall apart around us. We figured enough was enough and began to secede. Now, Uncle Sam didn't take too kindly to being given the one-fingered salute, so he tried to stop it in what we now call the "Texas Tussle.".

We followed the rules as laid down by our grand-daddies, but the U.S. was having none of that. They were hurting in a bad way and figured we could help them out. However, Texans take care of Texans first — something the Feds forgot.

### THE TEXAS TUSSLE

When the US Government cut off funding for disabled vets during "The Death," Texans rioted from Lubbock to Corpus Christi. Things might have died down within a week or so, but after 36 hours of rioting, our idiotic and cowardly Governor at the time — Governor Frank Stockton — declared martial law and mobilized the National Guard. He then ordered those wet-behind-the-ears kids into the cities to "restore order."

That's when the twister really touched down.

Forty-eight hours later, those green National Guard soldiers found themselves squared off against what turned out to be a well-armed and severely pissed off populace, many of whom were veterans. Texas has always had a large veteran population, and these ol' boys knew the cities better than any doe-eyed soldier doing combat drills two weeks out of every year in the hills around Killeen and Ft. Hood. Add a sizable, radical, separatist sub-culture to the mix and it didn't take much to escalate things. In fact, all it took was one person.

His name was Sergeant First Class Kyle Lang — a name Texans (and I) will never forget.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** To be fair, it was never proven that lang fired the first shot.

**#Luciferion:** They had video. It was lang that fired on that school bus.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** That video was taken out of context. It doesn't show who fired the first shots. It also doesn't explain the explosion. And before you even bring up the audio of lang telling those boys to kill them all, we both know that it's easy to mix someone's voice into a video, lu. Hell for all we know the guy who started it could have been Ronald McDonald.

**#Simba:** Ha!

**#Luciferon:** They used the sensor feeds from the Texas Ranger's golemmechs. The whole thing went viral through the g-net 20 minutes after the bus explosion. Voice-stress analysis proves the voice talking was lang's.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Do you even hear yourself? How could seraph and his team's golemmech's sensor feeds get downloaded, analyzed, and posted so quickly?

Lang and his platoon were patrolling a residential area in Dallas, when a school bus came around a corner, tires squealing and about ready to tip over on its side (no one knows why this bus was out of control). My squad of Rangers and I were also "patrolling" the area, but it was to make sure the soldiers behaved themselves. As we rounded a corner into a residential area we heared a loud squeal and suddenly this school bus heads straight for the soldiers — my sensor feeds showed the driver was screaming like some hell-bound demon, and then the video cut right out. This is where reports differ, some witnesses say the bus back-fired, and others say the driver opened fire on the Guardsmen. I can't say for sure as our systems registered some weird type of jamming that cut the video feeds on our golemmechs.

I heard what sounded like small arms fire, and then the soldiers' weapons…people screaming. My visuals suddenly cut back in and I see Sergeant Lang firing like a madman at the bus. The driver was killed almost immediately by Lang, and the bus swerved into a house and catches on fire. That's when I saw that maniac turn to his squad and shout out "Kill 'em all boys!" Then start opening fire on the civvies who came out to see what was going on.

We put down the soldiers before they knew what hit 'em, and then rushed to the wreckage of the bus figuring it was full of little children. Before I got within 10 yards of the wreck, the whole thing exploded, I heard the explosion levelling three city blocks. Turned out the bus was a homemade IED, and not carrying little children, but it was enough for the cloud forums on both sides to run with. The whole thing went viral within a day (with some spectacular footage of yours truly flying

through the air…and a house). The overpressure from the explosion caused me to black out. I still wakeup with nightmares about that bastard Lang shooting at the bus, and his grinning head popping as I put a HEX round through it

After the school bus incident, the President decided to up the ante and add another 30 thousand regular army grunts, err…soldiers to the mix along with tanks, some helicopters and drones. As you might have already guessed, that only served to add fuel to the fire.

Director Schultz of the Texas Rangers was so pissed off by that move I heard it took the efforts of everyone around him to keep him from suiting up and heading out to take care of things personally from the front lines. Down here we got a saying: "Don't mess with Texas." That includes the federal government steppin in our shit, ESPECIALLY the federal government, kay-pasa El mee Amigo?

**#Simba:** …that's not spanish

**#Abner's_ghost:** it's like, colloquial, man, just deal with it.

The riots lasted 37 days. When the dust settled over 5,000 people were dead and the final cost was over ten billion dollars in damage. After things calmed down a vote to secede was made before a special session of the State Legislature. This was then taken before the Congress, who refused to acknowledge this legal vote. When that happened Texans all around the world took that as the call to come home. Our ranks swelled; while the Feds' dwindled (you'd be surprised how many Texans served in the military at that time). Secession Day is a holiday down here now, but that's not sayin' too much. Texans celebrate just about anything that has to do with a fight…even if we lose.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** I'll give them that. Texans know how to party. The beer's pretty good, too.

**#Stickler:** But they didn't lose the war, what's he talking about?

**#Seraph:** Remember the Alamo!!!

**#Stickler:** Huh wha? What does a crumbling fort have to do with this?

## THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE

In 2064, the Second Civil War, on the heels of the Texas Tussle, was the impetus that Texans needed to finally leave the Union. Of course, like anything worth having, we had to fight for it.

When war erupted and fragmented the old United States, Texas was among the first states to denounce the outbreak of hostilities. Yeah, I know I said we don't mind a fight, but this wasn't against an outside threat; it was against fellow Americans, and that's a line any true patriot won't cross. I believed at the time (and still do) that deep down; while the old United States had its problems, it was still salvageable. Many nations around the world either feared us or hated us; very few respected us — but at least we could take pride in the fact that we were a free society. That changed with the creation of simulacra and hybrids.

I'm not going to get into the rights and wrongs of such things, but old prejudices were replaced with new ones. Then something happened that would forever alter the course of history… well several things actually.

That cowardly President Weber, rightfully fearing secession and not wanting to fight a war on two fronts, ordered Colonel Jason Meyers — the base commander at Fort Hood — to remove the duly elected and rightful Governor of Texas and the entire House of Representatives from office. Meyers was further ordered to take on the role as acting Governor until new elections could be held while martial law was still maintained. Not wanting to take part in what amounted to a military coup, Colonel Meyers surprised a lot of folks and refused to carry out the orders. What were the soldiers serving under Meyers to do: obey your Commander-in-Chief, or do the right thing?

Lucky for us, many showed extreme intestinal fortitude, because what happened next could only be described as 'Divine Intervention,' as thousands of troops stationed at Fort Hood decided that enough was enough. These troops took up arms and stationed themselves at various points around the border of Texas and throughout the various cities and megaplexes. They held the line and found themselves joined by armed vets and civilians alike; many armed with AGA products. Most units and Officers of the National Guard even switched sides — they were Texans after all.

We had won our independence with relatively little bloodshed, or so we thought. On a warm August day in 2065, in the middle of the afternoon, an explosion ripped through the streets of downtown Dallas, Texas and blasted toxic radioactive waste into the area, covering a large portion of the greater Dallas metroplex. After the commotion died down and rescue workers moved in, it was discovered that some gutless waste of human excrement detonated a dirty bomb (look it up). This device spread radioactive waste all over the area, rendering downtown and parts of the surrounding suburbia radioactive for hundreds of years. We later learned that the same thing happened in Denver, Chicago, and Tucson; those of us who were being labeled as "separatists." Needless to say, this was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back! In the flash of a moment, we'd lost 50% of our air force, and gained the "line" that split the nation literally in two.

The bottom line is Texas won its independence; a hard-won independence that we shall cherish for generations to come.

**#Nostromo:** Hold on a tick. I heard that stopwatch stopped the NAC from deploying some super weapon that would've cracked the continent in half. However, this was never published in any #infodumps or public forums. How the hell does this guy know about it?

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** More important nostromo, how do you know about it?

**#Nostromo:** Uh…well…[SYSADMIN ALERT: FEED CUT OFF AT SOURCE BY UNKNOWN INTRUDER]

**#Seraph:** I know about many things mi amigos, savvy? I just don't go on blabbing about them on public or private forums like nostril there (and I'm pretty sure his body has a third one at this point, hope he was up to date on his dubbing insurance, hehe).

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Cold, man, real cold.

## BREAKDOWN AND SURVIVING GLUTTON

At one point in history, Texas was the United States' proverbial oil and mineral mecca. Granted, foreign oil served the Nation's needs well enough and we kept what we pulled from the Texas soil in reserve. Then around 2012 the nation's economy started to spiral downward. As a result, folk turned to procuring minerals from other countries — where it could dug out faster and with little safety protocols, which made these markets more lucrative. Fortunately, the economic downturn wasn't too harsh for us, as Texas enjoyed income from other revenue streams, and we still sold the oil to bolster our local and national economies.

Things were going well as the economy came back. Then in 2016, that bastard eco-terrorist group NOAH released the GLUTTON bacteria, and that changed the whole ball game. While it took some months to reach our shores, when it did it hit hard. In the span of weeks, our oil became as worthless as the US Dollar. Even what we had stored away in tanks wasn't entirely protected from the stuff.

Now for you n00bs, GLUTTON was a specially-engineered oil-eating bacterium. It doesn't actually eat the oil, it feeds on an organic molecule found in the petroleum and replaces it with its own waste — which makes the oil useless for anything other than a sticky, black ooze that smells like rotten garbage packed into a dead canine's rectum…and then lit on fire! Only thing is, the stuff won't burn or process into anything useful, or do anything normal petroleum does.

However, with the help of some very smart people, GLUTTON was stopped before it destroyed all the oil in the ground and broke down all of our plastics and other petroleum-based products. Still, the damage was done and any oil that had seeped to the surface was gobbled up by the bacteria, as well as any that weren't stored in specially-protected tanks and wells. As you can imagine, amigo, this had a severe impact on everything.

Thankfully, members from the University of Texas and the other engineering schools banded together with several conglomerates that were willing to break into new territory with the development of hot fusion reactors. These new reactors provided us with a surprising surplus of power.

Before Texas could secede from the Union, we needed a way to sustain ourselves. If we were to be independent, we couldn't rely upon our enemies (of which surround 75% of the country) for help. We needed allies to help us survive. That was the first order of business: survival. Texas wasn't without its supporters, and allies, mind you. However, we didn't exactly want to needlessly indenture ourselves to one (or more) of the corporations or the nascent countries around the world. We were able to pay off our debts for the reactors and sell our surplus energy to our allies. This helped stabilize our economy and in retrospect, helped lay the groundwork for us to secede. Divine providence took care of the rest.

Natural disasters wiped out Cape Canaveral in Florida, but we had the Astronaut training center in Houston. Not that it mattered much because other nations had their own way of flinging astronauts into space. With nano-fabrication becoming more reliable, and the carbon nano-tube a reality, plans were made for Texas' first space elevator. Austin was also the world headquarters for Act of God Armaments (AGA), and let me tell you those folks are red-blooded Texans through and through.

So, now Texas has nuclear power plants (with the recent discovery and construction of a couple of brand spanking new shiny cold-fusion plants, we have an abundance of surplus energy to sell to neighboring nations), the HQ of the largest weapons manufacturers in the world, and a space elevator beginning to grow its way up into low orbit. Yet, with all of that, we still have one more ace in the hole: cloned beef. We call 'em Brahmin (a little joke, actually), and I'll talk more about them in a bit.

## Texas in 2090

So, we survived War, Famine, Pestilence, and Death. The Four Horsemen rode through Texas and we chased 'em out.

Texas operates similarly to the way it ran as a state. Our current president is Jason Meyers the third, the grandson of the colonel who stood up to President Weber. In fact, you can't even run for President unless you have done some form or federal duty or were part of the defense of the nation. Even doing humanitarian work for our allied nations counts, but it has to be a full term of Federal Service; that means four to six years, amigo. You also must be over the age of 35, have verifiable education, and be Texas born. A clause in our Constitution states that in twenty years, you must be at least second generation (or longer) Texan to run for the office, and you can only ever hold the position for two four-year terms. In addition, the post is as a civil servant so you don't make much money doing it; the idea is that you are doing it for Texas and not yourself. Our Congress and Supreme Court operate the way they did back when we were part of the United States.

As a small nation, we don't put our criminals in an institution for years and years. Thanks to the wonders of the TAP and VR, we can make an hour seem like a lifetime — as the brain has no concept of time. Believe me when I say this shit works! Depending on the crime, you may experience your actions from you victim's point of view replayed over and over, or you may spend it in a small VR room that serves as your prison, or any other creative ways we can think of so that not only does the punishment fit the crime, but justice is served.

Habitual offenders (of which there are few) typically get a longer time or the law comes up with some other means of justice through either VR or inducing something like Korsakoff's Syndrome — where you can only remember things for five minutes at a time so all you can do all day is put things together on an assembly line. Needless to say, heinous crime is very low here. Petty crime is still there, but the criminals are getting smarter at hiding their tracks. They still get caught, but sometimes it takes a bit longer. As the Texas Rangers say, "No Crime Goes Unpunished."

As for law enforcement the Texas Rangers can't be everywhere — much as they'd like to be. Texas is divided up into 254 counties. Each county is overseen by a Sheriff and his/her deputies (one deputy per 100 residents in the county), who enforce the law. Each Sheriff answers to the Texas Rangers, who have jurisdiction over the entire Republic (despite not being able to be everywhere).

## MEGACONGLOMERATES

In addition to AGA, we do business with Alat Petroleum (roughly 50% of the oil we managed to pump out before GLUTTON had its way with it is stored in special protective tanks thanks to Alat). Featherstone helped us out with the specs and nano-fabricators for the needle, as well as providing other nano-related technology. Aside from AGA and Alat Petroleum, probably the next biggest company we do business with is Jian Foods Group, based out of Pyongyang, Korea — they buy up and process roughly 75% of the Brahmin beef we clone…err produce, and they pay the ranchers a very nice sum for that meat.

## INDUSTRIES

Texas is not only a new nation, but a growing one. Not outwards (we have no place to go and don't like the land beyond our borders anyway), but internally. VR and HR broadcasters are in every major city and with the exception of the spotty Southern and Eastern areas, you can enter The G-Net just about anywhere. There are exceptions, of course, but like any modern country we have state-of-the-art casting and some of the smaller towns have their HR sculpted to resemble towns from the Old West: in fact some of those towns resemble the Old West with or without the benefits of technology, so be on your guard.

Our industry grows, but we don't really diversify. Like my grand pappy used to tell me, "do what you're good at," and I believe he's right. Now, I've already mentioned the major Megas we do business with on a constant or near-constant basis, so I won't repeat myself. However, here's some of the things the RoT produces and some projects we're getting ready to release upon the world.

## CLONED BEEF

Dotted across most of Western and Northern Texas you'll find various swathes of land dedicated to one of Texas' greatest accomplishments: cattle. To tell the truth, these aren't the same cattle from before The Death. Those sad and ugly critters died off. So we decided to make even sadder and uglier beasties through genetic-modification. These GM (genetically modified) beasties are 100% synthetic…well maybe that's not the right word. They're alive, and they eat and grow, but they can't breed right without our help, unless you want to see some wicked nasty mutations. We call 'em Brahmin — some guy's idea of a sick joke (one which eludes me to this day). After The Death, geneticists used stored DNA samples of the cattle we used to have to clone bovine cultures in tanks. The idea worked, but when a video feed of this stuff growing in a tank of purple slime hit The G-Net, folks decided a different road needed to be taken; there was no way they were going to put something like that in their mouths. Thus, with the help of some Megaconglomerate geneticists, the first generations of Brahmin cattle were born.

## THE MILITARY

As an independent nation, we need a standing military to protect our borders and our interests abroad (although we have no bases outside of the Republic's borders). Our main base is Fort Hood, but we have other bases coming online and have renovated other smaller ones across the Republic.

### PINEBOX, TEXAS

One of the settlements in East Texas is a place called Pinebox. If rumors are correct, this place is home to black clinics where you can get any cyberware…for the right price. Organleggers and Ronin infest the town. Hybrids with strong animal features prowl the shadows and strange drugs and gadgets appear on the streets. Yet, if the stories coming out are to be believed, this is the normal part of the town. Many report seeing strange lights over the town, little grey men walking the streets, and simulacra (or so most believe) of identical men wearing black suits have been seen, but they refuse to speak to anyone. The truly crazy stories coming from the drug-addled minds of those who have gone too far into The Global DataNet say that even the dead come back and walk the streets at night in Pinebox.

### FORT HOOD

During the Texas Tussle, and the Second Civil War that followed, it was thought that the military members stationed at Fort Hood would follow the orders of their Commander-in-Chief. Well, as I mentioned earlier in this post that wasn't the case. Today, Fort Hood is the largest and most well-defended military base in the Republic.

### TEXAS NAVY & AIR FORCE

In addition to a strong ground force, the Republic has a small Navy (mainly scavenged from the leftover Coast Guard cutters and other vessels converted to patrol of the Gulf. Many of these go out and run patrols of the many "abandoned" oil rigs floating in the waters. The others patrol the coast line for the various pirates and ne'er-do-wells who try and infiltrate the Republic via the coast. Bad move amigo, if you ask me.

Our Air Force is a bit stronger. We have roughly fifty fixed-wing aircraft and a small amount of rotor-wings that survived the Second Civil War and the fallout afterwards. These are scattered out across the various operational bases — including Fort Hood.

They mainly patrol the borders near the NAC and Mexico, but head out from time to time to take a look-see out across the Gulf.

### TEXAS RANGERS

"One Riot, One Ranger!" That's our motto in the Texas Rangers. Back in the days of old USA, the feds had Marshals that had the authority to cross state jurisdictional boundaries and enforce federal laws; that is with the sole exception of Texas.

Based out of Austin-Antonio Megaplex, the Rangers used to serve as state-wide law enforcement, but now they do it on a national level. However, since becoming our own nation again the Rangers have also changed. In addition to serving as a national police force, criminal investigation, and serving as protection for our beloved President, they also serve as

a military force. The Rangers provide trackers, intelligence gathering, and other services that serve the interests of the great Republic of Texas.

The Rangers serve a director, who is assisted by the Assistant Director of the Texas Rangers. Currently, we have about 200 Rangers in the field, including several squads outfitted and trained to drive golemmechs.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

As a new nation, the RoT has begun to branch out and forge relations with our cracked out neighbors, and other countries. Here's a listing of who we trust, and who we don't, and who we'd like to find a few nukes and return a small favor:

### ATLANTICA

Texas has enjoyed a great relationship with Atlantica. Our main export to them is our ability to achieve cold-fusion. The whole thing's a bit dodgy, but we still ship energy cells to them. While we've begun to break ground into helping them build their own cold-fusion plants, it looks like that may be a few years off. Smuggling between Atlantica and Texas is at an all-time high, however. Mainly because the NAC squats right between them and us. However, despite this, what we can make it across their borders brings in a premium, and vice-versa. We do a little bit of technology trading through The G-Net since the NAC is really trying to crack down on any border crossings into Texas. Yet, they can't patrol everywhere.

### BAJA MEXICO

Encompassing the southern half of what remains of California, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico, Baja Mexico is the closest ally the Republic has on the North American continent — literally. While this area contains the free cities of Phoenix and Las Vegas, it is also one vast desert. Once the Needle comes online we'll be shipping Baja's nano-manufactured goods up the well and out into the orbitals and ships in need. This will wring a tidy profit for the Republic. However, I think something isn't right with this deal, and I'm not the only one. Let me just say that the national director of Intelligence is also interested in the going's on of Baja Mexico.

### EURASIAN UNION (EU)

Up until the EU has been under cyber-attack by Charon, we enjoyed cordial relations with them. We would ship fundaments and oil and minerals, and they would send us foodstuffs and other items we couldn't get here. Now it looks like we may be helping out with more drastic matters — refugees are already starting to trickle in.

### THE GREAT LAKES UNION (GLU)

Again, another great (pardon the pun) ally of ours. The GLU was a huge supporter of our early efforts to secede and we backed their plays as well. Unfortunately, they suffered the same fate we did when Chicago was nuked with a dirty bomb. Currently, we have a standing agreement to supplement their power needs, and ship Brahmin meat to them, and they give us clean drinking water when our desalinization plants can't meet our national needs. Act of God Armaments is also a large supplier of the GLU and so we have a brotherhood in arms, so to speak.

### THE NAC

These hateful bastards should rot in their own excrement. Enough said! The NAC is an ultra-conservative nightmare of religious fanatics who should be judged by their own misguided views. Technically, a state of war exists between our nation, but shots haven't been exchanged since the Second Civil War. Still, if the word is given, I'll be one of the first on the line. We still owe these bastards for the dirty bombs they detonated on our soil.

### TEXARKANA

Texarkana is a border city that exists between Texas and the NAC. A giant wall was erected down the middle of the city and around it; and the only way across it is to pass through one of three checkpoint stations. Most of the city is a lawless morass of mercs, ex-pats, and religious hate-mongers. However, there's also a strong community of hybrids and Simulacra on the Texas side. Rumor has it that the NAC sends in groups of thugs disguised as "honest Texans" who go out and either kill or beat-up these poor souls. Of course, rumors also say that Texans disguised as religious psychopaths sneak into NAC side and raise hell, but I have a hard time believing that part.

### MEXICO AND THE SOUTH

Aside from the NAC, Mexico has been a constant enemy for Texas since the 1800's. Time and again we try to extend the olive branch, and time and again it gets burned. We even made a huge media circus about giving back General Santa Anna's leg (look it up), but that was a fake. Right after the Secession, we made a proclamation that we still had the stinking, rotting, piece of wood and that was kicking over the ant hill. Mexicans from all over the place took up arms and tried to invade us. However, that didn't end well…for Mexico. You see, when you have a border patrol and trackers like the Texas Rangers supported by some of the best-trained military in the world, and backed with weaponry from one of the world's premier weapons manufacturers, your opponent has no chance of winning.

Our diplomats have managed to cool things down, so now all we have are border stations and guard towers watching the border — along with drones and trackers who know the best routes into Mexico. Something is going on according to the intelligence community, but we have no idea what it is yet. Regardless, we find evidence of their scouts entering our country and then hear about raids on the southern settlements and towns. So we retaliate in kind.

## INTERNAL ISSUES

Like any nation, Texas is not without its own issues and dirty laundry to air. While we don't have a lot, what we have are bad enough that they could destabilize our nation and bring everything we fought for crashing to the ground.

### RANCH WARS

I mentioned earlier that Brahmin were the replacement for beef and that each ranch has their own group of geneticists and scientists who monitor herds. Each ranch has its own brand of beef, and each wants to steal the other's geneticists so they can have the best beef on the market. This has led to a silent war in which ranchers will hire Ronin and Mercs to kidnap their rival's scientists for their own.

### SMUGGLING

As a growing nation, Texas has many needs. Most of these we are able to provide, but there are creature comforts we cannot provide either due to a lack of resources or a lack of facilities. Thankfully, the megaconglomerates happily give us what they think we need, but at a premium. As such a sub-culture has arisen: smugglers.

Despite being against the law, the government tends to turn a blind eye towards smuggling in general. If they can benefit from it, all the better. Smugglers are a creative lot and have found many ways to bring items into the country.

## GEOGRAPHY

Texas has a variety of terrain and several major megasprawls covering the countryside. We have mountains, hills, forests, rivers, and so forth. Sometimes we even get snow, but that's a rare occurrence anymore. Unofficially, Texas is divided between the north and south.

### NORTH TEXAS

Considered to be the more "civilized" part of Texas, northern Texas is where the majority of the megasprawls are and where the majority of civilization can be found. Pretty much everything north of San Antonio is considered North Texas. Everything south is corrupt, taken over by bandit scum, overrun with shithead militia wannabes, or all of the above. Okay, I'm exaggerating, there are a few bright spots to be found, but those are the places where eking out a life is tough and they have the fire-power to keep the scumbags away from their turf.

### NORTH-TEXAS MEGASPRAWL

The North-Texas Megasprawl consists of the cities of Dallas, Fort Worth, Garland, and all points around and between. The cities grew together roughly forty years ago and despite being separate cities, the whole megasprawl is overseen by an elected governor, the Honorable Joseph P. Sentry. It is also policed by Allied Star Security. The G-Net here runs standard as you would find in any typical sprawl, except that in VR things take on an Old West feel — as it does in many places here in Texas.

### AUSTIN-ANTONIO MEGAPLEX

The Austin-Antonio Megaplex is the merger of Austin and San Antonio. This is near the unofficial border that divides the north from the south. There are black cyber-clinics and drug dens to be found here. Corporations have hidden compounds running hybrid experiments, and street talk says more than one AI has control of several gangs infesting the streets of the 'plex. Several companies are contracted to police the Megaplex, including Lone Star Enterprises and private conglomerate security.

### AUSTIN

Austin is the headquarters for Armaments of God, and is the shining nugget of Texas. Austin is where the seat of the national government is, and as such is policed very well. Yet, despite the surface luster, underneath is a corruption that runs deep. The NAC have managed to infiltrate this city and are beginning to distribute a new street drug called 'Synth.' This drug causes a high unlike most others, but it gets more intense with music; which the NAC are also distributing through The G-Net…along with a subliminal carrier that slowly undermines the user's will so they will find the NAC more appealing.

### SOUTH TEXAS

South Texas is a near-lawless band of country that is still reeling from the aftershocks of the Texas Tussle and Second Civil War. Many settlements dot the area, as do secret corp facilities, but the biggest problem is the gangs and smugglers who make this place a police nightmare, but a bounty hunter's dream.

### GULF REGION

There are dozens of floating oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico. Some have been taken over by rich entrepreneurs and turned into floating casinos and so forth. Others are used by the Megaconglomerates for ultra-secret, black-op experiments. However, there are some derelicts that have been taken over by squatters and pirates. That's right amigos, you heard right: pirates!

Many of these scumbags are no threat to anyone with the firepower to repel them. That doesn't include the settlements they raid and pillage, but it does include those with the know-how to stop them. A few operate by running "toll booths" and holding transports for ransom, but some dig their own graves by taking on a Megaconglom ship. I almost feel sorry for those poor bastards…almost.

**#Vasquez:** South Texas has a lot of problems, but this guy over simplifies the issue, and he doesn't even mention the fact that there's a border war with Mexico going on.

**#Sidewinder_Special:** @Vasquez: There hasn't been any official declaration of war. I live in El Paso, and things are starting to heat up, but neither the Republic nor the Mexican government have said much of anything about it.

**#Smilin_Jack:** Interesting commentary about the gulf, though I'm not so sure the guy's ACTUALLY been out there. Those "pirates" he likes to talk about are rovers who have been living there for years. Sure, they steal, but mainly from the corporations that kicked 'em out of their homes. As for "raiding and pillaging," I don't know what century this guy is living in, but rovers aren't flippin Vikings. Sheesh.

**#Stone_Cold:** The HR in Dallas isn't what he makes it out to be. DFW doesn't look anything like the wild west, in Hyper Reality or otherwise. I've been here for fifteen years and I haven't seen a single sprawler with a cowboy hat on.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** After reading this, I think I need to go down to Texas and check it out. Anyone know some good places to stay? Any people I can get with to see about getting a job or three?

**#Sidewinder_Special:** It depends on where you're thinking of going. If you haven't figured it out by now, Texas is big. I'd suggest The North Plano free zone; that's in the North Texas megasprawl. The burb's tame compared to other areas, but I wouldn't walk the streets without a weapon. As for the other…Contact me off-list.

**#Clutch:** You can find some decent coffin motels in Arlington.

**#Sidewinder_Special:** @Clutch; Arlington? Really? Might as well send him to the Russian/Chinese battlefront. @Billy: Don't take Clutch's advice. Stay the hell out of Arlington.

# NEW YORK RECLAMATION ZONE

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: VINTAGESTEAMTRUNK.COM.BNY

FQDN: VINTAGESTEAMTRUNK.COM.BNY.04TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

**Posted By:** #BrooklynGuy, NYRZ Tour Guide

New York was one of several East Coast cities eyeing rising sea waters due to global warming. The city invested billions on sea walls to keep the water out while other, smaller communities abandoned the coast. Both New York and Newark, NJ decided to stay and fight Mother Nature. Newark's sea wall project went off without a hitch, while New York's preparations were plagued by delays, terrorist attacks, and rumors of corruption ranging from stolen materials at sites to million dollar graft at the city contract level. The New York project finished in 2026 before the Newark project a year later.

The sea walls were in place for five years before it became apparent that they would not hold. The Death accelerated the cycle of harsh weather that battered the walls, and made the flooding of subways and streets as common a sight as hot dog vendors and yellow taxi cabs. It also pushed death and murders in the city to heights unheard of. Hospitals became little more than twenty story tall morgues. Blocks once full of vibrant neighborhoods counted survivors by the handful. When it became clear that the city police were barely holding on after losing 30% of its force during the Bronx Food Riots, the hard decision was made. On October 25th, 2031, President Davis announced the abandonment of Manhattan Island to the sea. Anyone who wished to continue to be a United States citizen had six months to get out of New York.

What the military did not expect was resistance from those citizens who decided that if the U.S. was abandoning the city, they didn't want to be part of the U.S. anymore. Small skirmishes broke out in Brooklyn and Queens as the military vehicles rolled through the streets. Many of these attacks were launched by individuals with criminal records afraid of being taken into custody. A few began as shouting matches between soldiers and civilians. It was not the transition the government had hoped for, especially with the revelation that there would be some people staying behind.

The destruction of the Manhattan seawall remains a mystery to this day. The rush of seawater devastated the island, the only evidence of the city being those skyscrapers that stayed above the waterline. The rush also overwhelmed the seawalls of the Bronx and Queens. Staten Island and Brooklyn stayed mostly dry.

New York faded from most minds until about a year ago when an Atlantican force marched on Queens. The North Atlantic Coalition mobilized its defenses to repel what it considered invaders. The tension soon decreased, though the NAC began regularly patrolling flooded areas of the city. The presence of military attention set the warlords and ruling gangs on edge. The citizens of New York keep living day by day, but they also recognize that something must give soon.

A few short days after the completion of Juliet Foxtrot Kilo Base, footage of a press conference flooded the Deep. Atlantica struck an alliance with the corporations of C-7. In exchange for tax considerations and very lucrative contracts, the corporations were given the island of Manhattan to do with as they see fit. The corporations are coming to what they now call the New York Reclamation Zone. New York will never be the same.

## Manhattan

When most people think of the New York Reclamation Zone, the image that comes to mind is of the island of Manhattan. The water overtook most of the skyline, though many buildings poke through the surface of the water. What were once testaments to the financial power of the world now rot from the salt water. The skyscrapers became a strange archipelago of glass, steel and iron.

One World Trade Center rises out of the depths to this day. Built to restore the Manhattan skyline after 9/11, the building became a rallying point for those looking to return the city to its former glory. The building serves as the C-7 headquarters in the Reclamation Zone. Each of the corporations carved out a floor for its operations, though none currently have any personnel in the tower yet. One World Trade Center recently activated a power source unconnected to the old grid, becoming the first building in the zone with updated capabilities. The locals refer to the building or anyone connected to it as OWTCs, pronounced "out sees."

Benoit MacroSec landed the contract to establish the headquarters for the Reclamation project. They cleared out the floors for the C-7 members. They provide security for the employees refurbishing the building and building the pumps to free up the lower floors. Benoit MacroSec's contract includes clearing out the squatters from the lower sections of the building. Rather than risk their own personnel and equipment, the project lead put out feelers for subcontractors willing to kick in some doors. So far, local help has been hard to find, but as the word gets out, more pros will be happy to spend time ripping up carpeting with their submachine guns.

> **#Swiggler:** MarcoSec are little more than a corporate-funded gang. If they catch you squatting on their turf, you're fish food in Turtle Bay.
>
> **#MarcoSec88:** We do our jobs, assclown. Nothing more. We're not murderers. We even pay the homeless to move elsewhere.
>
> **#Swiggler:** Yeah, right.

## Brooklyn

This borough is the closest that any neighborhood comes to resembling a real city. It runs more like a free city than a real city, but it is also still above water. The streets are tough, the security is private, and the corporates flee to private compounds on the mainland nightly. The city compresses the vibrancy of a big city into a smaller area. The rich look down on the dirty streets, but occasionally the gangs rise up and shatter the bulletproof penthouse glass to spread the wealth around. The bars are hotbeds of fixers looking for teams, since the clientele is such a strange mix.

Out of all the bridges that once connected New York, only the Brooklyn Bridge still stands. The edge of the bridge heading into Manhattan now forms a circuit on which weekly races keep patrons busy. The vehicles range from motorcycles and cars to exotic golemmech races. The races are the ultimate mix of high and low class members from the New York Reclamation Zone. Executives surrounded by security sit next to gangers howling for one of their members to win. The smell of cheap beer and amped fuel hangs heavy in the air.

The Zone Razors run the races on the bridge. The races mix bleeding edge tech, garage built mods and drivers ready to kill themselves for the roaring crowd. The Razors won control of the bridge four years ago during the annual endurance race called the Gypsy Cab 500. The course starts on the bridge, runs through the other boroughs and ends back on the bridge. The team with the last car running wins the race. The reigning champions get the advantage of planning the route, in addition to laying out ambushes on the track to work in their favor. Anything goes during Race Week, including bribery, threats, and rocket launchers on the track. Last year, the Razors lured the rival drivers to a big party before the race and gunned them all down.

One of the most surprising remnants from the fall of New York remains Coney Island. The Wonder Wheel still stands, lit and whirling. It still functions as a place to relax and unwind. Only now it caters to a specific clientele. Locals call it Gangland, because the gangs that keep the city running meet there. It's considered neutral ground, bangers from all sets feel safe. Scraps break out from time to time, but the offending parties are escorted off the grounds before things get out of hand. While gangs of all stripes come through the city, outsider gangs are only allowed if they are being escorted and sponsored by a member gang.

**#Squeeks:** If you're lookin for a good time, definitely check out the races. Just make sure you come strapped. BrooklynGuy is playing down the violence, omae.

**#Swiggler:** Truth. I've seen many a sprawler get ventilated and tossed off the BB and into the East River. Most days I prefer to spend in the Bronx. It's River Rat territory, but Shady-Eight keeps his boys in check.

**#Twitch:** It's not THAT bad. Sheesh. You guys make it sound like a warzone. Ya'll shillin' for the River Rats? Pissed the Razors are cuttin' into your turf?

**#Squeeks:** Fuck you Twitch.

## The Bronx

The Bronx survived Davis Day intact. Of course, it was already a Zero Zone in everything but name. The walls built to keep the gangs in kept the sea out and the other boroughs fell further and faster. Even though it's a jagged scar of burned out buildings, wild gangs and firefights in the street, it is the last unbroken link to New York's history. All the other boroughs were changed by the sea but The Bronx clung to the surface with bloody fingertips.

The Bronx Zoo displayed exotic animals from around the world before the fall of the city. The cages are still full, but now the creatures inside were built rather than captured. The galleries are invite only, either to corporate customers looking for controversial biosculptures, or private customers looking for creative organic security solutions. Occasionally, the Zoo sponsors gallery nights where the elite are invited to talk shop while the hottest bands play and the strange creatures look on from behind their double weight security glass.

Yankee Stadium became the heart of the Zone after Manhattan went underneath the waves. The landmark started as one of the rallying points for refugees from the Bronx flooding. It is now the largest open air market in the Zone, selling everything from tech hawked on the third base line to flesh in the old luxury boxes. Much of the action in the Zone comes through the Stadium at some point, and if it comes through the stadium, the Keys get a taste of the action.

The Stadium operates under the protection of the Keys, one of the few gangs that survived from before Davis Day. Younger members of the gang are given memorabilia from the old Yankee baseball team as their colors. The older, made members of the gang wear pinstripe suits to declare their allegiance. When the Keys send a message, they leave a house key in the mouth of the victim. The Keys know they are on the cusp of turning from a rough street gang to a respected criminal syndicate. It's a dangerous position. The gangs below want to take them down to show their dominance. The syndicates above want to hold the Keys down to stay on the top of the heap.

## Queens

Most of Queens is still underwater. The ocean is a constant danger as forgotten levees crumble and let in more. Queens offers many entrances to the Sixth Borough, thanks to the subway tunnels that run back to Manhattan. The borough's population consists primarily of Hybrids. Aquatic Hybrids in particular flourish thanks to the maze of flooded streets and submerged buildings. These gangs provide protection for this part of town, though they often squabble for territory as the flood waters recede and change.

On September 19, 2089, Atlantican forces moved into the neighborhood. Mobilized infantry and heavy golemmechs made their way through the submerged wreck of JFK International Airport. The soldiers built a new sea wall, restoring military service to the airport. Kennedy Base represents the official Atlantican interest in the New York Reclamation Zone.

The Golemmech Division One Base is the famed "War Pigs" column out of Denver. Though the golemmechs have proven surprisingly useful after a few modifications to run underwater, the soldiers understand that they are here primarily for symbolic value. Knowing that a concerted attack by the NAC patrols would overrun their position quickly, the Pigs eye the developments on Staten Island warily.

Juliet Foxtrot Kilo Base is Atlantica's public face in the Zone. However, rumors persist that Atlantican agents inserted themselves into the city for deep cover operations decades ago. Such sleepers would have children helping them by now. Families with roots in neighborhoods and communities could have stashed weapons, collected intelligence and have files on unfriendly elements ready to strike. These agents, if they exist, would be in the market for deniable assets willing to do their dirty work while allowing the agents to keep their cover.

## Staten Island

The only borough completely untouched by the flooding, Staten Island was quickly absorbed by Newark and the North American Coalition. NAC claims it is the true Old New York City, though this claim is not recognized by anyone outside of the NAC. It serves as a large military base for the NAC but also serves as the home to the refugees from New York City that couldn't leave their home completely behind.

The center of the NAC's power is located at New Wadsworth Base, located near the wreck of the Verrazano-Narrows bridge. Locals shorten the name to Newads. It was built to keep an eye on New York Harbor, as well as establish a buffer between the Reclamation Zone and the uncontrolled city of Newark, New Jersey. The base takes its name from the old Fort Wadsworth located nearby. The old fort is preserved and open to the public, offering a history lesson showing how the only true American Remnant of the United States is the Coalition.

Coalition Patrols run out of Newads. The patrols were content to stay close to the borough, but with Atlantica's advances their captains are bolder. The patrols now make it as far in as Manhattan. While they were once content to let the pirates fester in the old skyscrapers, now the patrol boats pursue the ships back to bases.

# NEWARK

INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: VINTAGESTEAMTRUNK.COM.NEWARK

FQDN: VINTAGESTEAMTRUNK.COM.BNY.04TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

**Posted By:** #BrooklynGuy, NYRZ Tour Guide

Even with its heated rivalry still in place, Newark remains the gateway for people looking to get back inside New York. The most famous coyotes moving between Newark and New York are called the Deep Six. They've secured some of the old commuter train routes that connected with the old subway system. Rather than running with full power to draw attention, the gang runs animals and other low tech options through the tunnels. The Deep Six handle everything from people to weapons on their genetically engineered pack creatures. They prefer to deal in barter and trade rather than currency.

## Central Ward

The Central Ward is the oldest section of Newark. Most of the buildings feature original architecture with modern conveniences bolted on the side. While other cities tear down and rebuild, Newark is concerned with adding on to keep things running. The Central Ward has always been the heart of Newark and its feel reflects the functionality of its current version. It doesn't look like much, but it's better than the alternatives. Living in a part of town filled with old, grey buildings is better than one where the organleggers work.

Vroom Alley is the center of Newark's law and order. Though it is a free city, there are still matters of bureaucracy that keep a city functioning. The Boss holds court here, meeting with

the leaders of the Five Stars to discuss Newark's operations. The tradition of drugstore judges began here in Vroom Alley. Drugstore judges opened "courts" in storefronts all across the city and somehow managed to keep the peace. The first drugstore judge was Judge Nathan Judd, a colorful former police captain who set up a court for anyone to come in and plead their case. His judgments were eclectic but fair. His popularity soon earned him an 'official' sanction from The Boss.

## North Ward

The North Ward reeks of money. A collection of colonial mansions, high rise condos and new constructions during the corporate transformation make this the section of town everyone wants to live in. It also makes security tight as a drum. The citizens that can buy a home here can also afford excellent private security. Many firms have offices in the vacated corporate towers in addition to the on-site services they provide. The residents of North Ward can likely live where they want, but choose to stay in Newark for business, family or tax shelter reasons. This ward is one of the main sources of wealth for the rest of the city.

Forest Hill is the cream of the crop, featuring houses built before World War II. The residents of the area included celebrities, Senators, and CEOs before the city went free. It was one of the few neighborhoods untouched by the Ivy Hill riots. Forest Hill parties are lavish affairs, where politicians can rub elbows with mobsters and never bat an eye. It's the one place in a free city where everyone should feel safe. Most of the shadow work that comes out of here ends up in different locations.

The Tancredo family came into existence when two of the largest crime families - one Italian, one Mexican - merged to protect their interests. They stayed in Newark as other crime families moved elsewhere without the cash cow of nearby New York to sustain them anymore. They are also the unwritten reason why North Ward stays safe. Anyone that pulls a job here ends up as a target for retribution. The Tancredos don't crap in their backyard for a reason, and anyone who does is likely to end up the latest resident of the Passaic River.

## East Ward

Immigrants have always left their mark on East Ward. The biggest influence today are the Portuguese. Many of the signs and HR in East Ward are in multiple languages. This was the neighborhood where the unwanted ended up, and the immigrants who climbed up the ladder crawled out of it. Today, the population is primarily hybrid, sim and human 2.0. The area is economically depressed, but is often fertile recruiting ground for individuals looking for shadow work. The area also has a reputation as a safe haven for escaped Sims and robots. Returning one to an original owner is a quick ticket to being ostracized by the neighborhood, even if the reward pays the rent for a few months.

Down Neck Saloon gets its name from the neighborhood it anchors. Down Neck sits on the Passaic River and the Saloon overlooks Ferry Street, with big neon letters spelling out its name perched along the roof. The second N fell off during the Ivy Hill riots. Rather than toss the letter out, however, the owners made it part of the architecture when they rebuilt. Entering the bar means stepping in under the arch of the letter. The saloon functions as a general gathering place, a drugstore courtroom, and a place for individuals seeking "off the book work" to find reliable fixers.

The Ironbound take their name from an alternate nickname for the area. The gang is comprised of simulacrum members with a few Human 2.0 hangers on. The Sims go out of their way to show violence towards any normal humans they encounter on their turf. Officially, they've toned down their hardline stance since becoming the Star of the East Ward, but that may just mean they've gotten better at hiding the evidence when a "meat boy" takes the wrong turn in the ward. Members can be identified by a stylized FE tattoo somewhere on their body. The F is reversed and the letters are connected at the main vertical stem.

## South Ward

The educational and medical centers of the city exist here. Multiple hospitals, schools, and colleges give this part of town the nickname of "The Academic Sector." Black labs and gene splicers have a knack for showing up in this area, thanks to the free city status that doesn't ask questions about how they use the office space they lease for double the going rate. The Helios complex in the South Ward is one of the city's largest employers, both directly through employees as well as the shops, restaurants and local businesses those employees frequent on lunch breaks.

## West Ward

The West Ward was where most of the New York refugees who settled in Newark after Davis Day ended up. It was already a mix of multiple ethnicities, and dumping hundreds of thousands more into the mix added untold tension. The Ivy Hill Riots started here and the ward never really recovered.

The Boom Boom Room rises above the squalor by taking advantage of the melting pot of music. It lures talent from all over the world by encouraging collaborations, mash ups and team-ups that only happen in the DJ booth. Strange mixes add to The Boom Boom Room's mystique, and it's rapidly climbing up the latter of influential clubs where screaming hot acts get their start. The club is open every night, and is almost always packed to capacity. Life in a free city is rough, but the appeal of coming down to the club and hearing something you won't hear anywhere else keeps the dance floor packed and the drinks flowing.

Wrecked Neck Records continues the grand tradition of mixing music with muscle. Criminal syndicates need front organizations to launder money, and this media company provides an excellent outlet for the Ivy Hill Gang, or IVG, to legitimize their money. The leaders hold court in the VIP lounge that overlooks the main floor. Many of the acts here owe something to the IVG, either as a new act or as a drug supplier. IVG members are known for the tattoos that wrap around a single limb, either an arm or a leg. Each flower on the vine represents someone the member has killed for the gang.

# THE NORTH AMERICAN COALITION

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/NAC

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

**Posted By:** #DLangton_SysMaster

Greetings, Ami. I'm Derrick Langton, a former security agent from the Helios technology company. Well, I was at Helios the longest, but I worked for several companies in my time. Of course, none of them were too pleased with me when I left, even if it was for a larger paycheck and a bigger office. Truth be told, I only spent half the time in the office, since I needed the rest of my time to track down leaks, check up on our former employees — to make it clear that staying silent about what they did for us would be most conducive to their continued health — and, of course, making sure that our facilities remained secure.

Through the course of my tenure in security, I had to spend time in pretty much every major city in the NAC, and I had no choice but to get to know them pretty well. Some places are better than others, depending on who you are and what you're doing there, but you can never escape certain realities. The first is that while much of the world's population has moved away from religion, the NAC managed to integrate religion into the state with the blessings of the people. That means no matter who you meet, no matter how good or bad they might be, they will have something to say about the almighty. Personally, I have more important things to think about than what I'll be doing with eternity after my meatshell is gone, but good for the people who make it important, I guess.

The next thing to remember about the NAC is that prejudice runs deep in many areas. In some cases, people are still up in arms about the fact that some folks have different skin colors than them, but those are mostly a bunch of geezers who have managed to turn a blind eye to the developments of the past fifty years or so. These days, it's all about discriminating against folks who are different on a fundamental level. Hybrids, simulacra, even engineered humans; all have some group that hates them. People's reasons for this hatred spans a range, from being afraid that good jobs are being stolen from the ordinary folk (a common theme throughout history), to religions that have declared such people unholy abominations.

> **#Xenslicer101:** Wow, talk about hyperbole. I think this guy's going a little overboard with the hate. Sure, the NAC has it's fair share of fundies, but so does every other nation on this planet.

The NAC is not the best place to be different from the norm, but at the same time, the corporations that are the real power behind the theocrats, who need people of all different types to keep the wheels of business moving. Because of this, those corporations may be up to all kinds of shady dealings in the high-rise offices and dank back-alleys, but they tend to promote a message of tolerance to a populace who are largely interested in ignoring what they have to say. Despite this, there's still a good number of people who can't abide by all this bigotry, and they embrace people of all different types.

Alright, so enough of that. I'm sure you already know all there is to know about the NAC on a macro scale. What you need is a guide to the people and places you're going to find as you travel around. When they came to me and asked me to write this, I almost told them to fuck right the hell off. After all, the damn publishing company had passed over my resume enough times after my last layoff, but then I realized that I can actually help people avoid some of the hairy mess in the cities of the NAC. So I decided it was worth the paycheck. So let's get going… I'll start with Denver Colorado, since it's the seat of power in the NAC.

> **#Xenslicer101:** So let me get this straight; this guy worked on some seriously intense security for a tech company, but later couldn't get a job with a publishing company? Sounds to me like he seriously screwed up along the way.
>
> **#Dianstarred:** Oh please, Xenslice_baby, everyone has major cred problems where you're concerned. Has it occurred to you that he might just be a victim of the crap economy like the rest of us?
>
> **#Xenslicer101:** Note the way he said that he'd worked for a number of companies but didn't list them all. I really think he burned a few too many bridges, or worse, sold one of them out. He's lucky to have landed this gig at all, from the sounds of it.

## Denver, Colorado

As the Capitol of the NAC, Denver is a hotbed for religions and the mega churches. The First Faith of Christ and the Templars of God are the largest ones based in Denver, and maintain enormous facilities for worship and business. The downside of religious activity is the various hate groups, and each of them seems to have their own favorite brand of human to hate. While skin color is rarely the emphasis of hate, religiously motivated hate is directed at everything from AIs to simulacra and hybrids, which consider such individuals abominations. The Knights of Jehovah is the largest of these; it operates openly, claiming to be a legitimate religious organization, and it primarily takes aim at hybrids.

Denver is located between the Rocky Mountains to the west and the High Plains to the east. The city has an area of 173 square miles.

The central portion of the city is dominated by skyscrapers, many of which originated during the 20th century, though they have since been renovated. The largest buildings in the city are the three massive Helios Towers, which occupy the center of the Denver skyline. The buildings themselves have equilateral triangular bases, with each building forming the corner of a greater triangle. Sky bridges connect all three buildings at two points, one at the top, and the other at the mid-levels. The majority of these buildings are dedicated to office space; the north tower is entirely occupied by the Helios Corporation, while the rest of the space is rented out to other companies. Roughly an eighth of the space is dedicated to high-end residential apartments.

The government of the entire NAC is based out of Denver, so politics takes place on both a regional and national scale, with the majority of the press coverage belonging to national

politics. The mayor's name is Raymond K. Ross, a tall, lanky man with steel gray hair, blue eyes, and a hooked nose. Ross holds widely popular evangelical beliefs. Politically, he is a staunch conservative who has re-allocated much of the city's welfare budgets to the security and prison budgets. The result is widespread poverty throughout the Metro Slum Zone and The Flats, and an increase in crime, arrests, and imprisonment. Behind the scenes, Ross is known as a man who doesn't tolerate dissent with his policies, and there have been two cases of high ranking elected officials who disagreed with him disappearing without a trace. Despite investigations into the disappearances, both cases have gone cold and have been promptly forgotten.

The company employed by the city of Denver for law enforcement is Ravenlock Securities. The Chief of Security for the entire Denver Metro area is Charles Edwards, who earned his way to his position through a long career as a beat officer. Cybernetically enhanced with the Gunslinger Package, Edwards has a reputation for not shying from engagements with criminals, while applying a fair approach to law enforcement that was rarely criticized. During his time as chief, he has notably achieved a higher standard of conduct among the force, and he has overseen a major Internal Investigation that ferreted out a group of bad cops who were on the take and helping out a major drug smuggling ring. Edwards holds a seat on the city council and is one of the key voices in determining public policy.

One of the major attractions in the central portion of the city is the VR Arena. This is an open stadium-sized space that is integrated with The Deep, and delivers holographic games on a massive scale. These games may be individual or team based, and they usually include material licensed from major media franchises. The games are captured on video and distributed to their own video channel, which has become a major hit.

Because of the emphasis on law enforcement, gangs and lowlifes struggle to maintain a foothold in Denver, despite the fact that they thrive in most other cities. The Silicone Crypts, the most prominent street gang in the Metro Slum Zone, specialize in accosting people on the streets and performing impromptu surgery to remove cybernetics. The Fenzini Cartel moves more illicit drugs than any other organization in Denver, though there are countless smaller organizations and individuals who cut in on the same trade. In addition to this, the sale of banned ordnance is present, but because this is Denver, a city of corporate intrigue, big business is done in the sale of personal unregistered weapons, often finding their way to various corporate agents and the various hate groups that operate in Denver.

## Philadelphia

The city of Philadelphia is widely recognized as being divided into three primary zones, which include the Skyzone, the Depths, and the Sprawl. The Skyzone consists of all the tall buildings crammed together, and comprises two thirds of the city. Each building is like a miniature city of its own, with commercial space, residential housing, eateries, and markets. The buildings are connected via sky bridges with moving walkways, which enable people to move quickly from one building to the next without having to go down to the ground level.

The Depths includes everything from the ground level and below. The streets are a lawless zone filled with drug addicts, the dispossessed, the mentally challenged and other lowlifes. Most of the city's people who couldn't find a place in the Skyzone found their way here, where they're forced to fight for survival. The sewers, steam tunnels, and other subterranean complexes are included in the Depths, and are well utilized by the city's various gangs and other denizens who are forced to exist in this region. Defensible regions below ground are typically held by one group or another, and are jealously defended.

The sprawl contains all of the old residential zones that were protected by the seawall and didn't succumb to the flood.

Because most people were forced to relocate to the high rises, this area in the Sprawl became highly sought after because of the lower population density and the more laid back lifestyle. Home values have skyrocketed, and as a result, even small homes are considered a luxury and not affordable to the blue platers. Because of this, street crime is a nuisance at best in these areas, though home invasions and targeted violent crime is just as common as it is in the Skyzone.

In these tough economic times, the city government of Philadelphia struggles to try and meet the needs of its citizens with the revenue it is able to raise, while providing for other expensive works, such as the massive seawall protecting the city from ocean flooding and maintaining security. Terrorist organizations like the United Front have attempted to destroy the seawall three times in the past ten years, the most recent attempt resulting in a massive hole blown in the center of the structure that had to be patched while seawater spilled in. The seawall remains an attractive target, particularly by religious extremists who see the salvation of the city as the thwarting of God's will, and others who would drown the city in order to weaken the NAC.

**#UnitedFront:** One day we'll purge this cesspool from the face of the earth!

**#Lawdog:** Over my dead body.

Lowlifes and gangs pose a constant problem in Philadelphia, as they do in most urban cities. The most obvious of them are found chiefly at street level and below, though many criminals operate in the Skyzone as hackers, corporate infiltrators, and assassins. The most notorious street gang is called The Spatha, whose symbol is that of a sword in the style of Ancient Greece. They are led by a tall, bald mercenary with an appetite for chaos, named Aaron Filkins, and they operate from a series of connected rooms in the steam tunnels. The Spatha frequently venture out into the streets to rape, pillage, and generally cause mayhem. The city is well aware of their existence, but the cost of dislodging them from their hideout is considered too high, not to mention that if they were cleared out, they could simply return to re-inhabit the same space. Aside from random violence, the gang has their hands in the illegal weapons trade, human trafficking, and virtually every other illegal endeavor within the city.

One well-known criminal is Matthew Braine, a thief credited with breaking into the Philadelphia Museum of Art and famously stealing Vincent Van Gogh's Vase with Twelve Sunflowers. Braine spent the early part of his adult life in prison for petty theft, but he managed to hone his skills while he was incarcerated and made numerous contacts that he has been able to call upon when pulling a variety of heists. His notoriety has made something of a celebrity of him, though he's careful to appear in disguise when in public, in order to avoid capture. Publicly, he's known for a famous portrait in which he wears a black suit with a tie depicting a pair of dominoes. Multiple warrants are out on Braine, and the reward for his capture is currently set at one hundred million credits. This has motivated a number of bounty hunters and his fellow associates to try to find him in order to collect.

///THREAD JACK///

*LOADING...*

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: PAPA BEAR

[PHILADELPHIA NEWS24: BEGIN STREAM

*Philadelphia has been shocked by the tragic death of morality campaigner Roger Mahon. Mr. Mahon, 48, was an upstanding citizen who toiled endlessly promoting family values and working for charitable organizations. His most recent crusade was raising public awareness against the group of sexual deviants known as "Furries". These individuals flaunt their unnatural zoophilic urges through all manner of self produced media intended to ensnare the youth of the nation into...*

**+++Error:** Stream0000042a Interrupted: Redirect+++

/UNKNOWN USER: LOGGED ON

*We interrupt your regular session of brainwashing to present some actual facts! We are people with everyday concerns like you. Friends, family, and holding down a job that lets us earn enough to live. Don't tell us how to dress, how and what to think, say and feel and we'll extend the same courtesy. Explaining our choices and lifestyle would take longer than I have in this hacked feed suffice to say we feel strong connections to our animals in a similar way to hybrids. Indeed many of us are hybrids, others cosmetically altered. I can't say that there are no deviants who are Furries as we are a group of people and generalizations are invariably wrong.*

*Roger Mahon was a hatemonger. He targeted those who didn't conform to his pseudo Christian beliefs, and took advantage of the states disinterest in safeguarding non-conformist subculture. His latest victim an eighteen year old girl was subjected to a horrific attack. Mahon and his four cronies jumped her on her way home and took her to a garage. Once there she was burned with cigarettes, the word animal was carved into her*

*face and her newly implanted cosmetic cat ears were removed with wire clippers…*

**+++Stream0000042a Restored:** trace in progress+++

*…was viciously mauled by a person believed to be a hybrid for no reason other than slaking the bestial urges that many who undergo this "augmentation" suffer from. The police have formed a dedicated task force to…*

**+++Trace Error+++**

**+++Error:** Stream0000042a Interrupted: Redirect+++

/UNKNOWN USER: LOGGED ON

*His victims received no media attention and only a cursory investigation by police. So to all you hate-mongers; if the state won't deal with you, then you'll deal with Papa Bear.*

**+++Stream0000042a Restored:** Redirect closed+++

*… described as being around eight feet tall, wearing body armor over a red top and blue trousers. His face was covered by a mask, and forensics show that the attackers hands and feet are bestial paws. It is not clear if the assailant was further augmented other than the hybridization but Mr. Mahon was crippled by an arrow into the back of his knee to prevent him fleeing his assailant, who then set about him with a large chopping blade as well as his own claws.*

PHILADELPHIA NEWS24: END STREAM]

The man who would go on to become Papa Bear had only rudimentary knowledge about hybrids or the furry subculture in Philadelphia. His knowledge could be summed up as they exist, and that his daughter sported some curious fashions. Cat ears on head bands, fur covered gloves, and a expensive birthday present of an animatronic tail that responded to input from her TAP. She talked endlessly about undergoing hybridization with cat DNA on her eighteenth birthday. Nervous about her making rash decisions he agreed, and paid, for her to receive cosmetic augmentation cat ears; reasoning that augmentation removal is a simple process.

Shortly after her birthday she was attacked and tortured. The NAC's government misdirected him, the evidence he was shown portrayed her as a victim of grooming by degenerate sex cult calling themselves "furries". They explained that they would've been grooming her from a young age with anthropomorphic cartoon characters to open her innocent mind that would allow them to set their hooks at a later date.

The detectives in charge admitted that it was horrific what had happened to her, but was clearly part of God's plan to save her and expose the nest of perverts. Feeling guilty that he hadn't realized what was happening, and worse enabling it by indulging her, he became an outspoken and active critic of the cult. These actions created and fueled tension with his daughter to the point that week after week became synonymous with fight after fight. Until he gave in to her and that rather than just blaming them; he ditch his prejudices, actually meet her friends, and make an informed opinion.

Thanks to her introduction he got what the media either never saw, or neglected to mention in favor of sensationalism. The people behind the government sponsored victimization. Admittedly their interests were somewhat different than the "average" persons but then again many pointed out that religiously watching numerous reality entertainment streams, rather than having your own life is pretty strange. Living by proxy. He understood the community spirit and his anger was redirected to where it should have been in the first place, the hate-mongers that relied on one of the many government's unofficial persecution policies to indulge their own dark natures oxymoronically in the name of morality.

Shortly after this realization he underwent hybridization, fusing his DNA with a bear, and took up the role of guardian to the unjustly persecuted. While he isn't truly part of the community, they are well aware of their new guardian angel and nick-named him Papa Bear and he is rapidly becoming a symbol of the subculture.

///END THREAD JACK///

## Atlanta

Atlanta is 160 square miles and sits at a high elevation, making it more temperate than most southern areas, though still far warmer than most northern cities and regions. It receives abundant rainfall during the spring and a small amount of snow during the winter months.

The downtown area of Atlanta has changed little over the past hundred years. A few skyscrapers have been torn down and replaced with larger ones, and the skyline has been extended by about a third; but the changes have been relatively small compared to most other major cities. The city contains three major high-rise districts, which form a north-south axis along Peachtree: Downtown, Midtown, and Buckhead. Beyond those are less populated neighborhoods. Over the past fifty years, the city has fallen once more into a state or urban decay, with gangs comprising the dominant power structure on over half the city's neighborhoods. Even the city's security force is viewed as just another gang in this wasteland.

The city is led by Mayor George Holman, an African American who was a football celebrity before entering politics. He's a tall, physically imposing, athletic man with a trademark scowl, bearded chin, and shaved head. Between his appeals to a higher authority, he's an endless crusader for the welfare of the poor and downtrodden, constantly pushing to increase funding for social programs his predecessors deemed too expensive and ultimately unnecessary. Because of this stance, he's popular with Atlanta's people, though he has numerous enemies within the city's corporate community. The majority of the government still opposes his programs, though they occasionally bend to his will when there's enough support for his initiatives among the city's general population.

Atlanta is one of the great areas for the production of robotics. Lifelike Robotech Corp is the largest producer of robotic parts within the city, though its sales lag significantly behind other industry giants, such as Mango Systems Inc, and Roboboy. The CEO of the company is Michelle Lemieux, a physically diminutive woman in her mid-forties, who is unusually youthful looking for her age, with pale skin, long black hair, and striking blue eyes. Despite her size, her natural grace and keen (some would say ruthless) business sense make her somewhat of a celebrity within the NAC, and in some quarters beyond. Her life and the lives of her two daughters are frequently covered in the various celebrity gossip vids.

Unknown to most — and very much a threat to the NAC and nearly every place that sells Lifelike Robotech Corp's androids — is the fact that the virus AI Charon has infiltrated the corporate production facilities and embedded itself in every android that has been produced over the last three years. Although this programming remains dormant for the time being, the AI has the ability to activate these robots and use them for its own nefarious purposes.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** I'd like to see proof. As far as anyone knows, Charon hasn't spread to North America.

**#Simba:** I'm not so sure Billy; some of those androids have been going on rampages. Could be Charon is morphing into something different.

**#Neon_Bright:** I did a job down in Atlanta recently. Lifelike Robotech's R&D database is a nightmare hack; ICE is thick, and like nothing I've ever seen before. Something is definitely going on down South.

## St. Louis

St. Louis is one of the key areas where the NAC and the Great Lakes Union bump up against each other. Shipping along the Mississippi River is vital, and this has given rise to disputes between the two nations. In addition to this, it's a haven for smugglers who transport all manner of goods, from weapons to drugs, from one nation to the other.

