

FULL METAL CYBERPUNK

# INTERFACE

# ZERO



From Gaza with Love





*“...but there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,*

*When two strong men stand face to face, tho’ they come from the ends of the earth!” — Rudyard Kipling, Ballad of East and West*

## INTRODUCTION

“From Gaza with Love” is a Novice Rankl adventure that introduces players to the Middle East of the 2090s. The adventure starts in the free city of Gaza, continues in the Negev desert of the United Arab Republic and ends in the Israeli city of Tel Aviv. While not directly involved in the adventure, events in Russia and Kurdistan have a profound effect on the plot. GMs are advised to read about these locations in the core rule-book in order to familiarize themselves with the setting and the political actors.

### BACKGROUND

The PCs are hired by a wealthy Russian expatriate named Vladimir Baranov to rescue the children of a young Israeli woman named Regina Anan-Mamatova from her vindictive ex-husband. Until recently, Regina was married to a Belarusian oligarch named Marat Mamatov. On the couple’s last business trip to Tel Aviv, Regina was swept off her feet by a poor, but charming Gazan taxi driver named Rahamim Jubran. The two eloped to his Gaza home and planned to marry as soon as possible.

However, before they had a chance to start their new life, Regina’s children were kidnapped. Later that day, Regina received a message from an undisclosed sender, saying that if she wants to see her children again, she must return to Israel and meet the sender at a location to be disclosed later.

Regina knows Marat to be a violent and jealous man perfectly capable of orchestrating this kidnapping to murder a disloyal wife. Going to meet the kidnapers alone seems like a very bad idea. However, cut from her husband’s wealth, she cannot afford to hire anyone to help her. Desperate, she turned to her rich friend Vladimir for help, and he, in turn, hired the PCs.

### SUMMARY

Regina’s children were kidnapped by Bedouin smugglers hired by her ex-husband’s Israeli head of security, Uzi Peres. The kidnapping of Michael, Regina’s youngest, was witnessed by a group of Kutaytat. The kidnapping of both her children were recorded by street cameras that can be hacked by the PCs.

Using either of the above leads, the PCs follow the kidnapers to a Bedouin camp in the Negev desert. There they discover the identity of the man behind the attack. Alternatively, the PCs can locate the children by confronting Regina’s estranged husband in her Tel Aviv hotel suite. Either way, the PCs discover the children are held by Marat’s private security under a café in the heart of Tel Aviv.

Once the PCs rescue the children, they discover that things are not as they seem; Marat had the children kidnapped because he found out that Rahamim is a Kurdish agent working in cahoots with a former Israeli spy — Vladimir, the man who hired the PCs!

Due to Regina’s constant boasting about the children’s obvious psionic talents, the Kurdish intelligence reached the (false) conclusion that the children have extraordinary genetic and psionic ability and decided to kidnap them for vivisection in Kurdistan. Rahamim, whose real name is Mustafa Uyghuran had seduced Regina in order to quietly transport her children to Gaza. Meanwhile, Mustafa’s partner-in-crime made arrangements to smuggle the children to Kurdistan.

Despite what Marat believes, Regina is ignorant of this conspiracy. If the PCs act in a sufficiently diplomatic manner, this story can even have a happy ending for the glamorous couple.

# PROLOGUE: A JOB INTERVIEW

Vladimir appears to be a kindly old man with fondness for dramatic gestures and the fashion sense of a Russian aristocrat of the previous century. He owns a small restaurant called “Staraja Rodina” in Gaza’s Little Russia. All his patrons are Russian and, unless one takes the time to consult clock and GPS, one would swear he was visiting a proper dacha in the Old Country.

Vladimir meets the PCs in his office along with a tearful Regina and an agitated Rahamim. Regina is a blue-eyed beauty who manages to make the drab Islamic garbs of Gaza look glamorous. Rahamim is a handsome man with shaggy curls and a magnificent mustache.

Vladimir briefs the PC on their mission (see “Background”) and offers them a compensation of 20,000 credits each plus expenses. Vladimir feigns complete ignorance of anything related to the attack on Regina’s children. He claims that his only motive for helping Regina is charity.

Unless the PCs directly address Rahamim or Regina, the couple remains silent. If the PCs question the couple, Rahamim takes over the conversation and provides the PCs with no additional information. If the PCs manage to catch Regina for a conversation without Vladimir or Rahamim present, they can also learn the following facts:

- Regina’s children underwent unique genetic therapy in Moscow. This had the unexpected effect of granting them psionic powers. This became common knowledge in Israel after she accidentally blurted it to paparazzi.
- Regina’s son liked to play with “cat-like street urchins” who hang out in Kuntar Street. Regina suspects these hybrids were involved in her children’s kidnapping because they look poor, dirty and obviously in need of money.



## GUESTS FROM OUT OF TOWN

If the PCs are not native to the Middle East, this scene is likely to take place in a VR channel in the Global DataNet. If the characters don’t have their own, avatars (no special attributes, just VR “skins”) are provided by Vladimir, which the characters can keep. If the PCs agree to take the job, Vladimir will take care of all travel arrangements, including bribing officials to ignore any unusual items the PCs bring with them. This includes armor, heavy weapons, and even explosives. Despite his considerable wealth and connections, however, Vladimir cannot arrange the transportation of military-grade vehicles or weapons that one can’t hide in a big backpack.



# ACT ONE: ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Once the PCs have accepted Vladimir’s job, there are several routes they can take to uncover the identity of the kidnappers.

## GOING DEEP

Because of the minor celebrity status of both Regina and Marat, even a cursory search on the Global DataNet will return tens of articles, news pieces and yellow press. Consult the below information to determine what information the PCs’ search brought up. Characters can use the Investigation skill for searches on the Global DataNet.

## SHOPPING IN GAZA

Gaza is one of the best cities in the Middle East to shop for illegal goods, both in