St. Louis has become a militarized city, with large ground and air bases standing at the ready for the order to move into the Great Lakes Coalition. The St. Louis Arch still stands, but what once symbolized the gateway to the west is now a symbol of defiance, promising to one day swamp the Great Lakes Coalition with NAC troops who will annex the whole of that nation. A plaque now stands on each side of the arch, which reads "Portal to Victory."

St. Louis is 80 square miles. Its population hit a peak in the 1950s, at which time it began a slow decline that continued until the end of the Second Civil War. At that time, it became an important strategic location, which led to the military buildup, and an increase in the general population that catered to the military's needs. This, in turn, led to a greater corporate presence, creating more jobs and industry, and as a result, the city's population quadrupled.

Beyond the downtown area, the city is divided into 85 distinct neighborhoods. The vast majority of these are fairly safe, though the western portion of the city is Helltown, known for its notorious high crime rate. To the north is Silicone Park, a relatively small upscale neighborhood where technology and cybernetics are manufactured. Although insignificant in size, this is one of the zones with jobs for those seeking a better quality non-military career in St. Louis. It is also frequently the target of angry thugs who resent the wealth being concentrated in such a small area.

The current mayor of St. Louis is Janelle Taylor, a short, heavy-set woman with iron-gray hair who also sits on the board of directors of Bastiontec, which is the top military contractor that operates within the city. While she claims impartiality, her record clearly shows that her policies have favored the company. Even though this fact has been noted by several organizations and media outlets, nobody in a position of authority has dared challenge her, fearing they would bring ruin upon themselves. She does not have a reputation for being kind or forgiving, and many officials who have run afoul of her have been bumped out of their positions. Despite her ruthlessness, Taylor remains popular among the people, who see her as a symbol of strength.

## Orlando

When global warming caused the sea levels to rise, none of the original American states were more affected than Florida. The capital, Tallahassee, was lost to the ocean, swallowed by millions of gallons of ocean water. The state government reconvened in Orlando, and a short time later they declared that it would become the new state capital. State buildings were rapidly constructed, government offices were opened up, and the business of running the state resumed.

Before global warming caused the sea levels to rise, Orlando was known as the City of Theme Parks. Every major park with multiple locations throughout the country had one in Orlando. Since then, even the rising waters and the influx of the displaced population into Orlando hasn't dimmed the excitement of these places, and three new ones have opened up over the past three years. The only one to fail is Joey and Martin Land, a theme park dedicated to a duo of cartoon cats that was popular half a century ago. After its failure, the park was closed and a fence was erected to keep people off the property. The fence has since been breached in numerous places and it has become a popular hangout for gangs and lowlifes.

## New Miami

New Miami bears a relationship to the original city in name only. The original city was located at the southern tip of Florida, and was one of the first to succumb to the rising waters caused by global warming. New Miami is located on the new southern coast, which is far to the north. While the old city was a city in the traditional sense, New Miami was built on a collection of small islands in a flood plain, effectively mirroring another famous flooded city, Venice, Italy. New Miami, however, contains no small buildings. Every structure is a high rise, and speedboats navigate the waterways between them, ferrying passengers from one location to the next.

The construction of New Miami was initially funded by the state of Florida as a means of accommodating all the people displaced by the rising sea levels. What began as little more than a refugee camp was seen as an investment opportunity by corporate developers who saw it as an opportunity to earn quick money from people who were collecting emergency funds from the government. The initial buildings were constructed to house as many people as possible, though corporations established office space in the ample high-rise buildings they created. In little time an economy formed that included a good mix of technology research and development, service jobs, and food production, all of which is grown in indoor vats.

Unlike most cities, New Miami isn't divided up among different districts. Every building is a high rise, and the islands they sit upon are so small that most can only support one or two of them. From the distance, the city looks like a mass of glass and metal fingers rising from the ocean. It covers an area of five square miles.

## East Texarkana

Texarkana is a border town between Texas and the NAC in Arkansas. The city originally straddled the border between states, but after the Second Civil War and the Balkanization that occurred as a result, the city became contested. Despite similar views on many things and several failed attempts at establishing peaceable accords, Texas and the NAC found themselves at odds. In response to this, Texas demanded that a wall be built to divide the city along the border.

Since the war, East Texarkana has transformed into a manufacturing city. Everything is produced here, from ordinary household goods to high-tech products that include cutting edge computers, simulacra, and cybernetics. This is largely due to the fact that the cost of living is extremely low, which means wages are the lowest in the NAC, so people have a hard time making ends meet, even if they are employed. Many people supplement their income by less than legal means.

## Oklahoma City

Oklahoma City is the largest city directly north of Texas, making it a strategic point for the NAC, not to mention one of several cities where smuggling is lucrative. Because the borders are closed and patrolled between the two nations, this is one of the key staging grounds for most ventures into Texas, whether they are state sanctioned or otherwise. Although East Texarcana lies on the border itself, most consider it too heavily patrolled to make any tactical ventures through and stand a realistic chance of success. Given the amount of open territory between Oklahoma City and the border, however, there are numerous places where the geography is more likely to hide the attempts.

Oklahoma City itself is 690 square miles and consists of a downtown area with numerous towering high-rise buildings, surrounded by miles upon miles of residential neighborhoods and suburbs. In this city, the primary force driving the economy is the military, which is constantly on a heightened state of alert, as it stands ready to go to war with Texas. Energy production, which has been a major industry here since the glory days of petroleum production, is the largest private enterprise, followed by food production, with one of the largest livestock markets in the world. Cybernetics and simulacrum production count as secondary industries here, but because of the emphasis on agriculture and energy, this is one of the cities of the NAC that is said to have changed the least over the past hundred years.

As with other places in the NAC, Military interests drive public policy in Oklahoma City. For many, this isn't perceived as a serious problem since this brings countless civilian jobs; however, there are those who don't appreciate the fact that General Oseas Echevarria holds more power than Mayor Chi Richardson. The truth of the matter is that the entire city council is a mostly powerless body. During elections, they take stock of all the problems in the city and create plans to address them, only to have those plans dashed once the election is over because the military dislikes the programs or needs the budget in order to maintain their constant state of readiness.

# THE SOUTHWEST BADLANDS

#INFOSOURCE

#STREETTOSTREET.TAG.DONATE

LOCAL: KNOWTHESTREETS.PEDIA.ORG

FQDN: KNOWTHESTREETS.PEDIA.ORG.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

**Posted By:** #SamTheKnight, Unofficial Historian, Atlanta Geological Society Forum Member

## San Francisco in 2090

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Oh yeah, tomo — don't get me wrong. Sure, all the crap going on out in the rest of the world has impacted The Ruins, but not in the ways some peeps would expect. For example, the powers-that-be up in Cascadia would dearly love Colonel Klusman to consolidate their control in the area, but other players have tied his hands.

I'm getting a little ahead of myself, ne? What's been happening for the last couple of years?

### THE WAR THAT NEVER HAPPENED

Frisco managed to achieve a certain status quo by 2088. The problem with 'status quo' is it hinges on nothing changing and upsetting the balance.

Early in '89, right before the Big Flare, a couple of the Warlords — particularly Phoenix and Mexicali — set their sights on Las Vegas and struck a deal to go in, take over, and split the spoils. The military buildup spooked a lot of peeps in Los Angeles, who went on the offensive. Mexicali found itself embroiled in a war of attrition with L.A. and Generalissimo Fuentes pulled out of the alliance. The Governor of Phoenix decided not to take the gamble, and Las Vegas was spared by a stroke of good luck.

> **#Simba:** I'd be remiss if I didn't point out here that plenty Sabrina Valentini had more than a little to do with stoking the paranoia in Los Angeles.
>
> **#Kryomancer_111:** @#Simba I'd believe it. There's one bitch who shouldn't be taken lightly. What's all that got to do with San Francisco?
>
> **#Simba:** It's all about pressure. Watch.

### THREE GENERAL MONTE

There are three people that shaped Frisco in 2089. Major Haveck, of the Angels of Mercy, Colonel Klusman of the Cascadia Expeditionary Force — the Cascadian military unit staked out in Frisco, and Grandmaster Mason, of Fort Mason.

With the Angelinos all dealing with Mexicali, Major Haveck and his Angels of Mercy didn't have to keep looking over their shoulders to the south.

> **#Simba:** See?

Haveck made sure a few 'traders' from Richmond made their way to Pacific Heights with rumors of a CEF offensive. It didn't take long for those rumors to reach the ears of Grandmaster Mason, who sent an envoy to Haveck, and an alliance was made: this one between a paranoid schizophrenic and a psychopathic madman.

Klusman was forced to give up reestablishing the Twin Peaks Reservoir to fend off an attack from both sides. Klusman has been forced for the last two years to devote his resources to keeping the Golden Gate Bridge intact. Without it, he had no easy supply line to Cascadia.

It's become a weekly event for Masonist patrol boats to take a run at the lower bridge supports or the Angels to send a mob in with explosives. Sometimes it's both. Complicating things for Klusman is the fact the Cascadian politicos are more concerned with potential incursions by the NAC than with the San Francisco ruins. The colonel can't count on any real backup any time soon — he's on his own.

Late in 2089 Klusman tried having supplies air-dropped, but there's no good place on the Presidio for anything other than a VTOL to land and when the transport was hit by a man-portable rocket, his superiors vetoed air drops.

> **#Slave_2_Daedalus:** Why in the world would this Major Haveck attack a military outpost in the first place? Especially if he was potentially outgunned? Is he nuts?
>
> **#Simba:** Haveck may be crazy, but he ain't no fool. My guess is that finding himself ignored by LA was something of a two-edged sword. He didn't have any more handlers coming to check up on him, but he also didn't have any more supplies being delivered. I figure he decided it was a calculated risk to attempt getting a hold of CEF weapons and supplies.
>
> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Odds are he was sanctioned by Los Angeles to make a power grab.
>
> **#Simba:** Maybe, but I doubt it. I don't think LA would pull it while involved in a shooting war with Mexicali.
>
> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** I have it on good authority the Angelinos thought it was a win-win for them to focus on Mexicali while Haveck did his own thing. If he succeeded, they had San Fran water and Cascadian weapons. If he failed, they had one less screwball to worry about. Plausible deniability.

### THE HYBRID PUSH

While the north end of the peninsula was engaged in its own conflict, trouble was brewing from the south.

The Daly City Hybrids were an unsettled powder keg — Rakshasa, their leader, wasn't known for her genteel demeanor — and having Rasputin whispering contentious ideas to the Consortium was like tossing a lit match on top of the thing.

At the end of the hot August of '89, a horde of really pissed off Hybrids descended on both Sunset Boulevard and Mission Street with the goal of eradicating all humans and creating a New Hybrid Order.

Initially, no one took any notice because Sunset was all but abandoned and Mission was full of people who subscribed to a Humanist doctrine. Most peeps figured it was just a bunch of Hybrids giving the Sons of Robert their just comeuppance. But when the Hoods were nearly wiped out by the Hybrids people started paying attention.

**#Slave_2_Daedalus:** San Francisco can probably thank Atlantica for the fact they aren't just another NAC holding now. Just about the time the Coalition was realizing something ugly was going on in the west, Atlantica Combine forces were surrounding New Brooklyn. The Nackies found the whole 'Hybrid Incident' in the Ruins to be 'unwholesome and distasteful'—they didn't feel the uprising posed as serious a threat as the Combine laying siege to a contested border city. The net result: outside assistance to San Francisco was negligible.

**#Simba:** #Slave_2_Daedalus Now you're an expert? Seriously, interesting observation.

Cinder's Bloc and the Ascending Dragon managed to put aside their differences long enough to join forces against the Consortium (with a little help from the Portrero Scavengers).

The UPLU (Union of Peace, Love and Understanding) remained neutral and uninvolved… but it's kind of ironic to note it was the decision of the human elements in Castro. Nicodemus and the Rat Pack argued that Rasputin's long-term goals were more insidious than simply subjugating the intolerant humans in Mission and making a statement of freedom to the rest of the world.

What spelled doom for the Consortium Uprising was the decision to attack Sunset. Given the lack of population, the Hybrids figured they'd move nearly unopposed all the way to Richmond and then swing around the north to close around the rest of The City.

No one's entirely certain what happened, though. The same lack of population means there weren't a lot of witnesses, most of whom are now dead or missing.

Buena Vista Heights and Twin Peaks reported flashes of light and sounds like 'tearing' or 'ripping' in the direction of the coast and slowly moving southward. Not long afterward, Hybrids began withdrawing from Mission, and then the fighting stopped.

**#Gyro:** Sounds… mysterious. Do I smell a conspiracy theory coming?

**#Simba:** #Gyro what up girl! Sandman said there was a spike in microwave transmissions and an increase in low-yield radiation. Maybe plasma weaponry was deployed out of the old University by the Brotherhood? However, the trading post at Fort Funston is still active, and the Conservators there deny any knowledge of what happened.

**#D-V8:** DOODs… It was totally aliens. Just ask Billy.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Give me a break. I'm more inclined to look into the potential of a Singularity going on… After all, this isn't the only odd event logged in this time period. Hell, maybe the mythical Prophet stepped in.

**#D-V8:** Aw man… Not with the Singularity thing again… Everyone knows the Prophet is just some group of posers faking it.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Just sayin. Besides, there's really not enough here to go on. All anyone can say for sure is something damn strange happened, and I wanna know who or what was behind it!

## RUINS IN THE RUINS

Eventually, Cinder led her scouting party south to see what they could find. It wasn't much.

Between nukes, earthquakes and rampaging gangs, the area around Daly City hasn't been much to look at in recent years, but now it was worse. They found nothing but wreckage — even areas like the Cow Palace that had previously been standing were reduced to smoking rubble.

Nothing seemed to be alive down there, leaving just radioactive pockets and swarms of free-ranging nanites to greet them. Cinder lost three of her group to "spontaneous cellular meltdown" as a nanovirus disassembled their DNA. She decided to go home.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Now THAT worries me!

Cinder also said she caught glimpses of San Bruno Mountain, smoking like some sort of volcano off in the distance, but she never made it that far.

## AFTERMATH

And as for Rasputin and Rakshasa? Well, tomo, no one knows what happened to them, either.

The same thing can't be said about Archdeacon White, though — he took a bullet to the head at some point. No one's sure who did it… What can be said is the net result was the same: Mission was plunged into chaos.

The Sons of Robert still try to run the neighborhood with the same proselytizing and tenets, but White was the glue holding things together, and the only question now seems to be whether it'll be internal power plays or external power grabs that finish the job.

The bottom line is, in 2090, San Francisco is just as stable as it's always been — which is to say not at all.

Oh yeah… There is one other juicy tidbit that's come out of the Western Addition. There's a rumor that a foreigner arrived in the city last year and moved into Flood Mansion — a Frenchman of Algerian descent by the name of Michel Chavausi. According to those who claim to know, he's a former Spy for Hire who went by the street name of Charon.

What that means remains to be seen.

**#Magpie:** yeah yeah! that's him! he had a really funny name and a really grumpy attitude. see? he's real! 0_0 <3 <3

**#Luciferion:** Calm down #Magpie… That doesn't prove anything. There's plenty of evidence to support the reports out of Europe.

**#Magpie:** i bet it was that patron thingy. o\ /o

**#D-V8:** Say what?

**#Magpie:** That patron thingy. Charon used to work for this weird guy called patron and would never show up in person. But it turns out it's because it was an AI and it could replicate itself and upload into someone's TAP to stay safe. And it would sometimes change its name. @_@

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Shit. People say I'm nuts.

# Vegas in 2090

## SIN CITY; THE ILLUSION OF HOPE

Sin City's seen some serious turmoil in the last eighty years. The 2085 Valentini-Osannowa War, won by the Valentini family, was the latest in a long series of turf wars over the resources that Las Vegas provides, especially Hoover Dam's hydro-electricity. More recently, Vegas barely managed to avoid direct conflict with the NAC.

Vegas isn't as big as some of its other free city counterparts, but it's still where the desperate go to make it big and the schemers go to play. Ask any hombre, and they'll tell you that it's better here than any other city, and you can't blame them for thinking that way. The Strip is filled with lights, and inside the hotels you can hear the clanking of the old coin machines, mixed with the bright displays of Hyper Reality games. If you look hard enough, tomo, you can even find a couple of tables where the dealers use real cards.

Meanwhile in the lounges, bars, and clubs — performers come out to entertain. Wannabe Idols looking for their 'Big Break', cynical comedians, nude dancers, and freaks right out of a 20th century carnival all parade their wares on Vegas's stages, promising to allow their audience escape from cold, harsh reality. And they know exactly how to make you forget how bad things are.

But beneath the polished veneer, Vegas is a cesspool of crime, corruption, and political intrigue. Agents of the NAC, Texas, Cascadia, Atlantica, the GLU, the CEL, and many of the foreign powers can all be found here, rubbing elbows, making deals, and stabbing each other in the back — sometimes literally.

You see, tomo, sometimes the big dogs need to make a deal with their rivals, and it just wouldn't be kosher to do it in public. So arrangements are made for 'representatives' to meet in Vegas. And what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas.

## GANGLAND POLITICS

The Valetnini family's control of the sim labs, casinos, and Hoover Dam are enough to put them on top of the heap, but that's only the tip of their financial iceberg. The Valentini's true influence is as large scale fixers and information brokers, headed by Sabrina Valentini.

The family won the Valentini-Osannowa War five years ago, leaving the beautiful Sabrina in control. Sabrina was much younger than her husband, Anlondo the Wolf, and was considered a trophy wife. She quickly proved her business savvy after Anlondo died and has remained in charge of the mafia, despite several attempts to displace her.

The Valentini family appears content to sit back and collect their "taxes", letting all of the lesser groups fight amongst each other. The one group that seems immune to the infighting is the NAC, who are constantly trying to worm their way into the Mafia.

The NAC does have their claws in one individual — Ricardo Bellucci, Sabrina's half-brother. Ricardo has always been envious of his sister, and suspects that she may have had a hand in her husband's demise, so when he was offered the patronage of Senator Edward Brown of the NAC, he might have the opportunity to finally trump his sister and put her in her place. For now, however, he plays the dutiful brother and waits for his plans to come to fruition.

## POWER PLAY

Vegas truly does sprawl. It was far more economical to expand outward, making the area that Vegas covers quite large, but with very few skyscrapers compared to many of the other Megasprawls. The one thing limiting the size of Las Vegas is water. With the Hoover Dam and Colorado River, the desert isn't completely uninhabitable, but the further the community is from Lake Mead, the poorer the neighborhood. If it weren't for the simulacrum laboratory in Spring Valley, most of the western areas of the city would have been abandoned.

The Valentini family controls the Hoover Dam (it's the largest source of hydro-electric power in the entire Southwest — that's a lot of energy, tomo) which maintains the city and sim labs, helping Las Vegas remain independent. Settlements in the Baja Mexico and other areas of the Badlands often pay for electricity from the dam in trade; loyal mercs and illegal goods are perennial favorites. This allows the Mafia to keep tabs on its neighbors; Sabrina Valentini often sends out 'repair crews' to keep an eye on things. It's also a very lucrative deal for the Valentini family.

The NAC also deals with Vegas for Sims. Simulacrum labs in the NAC are geared towards creating Labor and Combat Sims and lack the finesse of Vegas's systems. The NAC pays more per Sim than any other buyer. The Valentini family keeps quiet about their deal and NAC officials are free to appease their constituents by making inflammatory statements about the moral bankruptcy of Vegas and those who run it.

However, there are people in the NAC who have started calling for the 'cleansing' of Las Vegas, which worries Sabrina Valentini. While she allows for the talk of Vegas's "sin," the last thing she wants is the NAC breathing down her neck. To protect the family, and herself, she has gone on the offensive, collecting dirt on NAC officials to keep them under her thumb.

## C.R.E.A.M.

"Credits Rule Everything Around Me"—the 'Golden Rule' of Vegas. Anyone who doesn't understand it learns in the school of hard knocks. Whether you're looking for alcohol, girls, gambling, Sticky-Icky, or Black Mist, Vegas provides, ami. However, once the credits run out, there's no way to leave the city. People find work as dealers, strippers, prostitutes, or thugs at the casinos and hotels. Others find work as wage-slaves at the Hoover Dam or the Sim Labs. With the right skills, there's always work on the streets in info collections.

Those who can't manage to find work end up in the Tunnels. The Tunnels encompass all of the sewer tunnels that run under Vegas. Many of the people who live there survive off the refuse of Vegas's topside, scavenging for old clothes, food, bedding, and other 'goodies.' Disease is a big problem for Tunnelers, who often don't have access to clean water, and are constantly surrounded by sewage. Crimes against Tunnelers have started abating because of the Tunnel Rats, a gang dedicated to the protection of the Tunnelers.

There is no traditional justice system in Vegas. The Valentini's aren't interested in keeping the peace, after all, just getting a piece. For a small daily (or discounted monthly) fee, you can have Valentini Security Insurance. The more you pay, the better the service package you receive. On the other hand, this does mean that if you shoot and rob someone, the only thing you'll have to worry about is if he's more skilled in a fight than you are.

### DRUGS, MONEY, AND 'SIM' SLAVES

What makes Las Vegas such an alluring place is that anything can be acquired. Drugs, companionship, blackmail, weapons; for the right price it's yours. Everything's legal… as long as the people on top get a cut. Characters get +2 to Streetwise rolls when looking for Black Market items, however they're also 25% more expensive because of 'protection fees', 'handling fees', and any other fee that the middlemen come up with.

## LOCATIONS OF INTEREST

### BOULDER CITY

Today Boulder City (once the home of the workers constructing Hoover Dam) is the base of operations for the Valentini family. Sabrina decided to move operations here for two reasons — first, it would allow the family to guard the Hoover Dam, and second, at only 24 miles off the strip it allowed her to monitor potential threats. The only people who live and work here are Family, and extremely loyal to Sabrina. Anyone caught entering the area without authorization is detained or shot.

**Hacienda Hotel and Casino:** This casino-hotel was once the only gambling hall in the city limits. Sabrina Valentini decided to claim the Hotel, and its environs, as her personal Hotel and Casino. While she and her people actually live at the Boulder Dam Hotel, the Hacienda has become the place where many of the deals that have shaped Vegas in the last five years have been made. The only building with tighter security than the Hacienda Hotel is the Boulder Dam Hotel.

**Boulder Dam Hotel:** This white building is one of the oldest in Boulder City, though it has had extensive renovations done at the end of the 20th century. After Sabrina Valentini relocated the Valentini family here, she ordered further renovations, reinforcing the walls with steel plates, replacing the window panes with bullet-proof glass and installing cameras and turret systems throughout the premise. No one is allowed within 100 yards without Sabrina's express invitation.

**Boulder City Municipal Airport:** The Boulder City Municipal Airport is the only functional airport in Vegas besides Nellis. Sabrina uses this Airport for her personal hovercraft, and for the arrival of any important guests. Most of the time the Airport is only lightly guarded, but when planes are active, security triples.

### DOWNTOWN

While it's hard to see through the HR, Downtown is a mass of coffin hotels and cheap apartments — commonly known as cubes — housing many of the people who have come to Vegas. The high-rises offer room rates ranging from the hour to a yearly lease, depending on the needs of the customer.

**Symphony Park:** Symphony Park was the beginning of a redevelopment effort to draw tourists and locals to downtown Vegas. At the time, the Symphony Park development was to

be one of the largest urban redevelopment projects in the United States. But after a series of recessions, depressions, and bursting economic bubbles, the price of the real estate took a huge dive. No one could afford the prices, and so the buildings sat empty. The poor moved in, and the gangs followed. Now, Symphony Park is the worst part of Downtown, filled with decaying buildings and warring Gangs.

**Glitter Gulch:** Fremont Street, or Glitter Gulch as most people call it, is the second most famous street in Las Vegas. Most of the hotels and casinos that made this place famous were torn down during the Death to be replaced by high-rise apartments. However, people didn't want to lose Vegas Vic and the other brightly-colored landmarks that made Glitter Gulch such a famous place. Thus began the unofficial "Glittering Project." Thousands of avatars have constructed HR objects of the various lights and signs that once adorned the buildings there (as well as many new additions). Most have been crafted with so much love and attention that many people aren't even aware that the lights and signs aren't real, and that the buildings that they're attached to are apartments, not casino resorts. One problem this has created is that the area seems much more brightly lit than it is, leading to several injuries because the HR lights didn't reveal open manholes or other real dangers.

**Golden Nugget:** This casino-hotel is one of the few left remaining in Las Vegas' Downtown area, after years of declining profits. Now the Golden Nugget is a bright light in an otherwise dismal section of town. Owned by an older man named Jeffery Burns, he pays a large portion of his profits to the Valentini's to make sure his property 'doesn't get damaged.' But Burns does turn a profit, and the locals know that Flynn's, a restaurant inside the Hotel, has some of the best food downtown.

**Henderson:** Before the Civil War, this piece of Las Vegas was considered one of the best places to live in America, and today it's still one of the nicer areas. Many of the Vegas elite have bought the land around Henderson and created grand ranch-style villas for themselves. Each villa is protected by the best defenses and security personnel that money can buy, making the dwellings seem almost like feudal fortresses, with their lords launching raids against one another. Which isn't far from the truth.

The people who live here are representatives of nations and corporations often in direct competition with each other, and Sabrina Valentini likes to keep it that way. They are constantly vying for power, with each house employing agents, hackers, thugs, and a host of other talented individuals to both win the favor of the Valentini family and protect themselves. Be prepared to go up against some of the best mercs that money can buy if you want to start raiding these little slices of green.

**Villa Martinez:** The Martinez family currently seems the favorite of the Valentini family. To all appearances, Louis Martinez keeps his wife, Maribel, and their children Eduardo, Rosa, and Marta here in relative safety, while he makes business trips into South America. Maribel spends a lot of time with Sabrina, and some mistake it for a friendship. The truth is that Martinez was a Brazilian agent until Sabrina found out and took his wife and children hostage. Now, he works as a double agent for the Valentini family, while he looks for a cure for the nanovirus that Maribel suffers from.

## HOOVER DAM

The Hoover Dam crosses the Colorado River, and creates Lake Mead, the largest man-made lake in America. While the Hoover Dam Bypass was put in place in the early 21st century, it was destroyed during the Second Civil War, leaving Highway 93 as the only place to easily cross the Colorado River.

**East Point:** This small, but heavily fortified encampment is in charge of screening all caravans and individuals wishing to cross the Hoover Dam. A toll of 1,000 credits applies to each person wishing to pass through, and 5,000 credits per vehicle. This toll is extremely unpopular and fights occasionally erupt between guards and angry travelers. While the men assigned here are battle-hardened mercs, there's a rumor that they do have orders to let anyone pass who can kill more than half of their number. But we wouldn't recommend making an enemy of the Valentini's the moment that you cross into their turf…

## NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE

The resources of Nellis Air Force Base are an Ace up the Valentini's sleeve to keep Las Vegas a free city. Vegas is too small a fish for all the sharks to go to war over, but Sabrina Valentini has heard the sermons from the NAC, calling for a "cleansing" of Las Vegas, and she knows that it's just a matter of time before the sharks need to be reminded that this little fish has ways to defend itself.

Most of the aircraft on the base are fully functional, and all of the commercial airports have been stripped down so that the resources could be used to maintain this one airbase. Several smaller aircraft from the commercial airports serve as either extra aircraft or spare parts. Sabrina has spent a lot more time and money on improving the planes and hiring pilots than her husband ever did, offering a much larger salary than the NAC or the GLU are prepared to match.

> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Who's Valentini kidding? No way in hell can a small air squadron defend Vegas against the military might of the NAC. They might be crazy fundamentalists, but they're fundies with a standing army.
>
> **#Magpie:** @Billy_Black_Eyes: Word. Everyone knows they'd just love to cross the Rockies and level Vegas. Their golemmechs would roll right through this city, all in the name of God and country.

## MIKE O'CALLAGHAN FEDERAL HOSPITAL

While this hospital is no longer a federal hospital, it's still in use as a hospital for the Valentini and for any soldiers on the base. While the O'Callaghan hospital isn't the best one in the world, it's the best equipped one in Las Vegas, and it does accept patients who can afford the (quite expensive) fees that it charges.

## PARADISE

Paradise is an area directly south of Vegas that contains the ruins of the McCarran International Airport, the University of Nevada, and most of the Las Vegas Strip including well-known hotels such as Caesars Palace, the Palms Casino Resort, and the MGM Grand. Paradise is actually one of the largest areas of the Las Vegas Megasprawl, and was the scene of the most horrific fighting during the Valentini-Osannowa War.

Most of the Casinos on the Strip now belong to the Valentini, and the few that don't pay a large operating fee. This is

one of the few places in Las Vegas where the rich and poor bump elbows, and don't even care. "Everyone is welcome in Paradise."

Theft is a big problem here — a good Hacker can make a killing doing a Tap Dance on a person stupid enough to leave his hotel after a big win. Most people here are desperate for a fix, whether for escapism, money, booze, or some other pleasure — and Paradise promises to fulfill, but the Tunnels are full of those who were burned by that promise.

## CHINATOWN, LAS VEGAS

It would be more accurate to call this area the "Asian Quarter" of Vegas. West of the Strip, "Chinatown" was once the center of the Yakuza's power. During the 1990s, the area was renovated from a street filled with broken down strip clubs into a chain of strip malls, Asian restaurants, and specialized shopping markets. Chinatown has been on the decline since the Yakuza were driven out of Las Vegas, and the area has become quite dangerous.

## THE STRIP

The largest hotel, casino, and resort properties on Earth were located on the Las Vegas Strip, prior to the fall of the United States. Now hotels like Caesars Palace, the Palms Casino Resort, and the MGM Grand have been rebuilt and 'upgraded' after being destroyed during the fighting that has plagued the area.

**The Flamingo:** The Flamingo Las Vegas is ones of the more famous hotel-casinos on the Strip. The Flamingo was the Valentini family's base of operations prior to the Valentini-Osannowa War, however the building was destroyed during an attack nicknamed 'The Kamikaze Raid'. One of the most important features of the Flamingo is the Las Vegas Monorail station at the rear of the property. The Valentini family rebuilt the Flamingo and operates both it and the Monorail.

**Spring Valley:** Fifteen years ago the Spring Valley Simulacrum Laboratory was built, revitalizing the Spring Valley area. Most of the homes and businesses around the Labs cater to the employees and their families.

**Spring Valley Simulacrum Labs:** Las Vegas is the forerunner in the Luxury Simulacrum trade in North America, and plans to remain that way. These labs are specialized to allow small-order batches and individual Sim orders to be filled. While being ridiculously expensive, they're known for the highest-quality work and best discretion amongst those who can afford such luxuries.

> **#Simba:** Yeah. While many of the 'entertainers' in Las Vegas are humans or hybrids, the overwhelming majority of them are Sims. This works for the underworld figures that call Vegas home — they buy a model that works for very little upkeep, doesn't lose its good looks with all the wear and tear, and doesn't complain about its lot in life... at least in theory. In practice, most Sims in Vegas don't live out their lifespan. This 'mistreatment' of Simulacra has spurred a number of groups in the city calling for an end to 'Sim Slavery'—a term that covers humans and hybrids too these days. Viva Las Vegas.

## THE TUNNELS

Tunnelers come from all races, but the thing that they all have in common is that they have nowhere else to go. This desperation has unified the Tunnelers into one of the tightest communities in Las Vegas. Those who live amongst the Tunnelers are treated as part of the clan, and anyone who threatens one Tunneler, threatens them all.

**Chloe's:** Chloe is a street doc that runs a clinic in the Tunnels. Because of the occasional flooding in the Tunnels and the fact that, like it or not, they are sewage tunnels, she always has more work than she can really take care of, making her intolerant of those who waste her time. The other Tunnelers make sure to take care of her needs in trade for her help, since she's one of the few people who's willing to take care of the people that live there. Chloe will treat patients who don't live in the Tunnels. She's a very good doctor, and isn't likely to try to tinker with your cyberware, so she's worth the price.

**The Warren:** This is the closest thing to a bar as the Tunnels have, and it mostly consists of a large area filled with mismatched tables and chairs and a large cabinet in the back where the drinks are stored. This is usually where the Tunnel Rats hang out when not on patrol, and serves as a town hall of sorts when group discussions need to take place. The Warren is taken care of by an older man named Oliver. The Tunnelers, and the Tunnel Rats in particular, feel that topsiders don't belong here, and they aren't made to feel welcome.

> **#D-V8:** Anyone got the scoop on the Rats?
>
> **#Gyro:** #D-V8 Query Vegas Rats on TTioT. 'They keep the Tunnels safe for the people who live there. To the Tunnel Rats, it doesn't matter what gender, race, or creed a person has, as long as they know how to fight. Most of the Tunnel Rats have lost loved ones or been taken advantage of because no one on top cares about what happens to the people down here. This has bred a very vindictive streak in the group, and it's not uncommon that the punishment that they dish out is to 'do unto him what he has done unto others.'

# SALT LAKE & THE LDS ZIONS

> **#Simba:** So what's the word here? I can't dig anything up on Utah. It's like the LDS have a lockdown on info.
>
> **#Gyro:** #Simba I got your back. I managed to dig this nugget up... but it's in tatters. Fair warning. It's a school report by a kid.
>
> **#Cougar84:** #Gyro #Simba Wait a second-this is a report written by a student?
>
> **#Crystal_Red:** Looks that way.
>
> **#Simba:** Ya'll know #Gyro can dig like a damned dog after a bone. If this is all she could get, we should say thank you and read on.
>
> #JOSIAH.GLENN.30982
>
> #WEC.EDU/DEPT/SCIOLOGY/ST2089/FINALS/ID=JG30982
>
> #ZIONTRACK.INFODUMP

The topic of my paper is the impact of the LDS Zionist Party on the Wasatch Free Zone. The topics I will cover include the creation of the LDS Zionist Party, the isolation of the Wasatch Free Zone, and the status of both in the present day. I have

gathered my research from across HR coupled along with my own experience growing up here.

**#Rat_tay:** Uhh, anyone got some real facts on this place?

**#Crystal_Red:** How do you know the kid ain't got the straight of it? #Simba is vouching.

**#Rat_tayl:** Because kids don't know @#$%

**#Simba:** Shut up and read, troll.

As the world started to destabilize a unified group of business, military, political and religious leaders in Utah banded together. They secretly formed the LDS Zionist Party and their single aim was the survival of the way of life in Utah. Using a large variety of underhanded but necessary practices they spread their influence throughout as much of the government as possible. They quickly had enough power to be able to vote in their own agendas, the largest being the official creation of the LDS Zionist Party and the Zion Protocol.

The Mission Protocol was very simple; get as many people with ties to Utah or to the LDS Zionist Party ideals to return to Utah to prepare for the coming global catastrophe. Using the widespread communication network established by the LDS faith, the LDS Zionist Party was able to quickly spread its message and the population of Utah blossomed from 4 million to nearly 12 million. Most of the new residents were put up in temporary housing out on the salt flats awaiting their "mission call." There are two rules that come with living in the Wasatch Free Zone, service in whatever capacity is needed and live by the Honor Code.

As the population started to grow, massive construction began on the Boundary. The Boundary is mile after mile of shipping containers placed on end, welded together and filled with rock, sand and debris. In some spots, it is simply heaps of compacted cars. The end result is forty feet high in most places and at least eight feet thick. The Boundary is patrolled constantly by armed security forces. Three massive gates seal off the WFZ, one just to the north of Ogden, one to the west near Wendover, and the last one to the south past Provo. The mountains to the east form a natural barrier on that side.

**#Rat_tayl:** I can't believe I'm staking an Op on this! I need tactical.

**#Simba:** @Rat_tayl so hack GENIE_EARTH for sat pics. Duh.

Behind the Boundary, life seems somewhat locked in the 20th century. While the area was once criticized for being so far behind the cutting edge of technology, that very fact may have saved them. People still work hard, respect law and order and try to live the best "family life" they can. Life isn't luxurious but food on the table and a roof over your head is pretty fancy to some these days.

The leader of the LDS Zionist Party is John Young, a man of many years, an entrepreneur and "good family man." He is praised for putting his people first and for taking the consul of wise men and women, the most notable being the Prophet Edward Smith for obvious reasons. As he says, "The Wasatch Free Zone is Zion because the people of the Wasatch Free Zone live right, work together, and expect perfection of each other."

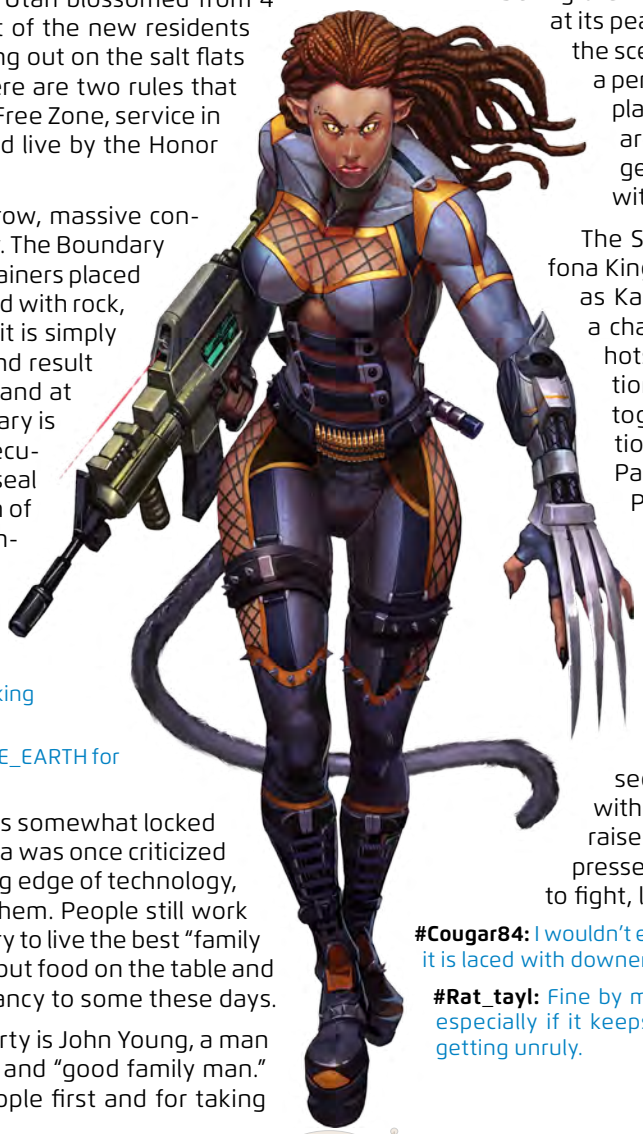
**#Rat_tayl:** Here comes the propaganda, plenty of believers though. Living "right" is a strong theme in the Wasatch Free Zone. I don't know if all that religion is true or bull$#!% but I will say this, they do seem to be having an easier time with the end of the world. Damn true believers.

## Zion

The entire area that was once the state of Utah is now part of what is known as The Wasatch Free Zone and the greater Salt Lake Valley is now known primarily as Zion. Zion itself is separated into several distinct Districts.

### THE SANDS (SLUMS)

The Sands (the Slums), which is everything west of Magna out to Wendover, is composed of row after row of surplus shipping containers left over from the creation of the Boundary. During the middle of the day when the sun is at its peak and temperatures are over 120, the scene is eerie, an entire city with not a person in sight. At night however, the place is alive with people out walking around, playing games, socializing, getting in fights and generally living without a care.



The Sands are mostly run by the Kalifona Kings gang and led by a chica known as Kaylee " Steel Panther" Matthews, a charismatic leader who was once a hotshot at some tech mega corporation. Gang leaders routinely gather together to talk about their situations, then petition the LDS Zionist Party for their needs. The LDS Zionist Party routinely sends out charitable donations to the people living in the slums. It keeps the gangs complacent and thankful for the LDS Zionist Party, and should the need arise; the ability to recruit a couple of million soldiers is always nice.

If any gang does get unruly, a security squad generally shows up within a day or so and no one seems to raise a fuss when the entire gang gets pressed into military service. If they want to fight, let them fight for Zion.

**#Cougar84:** I wouldn't eat the food out there; pretty sure it is laced with downers.

**#Rat_tayl:** Fine by me, free food is good food I say, especially if it keeps a bunch of poor people from getting unruly.

## SALT LAKE

The Great Salt Lake is an irradiated lake and is now known as Acid Lake by the locals. A group of hybrids, the Acid Lake Rancheros, mostly comprised of hardy hybrids like rats and roaches, and led by a shark hybrid named Gil have claimed Antelope Island for themselves. The hybrids created a network of docks and floating walkways off of the island, and nearly two dozen ships and boats of all types make up their motley flotilla. They seem to be rather open to visitors, especially those coming to purchase cattle, sea food, or to trade goods.

**#Simba:** I'm in the ALR Deep right now. Wow. You haven't seen the shrimp, eel, and jellyfish bio-horrors that live in the lake now. Nasty things, one of the shrimp is giant, and all white. Heh. Moby.

**#Cougar84:** I don't get it?

**#Rat_tayl:** Even I get that one. It is from Mo… meh. Forget it.

## DUGWWAY MILITARY BASE

The Dugway military base served as weapon storage and disposal for a number of years. The LDS Zionist Party seized it as their western command station for the protection of the WFZ from any would be attackers from the west. The Head of the military base is James Brigger, a career military man with a strong respect for the Honor Code and life in general.

A small research and development lab also operates out of Dugway. Headed by Doctor Persons, an accomplished neuro-surgeon, the lab does not appear to have any current projects listed in any database, nor has it ever released any results on any work it has conducted.

**#Crystal_Red:** I heard there is an open pool of radioactive waste out in Dugway. Even crazier, the pool is filled with nanotech of some type; supposedly actually breaking down the radioactive material in the pools. If it's true, it might be a game changer for the LDS Zionist Party, they could sell that tech for top dollar.

**#D-V8:** Wishful thinking that the nanotech is helpful, I guarantee you get too close to the restricted pools out there and you will see the real purpose of that nanotech.

**#Slave_2_Daedalus:** @Billy_Black_Eyes Right up your alley bud.

## ZION PROPER

The central part of the Salt Lake Valley is Zion Proper, home to the wealthy and those who work for the wealthy. The prime real estate in Zion Proper is the property on both sides of "State Street." State Street is Zion's version of the Vegas strip. Clubs, restaurants and entertainment of all types line both sides of the street. With all the lights, noise, and people one could almost believe life was normal for the people in the WFZ.

**#801_4_life:** Every couple months the heavies come in and crack down on the clubs and arrest a couple of the consistent trouble-makers, but then everything goes back to the way it is. Keeps dissension to a minimum I guess.

**#Rat_tayl:** Yeah, My H.R. Av was there during one of the busts; let me tell you, it was fast, like the party didn't even stop. A bunch of assault guys came in, grabbed a bunch of the regulars and took off. Nobody raised a hand or said a word.

## ZION MEDICAL; THE HEALING LIGHT

Hospitals and medical research facilities, united under the Zion Medical Megacorp, are the largest employer in the District. These facilities are also the biggest draw for people to come to Zion Proper. Zion Medical is a leader in non-cyberware, non-drug therapy, and treatments along with holistic medical practices that encourage the sanctity of the body — according to PR people.

Zion Proper is also the headquarters of the LDS Zionist Party, where they are housed in the remains of the Utah capital building. The government is lean and uniquely united in its views for Zion and the rest of the world. Security around the government buildings is incredibly tight.

## THE HILL

North of Zion Proper is The Hill. Named after the massive Air Force Base located near Roy, it now serves as military headquarters for the WFZ. The military force is not large, but it is well trained, well supplied and dedicated to the survival of Zion. The air force is still mostly intact including a decent fleet of drones that the LDS Zionist Party uses for long range reconnaissance.

The head of the Hill is General William Render, a shrewd defensive minded tactician, he prefers to observe and plan contingencies. His philosophy of wait and see has kept the WFZ out of numerous possible conflicts. The preservation of manpower and territory is his paramount strategy.

The area around The Hill also is home to most of the WFZ's mega corporations, the most notable being Deseret Arms. Deseret Arms negotiated a fifty year deal to supply The Hill with weapons and equipment after one of their security teams managed to intercept and stop an assassination attempt on President Smith in Zion Proper. To their credit, their weapons are extremely reliable, even in the rugged desert environments making up the WFZ. Several other major manufacturers are also located in The Hill because of plentiful cheap labor; however most of them are overseen by headquarters in the NAC. The LDS Zionist Party encourages this because it brings money into the WFZ economy that it can then use for its own purposes. Most of the people living in The Hill are military personnel, and their families, or megacorporation factory laborers.

**#Cougar84:** I served some time up at the Hill, as an outside consultant. On the surface it looks like a pretty straight up place, firmly committed to the protection of the WFZ.

**#Crystal_Red:** #Cougar84 What sort of consulting did you do for them?

**#Cougar84:** I can't say much, mostly just conducting data analysis on the reconnaissance gathered by the drones.

**#Simba:** Discover anything interesting?

**#Cougar84:** Nah, pretty sure I would still be under contract if I had.

## OGDEN

The northern part of The Hill is Ogden. Ogden was once a prosperous railroad hub, but it fell into disuse and disrepair for much of the 21st century. The creation of Zion meant the rebirth of Ogden as a shipping and warehousing district. These huge warehouses store much of the LDS Zionist Party surplus goods and equipment. The restored railways mean that large quantities of nearly anything can be on the way to any city in Zion in just a few hours. Its proximity to The Hill means it is well-guarded but more than one lucky individual has managed to sneak in and sneak out with something of value. Ogden is controlled by a unionized workforce. However, the union doesn't perform the work, they simply oversee the automated system that pulls goods from inventory and loads it onto the transports.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** At least it isn't Sim Slavery like in Vegas. Though I've heard rumors of an R&D facility hidden in Ogden.

**#Simba:** #Billy_Black_Eyes of course you have. That's why we love you, Billy.

## JORDAN

South of Zion Proper is the Jordan District. Jordan was once filled with upper middle class single family homes, homes with yards and three car garages. Once the Mission Protocol when into effect, most of the single family homes were demolished, the owners offered either a small sum for their homes or guaranteed first pick of the residences in the new dorm complexes. Now Jordan is strictly middle class high-rise dorms stretching high into the sky and deep underground. During the days in the summer so much heat is stored in the massive concrete housing structures that the whole area literally shimmers like a mirage.

The latest projections put Jordan at about ten million residents, many LDS immigrants from other areas, the largest percentage from California. The average citizen fights for survival but also fights to appear both better off and more pious. It is a strange tale of the "Keeping up with the Jones," this mentality of visible piety and generosity in the face of poverty.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** So backwards!

**#Simba:** #Billy_Black_Eyes not really. Social psychology shows an interesting phenomenon in some plexes, where everyone fights to show well off they are, even though they live worse than street rats. When pride is all you have, you damned well protect it.

**#Cougar84:** #Simba Hallelujah. Preach it brother man!

# Phoenix

INFOSOURCE.FEEDSECTION.PHOENIX.LANDO%^((*

{{TRANSMISSION ERROR..}}

**#Simba:** W...T...F?

**#Gyro:** Working on it.

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** I knew it! I knew it was only a matter of time before they got to our tag feed!

**#Simba:** Hush @#Billy I'm sure it's nothing.

**#Gyro:** Not nothing. Someone cracked this section of the feed. The whole Phoenix portion of the file is corrupted. Even the root sources are gone.

**#Simba:** That's... ominous.

**#D-V8:** I've heard word that Phoenix has been testing the Mexicali border...

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** #D-V8 really? Betcha they hacked their own files before making THE move!

**#Gyro:** Gimme a couple days, guys, I'll see what I can't recover. You may be right, though, @#Billy. Till then keep your eyes on the feeds, let's see what we can't uncover.

**#Simba:** Alright. Peace out kids, and stay safe.

# SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

DATASOURCE: MYTEL TAP CACHE ARCHIVE

#TAP::3E87CDF98EE:: (UNREGISTERED TAP)

The northern Americas haven't had a monopoly on geopolitical changes over the last century — borders south of the Rio Grande (or Río Bravo del Norte, depending on which side of the river you keep your crib) have shifted significantly as well. New Brasilia has functionally become one of the world's leading superpowers, while the New Republic of Mexico has taken great strides to stabilize and unify Central America in the face of ecological and economic disasters.

Of course, that doesn't mean there aren't tensions... Most of the smaller countries around New Brasilia (and even a couple of the larger ones, for that matter) view her with the same ambivalence that's always greeted superpowers — they're rich, which is a good thing; but they're also powerful, which is very threatening.

But let's take things one at a time, and start in the north...

## Central America

Let's face it, tomo: national borders are on the flux all over the globe, and If you'd been around about a century ago, you wouldn't recognize the borders of Mexico any more than you could make sense of all the North American nations.

The Nuevo Repúplica de México currently covers an area from Durango and Monterrey in the north to Panama in the south, with its capital still in Mexico City.

Ironically, one of the biggest breaks Mexico got in recent history was the collapse of a strong United States, but maybe not for the reasons one would think. Although the early twenty-first century had seen Mexico make a little headway against the drug cartels that were tearing the country apart, it was the sudden cessation of the "War on Drugs" that did them in.

Between that, The Death, and New Brasilia's highly religious new regime in the south, the drug cartels simply didn't have the market to sustain themselves. Most of them collapsed on themselves in minor squabbles and skirmishes, but a few got smart and cleaned up their acts. In fact, it's a dirty little secret that two of the most prominent movers and shakers in NRM politics — the Guzman and Martinez families — originally made their money in drugs.

Bear in mind, tomo: while these guys aren't exactly saints, they've put their very bloody and illegal roots behind them (and don't exactly enjoy having their grand sires' proclivities pointed out to them).

However, the thing that's probably gone the farthest in bringing much of Mexico under the umbrella of a single government has been the institution of Las Concesiones. Almost feudal in its application, a concesión de tierras (that'd literally be a land grant, tomo) is nothing more than the government handing a chunk of land to an individual, who is given the title of Gobernador. A Governor has almost absolute control over his (or her) territory, and is given a certain amount of support (militarily, economically, or technologically) based on the revenues he can bring to the Republican government from his Grant.

Technically, the Governor holds the position for life (barring extenuating circumstances), and — while the title can't technically be inherited — the scion of a Governor can continue to hold the position if confirmed by the Republican Senate.

## South America

When most peeps these days hear 'South America', they think 'New Brasilia'... and with good reason: Brazil is currently one of the leading powers in the world today. Of course that doesn't mean things are quiet and peaceful there.

Let's recap a bit for those of you who may not be up on world history...

Back in the early-to-mid part of this century, the collapse of the 'strong' northern hemisphere nations created a vacuum that the southern hemisphere could fill — especially since countries like the former United States were no longer in a position to effectively have any say in what was going on down south. This was further impacted by the discovery of a number of new 'Super Drugs' and 'Wonder Drugs' based on the properties of various flora and fauna only found in the Amazon Jungle basin... It meant that, in spite of the loss of most of the world's fossil fuels, Brazil had a means of massive income through pharmaceutical conglomerates.

The timing was also perfect for a theocratic government (the Liga dos Apóstolos) that had just taken the reins in Brazil. It enabled the Apostles to claim 'Divine Providence' to further fuel their growth and popularity. That, in turn, enabled Brazil to pretty much subsume many of the surrounding countries (well... that and the fact the Apostles are just a little militant).

New Brasilia and her protectorates now include (in addition to Brazil) what used to be the countries of Venezuela, Guyana, Surinam, French Guiana, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, and any portion of Argentina northeast of the Río de la Plata. Part of this expansion has been in the name of "The Rainforest Protection Act"; part has been in the name of "securing borders."

For over a century, Brazil's largest cities have functionally consisted of two distinct societies living side by side and pretty much ignoring each other: the favelas (basically the rural poor who moved to the city in the hope of a better life and have now become the urban poor) and the asfaltos (those who belong to the city and even profit from urbanization). Urban restructuring has largely resulted in many favela neighborhoods being built over and on top of.

Many favelas have simply accepted the new order and either live (literally) beneath the asfaltos or have been conscripted into maintaining the 'fronteira'—the boundary where the city meets the jungle. But others aren't so happy with things. The least militant simply apply various degrees of civil disobedience (up to and including the support of Crime Syndicates in

extreme cases); the most militant have moved into the fringes of the jungle, where they operate as guerillas (sometimes against the asfaltos, and sometimes against anyone 'intruding' on 'their territory').

> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** It's a little-known fact that Brazil and China are already at war — at least in The Deep. Strikes and counter-strikes by either side are almost a daily occurrence.
>
> **#Magpie:** i've never noticed it when i'm virtually there. @_@
>
> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Of course not. Unless you actively break into a 'battle', you aren't likely to see it as anything but a data slowdown and chalk it up to high pipe traffic.
>
> **#D-V8:** Damn, Billy. That just sounds like more of your conspiracy bullshit.
>
> **#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Whatever...

One other item of note: Some of you may have heard stories from long ago about German and Italian refugees fleeing to Brazil for sanctuary. Well, tomo, that's all true, and they settled in (largely in the south of Brazil), got married, raised families, and so on. And all the while they spoke of the "Glory Days' and brought up their children with visions of how great fascism was.

Believe it or not, 'The Dream' never died, and there are still a few hard cases who speak either longingly or fervently of bringing about a Novo Império (or for the real fanatics, a Neue Reich) that would see Humanity made 'pure' and all Humans socially prosperous. Fortunately, this group is a small minority — largely centered around the city of Curitiba — but they can make things ugly for the unwary... and there are other people who find their rhetoric compelling.

Okay, you say... You've been patient, but now you want to know about the countries that aren't part of New Brasilia. Fair enough. Here's the lowdown...

The South American countries not aligned with Brazil fall into one of three camps: Either they've banded together into alliances of mutual interest (Argentina and Chile), sought outside assistance (Peru), or — in a couple of happy instances — found their own legs to stand on (Colombia and Ecuador).

The alliance between Argentina and Chile was functionally ratified in the early '80s with the Treaty of Patagonia, which was their attempt to unite their mutual resources and create stable economies in the face of Brazilian growth. And, sad to say, it was spawned more out of mutual contempt for Brazil than any respect for each other. Basically, the Argentinians think Brazilians are "obnoxious" (and visa versa), as do the Chileans (and visa versa)... In fact, the Argentinians and Chileans aren't too fond of each other, either, but they happen to currently find each other less distasteful than Brazilians.

Colombia and Ecuador, on the other hand, were the two countries that managed to find a way to maintain themselves (and if you know anything about South American history, you might find it just a tad ironic).

Ecuador is something of the South American 'Golden Child'. Over the last couple of centuries, the country's kept something of a low profile while still staying active in United Nations politics, and she weathered economic crises fairly well in the past, given that the country sat atop a fair chunk of South American oil fields.

Ironically, in spite of the oil, the Glutton virus actually managed to help Ecuador.

> **#Crimson Velvet:** Wait a minute... I thought there was some sort of coup in Ecuador back in the mid teens, or something like that.
>
> **#Luciferion:** Indeed there was, Crimson. But history should show you such things seldom last — just take a look at the history of Iran or the Philippines during the twentieth century if you doubt it.

Colombia, on the other hand... Well, tomo, if Ecuador is South America's fair-haired kid, Colombia is the Black Sheep.

Let's face it: even before the turn of the millennium, Colombia was having problems — largely due to having an economy tied to drug trafficking, but also based on the fact the country has had a history of internal violence for a good two centuries. After the collapse of the Colombian Drug Cartels and the institution of a new democracy, there was still fighting going on between the government and militant rebel groups until well into the twenty-first century.

The 'fix' came as a sort of odd compromise.

In 2024, after over a decade of attempted (and failed) peace talks, the Colombian government offered a deal to the FARC-EC — who were the largest of the guerrilla factions fighting the government.

The Colombian economy was reeling in the wake of the Glutton virus, and the FARC treasury was dwindling with the slow collapse of their drug corridors. So the deal was this: the Colombian government would subsidize FARC as a military organization if FARC would allow its soldiers to be 'leased' to other countries by Colombia as mercenaries.

There was doubtless a lot of backroom dealing that went on — the FARC Resolution Treaty is kept out of the public eye and is not considered a matter of public record — but, in the end, an accord was struck and what has come to be dubbed "Colombia's Rent-A-Thug Program" was born. Well... Officially, it's called "Military Outsourcing", but it's still considered a little shady and controversial by more conservative governments.

## Panama

There's one other thing that should be mentioned when it comes to Central and South American nations: The Panama Canal... In spite of rising sea levels, there's still a chunk of land that keeps ships from going east and west between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

The above-water portion of the Panama Canal is now pretty much confined to the southern part of the traverse, but that doesn't make things any easier. Quite the opposite. Gatun Lake — which formed almost half of the canal's waterway — is now Gatun Bay, and some of the northern canal structures have become underwater hazards.

# THE CHICAGO SPRAWL

*Margo sighted her blaster on the ogre across the street. The brute—an actual ogre with a scarred eye, blunted horns, and wearing nothing but a ratty loincloth—stood there, gazing dumbly into the distance, unaware of the fourteen-year-old assassin taking aim just a hundred feet away. Data-wraiths swirled around him, detailing the price on his head. Couple hundred points for this takedown.*

*Margo counted off three breaths, waiting for the next gap in the crowd...and then pulled the trigger. The ogre jerked as a plasma bolt seared through his gut, leaving a smoldering hole in his torso. He looked over her way, scowling. She pumped a fist in the air and then briefly deactivated her Chicagowars VR filter. The blaster in her hand shrunk to an ordinary black pen, its virtual projection temporarily offline, while the monster she'd just fragged turned into a middle-aged man in a shabby business suit.*

*She reactivated the filters, preferring the more heroic perspective it offered. Then she hollered over at the deader. "I own these streets, N00B! You get on home to your wifey now, hear? You're too old for this bizniz."*

*The man glowered but had no recourse, as the VR domain had already registered his "death." Moments later, his form blipped away, removed from gameplay. Margo started to update the rest of her cg team, the rumblebeez, all on various assignments and patrols around the megacity districts, picking off targets like she just had, running rescue missions, or snagging virtual trophies.*

*Before she posted the update, though, a cg system alert appeared and a recorded audio kicked in.*

*"Congratulations, esteemed warrior," it crowed. "Thanks to your superior performance, you have been given access to an elite hunting sector. Normally, these areas would only be available to premium domain members, and all bounty targets would be alerted to your presence. However, these limitations will be temporarily waived for the next hour as a reward for your advancement. Data on your new contract is being uploaded now. Please follow the indicated route before time runs out. Happy hunting!"*

*Margo twirled in place. No zeekin way. Two primo targets in one day? This would blit her up to the top of the scoreboards pronto and take the rest of the team with her.*

*She started jogging along as a virtual arrow pointed the way. She owned these streets! A virtual warrior queen.*

*A new map opened up to her sight, hidden paths, sideways, and byways being revealed as previously false walls and fronts were removed from her private landscape schemata. Margo licked her lips and shivered in anticipation.*

*She hurried through the crowd until it thinned to a trickle of foot traffic. To her enhanced sight, she went from prowling a rusting maze of metal to an endless horizon of rolling hills. Buildings became cliff sides, while streets turned into river-swept canyons. She marveled at the fresh detail this area offered. Not the usual sprawl overlay, but a total rejigger that made it look like the entire city had vanished, depositing her in a wild outback.*

*A beacon flashed on her map, and text scrolled beside it: Last Known Location. Target Unmoving.*

*She picked up the pace, jumping over boulders and skirting logs that would be revealed as dumpsters and curbs if she turned off the cg filter. But why bother doing that?*

*The beacon didn't shift as she drew closer. What kind of moron stayed in one place in a cg battle zone? No pings of competition anywhere, either. When had she last passed by another person? Didn't matter. All that mattered was kills and credits.*

*She leapt around the corner, blaster readied as she cried the slogan that would make her famous someday.*

*"I own these streets, N00B!"*

*The clearing stood empty, though the beacon kept flashing, indicating her target should be right in front of her. Frowning, Margo kept her virtu-gun prepped, scanning every hidey-hole. As she did, the Hyper-Reality overlay wavered, and then fizzled away, leaving her standing in a junkyard piled high with garbage and scrap metal.*

*Margo turned in a circle, searching for any familiar landmark. Where was she? How had the cg map brought her here, so far from the main thoroughfares?*

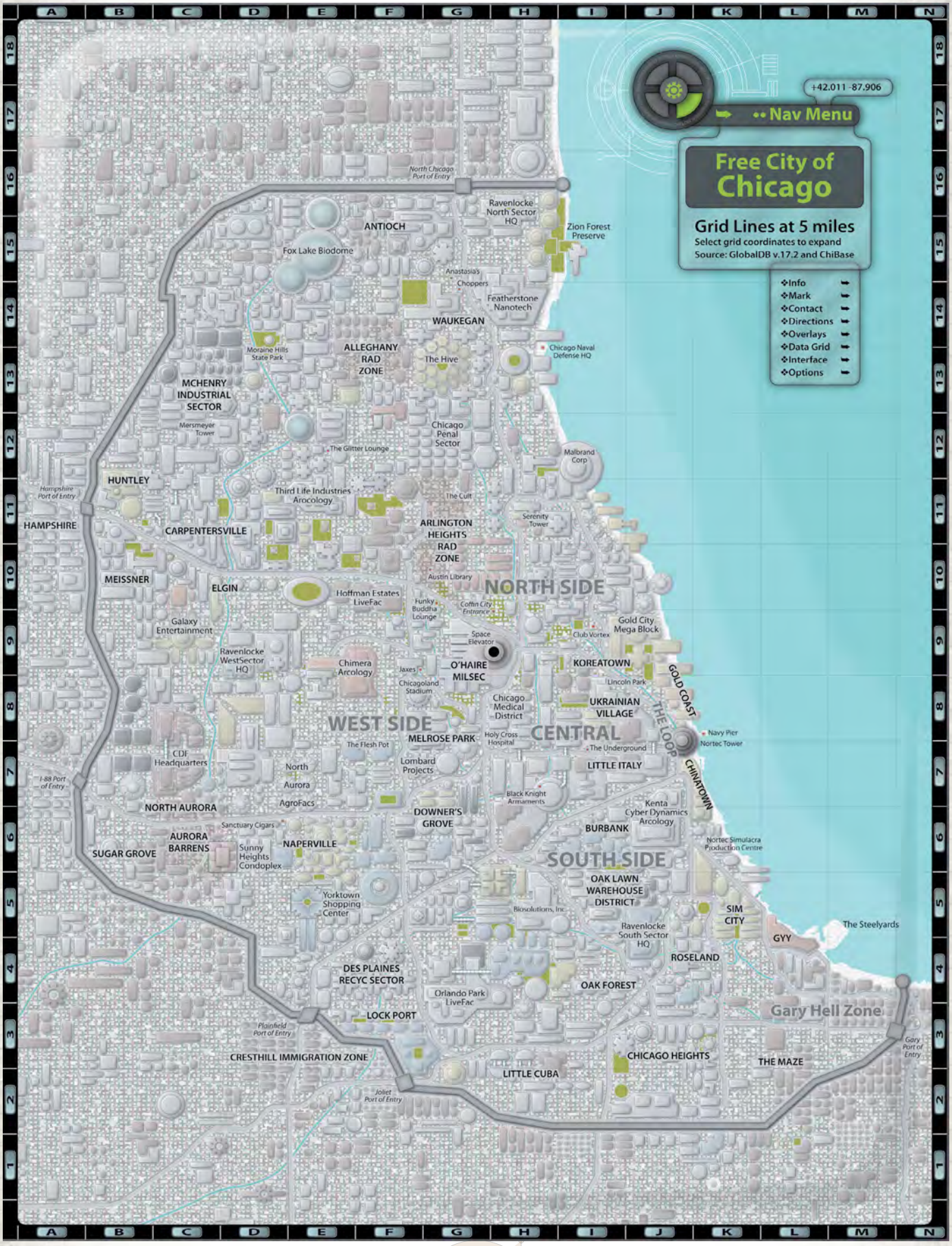
*A hack job, she realized. Someone must've patched in a fake overly and then seeded a path to lure her along. But why?*

*The answer came as the chrome reapers emerged from the heaps all around her, knives, scythes, and scalpels splotched with rust. At least, she thought it must be rust.*

*"You think you own these streets, sweets?" one asked, a tattooed, shirtless man with a purple Mohawk and a glittering silver eye.*

*"Like to play games?" a woman asked, her lower jaw plated with titanium. "Let's see you win this one."*

*Margo whimpered as she raised her cg pen in pointless defense...*


+42.011 -87.906
Nav Menu
Free City of Chicago
Grid Lines at 5 miles
Select grid coordinates to expand
Source: GlobalDB v.17.2 and ChiBase
Info
Mark
Contact
Directions
Overlays
Data Grid
Interface
Options
North Chicago Port of Entry
Ravenlocke North Sector HQ
Zion Forest Preserve
ANTIOCH
Fox Lake Biodome
Anastasia's Choppers
Featherstone Nanotech
WAUKEGAN
Moraine Hills State Park
ALLEGHANY RAD ZONE
The Hive
Chicago Naval Defense HQ
MCHENRY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR
Mersmeyer Tower
Chicago Penal Sector
The Glitter Lounge
Malbrand Corp
HUNTLEY
Hampshire Port of Entry
Third Life Industries Arcology
The Cult
HAMPSHIRE
CARPENTERSVILLE
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS RAD ZONE
Serenity Tower
MEISSNER
ELGIN
Austin Library
NORTH SIDE
Hoffman Estates LiveFac
Funky Buddha Lounge
Coffin City Entrance
Galaxy Entertainment
Space Elevator
Gold City Mega Block
Club Vortex
Ravenlocke WestSector HQ
Chimera Arcology
O'HAIRE MILSEC
KOREATOWN
Jaxes
Chicagoland Stadium
Lincoln Park
GOLD COAST
Chicago Medical District
UKRAINIAN VILLAGE
WEST SIDE
MELROSE PARK
CENTRAL
THE LOOP
Navy Pier Nortec Tower
The Flesh Pot
Holy Cross Hospital
The Underground
CDF Headquarters
Lombard Projects
LITTLE ITALY
North Aurora
I-88 Port of Entry
AgroFacs
Black Knight Armaments
CHINATOWN
NORTH AURORA
DOWNER'S GROVE
Kenta Cyber Dynamics Arcology
Sanctuary Cigars
BURBANK
AURORA BARRENS
NAPERVILLE
Nortec Simulacra Production Centre
SUGAR GROVE
Sunny Heights Condoplex
SOUTH SIDE
OAK LAWN WAREHOUSE DISTRICT
Yorktown Shopping Center
Biosolutions, Inc.
SIM CITY
The Steelyards
Ravenlocke South Sector HQ
GYY
ROSELAND
DES PLAINES RECYC SECTOR
OAK FOREST
Orlando Park LiveFac
Gary Hell Zone
LOCK PORT
Plainfield Port of Entry
Gary Port of Entry
CRESTHILL IMMIGRATION ZONE
CHICAGO HEIGHTS
THE MAZE
LITTLE CUBA
Joliet Port of Entry

# CHICAGOLAND

#INFOSOURCE

#STREETTOSTREET.TAG.DONATE

LOCAL: KNOWTHESTREETS.PEDIA.ORG

FQDN: KNOWTHESTREETS.PEDIA.ORG.CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

## A Free City?

Ironic calling a city "Free" when it's surrounded by one big-ass wall. Who's free, then? The saps stuck inside or the ones on the outs, who don't have to deal with the whole crab-bucket tangle? Ami, Chicagoland got the distinction of being the juicy bit of bone the war dogs of GLU and NAC scrapped over during the second civil war. Ain't that an honor? Funny thing is, those rabid pups weren't used to their bones biting back — and that's where the metaphor breaks down, neh? The good people of Chicago decided they didn't want to be gnawed on and started to making a nuisance of themselves.

It took three whole dirty nukes to knock sense into the bunch of lunatics, and the city's been recovering ever since. Slow and steady. Plenty of theories…conspiracies more like…on who dropped those bombs, and plenty of fingers pointing every which way to this day. But the past is the past, ami, and we Chi-town folk like to think on more important future matters, like where our next meal is coming from, or how we're gonna dodge the choppers that just jumped us outta the alley.

Live in the moment, neh? The sprawl will make you appreciate every last moment you're lucky enough to experience. When you're in Chi-town, every breath is a gift, ami. Every beat of your pulse has its price, and you better be willing to pay it if you want to walk the streets of Chicago long enough to know which ones will give you a nice stroll and which ones will wind you up as so much scrap in a dumpster behind a chop shop. Now pay attention, 'cause here's where it gets interesting…

## Life In Chicagoland

Chi-town is all about give and get. You won't see it on any TAP overlays or domains, but every single person has a running tally in their heads of the debts they owe and the debts they're due. That's what it often simmers down to in the end, when the grenade smoke clears.

We've got nearly thirty million souls crammed in behind The Wall, and when that many elbows and hips are bumping and grinding, sooner or later heads are going to start knocking and rolling right along with them, capisce? But you're a survivor, aren't you? Here to make a few credits, leave a few bruises and bodies in your wake. Make people remember your name, whatever its worth.

### GETTING IN

You'd think people would wise up after a while, thinking they're going to hop in here and immediately be the big fish among millions of shrimp. The migrants keep coming though. Fresh meat, in more ways than one. The ports are the main entries to the sprawl proper, and you've got a few options on how to make your way through those. Getting an official passport is the safest way, but requires the most patience. If you want to run the risk and pay the credits, you could find someone to smuggle you in or forge you a fake passport so you can skip to the head of the line. As high as The Wall is, numerous operations are in place to help you slip over, under, or through the boundary for a price. If you aren't careful, though, those same "helping hands" may just take your credits and then turn you over to the guards for a bounty. However you get in, you can be sure you'll be paying with time, credits, blood, or a mix of all three.

### GETTING OUT

Why would you ever want to leave? Plenty of folks never step foot, paw, or claw outside the sector they were born in, and they aren't complaining. And there's got to be a reason so many people are fighting to get in here. But if you want to go see the wide world, here's how you do it. You either scuttle out the nearest port, hook up with a ride across the lake, or shuttle up the Space Elevator and start guzzlin' air canisters. Going that route usually means handing over plenty of credits, or selling your soul to some space-bound corp that reminds you every day how lucky you are that they keep you alive. The trick usually isn't getting out of here…it's getting back in.

### GETTING AROUND

Get some boots. Heaviest ones you can strap on. That's the best piece of advice I'll ever pass your way, and this is the only time it's free.

Want something a little faster than clomping along? Individual maglev vehicles, VTOL craft, and jump cars are pretty nifty if you can afford them. Public transportation such as the maglev "El-Trains" make a knot of the place, and the subways are decent, so long as you remember which stations to avoid once it gets dark. You can always go old-school and chug your way down the streets with a motorbike, chem car, or other clunker.

If you ever get lost, then I pity you, because the hyper object navigation infrastructure embedded throughout the entire sprawl makes it near impossible for that to happen — unless your guidance system has been hacked.

### GETTING BY

That all you're gonna settle for? Just getting by? I'd hoped you had bigger dreams than that. A little spark of vision. This here is a microcosm of the solar system itself, a regular bottomless pit of opportunity. And everything in the sprawl runs on credits. How do you get those precious credits, you ask?

Sell your soul. Sell your mind. Sell your skills. Sell your body. Hell, sell someone else's body, preferably cold in a bag, ticked off your bounty list. Plenty of odd jobs always need running. This gang wants that gang leader snuffed. This corp needs espionage run on that rival conglomerate, or a pretty piece of tech stolen. Or you could go legit and run-n-gun with the militia.

In other words, get tough, or get rich and muscle to protect you. Make friends in high places, or buy them off. Learn enough to make yourself useful to the right folks, or learn how to make others useful to you.

## The Powers That Be

Time to get a clue about the pizza pie of power this city has been sliced up into. Otherwise, you might take a bite of the wrong slice and wind up with a mouthful of anchovy instead of a delish meatball deep dish. Oh god, I'm salivating. Someone ring up DP!

Anyhoo, ami, it's all about loyalty — which, luckily, can often be bought with enough credits. So...are you going to stick by the faceless corps through thick and thin so long as they keep your water running and fill your trough with slop? Got a thing for helping friends and family keep all their vital organs on the inside, where they belong? Or are you the 'all for one, and one for screw you guys' type? Here's the major players you should keep an eye on.

### CHICAGO GOVERNMENT

You've heard Chi-town referred to as the "Free City of Chicago," haven't you? Well, there's always those who like to amend that to the "Free So Long as You Do What We Say City of Chicago." How's about we see who's set themselves up as judge, jury, and executioners this week, ami?

### THE COUNCIL

Their faces have been popping up on the Hyper Real channels lately, promising big changes, peace and prosperity and all the usual blather. And by "faces," I of course mean those virtual constructs they've been using to mask their true identities. Only thing different about them, compared to the other hundred would-be rulers that pop up every year? This Council seems to have the military influence to back up their orders, and their presences has been detected in every sector.

But The Council is bad news, lemme tell you. Even if they are trying to do right by us sprawlers, it won't matter in the end. This city has a thing against centralized authority. Especially ones who try the anonymous route. Are they men? Women? Hybrids? AIs? A mix of all the above? Who knows? Yes, The Council knows, very funny. But they ain't saying, and maybe we're better off staying ignorant.

### CHICAGO DEFENSE FORCE

When it comes to keeping the Sprawl free, not even the biggest wall will do any good if it isn't manned and backed up with enough firepower. Besides, sometimes the threat isn't an external one. If a crisis ever overwhelms the private security organizations, that's when the Chicago Defense Force is called into action. A last line against the apocalypse. Problem is, the many noble volunteers and conscripts who compose the CDF can get a little power hungry once they're let off the leash, and end up causing just as many riots as they put down. Still, it's a bit better than dropping another nuke on all our heads, neh?

If you want a name to link them to, look no further Petrus Desonvacce. Yeah, the baby-faced spokesman you see on the feeds, talking about how wonderful it is to serve the city. Supposedly, they're keeping him out of active duty, though, in case he's unlucky enough to ruin that handsome complexion with a scar or two. On the other hand, if you want a grittier truth, then bring a bottle of whiskey (the real stuff) to Obed Lothem, aka The Obsidian Wolf. Used to be a run-n-gunner in the wilds who got conscripted to turn his gun sights on malcontents inside The Wall instead.

### CHICAGO MEGACORPS

Wanna hear a hilarious megacorps joke? Too bad, because that's in violation of anti-humor regulation V.33.Axxii and you are now terminated from your position. Proceed immediately to the exit or you will be fired upon by building security. Do not attempt to "liberate" your coffee mug from the break room.

Sad thing is, I'm still not sure if that's serious or not. The megacorps funnel plenty of credits into Chi-town, but they're pretty picky about who those are distributed to. It's all trickle down with them, and the corps know how reliant blue platers are on them, since they provide everything from our water to our food to our shelter to the filtered air. They know they can squeeze us dry, and the only reason they haven't is because they're too busy fighting each other.

Even while they're scrapping over us, there's tell of a secret meeting that happens a few times a year, one where you don't get invited unless you're worth at least a few billion credits. The deals struck there are overseen by an utterly ruthless honcho who is somehow unaffiliated with any one corp but has them all quaking in their sim-leather boots — goes by the name of Guilder, but you didn't hear that from me, ami.

### THE UNITED NATIONS

Nothing united about it, except that every nation involved acts in their own interests. Oh, and they've got nice uniforms. Minimal presence here, though they do pay attention when the dogs of war start sniffing around. They're all about keeping the peace, but everyone knows they keep peace best by occupying volatile territory and maneuvering so they're the ones in charge when the tear gas settles. U.N. General Adony Okimbe keeps a cold eye on their troops, while their political front is handled by a polished and prim official named Stella Rezuvoltk. She gives speeches so flawless that she's been accused of being an android, letting her handlers remain in the shadows.

## The Wolves

Chi-town is a bleeding beast, and the wolves are always circling, waiting for it to stumble so they can leap in to gouge out the juiciest flank. Chicago has a crowded pack of wolves prowling its streets and back alleys, and they're always getting into nasty scrapes, trying to establish alpha status.

### BARBARIANS AT THE GATE

In a time where even the poorest of the poor can get a TAP, you've got to make a pretty conscious choice to reject the net completely. The Barbarians at the Gate are a singularly savage bunch who dress in leathers and furs — often stripped from unfortunate hybrids or neko — and wield rustic weapons they've forged with their own hands. They choose leaders by the diplomatic technique of "who collected the most scalps this month?" and that current distinction goes to a set of twins: Ulrik and Reshan. Other clan leaders include Behadja, who always has a pack of starving mutts ready to attack on her command, and a lunatic called Gullet, who has

made cannibalism into a fine art. Somehow, their backwards brains have decided proximity equals property, so if they're squatting by the ports that control Chicagoland access, then they must be in control of the whole city, neh?

## THE GANGS

Pinged this old slang the other day that describes gangs perfectly: "Dime a dozen." Now, I don't rightly know what a dime was, but these days, gangs are giving the roaches a run for their credits when it comes to infesting all the corners and holes they can find in the sprawl. Some are run like mini-corps, all precision and profits and calculated territory expansion. Some just want to see the people bleed and the sprawl burn. Then there are those bound by codes of honor they think makes 'em oh-so-special. Whatever gets them up in the morning, gangs are active in every single sector to a large degree, and are often the blunt tools (or rusty knives) being manipulated by hidden hands in larger plots.

Watch out for the South Side Storm Troopers, who go out of their way to prove they're still the deadliest gangbangers in Chi-town. There are few subsectors where they don't have a least a handful of cells. The Burners are a unique bunch, populated entirely by hybrids and mutants who have taken the hazardous Arlington Heights rad zone for themselves and welcome all comers who dare to defy that claim. And if you wander too close to the Aurora barrens, be prepared to pay homage to the Aurora Angels of Death, who hold onto control there with tight and blood-soaked fists. While spread throughout the sprawl, the Angels concentrate operations closer to The Wall, with their troops funded by smuggling goods and people into the city.

## THE SYNDICATES

Without leaders, illegal activities amount to nothing more than spitting into the wind. Doesn't really accomplish much and just makes a mess, capisce? When criminal organizations actually start getting organized, though, look out. Enter the Chicago crime syndicates. They're not motivated by emotional fluff like most gangs. Syndicate members are there to enforce their bottom line. The credits, man, the credits. Syndicates are responsible for much of the bribery, blackmail, racketeering, and smuggling throughout the sprawl. There are rumors they've even got agents planted deep in the Triads, Mexican Mafia, and major gangs throughout the sectors. Intelligence and ill-intent makes for a nasty, if extremely efficient combination.

The Black Rose Syndicate is on top of the heap at the moment, the main competition to the South Side Storm Troopers in the Gary Hell Zone. They've secured such widespread influence by being extremely well-organized, almost a criminal corp, and are tightly linked to the Bratva-Vory "Brotherhood."

## THE TRIADS

Bet you never would've guessed it, looking around at all the borgs and chimeras and ronin walking these streets, but Chicagoland has a pretty big reputation for diversity. All that means, though, is we get to take our pick from a variety of colorful criminal factions. Among these are the Triads, Chinese-based gangs who like to style themselves as a shadowy army ruling by means of drug trafficking, credit dupes, data-theft, gambling, and — when all else fails — ruthless elimination of all opposition. Secretive and with numerous ceremonial rankings, Chi-town's triads encourage loyalty through highly ritualized inductions and oaths binding new members for life.

One of the more active triads goes by the unassuming name of the Purple Incense Party, and they're identified by the tattoo of a dragon's eye peering out of a stylized sketch of flame and smoke. Their Dragon Head is the elderly Shou Gao, whose frail build belies a cunning intelligence. A young woman known as Li Xiao is his Vanguard, handling offense operations. She's never seen without a veil covering the lower half of her face, and there's rumors that she's been spliced for superhuman senses and speed.

## THE BRATVA-VORY

Also known as the Russian Mafia, this "Brotherhood" has muscled into numerous sectors, hiding its activities behind brothels, cyber fight clubs, simsex parlors, unauthorized augmented reality simulators, illegal Hyper Reality domains, and even lethal VR hacks. On the streets, they're represented and protected by the Black Rose Syndicate, who get plenty of weapons, upgrades, and stims in exchange for their loyalty. Far more overt than the triads, the Bratva-Vory is quicker to resort to violent ends when they've been the least bit slighted, and they can hold grudges like no one else. Making them angry is akin to rousing a bear from its den. In other words, you better be able to skip town fast, have better connections and protective measures, or have someone you can trip and push into their vengeful path as a distraction.

The Big Brother of the band is a meathead called Oleksy Kovalik; though in the past couple years, he's been letting a love for fine vodka muddle his self-control, and an up-and-coming smuggler, Artur Sokoloff, is apparently gunning for the top. A coder known as отравленный язык is famous for managing their gambling domains and crafting truly spectacular VR hacks that have turned plenty of their enemies into gibbering idiots within seconds.

## THE MEXICAN MAFIA

Chicagoland has certainly made a brave effort to round up and incarcerate the more undesirable elements from the streets, maybe thinking sticking all the malcontents in one spot will somehow make them see the error of their ways. Instead, what they got was the Mexican Mafia, a prison and penitentiary-based criminal organization that continued operating within the heart of our very own faulty justice system. Vicious, bloodthirsty, and unforgiving, the Mexican Mafia has actually thrived inside the VR prisons, its members populate. If you ever end up on the wrong side of the law, making contact with this organization might be in your favor. They're often identified by symbolism linked to the number thirteen…since M is the thirteenth letter of the alphabet, capisce? Death is the only escape from their ranks.

Jesús Salazar is their current general, and has a flair for using occult spookery to scare new recruits into submission. His immediate lieutenant, Alejandro Gutierrez, is handy with a shiv and any sort of makeshift weaponry. The skull tattoo covering his entire face tells you all you need to know about his charming personality.

## The Unaligned

Sure, I get going solo. Fewer folks to split the credits with. Bigger boost to your rep, less overhead. But lemme tell you, precious few make it for long without at least a few fellow ronin to fall back on. And you aren't the first to strike out alone. Plenty of like-minded souls could use your knowledge and skills.

Besides, have you ever thought about how the other gangs and territory lords will take to some punk snitchin' gigs out from under them? Sure. Forget the hidden handshakes, the tattoos, the blood oaths, and wearing your underwear on your head — but never forget the value of having a few unaligned allies at your side. In Chicagoland, you're never totally alone.

### FIXERS

Hey, you got a problem with credits lately? As in, not nearly enough of them? Then you'll be happy to bump into a reputable Fixer who happens to have a contract that could keep you afloat a little longer. Fixers are the go-betweens who keep certain faces anonymous and certain hands clean of any blood. They can be your ticket to bigger and better things… but remember that pretty much anyone can call themselves a Fixer. Sometimes the only way to tell a good Fixer apart from a rotten one is by who pulls out a blaster after you complete a job.

### FREELANCERS

Freelancers chart their own path through Chi-town. No two are alike, and we like it that way, because it means there's plenty out there to handle the down-n-dirty jobs no one else wants. 'Course, that also means they get jobs that toss plenty of shiny credits their way. Anyone wanting to set themselves up as a freelancer will be entering a world of cutthroat competition. The work is often illegal, dangerous, and sure to end in blood and tears. In the end, all that matters to a freelancer is their reputation and the number of credits in their account.

### INFOBROKERS

Verily I say unto thee, learn to love Infobrokers, for they are the road to salvation. They're tapped into the deepest data feeds twenty-four seven, and are making connections between yesterday's megacorp assassination and today's half-off deal at McCafe that you wouldn't even dream of imagining. You want to run a successful contract? The more informed you are going into the fray, the better. But beware. The DataStream flows both ways, ami, and infobrokers won't blink twice before selling whatever dirt they've dug up on you to the highest bidder.

### SMUGGLERS

Point A to Point B, no questions asked. That's the beauty of Chicagoland's smuggling system, a vast under-network of transportation specialists who know all the hidden sprawl byways, or have a particular talent for running a black-market golemmech across town and making it look like a flower delivery to their grandmother. Illegal weaponry, implants, data… whatever makes your little heart go pitter-pat. Confidentiality is their specialty, and some go to extreme lengths to guarantee it. Even saw a smuggler who'd spliced his mouth shut so he literally couldn't squeal on his clients…though of course, a rival eventually bombed his VTOL car and just brain-hacked his corpse. C'est la vie.

## Chicago Laws

Our legal system, huh? Righto. I could use a good chuckle. Only thing that makes me laugh harder is the concept of a code of honor. Ever heard of "might makes right?" That about covers it. Oh sure, the megacorps have whole underground vaults and AI archives full of their precious regulations. But when you take away all the shine and skim, it all comes down to "Behave, or your pretty skull will be beaten to a bloody pulp." Of course, the definition of "behave" is what's slipperier than a greased hog chimera to hold on to.

Best advice is to familiarize yourself with what's expected in the main areas you'll be working. And you'll always find people are pretty imaginative in reinterpreting even the most basic laws to work for their advantage in a particular situation.

## Geography

Want a good idea of how Chi-town is laid out, ami? Go scrounge up one of them antique compasses. Y'know, the types with the twirly arrow that's chummy with magnetic fields. Now place that compass on the ground…and smash it in with your boot heel! Done? Right. Now scuff the bits around until you've got a lovely mess of broken glass, scrap metal, and dirt. Now take a picture, cause that's as clear a map of the sprawl you can rely on, for all the good it'll do you.

All right, all right. Lemme paint you a pretty picture if you're going to whine so much. Four sectors (you can count that high, right?). North, South, West, and Central. They make up an enormous puzzle you'll spend the rest of your life trying to put together, and all of it wrapped up and squeezed tight in the anaconda coil that is The Wall.

### THE WALL

What keeps one person out keeps another person in. Remember that, ami. With The Wall, it's all about perspective. After the nukes dropped Chicago back to a temporary Dark Ages, GLU and NAC finally decided the sprawl was a bit too hot of a potato to handle and slunk back to their holes to keep lobbing potshots at each other. During the reconstruction, the fine folks of Chi-town decided, for some weird reason, that they didn't like military goons tromping over their doorsteps. What, oh do tell me what sort of crazy twist of technology could possibly keep out armies trying to march in and trample our precious freedom? How about an enormous wall? Brilliant!

Some say Chief Administrator Thomas Stern should be considered a genius for the simplicity of his solution. Others say he was just compensating for something. Two years is all it took thanks to plenty of cheap android and sim labor, and now we're all ringed in by this 121 mile long, 150-story high monstrosity. The Wall hosts millions of souls who have carved out hovels and warrens within the infrastructure — sometimes literally — figuring the defensive nature of their home will keep them protected.

Consider The Wall being Chicago's big middle finger to the world, eh?

# North Chicago

## THE LOOP

What do you get when you cram every major Chi-town business into just under two square miles? This downtown corporate sprawl is nicknamed The Ant Farm for a reason. But it got stuck with being called The Loop due more to the eternal hamster wheel grind the employees and managers sprint through in order to meet their daily sales quotas. Day-in, day-out, it's all one big cycle of buying, selling, discounts, markups, violent takeovers, and endless cups of coffee and stim-sticks.

In order to pack all these people into one spot, The Loop is constantly undergoing new construction, adding yet another skyscraper to the dozens blocking out the dusty sunlight. All of them pale in comparison, though, to the Nortec Tower, which once more puts Chicago in the world record archives for the tallest office tower. More on it later, ami.

Beyond the hum and mutter of the worker drones in their cubicles and offices, The Loop is known for one major thing — offering every service or product imaginable up for sale. Of course, where credits are flowing, there are plenty of opportunists. Hackers and fixers abound, looking to make a quick flip.

## NAVY PIER

Chicago's old Navy Pier is now mostly controlled by Nortec Industries, which uses it to ship in outside resources and staff through a far faster and less dangerous route than the usual city ports. They also rent out pier use to any megacorps who can afford the fees, and the place is stacked high with shipping containers at all times, forming a high-security maze. There's talk of an underwater lab a mile or two off the coast… but hey, talk is just talk until it's proven, ami.

## NORTEC TOWER

The administrative HQ for Nortec Industries, this massive skyscraper has secured the world record at 4,367 feet — and lower levels are rumored to plunge into the earth as deep as the tower is high. It is a city unto itself, with lockdown mechanisms in place that can seal it off from the outside world for years at a time. Lower echelons are mostly staffed by the very simulacrum Nortec is famous for producing en masse, and the tower is patrolled around the clock by Ravenlocke security forces. The tower is divided up into sim labs and experimental centers, entire floors devoted to R&D, plus offices, executive suites, living quarters, and rec centers for on-the-premises employees.

## GOLD COAST

It's all in the name, ami. The Gold Coast is where all the people with too many credits for their own good go to spend them all on the high life. Pretty, shiny people living in their pretty, shiny buildings, far away from the muck and mess the rest of us have to trudge through. They've got access to the finest foods, the cleanest beaches, the best fitness facilities, and the jazziest clubs.

Despite most of the sprawl's borders wriggling like worms stuck on the sidewalk, the Gold Coast has kept itself stable. Once you've crossed Lake Shore Drive, North Avenue, South Divisions St., Areas of State St., or Oak St., you've "gone golden" and better be ready to pay some hefty fees in order to stick around long enough to admire the gleam. Monthly rent for even the shabbiest pads would keep most blue platers in the green for a few years. Easiest way to get into the Gold Coast is to be born there. Even if you rack up enough credits, most Coasters throw nasty looks at freelancers with dirty pasts who try to land a pad.

## GOLD CITY MEGA BLOCK

Even the 1% has a 1%, and they live in the Gold City Mega Block. Buildings here are usually a combo of living quarters and corp offices, and are so crammed full of amenities you could spend the rest of your life indoors, waited on by sims and server androids. Corporate CEOs live in elaborate penthouses overlooking their invisible empires. This is the golden carrot Chi-town dangles before sprawlanders, who all dream of someday making that big strike that launches them to the heights.

## CLUB VORTEX

One of Chi-town's social hot hubs, Club Vortex is an amorphous den that changes subtly from night to night, so it's unrecognizable as the same place from one week to the next. Club owners accomplish this through tricky application of Hyper Reality projections plus rumored nanotech furnishings that can be reshaped on command. An evening at Vortex is a dizzying experience, leaving you questioning the most basic fundamentals of reality. Catering mainly to the elite who live in the Gold Coast, Vortex is also known to provide "whiteout" rooms, offering complete privacy for all manner of deals and deliveries.

## COFFIN CITY ENTRANCE

Want to see what all the hype is about with Coffin City? Need to contact some of Chi-town's criminal elements and want to do so further away from prying eyes? This here's the main subsurface elevator that'll drop you down to the would-be Eden of the sprawl quick enough. Let's just hope you get a chance to ride back up. Notice the use of "main." Now be a smart Chi-sprite and figure there are plenty of other entrances and avenues that never get marked on official maps. That's the great thing about this place…there's always another way in.

## AUSTIN LIBRARY

Once a cultural epicenter, the Austin Library is now a bombed-out shell that hosts a multitude of illiterate mutants who have been using scraps from first editions as toilet paper for the last few years. Plenty of clients have sent salvage teams into the library, either for posterity's sake or to add to their private book collections. Given the library's position on the southern border of the Arlington Heights rad zone, such paper-retrieval runs pay well for the higher risk involved.

## ARLINGTON HEIGHTS RAD ZONE

Once a nice little suburb until it got hit by one of the dirty nukes during the second civil war, Arlington Heights is now little more than radiation-saturated wasteland that everyone does their level best to avoid at all costs. Think twice before taking any sort of contract that sends you into this rad zone, since you'll likely be dealing with violent mutant animals, zeeks, and hungry hybrids, not to mention the whole radiation poisoning threat.

### SERENITY TOWER

A popular executive-level recreation center, the Serenity Tower is four dozen stories of lounges, bars, massage parlors, spas, gift shops, jewelry stores, and other top-quality, luxury stores and services — all of which never close. Corporate types often bring clients and vendors here, treating them to the finest treats and treatments to soften them up for the closing sales pitch. No one gets in without a Serenity Titanium Membership, and no one gets out without spending at least a thousand credits (required by the fine print).

### THE CULT

This faux-religious club draws a crowd by mocking the clothing, teachings, worship, and ceremonial trappings of the "belief of the week." Employees dress as monks, nuns, gurus, and all other manner of clergy or religious officials, while clients are encouraged to engage in all the "sin" they desire. A real priest is even paid to be on the premises and provide absolution (for a few credits) for patrons who otherwise might leave with a soul too burdened by guilt. The drink menu offers plenty of sacramental wine.

### MALBRAND CORP

If it's up for sale, it probably has a Malbrand logo on it somewhere. There isn't an industrial pie they don't have their fingers stuck in, catering to the mass of blue platers that make up most of Chicagoland's. Their corp tower has an even bigger footprint than the Nortec Tower, though it hardly rises as high. While it serves as offices and a corporate base, it's also a mega-mart that requires riding automated carts to get through within a day. Some folks even use it for cheap entertainment, treating it like an amusement park they can take the whole family too.

### THIRD LIFE INDUSTRIES ARCOLOGY

Always on the cutting edge of gene cloning, gene therapy, and DNA recombination, TLI has set up a secure arcology to give its employees and lab departments an expansive facility where its evolutionary gene-hacking and splicing work can continue mostly unmolested. No one but TLI knows exactly what goes on inside the arcology (yes, there are always rumors of alien DNA and inhuman beasts being bred deep in their blackout labs). Lately, there's been numerous employee kidnappings and killings orchestrated by zealous religious groups.

### THE GLITTER LOUNGE

The Glitter Lounge sets itself apart by being mostly staffed by chimeras and hybrids, which draws a crowd of similarly spliced beings as well as baseline humans fascinated by such genetic alterations. The shows put on here are a cavalcade of inhuman strength, agility, and endurance, while the food and drink selection is tweaked to appeal to tongues and noses far more sensitive than your average pair of nostrils.

### CARPENTERSVILLE

This older neighborhood has an odd penchant for handmade goods, crafts, and antiques. Many shops here are rundown, if not entirely derelict, but if you're ever looking for a relic from pre-war days, a search through this area's market district is your best bet. The locals are proud of their work, and most families have been rooted there for several generations.

### HUNTLEY

Huntley is one of the temporary living quarter subsectors where thousands of migrants are processed into the city every month. From there, many transition over to the McHenry Industrial Sector for quick employment. The Barbarians at the Gates make frequent sweeps through the area, always eager for recruits willing to opt into a more rustic, fulfilling, and violent lifestyle.

### McHENRY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

This sector is a labyrinth of warehouses, factories, plants, vat farms, cyber mills, and droid shops. It provides one of the larger employment bases for the entire sprawl, drawing in at least two million blue platers to man the pumps, pipes, and vats every day. It also serves as a popular target for drug thugs, and prostitute rings — all ready and willing to give workers a bit of relief during union-mandated lunch breaks.

*///THREAD JACK///*

*LOADING...*

HOT SPOT: MERSMEYER TOWER

#INFODUMP LOADING

**#Billy_Black_Eyes:** Mersmeyer Tower INFOdump

### ORIGINS

Chicago's McHenry Industrial Sector is easily identified by the rearing Mersmeyer Tower, the questionable legacy of the Mersmeyer Construction Company. In 2089, Mersmeyer Construction got it in their tiny brains to build a luxury living community and lure in primo workers. The whole project got bungled from the get-go, ami, starting with the forced relocation of locals from the construction site. This sparked numerous protests that started verbal and quickly escalated to bottles and stones.

Mersmeyer Construction hired a security contractor, but a few APCs and uniformed thugs simply waved a red flag before the enraged bull of social injustice and the attacks intensified. Then came the death of Karl Whitman, a drug dealer and pimp who was run over by an automated construction vehicle. Normally, only junkies and johns would've mourned his demise, but the company issued a statement placing all blame on Whitman. This unrepentant attitude escalated the already violent atmosphere.

Empty bottles soon became Molotov cocktails, supplemented with gunfire. The next six months spiraled out of control as the corporation fought a gang-led insurgency, with workers maimed and deadlines obstructed by sabotage. Gunshot wounds and acid burns became the largest health insurance claims for Mersmeyer's employees, spiking the insurance premium by millions — and a mere rumor of discontinued health benefits sent the workers on strike. The same day the strike launched, hundreds of injured workers filed a class action lawsuit against Mersmeyer, seeking compensation for their suffering.

The final nail in the coffin was the unassociated Charon attack on global banking. Mersmeyer execs awoke to find their accounts drained, among many other financial victims. Buckling under the demands of injured workers clamoring for insurance payouts, massive negative publicity, and the

unexpected credit loss, Mersmeyer Construction folded. This left Mersmeyer Tower an empty shell, protruding from the centre of the McHenry Industrial Sector.

### A STRANGE BENEFACTOR

In early 2090, a street doc accomplished the impossible. Doctor Hans Meppen had always remained neutral in the ongoing gang violence, and so had strong connections with all local gangs. Five large gangs had moved into the abandoned Mersmeyer Tower and were fighting for the top floor. When the leaders of these gangs were all injured and brought to Dr Meppen, he held an impromptu peace conference enforced by the threat of "surgical complications." The leader of the Free-flow Raiders refused to negotiate, and Dr Meppen arranged an injection that triggered a massive attack of Toxic Shock Syndrome. Unsurprisingly, the remaining leaders became incredibly responsive.

His plan proved simple enough: the top level of Mersmeyer Tower would be his private sanctuary with improved medical facilities. Each gang was then given control of one of the wings surrounding the artificially lit central courtyard. The gangs gave a cut of their ill-gotten gains to Dr. Meppen, who arranged to have the tower's facilities finished.

**System Note:** Most Mersmeyer Tower residents are unaware that the majority of reconstruction funding comes from off-the-books pharmaceutical human testing.

Ravenlocke has recently marked the tower as a place of interest, monitoring for any signs that a new criminal syndicate may emerge within the fortress-like base of operations. Ravenlocke has offered impressive bounties for insider information about the tower — though the ongoing gang rivalries have kept worries at a minimum.

### LEVELS 1-49: COMMERCIAL AND COMMUNAL AREAS

The lowest tower levels remain under construction with exposed wires and concrete walls covered with graffiti. Stores, retail outlets, and other facilities crowd these areas, each frequented by particular gangs and boycotted by others. The communal areas contain several privately owned bars and diners, while chains like Jalapeno Bob's Mexican Grill and Fat Sally's BBQ! can be found nearby.

Other than the inevitable Malmart infestation on almost every floor, Urban Punk owns the largest retail space, occupying the majority of the forty-eighth floor. Shops are open to all gang members once they've passed a weapon checks and accepted specialized peace bonds on cybernetic weapons to prevent rapid deployment. The UP48 — as it's known to the residents — maintains an almost complete range of Urban Punks products and is home to several matter assemblers that allows them to produce specialized goods within 48 hours (for a suitable price).

Liftjacking is a common practice on these floors, with elevators stopped while gangers slide down the cables to take hostages or pick off targets. The fire escapes and stairwells connecting the wings are the place to visit if you want to be shot. Gangs guard their borders with unmatched ferocity, with trespassers shot on sight, and survivors shot again.

### NORTHERN WING: ROTERVOLKSSTURM

The northern wing is home to a militant band called the Rotervolkssturm. Having fled Germany after a failed attack against the Eurasian Parliament, they arrived in Chicago in 2083 and established a small fiefdom. Their turf was in the centre of where Mersmeyer Tower stands today. In the early construction days, Rotervolkssturm didn't make a single move against Mersmeyer. Instead, they planned and stockpiled. Later, they pioneered the cruel tactics of crippling and maiming Mersmeyer's employees. Gang colors are gunmetal grey pants, tucked into heavy duty combat boots and red shirts with the sleeves removed or rolled up.

A man named Bismarck is in charge and is more machine than man. Standing over two meters tall, all of his limbs are cybernetic and his torso is a heavily armored carapace devoid of synthetic skin. He has a strong Bavarian accent and prefers to use his native tongue whenever possible. His blond hair is cropped close to the scalp and his cybernetic eyes glow a faint blue. His addiction to augmentation has left him suffering cyber psychosis that manifests in an unbridled (and perhaps hypocritical) hatred of simulacrum, an attitude that infests the rest of the gang. Any simulacrum unfortunate enough to be caught on their turf will be invariably killed in inventive and disturbing ways.

### EASTERN WING: THE BANNON CRIME FAMILY

The Bannon Crime Family used to be small fry, running rackets, bookmaking, piracy and cheap drugs. Stable, but stagnant. They still run the same schemes, but moving into the tower has given them opportunity for unprecedented expansion.

In the aftermath of the civil war bombs, Gordon Bannon found that his family's relations with unions and political reconstruction efforts facilitated a vast profit in cold hard credits and favors owed. On his death in 2089, his only child, Mallory, inherited the main pipeline of hard-copy pirated software and global entertainment. Mallory works to keep the true strength of her syndicate hidden to avoid unwelcome attention from other syndicates. They simply don't have the experience to take on the cream of the criminal world such as the Yakuza or Triad. At least, not yet.

### SOUTHERN WING: FREEFLOW RAIDERS

The Freeflow Raiders embody flashy fighting. All members are adept at Parkour and members of "The Flow," employing these techniques to their advantage whenever possible. The Southern Wing's internal architecture has been heavily modified with bolt holes and bars across all surfaces to allow for rapid movement through the territory.

The gang has no official colors, but their appearance is always as vivid as possible. Many sport stylized FR tattoos in nano-enhanced glowing inks, and color-changing fiber optic hair is another favorite way of showing allegiance. Submachine guns and handguns are the weapons of choice, facilitating easy movement. Firearms are often modified for excessive muzzle flare, with custom ammunition creating different color flares. The gang excels in hand-to-hand combat, training in a variety of martial arts from unarmed disciplines such as Muay Thai and Kung fu to armed disciplines such as Kenjutsu and Eskrima.

At the moment, The Flow is facing problems since "surgical complications" killed their last leader. Other gangs are aware of this and the ongoing indecision makes for an inviting target.

### WESTERN WING: THE NATION OF PSIONS

The Nation of Psions is equal parts cult and psion supremacist group with a doctrine of psychic social revolution. The Nation is despised within the tower due to their arrogance towards and active persecution of "lesser humans." This is further reinforced by the eugenic policies forbidding psion women to "breed" with non-psion men. The governing body of The Nation Council (incidentally composed entirely of men) advocates that non-psion women be taken by psion men in order to produce more psion children. The western tower wing is largely unpopulated as only desperate or insane non-psions live there.

The other gangs are united in their opposition of The Nation of Psions, but The Nation's abilities have proven to be a great equalizer.

### LEVEL 250 – DR. HANS MEPPEN'S RESIDENCE & SURGERY

The entire top floor is Dr. Meppen's home and surgery, with wings dedicated to individual gang service and staffed by medically trained simulacrum. The doors into each wing are guarded by heavily armed and armored guards who meet any attempt to enter another gang's wing with lethal force. Troublesome patients often develop "unforeseen complications" and are taken to isolation wards for examination.

Dr. Meppen is in his mid-sixties, his narrow face is dominated by strikingly large blue eyes that regard everyone around him as merely an assistant or subject. His thinning hair is combed to the side and held in place with wax. He displays a constant limp and often walks with a cane. His impeccable white lab coat gives him the aura of a scientist who dances on the fringes of ethical responsibility.

### SUBLEVELS 1–10

The sublevels are built around a large industrial generator that runs on flammable products and waste. Not built for long-term use, this generator is now causing smog to form around the tower base. In recent weeks, growing instability has lead to power outages that affect the elevators and lights throughout the building. The lowest sublevel connects to Chicago's sewer system and is home to a small community of mutants that survive on tower refuse. So far, only Dr. Meppen knows about their presence and they've abided by the agreement they reached with him.

/// END THREAD JACK ///

### CHICAGO PENAL SECTOR

With the sprawl so rife with criminal activity, apparently the best solution was to designate a thirty square mile block as the prison sector and stash all the serial killers, drug ring bosses, and criminal masterminds in one spot, where they could exchange notes. The place is kept on round-the-clock lockdown except for the daily intake processing. The penitentiaries are overseen by Ravenlocke, but there's an undercurrent of criminal activity even within the barbed and bricked walls, fostered by the Mexican Mafia.

### CHICAGO NAVAL DEFENSE HQ

A portion of the Chicago Militia is dedicated to keeping the sweeping waterline protected, since it represents the most vulnerable city front. Countless migrants try to swim into shore, smugglers constantly use the beaches as launch points, and that's not to mention the many chimera and cyberforms Nortec and TLI keep dumping into the lake. Launched from both the Naval HQ and the southern pier, the Navy works tirelessly to keep the waters clean and safe.

### THE HIVE

The Hive began as an experimental community trying to form a more united, peaceful society through the sharing of interconnected implants, TAPs, and VR domains. It is one of the few areas in Chi-town where zeeks and other mental freaks are openly welcomed, so long as they lend their peculiar psychic powers to the ongoing — and growing — social experiment. It's difficult to ever gain entrance unless you can prove you buy into their unique philosophy, and most people find the level of data transparency and lack of privacy uncomfortable, if not disturbing.

### ALLEGHANY RAD ZONE

Another epicenter for one of the dirty nukes, this zone is rife with mutants and gangs that make this area their battlefield. In fact, some of the local gangs make it a trial of loyalty to send would-be members through a solo trek across Alleghany.

### WAUKEGAN

A smaller city swallowed up by Chicagoland after The Wall was built, Waukegan holds a rather large blue plater community alongside a dense unemployment population.

The only ones who really benefit are the corporate landlords who are constantly raising rents and kicking entire families to the curb when they miss a single month's payment. As such, Waukegan sees high housing turnover, making it one of the more transitory subsectors.

### MORAINE HILLS STATE PARK

One of the few parks in the sprawl that isn't overrun with gangs, it provides a rare oasis for those seeking peace among the chaos of the city — that is, so long as you aren't there when one of many VR domain war reenactments aren't taking place there.

### FEATHERSTONE NANOTECH

The Chicago HQ for the international Featherstone Nanotech company, supplying the sprawl with all the terrifyingly tiny robots that make for medical miracles, faster food processing, and military applications that we try not to think about too often. They're in pretty tight with Ravenlocke and the Chicago Militia, partly because they need the military defense to protect their premises and keep operations intact. As the use of nanotech is still hotly debated, they continue to have numerous public enemies who would love nothing more than to permanently shut the place down.

### ANASTASIA'S

Anastasia's is the Deep's answer to the Flesh Pot. Where the latter traffics solely in physical delights, Anastasia pleasures are found in the recesses of the mind. Once a patron steps

MERSMEYER
MERSMEYER

inside this club, they can choose any avatar they please to represent them to all other clientele, and you can be sure no one shows their real face. What would be the point? At Anastasia's, it's all about shedding the limits of the body and remolding your psyche into whatever form you prefer. Deep-addicted junkies go here to get their cerebral cortexes directly triggered, turning a few seconds into an eternity of white-hot ecstasy. If you enter without your TAP active, you'll mostly see people lying hooked up to cyber-pods or staring off blankly into space.

### CHOPPERS

Who doesn't love cheering when a cyber-enhanced fighter lands a final blow on another, cracking their skull in half? Even better when you've placed your bet on the winner. Choppers is the most famous fighting pit in the city, hosting nightly bouts that often end up with one fighter maimed, or dead. It can take a few years of fighting in minor clubs around town before a rookie gains enough rep to get a chance at dominating the ring at Choppers.

### FOX LAKE BIODOME

Fox Lake used to be a popular body of water for Chicago citizens to swim in and sail on. After the war, with the consequences of dirty nukes still fresh on everyone's mind, an industrial coalition was formed to build the biodome that now protects one of the city's main water processing plants. Several thousand people also live within the biodome, maintaining processing operations while enjoying sanitary living conditions of far higher quality than most of the rest of the city. There's always a several-year-long waiting list to apply for entry.

### ANTIOCH

A self-named religious subsector, Antioch hosts members of practically every world religion while also providing room for temples, mosques, churches, and countless other places of worship for the spiritually inclined. While there's an understandable tension between various religions that are naturally at odds, there's also a general leaning towards tolerance and respect. The largest congregation by far is found at the Center for Universal Harmony.

### RAVENLOCKE NORTH SECTOR HQ

The largest of Chi-town's Ravenlocke HQs, the North Sector base not only has the usual armories, mech garages, and squad barracks, but also a massive training center for new recruits, a cybernetics plant, R&D labs, and far more than they'll ever reveal to the public. But, 'ey, at least they keep the streets safe, neh? So long as it's in their interests, of course.

### ZION FOREST PRESERVE

Five miles wide and twenty-five miles long, Zion Forest Preserve not only stands as a testament to biodiversity within the sprawl, but also acts as training grounds for Ravenlocke soldiers preparing for woodland warfare. Dozens of smaller chimera communities hide among the trees here.

## South Chicago

### BURBANK

Tired of gnawing on the same old vat-produced, cloned food blocks? Get on down to Burbank and take your pick of the hundreds of restaurants vying for business. Sure, most of what they serve is the same old foodpaste if you wanna dither about the actual ingredients. But the cooks and chefs in this sector must perform some kind of dark ritual magic in their kitchens, because the dishes they serve will have you salivating for the rest of the day. Top ranked dives for the week include The Gnawzone, Veggiefreakz, and La Chatte Noire.

### OAK LAWN WAREHOUSE DISTRICT

Aka Smuggler's Paradise, because once a delivery disappears into the labyrinth of warehouses in this zone, unless you know exactly where it was stashed, you'll never dig it up on your own. Plenty of legitimate goods and supplies trafficking runs through this area, but legit is boring, neh? Almost every megacorp has bought up property here, and it's a prime target for gangs running protection rackets.

### DES PLAINS RECYC SECTOR

Most city waste and water gets funneled through the recycling sector, where it's purified and sent out for another cycle through the mouths of the masses. Most people try to ignore the fact that they're guzzling they're own sanitized piss, and that the food paste in the tube they just bought was in their stomachs a week earlier. The main recycling plant also processes most of the city's trash and cybernetic castoffs, reducing to elemental components for resale.

### LOCK PORT

When migrants get signed on by the megacorps and processed through the Plainfield Port, their next stop is Lock Port. This is where they get temporary quarters, a decent vat-grown meal, sanitizing showers, and paperwork finalized for their new lives as Chicagoland citizens. The sector is mostly processing agent offices, trying to help people get accustomed to their new environment with orientation sessions, a few credits to get them started, and a map that marks out the sectors they shouldn't go anywhere near unless heavily armed.

### LITTLE CUBA

Little Cuba is one of the few areas where the Mexican Mafia's influence is entrenched beyond the penal sector. Here, they're represented by a splinter group called Muerto 13, identified by the bone-handled daggers always strapped to their bared arms. In fact, the gang's presence in this Hispanic-dominated community has given rise to rumors about a series of tunnels and prisoner smuggling routes that stretch from this southern portion of Chi-town all the way up to Chicago's Penal Sector itself. After a recent rash of prison riots, several big-time crooks went missing in the chaos, while word circulated on the news feeds that they'd been spotted down in Little Cuba before disappearing again. The coordination and resources required to pull off this sort of operation would be staggering, but the Militia apparently gave enough credence to these tips that they marched in and shook down the whole area.

So far, neighborhood sweeps have turned up nothing but legitimate storefronts and restaurants, which only makes it more suspicious if you think about it long enough.

### CHICAGO HEIGHTS

Did you know this area used to be known as the "Crossroads of the Nation" before the second civil war? Funny thing, considering nowadays they might as well have an invisible force field surrounding this neighborhood for as welcoming as they are. Practically every citizen in the area is decked out with weaponry, from fist packs to the latest plasma blasters. And if they spot someone who they decide doesn't "belong" in their precious protected community, or who might be endangering the peace, they aren't shy about escorting them out.

### THE MAZE

With its snarl of streets, The Maze is one of the more popular areas for jump bike racing, road wars, and any other illegal motorsport competition. Far enough away from Ravenlocke patrolled regions and close enough to Gary Hell Zone that no one bothers trying to refurbish the area. Get down there early if you want to get your bets in before the deaths and crashes start piling up.

### GARY HELL ZONE

Welcome to Hell, ami. All your nightmares of a burnt-out, bombed-out, gang-infested wasteland are realized in this strip of devastation. It's a zone only the most hardened survivors should ever wander into, as the roving predators (human and otherwise) will make short work of any unwary ronin. At this point, the sector is so bad, no security force wants to even bother with it, which just lets the bodies keep piling up in the streets.

### ROSELAND

What's in a name, ami? Call Roseland by any other name, and would it smell so sweet? Nope, 'cause this neighborhood plain ol' stinks through and through. This place is just one step above Gary Hell Zone, and that's not saying much. Settled by Dutch immigrants in the 1840s, Roseland tried to fashion itself into quite the cosmopolitan community — until the gangs took over. And that's where they've stayed until this very day, looting, shooting, and generally making living conditions as uncomfortable as possible for folks just trying to get by.

### OAK FOREST

You won't see a single blade of grass in Oak Forest, much less a tree. The sector is the primary residential area for blue platers who work in the Oak Lawn Warehouse District, giving them a short commute and a decently secure neighborhood, thanks to heightened Ravenlocke presence. The homes and apartment complexes are far from pretty, but they function well enough, and that's all that counts in the end, neh?

### SIM CITY

When a simulacrum is fortunate enough to be emancipated, receiving full citizenship rights, they often wind up in Sim City. There they can be better integrated with society, have a chance to start earning their own credits, and flesh out a unique personality. The area has been the focus of numerous urban development efforts, but these have been largely unsuccessful, due partly to a series of freak disasters plaguing the zone — including airplane crashes and unexplained disease outbreaks.

### GYY

Business workers, executives, military operatives, and political figures looking to get into Chicagoland without worrying about all the port dynamic can fly directly into Gary International Airport — but the area has its risks. The whole surrounding sector is almost fully gang controlled, so you don't want to be stuck there for long. GYY is fully walled off to public access, and most travelers use jump cars to get from the terminals to the city proper.

### BIOSOLUTIONS INC.

A CHIMERA subsidiary, Biosolutions Inc. has a minor presence in the sprawl, offering an array of biomedical services and simulacrum production tech. Much of their work is linked to Nortec, and the more suspicious news hounds out there have tried to establish a stronger link between the two corporations, suggesting Biosolutions is just another front for Nortec operations.

### KENTA CYBER DYNAMICS ARCOLOGY

The world's premier cyber-tech developer and manufacturer, KCD has established a thriving business in its Chicago arcology, providing all grade of implants to civilians and military clients alike. This particular arcology is responsible for their more primo streetware products, whereas their gutterware lines (carefully devoid of any identifying logo or registry tag) are handled off the premises.

### NORTEC SIMULACRA PRODUCTION CENTRE

This is the Centre where Nortec produces its top-of-the-line simulacra. These are the bioforms sold to the highest bidder, custom jar-grown, and specialized for individual buyers' exclusive tastes. More labor-intensive and common-build Sims are outsourced to its LiveFacs across the rest of the city. But here is where you go if you're looking for a puppet crafted just for you and no one else.

### THE STEELYARDS

The Steelyards used to be the main waterfront industrial center, providing materials import, export, and storage; however it is currently an unviable location due to its proximity to the Gary Hell Zone. With its cranes and warehouses now overrun by gangs, the Steelyard is now a constant battle zone, with countless corpses shoved into the waters surrounding the docks every day.

### RAVENLOCKE SOUTH SECTOR HQ

This Ravenlocke HQ doesn't handle as many live patrols, but actually acts as the private sec corp's surveillance center. It's here that they monitor, record, and analyze millions of hours of video LIVEfeeds, keeping an eye on the many arcologies, industrial sectors, and megaplexes they're contracted to protect. There's enough material in their archives to blackmail half the city!

### ORLANDO PARK LIVEFAC

Another simulacrum vat factory under the jurisdiction of Nortec Industries. Nortec apparently has also struck a deal

with TLI for this factory usage, allowing them to produce hybrid life forms and reestablished species that have been approved for public exposure.

## West Chicago

### MEISSNER

Would you believe Orthodox Judaism has survived this long, after so much persecution? While many religious communities have settled up in Antioch, Meissner is distinguished by having Chicago's largest Jewish population. It's one of the more insular subsectors around, but so long as they stay quiet, no one's complaining.

### ELGIN

Once a small city in itself, now subsumed by the Chicagoland sprawl, Elgin has some of the oldest original architecture around, with multi-generational families embedded in the area for near a hundred years. Needless to say, there's a lot of pride and general dislike of outsiders. Hybrids are particularly unwelcome in this sector, and the local reputation has been sullied by a spate of specism hate crimes in the past few years.

### GALAXY ENTERTAINMENT

Want to get the latest sim seared straight into your optical nerves? Ready to experience a full-sensory VR domain? Want to spend every last credit you have on the latest and greatest entertainment tech? Galaxy Entertainment is all too happy to oblige. This here's their Chicagoland headquarters, where they produce and develop any sort of media for the eager masses. Movies, Deep channels, digital overlays, simsex vids and every illegal gutter flick unleashed on humanity…you name it, they make and sell it. This center acts as admin offices, production studios, and even has a subsector devoted to sensory immersion chambers.

### RAVENLOCKE WEST SECTOR HQ

Ravenlocke makes sure to keep a clear presence in most Chitown sectors, and the Westside is no exception. This is where they launch all local patrols, process criminals to the penitentiary or any number of their unmarked "rehabilitation" centers, and present a positive public face so citizens are assured the private sec corp always has their best interests at heart.

### HOFFMAN ESTATES LIVEFAC

One of the primary simulacrum factories owned by Nortec, Hoffman Estates LiveFac has recently suffered numerous production setbacks due to internal sabotage and external opposition. Seems like every day, this massive clone vat center is the site of another protest group of varying degrees of vehemence and violence. Many point to CDF as the main culprit, given their anti-clone extremism, but no proof has been confirmed.

## CHIMERA ARCOLOGY

The CHIMERA megacorp is globally famous for pioneering simulacra engineering, making the genetic-manipulation breakthroughs and laying the technological foundations for the many artificial life forms we bump shoulders with and work alongside today. Like Nortec and Third Life Industries, it faces ongoing opposition to its operations, especially from anti-sim military factions or highly religious organizations such as CDF. To keep scientific progress safe from the ignorant masses and protect its valuable (and often brilliant) employees, CHIMERA built this arcology with high-security housing, entertainment facilities, and social centers. As one of the most powerful megacorps in the world, they spare no expense in protecting their staffing investments, and should anyone be foolish enough to try and take one of their workers for ransom, CHIMERA will go out of its way to turn the would-be-kidnapper into a decisive and violent statement.

## THE FLESH POT

Anything goes at the Flesh Pot, so long as it happens in meatspace. If you're visiting this establishment, you're either going to enjoy the parade of gorgeous, surgically-altered prostitutes, perhaps pick one out of the lineup for a back room dalliance, or you're heading there to get your own body tweaked and transformed in a variety of exotic options. So long as you've got the credits, the Flesh Pot has the right company to keep you warm and tingly all night — or for a few minutes, however long you need. Call ahead for private reservations or for group rates.

## NORTH AURORA AGROFACS

There's plenty of food around town, but most of it's shit. You've got the North Aurora AgroFacs to thank for much of that. Their accelerated agricultural factory never actually factors in things like taste or visual appeal as it works to churn out and clone enough bland food paste, vat chum, and fake meat to keep the masses from starving.

## CDF HEADQUARTERS

The NAC maintains a presence in Chicago through its control of the Congregational Doctrine of Faith, a priestly secret police. Their theocratic ideals put them at odds with many megacorps that eschew morality in place of profits, or Nortec, as they decry the soulless manufacturing of simulacrum. As such, the CDF is believed to be behind many of the industrial bombings and sabotage that plagues these ungodly companies.

## NORTH AURORA

Aurora got hit hard in the war, and even thought there's been some rebuilding in the area, it keeps getting knocked down by the near-constant local gang warfare. Not exactly where you want to invest in real estate, neh? Mostly, it's an inhospitable stretch that daring smugglers or freelancers use as a shortcut when they want to avoid Militia patrols. It's claimed by the Aurora Angels of Death, one of the more infamous sprawlander gangs.

///THREAD JACK///

*LOADING...*

HOT SPOT: : LUNATIC FRINGE

#INFODUMP LOADING

## A VISION IN THE WILDERNESS

As a young boy born in the shantytowns beyond The Wall, Elijah was recruited by the American Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith. He became one of the Blessed Damned — bands of kids and teens who bullied, thieved, and killed for the ACDF, committing sinful acts for the order's benefit while allowing the actual believers and holy soldiers to avoid having their souls sullied with too much guilt. Members of the Blessed Damned were promised later absolution plus a chance to enter the city if they proved their devotion. Elijah's specialty was raiding medical supplies, but he quickly became addicted to the very painkiller meds he stole and was cast out from the Blessed Damned.

Believing his soul to be lost, Elijah tried to overdose on painkillers. He lived, but suffered an extremely vivid vision (some would say hallucination). It cast his sight through The Wall, revealing the city he'd only ever dreamt of. Elijah saw Chicago as a paradise beckoning him to claim its blessings. When he woke, gripped by a new zeal, he'd also gained a psionic ability that allowed him to thrust brief, but overwhelming visions into the minds of others. Doing so, though, left him plagued with crippling headaches, increasing his reliance on painkillers all the more. Using his new "zeek" nature, Elijah convinced a smuggler to get him over The Wall.

Upon finally entering the Chicago sprawl, however, he was dismayed by the rampant violence, corruption, and destruction. Yet as he wandered, stealing to survive, Elijah came to understand the deeper truth. The Chicago he'd seen wasn't a physical one, but existed only in the minds of true believers. Just as it had taken drugs and stretching the mind to inhuman limits to reveal it to him, so he must use those same tools to reveal it to others.

## FEARSOME ENEMIES. FEARSOME ALLIES.

Searching for Chicagoland's most despised and forsaken members, Elijah encountered his first breakthrough in the bombed-out, gang-infested, and deadly warrens of the Arlington Heights rad zone. There, two gangs in particular vied for prominence. One group of undesirables ran under the name "Loki's Liars." This Hyper Reality-addicted gang of drug runners had transformed their private TAP domain into a version of Valhalla and lost most of their ability to distinguish between VR and base reality. Led by Borghild, a cyber-enhanced psycho who claimed they were the chosen of the gods, Loki's Liars came into conflict with another major local gang, the Burners. A vicious crew composed of mutants and beastly hybrids, the Burners were led by a gargantuan bull hybrid named Neal. Nothing looked to end their constant feuding until Elijah strode into the midst of one of their territorial brawls.

Fearlessly, he stood among them and projected his strongest vision yet. The ferocious beauty of his prophesied paradise stunned both gangs into submission, but left Elijah spasming in agony at their feet. Awed by his power, both Borghild and Neal agreed to a temporary truce and mutually watched over

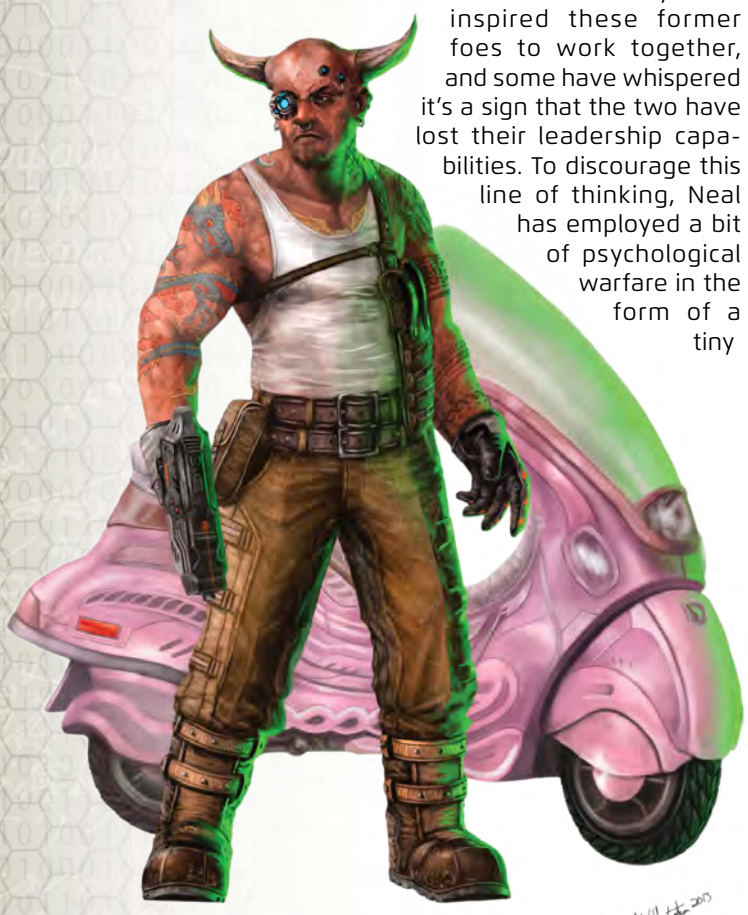
Elijah as he recovered (thanks, in part, to a unique blend of psychotropic drugs supplied by Loki's Liars). Upon regaining his senses, Elijah quickly took on the gang leaders as "prime converts" and redirected their efforts to holier pursuits — promising them great power and influence if they upheld his vision. But they needed more followers, more funding, and a haven in which to experiment and find the true path to inner paradise without fear of exposure.

Thus, the Lunatic Fringe was born, as if from a fever dream.

## EARLY BUSINESS DAYS

The Lunatic Fringe is a recently opened nightclub that's drawn attention by its edgy location and services. Sitting within the Arlington Heights rad zone, smack dab between Burner and Loki's Liars territory, Lunatic Fringe is already gaining a reputation for mixing psychotropic substances into its cocktails. A gutted and refurbished old hotel from before the bombs, the ground floor was converted into a series of bars and pleasure dens. The main reason to go is to get the highest buzz possible and make every night one your fried-out brain will never remember. It's also a chance to enjoy the spectacle of two still-warring gangs coexist in peace, so long as opposing members only encounter each other on club grounds.

This peace is enforced by the two main bouncers, Borghild and Neal, each respected and feared by everyone who crosses their path. While Borghild uses his cybernetic senses to sweep the interior for malcontents, Neal uses his bull hybrid stature to maximum effect at the front door, ensuring any would-be entrants know the cost of stirring up trouble inside. No one knows exactly what inspired these former foes to work together, and some have whispered it's a sign that the two have lost their leadership capabilities. To discourage this line of thinking, Neal has employed a bit of psychological warfare in the form of a tiny pink scooter he rides to and from work. Anyone lured into attacking him by this supposed sign of "weakness" is quickly shown the error of their ways — usually by being gored to death.



## GROUND FLOOR

The main club area may not look too different from any other night haunt, until you notice most patrons cling to the bars as if their centers of gravity are entirely at odds with the rest of reality. The few on the smoky dance floor are also moving rather erratically as if hearing music no one else can. No one has spotted any big-name DJs in the place yet, but there's always an undercurrent of whispers and murmurs to the pulsating music, words forever on the edge of comprehensibility.

The very nature of the brain-addling services and substances that abound on the premises makes for conflicting and disjointed personal accounts of what exactly goes on within the club's many private chambers and behind the secured doors towards the back of the expanding complex.

## UPPER LEVELS: 2–4

The upper floors of the old hotel have been converted into a variety of dwellings and bunking rows for Loki's Liars and Burners alike, as well as armories, food and supplies caches, and a surveillance hive that monitors all other areas within the building. New recruits are trained here under the watchful eyes of Elijah, Neal, and Borghild. Small medical recovery rooms are available should anyone overdose on "The Rapture," as they've started to call it.

Elijah has chosen a humble side room as his abode, where he often sits in the dark and dreams of the whole of Chicago achieving a deeper vision of reality. He doesn't show himself in public much anymore, preferring to nurse himself back from the brink of mind-shattering headaches after having converted new believers. Wispy black hair forms a dark halo around a balding pate. His eyes have sunk deep in their sockets, and those who stare into them too long will rarely remember their true color. He wears rough clothing, often patchworks of synthetic and real leather that still gives him the look of a wilder living in the shantytowns beyond The Wall.

## SANCTUARIES & SECURED LABORATORIES – LOWER LEVELS: 1–3

This is where the true work happens. Elijah has gathered a surprising array of lab equipment scavenged through raids and black market purchases, and tapped into the knowledge of some of the area's premier drug runners — several of which have been "converted." New formulae are brewed up in these lower levels, which are then tested on willing disciples and ignorant clientele. A number of tunnels have been dug out to the sub-basements of surrounding buildings, allowing for supplies to be transported without drawing too many eyes.

Patrons and other gang members who show an openness to religious experiences while under the influence are brought down here and subjected to further visions until they either join the cause or prove unworthy of induction. Those who are rejected have their brains bathed in deadly concoctions and are then released far away from the club, where their ravings will not be linked to the establishment.

/// END THREAD JACK///

## Central Chicago

### LITTLE ITALY

Technology evolves faster than we can comprehend…cities get nuked to dust…one megacorp swallows another whole… but despite the chaos, Little Italy is still the best place to find primo pizza when you need a sauce fix. Sure, the neighborhood is a bit more of a demographic mingle, thanks to the second civil war and migrant influx; but the Italian culture has never exactly been known for closing up shop and quietly slipping away, even when technically outnumbered by its new tenants. Two hundred years of Italian settlement leaves a deep footprint here, bolstered by a sense of national pride. The area may not be as wealthy as it once was, but glory days come and go. Aggressive preservation attempts have kept a few landmarks intact, including Arrigo Park, Our Lady of Pompeii church, and the Italian-American Sports Hall of Fame.

### KOREA TOWN

Don't let the name fool you here. Korea town is actually the most racially and ethnically diverse sector around. Plenty of migrants who don't have roots elsewhere tend to get funneled into this area, adding more spice to the mix. Vestiges of the original Korean population still exist if you know where to look.

This doesn't stop the place from being a hotbed of gang warfare. In fact, because no particular group can lay a solid claim to the area, it only encourages even the smallest gang to try and take their cut. Practically every gang in Chicagoland keeps sniffing around here, getting into countless scraps, trying to somehow prove they've got the cojones to take and keep control. My advice? Keep your nose out of their business and the Seoulpa rings will tend to ignore you in return. That's how most of the area's denizens avoid getting bullet-riddled on a daily basis.

### UKRAINIAN VILLAGE

The Ukrainian Village started out as a promisingly peaceful community back when the original settlers established its industrial borders — but it's been all a slide into the gutter ever since. The ethnic Ukrainians who once dominated the population charts have been slowly pushed out while plenty of gangs and criminal hives have replaced the businesses that supported the region.

To grind a little salt into the wound, all the abandoned factories surrounding the area have been left to rust and rot. Toxic manufacturing waste has seeped into the landscape and buildings over the years, adding mutants, disease, and large swaths of contaminated earth to the mix.

### CHINATOWN

There's a reason Chinatown clings close to The Loop and The Gold Coast. The Chinese have made some heavy investments in Chicagoland's post-war development, and they're sticking around for good to make sure they see decent returns on their deposits. The Chinatown population keeps the culture thriving with curio shop, restaurants, automated needle carts, and souvenir joints. They've got their fair share of gangs too, but fortunately the mile-long civilian region — the single largest in Chicago, if you'd believe it — at least gives them room to hash out their street-side battles with minimal innocents getting caught in the crossfire.

### THE UNDERGROUND

Can't afford to have your implants tuned up in Chicago's Medical District? Want to avoid having to scan your biometrics at Holy Cross Hospital? Get on over to The Underground, the best-known private chop shop in town. The prices are right (cheap) and the service is stellar (fast and confidential). Just remember they tend to get all their medical supplies by raiding supply caravans, while many of their extra organs and implants aren't grown on the premises, but bought off chrome chopper gangs.

### LINCOLN PARK

City planners have done their best to cling to the few parks this sprawl has left, trying to keep the industrial expansion from taking over fully. Lincoln Park is their biggest success so far, partly because it's so close to the Gold Coast City Mega Block, with the elite living there willing to pony up to keep "their" park looking nice. Just like the nearby beaches, access requires either an annual (1,000 credits) or daily pass (100 a head). Ravenlocke patrols and battlebots are a constant presence, but that doesn't stop opportunists from trying to abduct people from the area, since they know it's lousy with CEOs and others worth a ransom.

### CHICAGO MEDICAL DISTRICT

It's no coincidence Chi-town's largest medical sector popped up alongside the O'Hare Military Sector. Many of the clinics and borg shops here are owned by Ravenlocke or the Militia, giving soldiers and mercs a steep discount whenever they need patching up. Civilians can solicit here, but unless your life's on the line, prices are gonna make you wonder if any cure is worth the deduction to your credit account.

Oh, and none of that "chakra alignment" or other mystic healing bullshit here. All services are mech or flesh-based. You want some chants and crystals? I know a place in Korea Town…

### HOLY CROSS HOSPITAL

Nothing holy about it, ami — unless you mean the patients praying they'll be discharged with all the parts they came in with. The docs here do a good job, don't doubt it, but they're always looking for ways to line their pockets. If you're in to get a nasty gut shot treated, and then a blinger gets shuttled in needing a heart transplant and you just so happen to match his blood type…capisce?

In the southern portion of Chicago's Medical District, this is the largest medical center independent of any military, corp, or private sec control.

### BLACK KNIGHT ARMAMENTS

HQ and main market for the Black Knight Armaments weapons and armor manufacturing company. Getting ready to make a hit on the nearest corp skyscraper or wanting to push a competitor ronin out of your territory? It's in your favor to stock up here, ami, assuming you've got the credits. Word on the street is they're the best in the business, but you should never believe everything you hear. Most of their popularity is due to savvy marketing rather than the quality of their gear. Still, their stock can help you get the job done, and bangers

might think twice before attacking if they see you striding along with titanium plate armor strapped to your chest.

### DOWNER'S GROVE

A huge swath of urban sprawl, Downer's Grove is a mishmash of housing, industrial factories, and gang hovels that somehow escaped the war relatively intact. It's a popular area for those looking for work, but the concentrated and diverse population makes for a volatile stew of crime. The atmosphere can turn from safe to deadly from block-to-block, so be sure you know where you're heading if you ever traverse this sector.

### YORK TOWN SHOPPING CENTER

Is it payday already? Time to hit up Yorktown Shopping Center, two million square feet of all the cheap clothes, food, and VR domains you can buy. You could spend days in the center and not see everything it has for sale. From the cyber to the virtual to the real, you'll find any amenity you need there, and then some.

### NAPERVILLE

Some might make you think the only living options in Chi-town are the Gold Coast megaplexes or the slums. Not true! Naperville is a thirty-five square mile, primarily residential area that has pooled its resources enough to keep most gangs at bay, providing a comfortable, upper-middle class experience for those living there. There are a decent number of corporate offices established there as well, which are more the source of any espionage or sabotage that happens in the area.

### SUNNY HEIGHTS CONDOPLEX

If you were born in this hellish condoplex, you've likely spent most of your life trying to escape it. Sad to say, ami, this pit has a nastier reputation than quicksand for dragging people down and suffocating them before they even have a chance to make good. It's like someone took 100 stories of the cheapest housing around and crammed tens of thousands of Chi-town's least upstanding citizens into the same square footage. Gang rule is law here, though which gang will depend on what floor you stumbled into. If you took the Gold City Mega Block and engineered its evil twin, Sunny Heights Condoplex would be the vile result.

It's nickname is "The Candy Factory" for a reason, too. Got an itch that can't quite be scratched? An urge you need purged? A lust that must…eh, you get the point. Anything and everything can be bought and sold in this condoplex, including your sanity and soul.

### AURORA BARRENS

What used to be one of Chicago's more affluent areas was drilled back down to dirt during the civil war bombings. Now, it's a patchwork place, with blue platers stitched up alongside more affluent folks who brush shoulders with starving gangsters — with enough brewing animosity between them all that the Militia keeps a watchful eye should it ever boil over. Its defining feature is the ever-popular Paramount Theater, which broadcasts Deep-augmented films to this day.

### SUGAR GROVE

As a megacorp in itself, Ravenlocke has grown far beyond the private sec services that made it famous. Not only does it own Nortec Industries, but it's become highly diversified, to the point where it even started dabbling in the candy-making business. Sugar Grove is home to one such candy factory, with products being successful enough that they've come under scrutiny for potentially addictive ingredients. A concrete jungle of prefab housing and homeless warrens surrounds this factory.

### O'HARE MILSEC

O'Hare has turned into one big army base, and most of this sector marches to the beat of the military drum. It's HQ for the Chicago Militia, and even if you live there without donning a uniform and rank, likelihood is you still take orders from the these war dogs, whether you want to or not. One perk of sticking close to the guys with the guns and keeping their boots polished is they tend to return the favor by providing decently safe living arrangements compared to the rest of the sprawl — until the bomb sirens start wailing, that is.

United Nations troops are also bunked here, 20,000 troops strong. In other words, ami, do not stroll in there carrying an unregistered weapon (or at least don't get caught doing so) unless you want to bring the full wrath of the rank-and-file upon your head.

### SPACE ELEVATOR

Up and away, ami! The Space Elevator and surrounding Chicago Spaceport is one of the main reasons the sprawl has stayed independent from outside control. A steady stream of workers, cargo, and gear is shuttled along to the orbital station at its top, serviced by space-optimized droids and Sims. Being one of only a handful of functioning space elevators in the world, plenty of private corps and nations are willing to handover fistfuls of credits to use our direct line to zero gravity and back.

The elevator itself is like a mini-city, full of restaurants, shops, and even temporary living quarters. At the same time, it's such a tempting target that plenty of terrorists have set their sights on it, hoping to topple the whole pipeline. Guess it's a good thing the Chicago Militia is camped right on its doorstep where they can keep a close eye on potential troublemakers, neh?

If you're ever looking to break free from the sprawl, the Space Elevator is your quickest ticket off-planet — assuming you can afford the ride, that is.

### JAXES

Jaxes isn't your typical dance and drink dive. Nothing even close, ami, and best you be warned of that upfront for two big reasons. First, you don't want to be the sprawler dumb enough to get lured in here, promised a heaping plate of hot food and easy credits. Second, you don't want to work for the sickos who go here for "fun."

Once you get past the cozy front, an incredibly disturbing reality lurks in the back rooms. Want to whip someone bloody? Want to taunt a prisoner while they're tortured to death in a cage? Pay up and enjoy having your most twisted appetites sated. Most clients are wealthy psychos with anger management issues who get off on the pain and suffering of others weaker than them. Everything from psychological to nerve-scarring torment is on the menu, and the club employs the latest in stim-tech to keep prisoners conscious and screaming in agony for as long as possible.

Plenty of folks wouldn't mind seeing the place burned to the ground, and the sociopathic owner along with it…but the guy's got the muscle and credits to successfully defend against any legal or physical threats so far. Some say he's even funneling Nortec Industries funds to keep things running sadistically smooth, seeing as his pappy's the CEO.

### CHICAGOLAND STADIUM

The original Chicago Stadium only remained open until 1994, having been an indoor sports arena, theater, and community center. In the 2020s, the new Chicagoland Stadium was constructed for similar purposes, through on a far grander scale, and it hosted countless concerts, rodeos, political rallies, and war protests.

These days, this stadium is the epicenter of one of the largest ongoing black market operations in the sprawl. Illegal Sims and virtual domains are sold side-by-side with drugs that'll have you foaming at the mouth for a week. Gangs can get their hands on plenty of glitched weaponry, and even the local militia has been seen strolling through in civvies, eyeing the wares. It's all overseen by a woman named Merc Matron who takes a significant cut from the vendors — profits she then uses to fund private security and keep the peace.

### MELROSE PARK

A gorgeous strip of heavily wooded lawn, Melrose Park is home to several hybrid and chimera gangs that have bought into the idea of tapping into their animalistic "totems" by sticking closer to nature. Odd thing is, these gangs have proven relatively harmless so far, being more about living alongside humanity (which they no longer see themselves as part of) in harmony. In fact, their guardianship of the park makes it one of the more peaceful spots you'll find, and most nights you can walk its paths without worrying about being mugged — but if you ever disrespect the "Spirit of Nature" these gangs revere or significantly damage the trees and brush, you'll become so much plant food.

### LOMBARD PROJECTS

Hastily constructed in the wake of the second civil war, when refugees streamed out of newly irradiated sectors, the Lombard Projects now provides some of the cheapest dwellings in the Chicago sprawl. As always, you get what you pay for, ami. Crowded, dank, and dirty, with plumbing that could be described as "fickle" at best, these crammed-together complexes always look like they're just a heavy wind away from toppling into heaps of brick and lumber. Only a matter of time before someone lobs a Molotov Cocktail in the wrong direction and the whole neighborhood goes up in kindling, taking thousands of families and squatters with it.

### FUNKY BUDDHA LOUNGE

Better bring a personal air filter when you visit this establishment. Equal doses of enlightenment and entertainment are found in the Funky Buddha Lounge, which purports to hold the city's widest selection of drugs and stims (legal and illegal both). From the moment you pay the reasonable cover charge, you're enveloped in a haze of psychotropic smoke, and if you aren't careful you soon won't be able to tell the floor from the ceiling as you hand over your last credit just to continue floating along a rainbow river. Every surface is designed to offer a cozy pad for clients to sink into as their latest hit takes hold, while the chaotic color scheme confuses where reality begins and the trip ends all the more. They've even got some padded back rooms where patrons can safely sample some of the edgier batches without anyone getting hurt.

The place is watched over by the bloodshot eyes of one self-named Guru Bashki, a man of indefinable ethnic background who likes to trap people in long, rambling conversations about "doors of the mind" and the "transformative power of music."

### COFFIN CITY

"Down is the New Up!" is now the catchphrase for idealistic architecture gone horribly wrong. With The Wall in place, the sprawl couldn't exactly spread outwards when living conditions started getting crowded, so city planners latched onto the bright idea of subterranean expansion. Despite their best efforts, when you build underground, you tend to attract elements that naturally thrive below the surface — the roaches and rodents of society. And that's what Coffin City has become, one big hive or nest of crime, corruption, debauchery, and dark deeds.

## Ports of Entry

### SHANTY TOWNS

Miles upon miles of shanty towns have sprung up outside The Wall, crowded with millions of immigrants hoping to someday be lucky enough to secure an official pass into the Chicagoland sprawl. These towns are hopeless tangles of starvation, disease, theft, murder, territory warfare, and plain old chaos. In other words, there are times you should glad The Wall still stands strong. And if you ever plan on leaving Chi-town by road, best be sure to hire the best armored car you can find to keep from being stripped to the bone within your first hour outside the ports.

### HAMPSHIRE

Hampshire offers the main military presence outside of The Wall. It's where most migrants get processed into the sprawl, and is a heavily secured community that is constantly under attack by the roving gangs that infest the surrounding shanty towns. Assignment there from the Chicago Militia or a private sec corp is often considered a punishment for screwing up a job or a place to stick new recruits in order to test their mettle.

### HAMPSHIRE PORT OF ENTRY

The main entry port into the sprawl, watched over by Chicago Militia and private sec forces alike. Most official migrants are processed through here and given a handful of basic supplies, a TAP if they need it, and a quick orientation session so they can avoid getting killed their first day on the inside.

### NORTH CHICAGO PORT OF ENTRY

Thanks to its proximity to the Ravenlocke North Sector HQ, this port acts as a primary military ingress and the port of choice for visiting political and corporate representatives looking for safe passage into Chi-town.

### CRESTHILL IMMIGRATION ZONE

The second-highest concentration of would-be immigrants beyond Hampshire, the Cresthill Immigration Zone is actually overseen by numerous megacorp representatives searching for new labor and particular skills among the rabble. Lucky migrants are often approached with contracts ready for signing, offering them streamlined entry so long as they sign over at least the first ten years of their new lives to one corp or another.

### PLAINFIELD PORT OF ENTRY

One of two main ports servicing the Cresthill Immigration Zone, the Plainfield Port is most often privately employed by megacorps who have successfully rounded up a new crop of employees from the shanty towns beyond The Wall. These are shuttled through to sanitization clinics and undergo employee orientation within their first twenty-four hours of city life. Welcome to the grind, ami.

### JOLIET PORT OF ENTRY

The other main port used for the Cresthill Immigration Zone, the Joliet port is more used by migrants who enter the sprawl without any sort of corporate sponsor. These get no welcoming committee. Just a couple food paste tubes and a "good luck" slap on the ass.

### GARY PORT OF ENTRY

The Gary Port of Entry is the wretched sewer the desperate can crawl through to get into Chi-town while dodging official channels. This winds them up straight into Gary Hell Zone, where plenty of gangs and scroungers are waiting with broad smiles, open arms, and sharpened razors, ready to dice up the fresh meat. This port has been subjected to numerous bombings over the years, so even getting through the half-collapsed tunnel is a treacherous option.

### I-88 PORT OF ENTRY

Chicagoland does a good job of generating all necessary goods and services its citizens might desire from within, but that doesn't mean it refuses any trade with the outside world. Merchant runners use the I-88 port for trafficking goods into the sprawl — and this, of course, has fostered a heavily entrenched smuggling ring that operates within the ports processing center, diverting select shipments.

///THREAD JACK///

LOADING...

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: SANCTUARY CIGARS

Sanctuary Cigars opened shortly after The Death had begun to let up. The original owners were retired mercenaries who'd decided to live a peaceful life after their careers ended. They set up shop and soon had a solid clientele. Sanctuary Cigars thrived, but has changed hands several times but has always been owned by ex-military personnel in some form or fashion. Today, it's simply called The Sanctuary rather than its full name. Never before has the name been more appropriate.

After the reconstruction of Chicago, Sanctuary Cigars was left dead center in a ten block urban warzone, where four of the meanest and blood thirstiest gangs fight for control and respect of their peers. As a result of a self-enforced neutrality, the Sanctuary has become an eye in a storm of bullets, people trapped in the area through no fault except birth, and other sprawlers trying to escape the harsh realities of life via their own selected poison.

The outside isn't much to look at. The facade is scarred by acid rain and bullets holes. The major difference is that it's the only building with two slabs of chrome and blood — either identical twins or combat simulacrum; nobody is sure which — standing guard like the guardians of hell. The guards are dressed professionally, mirror shade guards bolted into their face, and a stare nearly as deadly as the point defense system installed into the building. If you get past the bouncers, the inside is beautiful, ultra-sleek black and white decor, an incredible selection of cigars and alcohol from across the world.

The crowd inside is filled with military cut-outs ranging from your typical jarhead to the less obvious military intelligence and "tech-weenie" types. Access to the back room is like going past the door muscle again, weapons are scanned and checked and you have to pass through several layers of screening and analysis.

Any problem and you don't go in, it's that simple but it's worth every second of scrutiny. In the back room you'll find more of the luxury Sims, white noise generators and other privacy measures to avoid any unfortunate incidents. The room is host to a military grade system network set up to provide access to a database of clients looking for either deniable assets and/or work. The network also provides access to a black market auction house where pay data, hard to find weapons like the Tiger Claw Assault Shotgun and other tech are available to the highest bidder.

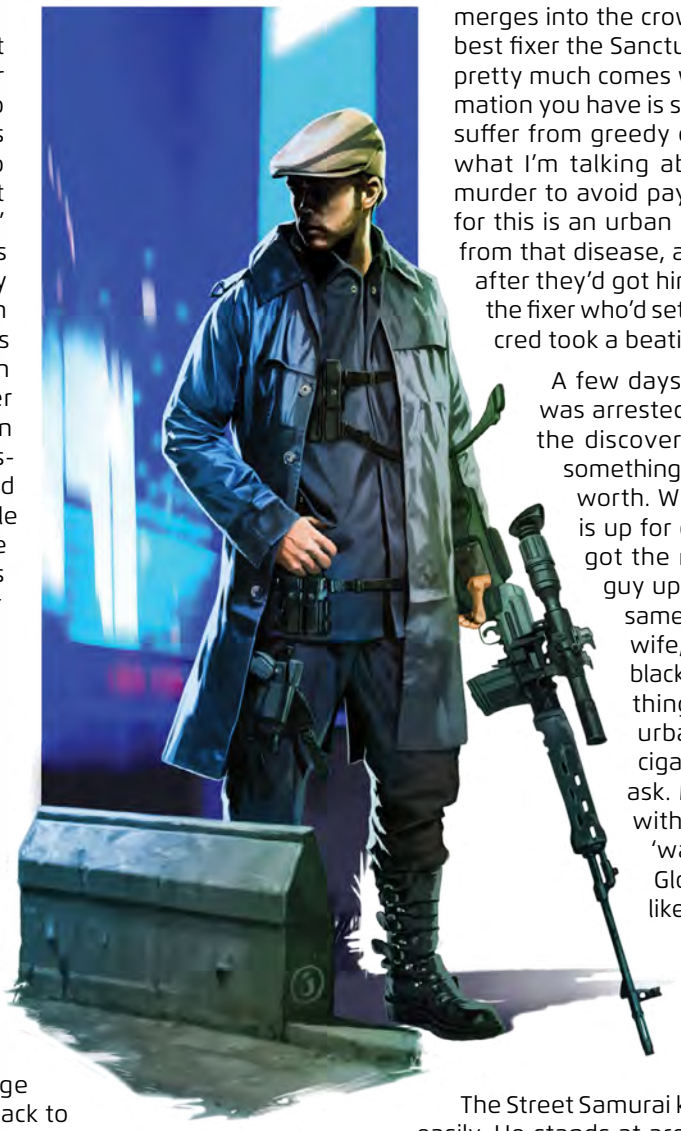
The final service offered by the proprietors of Sanctuary Cigars, not surprisingly, is sanctuary. If you need it, and have the credits to pay for it, a secure three meter secure cube is available for those who needs to go to ground. The exact fee is dependent on your situation and how much of it is your fault. While you're a guest of The Sanctuary you have a safe place from which you can smooth out any ruffled feathers you've made, or await your elective disappearance in relative comfort if things have truly gone ass over tit.

The current owners, Steel Grifter and Mauler, took over in mid '89, their sudden appearance drew a lot attention. The Sanctuary has always been neutral zone and any potential shift in politics could have massive ramifications throughout Chicago's gang population. One of the potentially affected parties paid me a large sum of credits to dig up whatever I could on them. The job seemed simple enough but turned out to be one of the hardest hacks of my career. It was dead end after dead end, and every lead I turned up had stonewall defense ICE built into the firewall. Getting around, over or under it was impossible. As my employer was getting impatient (read pissed) at my lack of progress, I broke one of my rules for living a long life and hacked a GAN. It cost me just about every ounce of cred I had on the streets getting access to that database, and that should've been enough to warn me that I hadn't put my foot in it as much as gone up to the groin. The GAN was thick with Black ICE. I lost track of how many times I found a dormant Jormungand or nearly activated one, and there were several forms I haven't seen before or since. It took me far longer to get the information than I'd expected, but somehow I made it out without drawing any attention to myself.

The file was wrapped up in a bundle of protective layers that I can only describe as a data-minefield that took me a month to traverse and for what I got out of it I'd have done my employer's a favor by copy/pasting "[REDACTED]" in big red letters a few thousand times. It was like someone had declared a pogrom against nouns! Needless to say, my employer — already chafing about how long it had taken me — wasn't happy and demanded that I try to use it get them information. When a tiger hybrid literally has your balls in a cyber-paw you find it easy to agree to anything. The little I managed to piece together was more or less public record anyway, but it made interesting reading when pieced together with the file I'd fished out of the GAN.

It looks like Bob Douglas aka Mauler was a Master Sergeant in the Marine Corps with some of the highest technical scores

in hand to hand and marksmanship, he was well educated and spoke three languages. All that promise was cut short due to an injury to his right patella that resulted in his discharge. Yeah that's right in this wonderful world of medicine and cybernetics a simple injury got him an honorable discharge. Shortly after his discharge he started working as a consultant for a private security firm that saw him jetting off around the world. I feel it in my gut that if I could get past the redaction we'd see a pattern of covert actions that if not illegal, would be sat firmly in an area that has the grey hue of ambiguity.



It was during this time that Scott Hudson aka Steel Grifter entered the picture, I have no doubt however that this was far the first time that the two had met. I'm pretty certain that Scott Hudson was Douglas' handler. Whenever Douglas was away in one of his heavily redacted periods, Scott Hudson was contracted to the firm as his home liaison. Information of Mr. Hudson is even harder to get than information than his partner. I ran some investigations into his background and the only hit I got was a Yale graduate who dropped off the face of the Earth for three years before reappearing as a worker in a private security firm. To me that screams "spook" especially in light of what happened next.

My investigations must have struck a nerve. One day I woke up in the back of a U-Move-It truck for a two day holiday of water-boarding, stress positions and having my TAP hacked with psychotropic malware. I'm not sure but I think I broke in the first hour, maybe the second, and my captors spent another forty six making sure I was telling the truth. I got the message though; I gave all the money back to my employer and walked away. My first stop ironically was the Sanctuary, as there are some people you just don't walk away from. I was shocked when Mr. Douglas and Mr. Hudson offered me a decent rate on their services. "It was nothing personal, just work" according to Mauler.

Mauler screams ex-soldier. He's a human, just under two meters tall, he keeps his hair about a millimeter off his scalp, and has cold grey eyes with the thousand yard stare; though that might be due to cybereyes, and I'm not going to ask. His shirt seems to be in a continual battle not to tear open. IMHO, the guy would be better off buying from a store that caters to bear hybrids (yeah, I'm sure he's human). The few occasion's I've met him, not including the whole water-boarding excursion he took me on, he's always been polite and well spoken. He's nigh on unreadable, unless you're a zeek, but you always get the feeling that he's ready to explode into action at a seconds notice. I wouldn't want to be around when he loses his shit, he's one of the scariest people I've ever met.

His partner Steel Grifter — another normie — is so non-descript it has to be surgical. He stands average height, and build, with brown hair and eyes. The effect? He just merges into the crowd when he wants to. He is the best fixer the Sanctuary has. A job from him though pretty much comes with a guarantee that the information you have is solid and you are very unlikely to suffer from greedy employer syndrome; you know what I'm talking about. Betrayal and attempted murder to avoid paying the hired help. The reason for this is an urban legend, one employer suffered from that disease, and had the "hired help" slotted after they'd got him what he wanted. Naturally as the fixer who'd set the deal up, Steel Grifter's street cred took a beating.

A few days later, the treacherous douche was arrested after an anonymous tip led to the discovery of his kiddy porn collection; something like 500 removable data carriers worth. Whether or not it already existed is up for debate but either he knew and got the necessary proof, or he set the guy up with it. The end result was the same though, the guy lost everything; wife, kids, friends, job and gained a blacklist mark against just about anything he ever attempts to do. This urban legend hangs in the air like cigar smoke, but no one's dared to ask. My money is that he's a hacker with some serious skill and a lot of 'ware that helps him cut through Global DataNet security measure like a K-Tana through ED suit.

*LOADING...*

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: JOSEPH ZIPPIRICH

///LOADING PERSONAL DATA///

The Street Samurai known as Zip blends into crowds easily. He stands at around six feet tall and keeps his brown hair cropped short, and whilst his eyes can change color he usually keeps them in their original color of brown. Like many in his profession he is perfectionist, stalking his prey to learn their routines and find the perfect area to make his move. Then he sets himself up and waits motionless until it is time to spring the trap. So far all of his kills have only required one shot, and his marksmanship is good enough that he can pick his target out of a crowd at extreme range with no collateral damage.

///END PERSONAL DATA///

///END THREAD JACK///

CLUB
14

# CHAPTER FIVE: THE SOLAR SYSTEM

*Planets spin along a set path, a trajectory through space, just as the sun spins along a path determined by the galactic core. Like ants, humanity scuttles about the star Sol, making little holes in the surface of the rocks, but never really affecting the grand scale of the universe.*

*Captain Hanz "Hands" Freiberg grinned from his perch on the hull of his one man planet jumper. Life as a Zero was good. His ship was en route to the dwarf planet Ceres. Since it wasn't in orbital prime right now this was a three week trip, but that also meant security would be at a minimum.*

*He slapped the hull of his mistress, The Jagged, and did something no Grounder could ever understand. In the vast reaches of space, he watched Earth pass between him and the sun. Colors blazed as the eclipse filled and a burning cornea surrounded the planet. The back drop of stars and other planets stood out against the bands of colors that were distant Galaxies.*

*Hands smiled to himself in the confines of his suit and activated his NutriPump, sipping a Pina Colada through it. He cranked up the tunes and lost himself in the majesty of the panorama before him. Yeah, life was good as a Zero, and he wouldn't have it any other way.*

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JAKE PLISKIN'S WHO'S WHO OF SOL

Here is a condensed overview of what you'll find in the great black yonder, ami. If you want the full story... especially all you hashtaggers who want to leave their two credits, I've got that too, and you know where to go to find it!

Life in space, 2090, is a life on the frontier. Terran life has conquered the final frontiers of the human body, the human mind, cyber space, and geographical expansion. Planet dwelling philosophers say there are no new frontiers for humanity, but they are wrong. Life in space is wild and filled with peril.

Much like Earth, free agents roam the streets of the colonies from job to job, just looking to make it to the next day.

Space started as colonies tied to terran governments and corporations. As the number of colonies grew, and their populations expanded, freedom from terran oversight became a larger and larger concern for the populations and bureaucracies. In 2090 there are over 500 prime colonies, mining outfits, and orbitals. Earth alone has 60 orbitals with populations in excess of 3,000 people apiece. Prime colonies have grown to the size of minor plexes, housing over four million each. The total estimated of population of the space colonies is thought to be around 250 million.

The current political climate is one of tension, but also one of possibility. The growing political maneuvers of the colonies to break free of Earth's control, combined with tensions between the colonies themselves, have created an air of suspicion amongst the various governments. The general feel of the colonial populations is one of hope. With the recent Lunar and Ceres revolutions a new age is in sight, and everyone knows it.

# History of Space Exploration

### 2010–2019

- **2011:** Spartus Space Group launches first commercial space liner into low orbit.
- **2011:** United States cuts funding to NASA's shuttle program.
- **2012:** Hurricane Nicole. Cape Canaveral destroyed.
- **2013:** GENIE begins. Worldwide satellite network repurposed to create global Wi-Fi.
- **2014:** GENIE phase 2. Wireless repeater network deployed across Earth's mesosphere.
- **2015:** GENIE phase 3. Cloud technology hubs repurposed to support GENIE.
- **2015:** GENIE phase 4. 'The Bottle', a handheld device allowing for full spectrum communication and Internet access is released for early adopters. PDAs, cell phones, and tablets crash in sales numbers.

### 2020–2029

- **2023:** GENIE phase 5. Aerosol form micro signal repeaters released into global cloud layer. Firmware patch of additional aerosol release is planned in two-year increments.
- **2029:** Quantum Entanglement Engines are successfully linked to a 'sub orbital' satellite, providing the first Geostationary Orbiting object within the Earth's atmosphere.

### 2030–2039

- **2033:** China begins program for Mars Landing. The U.S. follows suit, then changes destination to moon colony.
- **2036:** GENIE admin develop the STRAP, implanted crown of electrodes for Wi-Fi access
- **2038:** Construction of first orbital habitats begins.

### 2040–2049

- **2041:** Matter assemblers De factorization announced. Matter assemblers will be smaller and more consumer friendly.
- **2042:** Nanomachine matter assembly devices licensed to global corporations. Within 6 months they are part of all orbital and colony designs.
- **2043:** April 13. China successfully lands humans on Mars.
- **2043:** Teams from Eurasia and Brazil land on Mars.
- **2045:** NASA develops variable specific impulse magnetic plasma rocket, which speeds up missions to Mars.

### 2050–2059

- **2052:** Colony Simulacrum production begins on Mars, with plans being drawn into other colony's construction Specs.
- **2053:** Ceres colony is established.
- **2054:** Europa Prime Colony is established.
- **2054:** Ganymede Prime Colony is established.
- **2056:** Saturn colony established, actually a series of 12 orbital style plexes known as 'The Rings'.

### 2060–2069

- **2060:** First U.S. colony on Mars, lifers and deathers allowed indentured servitude on Mars as alternate option to sentencing on terran prison.
- **2061:** CHIMERA lands on Haley's Comet and refuses to share findings. Rumors are CHIMERA left two ships on the comet.
- **2065:** Low yield dirty bombs are used on Chicago, Denver, Dallas, and Tucson Arizona (destroying the Davis Monthan Air Force Base, and over 50% of the separatist Air Force planes, including orbital jumpers.)

### 2070–2079

- **2073:** The Omega protocol is rejected in colonies.
- **2077:** Colony Taxation repealed as the 100 colonies band together and form the United Civilizations (U.C.) The U.C. is modeled after the 20th century United Nations, rather than the modern U.N.
- **2078:** U.N. and U.C. go head to head as U.N. tries to claim U.C. as a subservient governmental body.
- **2079:** U.C. outlaws Stopwatch off Terra Prime.

### 2080–2090

- **2081:** 'The 52' are established. 52 'mining' colonies established near the moons of Callisto, Europa, and Ganymede. The 52 are suspected by the U.C. of being black ops colonies of the Stopwatch Underground.
- **2082:** Lunar Embargo on Earth shifts political currents to form the United Territories of Luna. Corporations are banned and Luna becomes first true democracy in 50 years.
- **2082:** Ceres colony follows lunar example and General Bjorn Smith-Gustafson leads a Coup D'état, establishing the Free Territory of Ceres.
- **2085:** 'The Year Of Embargoes' begins. Rising tensions between Terran controlled colonies, Corporate colonies, Free colonies, and rumored Stopwatch controlled colonies creates a series of embargoes and trade restrictions.
- **2085:** Black market and "street" Zeroes quickly respond by forming the 'Guild of Allied Traders.' (nicknamed GoAT.)
- **2087:** Headway is made with Embargoes as Bjorn Smith-Gustafson brokers a series of U.C. treaties between Corporate controlled Jupiter Moon colonies and Chinese Mandarinate based Mars colonies.
- **2088:** GoAT denies all ties to a series of suspicious terrorist strikes which appear to violate Jupiter-Mars treaties.
- **2089:** GENIE expands beyond Saturn in preparation for phase 4 system development.
- **2089:** GENIE p4 picks up signal coming from approximately 100 million miles beyond Neptune's orbital path. Hex keys from signal appear to match Terran IPs. No one understands how this is possible. System-wide media buzz the story for a couple weeks but stories die down as no explanation is found.

## Life in the Solar System

Life in the zero-scape is something the Terrans cannot understand. It isn't just a lack of gravity or atmosphere. There is something fundamental in the human soul which changes when exposed to the vast openness of space. When first confronted with it, a person either changes forever, or their mind breaks. The street philosopher, Wang Xi (named after the ancient metaphysician Wang Bi), calls space the great embodiment of Yuan Wu — or the existential nothingness from which all worth comes. Those that haven't been to space, or have just visited, don't understand Yuan Wu.

The popular terminology for someone living in space is a 'Zero.' This slang was popularized by Wang Xi as a way to describe not only someone used to zero gravity, but also someone who has embraced the worth of nothingness.

Sprawlers rarely do well in space, at least at first. There is a whole set of skills that they lack. How do you aim, when gravity pulls the bullet down at a different rate and changes trajectories? How are martial arts changed by zero gee and partial grav environments? Even drinking and eating are a far different experience. The most common setting for first timers to space is the pleasure orbitals and resort, designed to be an almost perfect match to Earth's gravity.

Tourism is a very large industry inside the 'Inner Solar System' which encompasses the areas from Venus to the outer asteroid belt. Once you get past the outer belt, travel times become too great for tourism to thrive.

### LIFE ON THE STREET

Life on the street as a Zero is mainly the same as life for a sprawler, other than the fact that they are not on terran soil. There is a saying on Earth; 'the streets are the streets are the streets, ami.' For a sprawler it means that if you know the streets in one city, you know the streets in every city. For Zeroes, it means that you can find work on the streets no matter where you are. There is always a segment of society that wants to hang out in bars and hire shady people to steal things from other people, or even steal other people.

### LIFE ON THE SHIPS

Sizes of ships vary wildly from single person transports to cruise liners capable of transporting about two thousand people. For the average person in space, they will be on a smaller ship, housing maybe a dozen to two dozen people. Personal space is at a premium, no matter what size ship you are on, and because of that thievery is dealt with as seriously as murder. Either can result in a fracture that rips apart an entire crew.

### LIFE WITH THE CORPS

Welcome to the shiny new facility that will be your home for the length of your contract! All of the best amenities are on site for you, and space, the grand adventure, is in the palm of your hand! Oh, wait. You didn't sign an executive contract? Sorry, you live in a bunk room, perhaps a studio if you are on one of the larger colonies. Your schedule is rigidly set by the corporation, and life isn't easy. What's the advantage of life under the corp to life on the free colonies? You are an asset of the corporation, and of no value if dead or damaged. While you may have to sign an extension of your contract, no one has medical facilities which can match the corporations.

### LIFE ON THE FREE COLONIES

Those that live on the free colonies are the masters of their own destinies. Life is grand. Sure they may not have the best facilities, but no one controls them. They can choose their role, do what they want. Hell ami, wanna take a day off and just watch Mars get eclipsed by Ceres as they both line up with the sun? Go for it. The entire solar system is your playground!

## The Law

There are a myriad of law enforcement agencies in space. Here are some of the larger of them.

### THE UNITED NATIONS

On a fringe technicality, the U.N. has control of all official law and jurisdiction in space. While the U.N. still has a strong and powerful presence surrounding the Earth, the further one gets away from Terra, the less their influence and power is felt. The U.N. claims to set policy, and hears major criminal cases, from the International Space Station. More and more, the U.C. fills these functions remotely across the colonies.

### THE UNITED COLONIES

As the Free Colonies began emerging, the U.C. was formed as a counterpoint to the United Nations. A bitter rivalry exists between the two organizations, and their doctrines. The U.C. doctrine is that Earth is just one of many human settlements, and the U.N. believes that all of space is a territory of Earth.

### THE CORPORATE COUNCIL

A Counterpoint and official "Helper" to the U.N., The Corporate Council is made up of representatives from each C-7 Corporation officially involved in off Earth activities. The Corporate Council handles corporate law and officially advises the U.N.. The Council has vast influence in space, largely due to the Corporate Council being responsible for funding the majority of current solar system exploration and colonization efforts.

### GUILD OF ALLIED TRADERS

The Guild of Allied Traders, also known as GoAT, is a market response organization formed by traders being financially harmed by the embargoes and tariffs war between the colonies. They quickly allied with the U.C. and emerged as the system's strongest unallied body. The U.N. sanctioned them as the corporations started hiring GoAT to transport goods through embargo lines for them, and the only rivalries that still exist are with C.O.P.S. (Colonial Officer Protection Services) and StarSec.

### U.N. SOLAR MARSHAL SERVICE

The 'Space Rangers', as they are nicknamed, are responsible for peacekeeping and law enforcement in space. Woefully understaffed and underfunded, they are made up of volunteers from U.N. peacekeeping forces. Marshals tend to be very highly competent individuals, or have very short careers. The highest ranking Marshalls are given jurisdiction to act on their own, and even break the law in face of dangers which would result in massive loss of life, or threat to an entire colony. The

Space Rangers have a bitter rivalry with "Star Sec" and there are increasing incidents of the two resolving chance meetings in deadly force combat.

### STARSEC

Corporate Star Security, StarSec for short or the "SS" to its detractors. StarSec is a wholly owned and recognized collective Corporate security force which answers to the Corporate Council. Thanks to the Council's influence, the U.N. gave the Council permission to form a security force which would police the space lanes between colonies and satellites to protect against Pirates and Smugglers. StarSec is more numerous and better funded than the Marshals, but less competent as a whole, and far more open to graft and corruption. StarSec often targets members of GoAT, and when they do joint training sessions with C.O.P.S, they bring databases of all known GoAT members and ships.

## Organizations

### SOLAR FREEDOM MOVEMENT

This is a collective, and growing, body of dissidents across the colonies and satellites who are calling for all space dwelling humanity to formally cut ties from Earth and the U.N. and to declare their independence. Though they applaud the actions of the U.C. and the free colonies, they don't feel the battle has been taken nearly far enough.

### THE COLONY LIBERATION FRONT

A terrorist organization which attacks not only U.N. holdings and officials, but those Corporations which have ties to Earth still. Publicly, they have no ties to the Solar Freedom Movement, but the Space Rangers, StarSec, and C.O.P.S. all constantly look for connections between the groups.

### ASTEROID MINERS ASSOCIATION

The official Union and Trade Guild representing all Miners across the colonies, not just from the Asteroids. Thanks to a lack of manpower, the AMA is able to actually force some concessions out of the Corporations which control the mining, however the AMA is also full of corrupt leaders right alongside idealistic ones. In many places the AMA is little more than an organized crime group extorting everyone around them, and controlling organized crime throughout much of the colonies. Despite the 'shady' nature of the organization, they do actively and primarily fight for higher safety standards and better compensation for their members.

### THE MARAUDERS

The Marauders is the largest collection of Solar System pirates currently in existence, and have a secret seat on the voting council of GOaT. The Marauders are a small private army, and a major cause of concern for both StarSec and the Marshals. C.O.P.S. avoid The Marauders, not being willing to engage in a losing struggle. Rumors put the Marauders as having not only their own capital ship, but a space station hidden somewhere as well.

### THE VOID SCREAMERS

An apocalyptic cult which sees the presence of humanity in the Solar system as a major sin. The Void Screamers engage in terrorist acts dedicated to causing colonies and space stations to fail, with the long term goal of having humanity abandon the stars. Rumors say their taking orders from an A.I. Their motto is 'Space is the river Styx, and to cross it you will pay the ferryman.

## Corporate Presence

### NEW FRONTIER ENTERPRISES

Responsible for terraforming technologies used by the majority of colonies, New Frontier Enterprises focuses on the manufacture of Hydroponics, artificial gravity generators, oxygen scrubbers, and quantum entanglement platforms.

### CENTRAL BELARUSIAN STEEL

Mainly involved with heavy mining operations, C.B.S. runs or assists with mineral extractions on the major colonies and in the asteroid belt.

### GOLDEN PROMISE

Golden Promise, Inc. administers to most of the needs of the Chinese colonies, being the largest service provider on mars, but is now hoping to expand beyond the reach of the Mandarinate in space. They are focusing on the outer planets, looking to Saturn and Neptune as prime colonial development sites.

### THIRD LIFE INNOVATIONS

While overshadowed by CHIMERA back on Earth, Third Life does substantial biological research in space, hoping to overtake CHIMERA by reaping the rewards of space. The have a heavy presence in the asteroid belt, and work well with the Free colony of Ceres.

### RED PLANET INDUSTRIES

The first major successful 'off-planet' conglomerate. Red Planet would be a second or third tier corporation on Earth, but in the solar system has made a name for itself. Red Planet makes everything from food, to space ships, and is based out of Mars. It is always looking over its shoulder at the Chinese Mandarinate and Golden Promise, but have thus far managed to stay autonomous despite their locale on the Red Planet.

### C.O.P.S.

"Colonial Officer Protection Services": C.O.P.S. is a professional mercenary and private security firm which, like Red Planet Industries, operates strictly off Earth. All members are specially trained for Zero-G combat and ship boarding actions.

### CHIMERA

CHIMERA is a huge presence in the outer planets, controlling most of Jupiter. CHIMERA dabbles it fingers in almost every facet of space and will overpower any colony it believes the U.C. is not watching over.

### STARDUST ESCAPES, INC.

Stardust is a corporation completely dedicated to creating vacation hotspots and "pleasure palaces" for the well-to-do of Earth. From floating casino space stations hovering over Venus, to Martian spas, Stardust is the first name in off earth vacationing. One of their most popular spots is the orbital 'New Vegas' just eclipsed by the dark side of the moon.

## Major Settlement Areas

### NATIONAL COLONIES

National Colonies's, the rarest of the bunch, are those settlements still tied to a governmental body on Earth.

### FREE COLONIES

Free Colonies are those settlements which have officially broken all ties with their previous earth based governments, or, never had them in the first place. Free Colonies are fully governed by themselves, but still subject to United Nations laws. Every Free Colony has a representative to lobby on its behalf at the U.N. International Space Port.

### CORPORATE COLONIES

Corporate Colonies outnumber Free Colonies by a small margin, the two together make up the most common settlement types. Corporate Colonies are further broken down into two varieties, those wholly owned by one Corporation, where every resident is a new Corporate Citizen and employee (the rare ones), or a Colony funded by Multiple Corporations coming together and providing resources and labor. The residents of these colonies have more freedom and independence compared to their Corporate Citizen counterparts, but have to put up with the Machinations of each Corporation invested in the colony competing with one another for greater control.

## Venus

AU: 0.7
AN PRIME: -0.3
AN WORST: -1.1

**Mass:** 80% Earth's mass

**Surface Conditions:** The Venus cluster of colonies survive amongst one of the most hostile environments known to man. The surface of the planet is Silicate sand, with heavy volcanic activity. The atmosphere is composed mainly of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane, and the surface temperature is 400 degrees Celsius. You have to be tough to survive on these colonies, even in the orbitals.

**Dominant Colonizer:** Central Belarusian Steel.

**Rivalries:** There are no rivalries on Venus. Due to the highly inhospitable environment, the average life expectancy of a colonist is only 13 years.

**Exports:** Silicon 40%, Iron 33%, various minerals 27%. The primary method of exporting goods from Venus is to use cargo barges to slingshot lumps of mineral around the planet and fling them at magnetic clamping docks on other Colonies orbitals.

**Number of Colonies:** 39

**Population range:** 500-21,000

### NOTABLE LOCATIONS:

**Venus' Palace:** Run by Star Dust Inc., Venus' Palace is a casino and super resort for the wealthy, floating over the atmosphere of Venus. The primary focus of the Palace is space based spy games and espionage.

## Luna

AU: 1.0
AN PRIME: 0.01
AN WORST: -0.05

**Mass:** 1.2%Earth's mass

**Surface Conditions:** The moon is a barren wasteland of rock and freezing temperatures. Despite this, the population is overall happy. They do not, generally, feel that life is a struggle, but rather that they are in on a big secret that no one else is privy to. Perhaps it is the sight of the Earth, floating in their sky, that makes lunar colonists not feel separated from the rest of humanity. Or perhaps it is the large size of the colonies.

**Dominant Colonizer:** Free Colonies

**Rivalries:** Earth, any Corporate or Terran controlled colony

**Exports:** Information Technologies. Gateway information flow from GENIE to solar system.

**Number of Colonies:** 12

**Population range:** 50,000–375,000

NOTABLE LOCATIONS:

**U.N. International Space Station, located between Luna's free colonies and Earth:** this is the largest 'hub' style space station in the Solar System. It contains shops, ship yards, the governing body of colonial representatives (according to the U.N.), the corporate council's HQ, and the home of both the U.N. Solar Marshals as well as StarSec. It's a place of politics, intrigue, and far reaching consequences.

**Luna Prime:** This Colony went independent after the U.S.A. fell to civil war. It is now a large Sprawl site full of Corporate influence, crime, corruption and with a seedy underbelly. While it does a brisk tourism trade, and bills itself as being "free from earth", in reality coming here is like most any other sprawl on Earth. But, as with any sprawl, there is another side to it. A vision of hope and fierce independence lives in the hearts of population. Luna Prime was the home of the free colony movement and the city spends a lot of its profits supporting other colonies across the system wishing to become free.

**Rio De Luna:** Rio De Luna is a fiercely religious city, originally founded with the U.S.'s permission to harbor South American interests. When the U.S. fell, the colony broke ties with all other Lunar colonies, other than Luna Prime. They supported the freedom movement, wanting to break ties with earth to found the New Lunar Church of Christ. Christians on Earth simply call them 'The Loonies', but they are well respected amongst the free colonies as a philanthropic and charitable faith.

**U.N. Luna Prison Colony:** This city started as being home to solar system prisoners of the worst order, along with criminals too dangerous to be kept on Earth. During the freedom movement the city broke it shackles, but is closely watched by other Lunar powers.

**Central African Union Colony, known as New Haven's Port:** For reasons unknown to many, the Central African Union built a colony on the Dark Side of the Moon. Rumors say they created it with the intention of building some sort of super weapon on the surface, or conducting illicit research. After the freedom movement the Colony became much more open than their Earth counterpart, and lets tourists visit. The colony is a known smuggler haven, yet one that is polite, safe, and civilized. Perhaps there is honor amongst thieves.

### ASTRO NAVIGATION AND DISTANCE

Centuries before the colonization of space astronomers on Earth realized they would need a better number system to deal with the vast distances and sizes in space. Of course, Earth was used as the center for this system. The distance from the Earth to the sun is 150 million kilometers, and has been defined by astronomers as astronomical units, or AU.

As humanity began to be able to traverse space, we also defined Astro Navigation, or AN, in the same terms of 150 million miles being defined as one Astro Navigation unit, but with a positive or negative value to determine whether the distance is towards the sun or away. As each planet revolves around the sun, it has a prime navigation window, which is the fastest way to the planet, and a worst navigation window, which is the furthest it can be in orbit from the current departure point.

## Mars

AU: 1.5
AN PRIME: +0.6
AN WORST: -2.1

**Mass:** 10.7% Earth's mass

**Surface Conditions:** The red planet, both in appearance and in government, has a surface covered in iron oxide — rust. It's atmosphere is mostly carbon dioxide and it has volcanoes and vast valleys. Underground ice deposits are mined by the colonies to provide Oxygen and water, as well as exports to Venus. The small planet is considered the last planet of the "inner" solar system and has two small moons, each a fraction the size of Luna.

**Dominant Colonizer:** Chinese Mandarinate, Golden Promise Inc.

**Rivalries:** While Mars presents a very uniform face, there are rumors amongst the Zeroes of trouble brewing between the Mandarinate colonies and those controlled by Golden Promise.

**Exports:** Iron 89%, Ice 6%, various minerals 5%

**Number of Colonies:** 77

**Population range:** 200–40,000

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

**New Shanghai:** The newest Chinese colony, this colony is large and full of Mandarintes, and those who have petitioned to become citizens of the Mandarintes, expanding Chinas influence to the stars. In name it is a governmentally run colony, but in truth it is overseen by Golden Promise Inc., which secretly wishes to push the Colony to independence.

**Tien Pao Ma:** China's first colony is smaller than its new brother, but more entrenched and established. It is home to an older generation of colonist, mainly those having grown up living inside the colony. A Chinatown that happens to be on Mars, the Triads are firmly entrenched within the sprawl's borders, to the point of not so secretly controlling the local government. The residents of Tien Pao Ma are not happy with the establishment of New Shanghai and actively avoid trade with the colony as much as the Mandarinate will allow them to.

**The Total Re-envisioned Independent Colony City:** The only former American colony built on Mars, TRIC City is also the only free colony and U.C. member on Mars. TRIC City has grown over the years to encompass roughly thirty square miles. This colony is full of people trying to make a real life for themselves, braving the new frontier and fighting for their autonomy. A decent segment of the population are refugees from other Martian colonies who sought freedom from the Mandarinate. TRIC City is also the headquarters of "Red Planet Industries" a source of pride for the people who live there.

**Golden City:** Built by several of the Mega Corps working in tandem, though named by and run by Golden Promise, this Colony is a top of the line, ultra high tech and comfortable colony to live in. Intrigue and Industrial espionage are rife behind the scenes, with Ronin teams and mercenaries hired by the Corporations to strike at one another in attempts to control greater parts of the colony. Despite the intrigue, and due to the high-life amenities of the colony, Golden City also generates a high amount of tourism revenue.

**Olympus Mons Ski Resort:** Built by StarDust escapes, the massive Olympus Mons Ski Resort is a domed enclosure built into the side of Olympus Mons, the largest mountain on Mars (or Earth) with snow generators creating slopes suitable for skiers, snowboards, astro-boarders, and anti-grav skaters of all skill levels. Hands down this is the best, top of the line, Ski lodge in the Solar System — complete with spa and shopping complex.

**Phobos Prime:** This is a private research and development facility located on Mar's moon Phobos. It is a known science research station where they're conducting experiments using Zeeks and bio-upgrades. Discovering more than that would require being a researcher at the facility.

**Star Children's Refuge:** Demos, the sister moon to Phobos, is home to the religious group Star Children, which took to the stars and now lives in its ideal promised land — separated from everyone else… yet they still need to trade with outsiders to survive. Though they strive to bar outsiders, one can gain access to the colony as a trader or by feigning interest in joining the cult.

## Ceres

AU: 2.7
AN PRIME: +1.7
AN WORST: -3.7

**Mass:** Ceres has less than 1.0% Earth and is approximately 1,000 km diameter.

**Surface Conditions:** Ceres is a dwarf planet in the middle of 'The Belt' which is composed of an ice mantle covering a water interior. The core of the planet is mineral, but the true value of the Ceres colony is water. The ice cities of Ceres pump water from the ocean under the surface directly past the Dwarf Planet's weak atmosphere and freeze it in space around nanite electro magnets. The most interesting fact about Ceres was the discovery of microbial life in the oceans. Current theories propose that Ceres was the source of all life in the solar system and the colonies have a healthy export industry shipping microbes from the ocean to off world R&D facilities.

**Dominant Colonizer:** Free Colony

**Rivalries:** Earth, any Corporate or Terran controlled colony.

**Exports:** Water 44%, Microbes 56%

**Number of Colonies:** 7

**Population range:** 25,000–400,000

### Notable Locations

**Ceres Prime:** The original settlement on Ceres, Ceres Prime, is an enigma of corporate bureaucracy and anarchistic piracy. You are free to do as you will here, as long as it doesn't affect profits. Need a job? There are far too many to pick from, and only a small percentage of them will get you killed. Only here will you see convoy escort mercs negotiating with pirates over the best time to jack a shipment. Hey, the shipment is insured, so everybody wins. This solid ground mega-colony is the gateway to the heart of Ceres, in more ways than one.

## The Inner Belt

AU: 2.2–3.3
AN PRIME: +1.2
AN WORST: -4.3

**Mass:** The belt contains almost a million asteroids that are over 1km in diameter, but the entire belt still only has a mass one thousandth that of Earth. The belt is massive though, a giant ring (like the rings of Saturn) occupying the orbit between Mars and Jupiter. The belt is not difficult to navigate through, due to its scale.

**Surface Conditions:** The colonies in The Belt are all on atmosphereless asteroids with only a view of distant space. Colonists in The Belt suffer a higher rate of Space Sickness (sudden onset dementia) than anywhere else in the solar system.

**Dominant Colonizer:** Varied

**Rivalries:** Every power in space has colonies or mining operations in The Belt and with 239 colonies, there are about 500 rivalries.

**Exports:** Minerals 39%, Research Information 31%, Espionage 30%

**Number of Colonies:** 239

**Population range:** 100,000–180,000

### Notable Locations

**The Central Belerusian Steel Asteroid Colony:** The largest purveyor of Mining in the Solar system has their key Colony here overseen by one of the crazy Russian aristocratic members of the family. The Colony atmosphere has a weird post-cold war

Russia feel to it. A power struggled within the family that runs CBS may be playing out here behind the scenes for something interesting going on. On a very large Asteroid.

**C136dz:** This is the largest asteroid in the outer belt currently being mined, with a diameter of 250 kilometers. It is also the only asteroid in the outer belt to have developed a tourism trade. It has a very wild west frontier town feel to it, with a mayor who used to be an executive for StarDust. There are plenty of shady deals, along with outlaws and law enforcement going at it.

## Jupiter

AU: 5.2
AN PRIME: +4.2
AN WORST: -6.2

**Mass:** 31,800% Earth. Besides the prime colonies, there are an abundance of colonies on the four moons, Ganymede, Io, Callisto, and Europa.

**Surface Conditions:** Gaseous. All Jupiter prime colonies are orbitals, floating in different levels of the gaseous atmosphere. Rumors say that CHIMERA found advanced life less than billion years behind Earth's life (in the multicellular stage.) CHIMERA keeps Europa locked off from any other colony, responding militantly to settlement attempts. The one concession made is the export of microbial life, equal in development to Ceres' exports.

**Dominant Colonizer:** CHIMERA

**Rivalries:** Golden Promise, Mars

**Exports:** Solid State Gases 54%, Minerals 37%, Microbes 9%

**Number of Colonies:** 79

**Population range:** 500–900,000

### NOTABLE LOCATIONS

**The Hive:** The rings of Jupiter are like a mini Belt, solid minerals and too small to colonize, The Hive runs the mining operations. It's called The Hive because… well, It's like a beehive. With so much traffic, it's easy to ditch a tail. It is also a great place to buy uppers or find great pilots eager to earn a quick credit.

## Saturn

AU: 9.5
AN PRIME: 8.5
AN WORST: 10.5

**Mass:** 9,500% Earth

**Surface Conditions:** To date there is no Saturn prime colony. The 52 colonies are spread amongst the 62 moons and the rings. Every one of them is a mining facility. There are rumored secret colonies on the two largest moons, Titan and Enceladus (both of which have tectonic movement and volcanic systems.) What those colonies do though, or even how big they are… they are just rumors. Right?

**Dominant Colonizer:** Stopwatch

**Rivalries:** All other colonies.

**Exports:** Mineral 100%

**Number of Colonies:** 52

**Population range:** 50–250

### NOTABLE LOCATIONS

**Inktomi Colony:** The place to go in Saturn's subsystem to spend all those hard earned credits. The colony is small, but has an atmosphere. However, unless you want to know what it feels like to have your lungs freeze, better not pop open that visor.

## Colony Technologies

Colonies come in many flavors across the solar system-as many as there are colonies. The technology to colonize different types of planets stem from the varied atmospheric conditions. As different conditions were discovered, humanity quickly adapted and grew, retrofitting and redesigning existing orbital technologies to make these new terrains survivable. While full scale terraforming is not yet within the species' grasp, microclimates and controlled terraforms inside of colonies have become a standard. Differing types of colonies have been engineered for Surface Colonies, those plexes which are located on a solid or semi-solid body, versus Orbital Colonies, which are plexes designed to float anywhere from inner atmosphere to outer orbits.

Each colony has a distinctly unique flavor, based upon a combination of the tech required to make the colony stable,

TABLE 5.1: AVERAGE DISTANCE IN AN

| | VENUS | LUNA & EARTH | MARS | INNER BELT | CERES | OUTER BELT | JUPITER | SATURN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VENUS | 0 | 0.3 | 0.8 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 4.5 | 8.8 |
| LUNA & EARTH | 0.3 | 0 | 0.5 | 1.2 | 1.7 | 2.3 | 4.2 | 8.5 |
| MARS | 0.8 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.7 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 3.7 | 8.0 |
| INNER BELT | 1.5 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 0 | 0.5 | 1.1 | 3.0 | 7.3 |
| CERES | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.2 | 0.5 | 0 | 0.6 | 2.5 | 6.8 |
| OUTER BELT | 2.5 | 2.3 | 1.8 | 1.1 | 0.6 | 0 | 1.9 | 6.2 |
| JUPITER | 4.5 | 4.2 | 3.7 | 3.0 | 2.5 | 1.9 | 0 | 4.3 |
| SATURN | 8.8 | 8.5 | 8.0 | 7.3 | 6.8 | 6.2 | 4.3 | 0 |

TABLE 5.2: AVERAGE TRAVEL TIMES (DAYS)

| | VENUS | LUNA & EARTH | MARS | INNER BELT | CERES | OUTER BELT | JUPITER | SATURN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VENUS | 0 | 3 | 8 | 15 | 29 | 25 | 45 | 88 |
| LUNA & EARTH | 3 | 0 | 5 | 12 | 17 | 23 | 42 | 85 |
| MARS | 8 | 5 | 0 | 7 | 12 | 18 | 37 | 80 |
| INNER BELT | 15 | 12 | 7 | 0 | 5 | 11 | 30 | 73 |
| CERES | 20 | 17 | 12 | 5 | 0 | 6 | 25 | 68 |
| OUTER BELT | 25 | 23 | 18 | 11 | 6 | 0 | 19 | 62 |
| JUPITER | 45 | 42 | 37 | 30 | 25 | 19 | 0 | 43 |
| SATURN | 88 | 85 | 80 | 73 | 68 | 62 | 43 | 0 |

the governing body in charge of the colony, who built it, and who the current inhabitants are. That aside, there are six basic themes for colonies, all based on the raw design.

### SUBTERRANEAN

Subterranean are plexes that are mostly underground. These exist in areas where the surface and even the inner atmosphere are too vicious to maintain any other type of colony. Subterranean colonies are anywhere from 80% up to 99% underground. Every colony of this type will have at least a small portion above the surface to anchor solar arrays and provide extra power for the plex. Most of these colonies are very Spartan, with the exception of a lavish central park, which has been terraformed to maximize life support systems like Oxygen, water filtration, protein production, and mental health.

### SURFACE

Surface colonies most frequently have a carbon nanoweave glass (the standard for all glass from vacuum to high pressure) shell, and most closely resemble the cities in the sky so often depicted in the previous century's science fiction. These colonies have massive terraform sections, frequently constructed to be even greener than Earth. Combined with the view through the naifno-glass shells these colonies, even the most desolate and rundown of them, are picturesque and opulent in appearance. Vacation and resort colonies generally refuse any other construction, on the shared motto that every space experience should be 'better than Earth.'

### HYDRATIC

Hydratic Colonies, like on Ceres, are those colonies built on or in water. The ice colonies use a similar construction method to surface colonies, with one major notable difference. Every Hydratic colony is built with three specs not found on other colonies. The first is that each has 'tectonic stabilization plates', a system engineered to prevent capsizing. The second is the fluid filtration system. Terraforms and life support parks are less important to a hydratic colony than ice and water processing systems-the same systems which double as a failsafe to the tectonic stabilizers. The third, and perhaps most important difference, is that hydratic colonies are designed with modular shells so that in the case of catastrophic tidal conditions they can separate neighborhoods and launch into low orbit. These systems have not yet been tested in actual catastrophe conditions, and whether or not they will actually work is the source of much debate.

## Orbital Technologies

Orbital technologies are adaptations of the 'floating city' philosophy of plex design. They are not exclusive to any particular system type, and may often be found as support colonies for various types of surface colonies. Orbitals all float, some in the atmosphere, some beyond it. Since they can technically, though not practically, be moved they are often research or distribution colonies. A small percentage of them are floating casino cities.

### INNER ATMOSPHERE

Inner Atmosphere orbitals, depending on the location, can be found as low as 500 feet from the ground up to the outer reaches of the planet's surface conditions or magnetic pull. These use a wide variety of technologies to maintain loft, from turbine lift up to lighter than atmosphere buoyancy shells. Lower floating Inner Atmosphere orbitals generally have anchors to the surface and maneuvering jets to help create stability.

### UPPER MESOSPHERE

Upper Mesosphere orbitals are the first class of 'space worthy' orbitals. While they are technically found in the atmosphere of a celestial body, for all intents and purposes they are scaled down space stations. They are most frequently used as ports of entry and space docks for ships which are not able to land on the surface. One unique attribute of engineering which Upper Atmosphere Orbitals use is Quantum anchors. The basis of a Quantum anchor is that the Orbital has a microplate which is Quantum Entangled to a matching plate on the surface below. The two entangled plates keep the Orbital in perfect stationary orbit.

### SPACE STATIONS

Space stations are engineered to withstand the rigors of supporting life in total vacuum. The most common station type is the 'hub station.' Hub stations rotate around a central core using centripetal force to mimic gravity. From a distance, a Hub Station resembles a wheel rotating around a spike. Space stations are often all in one facilities, containing a space dock, ports of entry, vacation spots, colony storage…they are designed to handle any form of commerce.

# Ship Technologies

Ship technologies have vastly improved as the decades of travel have passed. During the early part of the twenty first century, travel took about one month per 10,000,000 kilometers on average, and was impractical for manned flight beyond Mars. Advancements in technology rapidly brought this number down to weeks, and as of recently, days and hours. The sleekest, fastest ship can make the trip from Earth to Mars in just a few days.

## THRUST OPERATED

Thrust operated ships exist in two functions. The most common is inter-fleet and surface to orbital transportation. For these purposes standard rocket propelled thrusters, vector thrust, and jet propulsion are sufficient to transport people or goods. However, there are throwbacks to the ships of old floating around the system. Interplanetary thrust propelled ships take about six times longer than the average nuclear powered drive to traverse their courses.

## NUCLEAR POWERED

Nuclear powered acceleration drives are the most common in the system, and the current basis for travel times. These vessels use controlled nuclear micro-detonations to power light sails. Excess force from the detonation is channeled out a series of burst cells around the craft, which helps control the direction of travel.

The primary motive force is a series of energy sails which can be deployed in various configurations around the craft. The "sails" catch the radiation and light and propel the craft forward. The engineers who devised this system were inspired by the Earth sport wind surfing.

## MAGPULSE DRIVES

Magpulse Drives are the newest technology in Solar System travel, and by far the fastest. Crafts utilizing Magpulse drives are superior in build, moving about twice as fast as their nuclear counterparts. The technology is based on creating magnetic poles on the ship and collapsing tandem magnetic bubbles to propel the ship. So far, this is the best hope for fast travel, though theoretically these ships will be useless outside of the Solar System where they cannot interact with the Sun's gravity and magnetic fields.

## SINGLE PERSON CRAFT

Single person crafts can be any of the above types of drive, depending on the finances of the owner. However, the most common of the single person crafts found in the 2090 Solar System is known by Zeroes as 'The GeeHawg.' While it looks nothing like a motorcycle, resembling the shape and size of a Terran VTOL, the fact that it is a one man ship has created a culture around the craft. There are 'biker clubs' that cruise the asteroids, or moons, or other locales of each area consisting of groups of GeeHawgs travelling together.

# CHAPTER SIX: SETTING RULES

# SYSTEMS OF CONTROL

*Interface Zero 2.0* is a setting where your characters can install cybernetics in their bodies, hack computer networks and various objects, and even people. You characters can pilot drones, and golemmechs; they can use drugs to gain benefits, but at a cost to their mental and physical health. All of these aspects of *Interface Zero 2.0* need some special setting rules in order to capture the feel of the cyberpunk genre. This chapter provides them.

## AUGMENTS

Bioware, cyberware, geneware — hell even nanoware. We've seen it all in 2090. It started with chrome (that's street code for cyberware). In the more dangerous circles where an edge is needed, cyberware is still the go-to gear; especially if you can get in on the cheap. That's why chrome reapers can make a decent living chopping people up for parts.

Sure bioware is nice and clean. It's all the rage among body builders and pro athletes, but there's nothing more intimidating than a full-conversion borg decked to the nines' with enough weapons to make a sector cop wet his pants. Then ya got nanoware. The arm-chair cyber jockeys and brainpans all say nanoware is the wave of the future, but if you ask me, chrome will still be around and in use when nanoware becomes common place. Either way, if you're gonna walk the razor, you need an edge, omae.

This data feed will clue you in on the best ways to get it.

### GRADES

The first thing you need to understand is, not all augments are created equal. Some are really crappy, and can actually speed up the process of cybertrauma, while others are so clean they almost feel like you were born with them installed. There are four grades you can choose from when purchasing cybernetics in *Interface Zero 2.0*: Gutterware, Streetware, Hyperchrome, and Milware.

### GUTTERWARE

Gutterware is the worst possible grade of 'ware you can get. These augments are very cheap, but that's because they were either cut out of someone else's body, grown from incompatible — or diseased — organs, or built with sub-standard materials.

- **Cost in Credits:** Gutterware costs 1,000 credits per point of Strain. This cost is based on the item's listed strain cost, not the actual Strain cost the 'ware inflicts on your body when it is installed (see below).
- **Strain Cost:** Gutterware costs double the listed Strain.
- **Availability:** Gutterware is highly illegal, and is only available on the black market. If your character wishes to purchase Gutterware after character creation, she must make a Streetwise roll to find a dealer. If your character has a fixer or street level contact, she gains a +1 bonus to the roll.

### STREETWARE

Streetware is the most common grade of cybernetics you'll find. It's clean, but more expensive than Gutterware. Streetware is generally thought of as "out of the box," or "plug 'n play" 'ware. It's not specifically tailored to a particular individual's body, but has been tested on a wide range of subjects to ensure general compatibility with baseline humans, synthetics, and hybrids.

- **Cost in Credits:** Streetware costs 5,000 credits per point of Strain. This cost is based on the item's listed strain cost, not the actual Strain cost the 'ware inflicts on your body when it is installed (see below).
- **Strain Cost:** Streetware costs the listed Strain of an item.
- **Availability:** Streetware is available on the open market. Characters can find it in any city on the planet, or even get it via the Global DataNet.

### HYPERCHROME

If Streetware can be likened to an economy vehicle, then Hyperchrome is a sports car. Hyperchrome is custom-made for the individual, resulting in a much cleaner — but more expensive — installation.

- **Cost in Credits:** Hyperchrome costs 25,000 credits per point of strain. This cost is based on the item's listed strain cost, not the actual Strain cost the 'ware inflicts on your body when it is installed (see below).
- **Strain Cost:** Hyperchrome costs the listed Strain of the item, minus 1 point of Strain. The Strain cost for Hyperchrome augments can never drop below 1.
- **Availability:** Most Hyperchrome grade augments are readily available on the open market. Characters can get any type of augment not considered to be a weapon without submitting to a background check. If a character wants to get weaponry, but doesn't want to have her identity listed, she'll have to find it on the black market, specifically various organized crime rings, like the Yakuza, the Triads, and other groups. The cost is still the same, but that doesn't mean purveyors of these augments won't want something extra for their services. To find Hyperchrome, a character must make a Streetwise (organized crime) roll at a –1 penalty. Remove the penalty to the roll if the character has a fixer contact.

### MILWARE

Sometimes called blackware or ghostware, military-grade augments are beyond SOTA (State Of The Art), existing in a realm of myth and street rumor. These augments aren't just clean, they're made from emerging tech — like neurochemical combat conditioning, advanced reflex technology, and radical nano-morphic science. If you want L33T gear, this is the grade for you amigo…If you can get it, that is.

- **Cost in Credits:** Milware costs a whopping 125,000 credits per point of Strain. This cost is based on the item's listed strain cost, not the actual Strain cost the 'ware inflicts on your body when it is installed (see below).
- **Strain Cost:** Milware costs half the listed Strain of an item. If the result is a number with a decimal point (like 0.5 or

1.5), round down to the nearest whole number, even if the result is 0.

- **Availability:** Milware augments are like the alien myth; everyone's heard about them, but nobody has actually seen them. Whether or not someone's actually seen Milware in action — well that's how the rumors start, isn't it?

  If your characters are playing at the Elite Operatives power level, they can begin play with as many of these augments as they can afford. If the characters aren't playing at the Elite Operatives power level, they're going to have to work it into their background to be able to get these at character creation, but even then, Milware is expensive; prohibitively so. Characters with nothing but Milware cyber systems can have nearly double the number of augments someone with Streetware can! That kind of edge shouldn't come cheap. Furthermore, just because your character can afford this stuff (not very likely at Novice rank), doesn't mean they can just buy it as if they were ordering a pizza.

  Milware is never available for purchase on either the open market or the black market. To obtain these augments, your character needs to have developed some serious connections with powerful people. We're talking about high ranking government officials with access to code-name classified projects, military commanders, and CEO's of megacorps, and I'm not talking about the little fish; I'm talking about C-7 megacorps with vast resources and influence. This should only happen through role-play; no hand-waving the process of establishing contact and working to gain mutual trust, and absolutely no using the Interludes rules from the *Savage Worlds*.

### CYBERTRAUMA

In *Interface Zero 2.0*, your characters can install as much cyberware as they wish. There are no artificial limits in this game, but that's not to say there aren't any consequences. If your character ever gains more Strain than her Vigor die, she must make a Vigor roll each time she installs a new augment. The penalty to the roll is equal to the difference between her Vigor die and her current Strain.

If she fails the roll, she gains a level of lethal Fatigue that doesn't go away until your character removes enough augments to drop below the Vigor threshold. A critical failure results in two levels of lethal Fatigue. As mentioned above, your character can continue to install augments if she wishes, but if she ever becomes incapacitated as a result of gaining Fatigue in this manner, she dies on the operating table. All of the standard rules for Fatigue apply.

### FUNCTION SLOTS

Some augments, like cyber eyes, cyber legs, and cyber arms are capable of holding more than one function. The number of functions an augment of this type can hold is equal to the Strain of the augment. So, a cybernetic eye with a Strain of 2 will come with 2 functions, a cyber-arm with a Strain of 3 will have 3 functions, etc. The monetary cost for the augment is determined as normal, by paying X credits (indicated by the grade of the augment) per each point of Strain.

## Drugs

Drugs are just as popular in 2090 as they have been throughout history. Indeed, in the grim, gritty world of *Interface Zero 2.0*, the average person welcomes any chance to get some kind of relief from the stresses of life in the sprawl. Better to get stoned out of your gourd on a little sticky icky in the privacy of your squat than go on a raging killing spree in the plex', comprende mi amigo?

Of course, that's not always why people do drugs. Some people either can't afford or simply don't want hard core cybernetics or bioware, but still want an edge over the rest of the pack. So they turn to drugs as a cheap (though temporary and often debilitating) way of boosting their reflexes or awareness up a notch. Some go for really hard core drugs that provide measurable increases to their strength, or deaden pain so they can get their job done. These kinds of effects invariably come with mental and physical side effects that can be debilitating, even lethal, not to mention addictive as hell.

### BECOMING ADDICTED

To see if your character becomes addicted to a drug, make a Spirit roll at a penalty equal to the addictiveness rating of the drug. If the character fails the Spirit roll, she gains the Habit Hindrance at the level of severity (Minor or Major) indicated in the drug's description. If you already have the Habit Hindrance, choose one of the drugs listed in the drug section of the equipment chapter. There is no need to roll to see if you become addicted to that particular drug.

## Fatigue

Characters in *Interface Zero 2.0* have one extra level of Fatigue (Debilitated) before becoming Incapacitated — in other words, a character can take the same amount of Fatigue as he can Wounds. This is to help adjust for things like Strain which makes *Interface Zero 2.0* more Fatigue intensive than in other *Savage Worlds* settings.

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

## Gritty Damage

*Interface Zero 2.0* makes use of the Gritty Damage setting rule outlined in the *Savage Worlds* core rules. They work like this:

Treat Extras' wounds normally. Count Wild Cards wounds as usual and go through the normal steps for Incapacitation. Every time the hero suffers a wound, roll on the Injury Table and apply the results immediately (but roll only once per incident regardless of how many wounds are actually caused). A hero who takes 2 wounds from an attack, for example, still only suffers one roll on the Injury Table. Injuries sustained in this way are cured when the wound is healed. A Shaken character who becomes Shaken a second time receives a wound as normal, but doesn't have to roll on the injury Table.

## Street Cred

It's a dog-eat-dog world out there folks. The streets are filled with all sorts of folks lookin' to up their street cred, because let's face it; your rep is everything omae. A shiny rep gets you the respect of your peers. Doors open, Bollywood agents wanna make you the star of your own media feeds, chicas want to have your babies, jobs are plentiful, the food is authentic, and life is good.

A piss poor rep puts you out in the cold. Contractors who once had your OOL on speed dial are suddenly unreachable. Fixers who once jumped to get the gear you needed raise their prices and take longer to do it. Freelancers and specialists you counted on to watch your back avoid you like the plague, or worse — they torpedo the precious few jobs you do manage to get. Rival bangers who once gave your set a wide berth suddenly grow a pair and move in on your territory. They tag your turf, steal your business, rough up your soldiers, and generally make life hell for you and your crew.

It sucks worse than the slop you get out of the food vats, and thanks to the Global DataNet, if you screw the pooch on a job your Street Cred will get trashed faster than a script kiddie can hack your MyFace domain. Most cities have media feeds dedicated to following the activities of freelancers, hackers, gangers, media icons, politicians and anyone else lookin' to make a name for themselves in sprawls across the globe, so don't be surprised to hear about the success or failure of your run on the way back to your squat. Hey, if you're lucky, there won't be any feeds streaming real-time footage of the event into your TAP.

Such is Life in 2090.

### STARITNG STREET CRED

A character starts with a Street Cred of 2, and this increases by 2 each new Rank the character obtains, modified by Edges and Hindrances. This is the character's maximum Street Cred and represents the limits of his influence on the streets. Over the course of the character's life, this value will fluctuate as he exerts his influence and his reputation grows (see below), but it may never be lower than zero or greater than his unspent value.

*For example a Seasoned character without any special Edges will have a Street Cred of 4. Until he becomes Veteran, his Street Cred will never be less than 0 or greater than 4.*

### USING AND GAINING STREET CRED

Sometimes you need some help on a job, and you need it yesterday. The form of help isn't necessarily always the same, either. One day, you might need a quick loan to bribe a security guard into looking the other way while you sneak in through the back door of a corp. Some other night, you may want to hire a hacker to grab a piece of pay data you need. Or perhaps you want some extra muscle to watch your ass on a meet with the Mexican Mafia; whatever the reason, it's good to be able to call in a favor from time to time. Here's how it works.

The character's Street Cred is a pool of points that he may spend to obtain various favors from existing contacts or even new ones. The points a character has is equal to his current Street Cred value. In addition a character may earn Street Cred doing "good stuff"—or at least stuff that makes him look good or seem cool — up to his maximum. Think of Street Cred as sort of a 'Currency of Reputation': once a character spends it, it's gone until he earns more.

### CONTACTS

All characters in *Interface Zero 2.0* begin with 2 Contacts, and may gain more through the Connections Edge or by spending Street Cred (see Table 6.2: Favors). During the course of the adventure, a character may reach out twice to any contact he has, without needing to spend Street Cred, each time after this requires the expenditure of 1 point of Street Cred. The contact will provide the character a 1 point favor without the expense of Street Cred, however, if the character wants a favor that has a higher cost, he must spend his Street Cred to cover the difference.

*For example, Rayon needs a quick influx of cash, he calls one of his mafia contacts, since this is the first time Rayon has used his contacts in the adventure he is allowed a 1 point favor. His contact is willing to provide him a 5,000 credit loan. However, if Rayon needed a driver (Allied Extra 3 point favor) he would need to pay 2 points of Street Cred to cover the difference. Having the Street Cred he does (this reduces his Street Cred by 2), and his contact puts him in touch with a skilled wheel man.*

In addition, a character may use a Contact as explained in *Savage Worlds*, under the Connections Edge. Each success and raise on the Persuasion roll grants the character a temporary point of Street Cred that may be only used for this favor. As before, the character must pay in deficit for a favor from his Street Cred.

*Continuing from above, Rayon needs to a Ravenlocke facility, he decides to call a "friend" who works as a security guard. Since this is the second time he is reaching out to a Contact, It doesn't cost him. Knowing the favor is going to be high, he opts follow the process for Connections. His Steetwise roll is successful, so he gets a hold of his friend. He then explains what he needs and rolls Persuasion. The result of his roll was 9, a success and one raise, which provides a temporary 2 points of Street Cred; Access to the facility is a 3 point favor. Though he said all the right things, its not enough to convince his contact to risk his job. Rayon, pays the additional point of Street Cred. The contact relents and tells him the access code to a door that is rarely guarded at the facility.*

Although contacts provide the best opportunity for a character to get favors, he doesn't have to solely rely on them. Also there will be times he needs a favor that a contact cannot provide. In those cases the character may just simply spend the Street Cred. Remember, though, once spent the cred it gone, until its earned back. Sure, he'll get 2 more points next Rank, but that usually is a long wait. Fortunately, a character will have several opportunities to earn (and potentially lose) Street Cred.

### SETTLING UP

At the end of an adventure (or session depending on style of play) the GM needs to take stock of the characters' action and modify their Street Cred based on the things they managed to accomplish. For the most part, the characters should all get the same gains or losses, but if an individual did something exceptional, he should be awarded a little more Street Cred (or, for that matter, if someone did something totally heinous or lame, he should take the hit to his reputation).

TABLE 6.1: STREET CRED REWARDS AND PENALTIES

| ACTION | MODIFIER |
|---|---|
| Barely managing to achieve a mission objective | +0 |
| Finishing a job with good planning and few hitches | +1 |
| Smooth run (everything went more or less as planned) | +1 |
| Stylish execution of a job (GM's discretion) | +1 |
| Going out of the way to help someone | +1 |
| Finishing a job so well as to generate a lot of buzz | +2 |
| Taking out a major player (Wild Card villain) | +3 |
| Revealing a corporation or government's dirty secret | +3 |
| Doing a job with no style (GM's discretion) | –1 |
| Hurting innocent bystanders (directly)[1] | –1 |
| Being a coward or a snitch | –1 |
| Failing to accomplish a job | –2 |
| Double-crossing a contact or employer | –3 |
| Failing to repay a loan[2] | –1 |

[1]Per each innocent bystander affected.
[2]Cumulative –1 per point put into the original loan.

TABLE 6.2: FAVORS

| COST | FAVOR ACQUIRED |
|---|---|
| 0 points | Access to a permanent Contact during an adventure (for the first two times). |
| 1 point | Temporary contact willing to provide special information. |
| | Immediate access to an exclusive locale or event. |
| | Charisma +1 for the entire adventure. |
| | Access to a permanent Contact during an adventure (for the third time or more). |
| | A 5,000 credit loan. |
| 2 points | Special transport to a local area (A VTOL transport, an armored Limo, etc.). |
| | A temporary contact capable of acquiring special (or illegal) equipment. |
| | Access to a restricted area (Back room of a night club, corporate office, etc.). |
| | A 10,000 Credit loan. |
| 3 points | An Allied Extra for the adventure. |
| | Access to a secure location (Corporate Research facility, Police Station, etc.). |
| | A new permanent Contact. |
| | Special transport to anywhere on the planet within 24 hours. |
| | +1 bonus to Intimidation rolls for the adventure. |
| | A 20,000 credit loan. |
| 4 points | A new permanent contact with access to classified information. |
| | Charisma +2 for the entire adventure. |
| | Access to off-world transport. |
| | Access to a government or military complex. |
| | A 40,000 credit loan or more. |

# COST OF LIVING

Life in 2090 isn't cheap (Hell, life today isn't cheap). Your characters have all sorts of issues that crop up in their daily lives that can only be address by spending their hard-earned credits. There's rent to pay, food and clothing to buy, fuel and maintenance costs for that VTOL car that seems to break down every other week. Characters need weapons, ammunition for those weapons, and (if they want them) cybernetics.

All of these can things add up to a hefty price tag, especially if your character is keeping up with the state of the art in gear. Having your characters pay these costs on a regular basis is an easy way to help keep money from getting out of control in your game. But *Interface Zero 2.0* isn't meant to be a lesson in money management. The idea of needing a spreadsheet just to keep track of everything your character might have to pay for in 2090 is going to kill a game just as fast as letting things get out of control will. With this in mind, we've created a simple chart that represents the character's lifestyle. Players choose what type of life style they want to adopt, and every time you begin a new game session (not a continuation of an existing job), they pay the cost associated with that lifestyle. The more extravagant the lifestyle, the higher the cost. Incidentally, this is a pretty good motivator for characters to seek higher paying (and more dangerous) contracts. Gotta pay them bills, neh?

The character's lifestyle covers things like paying rent, buying food, paying utilities, maintaining gear and vehicles (or paying for public transportation), maintaining personal health, etc. What it doesn't cover, however, is the cost of purchasing cybernetics, buying new weapons, purchasing new vehicles such as VTOL aircraft, jump bikes, golemmechs, drones, etc. Put simply, if the character wants to make a purchase that gives her some sort of mechanical bonus, it isn't covered by the character's lifestyle.

Like anything, this can be abused. As characters start making more and more credits, they are more likely to improve their lifestyle without necessarily realizing it. They buy better clothes, cooler, faster cars, get a nice crib to doss down, go to fancy night clubs every night and generally throw money around like there's no end to it. As the Game Master, it's up to you to let the players know when their characters start living a better lifestyle and enforce that upgrade.

TABLE 6.2: CHARACTER LIFESTYLES

| LIFESTYLE | UPKEEP PER NEW GAME SESSION |
|---|---|
| Destitute | 500 credits |
| Poor | 1,000 credits |
| Modest | 2,500 credits |
| Moderately Well Off | 5,000 credits |
| Wealthy | 10,000 credits |
| Filthy Rich | 20,000 credits |

## OCCUPATIONS AND CHARACTER LIFESTYLES

The character lifestyles rules are designed with work in conjunction with a character's occupation. Since characters receive an infusion of credits every level up, they can use those

TABLE 6.3. PSYCHOTHERAPY COSTS

| CONDITION | COST | TIME | BENEFIT |
|---|---|---|---|
| Minor Mental Hindrance | 250 credits per session | 1d6 weeks | Removal of the Hindrance in question. |
| Major Mental Hindrance | 500 credits per session | 2d6 weeks | Removal of the Hindrance in question. |

*Virtual Therapy makes it possible to dramatically speed up this process. It costs ten times as much, but the VR Time to Real Time ratio is 1 day of VR time for every hour that passes in the real world. So someone who needs 6 weeks (42 days) of therapy can get it all done in one or two sessions, depending on how much time she wants to spend per session.

credits to offset some of the money they need to pay every game session in which they begin a new run. Some credits gained from the character's occupation might be eaten up immediately because a character is living above her means, while other occupations easily provide the requisite credits the character needs to maintain her lifestyle and have some cash left over. This is a quick way to gauge how well or poorly the character is living without needing an itemized list of every possible expense.

## CONTACTS AND FAVORS

Everything costs something, even a favor; especially a favor. While the system for using contacts is designed to be Fast, Furious, and Fun! it is only a vehicle to keep the game from bogging down into a series of rolls as characters try and convince people to do things they simply don't have time to take care of themselves.

The system doesn't address intangible aspects of the game which are just as important to the atmosphere of *Interface Zero 2.0*. Characters can call in favors any time they choose, but keep in mind, the people they are asking for help don't necessarily do things out of the kindness of their hearts.

They wanna get paid just like anyone else. From the viewpoint of the characters, they're just asking their contact to do something, but to the contact, it's a job. It is certainly not out of bounds for contacts to charge the characters a monetary amount for a favor. Indeed, the more important the favor, the bigger the price tag is likely to be. Consult Table 7.1.: Baseline Payouts on page 292to get a general idea of what characters might expect to pay their contacts for a given favor.

## "PRO BONO" GIGS

Jobs don't always need to involve payment for services rendered. Some savage tales might happen as a consequence of some other run the team pulled. Others might form out of some random (or perhaps orchestrated?) event on the streets. This tactic both keeps the characters from charging a metric ton of cred for their services and drains their existing resources at the same time.

## HEALING AND REPAIR BILLS

Finally, always remember to charge your characters for the damage inflicted on mind, body and cyberware. It's unlikely the characters are going to bother trying to repair guns or electronics equipment (unless they paid out the hump for them). And even if they do, those costs are covered under their lifestyle.

## PSYCHOTHERAPY

Characters can pick up some nasty mental Hindrances if they run afoul of malware or a vicious virtual entity. That can typically mean hours of psychotherapy to deal with the consequences of the raping of their minds. Just as easily, characters can pick up a mental Hindrance from high stress situations or things they've seen or experienced. Consult Table 6.3. Psychotherapy Costs for appropriate costs of psychotherapy. Psychotherapy typically requires two to three sessions a week.

## MEDICAL TREATMENT

Sooner or later the characters are gonna get shot, stabbed or blown up. That's just the nature of the game. Even crappy medical treatment costs money. Street Docs may not charge as much as a fully functional MED facility, but they gotta eat just like anyone else. Street docs have to re-stock their medical supplies, maintain whatever electronics (X-ray machines, KAT scan units, defibrillators, EKG's, etc.) they have, pay hush money to keep the crooked cops from shutting them down and protection to criminal organizations to keep from getting robbed by drug fiends every week. Consult Table 6.4: Medical Treatment Cost to see how much it's gonna take to put the characters back together when they get shot up.

TABLE 6.4: MEDICAL TREATMENT COST

| WOUND LEVEL | COST* |
|---|---|
| 1 wound level | 1,000 credits |
| 2 wound levels | 2,000 credits |
| 3 wound levels | 3,000 credits |
| Bleeding Out | 5,000 credits |

The listed cost is for treatment by a street doc. If the character goes to a Med facility, charge quadruple the price of the wound level and five times the cost for someone who is Bleeding Out.

## KEEPING REPAIRS AND MEDICAL "IN HOUSE"

It's highly likely that, rather than seeking outside help, the characters will rely on each other for healing or necessary repairs to cyberware. This is certainly valid and is encouraged! The characters worked hard to develop their skills and they shouldn't be penalized (or worse, have their roles within the group marginalized) because they want to avoid potentially high costs associated with medical treatment and repairing their gear.

That said, nothing is free.

Characters that can treat injuries sustained on a run still have to pay for the medical supplies necessary to get their pals back on their feet. Cyberware is especially costly to repair, requiring special equipment and highly expensive materials, which, by the way, may or may not be readily available. That means you're probably paying a fixer to get it. Not cheap, omae.

When the team decides to handle this stuff personally rather than go through a third party, charge them 50% of the cost they'd normally pay.

# DRONES

Over the past century and a half drone technology, like other technologies, has advanced with tremendous leaps and bounds. Evolving from basic surveillance and target drones, to machines and cybernetics that are capable of functioning as a proxy between it and the drone's controller.

In 2090 drones are widely used. From shuttle repair drones in space, to heavily armed drones monitoring a country's borders, to drones used by law enforcement; drones are pervasive in society. The primary function of drones is to do work that is to dangerous for a person to do.

Why send a person in to disarm a bomb when a remotely controlled drone can do it? Why send someone to sneak into the drug dealer's warehouse when you can send an eye-drone to do it? Why risk a Special Forces team to take a compound when you can send in a drone equipped with missiles and heavy machine guns to clear the way? The bottom line, is that drones exist to keep our fragile bodies out of harms way.

The primary link between a drone's pilot (aka drone jockey) and a drone is the Vehicle Control Interface (VCI).

## THE VEHICLE CONTROL INTERFACE

A Vehicle Control Interface is a cutting edge piece of brainware that works in tandem with the user's TAP to send and receive signals to and from a similarly equipped drone. The VCI is located at the base of the skull and hooked directly into the central nervous system — specifically the part of the cerebellum that translate thoughts of movement, reflexes, and fine motor control into signals a drone can interpret.

In the simplest terms, the VCI allows the owner to control machines equipped with a VCI Transponder with his mind. It also allows for transmission of data from a said equipped drone back to the controller.

The sophistication of the VCI determines the number of drones that it is able to control simultaneously.

TABLE 6.5: VEHICLE CONTROL INTERFACE

| VCI LEVEL | CONTROL SLOTS | RANGE |
|---|---|---|
| Level I | ¼ Smarts | 150" (900') |
| Level II | ½ Smarts | 300" (1800') |
| Level III | Smarts | 600" (3600') |

## DRONE CONTROL

There are two different modes drone jockeys use to control a drone—basic mode and pilot mode. Each affects the number of drone a "drone jockey" may have under his control. Switching between modes is an action.

A drone jockey may control as many drones as his VCI's control slots allow. Should the number of control slots drop under the required amount the drone jockey needs to control all the drones, he must choose a number to go on "stand-by," until he is able to resume control. Drones that go into stand-by mode, may be issued one last simple command to return to a designate spot, at which point the drone will stop and take no further action until control is resumed.

### WHAT IS A DRONE?

Drones are basic constructs similar to robots, with one major difference they rely on a human input to provide commands. Earlier versions of drones had more advanced AIs, similar to that of a robot's, which would allow them to operate when not controlled. It was quickly realized that the AI's heuristic programming often interfered with the neural commands being sent by the drone jockey. Now days drones are only installed with a very rudimentary AI to handle the most basic tasks.

To keep things Fast, Furious, and Fun! Drones are not treated as vehicles, but as Allied Extras, and are Incapacitated after one wound. Future supplements will deal with vehicle based drones.

#### OPTIONAL RULE: TOUGHER DRONES

Even though drones are designed to work as Extras, some might find the one Wound insufficient, especially when a character has to purchase the drone initially. This limitation may easily be overcome by increasing the number of Wounds a drone has or by providing controlled drones the Hardy ability (see *Savage Worlds*). When using this rule, the Gritty Damage rules should apply to the drones that are able to take more than one Wound.

Healing drones with additional Wounds is done with the Repair skill and 15–30 minutes per roll, with no "Golden Hour."

If you use this optional rule, keep in mind it may make groups tougher, especially when they have two or three Extras with three Wounds each, and encounters should be scaled appropriately.

### BASIC MODE

Basic mode allows for commands to be sent to the drone, without requiring the full attention of the controlling drone jockey. Without input from the drone jockey, drones are only able to follow their basic programming. Should the controlling drone jockey become Shaken, the drones under his control may still act, but suffer a –2 to Trait rolls.

In basic mode, drones act on the drone jockey's initiative and benefit from any Leadership edges the drone jockey has (as long as the drone is in the character's command radius). A drone in basic mode uses its own skills and attributes when making Trait rolls and has no Wild Die.

As an Action, a drone jockey may opt to view the video input from any drone under his command. When doing so, he uses the higher of his Notice or the drone's, including any penalties that may be affecting him. When doing so, the drone jockey's point of view is that of the drone's. Which means he may peer around corners, have a bird's eye view, or remotely see a distant area.

### PILOT MODE

Pilot mode is the pinnacle of drone control, allowing the drone jockey to use a drone as a proxy. Through the use of the VCI and advanced neural connections via the jockey's TAP, pilot

mode transfers the character's consciousness to the drone, allowing the drone jockey to extend his control over the drone to a level that cannot be accomplished in basic mode.

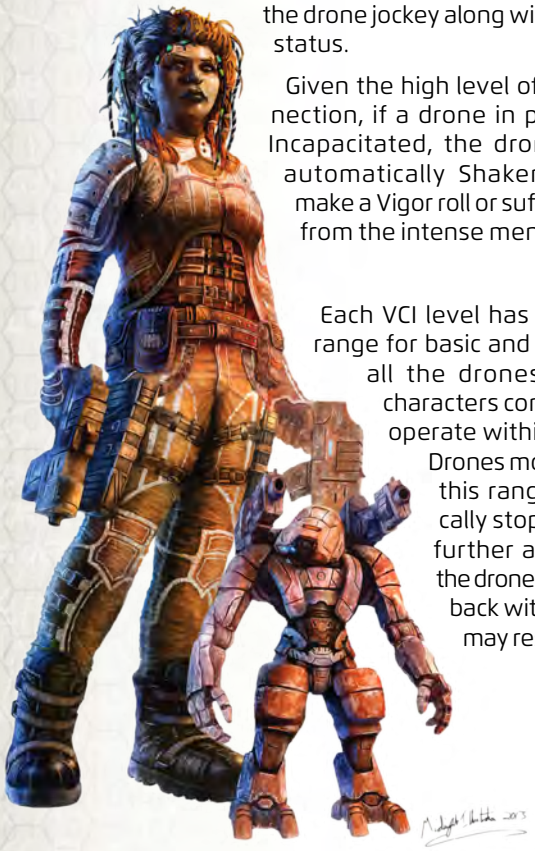
In order to use pilot mode with a drone, the drone and VCI must be linked via both hardware and software. The link is established initially by physically changing the drone's receiving code at the same time as the VCI. This only allows drone to enter pilot mode with a specific VCI. Linking a drone to a new VCI requires a Repair (Drone) roll and ten minutes.

While in pilot mode, the character's full attention is on the drone he is controlling. As a result, the character is only vaguely aware of what is happening around his real body. If required to perform any action or make any Trait roll with his meat body, while in pilot mode, he suffers a –4 penalty.

Due to the higher level of neural traffic required to pilot a drone in this mode, the drone requires two times the normal control slots, and a character may only have one drone in pilot mode at a time. If he has free control slots, he may control other drones, only in basic mode.

While in pilot mode, the drone uses the drone jockey's Smarts and Spirit attributes, while retaining its own physical attributes — Agility, Strength, and Vigor. Skill rolls made by the drone in pilot mode are made using the higher skill of the drone jockey or drone. If the drone jockey is a Wild Card, the drone gains a Wild Die. The drone gains access to the drone jockey's appropriate Combat, Social, and Background Edges (the GM has final call on which ones are allowed). The drone jockey may spend his bennies on behalf of the drone.

The drone jockey controls a drone in pilot mode using his own actions. Unlike basic mode, the drone being piloted suffers any penalties (MAP, Wound, Fatigue, etc) that are affecting the drone jockey along with his Shaken status.



Given the high level of neural connection, if a drone in pilot mode is Incapacitated, the drone jockey is automatically Shaken and must make a Vigor roll or suffers a Wound from the intense mental backlash.

### RANGE

Each VCI level has an effective range for basic and pilot modes, all the drones under the characters command must operate within this range. Drones moving beyond this range automatically stop and take no further actions. Once the drone jockey moves back within range, he may resume control.

### DAMAGE AND DESTRUCTION

Unlike vehicles, drones only suffer one Wound before becoming Incapacitated. A drone that suffers enough damage may be Shaken. Due to the direct interface between a drone in pilot mode, both share the same Shaken status — such that if a drone is Shaken, so it's controller and vice versa. A drone in basic mode uses the drone's Spirit die and modifiers to become Unshaken. Whereas in pilot mode, the drone jockey uses his Spirit roll and modifiers.

Incapacitation does not necessarily mean the drone is destroyed. After combat ends, the character makes a Vigor roll (using the drone's Vigor), for each Incapacitated drone. Failure indicates the drone is considered heavily damaged and beyond repair. Success indicates the drone is heavily damaged and requires repairs before its functional again. This typically requires a shop, tools, spare parts, 1d4 hours of work, and a successful Repair roll. If Vigor roll is made with a raise, the drone has suffered only minor damage and may be repaired in the field, requiring tools, ten minutes of work, and a successful Repair roll.

### DRONE HACKING

Drones may be hacked like any other piece of gear or Hyper Object. When being hacked the drone uses it's Firewall unless in pilot mode, in which case it may use the higher of the drone jockey's Firewall or that of the drone. Once the Firewall is defeated the hacker may perform normal actions (see Hyper Reality on page 280, for more details).

### SHUTDOWN

A drone that is remotely shutdown by a hacker can be brought back on line with the appropriate control skill (Boating, Driving, or Piloting). With a success the start up time takes a full round before the drone is functional, a raise on the roll means the drone is operational immediately.

### CONTROL

A hacker with a VCI and sufficient open control slots may attempt to issue commands to the drone. The hacker makes an opposed Hacking (Object Control) against the drone jockey's Spirit (in pilot mode the drone jockey gains a +2 bonus to his roll). A success means that the hacker has control of the drone and it remains that way until he is booted. If the drone was in pilot mode, it instantly switches to basic mode and the drone jockey must make a Vigor roll or become Shaken as he is unexpectedly shunted from the drone, this can cause a Wound.

On his next action, a drone jockey can try to wrest control of his drone back and boot the hacker — he is not required to hack the drone as he already posses the access codes. It works as above, with an opposed roll between the hacker and drone jockey. A success indicates the hacker has been booted from the drone and must go through the process of hacking it again to gain control.

Due to the secured link required for pilot mode, a hacker in control of a hacked drones may only operate it in basic mode.

# DUBBING

In 2090, Engram Technology has reached the point where a person can create a backup of his or her consciousness and either store it locally in devices known as cortex drives, or have it stored remotely in engram banks. If a person with a dub ever dies, her dub will be downloaded into a new body; usually a bioform grown in cloning tanks. It goes without saying that these arrangements must have been made before death, but for those who have the foresight, death is merely an inconvenience.

Here's how it works.

## COST

Immortality ain't cheap. While this technology is rapidly becoming available to more and more people, the cost to dub one's self is still prohibitively expensive. The base cost of a dub is 250,000 credits. This includes a single bioform, though extra bioforms can be purchased at the additional cost of 50,000 credits per extra body. These bioforms are clones based on the character's existing race and her physical attributes: Strength, Vigor, and Agility. Mental attributes are covered by the dub itself. If the character wishes to download into a new race, the cost of the body rises by 25,000 credits. All prices assume the character is buying her body on the open market at a reputable firm.

The cost of a dub or new body does not include cybernetics (with the exception of a TAP, which is automatically installed). These items must be purchased separately, at the original costs of each item. She can choose to have the cybernetics pre-installed in her bioform. The grade for each augment is either Streetware or Hyperchrome. If she chooses to wait until after, then she can choose whatever grade she wants, provided she can afford (and acquire!) the grade.

## CREATING THE DUB

Mechanically speaking, creating a dub is as simple as making a new character. When the character purchases her dub, you make a new character (or simply make a photocopy of your existing character sheet) at the character's current rank and experience. You cannot make a dub at a higher rank, or with more experience points than what your character has gained.

## CHANGING BODIES

Since you are choosing the bioform your dub downloads to after you die, you can opt to purchase a new race. Simply pay the extra money to get the race you choose, and rebuild your character with the appropriate racial template.

## HOW MANY BODIES CAN I HAVE?

While multiple dubs are illegal in many nations across the world, there is nothing stopping you from getting as many copies as you can afford if you really want them. That said, you have to pay the cost of the dub (and the additional body) each time you want to undergo the process.

## LEGALITY

As mentioned before, multiple dubs are illegal in most countries across the world. Locale governments and independent agencies like Stopwatch have devoted considerable resources to tracking down organizations that engage in unlicensed dubbing, and individuals who purchase multiple dubs.

People caught with multiple dubs are given a mandatory minimum 10 years in a VR federal prison, and their dubs are destroyed (provided the dubs can be found, of course).

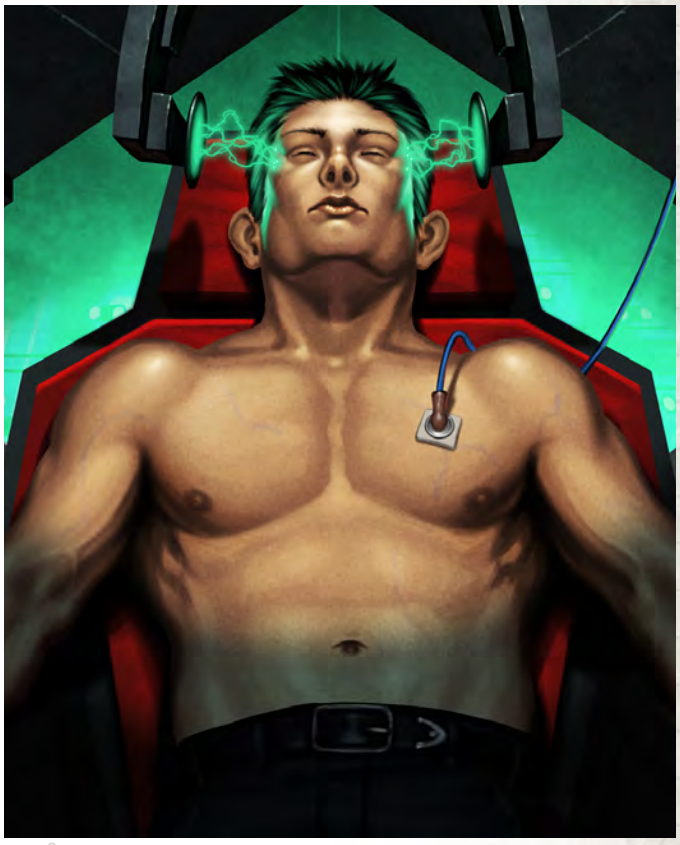
## BLACK MARKET DUBS

It is possible to get dubbed on the black market. The cost for a dub on the black market is cut in half, but it's risky. Your character must make a Spirit roll at a –2 penalty with a cumulative –1, based on the number of times the character's has previously been dubbed. So, if a character has been dubbed once, the penalty to get a second dub requires a Spirit roll at –3, to be successful.. If the roll fails, the dub fails. Since most shady organizations require payment up front, the character loses the money she spent for both the dub, and the new body.

Even if the dub is successful there is a good chanced chance that the dub may be flawed and the character could experience severe mental trauma.

## BLACK DUBS AND MENTAL TRAUMA

Character using "Black Dubs" run the additional risk of flawed dubs and mental trauma. When a character with a Black Dub, is downloaded into his new bioform he makes a Spirit roll with a cumulative –1 penalty for each previous dub after the first time (–1, if he has been dubbed twice, –2 if dubbed three times, etc). If this roll fails, the character gains a minor Mental hindrance (or a minor one may be increased to a Major), reflecting the flawed nature of the dub. With a critical failure on the roll, his Spirit or Smarts is permanently reduced by a step (to a minimum of d4). The flaw cannot be detected until the character is downloaded into the new body.



# GOLEMMECHS

In 2090, Golemmechs can be found in every military force on the planet. Private security firms, such as Ravenlocke securities also use them. While we have an array of golemmechs for you to use in the Equipment chapter on page 73, many of you will naturally want to create your own. The following rules, reprinted with permission from Pinnacle Entertainment, give you everything you need to quickly create a variety of golemmechs for your game.

## Golemmech Combat

In combat, golemmechs are treated as vehicles with a few alterations. Golemmechs are treated as humanoid, though when required to make an Agility roll, they use the operators Piloting skill in its place.

### WEAPONS SYSTEMS

For most weapon systems on a golemmech, the operator will use his Shooting skill. For melee attacks, he uses the lower of his Fighting or Piloting (this applies to calculating the golemmech's Parry as well).

### MOVEMENT

Instead of using Acceleration and Top Speed like vehicles, golemmechs use Pace. It may also run, using it's running dice, suffering the standard –2 Multi-Action Penalty.

*Example, a AGA MM-LGM-21 Light Golemmech, can move 24" on a tabletop battlefield and run an additional 4d6, if necessary.*

### SIZE

Light golemmechs count as Large targets with regard to infantry, medium golemmechs are Huge, and heavy golemmechs are Gargantuan. It is thus much easier for a lone soldier to hit a mech than it is for a mech to hit a lone soldier.

### WOUNDS

Golemmech use the rules for vehicular damage found in the *Savage Worlds* core rules, with a few exceptions listed below.

### CRITICAL HITS

Golemmechs use a hydrogen cell reactor as a power source, when breached it can cause devastating damage to the golemmech and those nearby. When the golemmech suffers a Wrecked result on the Critical Hit table, the unit's reactor explodes doing 1d6 × Size damage to everything in a 10" radius (the explosion is considered a Heavy Weapon). Subsequently the golemmech is destroyed as well.

### FALLING

Any time a golemmech suffers a wound, the pilot must make Piloting roll (accounting for any wounds as well). If the roll fails, the golemmech topples over, which can be devastating to the golemmech and anyone unfortunate to be caught underneath.

Damaged golemmechs don't always fall forward, often they lurch and stumble as the pilot tries to overcompensate. Roll a d12 reading it like a clock facing, to determine the direction the golemmmech lands. The golemmech suffers Xd6 damage from the fall, where X is the golemmech's Size.

Anything in the path of a falling golemmech makes an Agility, Piloting, or Driving roll (at –2 unless on hold) to escape. Failure means they are caught under the unit and suffer Xd6 damage, where X is the Size of the golemmech.

### EXTERNAL AND HAND-HELD WEAPON TOUGHNESS

Weapons on external mountings and any hand-held weapon can be targeted by a called shot, and gain no benefit from any vehicle armor. Check the rules on Breaking Things in the *Savage Worlds* core rules. Such weapons will typically have a Toughness of 10.

### HACKING A GOLEMMECH

Golemmechs may be hacked just like any other item or equipment, and all built-in functionality is accessible once past the golemmech's Firewall. Hand-held weapons and other external equipment will have their own HR tag, and will need to be hacked independently. The golemmech's Firewall, applies to most external equipment.

## Golemmech Creation

Golemmech customization is as simple as grabbing a basic Frame, and then choosing from available options to upgrade the system. Each basic frame has a number of Mods for personalized customization. All golemmechs come standard with a hydrogen cell power supply, Firewall, and a fully-functioning cockpit (complete with basic sensors and a 5-mile radio).

### STOCK FRAMES

The following frames are available for customizing. The listed price is the cost for the chassis only, it does not include any upgrades or modifications.

## LIGHT GOLEMMECH

The light golemmech is often used for reconnaissance and missions in areas where larger, slower golemmechs are at a disadvantage. While not as heavily armored as the larger mechs, their weaponry and mobility make them well-suited for assaults on convoys and in urban warfare.

**Chassis:** Light (Size: 4)
**Strength:** d12+4
**Crew:** 1
**Mods:** 15
**Pace/Run:** 18 / 3d6
**Toughness:** 15(4)
**Firewall:** 6
**Cost:** 200,000

## MEDIUM GOLEMMECH

Medium golemmechs are the work horses of mechanized cavalry divisions. They are often used in battles in support of infantry and the larger, less mobile heavy golemmechs.

**Chassis:** Medium (Size: 6)
**Strength:** d12+6
**Crew:** 1
**Mods:** 20
**Pace/Run:** 12 / 2d6
**Toughness:** 18(5)
**Firewall:** 8
**Cost:** 400,000

## HEAVY GOLEMMECH

Heavy golemmechs are the most advanced mobile weapon platforms in the history of warfare. While cumbersome, these mechs more than make up for their lack of mobility with overwhelming firepower. Heavy golemmechs are used in defense of large military installations, forward operation bases on the battlefield, and in assaults on enemy bases.

**Chassis:** Heavy (Size: 8)
**Strength:** d12+8
**Crew:** 1
**Mods:** 25
**Pace/Run:** 6 / 1d6
**Toughness:** 21(6)
**Firewall:** 8
**Cost:** 800,00

TABLE 6.6: GOLEMMECH WEAPONS

| ANTI-PERSONNEL | RANGE | DAMAGE | ROF | COST | SHOTS | MODS | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Heavy Machine Gun | 50/100/200 | 2d10 | 3 | 10,000 | 1,000 | 1 | AP4, HW |
| 7.62mm Rotary Cannon | 30/60/120 | 2d8+1 | 4 | 5,000 | 1,000 | 1 | AP 2 |
| 4g Shotgun | 12/24/48 | 1–3d10 | 2 | | 50 | — | Auto, Shotgun, Hand Held |
| **HEAVY WEAPONS** | | | | | | | |
| Liberator Minigun | 24/48/96 | 2d8 | 6 | 25,000 | 1,000 | 1 | AP 3, Auto, HW |
| Light Rail Gun | 50/100/200 | 3d12 | 1 | 75,000 | 20 | | HW |
| 20mm Rotary Cannon | 50/100/200 | 2d12 | 4 | 50,000 | 100 | 2 | AP 6, HW |
| 30mm Rotary Cannon | 50/100/200 | 3d8 | 3 | 85,000 | 100 | 3 | AP 10, HW |
| 50mm Rotary Cannon | 75/150/300 | 4d8 | 3 | 165,000 | 100 | 1 | AP 10, HW |
| 90mm Cannon | 150/300/600 | 5d8 | 1 | 250,000 | 20 | 5 | AP 80, HW, LBT |
| 120mm Cannon | 150/300/600 | 5d10 | 1 | 500,000 | 20 | 5 | AP 80, HW, LBT |
| 20MW Pulse Laser | 75/150/300 | 2d10 | 1 | 150,000 | — | 1 | AP 5, HW |
| 50MW Pulse Laser | 150/300/600 | 3d10 | 1 | 285,000 | — | 2 | AP 20, HW |
| Plasma Cannon | 50/100/200 | 4d8+2 | 1 | 275,000 | — | 4 | HW, Affects least armored area, catch fire 5+ |
| **MISSILES/ROCKETS** | | | | | | | |
| 40mm Grenade Launcher | 24/48/96 | 4d6 | 3 | 10,000 | 20 | 1 | HW, LBT |
| Light Missile Launcher | 20/400/800 | 4d6 | 1–4 | 100,000 | 8 | 1/8 | AP 6, HW |
| Heavy Missile Launcher | 200/400/800 | 6d6 | 1–4 | 250,000 | 8 | 1/4 | AP 12, HW |
| 70mm Rocket Pod | 24/48/96 | 4d8+2 | 1–4 | 50,000 | 12 | 1/12 | HW, MBT |
| 20mm Gyroc Pod | 50/100/200 | 2d10 | 4 | 45,000 | 50 | | AP 4, Auto, HW, SBT |

TABLE 6.7: GOLEMMECH UPGRADES

| UPGRADE | MODS | COST |
|---|---|---|
| **AMCM (1):** Anti-Missile Counter Measures add +2 to Piloting or Knowledge (Electronics) rolls made to evade missile attacks. | 1 | 500K |
| **Advanced Sensors (1):** Adds +2 to Notice rolls and rolls to get missile lock. | 1 | 300K |
| **Armor (U):** Increases a golemmech's Armor value by +2. | 1 | 1,000×Size |
| **Auto-Fire (5):** The golemmech's weapons can fire on verbally designated targets. The first level grants d4 Shooting, and each additional level increases it one die type (max d12). This applies to all attached weapons. | — | 250K |
| **Cargo Space (U):** Each dedicated space holds 5' by 5' by 5', or 250 cubic feet. A space may be concealed by paying 10,000 credits. | 1 | — |
| **Decoy Pod (U):** These pods contain high-signature micro-drones that can draw off enemy missiles. These are deployed after an enemy has already gained a lock and launched his projectiles (this is a free action). The golemmech adds +2 to rolls made to avoid missiles (see *Savage Worlds*). Each pod may be used five times before it's expended. | 1 | 500K |
| **Drop Chute (1):** An external drop chute for paradrops behind enemy lines. Single use. | 1 | 1,000×Size |
| **Electromagnetic Shielding (1):** Adds +6 to the walker's effective Toughness from EMP attacks. | 1 | 250K |
| **Environmental Seal (1):** The golemmech completely sealed for operation in hostile environments (space underwater), and able to provide it's own heating, cooling, and has enough oxygen to last 72 hours. This includes propulsion jets which provide a Pace of 12" when in vacuum or water, no effect outside these environments. | 1×Size | 50K×Size |
| **Firewall Upgrade (U):** Increases the Firewall rating by +1 | — | 10,000/+1 |
| **Fixed Gun (U):** Weapons with this modification cannot rotate. On the table-top, they have a 90 degree firing arc. In the Chase rules, the weapon may only fire when the character has Advantage and an Action Card of ten or higher. | — | +20% |
| **Ejection System (1):** Should a golemmech suffer a Wrecked result, anyone equipped with an ejection system may make an Agility roll at –4 (or no penalty if the individual was on Hold) roll. Failure results in damage as usual and failure to eject that round. Those who succeed are launched into the air and descend safely via parachute (the GM must decide how long the descent takes). | 1 | 100K |
| **Hyperlink (1):** Satellite uplink to the Global DataNet, provides access anywhere in the world as long as the sky is visible. | 1 | 50,000 |
| **Jump Jets (1):** Powerful rockets give walkers the ability to propel themselves high in the air — to clear obstacles or perform "death from above" attacks on foes. To jump, the pilot uses an action to make a Piloting roll to both maneuver his walker and manage his power reserves. Each round spent jumping increases his height 8" (50') for light and small walkers, 5" (30' )for mediums, and 3" (20') for heavies. Each subsequent round spent jumping (essentially flying) afterwards inflicts a –2 to the Piloting roll, cumulative to a maximum of –6. Failure means the walker descends immediately (a critical failure results in a fall). Should a walker attempt to land on something for damage, treat it as a fall. | 1×Size | 500K×Size |
| **Linked Weapons (U):** Up to four direct-fire weapons of the same type may be linked and fired as one (one Shooting roll at one target). Increase damage by one die type per additional weapon (or +1 past d12). This halves the total Mods required. | — | — |
| **Melee Weapon (2):** These terrible, diamond-bladed weapons are designed to cut through the hard armor of rival golemmechs, buildings, or enemy tanks. They have AP X and cause Xd6 damage, where X is the golemmech's Size. Two-handed weapons increase the golemmech's Size by +1 for cost and required mods. | 1×Size | 50K×Size |
| **Missile Launcher (U):** Allows up to four missiles to fire at once. | 1 | 500K |
| **Optics (1):** An advanced optics suite provides 50× magnification, IR vision, and night vision. This adds +2 to vision-based Notice rolls and eliminates all penalties for darkness up to 100 yards. | — | 100K |
| **Passenger Compartment (U):** Space for two additional crew. | 1 | 5,000 |
| **Sensor Suite (1):** The vehicle is equipped with thermal, radar, and electromagnetic sensors that detect sound, motion, strong chemicals, radiation, or electrical fields up to 500 yards. Range can be increased to 1,000 yards for double the cost (but not Mods). | 1 | 250K |
| **Sloped Armor (3):** The vehicle's armor is sloped in such a way that shots are often deflected off its surface. Attackers subtract 2 to hit with direct-fire weapons. | 1 | 5,000×Size |
| **Speed (3):** Increases the golemmech's Pace by +4 and running die by 1d6. | 1 | 5,000×Size |
| **Speed Reduction (1):** The vehicle sacrifices power and speed for additional room. Halve total Pace (figure any Speed increases first) and add half its Size in Mods. | — | 20,000×Size |
| **Stealth Shielding (1):** Radar-absorbing paint or signal scramblers –4 to spot the vehicle with sensors. | 1 | 5,000×Size |
| **Stealth System (1):** Active stealth utilizes active systems to assist with stealth. This provides +2 stealth bonus. The larger the frame the more costly the system. | 1 | 20,000×Size |
| **Stabilizer (U):** Reduces penalties for running to 0 for all weapons. | 2 | 50,000×Size |
| **Targeting System (U):** Negates two points of penalties from Shooting rolls for all weapons. | — | 100K×Size |
| **VCI Rig (1):** The golemmech is configured with a Vehicle Control Interface. | 1 | 10,000 |

# HACKING

The Global DataNet is the internet of 2090. The only difference between today and 2090, is that people access it via their Tendril Access Processors much like you would use a smart phone or an iPad™ to access your favorite websites. Anything you can do online today, you can do in 2090. You can have voice and video chats, stream your favorite music, watch your favorite TV show, sporting event or movies, play games, and yes, even hack. Before we get into the nuts and bolts of the hacking process, let's discuss the primary component you'll need to do it; the Tendril Access Processor.

## Tendril Access Processor

For most people, the Tendril Access Processor (TAP) is simply the interface they use to interface with the Global DataNet and Hyper Reality. Most people use their TAP to scan the Global DataNet for various types of information, listen to streaming music, update their Hyper Reality profiles, MyFace pages, watch video feeds of their favorite MediaProgs, play the newest VR games, and much more. For hackers, the Tendril Access Processor is a powerful tool used to manipulate the world around them.

### THE ON AND OFF SWITCH

After the Flare briefly shut down the Global DataNet, crashing people's firewalls across the world, developers issued a hot patch to the firmware, allowing people to turn off their TAPs. Characters can turn their TAP off any time they wish. The process takes about 30 seconds to cleanly shut down, but if characters is in combat, it requires an action.

### STATS

The TAP has a few basic statistics. If your character isn't a hacker, the only thing you absolutely need to worry about (and should consider upgrading at some point) is your TAP's Firewall, as it represents your character's main defense against attempts to hack her TAP. The other stats are used to hack. Below are stats for a standard TAP that all characters begin play with. A character with the Unplugged Hindrance, does not start with a TAP. A character's TAP can be improved by purchasing upgrades.

TABLE 6.8: STANDARD TAP READOUT

| FIREWALL | AMS | NEURAL TOUGHNESS | RANGE | COST |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 4 | 2 + ½ Vigor + Neural Armor | Smarts | Free |
| **INSTALLED ENGRAMS** | | | | |
| List each engram here | | | | |

### ACTIVE MEMORY SECTORS

Active Memory Sectors (AMS for short) facilitate the use of engrams by loading them into the TAP's active memory, much like your Laptop, Mac, or PC allows you to open and use multiple programs simultaneously. For example, you might have iTunes©, a word processing program, and Adobe Photoshop© all running at the same time while you browse the net in search of information on your favorite role-playing game.

The concept is exactly the same, with one notable exception: unlike modern day programs on your computer, engrams require more concentration to use, especially when you are trying to do multiple things at once. So there is a limit to the number of AMS a character can have.

All characters begin play with 4 Active Memory Sectors. Characters may gain more additional slots by purchasing upgrades (see Table 6.9: Active Memory Sector Cost).

TABLE 6.9: ACTIVE MEMORY SECTOR COST

| AMS | COST |
|---|---|
| 1 | 10,000 credits per AMS |

### SWAPPING ENGRAMS

Loading and unloading an engram takes time based on the AMS required by the engram. An engram with an AMS rating of 1–4 maybe swapped as free action, an engram with a rating of 5–7 requires a regular action, and any engram with an AMS 8+ a full action. Loading and unloading are considered two separate actions, allowing an engram to be loaded and unloaded in the same round — treated as two actions. However, two engrams could not be loaded as it would be a repeated action.

### FIREWALL

Firewalls are designed to protect against unwanted intrusion by other hackers. Firewalls can be upgraded to provide more protection as outlined by the chart below.

TABLE 6.10: TAP FIREWALL UPGRADES

| RATING | COST |
|---|---|
| 5 | 10,000 credits |
| 6 | 20,000 credits |
| 7 | 30,000 credits |
| 8 | 40,000 credits |
| 9 | 50,000 credits |

### SKILL TERMINOLOGY

Throughout this section, you'll be seeing references to skill rolls with a specialization attached in parenthesis. The basic format will look like this: Hacking (Firewall Penetration), or Knowledge (Programming). In all cases, just remember that the name listed in parenthesis is the specialization your character needs to make the base skill roll (Hacking, or Programming) without suffering a –2 penalty. Skill specializations are discussed in detail in the character creation chapter.

If you have decided not to use the skill specializations rule outlined in the Character Creation Chapter, default to either Hacking, Knowledge (Programming), or Hyper Combat skills to resolve a hack.

### NEURAL TOUGHNESS

Neural Toughness represents the characters ability to resist attacks capable of causing physical damage. Neural Toughness is equal to 2 + ½ Vigor plus any neural armor engrams she has installed in her TAP.

### RANGE

Tendril Access Processors facilitate Object-Oriented hacking in Hyper Reality. That is to say if your character can see a Hyper Object, she can try and hack it, provided the Hyper Object is within range. Range is determined by your character's Smarts Die. So, if your Character has a Smarts d10, she can hack a Hyper Object 10" away. This range trait can be increased by purchasing upgrades. Range has no application when hacking via the Global DataNet.

TABLE 6.11: TAP RANGE UPGRADES

| RANGE | COST |
|---|---|
| Smarts ×2 | 5,000 credits |
| Smarts ×3 | 10,000 credits |
| Smarts ×4 | 20,000 credits |
| Smarts ×5 | 40,000 credits |

## ENGRAMS

Skill Engram Technology, or SET, is used to map activity in the neural pathways of the brain when the character uses certain skills with the Tendril Access Processor. SET takes this neural map and creates digital engrams of those skills. These engrams are loaded into the Tendril Access Processor's Active Memory Sectors (see Active Memory Sectors on page 274) as programs which provide a bonus to skill rolls for the appropriate specialization. More sophisticated engrams can also have additional effects like damaging attacks, and some can even act independently of the character as Allied Extras or Allied Wild Cards (See AI Sprites for more information about AI Wild Cards).

### CREATING AN ENGRAM

Engrams are created with the Knowledge (Programming) skill. To create them, the character makes a skill roll at a difficulty modifier equal to the number of Active Memory Sectors (AMS) the engram uses. When an engram is created, it must be coded to a specific TAP. The engram will not function on any other TAP than the one it was originally programed for.

If the character's Knowledge (Programming) roll fails, the character must start over losing any invested time. On a Critical Failure, he must spend 24 hours clearing the corrupted engram from this TAP and then start the programing process over.

*Example: Billy Black Eyes wants to create a non-lethal damage (1d10+2) skill engram. It takes up 4 Active Memory Sectors in his TAP. He makes a Knowledge (Programming) skill roll with a –4 penalty, if successful he creates the engram, otherwise he must start over.*

### TIME

It takes 24 hours to create a stable skill engram. If the character needs to create one on the fly, she can attempt to do so at a –4 penalty. An engram created in this manner is unstable, and will only work for the length of the scene. The engram cannot take up more AMS than the character has available.

### COST

If you don't wish to create an engram, you can purchase them at the listed cost. Some engrams — especially ones which have very high AMS — are likely harder to come by than others. Game Masters should use their best judgment when deciding whether or not a character can purchase a given skill engram.

### AMS REQUIREMENT

This is the number of Active Memory Sectors required to run the engram.

### ENGRAM QUALITIES

The following qualities can be coded into a skill engram. If you don't want to code the engram yourself, you can purchase one at the listed cost.

TABLE 6.12: ENGRAM QUALITIES

| ENGRAM QUALITY | AMS | COST |
|---|---|---|
| AI Sprite (Allied Wild Card) | 8 | — |
| Area of Effect Attack Module (SBT) | 5 | 50,000 credits |
| Area of Effect Attack Module (MBT) | 6 | 60,000 credits |
| Area of Effect Attack Module (LBT) | 7 | 70,000 credits |
| Expert Sprite (Allied Extra) | 4 | 40,000 credits |
| Lethal Damage Upgrade | see below | see below |
| Neural Armor +1 | 1 per point | 10,000 credits/ per point |
| Non-lethal Damage (1d4 + spec) | 1 | 10,000 credits |
| Non-lethal Damage (1d6 + spec) | 2 | 20,000 credits |
| Non-lethal Damage (1d8 + spec) | 3 | 30,000 credits |
| Non-lethal Damage (1d10 + spec) | 4 | 40,000 credits |
| Psychotropic Attack | 2 | 20,000 credits |
| Skill Specialization Bonus (+1)[1] | 1 | 20,000 credits |
| Skill Specialization Bonus (+2)[1] | 2 | 20,000 credits |
| Sprite Firewall Rating +1 | 1 per value | 10,000 credits |
| Sprite Armor +1 | 1 per value | 10,000 credits |
| Stealth Module (1) | 1 | 10,000 credits |
| Stealth Module (2) | 2 | 20,000 credits |
| Stealth Module (3) | 3 | 30,000 credits |
| Stealth Module (4) | 4 | 40,000 credits |
| Virtual Avatar | see entry | 10,000 credits |

[1]The skill specialization bonus gained from this engram defaults to the parent skill if you aren't using skill specialization rules.
*Lethal Damage Upgrade:* has the same AMS and twice the cost of its nonleathal counterpart..

### AI SPRITE (ALLIED WILD CARD)

*Savage Worlds* makes use of Allied Extras; NPCs that work for the characters in some fashion. *Interface Zero 2.0* goes one step beyond, introducing Allied Wild Cards to the game in the form of artificially intelligent programs called AI Sprites. AI Sprites have to be created. Characters cannot buy these programs, as they are highly illegal, and with good reason.

This is how rogue AIs are born.

This is how Charon was born.

## AI ADVANCEMENT

There's always a chance characters will lose control of their AI, and this merits some discussion. Naturally, some players might not like losing control of their Sprites. The AI is theirs, after all — or is it? Can you truly own anything capable of thinking, learning, and eventually coming to an awareness of what it is? Can a mother truly own her child, or is she really just a custodian, tasked with raising the child until ultimately, it grows into adulthood and leaves home? This raises some interesting questions.

Will players, knowing that with each advance the AI might grow beyond their control, choose to allow the AI to advance? Should that decision be theirs in the first place? Conceptually, the AI is a separate entity. Yes, it is under the control of the character, and one can (and likely will) argue that, similar to a parent who attempts to restrict the things their children are exposed to, characters should always have the ability to set restrictions on how powerful their creation becomes.

There are a few ways Game Masters can handle this problem. Regardless of which method you choose, AI's use the same rules for spending advances as your characters do.

1. You can allow the player to do whatever she wishes, either advancing or not advancing the AI as she sees fit. This is perhaps the easiest option. It causes less friction, and ultimately puts control in the player's hands. Treat the AI Sprite as a Novice for purposes of tracking advances and rising in rank.

2. You can choose to advance the AI yourself. This option fits perfectly with the idea that an artificially intelligent entity is capable of learning on its own, and the character doesn't necessarily have any control over the things the AI learns, or how fast it learns. As above, treat the AI Sprite as a Novice for purposes of tracking advances and rising in rank.

3. Simply use the Allies and Experience rules in the *Savage Worlds* core rules. This addresses the problem nicely, and gives you Game Masters out there something to point to in the core rules if a player complains. Under these rules the advances are random, so you don't have to assign a rank to the Sprite if you don't want to, which eliminates the bookkeeping.

An AI Sprite has a chance of becoming self aware. When the Sprite's Smarts or Spirit is increased through an Advance (see AI Advancement sidebar), the GM secretly draws a number of cards equal to the number of Advances spent increasing these attributes (1 card for the first advance, 2 for the second, etc), from a freshly shuffled Action Deck.

If the card drawn is the Red Joker, the AI Sprite becomes self-aware and is a sentient being. At this point the AI is no longer considered an Allied Wild Card, but an NPC Wild Card, and can do whatever it wishes. This includes hacking out of a character's TAP and disappearing into the Global DataNet.

**AI Sprites and Combat:** Like characters, AI Sprites use the Hacking (Hyper combat) skill to make attacks against their enemies. All AI Sprites can be Shaken, and take 3 Wounds before being destroyed. AI Sprites can soak Wounds, and get a single Bennie to spend as they wish using the *Savage Worlds* rules for spending Bennies. For more information on hacking and Combat, see the Hyper Combat section later on in this chapter.

### AREA OF EFFECT ATTACK MODULE

This engram quality works exclusively in Hyper Reality. It allows a character to broadcast a wide-band viral attack against multiple Hyper Objects, and Tendril Access Processors. The process works like hacking a Firewall with one notable exception; the attack automatically launches the programmed effect (such as a virus), and requires no additional skill roll. If the attack does damage, the hacker rolls damage against the target's Neural Toughness or VR Toughness rating. If successful, the targets suffer the effects of the virus.

### EXPERT SPRITE (ALLIED EXTRA)

Unlike AI Sprites, these programs are very limited in what they can do. Expert Sprites are built as if they were AI Sprites, but only have 2 points to spend on attributes, 4 skill points, and have half their Smarts die value in Active Memory Sectors for engrams. Expert sprite's do not have Hindrances, and never advance.

### LETHAL DAMAGE UPGRADE

This engram turns non-lethal damage engrams into lethal damage engrams. Damage is determined in the same manner as non-lethal damage engrams.

### NEURAL ARMOR

Neural Armor works like physical armor, providing a bonus to the TAP's Neural Toughness rating. If any damaging attack penetrates the TAP's Firewall, it must overcome the character's Neural Toughness to inflict damage on the character. There is no limit to the amount of Neural Armor a character can install, as long as the she has sufficient amount of AMS to run it.

### NON-LETHAL DAMAGE

This engram allows a character to make non-lethal attacks on a network, virtual entity, or person. The damage done from the attack is based upon the engram level and the character's Knowledge (Programing) at the time the engram was written. Once written the damage does not change even if the character's skill increases. If she wants to increase the damage the engram must be rewritten. Purchased engrams are assumed to have a Knowledge (Programing) equal to the base damage.

*For example: A character with Knowledge (Programing) d6 writes a level one non-lethal engram, the damage is d6 + d4 (d6 for the skill and d4 for the base damage). Had he instead purchased its, the damage would be 2d4.*

### PSYCHOTROPIC ATTACK

Psychotropic engrams allow characters to launch a direct mental attack against another hacker or an AI program. The attacker makes an opposed Smarts test against her opponent.

If successful, the target is Shaken from the mental onslaught. With a raise on the roll the target gains a minor mental

Hindrance of the GM's choosing (delusional is the most common), or a minor becomes a Major. The Hindrance is permanent, and may be bought off with an Advance or through theraphy (see Psychotherapy on page 266 for more details).

### SKILL SPECIALIZATION BONUSES

This is a one-time bonus to a single skill specialization. Each time a character obtains this engram quality, she must apply it to a different specialization. The +1 specialization bonuses does not stack with +2 specialization bonuses.

**Note:** If you aren't using the skill specialization rules, this engram provides a bonus to a specific skill (Hacking, Knowledge (Programming), or Hyper Combat.

### SPRITE ARMOR

This engram adds 1 point of Armor to the Sprite for each AMS.

### SPRITE FIREWALL

This engram boosts the Sprite's Firewall by 1 point for each AMS.

### STEALTH MODULES

Stealth modules mask the presence of a hacker when she is hacking a TAP or a Cloud Network, applying a penalty to all Hacking (Intrusion Detection) rolls to detect the presence of the hacker. The penalty applied is equivalent to the rating of the module. Only one Stealth engram may be used at a time.

### VIRTUAL AVATAR

A Virtual Avatar is a program characters use when they enter virtual reality. These programs are created just like creating a regular character, but all "attributes" are computer generated, and work exactly like their real-world equivalents. Unlike other engrams, Virtual Avatars fill a single AMS slot. Programing an avatar it imposes a –5 penalty to the skill roll. For more information on Virtual Avatars, see Virtual Reality on page 281.

## AI SPRITE CREATION

Once you have successfully coded the AI Sprite, she must assign attributes, skills, and special abilities (see Engram Qualities, above). Use the rules below to complete the process.

**Name:** This helps identify the Sprite. Different programers use different names ranging from descriptive ones like Black Dog Attack Sprite to obscure ones like IX-8976-6757.

**Attributes:** All AI Sprites have a Smarts, Spirit, and Vigor of d4. You get 3 Attribute points to distribute. No single attribute can exceed d8 during the AI creation process.

**Skills:** AI Sprites can learn any Smarts or Spirit based skill. The Skill Specialization rules apply. You get 8 points to pick the skills the Sprite knows. Investigation and Streetwise skills only apply to The Global DataNet and Virtual Reality.

**Edges and Hindrances:** Similar to character creation, a Sprite may take a Major and two Minor Hindrances. Each Minor Hindrance provides 1 point, while the Major 2 points for upgrading the Sprite. An attribute may be increased for two points (remember if Smarts or Spirit is increased, to check if the AI becomes self-aware) or the points may be used to select engram qualities free of cost, each point is equates to 1 Active Memory Sector.

### DERIVED STATISTICS

**Virtual Pace:** AI have a Virtual Pace of 6. This has no application in Hyper Reality or the Global DataNet, but if an AI is inhabiting Virtual Reality in, say an MMORPG or some other Virtual Reality environment, the AI's movement is governed by this stat.

**Toughness:** AI Sprites calculate their Toughness just as regular characters do (½ Vigor die + 2). Sprite armor can modify Toughness just as armor can with characters.

**Firewall:** AI Sprites have a starting Firewall of 4. Characters can either buy or program stronger Firewalls, for their Sprite using the Skill Engram rules above. If the GM allows it, the AI can also program a stronger Firewall.

**Qualities:** AI Sprites are created with two engram qualities of your choice. These qualities cannot individually be higher than 1 AMS. If you are advancing your AI, it can use an Advance to try and program its own engram using the rules for programming an engram.

**AMS:** When created an AI Sprite has a number of Active Memory Sectors equal to its Smarts die. Should its Smarts increase, so does the AMS available for engrams.

**Note:** Sprites suffer multi action-penalties, and have Active Memory Sector restrictions just like characters do.

### SAMPLE AI SPRITE

**Name:** N-26 Epsilon
**Attributes:** Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Hacking (Data mining, Firewall Penetration, Hyper Combat, Systems Control) d6, Knowledge (Programming) d4, Notice d4
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Firewall:** 5; **Toughness:** 6
**Hindrances:** Wanted (Major)
**Engrams:** Sprite Armor (1), Sprite Firewall (1), Skill Specialization Bonus (Data Mining +2)

### SAMPLE EXPERT SPRITE

**Name:** Black Dog Attack Sprite
**Attributes:** Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Hacking (Hyper Combat) d6, Notice d6
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Firewall:** 5; **Toughness:** 6
**Engrams:** Sprite Armor (1), Sprite Firewall (1), Non-lethal damage (1d6+2)

## How to Hack

Thus far, we've discussed the Tendril Access Processor and its components. Now it's time to talk about the actual process of hacking the Global DataNet and Hyper Reality. Hacking in Virtual Reality uses the same core mechanic, but in a slightly different way. We'll discuss hacking in Virtual Reality later on in this chapter.

### THE CORE MECHANIC

The system for hacking in *Interface Zero 2.0* is the same regardless of whether your character is remotely hacking a Cloud Network, a Hyper Object, or someone's Tendril Access Processor (TAP).

1. Hack the target's Firewall by making a Hacking (Firewall Penetration) skill roll versus the network's Defense Rating, or the Firewall of the TAP. This is a regular action.
   - If the roll fails or does not generate a raise, the target can make a Hacking (Intrusion Detection) roll at a penalty equal to the rating of any stealth engrams running in AMS. If the roll is successful the intrusion is detected.
2. Once you've hacked past the Firewall, you can perform actions by making the appropriate Hacking or Knowledge (Programming) skill check with the Target number being equal to the Defense Rating of the network or the Firewall of the TAP. Each skill roll is an action, though you can take multiple actions. Standard multi action penalties apply.

   If you have a Sprite, you can upload it into the destination network, where it acts like an Extra under your control.
   - As above, if any of the rolls fails or does not generate a raise; the target is allowed a Hacking (Intrusion Detection) roll (modified by and stealth engrams you have loaded in AMS) to detect the hacker's activity.
3. Repeat Step 2 as many times as you wish, or log out. Logging out is a regular action if your character isn't under attack. If the character is under attack, you must make an opposed Hacking roll against the Defense Rating of the Network or the Firewall of the TAP, to log out. Failure means you can't log out that round.

### NETWORK STATISTICS

There are 5 network categories: Public Access Networks, Home Access Networks, Corporate Access Networks, Government Access Networks, and Military Access Networks. The pertinent statistics are outlined here.

#### STATISTICAL INFORMATION

##### DEFENSE RATING

The Defense Rating is the target number to any Hacking (Firewall Penetration) rolls are made against to gain access to a network. It is also the base target number for all skill (Hacking, Knowledge (Programming), etc) rolls made by non-authorized personal on the network.

#### TARGET NUMBER OR MODIFIER?

Some people may prefer to roll Hacking and Knowledge (Programming) rolls against a target number 4, instead of the Defense Rating. This is simply done, by subtracting the Defense Rating from 4 and applying this as a modifier to the character's roll.

*For example, Hacking rolls against a HAN would have a modifier of –2 to +0 (4 minus the Defense Rating of 4 to 6). A PAN would have a modifier of +0 to +2.*

##### DIE TYPE

When a SysOp needs to make any type of roll on behalf of the network, including attack rolls, he uses this die. If the Network is monitored by an AI or NPC with its own stats, the GM may use those instead.

##### DAMAGE DICE

The damage the network does with a successful attack.

##### TOUGHNESS

The networks' Toughness for resisting direct attacks to the network (SysOps and others resist damage with their TAP's Neural Toughness), it works the same as it does for characters. Also, it will designate if a network is treated as an Extra or Wild Card for taking damage (see Hyper Combat for more details).

#### PUBLIC ACCESS NETWORK (PAN)

PANs are the most common cloud networks since they're found in most public places. They provide a basic level of security against unwanted intrusion, but relying on a PAN for security isn't generally wise. If a Hyper Object isn't attached to any other type of cloud network, a PAN is the usual default.

- **Defense Rating:** 2–4 (default 2)
- **Die Type:** d4
- **Damage Dice:** 2d4 (non-lethal damage only)
- **Toughness:** 4 (Extra)

#### HOME ACCESS NETWORK (HAN)

HANs are found in any place where ordinary people live, including low-end hotels (or coffin motels). Note that, while many people invest in some type of network security, they often don't have them cranked up to high levels.

- **Defense Rating:** 4–6 (default 4)
- **Die Type:** d6
- **Damage Dice:** 2d6 (can be lethal or non-lethal)
- **Toughness:** 6 (Extra)

#### CORPORATE ACCESS NETWORK (CAN)

CANs are found in corporate buildings, as well as high-end homes and hotels all over the world. These networks are the types the hacker faces the most, since anything controlled by a corporation will have its attendant network protected by that corporation's security. Conversely, corporate security tends to be pretty hefty simply because corporations are a favorite target of Hackers.

- **Defense Rating:** 6–8 (default 6)
- **Die Type:** d8+1, Wild Die
- **Damage Dice:** 2d8+1 (can be lethal or non-lethal)
- **Toughness:** 8 (Wild Card)

### GOVERNMENT ACCESS NETWORK (GAN)

GANs are used by those who 'rule', whether at a local level or a national one. The security is tight at all levels.

- **Defense Rating:** 8–10 (default 8)
- **Die Type:** d10+1 Wild Die
- **Damage Dice:** 2d10+1 (can be lethal or non-lethal)
- **Toughness:** 10 (Wild Card)

### MILITARY ACCESS NETWORK (MAN)

MANs are ultra-secure systems designed to protect anything related to a military, including advanced weapons systems, satellite networks, military bases and the like. Odds are, there are also MANs called 'Black Networks' that are not only used by the military, but also by corporations or other entities who very much want to keep something secret and secure.

- **Defense Rating:** 10–12 (default 10)
- **Die Type:** d12+2, Wild Die
- **Damage Dice:** 2d12+2 (can be lethal or non-lethal)
- **Toughness:** 12 (Wild Card, second Shaken result does not cause a wound)

## SYSOP COUNTERMEASURES

A SysOp is a person or AI that monitors a cloud network. The SysOp is responsible for maintaining the network and, as is appropriate to this section, guarding against unwanted intrusions. Once a SysOp detects an intruder, draw initiative cards for both the SysOp and the hacker to keep track of everything that is going on. If the group as a whole can be affected by this process (perhaps the team is inside a corporate facility and the hacker is running overwatch), draw initiative cards for the entire group, and let everyone act on their turn.

Once a SysOp becomes aware of an intrusion, she can respond to the threat in the following ways. If a response dictates a die roll, use the die type designated by the type of network the character is hacking (PAN, HAN, CAN, GAN, and MAN). Characters and NPCs are considered SysOps if their TAP is being hacked, and can perform these actions as well using their own skills for any required rolls.

If the character or NPC doesn't have Hacking, Knowledge (Programming), or Hyper Combat skills; they can make an unskilled roll using the rules for Unskilled Attempts found in the *Savage Worlds* rules.

### ATTACK THE HACKER

As a regular action, a SysOp can attack the character by launching a virus against her Tendril Access Processor using the rules as outlined in the Hyper Combat section of this chapter.

### INCREASE SECURITY

As an action the SysOp can attempt to increase the security of the network. She makes a Knowledge (Programing), a success and each raise increase the TN for all hostile Hacking and Knowledge (Programing) rolls by 1. Increased security lasts until the end of the scene.

### RESTORE FUNCTIONALITY

As a full round action, the SysOp can attempt to restore functionality to a damaged network. With a Knowledge (Programing) roll the SysOp can remove one wound with a success, two with a raise. The roll suffers a penalty equal to the wounds the network is suffering, plus –2 for the network's Shaken status, and any modifiers the SysOp may have (Wounds, Fatigue, etc.). See Hyper Combat for more details.

### SHUT DOWN THE NETWORK

As a full round action, the SysOp can shut down the entire network. The network will shut down on the SysOp's next action. If a character is still inside the network when it shuts down, she gets forcibly booted from the Global DataNet and takes damage based on the damage die type of the network. This damage can be lethal or non-lethal. If a character uses this action to shut down her TAP, she cannot access the Global DataNet or interact with Hyper Reality until she brings it back online.

### SOUND AN ALARM

A SysOp can hit the panic button as a free action. While this doesn't directly impact the hacker, it does mean that security forces will search the premises for any signs of physical intrusion.

### RUN A TRACE

SysOps (and characters for that matter) may attempt to find someone's physical location. To do this, the SysOp must make a Hacking (Trace) roll at a difficulty equal to the Firewall of the person's TAP, modified by the rating of any stealth modules a character has running in AMS (see Stealth Modules on page 277 for more information). Success reveals the person's physical location. The process takes 1 round plus a number of rounds equal to the target's TAP Firewall.

Characters who don't have the appropriate skill may attempt to trace someone using the rules for making Unskilled Attempts from the *Savage Worlds* rules

## HYPER COMBAT

Some of you might be wondering: How can SysOps (or other hackers) do physical damage to a character via the Global DataNet and Hyper Reality? This is because the Tendril Access Processor is over 50% flesh. Much of the TAP is organically designed to translate the signals it receives via Hyper Reality and the Global DataNet into visual, auditory, tactile, taste, and olfactory information your brain uses to inform you of what's going on around you.

In 2090 the people who create viruses know how to exploit this technology and create programs which damage the mind and body — i.e. the victim's brain. In addition to effects typical of modern day malware — keystroke loggers, spam, and data corruption utilities, etc.—virii are capable of causing blindness,

hallucinations, physical pain, comas, strokes, and even death by way of a brain aneurism. The process for resolving hyper combat is as follows.

### INITIATIVE

Draw initiative cards. All characters in the group should do so, even if the rest of the group isn't in combat. We do this, so the other players aren't just twiddling their thumbs waiting for Hyper Combat to end.

### ATTACK

Attacks are treated as ranged attacks at a TN based on either the target's Firewall, if the hacker is engaged in Hyper Combat with another person; or against the Defense Rating of the network. No range modifiers apply to this roll. Characters use their Hacking (Hyper Combat) skill, and any appropriate engrams.

### CAUSING DAMAGE

Damage has different effects depending on whether or not you are attacking a character/NPC or are attempting to damage an entire network.

### CHARACTERS AND NPCS

When a character is attacked, she resists any potential physical damage with her Neural Toughness stat, taking Wounds as normal, and using the Gritty Damage setting rule. These Wounds can be soaked. If the character ever receives 3 non-lethal Wounds, she becomes unconscious for 2d6+2 rounds. If she receives 3 lethal Wounds as a result of these attacks, she becomes Incapacitated, but the only applicable injury is brain damage. Her Smarts die is reduced by one die type (min. d4).

### NETWORKS

Cloud networks can be damaged just as characters or NPCs can be. If a network is categorized as an Extra, it can be Shaken, and crashes when it takes a single Wound. If a network is a Wild Card, it can also be Shaken, and can take 3 Wounds before crashing. Now, here's where things get interesting.

Once a network is Shaken from an attack, it still functions, but not at its full capacity. The network is unstable and slowing down. It's in the first stages of shutting down and booting everyone out. Commands may or may not work, or take longer to implement. Ironically, characters are going to have just as hard a time acting as the system administrators and programs running in that type of environment. This is akin to blowing up a house while you're still inside it. Everyone (SysOps, AIs, hackers...everyone) on the network suffers an additional –2 penalty to all Hacking and Knowledge (Programming) rolls as the system is not fully responsive. The Shaken status remains until the end of the scene or until the network is re-booted.

Assuming the network isn't crashed after suffering a Wound, things are getting worse. However, unlike a character the network itself does not directly suffer Wound penalties; the SysOp or AI monitoring the network does. This doesn't mean the SysOp or AI has taken physical damage or a Wound; for that, the attack would have to be directed at them, not the network. Nevertheless they are trying to protect a damaged, unstable environment, and consequently suffer a penalty equal to the number of Wounds the network has suffered. A SysOp or AI may attempt to mitigate the damage a network is suffering, see Restore Functionality on page 279.

#### THE NETWORK IS SHAKEN? HUH?

Now, some of you might be wondering what it means when a network is Shaken? How do you explain that to your group? We liken a Shaken result to a massive surge of activity on the network's server; so much activity that it is suffering from "lag," and slows down to the point where it is unable to process all of that activity until the Shaken condition is removed. A Wound simply means all of that activity has slowed the server down to such an extent that it becomes so unstable, it's in danger of crashing.

*For example, a character is hacking into a Corporate Access Network (CAN). He has been running a few viral attack programs against the network to shut it down. The first attack he was able to do enough damage to the network to Shake it. All future Hacking rolls he makes while in the network are at a –2 due to the network being Shaken. On a future turn he is able to inflict two wounds on the network, since the network is classified as a Wild Card, it remains up. The character is still suffering –2 to his Hacking rolls. However, the SysOp trying to stop him is suffering a –4 penalty (–2 for the network being Shaken and –2 for the network's wounds).*

Characters who manage to pull off a system shutdown, especially on secure systems like CANS, GANS, or MANS, are legends in the hacking community. Game Masters should consider giving them a couple of points of Street Cred if they pull it off.

### WHY CRASH A NETWORK?

There are a number of reasons why you might wish to crash a network, the most obvious being that it's part of the run. Crashing a network will kill a security force's ability to remotely monitor the activities of a team as they move through a facility through security cameras, or motion sensors. SysOps and security forces are effectively blind with regards to any Notice rolls to "see" characters through security cameras and other remote viewing devices.

It's also a great way for hackers to remove all traces of a hack. If a character manages to crash a network, it wipes all traces of her activity from the network. Any trace attempts by the SysOp (or character if her TAP has been crashed) are made at a –6 penalty.

## Hyper Reality

Now that you understand how hacking works, we need to have a brief discussion about Hyper Reality and how a character experiences (and hacks) it. As mentioned earlier, Hyper Reality is an advanced form of augmented reality; a form of technology which superimposes digital data on a real-world object, like a billboard, or a street address. In the present day, this technology is still in its infancy, but is rapidly growing. An example of the newest — and perhaps most exciting — forms of technology which uses augmented reality are Google Glasses©. *Interface Zero 2.0* takes the concept of augmented reality and pushes it to the point where it's become so ubiquitous that — if you have a Tendril Access Processor — you are immersed in Hyper Reality to varying degrees regardless of where you are on and off the planet.

TABLE 6.13: SAMPLE HYPER OBJECTS

| SAMPLE DOORS | TYPE | DIFFICULTY[1] |
|---|---|---|
| Lock/Unlock/Alter Security Protocol | Lock On A Standard Door | 4 |
| | Lock On A Corporate Security Door | 8 |
| | Lock On A Military/Government Door | 10 |
| **TENDRIL ACCESS PROCESSOR** | | |
| Shut Down AMS/Search for, Edit, Delete, Repair: Files and Applications/Trace Location | Average Sprawler's TAP | 6 |
| | "Extra" NPC's TAP | Firewall |
| | Wild Card NPC's TAP | Firewall |
| **SECURITY CAMERAS** | | |
| Control/Disable | Public Security Camera | 4 |
| | Home Security Camera | 6 |
| | Corporate Security Camera | 8 |
| | Military/Government Security Camera | 10 |
| **WEAPONS SYSTEMS** | | |
| Disable/Eject Clip/Alter Security Protocol | Personal Weapons (Hand Guns/Shotguns) | 6 |
| | Assault Rifle/Submachine Guns | 8 |
| | Military-Grade Weapons[2] | 10 |
| **VEHICLES** | | |
| Lock/Fire Weapon/Unlock/Change Lock/Control[3] | Personal Ground Vehicles (Cars, Motorcycles, etc.) | 6 |
| | Government Vehicles (Public Transit Vehicles, Armored Cars, Police Vehicles) | 8 |
| | | 10 |
| | Military Vehicles (Aircraft, Golemmech, Tanks, etc.) | varies |
| | Spacecraft | |

[1]These difficulties should be considered baselines. They can be raised or lowered at the GM's discretion.
[2]Includes Heavy Weapons, rocket and missile launchers, gun turrets, etc.
[3]A character wishing to drive a hacked vehicle must possess the appropriate skill. Furthermore, all attempts to drive are made at a –6 penalty if you don't possess a VCI.

### HACKING HYPER REALITY

Unlike a standard hack against a computer network, hacking Hyper Reality is all about affecting your immediate environment in some way. Instead of penetrating the entire network, the character hacks peripheral components, like a single security camera, a locked door, piping systems, or even someone else's Tendril Access Processor. For simplicity-sake, the process is the same as a standard hack against a remote network. The consequences of a failed hack are the same. Characters can only hack Hyper Objects they can actually see and are within their TAP's range.

### SAMPLE HYPER OBJECTS

Consult Table 6.13: Sample Hyper Objects for objects you can use or modify for your game. If you aren't using the skill specializations rules, follow these guidelines for each skill.

**Hacking:** The Hacking skill is always used to penetrate the Firewall of a given Hyper Object. It's also used to take control of a Hyper Object, unlock/lock doors, and other security systems.

**Investigation:** A character may use Investigation to find all types of data files. Examples include personal information about a person, research and development files, log transcripts, e-mail, etc.

**Knowledge (Programming):** The Programming skill is used to affect changes to a Hyper Object. Examples include changing information on data files, deleting files, and rewriting the core programming of a Hyper Object.

## Virtual Reality

Commonly known as Virtual Reality or The Deep, the virtual aspect of the Global DataNet is a vast network of domains where people from all walks of life gather to engage in countless activities; anything you can do in the real world has a virtual equivalent. People can play games, do VR drugs, socialize in virtual clubs, fight in virtual duels, shop, race virtual machines like cars and hovercraft; the list goes on and on. Of course, as is appropriate to this section, you can also hack the virtual world, but before we get ahead of ourselves, let's discuss your avatar, the interface you use to experience Virtual Reality.

### AVATARS

Avatars have their origins in the Massively Multi Player Online RPGs (MMORPGS) of the early 21st century. In these types of games, players are able to create characters with access to mystical powers, and races with exotic abilities. As the technology advanced and — with the advent of the TAP — became a completely virtual experience, corporations like Featherstone Industries and Kenta Cyber Dynamics expanded the technology, creating the first true virtual domains and avatars sprawlers could purchase to experience this new environment.

Because domains are built with the same programming language as MMORPGS, it didn't take long for programmers to realize they could modify avatars and give them the same kinds of powers normally only found in games. Indeed, many programmers and hackers found ways to rip existing powers straight from their favorite games and code them into the

avatars they used to roam the Global DataNet. Again, because the coding for MMORPGS and non-gaming domains are basically the same, hackers found they could use those abilities and powers to manipulate, e.g., hack any domain.

## AVATAR LIMIT

Avatars may be purchased and sold, and this is often done. Each avatar must be programed for a specific TAP in order to relay information correctly in Virtual Reality, as such it is only possible to have one avatar running at a time. Using different avatars to try and spoof the system often is futile as the avatar is marked with it's owner's TAP information.

Transferring an avatar from one person's TAP to another or loading a new avatar is a fairly simple process. It requires thirty minutes and a successful Knowledge (Programing) roll. With a successful roll, the avatar is registered and uses it's new owner's Traits.

## CREATING AN AVATAR

An avatar is a virtual construct; a program people use to access virtual reality. Avatars can look like anything you can possibly imagine, but they all have some common statistics — VR Strength, VR Agility, VR Pace, VR Parry, VR Skills, VR Edges, and Virtual Powers. Other aspects of an avatar — Smarts, Spirit, and Charisma — are based on your character's existing traits and knowledge base.

Avatars are created by modifying the basic avatar below, with upgrades from Table 6.14: Avatar Upgrades.

The programing modifier is applied to any Knowledge (Programing) rolls made to program the modification (see Creating an Engram on page 275 for more details). Cost is the price to buy the upgrade off the shelf.

### BASE AVATAR

This is a basic avatar with no additional programing included..

**Attributes:** VR Agility d4; Smarts *; Spirit *;VR Strength d4; Vigor *
**VR Skills:** none
**Charisma:** *; VR **Pace:** 6; VR **Parry:** 2; VR **Toughness:** **
*These are the actual character's Traits.
**The character's TAP's Neural Toughness

## VIRTUAL SKILLS

When determining an avatar's skills, for skills linked to Smarts and Spirit, the avatar uses the character's skills. Any skill linked to the virtual attributes (VR Agility, VR Strength, VR Vigor) must be purchased or programmed in order for the avatar to have it.

## VIRTUAL EDGES

Since avatars have no Rank, there is no Rank requirement for Edges. Instead, the Rank requirement translates into the programing modifier/cost. The avatar/character still must meet all the other requirements for the Edge, including required Edges. When determining if the requirements are met, use the Avatar's Traits first, for those Traits not possessed by the avatar (such as Smarts or Spirit) then the character's Trait is used.

Outlining all of the possible edges you can choose from is beyond the scope of this book. That said, the majority of the edges you'll find in the *Savage Worlds* core rules will work just fine in Virtual Reality. Game Masters should take a hard look at any Edges players pick for their avatar and use his best judgment as to whether he should allow them or not.

TABLE 6.14: AVATAR UPGRADES

| UPGRADE | PROGRAM MODIFIER | COST |
|---|---|---|
| **Virtual Armor:** Increase Armor by +1. Stacks with Neural Toughness but only works in VR. Max +3 Armor value. | –2/point | 5,000/point |
| **Virtual Edge:** Price is based on the Edge's Rank (Improved versions of the same Rank are double). An Avatar/Character must still meet all requirements. See Virtual Edges for more details. | –1/Rank | 10,000/Rank |
| **Virtual Parry:** Increases the avatar's Parry by +1. Max +2 Parry bonus. | –1/point | 2,500/point |
| **Virtual Power:** The avatar gains access to a specific power to use in Virtual Reality (see text) | –1/PP | 10,000/PP |
| **Virtual Trait:** Increase a skill or attribute a die type. Every increase after d12 adds +1. | –1/die type | 3,000/die type |
| **Virtual Weapon:** A weapon program. | see Table 6.15: Avatar Attack Programs | |

## VIRTUAL POWERS

An avatar may be programed with various virtual powers. These work the same as powers from the *Savage Worlds* core rules, with a few exceptions.

- **Skill Use:** To activate a virtual power program in Virtual Reality, the character uses his Hacking (Run Program) skill.
- **Rank:** Virtual power programs do not have a Rank restriction, instead if the power is a higher Rank than the character, the character suffers an additional –1 to his Hacking (Run Program) skill each rank different. So a Novice character who purchases a power program with a Heroic rank requirement is at an additional –3 penalty to use that power.
- **Power Points:** The No Power Points setting rule from the *Savage Worlds* core rules is used.

Since Virtual Reality is not designed to follow the conventions of the normal world, it is left to the GM to determine

TABLE 6.15: AVATAR ATTACK PROGRAMS

| | MELEE ATTACK PROGRAMS | | RANGED ATTACK PROGRAMS | | | | PROGRAMMING |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WEAPON TYPE | DAMAGE | COST | DAMAGE | RANGE | ROF | COST | MODIFIER |
| Basic | VR Str + d4 | 1,000 credits | 2d4 | 5/10/20 | 1 | 1,500 credits | –1 |
| Standard | VR Str + d6 | 2,000 credits | 2d6 | 12/24/48 | 1 | 2,000 credits | –2 |
| Advanced | VR Str + d8 | 3,000 credits | 2d8 | 24/48/96 | 2 | 3,000 credits | –3 |
| Expert | VR Str + d10 | 5,000 credits | 2d10 | 30/60/120 | 3 | 5,000 credits | –4 |

which powers are allowed in Virtual Reality. Players should work with the GM to determine appropriate trappings for each power as well. Keep in mind that depending on how a domain is programed, some powers may not work there. It is possible for a power to work in one place in Virtual Reality, but not in another, so be careful.

**Note:** Powers can only affect objects in Virtual Reality.

**Suggested Prohibited Powers:** *beast friend, detect/conceal arcana, drain power points, fear, mind reading, puppet, slumber, warrior's gift, zombie*

### EXAMPLE AVATAR

This is an advanced avatar, having a few upgrades. It is one that an above average hacker may posses.

**Appearance:** The avatar appears as an old Chinese monk, dressed in long flowing robes.
**Attributes:** VR Agility d8; Smarts *; Spirit *;VR Strength d8; Vigor *
**VR Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Stealth d6, character's skills linked to Smarts and Spirit
**Charisma:** *; VR **Pace:** 6; VR **Parry:** 6; VR **Toughness:** **
**VR Edges:** Counter Attack, Martial Artist, Sweep
**VR Powers:** Teleport
**VR Gear:** Staff (Str +d6)
**Cost:** 153,000
*These are the owner's Traits.
**The owner's TAP's Neural Toughness

## HACKING VIRTUAL REALITY

Virtual Reality is a realm of metaphor, where aspects of a system — and even other people — have a digital representation which may or may not look like the thing they represent. For example, a security camera might look like a watch tower, or a Firewall might look like a security door. An attack program might look like a giant dragon breathing fire. Because Virtual Reality can very abstract, it can take much longer for a hacker to achieve the same goals she could in Hyper Reality or the Global DataNet. The GM and players should seriously consider whether or not they want to hack in Virtual Reality.

### THE SYSTEM

The core mechanic for Virtual Reality hacking is exactly the same as hacking Hyper Reality or the Global DataNet. Characters make the relevant Hacking and Knowledge (Programming) skills using the core mechanic, repeating the steps as many times as they need to get the job done. Domains are built using the System Network Statistics, with one notable exception; intrusion countermeasures (attack programs, guardian programs, etc.) are created as if they were Expert or AI sprites.

### COMBAT

Combat works the same as it does in outside of Virtual Reality. Since the avatar is only a representation of the character or a program on the network; any damage dealt, either lethal or non-lethal is applied directly to the character or the Network. If a character is Incapacitated due to non-lethal damage, her avatar crashes and she is kicked out of Virtual Reality. If damage is lethal, the character is taking physical damage, and an Incapacitated condition destroys the avatar as well (a new avatar must be purchased or programmed).

### THE REAL TIME TO VIRTUAL TIME RATIO

In general, Virtual Reality operates at a 1:1 ratio; that is, 1 hour in Virtual Reality equals 1 hour in the real world. That said, it is possible to speed up or slow down this ratio. Some domains, such as VR prisons, speed this ratio up to a year of virtual time for and hour of real time. In this manner, the prisoner can serve years and years of a sentence in Virtual Reality while his body only spends a fraction of that time in physical containment.

Similarly, various on-line entertainment domains like MMORPGS, Simsex parlors and other environments speed the ratio to a maximum of up to two hours in VR for every hour in the real world, as stipulated by Virtual Domain regulation agencies.

Characters can manipulate the ratio of a given domain by making a Knowledge (Programming) roll against the Defense Rating of the network. All entertainment domains are Corporate Access Networks. Success speeds up the ratio to 3:1.

# POWERS

Below you will find details on the two Arcane Backgrounds allowed in *Interface Zero 2.0*. *Interface Zero 2.0* makes use of the No Power Points setting rule from *Savage Worlds*

## ARCANE BACKGROUND (CYBERMONK)

**Arcane Skill:** Cybermastery (Spirit)
**Starting Powers:** 2

> ***Note:*** *If you are using the Skill Specialization rules, then each power would be its own specialization.*

**Available Powers:** *Armor, boost trait, damage field, darksight, deflection, farsight, fly, heal, pummel, quickness, smite, speed, succor, wall walker, warrior's gift.*

Cybermonks have embraced cybernetics to push their bodies far beyond the range of human potential. They view cybernetic implantation as a deeply philosophical and almost religious experience. Cybermonks constantly push the limits of their bodies and cybernetics far beyond what most people can achieve. They gain levels of performance from their cyberware and bioware that border on the realm of the mystical.

**Trappings:** All cybermonk powers have a range of *self* only. After choosing a new power, the cybermonk must specify which augmentation it is associated with. Only through his mental and cybernetic connection is he able to break the normal limits of cyberware. The augmentation that is chosen should reflect the nature of the power; the GM has final say on what is allowed. Should the augmentation be damaged (non-functioning) or lost, the cybermonk is unable to use the associated power until the augmentation is fixed or replaced.

> *Mia Tong is cybermonk who has Wireless Reflexes I installed and decides to take the* deflection *power. The player decides that the* deflection *power is an extension of Mia Tong pushing the Wireless Reflexes past its normal limits — allowing her to dodge ranged attacks and side-step incoming melee attacks.*

**Backlash:** The strain on the cybernetic device is too great, causing it to stop functioning. The character may not use the augmentation or the power for the remainder of the encounter or until he spends a Benny to negate the backlash.

## ARCANE BACKGROUND (PSIONICS)

**Arcane Skill:** Psionics (Smarts)
**Starting Powers:** 3

> ***Note:*** *If you are using the Skill Specialization rules, the three specializations for Psionics are freek, peek, and tweek.*

Psionicists — or zeeks as they are commonly referred to — have discovered how to tap into their own psychic powers. They can manipulate matter, read and control thoughts of others, or control their own bodies with but a thought.

Zeeks powers are classified into three categories: tweek, peek, and freek based upon how the power is manifested and interacts with the world. Zeeks may take any allowed power they wish, however, most often tend to specialize in a specific group of powers.

The classification of a power determines the trappings that are applied to the power.

**Available Powers:** *armor[T], barrier[T], beast friend[F], blast[T], blind[P], bolt[T], boost/lower trait[F], burst[T], confusion[P], damage field[T], darksight[F], deflection[T], detect/conceal arcana[P], disguise[P], dispel[P], divination[P], elemental manipulation[F], entangle[T], environmental protection[F], farsight[P], fear[P], fly[T], greater healing[F], havoc[T], healing[F], intangibility[T], invisibility[P], jet[T], legerdemain[T], light/obscure[F], mind reading[P], pummel[T], puppet[P], quickness[F], slow[P], slumber[P], smite[T], speak language[P], speed[F], stun[P]., succor[F], telekinesis[T]., teleport[F], warrior's gift[F], zombie[F]*

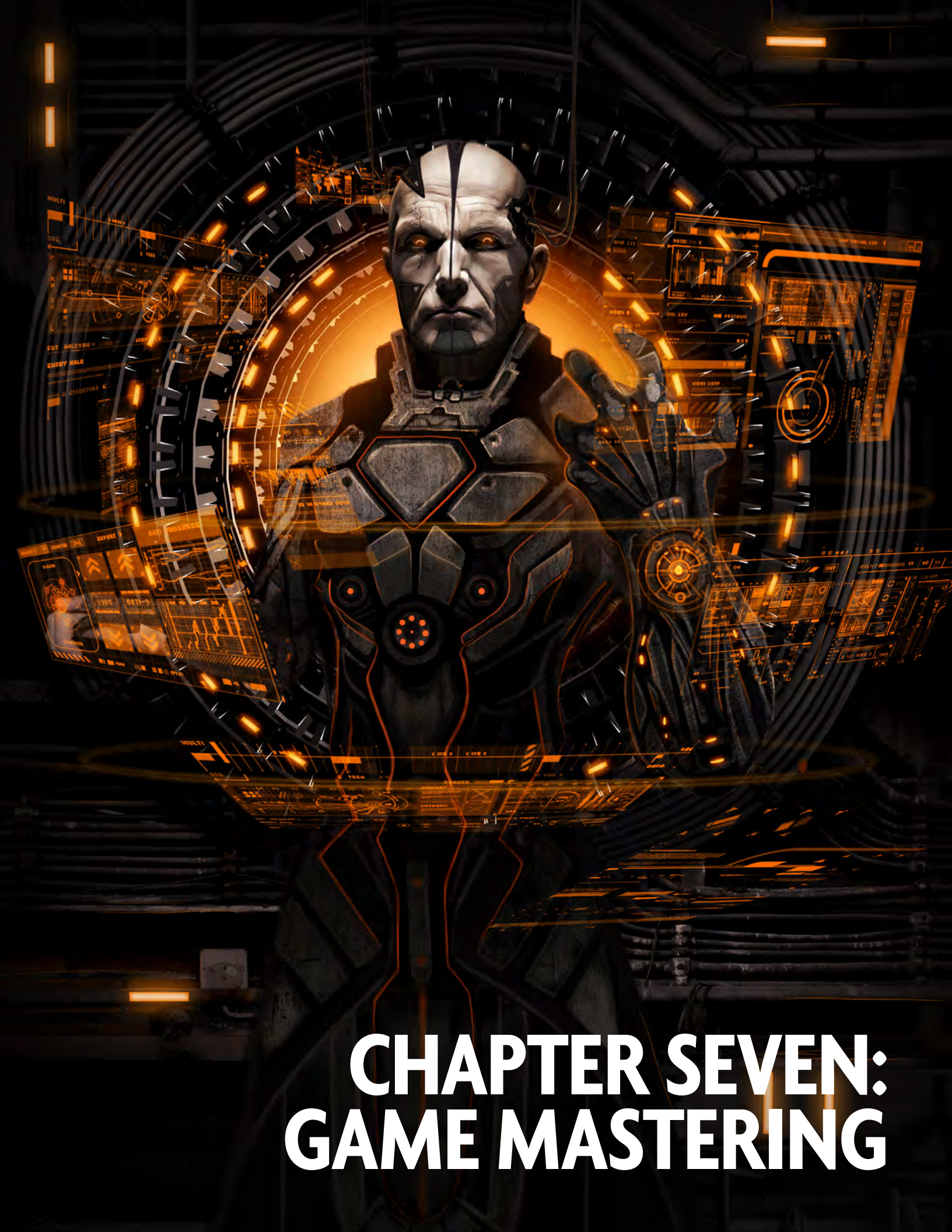
[P] Peek, [T] Tweek, [F] Freek

**Peek Trappings:** Peek powers rely on the zeek peering into or controlling the minds of others, so the zeek must concentrate on her subject. This means a peek can be spotted by someone who knows what to look for; with a Notice roll opposing the zeek's Psionics roll. Since these powers affect the mind, some (like *disguise* or *invisibility*) won't register via electronic devices like cameras or IR gear.

**Tweek Trappings:** Tweek powers are largely telekinetic in nature, and require the zeek to channel energy to her target. This means an active tweek must make some sort of motion to mimic the effect she's creating (such as "pushing" with her hands when firing off a burst), and regardless, the kinetic "ripples" can be seen (sort of like the air above hot pavement) with a raise on a Notice roll.

**Freek Trappings:** Freek powers are...strange. They defy classification (although some skirt the boundaries of peek and tweek powers). In all cases, their use is very noticeable — things like glowing eyes for *darksight*, or glowing hands for *healing* — as are their effects. The bottom line is it doesn't even take a Notice roll to know when a freek is using her abilities or to spot her in a crowd while she's doing so. Note that anecdotal tales of "holy people" with halos and the like are probably records of freeks in action.

**Backlash:** As Psionicists per the *Savage Worlds* core rules



# CHAPTER SEVEN: GAME MASTERING

# RUNNING THE GAME

So you wanna be a GM? Sweet! You're a special type of person, my friend. You have stories you want to tell, and this chapter is going to give you the tools you need to tell them. You'll find handy references for payouts on a typical job, adventure generators, bio-horror generators, a nice range of NPCs for you to use, and other tools for your GM toolbox.

## City Trappings

City Trappings allow you to apply an effect to a city, neighborhood, or even a specific location. This might come in the form of a bonus or penalty to certain skill checks, or maybe even some other effect.

*Here's an example: Say your characters are in Saint Louis, trying to find a smuggler to move some goods. Since you happen to know Saint Louis is a favorite haunt of smugglers, you could have the Trapping of Smuggler's Haven applied to the city, and the characters gain a +1 bonus to their Streetwise checks when they go looking.*

*Here's another example: Suppose you've got a group of happy humans and hybrids trying to take care of some business in the south of San Francisco — San Bruno Mountain, to be precise. Since you know San Bruno Mountain is a refuge for West Coast hybrids, you may have given it the Trapping of Hybrids Only. For the duration of their stay, the (non-hybrid) characters would acquire the Outsider Hindrance, and incur all the problems that come with it until they finally leave.*

You should be getting the idea.

Feel free to start coming up with your own Trappings, but to help you along, we've provided a few examples of Trappings that were originally used for Boston and San Francisco — you can use these if you want to spice up your game just a bit. Note the effects of Trappings can stack... in other words, a Hacker in an area under the influence of both 'Brown Outs' and 'Combat Zone' would have a –5 penalty to his rolls while trying to use the Global DataNet to track someone. And if you add Trappings to specific locations, remember that in the case of conflicting events, the smaller area supersedes the larger.

### TRAPPING DESCRIPTIONS

#### BLACK MARKET

This area is thriving with commerce dealing in illegal and illicit goods and services, which means it's a lot easier to find these things — or get into trouble. This Trapping most often applies to specific locations or neighborhoods, although some cites may have it as well; it would be rare, though not impossible, for an entire nation to have the Trapping. Black Market generally affects how easy it is to find and acquire restricted items, although it can lead to other effects.

Streetwise checks involving the purchase or sale of illegal goods or services are made with a +2 bonus.

Any character who is perceived to represent 'the Law' (in whatever form) is assumed to have the Outsider Hindrance while in this area, with all its attendant repercussions. Additionally, if that character should roll a 1 on the skill Die for any Streetwise check in the area, he finds himself cornered somewhere by a group of thugs who are bent on 'removing him from the picture'.

Any contraband bought here which can be legally purchased in most other places costs 50% more than usual.

All rolls to contact and deal with 'Criminal' Contacts in the area gain a +1 bonus.

#### BROWN OUTS

This area has problems with its power grid, making anything requiring electricity a bit unreliable. This Trapping can apply to almost any type of location — a nation might be a Third World country; a neighborhood may have bad transformers; a building could just have old wiring... or maybe no one paid the power bill. Brown Outs can have diverse effects, although they are largely environmental.

Hacking checks are all made at a –4 penalty — unless the hacker is directly accessing a terminal, in which case the penalty is –2 — because the unstable power affects communications and computers.

A roll of 1 on the Skill Die for any skill involving gear that has to be connected to a power source (most often things like Hacking, Investigation, or Repair) results in a total loss of power to an area one size smaller than the area normally suffering from Brown outs (in other words, a country would lose power to a city, a city would lose power to a neighborhood, a neighborhood would lose power to a building, and a building would lose power to a room) until power can be restored. This can take from 1d4 to 1d10 hours, depending on the size of the area affected. During this time, no gear can be used if it has to be connected to a power source (unless there is an available backup source), and penalties should be applied for darkness when indoors or outside at night.

Any character who is Hacking or Deep Hacking when the power goes out is forcibly ejected back to reality, taking 2d6 non-lethal damage from the sudden neural feedback due to loss of connection.

#### COMBAT ZONE

This area is run-down and only loosely patrolled by law enforcement, making it more dangerous but fairly easy to move around unnoticed. This Trapping usually applies to a neighborhood or city, although it could also apply to specific locations or entire nations like China and Russia. Combat Zone mostly affects moving, hiding and combat situations.

Investigation, Hacking, or Streetwise checks made to locate an individual receive a –1 penalty, as it's easy to hide here. This works both ways, and anyone attempting to locate a character hiding here suffers the same penalties.

Notice checks to detect an ambush suffer a –2 penalty, as there is usually plenty of rubble or debris available to hide in or behind. Again, this works both ways, and it's also easy to find cover if a fight breaks out (assume Medium Cover unless a specific scene has been set).

Movement is often difficult because of rubble or debris. Driving checks as well as any Agility check involving movement (such as running during a Chase) suffer a –1 penalty, and the terrain is considered Rough for purposes of determining obstacles during a chase.

## CORPORATE ZONE

This area is a corporate center, usually filled with the offices and outbuildings of various corporate interests, making this a great place for commercial endeavors. This Trapping most often applies to a single neighborhood, although it could also be occasionally used for a single location or an entire city. Though not impossible, it usually won't apply to entire nations. Corporate Zone will typically affect things where wealth and businessmen might be concerned.

Investigation checks all enjoy a +1 bonus, as streams of data are readily available and accessible. Notice checks all suffer a –1 penalty due to the massive overload of lights, sounds and HR objects. Stealth checks to move about without being noticed gain a +2 bonus due to the massive overload of lights, sounds and HR objects.

All rolls to contact and deal with 'Corporate' Contacts in the area gain a +1 bonus.

## FAT CATS

This area is inhabited largely by the wealthy and the people who cater to them, which often leads to a certain elitist attitude. This Trapping usually applies to a neighborhood or specific location, although in rare cases it could extend to an entire city, or even a small nation. The effects of Fat Cats largely impact interactions with the lesser people — the ones who cater to the wealthy.

Any character not displaying any obvious signs of wealth receives a –1 Charisma modifier for any type of social interaction (usually Intimidation, Persuasion or Streetwise checks) with merchants or service providers. Any character not displaying any obvious signs of wealth will always be charged 10% more for any purchase or activity, if at all possible. Any character displaying any obvious signs of wealth receives a +1 Charisma modifier for any type of social interaction (usually Intimidation, Persuasion, or Streetwise checks) with merchants or service providers.

## HUMANS ONLY

This area is mostly occupied by people who subscribe to a human supremacist doctrine, or at the very least by people who fear anything different from themselves. This Trapping can apply to nearly any size of location — the smaller it is, though, the harder it will be for a non-human to integrate… as a building, it may even simply be an exclusive private club. Humans Only tends to be social in nature, potentially affecting a character's interactions with others.

Any character in this area who is obviously (or known to be) non-human is treated as if he has the Outsider Hindrance as long as he's here. The –2 Charisma penalty is always applied unless specifically dealing with a resident who doesn't adhere to the norms of his group in regard to non-humans.

Any Streetwise roll made by humans in this area gain a +1 bonus.

A roll of 1 on the Skill Die for any Streetwise roll made by a non-human (or non-human sympathizer) results in a group of vigilantes bent on ejecting and/or harming the character.

## HYBRIDS ONLY

This area is occupied by hybrids, and maybe a few other people who get on well with hybrids. This Trapping can apply to nearly any size of location — the smaller it is, though, the harder it will be for a non-hybrid to integrate… as a building, it may even simply be an exclusive private club. Hybrids Only tends to be social in nature, potentially affecting a character's interactions with others.

Any character in this area who is obviously (or known to be) not a hybrid is treated as if he has the Outsider Hindrance as long as he's here. The –2 charisma penalty is always applied unless specifically dealing with a resident who doesn't adhere to the norms of his group in regard to non-hybrids.

Any Streetwise roll made by hybrids in this area gain a +1 bonus.

A roll of 1 on the Skill Die for any Streetwise roll made by a non-hybrid (or non-hybrid sympathizer) results in a group of vigilantes bent on ejecting and/or harming the character.

## INTERDICTED ZONE

For some reason or another, this area is restricted, and anyone without proper authorization is not allowed in (or is only allowed in a very limited area). While this Trapping could be applied to any location, larger areas — like nations or cites — are less likely to have it than smaller areas; neighborhoods or buildings could be top secret installations, or they could simply be secure facilities (like a nuclear power plant). Interdicted Zone is more likely to be an obstacle or have legal repercussions for the characters.

Characters traveling through this area must make periodic Stealth checks to avoid being noticed (every minute if in a building; every hour if in a neighborhood; every day if in a city; every week if in a nation). Unless there is a reason for the interdicting force to be suspicious, this is passive check… although a failure results in all future Stealth rolls being active.

Characters failing an active Stealth check find themselves confronted by a group dispatched by the interdicting force. The group will be of whatever size is deemed sufficient to deal with the character(s) and will act according to the disposition of the interdicting force: either attempting to remove intruders from the premises, or attempting to kill them.

A roll of 1 on the Skill Die for any Stealth check results in the characters stumbling into some sort of automated defenses. This could be as simple as a minefield, or as complex as pop-up infrared laser turrets. In any case, it still counts as a failure, with the effects detailed above.

## KINGPIN

This area is under the control of a major underworld figure. Occasionally, this can also be the local leader or head of state; in any case, very little goes on in the area which this figure doesn't know about. This Trapping can apply easily to a neighborhood or city, or even to a nation, under the right circumstances. It can technically also be applied to a single building or locale. Because of its nature, Kingpin can work for or against the characters, depending on circumstances.

Streetwise checks involving the purchase or sale of illegal goods or services are made with a +1 bonus.

Any goods bought by someone without 'connections' to the Kingpin cost an additional 10%, and any goods sold earn 10% less. If these goods are of a 'questionable' nature (illegal or stolen), the modifiers both increase to 20%.

A roll of 1 on the Skill Die for any Streetwise check made by a character without 'connections' to the Kingpin results in his being picked up by the Kingpin's local representatives and taken for a little chat to determine his motives.

All rolls to contact and deal with 'Mob' Contacts in the area gain a +1 bonus.

### MARTIAL LAW

This area is under martial law for some reason or another. Inevitably, heightened security means curtailed freedoms, which can prove inconvenient at the very least. This Trapping can apply to a very large region — like an entire nation — all the way down to a single building held by military forces (although the impact of the Trapping also diminishes accordingly). Martial Law creates several effects, which largely boil down to the idea that there's always a cop around, even if you don't need one. Regular patrol sweeps are carried out by soldiers and observation drones, and they are always on the lookout for any sign of trouble.

Streetwise checks to find some sort of Law Enforcement are made with a +1 bonus.

Stealth checks for any sort of apparent criminal activity (like sneaking around after curfew or trying to quietly break into a building) are made with a –1 penalty.

A roll of 1 on the Skill Die for any Streetwise check results in the character(s) being stopped, asked for ID and perhaps even detained if the circumstances warrant it.

### MILITARY BASE

This area serves as a military headquarters of some sort, which can complicate things for characters trying to get into various types of trouble, as it tends to be full of soldiers and weaponry. This Trapping can apply equally well to a single building, a neighborhood or an entire city. Very rarely would it be used for a nation — that would normally fall under Martial Law. Military Base mostly affects characters in terms of area security, although this would be the place to find military personnel and equipment.

Anyone caught on base without proper ID or authorization is assumed to have the Wanted (Minor) Hindrance. If the character also has weapons, he is assumed to have the Wanted (Major) Hindrance instead.

Stealth rolls are all made with a –1 penalty, as security cameras, drones and guards are generally keeping an eye on things.

A roll of 1 on the Skill Die for such a Stealth check results in Military Police (MPs) being dispatched and the character(s) being stopped, asked for ID and perhaps even detained if the circumstances warrant it.

All rolls to contact and deal with 'Military' Contacts in the area gain a +1 bonus.

### RESEARCH CENTER

This area serves as a center for some sort of research and development, which makes technology very prevalent and readily available. This Trapping applies to a neighborhood or specific location. Most of the effects of Research Center have to do with access to technology.

Streetwise checks to locate state-of-the-art equipment gain a +1 bonus. This bonus increases to +2 if the character is looking for gear specific to the area's focus of research.

All rolls to contact and deal with 'technical' Contacts in the area gain a +1 bonus.

### SLUM DOGS

This area is largely inhabited by the poor and other dregs of society, which often leads to a certain insular mentality. This Trapping usually applies to a neighborhood or specific location, although in rare cases it could extend to an entire city or even a small nation. There are several effects of Slum Dogs, largely to do with interacting with the locals.

Any character displaying obvious signs of wealth receives a –1 Charisma modifier for any type of social interaction (usually Intimidation, Persuasion or Streetwise checks) with the local denizens.

Any character displaying obvious signs of wealth who makes a Streetwise check must pay 10 credits times the result of the roll, regardless of Success or Failure, to 'grease the wheels' of conversation (You should make the rolling character keep rolling and adding any Aces). Additionally, a roll of 1 on the Skill Die finds the character(s) surrounded by slum dogs and beggars all demanding a handout, and possibly even taking the money by force, depending on the circumstances.

Any character who is obviously poor receives a +2 Charisma Modifier for any type of social interaction (usually Intimidation, Persuasion or Streetwise checks) with the local denizens.

All rolls to contact and deal with 'street' Contacts in the area gain a +1 bonus.

### STATUS QUO

This area is inhabited by people who like things to remain quiet, unchanging and uncomplicated — ordinary sprawlers and their soccer mom wives, who don't want their lives interrupted by thugs and ruffians and people who are probably much like the characters. This Trapping is usually applied to a neighborhood, although it would work equally well on a single location. While cites and nations could also have this Trapping, it's not common in this day and age — small towns are the most likely candidates. In many ways, Status Quo could be one of the most frustrating Trappings for a group of characters to deal with.

Any character who looks remotely 'scruffy' or 'dangerous' is considered to have the Outsider Hindrance. Most 'decent' people will try to avoid him.

Intimidation checks made by any character who looks remotely 'scruffy' or 'dangerous' receive a +2 bonus.

### WILDERNESS

This area is notable largely for it's lack of civilization. This doesn't mean the area is uninhabited, but rather that there is probably more plant and animal life present than street lights and plumbing. While this Trapping could apply to any type of location, from a building to a nation, it's less likely in the smaller areas, although there could be parks in the middle of a city that count as such. Wilderness is most likely to affect characters in terms of comfort and technology.

Hacking and Investigation rolls are made at a –2 penalty as there is generally little — if any — communications support equipment in the area. At the GM's discretion, the penalty to Investigation can be ignored if the character has hard copy to dig through (archaic things like books and newspapers, for example).

If a character must spend more than a week in this area without access to civilization, he must make a Survival check. Ready availability to provisions may add +1 to the check, and a sturdy, permanent shelter may add +1 as well, for a possible bonus of +2.

Tracking can be used to find or follow creatures, people or vehicles without the penalties one might have in a place filled with concrete and asphalt. If you normally allow Tracking to be used in those areas, this area grants a +1 bonus to the check.

## Freelancing

Not all jobs are created equal. As the baseline payouts table suggests, the pay for the jobs will certainly increase as the characters gain ranks, but so will the difficulty of the job. Some jobs (Like milk runs) don't even merit mentioning at higher ranks, as they represent typical grunt work characters will do to up their street cred and prove they can handle themselves. Some of the entries on the table are pretty straightforward, while others may seem vague at first glance, so compare the following section to the table to get a better understanding of what each entry means.

### ASSASSINATIONS

Better known as wet work in the freelancer community, assassinations are precisely what the name implies, the calculated, cold-blooded murder of someone. Early on in the game, wet work generally involves taking out some poor sap that crossed the wrong individual, like a rival gang or mob boss. Some hits at lower ranks are often motivated by betrayal; a jilted lover pays the characters to ghost her husband and that whore he was banging. Someone gets robbed by a trusted friend, or some dumbass fails to pay his gambling debts to the local Triad.

As characters gain ranks and their street cred rises, contracts begin to focus on people of moderate influence like mid-level crime bosses, city officials, media stars corporate salary men, etc. By the time characters reach the Heroic and Legendary ranks, they are gunning for the big fish; Corporate CEO's, Senators, Oyabun; even world leaders.

### BODYGUARD DUTY

Another type of job that has varying levels of complexity, guarding someone is always inherently dangerous. Why would the characters be hired to protect someone if he didn't fear for his personal safety? Low ranks will see characters doing one-shot protection gigs; watching a contractor's hump while he deals with another shadow team, protecting the misses while she goes shopping, etc. As the characters get a rep, they might be hired to ensure the safety of high profile people; city officials, mid-level corporate executives, etc.

By the time characters attain higher ranks, they are getting hired to watch V.I.Ps; heads of state, elected officials, CEO's, etc. Rather than handle the job by themselves, characters might be assigned a detail of military cutouts or corporate security goons to ensure their mark has the best protection possible. Jobs at this level of the game generally aren't short-term and can easily become campaigns filled with all manner of dangers, corporate or political intrigue and, of course, action!

### DATA SNATCHES

A data snatch is more or less exactly what the name implies; a penetration of a computer network to recover or steal some kind of data. Low ranks will see characters doing simple stuff; hacking into a person's home or TAP to get personal information, re-writing data files or in some cases uploading incriminating evidence in support of a larger operation. Identity theft is commonplace at low ranks. Criminal organizations pay decent cred for confidential information on the average sprawler. As the characters rise in rank, they'll be tackling tougher domains, and even assisting teams with the physical penetration of facilities to get hard copy, DNA samples, prototype weapons, etc.

### EXTRACTIONS

Similar in many respects to street-level kidnapping, extractions involve the physical and virtual penetration of some sort of building, like a corporate enclave, or government installation. Extractions are risky ventures that require detailed planning and often involve more people than just the characters.

### INVESTIGATIONS

Investigations have varying degrees of complexity, depending on the nature of the investigation. At lower ranks, characters might be hired to find out where the client's wife is going every night, and who she's meeting. As with milk runs, these types of investigations are usually straight forward with few complications. As the characters gain ranks these investigations become more intricate and involve important people. The legwork is often extensive, involving multiple hacks, extended surveillance, interrogations and sometimes even blatant confrontations with the mark.

Higher level investigations are rarely ever what they seem, involving a number of players, plot twists and as always, dirty secrets better left uncovered. At the highest ranks, characters are getting into some deep water, dealing with conspiracies at the uppermost levels of organized crime, corporate and government power. The people under scrutiny will do anything they can to keep certain truths from coming to light.

### MILK RUNS

Sometimes called beer runs, these jobs are simple, fairly straightforward errands. Characters get paid to take something from point A to point B. When the job's done, the characters get paid. Usually, there's no risk involved in a milk run…Usually.

The goods might be stolen from someone else who wants them back and is willing to kill to get them. The route the characters take might put them in smack dab in the middle of a gang war. Heck, they might even be setup as patsies or worse, decoys to throw off any pursuit while the real goods are transported by a different team.

Sometimes the characters will know exactly what they're transporting, but more often than not they won't. Employers generally don't like the hired help poking their noses where they don't belong and typically make it clear what will happen if a character gets nosey. Besides, the characters are probably better off not knowing anyway.

Morality has a funny way of screwing up what would otherwise be an easy pay day. So let your characters take a quick peek at what's inside the back of the truck if they want. When they realize they're delivering a bunch of immigrants to the local Triad and find they don't like the notion of contributing to the proliferation of slave labor, politely remind them that there might very well be nasty consequences if they fail to deliver the goods.

### SMASH JOBS

As the name implies, smash jobs involve the destruction of something. Novice characters are usually hired to head down to the local Malmart and cause some havoc or bust up a gang's safe house. As the game progresses, smash jobs tend to involve higher profile targets, like a corporate R&D facility, a simulacrum production plant or the home of a mid-level Yakuza boss. At the higher end of the spectrum, smash jobs turn into full-fledged paramilitary operations designed to take out heavily guarded targets, like a military instillation, a spy satellite, an embassy or the regional headquarters of a megacorp.

### SMUGGLING OPS

Smuggling runs are much like milk runs, only on a larger scale and considerably more dangerous. Characters will get paid to transport cargo across national boundaries, a process filled with a myriad dangers including dodging military patrols, sensor arrays, dealing with shady fixers, etc.

## JOB CONSEQUENCES

Like the man said, "For every action, there's an equal, opposite reaction." That's life in 2090, only more pronounced. Everything the characters do has some sort of consequence. That corp from which they just snatched a cyber-arm prototype is going to want restitution. The gang they disrespected on their last job is going to try and get some payback. Revenge is a dish best served brutal my friends, and as a GM, one of your tasks is to serve the meal. Now, we know you're a busy person with a life outside of the game. You probably don't have a bunch of time to devote to fleshing out all the ramifications of the previous mission, and while it's impossible to think of all the potential consequences of a given job, we've provided some basic tools to help you out.

### CONSEQUENCES: YES OR NO?

Determine whether or not there will be any repercussions by rolling 1d4. On a result of four, there will be some sort of backlash against the group, regardless of whether or not they successfully completed their contract. Use the following guidelines to generate an appropriate response for the group.

### RESPONSE TIME

Revenge doesn't usually happen overnight. That said, unless your antagonists are very patient, things could feasibly happen in a very short time frame. We've provided systems for calculating the time it takes for a corporation, gang, individual, or other organization (like a triad) to acquire the information they need to take action against the group. Now, this doesn't mean the individual or organization will immediately act on their info. That is up to you.

### CORPORATIONS

It should be assumed that, unless characters have taken great lengths to cover their tracks, corporations will find them; it's just a question of how long it's going to take. To answer this question, roll 1d6. The result is the base number of days that pass before the corp gathers enough information on the characters to exact their vengeance. Add one day for each team member, plus another day each alternate identity any character might have.

*Example: Kenta Cyber Dynamics has a team of investigators scouring the streets for info on the team who just snatched one of their executives. The group consisted of four team members, two of which had an alternate identity. The Game Master rolls a 2 for the base number of days, then adds 6 to that score (4 for the number of characters, and 2 for the alternate identities), coming up with a result of 8. So, in eight days, Kenta Cyber Dynamics will have gathered sufficient information on the team as to generate a profile and plan some sort of response.*

### GANGS

Gangs, while powerful factions on the streets, don't have tons of resources they can draw on when finding information on a group of people. Furthermore, they have even less influence outside of the area they control. Gangs can use any contacts they might have with the sector police, and even corporations that pay them to do work. When determining how long it will take for a gang to get the data they need on the group and devise a response, roll 1d10. The result is the number of days it takes to get the info. As with corporations, modify this roll by the number of people in the group, and any fake identities they might have.

### GOVERNMENTS

If the group gets on the bad side of a world government, they have problems. Governments operate with impunity, have entire branches dedicated to surveillance and espionage, and of course they have secret agents, armies and black ops teams to carry out their will. If a government decides to hunt the characters down, it won't take more than 48 hours (and that's being generous) to get the information they need, regardless of whether or not characters have alternate identities. Roll 4d12 and add the number up. This is the maximum number of **HOURS** it takes for a government to gain all of the data they need to find the characters. Alternate identities can slow the government down by an hour at most.

### INDIVIDUALS

The woman the group just widowed, a wealthy financial investor the group stole from, a wronged-fixer; these are just a few examples of the types of people who might want

to get some payback. Roll 1d10. This is the number of days, weeks, or hours an individual needs to track down the characters. You'll need to decide which time increment to use. We do it this way, because this category is the broadest in terms of the kinds of resources an individual might have. If characters have alternate identities, add a day, week, or hour to the final score.

#### ORGANIZED CRIME RINGS

Criminal organizations such as the Triads, Yakuza, the Mexican Mafia, and the Bratva Vory are brutal in their persecution of those who cross them. With a presence in nearly every city on and off the planet, these groups have the ability to track down anyone they want. That said, these guys understand the value of patience, and unless the characters have really crossed the line (like, say, killing a high ranking member of the organization), they are content to bide their time, collect information on the characters, and plan their revenge. Roll 1d12. That's the number of months a given criminal organization is willing to wait before they go after the group. Because the length of time is so great, alternate identities aren't much help. If your group complains, however, add a week for each character who has an alternate identity to the total.

### TYPES OF RESPONSES

Ok, so you've figured out how long it will take before your antagonists can start making life hell for the characters, but what exactly are these people capable of doing to a group? The short answer is; anything they damned well want. But that doesn't help you now, does it? Here are some things you can do to make life hell for your group if they cross the wrong organization or individual.

#### BRING THE BODY BAGS

Send a hit team to take the characters out. While this is the most obvious option you have available, it's not the best option. It's a cliché, after all. It's what characters expect to happen. I don't recommend trying to kill the team outright unless they are dealing with some really vicious antagonists. As an option, you might consider hitting friends and associates instead.

#### COERCION

Find some dirt on the characters and hold it over their heads, or better yet, get them in your antagonist's pocket working for him or her until the characters can find a way clear of the mess they find themselves in. This is particularly useful at higher ranks, when characters have had a chance to do some really incriminating stuff. Force the characters to play ball or spend multiple life sentences in Virtual Prison. Threaten them with indentured servitude on an asteroid colony, or Venus.

#### HIT 'EM WHERE IT HURTS

Steal their money. While it's probably the least dangerous of all the consequences you can choose to hit your group with, it's also very effective. Corporations, powerful people, governments and criminal organizations have the means to wipe a character's bank account clean. You'll find that, in a genre where the acquisition of money is a large part of the game, losing everything you've worked and bled to save accomplishes two things. Not only does it send a strong warning to characters who think they can mess with someone and get away with it, but it can have a lasting impact, as the characters have to work hard to regain what they've lost.

#### MESS WITH THEIR ABILITY TO DO THE THINGS THEY DO

Find ways to take away their ability to perform their jobs. Capture them, and have cutters go to work on their bodies Cut out cybernetics. Cut out a hacker's TAP. Steal weapons. Steal vehicles and drones. Burn down their safe houses. Kill their contacts. Again, this isn't a lethal option in the strictest sense (at least for the team), but it can certainly make life much harder for characters, especially if you combine it with "Hit 'em where it hurts." If your group complains, point them to William Gibson's *Neuromancer*. Heck, Case got to keep the money he took, but the people he stole from made sure he'd never see the matrix again, that is until Molly Millions and Armitage found him, which brings up another important point.

If you do use this option, be damned sure you come up with a way for characters to recover what they've lost (if they can. Dead people don't come back to life unless they have a dub). Use a third party, if necessary; some kind of benefactor who has his or her own agenda will do the trick, and lead to more adventures!

## PAYOUTS

One of the most difficult aspects of running the game is deciding how much to pay the group for a given job. Players are naturally going to want to get paid as much as possible so they can get new weapons, cybernetics, vehicles, etc. You need to be careful about that, as giving players too many credits too fast can wreck the balance of your game, as characters suddenly become really powerful. Consult Table 7.1.: Baseline Payouts on page 292, to get some sample payouts for a given job. These are sorted by rank, so you can easily determine how much money the characters receive, and are for individual team members, not the entire group.

TABLE 7.1.: BASELINE PAYOUTS

| TYPE OF JOB | TYPICAL PAYMENT |
|---|---|
| **TYPICAL PRICES FOR NOVICE JOBS** | |
| Milk Run | 200–400 credits |
| Investigation/Data snatch | 400–600 credits |
| Smash Job | 500–700 credits |
| Extra Muscle | 700–1,000 credits |
| Leg-breaking | 400–600 credits |
| Kidnapping | 1,000–1,500 credits |
| **TYPICAL PRICES FOR SEASONED JOBS** | |
| Low-level Smuggling jobs | 1,000–5,000 credits |
| Low-level Extractions | 5,000–10,000 credits |
| Low-level Wet work | 10,000–20,000 credits |
| Low-level Data Snatch | 5,000–10,000 credits |
| Low-level Smash job | 1,000–5,000 credits |
| Low-level Bodyguard duty | 2,000–5,000 credits |
| **TYPICAL PRICES FOR VETERAN JOBS** | |
| Mid-level Bodyguard Duty | 5,000–10,000 credits |
| Mid-level Data Snatch | 10,000–20,000 credits |
| Mid-level Extraction | 20,000–40,000 credits |
| Mid-level Wet work | 20,000–40,000 credits |
| Mid-level Smash job | 5,000–10,000 credits |
| Mid-level Investigation | 5,000–10,000 credits |
| Mid-level smuggling operation | 10,000–20,000 credits |
| **TYPICAL PRICES FOR HEROIC JOBS** | |
| High-Level Bodyguard Duty | 30,000–40,000 credits |
| High-level Data Snatch | 20,000–30,000 credits |
| High-level Extraction | 30,000–60,000 credits |
| High-level Wet work | 30,000–60,000 credits |
| High-level Smash Job | 20,000–30,000 credits |
| High-Level Smuggling Operation | 50,000–75,000 credits |
| **TYPICAL PRICES FOR LEGENDARY JOBS** | |
| Epic Extraction/Kidnapping | 80,000–100,000 credits |
| Assassination of a Government figure, Corporate CEO, Singularity AI | 100,000–150,000 credits |
| Conglom/Military Assault Operation | 150,000–300,000 credits |

## Gang Generator

This book doesn't go into great detail on specific gangs that you might encounter in 2090. Instead, we're giving you a few tables so you can just generate a gang as you need it. You can roll the dice, or you can just pick out the options that strike your fancy at the moment.

### TYPES OF GANGS

In order to help define things, we've classified gangs into six types:

#### PUNK

This type of gang tends to consist of younger people who are usually banding together for no real purpose other than a common bond and a sense of identity. They seldom engage in seriously 'criminal' activity, but they can be annoying (or even dangerous), as their initiation rites and acquisition of street cred tend to stem from stunts and activities which don't take into account other people or things (or, in extreme cases, take them into account with no sense of respect). Examples of this type of gang include skater boys, Japanese bosozoku, and college fraternities.

#### HOODLUM

This type of gang also tends to attract younger people, although these gangs are less innocuous than punk gangs, as they are usually engaged in small-time criminal activities — typically along the lines of theft and street-level drug dealing. In 2090, a good percentage of gangs fit into this category, as groups of like-minded hoodlums organize for camaraderie and protection. Examples of this type of gang include pretty much most street gangs, as well as petty biker gangs and unaffiliated gambling rings.

#### THUG

This type of gang is a step 'up' from hoodlum gangs, but not quite at the level or 'sophistication' shown by racketeer gangs. The range of ages is also broader, as many of the gang become 'lifers', dedicated to the gang's activities. Thug gangs excel at (and seem to take pleasure in) much more violent crime than most other types of gangs — robberies, burglaries and murder aren't uncommon. Examples of this type of gang include the more hardcore street gangs and biker gangs, as well as the less-organized groups in 'organized crime', such as Asian gangs.

#### RACKETEER

This type of gang is what you're likely to think of with most Mob-style gangs, although they aren't necessarily part of the Irish Mob or the Italian Mafia. They are generally well-organized, with a very coherent structure of rank and control, and their activities — while necessarily legal — often fall into a slightly more gray area, such as gambling, money laundering and other white-collar crimes. Examples of this type of gang include any Chinese tongs that step outside the law, some yakuza, and other organizations with a longer reach than most street gangs.

#### GUARDIAN

This type of gang isn't very common, but their stated goals are usually the protection of a given area (although they are occasionally just protecting a particular person or group of people). This can sometimes be a good thing. However, if the gang has a vigilante attitude and little regard for local law enforcement, they can be quite dangerous — and not usually willing to listen to reason.

#### DEGENERATE

This type of gang isn't necessarily a 'gang' in the traditional sense of the word — these gangs often ride the fine line of being cults. They are typically composed of like-minded individuals who share a particular interest (usually a vice) that is frowned upon by most 'upstanding' people. Their activities can range from the relatively innocuous (like partaking of illegal drugs) to the absolutely unthinkable (like the kidnapping, torture and murder of innocent victims). The way they deal with interlopers is also likely to be a reflection of their typical activities.

You can determine the type of gang randomly by rolling 2d6 and comparing it to Table 7.2: Gang Type. This will also give

you a modifier to the size of the gang. Note that some types of gangs have an upper limit to their size (see below).

TABLE 7.2: GANG TYPE

| 2d6 | TYPE | SIZE MODIFIER |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | Degenerate | –2 |
| 3–4 | Racketeer | +1 |
| 5–6 | Punk | –1 (maximum of Medium) |
| 7–8 | Hoodlum | +1 (maximum of Large) |
| 9–10 | Thug | — |
| 11–12 | Guardian | — (maximum of Large) |

## GANG SIZES

Gangs will vary in size, which will in turn affect how many pies they've got their fingers in. You can determine the size of the gang randomly by rolling a 1d6 and comparing it to Table 7.3: Gang Size. Sizes are rated from Tiny to Huge, and the table shows how many members are likely to be in the gang. The Interests column shows how many 'projects' the gang is involved with.

TABLE 7.3: GANG SIZE

| 1d6 + SIZE MODIFIER | SIZE | INTERESTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 or less | Tiny (10 members or less) | 1 |
| 2 | Small (10 to 20 members) | 2 |
| 3–4 | Medium (20 to 50 members) | 3 |
| 5 | Large (50 to 100 members) | 4 |
| 6+ | Huge (100+ members) | 5 |

## GANG ACTIVITIES

Now that you know the type and size of the gang, you can figure out what they're up to by comparing the type of gang against Table 7.4.: Gang Activities. The Gang Size table gave you a number of interests, which translate to Activities — for example, a Small gang will be involved in two things. You can either pick them, roll a 1d6 until you get the right number of different Activities (ignoring results that aren't included in the table), or simply start at (1) and keep adding to the list until you fill it up

*For example, if your Small gang was a Hoodlum gang, you could simply say they are involved with (1) Gambling and (2) Theft.*

### BLACKMAIL

The gang specializes in 'acquiring' damaging information about people and profiting from its sale or simply by extorting the victim. Some gangs will find a mark to set up, causing it to appear that he is involved in some scandalous activity, in an effort to achieve the same ends.

### DEALING

The gang specializes in selling drugs — generally of the illegal variety, but some even sell rpescription drug. While some gangs can actually make their own product, most simply purchase it for resale from a more powerful source that engages in Smuggling.

### DEFENSE

The gang specializes in defending individuals. Gang members will typically stake out a certain person or place and act as a pro bono bodyguard. Depending on the gang's nature, they may have a different opinion of who (or what) poses a threat to their charge than the charge has himself.

### DRUGS

The gang specializes in partaking of drugs. These may or may not be illegal (and bear in mind that alcohol is a drug as well), but gang members will typically have an out-of-the-way place where they indulge themselves. Interlopers may or may not be welcome.

### GAMBLING

The gang specializes in monitoring wagers over particular sports or events. Sometimes this is legal, sometimes it isn't, but in all cases the gang will take pains to make sure it stands the best chance of walking away with the most money.

### HITS

The gang kills people, either for fun or money. Sometimes it's contracted assassinations; sometimes they just like to off their enemies and rivals. And sometimes it's both. These gangs are typically very dangerous.

### JUSTICE

The gang specializes in upholding justice. Bear in mind that this is sometimes the gang's interpretation of justice, and sometimes the 'laws' they uphold are vague, arbitrary or obscure. Yeah, tomo... go ahead and laugh, until you find yourself getting the crap beaten out of you for littering. On the other hand, some of these gangs will simply call in the authorities if they see a crime being committed — although the same caveats about interpretation can apply on occasion.

TABLE 7.4.: GANG ACTIVITIES

| | POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TYPE OF GANG | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Punk | Loitering | Stunts | Tagging | — | — |
| Hoodlum | Gambling | Theft | Dealing | Rumbles | — |
| Thug | Loans | Protection | Robbery | Hits | Prostitution |
| Racketeer | Loans | Gambling | Smuggling | Blackmail | Laundering |
| Guardian | Watch | Justice | Defense | Retribution | — |
| Degenerate | Drugs | Sex | Violence | — | — |

### LAUNDERING

The gang specializes in taking credits acquired in a questionable manner (such as through embezzling) and 'cleaning it up' so it appears totally legitimate. Fences, smugglers and probably no few characters will also tend to avail themselves of this gang's particular service.

### LOANS

The gang specializes in loaning credits to others with few (if any) questions asked, in return for an exorbitant interest rate. Penalties for defaulting vary from gang to gang, but they usually aren't pleasant. Characters with the Debt Hindrance are likely to be intimately acquainted with one of these gangs.

### LOITERING

The gang specializes in, um... doing nothing. Just hanging around. "What are you looking at, homie?" Essentially, this gang likes to take up space in a public place, mostly just chilling and being something of a nuisance. Their response to requests to move along can range from sullen (and slow) compliance to outright hostility.

### PROSTITUTION

The gang specializes in providing sexual favors in return for cash. Prices can vary, but largely depend on where the gang gets their prostitutes from — willing recruits cost a lot more than 'volunteers' acquired through less savory methods.

### PROTECTION

The gang specializes in providing 'insurance' for local businesses and residents against ill fortune befalling them. It must work, since those who don't pay the often-exorbitant fees seem to meet all manner of 'accidental' injuries and destruction of property that never seem to befall those who do pay.

### RETRIBUTION

The gang specializes in meting out vengeance upon those who have wronged another. Once again, you should bear in mind that perceptions can vary — while it may appear a noble cause on the surface, sometimes the definition of 'wronged' can be broad or vague, and sometimes the retribution can be way out of proportion with the original 'crime'.

### ROBBERY

The gang specializes in taking valuables from other people by force. We're not talking subtlety here — this is usually an outright mugging or armed holdup. And handing over your cash isn't always a guarantee of safety, either... A lot of these types just like the violence.

### RUMBLES

The gang specializes in fighting. Not like the Combine does — this is simply a chest-thumping show of force for the purpose of impressing or intimidating potential rivals. Most often the gang takes on other nearby gangs, although it isn't unknown for them to simply go into a crowded area and just start a brawl.

### SEX

The gang specializes in partaking in sex. Depending on the gang's nature, this can be with other gang members, willing outsiders or hapless victims picked up off the street. In any case, they usually have a 'base' where the action takes place, and the way they react to intruders often depends on how they choose their sexual partners.

### SMUGGLING

The gang specializes in moving contraband. Individual gangs may focus on 'importing' goods, others on 'exporting' goods, and a few actually do both. In any case, they have some sort of network and a means of moving illegal goods into or out of an interdicted area.

### STUNTS

The gang specializes in showing off. What this translates to depends on the gang: it could be a group of skater boys sliding down the Malmart plaza bannisters, or a bunch of jump racers flinging themselves from the top of the John Hancock Tower. By no means is any measure of safety implied.

### TAGGING

The gang specializes in making their mark on society. Again, what this means depends on the gang. It may involve putting a hypertag logo on top of the Massachusetts State House, painting a gang sign on the side of the Harvard Bridge, or racing through a crowded area to see how many people can be jostled or made to crash.

### THEFT

The gang specializes in taking valuables from other people by stealth. Unlike robbery, this involves as little confrontation as possible — picking pockets or breaking and entering are the preferred methods. Also unlike robbery, people don't usually end up hurt unless the perp is caught in the act and one side or another panics.

### VIOLENCE

The gang likes to fuck shit up. Unlike Activities involving sex and drugs, this is seldom ever pretty — even if they actually use willing volunteers. Typically, the gang will 'acquire' a victim, take him or her to a secluded location, and proceed with the torture. Death is not uncommon, and a few depraved gangs make a little extra cash by making snuff vids.

### WATCH

The gang specializes in maintaining some sort of neighborhood watch. Occasionally, this can also be a watch over a specific person or place. If trouble arises, the way it's dealt with depends on the gang: they may call for authorities, call in reinforcements, or simply step in there and then.

## GANG NAMES

Whatever the type of gang, most of them will take on a name usually meant to either impress or intimidate everyone else. Feel free to make up your own names, but if you're not feeling very inspired, we've included a random Gang Name generator to help. Roll 1d6 on Table 7.5: Gang Name Generator to get two Name Columns, then roll 1d6 for each of those columns to get an instant gang name.

*For example, an initial roll of '3' would give you columns B and D. Then, rolling a '5' and a '1' would give you the gang name 'the Screaming Angels'.*

TABLE 7.5: GANG NAME GENERATOR

| 1d6 | COLUMN COMBINATION | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Column A + Column D | Black | Avenging | Bringers of | Angels | Darkness |
| 2 | Column A + Column E | Bloody | Killing | Chosen of | Demons | Death |
| 3 | Column B + Column D | Chrome | Raging | Hand of | Knives | Fury |
| 4 | Column B + Column E | Golden | Ruling | Masters Of | Jackals | Iniquity |
| 5 | Column C + Column D | Red | Screaming | Sons of | Metal | Pain |
| 6 | Column C + Column E | Righteous | Warring | Wrath Of | Vengeance | Doom |

Feel free to tweak any names that don't seem to work—'Sons of Jackals' might be better as 'The Sons of The Jackal', for instance. We'll leave it up to you if you want to use names like 'Avenging Vengeance'... it may sound redundant, but we're sure there's a group of gangers out there somewhere who'd think it was "killer cool!" Go figure.

## Adventure Generator

Real life is filled with responsibilities. You have work and/or family. Sometimes you don't have a ton of time to prepare an adventure for your game. An adventure generator is a quick, painless way to quickly determine the basic elements of the game with just a few rolls of the dice. Once the core components of your Savage Tale are in place, all that's left to do is connect the dots and flesh out a great Savage Tale for game night!

### CONTRACTORS

Since most cyberpunk adventures involve working for someone, roll on this table to find out who. If the heroes have a regular employer (like Stopwatch, Psi Division, the military or a law-enforcement agency), skip this step.

Note that this is the visible Contractor — the person or group the heroes believe they are working for. It may well turn out that the Contractor is a just a front for someone else, in which case the GM should reroll to determine who's really pulling the strings.

TABLE 7.6: CONTRACTORS

| 1d12 | CONTRACTOR |
|---|---|
| 1 | AI |
| 2 | Corporation/Conglom |
| 3 | Fixer |
| 4 | Friend or Family |
| 5 | Gang |
| 6 | Government |
| 7 | Happenstance |
| 8 | Celebrity |
| 9 | NGO |
| 10 | Rebels |
| 11 | Rumor or News |
| 12 | Tycoon |

#### AI

An Artificial Intelligence or personality upload. It may be a legal citizen or an illegal creation, hunted by Stopwatch. It can offer money, data, and excellent hacking support but its ability to influence the physical world is limited.

#### CORPORATION/CONGLOM

A gigantic corporation, probably through a "deniable" intermediary. Congloms have vast wealth and all that can afford, but seldom wish to be directly linked to any shadowy operation.

#### FIXER

The Contractor is a person who arranges deals like this, and acts as a human "insulator" between hireling and employer. If the fixer has an established reputation, the deal is likely to be straightforward and solid. Other fixers are less reliable, and may not be what they seem. Some fixers put together operations for their own benefit as well.

#### FRIEND OR FAMILY

Someone dear to one of the characters wants their help. Resources are very limited, but at least your family won't lie to you. Unless they will.

#### GANG

Gangs have plenty of untraceable cash and firepower, but their power in the legitimate sphere is low. The very fact that a gang is bringing in outside help means the situation is either very bad, or something which can't be handled by shooting.

#### GOVERNMENT

A nation-state, city, or government agency. Tons of money and guns, but their ability to act is limited by borders and laws. If a government is hiring freelancers that means the job is almost by definition illegal, and probably something the agency wishes to hide.

#### HAPPENSTANCE

Nobody hires anybody; the characters simply blunder into a situation on their own. It may turn out that this "random event" was carefully orchestrated, of course.

#### CELEBRITY

A person who is famous — from a Bollywood star to an investigative blogger. Fame does not equal wealth, of course, and a celebrity has his or her public reputation to protect. Celebrities do have fans and followers, who can help or hinder.

#### NGO

A legitimate non-government organization, such as a political party, charity, activist group, church, or university. Resources

can be anywhere from "not much" all the way to near-government levels. Even more than governments and congloms, NGOs have to obey the law — but they're often motivated by a "higher purpose" which brings them into conflict with the powers that be.

### REBELS

Armed opponents to one or more governments. An NGO with guns, if you will. Some rebel groups control actual territory and are basically small governments themselves; others are nothing but a few malcontents with slogans and pipe bombs. By definition, everything they do is illegal.

### RUMOR OR NEWS

The characters learn about a situation or opportunity indirectly. The situation must be something which motivates them to get involved — a chance for profit, a cause they care about, a menace they alone can stop.

### TYCOON

A wealthy individual. He (or she) may control a conglom, but is pursuing a personal agenda. A tycoon's motives can be extremely whimsical or eccentric, in contrast to a conglom's focus on profit or a government's goals of power and control.

## THE MISSION

This is the task the heroes are hired or ordered to perform. It may well happen that the mission may turn out to be a red herring, or that the situation will change, but this is what they think they're going to be doing, and can prepare for.

TABLE 7.7: THE MISSION

| 1d12 | MISSION: |
|---|---|
| 1 | Escape/Survive |
| 2 | Find Someone or Something |
| 3 | Harm (or kill) Someone |
| 4 | Kidnap (or capture) Someone |
| 5 | Manage an Operation |
| 6 | Prevent Something |
| 7 | Protect Someone or Something |
| 8 | Reconnaissance/Surveillance |
| 9 | Rescue Someone |
| 10 | Solve a Mystery |
| 11 | Steal (or Destroy) Something |
| 12 | Transport Something or Someone |

### ESCAPE/SURVIVE

The characters must get out of a place, overcoming whatever dangers lurk there. You may be guarded by people trying to keep you in, or the place may simply be a hostile environment. This can be anyplace from the radioactive Arabian desert to a dangerous neighborhood in Shanghai. It's rare that anyone deliberately hires someone to do this; it usually comes about because a prior mission has gone badly wrong.

### FIND SOMEONE OR SOMETHING

Something or someone is hidden or lost, and you have to find it. Whoever did the hiding may well use "active measures" to discourage searchers.

### HARM (OR KILL) SOMEONE

A good old-fashioned hit job. Your job is to kill (or at least rough up) the target. The target, of course, has guards and walls for protection — or the problem may be finding where he is hiding, or who he is. Any target who learns he's being stalked is sure to fight back.

### KIDNAP (OR CAPTURE) SOMEONE

Your job is to catch someone who doesn't want to be caught. It may be a legal capture of a wanted felon, or an extremely illegal kidnapping operation.

### MANAGE AN OPERATION

Life is not all gunplay and car chases. You must oversee an operation — throw a party, negotiate a deal, run a business. It can be entirely legal or a gigantic con game. There may be someone determined to prevent you from succeeding.

### PREVENT SOMETHING

You are the monkey wrench in the works. Something is going to happen unless you interfere. Stop the bomb from going off, prevent the marriage, interrupt the broadcast, prevent the robbery.

### PROTECT SOMEONE OR SOMETHING

This time you're the guards and someone is trying to steal or kill or kidnap whatever you're guarding. If it's a person, they can easily make stupid and self-destructive choices, and you're the one to deal with the consequences.

### RECONNAISSANCE/SURVEILLANCE

The goal this time is simply information. Observe a target and report. Usually this means keeping your presence a secret, and the target almost certainly doesn't want to be observed. This can be anything from military espionage to freelance journalism.

### RESCUE SOMEONE

Someone is in a dangerous place and you need to get them out. The peril can be natural or human. Depending on the peril, you may have to be stealthy. Unlike a kidnapping, the target presumably wants to be rescued.

### SOLVE A MYSTERY

Something has happened and you have to figure out who did it, or why, or how. This may mean investigating a crime, or uncovering a covert operation, or even delving into a seemingly paranormal event. The culprit almost certainly tried to destroy all the clues, and may try to interfere with the investigation. There are sure to be red herrings and false leads.

### STEAL (OR DESTROY) SOMETHING

You have to get something, or get close enough to blow it up. This means getting past alarms, doors, guards, or ancient temple traps. The location of the item may be a secret, and the current owner may try to interfere with your plans.

### TRANSPORT SOMETHING OR SOMEONE

You are at Point A, and need to arrive at Point B with someone or something. There's probably someone in between who wants to keep that from happening. Or maybe you just have

to get to Point B first. It could be a secret, stealthy journey or a flat-out race. The cargo can be troublesome on its own, and you may not even know where Point B actually is.

### THE REAL MISSION

Often the job the heroes sign on for isn't the task they wind up completing. Game masters who want a twisty plot should roll a second time on the Mission table to determine what the real job is. This is what the player characters find themselves doing after things turn sour or the villain pulls a fast one, or a "sub-mission" they have to accomplish in order to make the main job possible.

## THE LOCATION

The growth of global culture is one of the hallmarks of cyberpunk fiction. In a "post-national" era, feel free to set adventures anywhere on Earth. For a globe-trotting tale, roll two or three times. There is one table for urban settings, a second for adventures which go beyond the big cities.

TABLE 7.8: LOCATION

| 1d12 | URBAN LOCATION |
|---|---|
| 1 | Airport/Rail hub |
| 2 | Amusement park |
| 3 | Arcology |
| 4 | Construction site |
| 5 | Corporate headquarters |
| 6 | Gang territory |
| 7 | Home |
| 8 | Housing project |
| 9 | Industrial plant |
| 10 | Megamall |
| 11 | Police station/jail |
| 12 | University/research lab |

### AIRPORT/RAIL HUB

A transportation nexus, full of travelers coming and going, bored or paranoid security officers, and some powerful and dangerous machines. The traditional venue for hostage swaps, message drops, and assassinations.

### AMUSEMENT PARK

It's colorful, full of adorable kids and characters in costume, and there are polite and heavily-armed guards nearby no matter where you go. "Backstage" areas are less jolly and have dangerous machinery to play on.

### ARCOLOGY

A city in a building, combining residential space, offices, shopping, and even industrial facilities. Often designed to be highly self-sufficient — and well-protected. The chief feature of an arcology is that it's big: hundreds of stories tall, covering a vast area, and home to 100,000 people or more.

### CONSTRUCTION SITE

Something is going up (or coming down). Security is minimal, there's plenty of dangerous equipment lying around, and the building itself isn't entirely safe yet. A favorite spot for gang summits, meetings with the enemy, or a chat with a shadowy informant just before the assassin strikes.

### CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

It's posh, it's clean and shiny, and it has top-of-the-line security systems. This is where the Big MacGuffin is hidden, or where the main villain makes his lair. It's where the veiled threats are made across a big oak desk, or where the caper goes off with split-second timing.

### GANG TERRITORY

The Bad Part of town. This is the area run by crooks, where the police go in armed convoys or not at all. If you're cool with that, it's a free zone where anything is available for a price, and you're safe from the authorities until someone betrays you.

### HOME

You don't have to go out for this adventure; it comes to you. Being on your own turf means you know the territory very well, and you may even have time to set up booby-traps and defenses. It also means you've got noplace left to run.

### HOUSING PROJECT

Where the state warehouses poor people it can't use. Quarters are cramped and shabby, gang members hang out in the stairwells, but there's often a thriving underground economy in the hallways and back alleys. The cops do come here — just not often, and not very quickly when they're called.

### INDUSTRIAL PLANT

A factory, refinery, power plant, or waste-reclamation facility. Full of highly dangerous machines, often totally automated, and moderately well-guarded.

### MEGAMALL

A temple of consumerism, filled with every imaginable kind of stuff. It's crowded with shoppers, guarded by authority-crazed mall cops, and your senses are overloaded with adware. In poorer lands, this is a street market, crammed with little stalls and packed with people. A good place for a chase or an assassination attempt.

### POLICE STATION/JAIL

Where authority lives. It's a fortress full of armed guards. If there's something inside you need, it's going to be very hard to reach. And if you're inside and need to get out — that's going to be even harder.

### UNIVERSITY/RESEARCH LAB

It looks serene and peaceful, and the only infighting happens on academic committees. This is where the bleeding edge of science is happening, where world-changing discoveries are lying around on lab benches. There are plenty of students and junior researchers who might be sympathetic to outlaws and rebels.

TABLE 7.9: NON-URBAN LOCATIONS

| 1d12 | NON-URBAN LOCATION |
|---|---|
| 1 | Desert/Wasteland |
| 2 | Farming Region |
| 3 | Free Zone |
| 4 | Island |
| 5 | Mansion/Resort |
| 6 | Military Base |
| 7 | Nature Preserve |
| 8 | Ocean |
| 9 | Polar Region |
| 10 | Space |
| 11 | Swamp/Flooded Region |
| 12 | Underground |

### DESERT/WASTELAND

Either the American Southwest, the Sahara, or the war-ravaged Middle East. The chief problem here is surviving without water, even if you're not in a radioactive area. Inevitably home to biker gangs and scavengers.

### FARMING REGION

It's not all giant cities and howling wastelands. There are still plenty of places in the world where people live close to the land, growing food (or pharmaceuticals). Communities are still small and fairly traditional, with none of the anonymity of a big city. Outsiders will be noticed. Farms have automated harvesters, pesticides, and farmers with shotguns. And plenty of places to dispose of bodies.

### FREE ZONE

A region outside the control of any organized government. This may be a deliberate attempt to build an anarchist utopia, or it could be a place where government has collapsed.

### ISLAND

Probably in the Pacific or the Caribbean. Likely threatened by rising sea levels and megastorms. It could be a private corporate enclave, or poor and overcrowded, or entirely uninhabited.

### MANSION/RESORT

A pleasure dome, either a resort hotel or one family's private domain. Either way, security is tight around the perimeter and anything goes inside. Often full of valuable stuff and important people.

### MILITARY BASE

A true fortress, with more guns than you can shake a stick at, and some pretty scary sticks, as well. Unless you have a private army of your own, this is not a place you want to attack.

### NATURE PRESERVE

A pristine wilderness, probably protected and patrolled. Serene and pretty — except for the gene pirates, poachers, and eco-activists who don't like intruders. Forests and jungles can have dangerous animals, while mountains have plenty of dangerous cliffs, avalanches, flash floods, and other natural hazards.

### OCEAN

The sea is Earth's last frontier, the home of Rovers, pirates, and sea-farmers. No nation has the power to patrol it all anymore, so the Law of the Sea is pretty much whatever you care to make it.

### POLAR REGION

Perhaps the only truly empty spaces left on Earth. The Arctic and Antarctic may have less ice than they once did, but they're still very cold and inhospitable. A good place if you truly want solitude — or have something to hide.

### SPACE

There are numerous locations beyond Earth's atmosphere. The environment is extremely unforgiving, life in zero gravity is strange to newcomers, and getting out of the well is very expensive. But this is where the future lives.

### SWAMP/FLOODED REGION

The drowned cities of the American east coast or south Asia are treasure troves of salvage — and full of dangerous pirates and scavengers. Swampy wilderness abounds in crocodiles, piranhas, anacondas, and mosquitoes.

### UNDERGROUND

Natural caves, mineshafts, vacuum-train tubes, secret underground bases — all great places to hide or fortify something. They're hard to find and hard to get into, but for that reason security may not be as tight as it should be. Abandoned underground complexes may be full of traps, monsters, and treasure.

## THE MACGUFFIN

If the adventure involves a "something," roll on this table. This is what the heroes are trying to get, or steal from the villains, or reveal to the world, or keep hidden.

TABLE 7.10: THE MACGUFFIN

| 1d12 | MACGUFFIN |
|---|---|
| 1 | Cash |
| 2 | Data |
| 3 | Endangered Species |
| 4 | Evidence |
| 5 | Key |
| 6 | Land |
| 7 | Medicine |
| 8 | Person |
| 9 | Possession |
| 10 | Secret |
| 11 | Technology |
| 12 | Treasure |

### CASH

Cold hard cash, bank credit wafers, or something equivalent like bearer bonds. The point is, you can spend it right away, no waiting. It's pure wealth.

### DATA

In the Information Age, data is power. It could be a scientific discovery, the master files for next month's media blockbuster, or a corporation's un-edited financial report. It's data, and someone will pay for it.

### ENDANGERED SPECIES

A living thing, rare and therefore valuable. Part of the problem is making sure it stays alive until the mission is over.

### EVIDENCE

Data, video, or physical objects which link someone to something they really don't want to be linked to. This makes it dandy blackmail material. Its value depends on who the person is and what the crime is.

### KEY

This MacGuffin isn't particularly valuable itself, but it gives access to something else which people do want. It could be a physical key, a combination, a severed thumb with the right thumbprint, or a bunch of cryptic clues.

### LAND

Sure, it's not as exciting as a box of guns, but the title to a plot of land means control of whatever's hidden there. And land in the right place can be incredibly valuable.

### MEDICINE

The cure for what ails you — or somebody. When someone is afraid of pain or death, there's not much they won't do. This could be anything from a sample of a new drug, to a shipment of vaccine to prevent an epidemic.

### PERSON

The MacGuffin is a person. Roll on Table 7.6: Contractors to find out who.

### POSSESSION

An item which belongs to someone and is valuable to them. It may not have any great cash value, but its owner thinks it's very important.

### SECRET

Something hidden, which someone wants to keep hidden. Governments and corporations have lots of secrets — some benign, some revolting. Secrets remain valuable only while they are secret, so once too many people find out it's old news.

### TECHNOLOGY

A gadget. Something practical that can be used. Whoever gets it has an immediate advantage. It could be a weapon, a vehicle, a superfast computer, a robot, or something more exotic.

### TREASURE

Something which can be turned into cash. It's valuable in its own right, but may have to be sold or "laundered" first.

## INNOCENTS

If someone needs rescuing, this is where to roll. Also use this to determine innocent bystanders affected by the operation, people being victimized by the villain, or other "civilians" as needed.

TABLE 7.11: INNOCENTS

| 1d12 | INNOCENT |
|---|---|
| 1 | Activist |
| 2 | AI or Upload |
| 3 | Child |
| 4 | Clone or Simulacrum |
| 5 | Doctor |
| 6 | Family or Friend |
| 7 | Media Person |
| 8 | Politician or Judge |
| 9 | Refugee |
| 10 | Scavenger |
| 11 | Scientist |
| 12 | Witness |

### ACTIVIST

Someone pushing for change or reform, using (mostly) peaceful and (mostly) legal methods. Note that a neo-fascist agitator is just as much an "activist" as an anti-corporate crusader.

### AI OR UPLOAD

A Virtual Entity of some sort. It could be a full-blown AI, or even someone's dub.

### CHILD

A kid, who should be too young to get mixed up in this kind of business. Whatever's happening, they're not the ones responsible.

### CLONE OR SIMULACRUM

An artificial person. They may or may not know that's what they are.

### DOCTOR

A healer; anything from an under-equipped "barefoot doctor" in the housing projects to a high-end body-sculpting surgeon.

### FAMILY OR FRIEND

Someone with a personal connection to one of the protagonists. Yes, that's right, Mom's got the Holy Grail again.

### MEDIA PERSON

A news reporter, actor, sport star, or other creation of the media nets. Their billions of fans inevitably include some nutcases.

### POLITICIAN OR JUDGE

Someone still trying to uphold the public trust. Naturally that makes them a target for corruption, assassination, and blackmail.

### REFUGEE

Driven from home by war, poverty or disaster, they're frightened, don't have much money, and are still adjusting to a new society. That makes them natural victims for all kinds of scams and exploitation. Today's penniless refugee might have been an important person back home yesterday.

### SCAVENGER

A harmless junk-picker, except that sometimes they find things which turn out to be important.

### SCIENTIST

Maybe motivated by pure desire for knowledge, or maybe hoping for lucrative patentable discoveries. Smart but often not very shrewd.

### WITNESS

Someone who saw something. Someone else would like them to forget it or at least keep quiet.

## THE ANTAGONIST

Not always a villain, the antagonist is the person or entity the player characters have to overcome. He may be in the foreground trading pistol shots with them, or he may work through layers and layers of agents and flunkies.

TABLE 7.12: ANTAGONISTS

| 1d12 | ANTAGONIST |
|---|---|
| 1 | Bounty Hunter or Detective |
| 2 | Con Man or Impostor |
| 3 | Corporate Executive or Tycoon |
| 4 | Corrupt Bureaucrat or Politician |
| 5 | Crime Lord |
| 6 | Hacker |
| 7 | Media Personality |
| 8 | Military Officer or Mercenary |
| 9 | Priest or Cult Leader |
| 10 | Rebel or Terrorist |
| 11 | Rogue AI or Upload |
| 12 | Spy |

### BOUNTY HUNTER OR DETECTIVE

He's got the law on his side, or at least that's what people will believe. Even if he's corrupt or pursuing his own goals he can call on other law enforcers for help. The only thing scarier than a corrupt lawman as an enemy is an honest one.

### CON MAN OR IMPOSTOR

He's pretending to be someone else (roll on the Contractor table to see who) and this is all part of some big scheme. It's quite likely that there will be a change of mission midway through the adventure as the true nature of the scheme starts to emerge.

### CORPORATE EXECUTIVE OR TYCOON

Either one can be advancing the interests of the megacorp or pursuing a private agenda. It doesn't really matter — they

can command the resources of a giant corporation, and that makes them truly formidable.

### CORRUPT BUREAUCRAT OR POLITICIAN

A bureaucrat is appointed, a politician is elected, but both of them can use (and misuse) government power. The target may be an enemy state, a rival faction within the same government, a corporation, or a personal enemy.

### CRIME LORD

A gang boss or underboss, with crooks at his command and a pretty hefty resource base. Most high-level crime lords are savvy enough to keep their own hands clean, and have friends in politics and corporations. Modern crime lords have hackers on the payroll and know how important the Deep can be.

### HACKER

Anything from a straight-arrow software engineer to a wild-haired radical living in a dumpster, a hacker's main strength lies in the Deep. He (or she) can cut off your finances, put you on the Most Wanted List, and call you names on your own blog. Fighting a hacker is like fighting smoke, until you find the source of the fire.

### MEDIA PERSONALITY

Media people probably don't have vast wealth and aren't likely to shoot you down in the street, but they can trash your reputation, turn people against you, and expose things you want kept secret. A big-time Bollywood figure is almost a corporate executive, while a freelance blogger could also be a hacker.

### MILITARY OFFICER OR MERCENARY

This person has a lot of armed force at his or her disposal. She is charged with obeying the orders of their country's government (or whoever signs the paychecks) and can be frighteningly competent at doing just that. Corrupt or self-serving military leaders can be like crime lords, only with bigger guns.

### PRIEST OR CULT LEADER

Religion is a powerful force and can be the motive behind noble acts and despicable ones. False prophets often use the trappings of religion to gain wealth and power. A religious leader can have riches and goons, but his most powerful weapon is his ability to motivate those who believe in him.

### REBEL OR TERRORIST

This person doesn't want to be ruled by the existing government, and is fighting against it, either alone or with a band of followers. A successful rebel leader may control a substantial territory, functioning as a small government. Others are just violent lunatics bent on mayhem. It's all too common for foreign governments to support rebels in their enemies' homelands.

### ROGUE AI OR UPLOAD

It's a mind in the Deep, pursuing its own mysterious goals. As a data entity, an AI has incredible Hacking skills, and can find and manipulate all the information controlling someone's life. In the physical world, its powers are limited to what it can get people to do by bribery and manipulation.

### SPY

Spies are in the information business. They may serve national intelligence agencies, international groups like Stopwatch, or corporate "data acquisition" departments. A spy seldom works openly; usually there is at least one cover identity (use the Contractor table to figure out what).

## HENCHMEN

Even the most terrifying villain isn't much of a threat on his own. Roll again on the Antagonist table to see who the main opponent's allies are. Most foes have just one ally, but a particularly potent villain might have two or three main henchmen. The player characters may not know about the henchmen at first, and their special talents or connections can be an unpleasant surprise. However, henchmen can have their own goals, and may be persuaded to switch sides if the reward is big enough.

## TWISTS AND COMPLICATIONS

No plan ever anticipates everything that may happen. The heroes must always be ready to deal with unexpected problems. Roll once (or more) to see what fastballs Fate is getting ready to throw.

TABLE 7.13: TWISTS AND COMPLICATIONS

| 1d12 | COMPLICATION |
|---|---|
| 1 | Ally with Enemy |
| 2 | Betrayed by Contractor |
| 3 | Disaster |
| 4 | Diversion |
| 5 | Dodgy Ally |
| 6 | False Flag |
| 7 | New Technology |
| 8 | Old Enemy |
| 9 | Old Friend |
| 10 | Third Force |
| 11 | Time Limit |
| 12 | Trap |

### ALLY WITH ENEMY

You're going to wind up on the same side as your adversary. This could be the result of treachery on your own side, a misunderstanding, or some outside peril neither of you can survive alone. How long before one of you decides it's time to resume the original conflict?

### BETRAYED BY CONTRACTOR

The boss is not your friend. Your Contractor has turned against you. This may simply mean you're cut off from support (and your pay), or it may mean he's actively trying to destroy you. This could have been his plan all along, or possibly the enemy has fooled him into thinking you're the traitor.

### DISASTER

Something big and bad happens while the mission is underway. The characters didn't cause it, but they're going to have to cope with the effects. Even in the future there are tornadoes and earthquakes, gas leaks and plane crashes — and

the occasional terrorist bomb. Will you take advantage of the chaos, or pitch in to save lives?

### DIVERSION

This whole operation is just a diversion for some other scheme. That means the Contractor probably doesn't care much if you succeed, and all those goodies he promised you in payment may not exist.

### DODGY ALLY

In order for the operation to succeed, you need outside help. Unfortunately, the person you're working with may have their own agenda. They may want to hog all the glory (and pay), they may be a spy for the enemy, or they may have some scheme of their own,

### FALSE FLAG

The person who hired you is an impostor, and the mission itself may be bogus as well. This may be part of some larger scheme, or it may simply be that the Contractor had to mislead you in order to get you to take on the mission.

### NEW TECHNOLOGY

Cyberpunk is all about the tech, and characters love to be on the bleeding edge. This time, however, it's the other guys who have the latest, shiniest gear. They've got some gadget or weapon you're not prepared for.

### OLD ENEMY

The adversary is someone you've crossed paths with before. On the plus side, you know something about his means and methods. On the minus side, he knows about you. And did he set this all up just to get revenge?

### OLD FRIEND

One of your opponents is someone you know and like. Will you turn against them now? And if you don't, will your Contractor have doubts about your loyalty?

### THIRD FORCE

There's another faction involved in the affair, not aligned with either the heroes or their adversaries. The third force may have the same goal as the heroes, or an opposed one. The presence of a third force can lead to mysterious events, and once their existence is revealed the heroes can confront them or try to strike an alliance. Roll on the Antagonist table to see who it is.

### TIME LIMIT

There's a deadline. The job must be finished by a certain time. Or maybe the enemy is operating on a schedule and must be stopped before their plan succeeds. The point is: get moving!

### TRAP

It's a trap! Either the whole operation is nothing but a scheme to lure the heroes into their enemies' hands, or perhaps the goal of the mission is a fraud designed to snare the unwary. The trap may be aimed specifically at the player characters, or it could be intended to catch someone else entirely.

## DRAMATIC CONFLICT

A key theme of cyberpunk fiction is the conflict between what we must do to prosper and survive, and what we want to do. Often a mission runs headlong into a character's beliefs, morals, or well-being. If you want a straightforward external conflict, skip this step; for a very angsty story, roll more than once.

TABLE 7.14: DRAMATIC CONFLICT

| 1d12 | CONFLICT |
|---|---|
| 1 | Destruction |
| 2 | Economic Harm |
| 3 | Environmental Damage |
| 4 | Family/Friend |
| 5 | Honor |
| 6 | Innocents |
| 7 | Justice |
| 8 | Loyalty |
| 9 | Morality |
| 10 | Reputation |
| 11 | Truth |
| 12 | Wealth |

### DESTRUCTION

Accomplishing the mission is likely to cause a lot of physical destruction. People may be killed, or maybe a historic building will be ruined. How much collateral damage are you willing to cause?

### ECONOMIC HARM

A lot of people will be poorer as a result of this mission. Taking down an evil conglomerate means putting its employees out of work. Helping stage a coup could disrupt a region's trade. You're going to profit, but at what cost to others?

### ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE

The mission will harm the planet. Maybe a rare species habitat is the scene of a battle, or maybe you're working for a crimelord involved in illegal waste dumping. In the late 21st Century, the planet's fragile enough already — how much more can it take?

### FAMILY/FRIEND

Someone you love will be harmed by this job. Where do your loyalties lie? What if it's a noble cause?

### HONOR

You gave your word, and now you have to go back on it. This isn't a case of deception or trickery — you've got to betray someone who trusted you.

### INNOCENTS

Someone who isn't involved in the business is going to be hurt if you succeed. Maybe someone's secrets will be revealed, maybe their boat's going to get blown up, or maybe killing the local warlord means the town will be sacked by bandit gangs. Anyway, you have to decide if you want someone else to pay the price for your success.

### JUSTICE

Not law, justice. Someone will escape the consequences of a crime, or maybe get punished for something they didn't do. Maybe you're the someone.

### LOYALTY

You owe allegiance to someone or something, and this mission comes into conflict with that. Maybe it's patriotism, or your oath to your gang lord, or a cause you believe in, or maybe just the debt you owe to the hacker who taught you everything you know. Whatever it is, you're going to have to betray your loyalty to get the job done.

### MORALITY

In order to pull this mission off, you're going to have to do (or at least ignore) something that's just wrong. Torture, child slavery, sexual exploitation — whatever it is, it's bad. And you're not helping.

### REPUTATION

A freelancer lives by reputation, and this job's going to destroy yours. A hacker who's known for fighting the Man is helping oppressors this time, or a blood-and-guts mercenary is going to look ridiculous. Is it worth it?

### TRUTH

More than just the typical secrecy of an undercover mission, this job requires suppressing some truth, or broadcasting a lie. Maybe someday the real story will emerge, but for now you're on the side of deception.

### WEALTH

It turns out you're going to come out of this job poorer than when you started. Either it involves a substantial payment, or the effects will wipe out your savings. Unlike the other conflicts, this assumes that the mission is more important to you than simply getting rich

## Adventure Creation Example

Let's create an *Interface Zero 2.0* adventure. We roll a dozen 12-sided dice: 3, 12, 6, 2, 8, 10, 11, 2, 7, 10, 9, and 10. What can that create in the way of an adventure?

The Contractor is 3 — a "Fixer." That means he's representing someone else, so we go ahead and determine that's number 12. Our Fixer is fronting for a wealthy tycoon, though he probably won't tell the heroes that.

What's the task? The roll is 6, so our heroes have to prevent something. Exactly what is yet to be determined. To make a twistier, more intrigue-filled plot, we'll roll again to find out the real mission. That result is 2. They'll be trying to find someone or something.

Since a fixer is putting the job together, we'll assume an urban location. The roll is 8, a housing project. What is our tycoon trying to prevent in a housing project?

Next is the MacGuffin. The secondary mission could be to locate a person or a thing. We'll see what kind of a thing might be involved. The roll is 10: a secret! We also roll for an Innocent in case we need one and get 11, indicating a Scientist.

Who's the opponent? Our result on the Antagonist table is 2, a Con Man or Impostor. We roll for a Henchman and get 7, a Media person. That suggests the primary antagonist is an Impostor.

Now check for twists and dramatic conflicts. The Twist roll is 10: a Third Force. Rolling on the Antagonist table yet again gives us 9. A priest or cult leader is involved. That's certainly interesting. On the Dramatic Conflict table we roll 10, indicating a threat to the heroes' Reputations.

Time to put it all together. The player characters are hired by Rigoberta Miho, a "fixer" who acts as the interface between wealthy clients and deniable operatives. Ms. Miho offers generous pay for a simple task. The freelance reporter Javier Donau has scored an exclusive interview with the reclusive tycoon Hiro Hayamura. Hayamura is famous for maintaining his privacy, doing business only through handwritten notes (in flawless traditional calligraphy on rice paper). The mission is to prevent the interview from happening, or stop it from being released.

First of all the heroes have to find Donau. If they succeed in tracking him down, they can tail him to a crumbling old Soviet-era housing block in Vladivostok, which has been taken over by Hayamura.

Except that it isn't Hayamura at all, but an impostor — one of several doubles who had cosmetic surgery in order to make public appearances in Hayamura's place. The double knows that the real Hayamura disappeared several years ago and not even his inner circle of aides know where he is. They've kept up the illusion that he's still running his business empire, and they are the ones who hired the player-characters to prevent the interview. The impostor and Donau are using the interview as part of a power play to fire Hayamura's advisors in a very public way and gain control of his fortune.

Meanwhile an aged Buddhist monk and his acolytes have become involved, tailing the player-characters and trying to break into the guarded building when the interview is going on. The monk is the real Hayamura, who found spiritual peace long ago and now wants to end the machinery of lies he created.

A couple of elements didn't fit — the poor scientist had nothing to do, and it's hard to see how any of this could be a threat to the heroes' reputations, unless they screw up and make themselves look like idiots in front of a global audience. But we've still got plenty of potential for crawling through the heating ducts of a crumbling housing project, martial-arts battles with monks, and endless confusion about which Hayamura is the real one.

# Bio-Horror Generator

In *Interface Zero 2.0*, the world has reached a point where man has all but mastered the science of genetic manipulation. With a snip here and a paste there, scientists can create just about any type of hybrid species they want. While most creatures are locked safe and secure in some lab, others have somehow escaped confinement and fled into the wilderness and even into cities. Some super-secret labs (such as those in Chiba or T.L.I's research facilities in Johannesburg and Chicago) are rumored to have obtained alien DNA from deep space colonies on Mars or the Jovian moons around Jupiter, which they use to create monstrous hybrid creatures. It would be a great undertaking to stat up all the possible combinations of creatures characters might encounter in their adventures, so we've decided to provide you with the tools to create your own. The following generators allow you to quickly create a limitless number of new and unique mutated monstrosities.

## MUTANT TYPE

First determine the type of mutant you want to create, either by rolling on Table 7.15 Mutant Types or by choosing one of the three options listed below.

TABLE 7.15 MUTANT TYPES

| 1d6 | MUTANT TYPE |
|---|---|
| 1–2 | Mutant Animal |
| 3–4 | Spliced Animal |
| 5–6 | Xenomorph |

### MUTANT ANIMALS

Mutant animals are terrestrial beasts that have been genetically modified and mutated to varying degrees.

- **Base Statistics:** Mutant animals begin with the base statistics of an animal and gain additional mutations and drawbacks rolled on the Mutations Table and Drawback Table respectively:
- **Mutations:** Mutant Animals have 2d4 mutations, each rolled separately Table 7.25: Mutations.
- **Drawbacks:** Mutant Animals have 1d4–1 drawbacks, each rolled separately on Table 7.26: Drawbacks.

### SPLICED ANIMALS

A spliced animal is an aberrant amalgamation which combines two natural animals in unusual ways.

- **Base Abilities:** A spliced animal's Strength and Vigor die types are the highest of either animal involved in the splice. Its Agility, Smarts and Spirit die types are an averaged from the two animals used in the splice (round up). If one component creature in the splice has animal intelligence, as indicated with an (A) after its Smarts die, and the other does not, the spliced animal has a random 50/50 chance of possessing sentience or animal intelligence.
- **Base Skills:** A spliced animal has all the skills of both animals used in the splice, at the highest die type of either animal.
- **Base Size:** A spliced Animal uses the highest size of either component animal.
- **Base Pace:** A spliced animal has the highest pace from each component animal for every movement form listed.
- **Derived Statistics:** Calculate a spliced animal's derived traits normally based on its new Ability and Skill die types.
- **Special Abilities:** A spliced animal has the combined special abilities of both animals used in the splice, plus it may have additional mutations.
- **Mutations:** Spliced Animals have 1d4–1 mutations, each rolled separately on Table 7.25: Mutations.
- **Drawbacks:** Spliced Animals have 1d4 drawbacks, each rolled separately on Table 7.26: Drawbacks.

### XENOMORPHS

Xenomorphs are bizarre mutant creatures either based on alien stock, or they may be terrestrial beasts so heavily mutated as to be unrecognizable.

- **Base Abilities:** Roll the xenomorph's base Smarts on Table 7.16: Xenomorph Smarts and roll the other abilities on Table 7.17: Xenomorph Other Attributes.
- **Base Skills:** All xenomorphs begin with the Fighting and Notice. Roll for additional skills a number of times equal to half their Smarts die on Table 7.18: Xenomorph Skills. Then determine the die type used for each skill by rolling them separately on the Xenomorph Skill Die Table.
- **Base Size:** Roll for the xenomorph's size on the Table 7.20: Xenomorph Size.
- **Base Pace:** Roll for the xenomorphs form(s) of movement and their respective paces on Table 7.21: Xenomorph Locomotion.
- **Derived Statistics:** Calculate a xenomorph's derived traits normally based on its Ability and Skill die types.
- **Other Abilities:** For each xenomorph roll for armor on Table 7.22: Xenomorph Dermis, roll for their attack forms on Table 7.23 Xenomorph Base Attack, and roll for their sensory abilities on Table 7:24: Xenomorph Senses. Additional Special Abilities may be gained through a xenomorph's mutations as rolled on the Mutations Table.
- **Mutations:** Xenomorphs have 1d6–1 mutations, each rolled separately on Table 7.25: Mutations.
- **Drawbacks:** Xenomorphs have 1d4–1 drawbacks, each rolled separately on Table 7.26: Drawbacks.

TABLE 7.16: XENOMORPH SMARTS

| 1d12 | SMARTS | INTELLIGENCE LEVEL |
|---|---|---|
| 1–3 | d4(A) | Low order animal intellect |
| 4–6 | d6(A) | High order animal intellect |
| 7–8 | d4 | Low sentient |
| 9 | d6 | Average sentient |
| 10 | d8 | Above average sentient |
| 11 | d10 | High sentient |
| 12 | d12 | Peak sentient |

TABLE 7.17: XENOMORPH OTHER ATTRIBUTES

| 1d12 | ATTRIBUTE | RANKING |
|---|---|---|
| 1–2 | d4 | Poor |
| 3–6 | d6 | Average |
| 7–9 | d8 | Above Average |
| 10–11 | d10 | Superior |
| 12 | d12 | World Class |

TABLE 7.18: XENOMORPH SKILLS

| SMARTS ROLL* | SKILL |
|---|---|
| 1 | Stealth |
| 2 | Survival |
| 3 | Tracking |
| 4 | Climbing |
| 5 | Intimidation |
| 6 | Persuasion |
| 7 | Investigation |
| 8 | Taunt |
| 9+ | Knowledge (pick one) |

Note: All xenomorphs begin with the Fighting and Notice skills.

*Instead of rolling a set die type on this table, use the xenomorph's Smarts die when rolling to see which skills it has. Unlike a normal trait rolls, this roll does not Ace.

TABLE 7.19: XENOMORPH SKILL DICE

| 1d8 | SKILL DIE |
|---|---|
| 1 | d6 |
| 2 | d8 |
| 3 | d10 |
| 4 | d12 |
| 5 | One die type lower than the linked attribute's die (d4 minimum) |
| 6–7 | As linked attribute's die |
| 8 | One die type higher than the linked attribute's die |

TABLE 7.20: XENOMORPH SIZE

| 2d10 ROLL | SIZE | SIZE MOD[1] | STRENGTH INCREASE[2] |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2–4 | Small | –2 | +0 |
| 5–7 | Medium | –1 | +0 |
| 8–9 | Medium | +0 | +0 |
| 10–11 | Medium | +1 | +1 |
| 12 | Medium | +2 | +2 |
| 13 | Medium | +3 | +3 |
| 14 | Large | +4 | +4 |
| 15 | Large | +5 | +5 |
| 16 | Large | +6 | +6 |
| 17 | Large | +7 | +7 |
| 18 | Huge | +8 | +8 |
| 19 | Huge (Gargantuan[3]) | +9 | +9 |
| 20 | Huge (Gargantuan[3]) | +10 | +10 |

[1]Adds to the xenomorph's base Toughness

[2]Adds to the xenomorph's base Strength rolled earlier. Each bonus increases the creature's base Strength die by one step. Anything over a d12 has the remainder applied as a bonus to the d12 (ex: a +5 bonus added to a d10 yields d12+4).

[3]Xenomorph's attacks and armor are treated as heavy weapon/armor.

TABLE 7.21: XENOMORPH LOCOMOTION

| 1d10 | LOCOMOTION | PACE |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Burrowing | Pace 1d6+1; Burrowing monstrous ability, burrowing Pace of 1d4 |
| 2 | Climbing | Pace 1d6+1 |
| 3 | Clinging | Pace 1d6+2 plus the Wall Walker monstrous ability |
| 4 | Crawling | Pace 1d6+1 |
| 5 | Flying | Pace 1d6+1 plus Flying Pace of 1d12+6 |
| 6 | Jumping | Pace 1d6+3 |
| 7 | Slithering | Pace 1d6+1 |
| 8 | Swimming | Pace 1d8–1 plus a Swim skill of d10 and Aquatic monstrous ability |
| 9 | Walking | Pace 1d8+2 |
| 10 | Roll twice more | Use best Pace |

TABLE 7.22: XENOMORPH DERMIS

| 1d8 | TYPE | ARMOR BONUS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Feathers | +1 |
| 2 | Thick Skin | +1 |
| 3 | Thick Fur | +2 |
| 4 | Leathery Hide | +2 |
| 5 | Thick Scales | +3 |
| 6 | Bony Plates | +4 |
| 7 | Chitinous Exoskeleton | +5 |
| 8 | Calcated Shell | +6 |

TABLE 7.23 XENOMORPH BASE ATTACK

| 1d8 | ATTACK | DAMAGE |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Bludgeon | Str+d6 |
| 2 | Bite | Str+d4 |
| 3 | Claws | Str+d6 |
| 4 | Horns | Str+d4 |
| 5 | Pinchers | Str+d8 |
| 6 | Stinger | Str+1 plus poison |
| 7 | Tentacles | Str+d6; Grapples target on a raise. |
| 8 | Roll twice more | |

TABLE 7:24: XENOMORPH SENSES

| 1d8 ROLL | PRIMARY SENSE |
|---|---|
| 1 | Echolocation |
| 2 | Infravision |
| 4 | Low Light Vision |
| 5 | Normal Vision |
| 6 | Scent |
| 7 | Sixth Sense |
| 8 | Roll twice more |

TABLE 7.25: MUTATIONS

| 1d20 | MUTATION | GAME EFFECTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Acidic Ichor | When wounded, everything within 1" takes 2d6 acid damage. |
| 2 | Additional Natural Weapon | Roll for a new attack form on Table 7.23 Xenomorph Base Attack. |
| 3 | Armored Dermis | Increase Armor by +2. |
| 4 | Bio-Electric Field | Deals 2d4 electricity damage to anyone adjacent or touched by it. |
| 5 | Dwarfism | –2 to base size. |
| 6 | Enhanced Ability | Increase a random ability by one die type. |
| 7 | Enhanced Skill | Increase a random skill by one die type. |
| 8 | Extra Limbs | +1 Pace and the Improved Frenzy edge |
| 9 | Extra-Motive | Roll a new form of movement on Table 7.21: Xenomorph Locomotion. |
| 10 | Extra Sense | Roll for a new sense on Table 7:24: Xenomorph Senses. |
| 11 | Extremophile | Half damage from Heat and Cold based attacks. |
| 12 | Gigantism | +1 to base size and gains the Brawny edge. |
| 13 | Hardy | Gains the Hardy monstrous ability. |
| 14 | Horrific Appearance | Causes a Fear roll at –2. |
| 15 | Multi-Headed | +2 to Notice. |
| 16 | Poisoned Attack | Vigor roll at –4 or suffer instant Paralysis that lasts 2d6 minutes. |
| 17 | Regenerative Tissues | Gains a natural healing roll every round. |
| 18 | Slimy | +4 to rolls to escape a grapple or other restraint. |
| 19 | Stench | Anyone within 1" must make a Vigor roll or become shaken. |
| 20 | Super Mutant | Roll twice more. |

TABLE 7.26: DRAWBACKS

| 1d12 | DRAWBACK | GAME EFFECTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Anemic | Gains the Anemic Hindrance |
| 2 | Arrested Development | Gains the Young Hindrance (lower Strength and Vigor by 1) |
| 3 | Atrophied Ability | Lower a random Ability by one die type (minimum d4) |
| 4 | Atrophied Limb | Gains the Lame Hindrance |
| 5 | Blind | Gains the Blind Hindrance |
| 6 | Cold Blooded | +4 damage from cold based attacks |
| 7 | Cyclopia (one-eyed) | Gains the One Eye Hindrance |
| 8 | Microcephally (pin-headed) | Lower Spirit by one die type (minimum d4) |
| 9 | Holoprosencephaly | Lower Smarts by one die type (minimum d4) |
| 10 | Oily Epidermis | +4 damage from fire based attacks |
| 11 | PH Sensitivity | +4 damage from acid |
| 12 | Progeria | Gains the Elderly Hindrance |

# THREATS

What's good is a game setting without a few NPC's and threats to throw at your players? In this section, you'll find exactly that. It's not as big as we would like. In fact, entire books can (and will) be devoted to the vast number of non-player characters you can use.

## Bio-Horrors

Government experiments bred or built for war, genetic mistakes that somehow got loose, or the creations of some modern-day Joseph Mengele, biohorrors are the result of science gone awry.

### BASP

A military experiment to create a comparatively large venomous bat, the basp is a nocturnal creature that hunts its prey — usually small animals and children — by paralyzing them with its large stinger, and then eating them alive. Basps prefer dank, dark environments like sewers, subway tunnels or abandoned warehouses where squatters provide ready prey.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d10
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d6, Stealth d8
**Pace:** —; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5
**Special Abilities**

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Paralytic Sting:** The basp has a large stinger that causes instant paralysis. Targets wounded by the basp must make a Vigor roll or be paralyzed for 1d6 minutes.
- **Flight:** Basps have a Flying Pace of 10", with a Climb of 2.
- **Sonar:** Ignores all penalties for poor lighting.
- **Small:** Because of their size, human sized opponents suffer –2 to attack rolls vs. Basps.
- **Size –2:** The Basp is roughly the size of a large house cat.

### BEETLE RAT

A result of some twisted experiment to breed larger, tougher rats, the beetle rat is another common fixture of the urban sprawl. Standing roughly 2 and a half feet at the shoulders, these vicious rats travel in groups of 4 to 6 and have been known to drag down a full grown man.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d10, Stealth d8, Tracking d6
**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7(2)
**Special Abilities**

- **Armor +2:** The beetle rat has a hardened outer shell.
- **Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Low Light Vision:** Ignores penalties for dim and dark lighting.
- **Size –1:** Beetle rats are roughly the size of an English bulldog.

### CYBER HOUND

Some Street Docs like to tinker, and in lieu of paying customers they'll settle for whatever they can find. Domesticated animals work best, as they are often trusting enough of man to allow them get close, and then Blam! The next thing the

animal knows is that it has newly minted thorax and legs, and a new set of sensors. Completed specimens are often traded to wasteland scavengers, dog fighting rings, or gangsters looking for a new status symbol, or vicious guardian.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d10, Tracking d10
**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6(2)
**Special Abilities**

- **Armor +2:** Advanced Subdermal Armor.
- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Fleet Footed:** Dogs roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- **Go for the Throat:** Cyber Hounds rely on a millennia of instinct to drive them to the weakest spot on a target. A raise on its attack roll indicates the cyber hound hits the target's most weakly-armored location.
- **Low Light Vision:** Cyber hounds are fitted with cybernetic eyes. Cyber hounds ignore penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.
- **Size –1:** Cyber hounds are fairly small.

### TOXIC ROACH

Toxic roaches are vile insects that have mutated in the past two decades since the free city of Chicago was nuked in the second civil war. They are greenish/black in color and otherwise look like very big roaches. Toxic roaches can be found in any urban environment, especially slums.

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d8
**Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5(2)
**Special Abilities**

- **Bite:** Str+d4
- **Armor +2:** The toxic roach has a hardened outer shell.
- **Immunity:** The Toxic Roach is immune to the effects of its vomit and the effects of Toxic Death (see below).
- **Small:** Because of their size, human sized opponents suffer –2 to attack rolls vs. toxic roaches.
- **Size –2:** Toxic roaches are much, much larger than the insects they originated from, growing up to 2 feet in length and a foot tall. That said, they are still considered small creatures for the purposes of toughness modifiers and attacks against them.
- **Toxic Death:** When a toxic roach is killed it explodes. All adjacent characters must make an Agility roll or suffer 2d6 damage.
- **Toxic Vomit:** The toxic roach can spew a stream of highly acidic vomit (Range: 3/6/12). Targets must make Vigor roll at –2. Failure indicates they take 2d6 damage every round until the goo is removed from their body. Removing the goo takes 1 full round, during which the character may not move or perform any other actions.
- **Wall Walker:** Toxic roaches have a Pace of 5" when skittering across walls and other vertical surfaces.

## Sprawl Denizens

### COURIER

Today's Global DataNet is nigh omnipotent but sometimes you need something physically and that's where these guys and gals come in. As many areas of business traffic is prone to deadlock they make use of fast hybrids and even augmented kids on jump boards.

### COURIER, QUICK HYBRID (CHEETAH)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Investigation d4, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 12; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 4; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 1
**Edges:** Alertness, Fleet-Footed
**Cyberware:** Reinforced Exoskeleton (Load Limit Str × 8)
**Gear:** Sports clothing with expensive running shoes

### COURIER, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Driving d6, Fighting d4, Investigation d4, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8(3); **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 3
**Edges:** Alertness
**Cyberware:** Reinforced Exoskeleton (Load limit Str × d8), VCI I (+1 Driving)
**Gear:** Road Wear Reinforced Biker Jacket (+3), Nakamura Motors 'Kamikaze' Jump Board

### CRIMINALS

From lowly gang bangers to leaders of organized crime rings, the sprawler's filled with all sorts of people who prey on the unwary.

### GANGERS, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Throwing d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8(3); **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 4
**Hindrances:** Various
**Edges:** Chromed, Combat Reflexes, Steady Hands
**Cyberware:** Cyberweapon (Str+d4), Fight or Flight (Quick Edge), Subdermal Armor (+1 supplemental armor)
**Gear:** Urban Punk Combat Jacket (+2), Hostile Takeover HT-9 (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6; Shots 5; AP 1, Semi-Auto), Wasteland Trader's Shillelagh Havoc Stick (Str+d6; Knockback)

### HACKER (HUMAN)

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Hacking d10, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d4, Streetwise d8, Throwing d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6(1); **Firewall:** 7; **Strain:** 2
**Hindrances:** Curious
**Edges:** Hacker

**Gear:** Urban Punk Street Soldier Combat Thredz (+1), T-APP Firewall 4th Dimension Security
**Cyberware:** Enhanced Neural Net (Smarts raised by a die type

### HACKER, TOUGH HYBRID (WARTHOG)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Hacking d10, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Streetwise d8
**Charisma:** –2, **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7(1); **Firewall:** 9; **Strain:** 7
**Hindrances:** Ugly
**Edges:** Alertness, Hacker, Improved Interference, Investigator
**Cyberware:** Cyberware: Cyberarm [Fingerprint Duplicator and Lockpicking Kit (duplicate fingerprint sample, +2 to Lockpicking)], Cyberears [Amplified Hearing (+2 to Notice rolls involving sound)], Enhanced Articulation I (increase Agility one die type), Enhanced Neural Net (increase Smarts 1 die type), Skill Computer (choice of d6 skill)
**Gear:** Urban Punk Street Soldier Combat Thredz (+1), Foley Arms Watchdog pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d8; Shots: 12; AP 2, Semi-Auto), Ravenlocke JointLock Stun Gloves (Str, Shock), T-APP Firewall 4th Dimension Security)

### WISE GUYS, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10(3); **Firewall:** 5; **Strain:** 2
**Hindrances:** Loyal
**Edges:** Brawler, Brawny, Bruiser, Combat Reflexes, Martial Artist, No Mercy
**Cyberware:** Cyberweapon (Str+d4), Emotional Resistance Response System (+2 to Smarts or Spirit in a Test of Wills)
**Gear:** Executive Decision Entourage Suit (+3), ballistic shades, subvocal comms

### MADE MAN, HUMAN (WC)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Throwing d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 10(3); **Firewall:** 6; **Strain:** 5
**Hindrances:** Loyal
**Edges:** Block, Brawler, Brawny, Bruiser, Combat Reflexes, Martial Artist, No Mercy
**Cyberware:** Advanced Cyberweapon (Str+d8), Emotional Resistance Response System (+2 to Smarts or Spirit in a Test of Wills), Wireless Reflexes I (+1 Parry, ranged attacks at –1 to hit)
**Gear:** Executive Decision Entourage Suit (+3), AGA Thunder Shotgun (Range 10/20/40; Damage 1–3d6; Shots: 6; +2 to Stealth to conceal), ballistic shades, subvocal comms

## THE ELITE

The heads of businesses and often the king makers in any nation these men and women have it all but still want more. The old breed of politician is thankfully that, old. These guys have been around for years and many of them have begun to merge into the power structure rather than being the representative of the people. Then again the new breed don't seem to be much better. The media-whores sell their image and the masses gobble it up. Scandals, drama and all other the other bullshit eclipse the few who have actual talent. Regardless remember that they will stab you just as readily as each other in the back to get ahead.

### CELEBRITY, HUMAN 2.0

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Performance) d10, Persuasion d10, Taunt d8
**Charisma:** +4; **Pace:** 6", **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5 **Firewall:** 4–8*, **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Clueless, Stubborn
**Edges:** Attractive, Charismatic, Filthy Rich
**Cyberware:** Dependent on the icon and her sponsor they may sport impressive quantities and quality of Cyberware)
**Gear:** Exclusively tailored clothing, entourage, and groupies.

### CELEBRITY, LUXURY SIMULACRUM

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Performance) d10, Persuasion d10, Taunt d8
**Charisma:** +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4–8*; **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Clueless, Pacifist, Owned
**Edges:** Attractive, Charismatic, Filthy Rich
**Cyberware:** Dependent on the icon and her sponsor they may sport impressive quantities and quality of Cyberware)
**Gear:** Exclusively tailored clothing, entourage, and groupies.

### EXECUTIVE, HUMAN 2.0

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Business) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Taunt d6
**Charisma:** +2, **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Firewall:** 6; **Strain:** 1
**Hindrances:** Cautious, Greedy (Major), Vengeful (Minor)
**Edges:** Attractive, Corporate Mogul, Filthy Rich, Strong Willed
**Cyberware:** Data Carrier
**Gear:** Executive Decision Business Suit (+2), T-APP G-Net Security, hover sports car or hover limo

### FIXER, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Investigation d8, Notice d4, Persuasion d6, Streetwise d8
**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Firewall:** 7; **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Greedy (Minor)
**Edges:** Charismatic, Fixer, Investigator
**Gear:** Urban Punk Combat Jacket (+2), Normal Clothing

### POLITICIAN, HUMAN (WC)

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4
**Skills:** Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Politics) d8, Persuasion d8, Taunt d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 4 **Firewall:** 6; **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Elderly, Secret (Major), Greedy (Minor)
**Edges:** Connections (Many), Filthy Rich
**Cyberware:** Data Carrier
**Gear:** Expensive Suit, T-APP G-Net Security, bodyguard team

### RISING STATESMAN, HUMAN 2.0

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Politics) d6, Persuasion d8, Taunt d6
**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 7; **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Secret (Minor), Rich
**Edges:** Charismatic, Rich
**Cyberware:** Data Carrier
**Gear:** Expensive Suit, T-APP 4th Dimension Security, ronin bodyguard(s)

## MILITARY

Nations across the world maintain standing armies to defend their borders. here are a few samples of the types of military NPCs you can use in your game.

### MILITIA

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Driving d10, Fighting d6, Notice d8, Piloting d10, Shooting d8
**Charisma:** –2; **Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 6
**Hindrances:** Mean
**Edges:** Ace, Chromed
**Cyberware:** Fight or Flight (Quick Edge), Cybereyes [Low Light Vision (negates Dim and Darkness lighting penalties)], SmartGun System I (Shooting Wild Die increase 1 step), VCI I (+1 to Driving and Piloting)
**Gear:** Urban Punk Combat Jacket (+2), Ravenlocke Securities Riot Gel Gun (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6; Shots 6; Non-lethal, Knockback), Hostile Takeover HT-9 (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6; Shots 5; AP 1, Semi-Auto), Wasteland Traders Lacerator Knife (Str+d6, AP 2).

### INFANTRY/PRIVATE MILITARY CONTRACTOR

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor 10
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8(6); **Firewall:** 6; **Strain:** 8
**Hindrances:** Various
**Edges:** Block, Combat Reflexes, Counterattack, No Mercy, Rock and Roll!
**Cyberware:** Bone Reinforcement (+1 Toughness), Enhanced Articulation (Agility increased by 1 die type), Lifesaver (+1 to Natural Healing), Muscle Augmentation (Strength increased by a die type)
**Gear:** Ravenlocke Justified Response Assualt Armor (+6), Foley Arms TAW 2022 (Rifle: Range: 25/50/100; Damage 2d8+1; ROF 3; Shots: 45; AP2, 3RB, Auto; Shotgun: Range 12/24/48; Damage 1–3d6; ROF 2; Shots 12; Grenade Launcher: Range 12/24/48; Damage 3d6; Shots: 12; HW, SBT), Foley Arms Watchdog pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d8; Shots: 12; AP 2, Semi-Auto), 2×25mm Grenades (3d6, MBT), Ravenlocke Security Truncheon (Str+d4; +1 Parry; Shock), combat knife (Str+d4)

### SPEC-OPS TEAM MEMBER (WC)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Healing d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 8(5); **Firewall:** 10; **Strain:** 11
**Hindrances:** Various
**Edges:** Combat Reflexes, Counterattack, Improved Block, Killer Instinct, Marksman, No Mercy, Rock and Roll!
**Cyberware (All Milware):** Bone Reinforcement (+1 Toughness), Lifesaver (+1 to Natural Healing), Cyberlegs [Ligament Enhancement (+4 Pace)], Advanced Muscle Augmentation (Strength increased by 2 die types), Trauma Suppressor (ignores 1 Wound penalty), Skill Computer (d6 skill relevant to current mission)
**Gear:** Ravenlocke Raptor Specops Armor (+5; Smartdoc +4 to Incapacitation rolls), wrist mounted grenade launcher (Range 12/24/48; Damage by grenade; Shots 1), Foley Arms TAW 2022 (Rifle: Range: 25/50/100; Damage 2d8+1; ROF 3; Shots: 45; AP2, 3RB, Auto; Shotgun: Range 12/24/48; Damage 1–3d6; ROF 2; Shots 12; Grenade Launcher: Range 12/24/48; Damage 3d6; Shots: 12; HW, SBT), 2×25mm Grenades (3d6, MBT), Ravenlocke Security Truncheon (Str+d4; +1 Parry; Shock), combat knife (Str+d4)

## SPRAWL SOLDIERS

The Sprawl is filled with causes, but it is a rare individual that lives and dies for their beliefs; in the Sprawl's of the world when faced with the power of Credits you're far more likely to find someone who'll renounce their beliefs. The final group of combatants are owned 100% and have no option but to fight for their master's amusement, greed or security

### BOUNTY HUNTER, HUMAN (WC)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Investigation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Streetwise d8, Throwing d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(4); **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 6
**Hindrances:** Various
**Edges:** Chromed, Combat Reflexes, Investigator
**Cyberware:** Advanced Subdermal Armor (+2 supplemental armor), Cyberlegs [Ligament Enhancement (+4 Pace)], Advanced Muscle Augmentation (Strength die increased by 2 steps)
**Gear:** Private Dick Urban Trench (+2), AGA Thunderbolt (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d8+1; Shots 15; AP 4, Semi-Auto)

### CORPORATE SECURITY TEAM LEADER, HUMAN (WC)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d10,
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(4); **Firewall:** 6; **Strain:** 6
**Hindrances:** Cautious
**Edges:** Alertness, Command
**Cyberware:** Enhanced Articulation (Agility raise by a die type), Muscle Augmentation (Strength raise by a die type), Nanoweave Organ System (Vigor raised by a die type)
**Gear:** Ravenlocke Beachhead First Responder Armor (+4), BD-4DY 12G Pump Action Shotgun (Range 12/24/48; Damage Shot 1–3d6; Shots 6; Semi-Auto), AGA Thunderbolt (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d8+1; Shots 11; AP4, Semi-Auto), Ravenlocke P9D Personal Defense Weapon (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6–1; Shots 100; AP 3, Auto, 3RB), Ravenlocke Security

Truncheon (Str+d4; +1 Parry; Shock), T-APP G-Net Security, subvocal comms

### CORPORATE SECURITY OFFICER, SOLDIER SIMULACRUM

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8,
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 11(4); **Firewall:** 6; **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Borrowed Time (Major), Owned
**Edges:** Alertness, Ex-Soldier
**Gear:** Ravenlocke Beachhead First Responder Armor (+4), BD-4DY 12G Pump Action Shotgun (Range 12/24/48; Damage Shot 1–3d6; Shots 6; Semi-Auto), AGA Thunderbolt (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d8+1; Shots 11; AP4, Semi-Auto), Ravenlocke P9D Personal Defense Weapon (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6–1; Shots 100; AP 3, Auto, 3RB), Ravenlocke Security Truncheon (Str+d4; +1 Parry; Shock), T-APP G-Net Security, subvocal comms

### CORPORATE MERCENARY, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7(8); **Toughness:** 13(6); **Firewall:** 6; **Strain:** 5
**Hindrances:** Various
**Edges:** Block, Combat Reflexes, No Mercy, Rock and Roll!
**Cyberware:** Bone Reinforcement (+1 Toughness), Lifesaver (+1 on Natural Healing), Muscle Augmentation (Strength increased by 1 die type)
**Gear:** Ravenlocke Justified Response Assualt Armor (+6), Foley Arms Watchdog pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d8; Shots: 12; AP 2, Semi-Auto), Ravenlocke Security Truncheon (Str+d4; +1 Parry; Shock), combat knife (Str+d4)

### CYBORG, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Hacking d4, Intimidation d6, Lockpicking d4, Repair d6, Shooting d8
**Charisma:**–2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8(2); **Firewall:** 6; **Strain:** 4
**Hindrances:** Mean
**Edges:** Berserk, Combat Reflexes, Martial Artist, Marksman, Cyber Tolerance
**Cyberware:** Improved Cyberweapon (Str+d6), Muscle Augmentation (increase Strength by 1 die type)
**Gear:** Urban Punk Combat Jacket (+2), Assault rifle (Range 24/48/96; Damage 2d8; RoF: 3; Shots 30; AP 2, Auto, 3RB), spare parts, toolkit

### DRONE SUPPORT SPECIALIST, STEALTH HYBRID (FOX)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Boating d8, Climbing d6, Driving d8, Fighting d4, Notice d6, Piloting d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 10(5); **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 5
**Edges:** Drone Jockey
**Cyberware:** Subdermal Armor (+1 supplemental armor), VCI II (3 control slots)
**Gear:** Ravenlocke Beachhead First Responder Armor (+4), AGA Thunderbolt (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d8+1; Shots 11; AP4, Semi-Auto), 2× drones, subvocal comms.

### POLICE OFFICER, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Driving d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Investigation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Shooting d8
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 5(7); **Toughness:** 11(6); **Firewall:** 5; **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Loyal
**Edges:** Marksman
**Cyberware:** Cyberlegs [Ligament Enhancement (+4 Pace)]
**Gear:** Ravenlocke Bulwark Crowd Control Armor (+6), Riot Shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor vs ranged attacks), Foley Arms Watchdog pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d8; Shots: 12; AP 2, Semi-Auto), Ravenlocke Security Truncheon (Str+d4; +1 Parry; Shock)

### RONIN, FIERCE HYBRID (WOLF)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:**, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 10(3) **Firewall:** 5; **Strain:** 3
**Hindrances:** Code of Honor, Loyal
**Edges:** Chromed, Quick, Two Fisted
**Cyberware:** Bone Reinforcement (+1 Toughness), Reflex Enhancers (+1 Parry)
**Gear:** Road Wear Reinforced Biker Jacket (+3), Shogun Outfitters Whirlwind Butterfly Swords (Str+d6, AP 2), T-APP Firewall Sapper Protection

### STREET SAMURAI, HUMAN 2.0

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 12(6) **Firewall:** 6 **Strain:** 6
**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Code of Honor, Stubborn
**Edges:** Block, Chromed, Improved Level Headed, Trademark Weapon (K-Tana)
**Cyberware:** Enhanced Articulation (Agility increased by a die type), Muscle Augmentation (Strength increased by a die type), Wireless Reflexes I (+1 Parry, ranged attacks at –1 to hit)
**Gear:** Ravenlocke Justified Response Assault Armor (+6), Miyamoto K-Tana (K-Tana (Str+d8+2; AP 4, HW), T-APP G-Net Security

## WAGE SLAVES

The poor schmucks who work their shift patterns for enough to eke out, rather than a life, a survival. The luckiest have some kind of skill, the unluckiest work in what could be charitably described as battery farms for people.

### BARTENDER, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Investigation d4, Notice d6, Persuasion d6,
**Charisma:** 2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0
**Edges:** Charismatic, Connections
**Gear:** Normal Clothing

### BARTENDER, LUXURY SIMULACRUM

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Investigation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Repair d4,
**Charisma:** 4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0

**Hindrances:** Pacifist (Minor)
**Edges:** Attractive, Charismatic, Connections
**Gear:** Normal Clothing

### BOUNCER, FIERCE HYBRID (BULL)

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d8,
**Charisma:** –2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 8(1); **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 1
**Hindrances:** Mean
**Edges:** Brawny, Bruiser
**Cyberware:** Emotional Resistance Response System (+2 to Smarts or Spirit in a Test of Wills)
**Gear:** Urban Punk Street Soldier Combat Threadz (+1), Horns (Str+d6 damage)

### BOUNCER, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d8,
**Charisma:** –2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7(1); **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Mean
**Edges:** Brawny, Bruiser, Martial Artist
**Gear:** Urban Punk Street Soldier Combat Threadz (+1), Ravenlocke Jointlock Stun Gloves (Str+d4+2, Vigor at –2 or Shaken)

### CONSTRUCTION/MANUAL WORKER, TOUGH HYBRID (BOAR)

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Intimidation d4, Notice d4, Repair d6,
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0
**Edges:** Up-Sized
**Gear:** Work Clothing, hard hat (+1, 50% coverage), jackhammer (Str+d10), nail jun (Range 2/4/6; Damage 1d6)

### CONSTRUCTION/MANUAL WORKER, LABOR SIMULACRUM

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Notice d6, Repair d8,
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Owned (Major)
**Edges:** Brawny
**Gear:** Work clothing, hard hat (+1, 50% coverage), jackhammer (Str+d10), nail gun (Range 2/4/6; Damage 1d6)

### GUTTERPUNK, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Driving d6, Fighting d6, Lockpicking d4, Notice d6, Repair d6, Survival d8, Shooting d6, Tracking d6
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Clueless, Poverty
**Edges:** Fleet-Footed, Martial Artist
**Gear:** Scavenger's Trench (+2), light pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6; Shots: 15), club or quarterstaff (Str+d4), knife (Str+d4)

### STORE CLERK, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Investigation d4, Notice d4, Persuasion d4, Repair d4, Shooting d4
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0
**Edges:** Alertness
**Gear:** Clothing, Wasteland Trader's Shillelagh Havoc Stick (Str+d6; Knockback), AGA Thunder Shotgun (Range 10/20/40; Damage 1–3d6; Shots: 6; +2 to Stealth to conceal)

### OFFICE WORKER, HUMAN

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Investigation d4, Knowledge (pertinent to job) d6, Notice d4, Persuasion d4, Repair d4,
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0
**Edges:** Alertness
**Gear:** Normal Clothing,

### OFFICE WORKER, BIOROID

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Investigation d6, Knowledge (pertinent to job) d6, Notice d4, Persuasion d4, Repair d4
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0
**Hindrances:** Owned (Major)
**Gear:** Normal Clothing

## Robots

All robots have the following Special Abilities:

- **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; immune to poison, disease, and suffocation; no additional damage from Called Shots.
- **EMP Vulnerability:** Robots suffer full damage from EMP Weapons.
- **Fearless:** Robots are immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- **Weakness (Electricity):** Robots suffer +2 damage from electrical attacks.

### COMBAT ASSAULT ROBOT (WC)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts, d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+4, Vigor d10
**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Intimidate d8, Knowledge (Battle): d10, Notice d8, Shooting d10, Survival d8, Tracking d8
**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 12(3); **Firewall:** 10
**Gear:** Based on mission parameters
**Special Abilities**

- **Armor (+3):** Heavy Armor, superior alloy.
- **Fast Movement:** Roll 2d6 for running instead of d6.
- **Fist:** Str+d6
- **Quick:** It redraws Initiative cards of five or less.
- **Sensor Suite:** The Combat assault robot is configured with telescopic, low light, and thermal vision adds +2 to sight-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties.
- **Size +2:** This robot stands between 10–12 feet tall.

### RAVENLOCKE BLOODHOUND CANINE

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts, d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8 Tracking d10
**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7(6); **Firewall:** 6
**Special Abilities**

- **Bite:** Str+d6, AP2
- **"BloodScent" Round:** The bloodhound canine is equipped with a small weapon (Range 5/10/20; Damage 2d6; Shots 5; non-lethal). The bloodhound gains +4 to Tracking rolls against targets struck (not necessarily wounded).

- **Evasion:** The bloodhound is programed to anticipate incoming attacks. Ranged attacks against the bloodhound suffer a –1 penalty.
- **Improved Senses:** The bloodhound is equipped with various vision and hearing enhancements. It ignores lighting penalties. It receives a +2 bonus to Notice rolls
- **Lock Jaw:** If the Bloodhound strikes with a raise, it locks on to the target automatically dealing bite damage each round. The target may break free by making an opposed Strength roll as an action.

### RAVENLOCKE ONI

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts, d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+3, Vigor d10
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidate d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8
**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 14(4); **Firewall:** 8
**Special Abilities**

- **Armor +4:** Heavy Armor. Oni have sturdy, reinforced frames.
- **Claws:** Str+d8, Heavy Weapon.
- **Optics:** Telescopic, low light, and thermal vision adds +2 to sight-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties.
- **Size +3:**The Ravenlocke Oni stands 12–13' tall and is quiet bulky.
- **Targeting Computer:** +2 Shooting.
- **Weapon Mount:** Shoulder mounted Black Knight Maverick Light Autocannon (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; Shots 200; AP 4, HW).

### SECURITY ROBOT

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8
**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8
**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10(4); **Firewall:** 6
**Gear:** Weapons based assignment.
**Special Abilities**

- **Armor +4:** Protective armor plating.
- **Fist:** Str+d4. Security robots are programed to handle hand-to-hand combat.
- **Optics:** Telescopic, low light, and thermal vision adds +2 to sight-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties.
- **Sensor Suite:** +4 Notice vs sound, motion, chemicals, radiation, and electrical fields up to 500 yards distant. Ignores lighting penalties for Dim or Darkness.

### M-23 CORPSMAN

Designed for military service, the M-23 Corpsman is often deployed with military units. Its ability to work unaffected in a combat zone is one of its best assets.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Healing d8, Knowledge (Medicine) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6
**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 9(4); **Firewall:** 8
**Gear:** Medical kit and various drugs, weapons based on missing parameters.
**Special Abilities**

- **Armor +4:** Reinforced alloy frame.
- **Firewall:** +4 military grade Firewall.
- **Optics:** Telescopic, low light, and thermal vision adds +2 to sight-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties.
- **Trait Bonus (Medical Programing):** +2 bonus to Healing rolls.

### SPYBOT

Spybots look like large arachnids that are able to get into most places undetected.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Hacking d4, Notice d10, Stealth d10
**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 3; **Firewall:** 4
**Special Abilities**

- **Advanced Optics:** The Eye Borg is equipped with telescopic, low light, and thermal vision. It adds+2 to sight-based Notice rolls and ignores lighting penalties.
- **Alertness:** +2 to Notice rolls.
- **Recording Suite:** The spybot is able to records up to 4 hours of audio/visual footage in multiple spectrums.
- **Size –2:** Spybots stand only about 1' tall.
- **Small:** Attackers subtract 2 from their attacks to hit.
- **Stealth System:** The spybot's shell can change color to match the surrounding environment. This adds +4 to Stealth rolls versus visual detection but has no effect against sensors.
- **Wall Walker:** Spybots are able to transverse vertical and inverse surfaces at half Pace.

### WALKING/POSSUM MINE

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
**Skills:** Fighting d4, Notice d4, Persuasion d4, Repair d4, Shooting d4
**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 4
**Gear:** Suicide mine (Damage 6d4, SBT; 5d4, MBT; 4d4, LBT; AP4)

# Intrusion Countermeasures

## General Purpose

### Counterstrike

General purpose ICE are readily available consumer brands. Counterstrike is the best example of such software. It often lags just a bit behind the cutting edge of hacking but is regularly updated to patch the latest exploits. While it's okay detecting intrusions even a N00blet hacker can avoid it's tracking heuristics; so In many ways it's a big dumb guard dog. Let your guard down and it gets it teeth in you'll come too feeling like you've been on a 4 day mezcal bender.

**Attributes:** Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Vigor d6
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Toughness:** 5; **Firewall:** 5
**Skills:** Hacking d6, Notice d4
**Engrams:** Non-lethal damage (1d8+2), Sprite Firewall (1)

### Howl3r

Howl3r is the third generation of detection software from United Kingdom firm ArdWarez. Howl3r is a pure alarm system, no active defense it focuses purely on detecting intruders. The latest version is able to pierce basic stealth modules and has got many professional hackers worried that the Global DataNet arms race may be turning against them.

**Attributes:** Smarts d8, Spirit d4, Vigor d4
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Toughness:** 4; **Firewall:** 4
**Skills:** Notice d8
**Engrams:** Omniscience Module (negates 1 level of Stealth Modules)

## ICE Layers

This is one of the oldest methods but it's still popular and with good reason. Pay data wrapped a layer of this ICE this can't be accessed, altered, copied or moved without disabling or destroying the Layer program. The owner will have a V-Key that opens it safely but getting that can be job in itself. Naturally the time you spend trying to hack it or smash is time a SysOp or a Howl3r setting off an alarm or a sneaky piece of traceware (and the accompanying security team) closing in on you. This stuff is a nightmare, as it obscures the data making it difficult to determine if you've got the right data or a Kill-Trojan waiting to strike. The more up to date versions have a Respawn code built into them letting them repair any damage (Vigor roll each round, remove one Wound for each success and raise). Others have black settings that use feedback from your own actions to fry your brain.

### The Wall

**Attributes:** Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Vigor d12
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Toughness:** 13(5); **Firewall:** 7
**Skills:** Hacking d6, Notice d4
**Engrams:** Sprite Armor (5), Sprite Firewall (3)

### The Wall (Black ICE Version)

**Attributes:** Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Vigor d10
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Toughness:** 12(5); **Firewall:** 7
**Skills:** Hacking d6
**Engrams:** Lethal damage (1d8+2), Sprite Armor (5), Sprite Firewall (3)

## Kill-Trojan and Traceware

A Kill Trojan is one of the most deadly items in a SysOp's arsenal. The majority of these programs have their origin in the Traceware called the Odysseus Worm. The original Odysseus Worm was a low impact Trojan that once inside mobile systems sent regular updates utilizing local Global DataNet features to approximate a location and monitored any purchases you made. It's success combined with an easily modified code set it as the benchmark similar programs were judged against.

As generations became more sophisticated SysOp's began to use the code against the hackers. These variants aren't just passive monitoring programs. They track the intruders, call up the authorities and then render the hacker unconscious to make it an easier arrest. Naturally it wasn't long until more shadowy organizations (from all sides of the law) had created their own little dirty versions that were virtual predators that would swim right in through your TAP and leave you a vegetable. The Jormungand is the one of legend, all manner of deaths are attributed to it though rumors where hackers tear their own skulls open is disturbingly regular. I just hope one doesn't gain self awareness.

### Odysseus Worm V1.0

**Attributes:** Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Vigor d8
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Toughness:** 6; **Firewall:** 4
**Skills:** Hacking d6, Tracking d8
**Engrams:** Stealth module (3)

### Odysseus Worm V2.0

**Attributes:** Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Vigor d10
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Toughness:** 7; **Firewall:** 4
**Skills:** Hacking d8, Tracking d8
**Engrams:** Non-lethal damage (1d6+2), Stealth Module (3)

### Jormungand (WC)

**Attributes:** Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Vigor d10
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Toughness:** 10(3); **Firewall:** 7
**Skills:** Hacking d10, Notice d6, Tracking d8
**Engrams:** Lethal damage (1d10+2), Sprite Armor (3), Sprite Firewall (3), Stealth Module (4)
**Options:** Some versions have Psychotropic Attack Engrams.

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Eric Alexander, Marc Ingram, Ken "Kenomi" Krenzer, Neil M, JohnPatrickMCP, T.R. Knight, Craig Gaddis, Chris Archer, Christopher Irvine, Neal Tanner, David Panseri, Jeff Brissette, Ingo Beyer | obskures.de, Robert Skaggs, Robert N. Emerson, Jonathan Souza, Tony E. Calidonna, Jack Gulick, T.S. Luikart, Tomo Scott, Grandy Peace, Sean P. Kelley, Steve Howells, Yannick "Torgan" Le Guédart, Ian Tong, Dave 'Wintergreen' Harrison, Tealus, Lassi "Cursed" Into, Owen Milton, Zorblag R`Lyeh, Aaron Smith, Shawn C., Ben Hunt, "Fixer From Another Mother," Tom Ladegard, John "GandalfThePlaid" Clark, "ConfusedDad," Kurt T. Runkle, Nathan Horn, Joshua Cupp, Pierre Chaloux, John W. Thompson, Giddoen, Ignatius Montenegro, ChrisMeylan, Jonathan Romulo Geronimo, Jordan Peacock, Jason M. Brown, Corey Spillis, John Bennett, Hersho "Floppy" Domínguez, Wes Divin, Gene F Walthes, Jr, Cryoban, James A. Walls, Mark Gizmo Lesny, Swift One, Christopher Jones, Sean M. Dunstan, Mikael Bergström, Aaron T. Huss, Adam Rinehart, Dave Terhune, Johannes Forster, Hamish Cameron, Clint Morris, Ryuto Serizawa, Gordon Fancher, Rob Trimarco, Denis, Mark Thompson, Josh Thomson, Benjamin Bruck, Joe Kadisak, Kyldan, Arnaud "Khentar" Martin, Joseph M. Raiten, Scott Synowiez, Arthur Santos, Joshua D. Meadows, Phasmtis, Víctor Ventura, Jason Paul McCartan, Eddie Goehner, Calvin D. Jim, Andy Collier, Mark Woodside, Dave Sherohman, Randy Mosiondz, Slamfist Media, Cavan Rider, Trinnean K, v furstenberger, Darrin Fesperman, Jonathan Leopold, Andy Kitkowski, Silverlock, Robert De Luna, Robert Richardson, Namshiel, Casper Manfred Andersen, Andreas Monitzer, Bazz, Nigel 'Iron ministry' Wright, A. Quentin Murlin, Sorin, Lauri Hirvonen, Tristan Smith, Vickey & Bob Beaver, Guillaume Robert, mAdHaTtEr, David Harrison, Darren "MancerBear" Bulmer, Daniel Steadman, Bob "Hiro #:)0" King, Halion Jay Abramovitch, Craig Hackl, Alain Renz, David Guyton, Ed Goehe, Keith Nelson, Kem Templeton, Kevin Moldenhauer, Peter Krulder, "I am Crawford," Doug Grimes, John M. Trivilino, Stefan Feltmann, Bert Isla, Dominik Dalek, Liam McCauley, Robert Saint John, Kent Dorsey, Wesley Cole, Edward Saxton, Jonas Karlsson, Richard "Boomtopper" White, Brent Erdman, Eric Coates, Daniel L Henson, Andrew Godde, Karl Borns, Delvidian, Dennis P. Campbell, Carl Walter, Thiago Gonçalves, Jeff Zitomer, Scott Hayes, Bob Hall, Jimmy Plamondon, Deb Davis, Grigorakakis Panagiotis, Steven Moy, Aaron Kulick, M. Wells, Jay Watson, Charles strange, Scott Barrett, Yuting Lian, Joshua Boys, Cole Nordin, Virkkoka, Anonymous Coward, Matthew McDonnell, Michael Feldhusen, Lola and Robby Payne, Allan Rodda, Mark Giebler, Brook "Briar" ;), Michael G., Jason Wright, John M. Portley, Aaron Marks, Kyle Burckhard, Jack Skratch, Jonathan Stevens, Jon Edwards, Michael F. Zabkar, "Bad Baboon" Bill, Dodds, Simon Brown, Roberto "Sunglar" Micheri, "Brother", Karry Koehler, Alex Lapin, J.T. Evans, Ian Cunningham, Steven Fujisaka, "Lightning91", "Thunder92", Lord Deron Creag Mhor, Mark Kadas, Danny Keen, Matthew "The Mad Tinkerer" Mather, Blackjack, Andreas Nikolaeff, Geoffrey Ford, Anders Edqvist, Petri Wessman, James "Fenris" Blevins, Mark A. Siefert, Victor Jorge, Larry Hollis, Bret Anderson, Karry Koehler, Smiling Jack, Steven Cornell, "Teh Ebil Bunneh", Joseph A. Russell, Marc Schamlé, Matt Schelsky, drgnldy71, Yoda McVaderson, Patrick J. Walsh, Neal Dalton, Karl Hubbs, Tim Fiester, Jason Middleton, Robert "The Herald" Tupper, Jonathan Siregar, Joey Virtue, John Taber, Zombi Bitz, Robert Wood, Mark Giebler, Justin Suzuki, Todd Antill, Benoit Devost, Caitlin Eckert, Bruce Harlick, David Walker, Jim Burzelic, Aaron "Mokona" Alberg, Jeff Devin, Kturock, Eric Schmid, Skiouros, David Harriss, Stephen Kilpatrick, Kraken Orbital Inc., Alex 'Leif' Williams, Dan Stewart, Nicholas Brigance, Pete Hurley, Thomas "Azmo" King, Luigi Caps, Richard "Rico" Ashley, Sean Huempfner, Evan Crossland, Eric B Kiser, Penda Tomlinson, Daniel Colwell, Henry Wilson, Ben Dinsmore, Steve "White Knight" Dulson, Eric "Pizza Samurai" Lange, Gene F Walthes Jr, Josh "Kraghed" Arney, Anne-Sylvie Betsch, Colin Sullivan, Allen Thornton, K. Reed Zesiger, Robert, Kevin J. Clement, Matthew Roberts, Nick "Bushi" McFadden, Michael S. Gardner, Castellan Montag, Bill Darrow, Joseph

M. Raiten, Jack Merideth, Steven K. Watkins, Karry Koehler, Robert N. Emerson, Steve, Michael Anthony Border, Jason Lescalleet, Static_DET5, Woren, John W. Thompson, Sean P. Kelley, Bill Stilson, Jonathan Romulo Geronimo, Mathew Schelsky, Gian Holland, Matt Leitzen, Faust, Sseatris, Ed Goehe, Anna Bobisuthi, Docteur Half, José Luis Porfírio, Matthew W. Sutton, James, "Fenris" Blevins, Milani "Seghetto" Alessandro, Erik "Midnight" Ménard, Yoda McVaderson, Andrew G Smith, Mike Haggett, Adam Luchjenbroers, Heath Delashmit, Doud, Arkawet, Steve Huntsberry, Jonathan T. Combs, S D Stutzel, Reed Zesiger, Patrice Esmieu, Simon Carter, Kevin Lemke, Matthew Wasiak, Kevin Moldenhauer, Lecroix "Fangthane," Malvais, Karl Borns, Marshal KT, Erik "Midnight" Menard, Heath Delashmit, Andrey Nikolaev, Karlen "Fuzzy on Kneecaps" Kendrick

## SECTOR COPS

Matt Fleming, Joshua Reubens, Chris Birch, Guy Sargeant, Ben Hammer, David Donohoo, Jon Deeming, Michael "Benji" Hall, Living Worlds Games, Patrick Bass, Jason Buchanan, Glenn Seiler, Daryl Kohlerschmidt, Jerrod 'Savage Daddy' Gunning, Mark Perneta, Daniel Evanson, Gavin Phillips, Raphael Bonelli, Robert L Griffin, Bob Huss, Jon Merchen, Craig McClung, R. Patrick Taggesell, Andy Blanchard, Armin Sykes, Paul Dyson, PERROT Claude-Arnaud, PDXTarget

Kevin Doswell, Mark Harding, Joshua Shaw, David Wolf, Adam M. Coleman, Callum Cornelius, Alex Cotterill, John Bromley, Oscar "To Peace" Simmons, Bill Hein, Erik Parker, Robert P. V. Davis, Mike Musteric, Abdelkrim Belal, Bryteone, Travis "tensider" Bryant, Frost Holliman, Keith Preston, Purple Cyber Gecko, Soul-Crusher, Jan Egil "Jedidiah Curzon" Bjune, Sterling Brucks, Steve Wollett - Blasphemy Press, John "Orastes" Kelbaugh, Bryan Andrewski, Craig Bishell, Wayne Carroll, Andrew Mathieson, Ron Robinson, Ragnaroknroll, Brad Vest, Gareth Morris, Michael D. Blanchard, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Matthew Marovich, Keith Fannin, Benjamin Wenham, Giryan, John Rogers, Slaine Fullerton, Stephen Tihor, Scott Galliand, Tom Weston, Charlie Payne, Brett Boyko and Mariah Malczewska, Adam Dray, Paris Conte (Pure Mongrel), Joshua W. Pittman, Artur "SySCR" Jeziorski, Andrew Pickin, James Beauchesne, Marcus "Chaosmeister" Burggraf, Ryan Riojas, David 'Shindere' Hinderer, Jason "cd8dman" Chlopek, Sean T. DeLap, Mike Guarneri, Jason Lund, Nick "Dolan" Simpson, James Faucher, Roland Seeley, Daniel Yauger, Greg Conant, Jacques DuRand, Steve Sick, Matt Caron, James Ballard, Roy Paeth, Skyline, Ed Sagritalo, Edward Durant, Chris "null packet" LeBlanc, Michael "gleepism" McCormack, James Schrecengost, Curt L. Koenig, James Dawsey, Doug Keester, Jan Egil"Jedidiah Curzon" Bjune, Otto T Mariedahl, Patrick Joynt, Elyandel, Ryan Chaddick, Jason Lund, Warren Bailey, John D. Barr, Elkartzut, Kenneth Lavender, William (Bill) Reger, PAILLET Olivier, James Beauchesne, Brian Kreuzinger, Tim Davis, Larry Larrison, "Salem Is Awesome," Raun Sedlock, Matthew Karafa, Jordan Dennis, Glenn Mochon, Mark Arrowsmith, Fleshsmyth, Tracey and Frank Michienzi, Walt Robillard, Anita "Neeters" Twitchell, Jonathan H. Blanford, Scathaigh, Ryan Riojas, Matt C, Brent "GFelix" Matyas, Joel "Chris" Wheeler, Shawn Craig, Jason Lund, Brian Isikoff, Andrew Pickin, Chris Edwards, Rowan Rose Lily Hazel Middleton, Andy, Dammit!, Daniel Evanson, Scott Holden, David A. Stern III, David Hixon, Magdiel Rubiano, James W. Wood, Shane Wheeler, Kaisermech Model JH-1979, Ryan LaRiviere, Brent 'GFelix' Matyas, Elyandel, Ron Robinson, Matthew "The Evil Dr K" Karafa, insomniac009

## CORPORATE MOGULS

John Swiers, Guardian Games, Games Plus, Barry Osser - North Coast Role Playing, Battlefield Bangkok, Olympic Cards and Comics

## FIXERS

Christopher Gunning, Dave Weiss, Sascha Kaufmann, Wong Bros, Thomas "Kyorou" Vanstraelen, Frédéri "Volk, Kommissar Friedrich" POCHARD, Josh Thaler, Emiliano Marchetti, Nick Edwards, Jacob C Thurston, Jeff "Kertain" Messina, Franck "Booga" Florentin, Christian Sciple, Shamdor, Kai S Fredriksen, Iridios, Aric Wieder, Joe Collins, Donald J Arnold, Sean T. Masters, Antoine Pempie, Nauwelaerts Nick, Christopher A. Barney, Ryan Percival, Kevin Schantz, Matthew Brumfield, Brandon Metcalf, Eric Campion, Chris Neveu, Ian Reid, Derek Mayne, Rick Neal, Lloyd Rasmussen, Walter J P, Adam "Greymalken" Caverly, William Rodriguez, Wesley Goodwin, Bill Charleroy, Manuel del Jesus, Redfuji6, Jeffery Tillotson, Peter Maslin, Drew Wendorf, Jared Thibault, Guillaume "Gap" Pasquier, Skippyl l'Auvergnat, Robert Boyett, Mark Green, Nickolai "Redwan" Korshunov, Etienne Olieu, AJ Carrington, Kyunga-An Barrett, Daniel López Coira, Thomas Shook, Ulysses Cruz, Frankie Mundens, Charles Hammond, Phillip "Hebrew Hammer" Millman, HP Lustcraft, Francis Gagnon, Jeremy "SeeleyOne" Seeley, Volker Jacobsen, Walter F. Croft, Vincent Langlois, Nicholaus Clinite, Ozymandius, Daniel Cater, Stork, Philippe Depriester, Gael IMAD'EDDINE, Paco Garcia Jaen - G*M*S Magazine, Steve Dodge, Yuan, Gianluca Ceruti, Brett Easterbrook, Scott Neal, Grace Fairfax, Philip Minchin, Nathan "Patches" Reed, Mark "Loose Bolt" Margraf, John Lambert, Arlyansor, Chris Snyder, Kyle Krebs, Brian Young, F0lkL0re, Tracer, Gunsmoke, George VanMeter, Joseph von Arx, Jeff Scifert, Sam Wong, David 'Zankabo' Kohlerl Donald D. Jones, James R. Chance, William "Evil Jester" Lafleur, Glen Green, J. Quincy Sperber, Jacob Carpenter, Michael "Diablozeta" Fliger, Brian "Arkayanon" Holder, Shane Lacy Hensley, Joe Thater, Arnaldo "Kurono" Lefebre, Kyle "Fiddy" Pinches, Johannes von Carstein, Norm "No Relation" Hensley, Brian W. Hamm, Philippe Deville, Dave Freireich, "Weird Dave" Olson, Andrew Laliberte, Richard Farris, Sherwin R. Jones, Kevin Stoner, Patrice Mermoud, Jesse R. Davis, Matthew French, Andy Grant, John Savage, David McKi, John "Keener" Carrington, Dave Weiss, Wesley Griffin, Fastidious Monk, Sven Schläpfer, Jonathan Fortini, Tim Scheer, Mock, Mike Emler, Da Profezzur, Eric B. Pratt, Jere Manninen, Darren "Rubber" Fong, Roland Jacobsen, François-Xavier Guillois, Brad D. Kane, Joffrey Collard, Christian A. Nord, Calvin Shafer, Guillaume "Gap" Pasquier, Philippe Depriester, Karsten Alexander Kopplin, Brian Koonce, J.R "NeuralSyntax" Escobedo, Drew Wendorf, James E Dezomits, Antoine Pempie, Phillip Millman, Gunsmoke, Paco Garcia-Jaen, Jacob T. Engstrom, Ozymandius, Minheack Choi, Leath Sheales, John Claude Greer, Daniel Ley, Grant Warwick, Stephen C Ray, Tom Piddock, Lee Barnes, Dave the Ratman, HPLustcraft, Kean P Stuart, Dennis Moore

## COMBAT ANDROIDS

Tas Jones, Robert Valdes, Hans "JediSoth" Cummings

## DIVAS

Peter Johnston, Cyberook, Sarah Lyons

### MEDIA ICONS

Kairam 'T. O. Morrow Flash' Hamdan, Thom Shartle, Nicolas Vandemale-Couchy,

### HACKERS

Enrico "Vultus" Franceschini, Scantrontb, Nicholas Palmer, James a.k.a. uber, Michael Schell, The Archfiend Joseph Zipprich, David "Simon Foy" Chadderton,

### CITY PLANNERS

Shane Tilton, John Ware, Gary 'Slug' Perkins, Robert J. Hansen, Jason Greenwood, Thomas H. Mersmeyer, Jeremy Kear, Joel Waalkens,

### A-LIST SHADOW TEAM

Bobcat, Task Force Harfang, Final Option, Noah Bristol

### BATTLE BORG

David Fry II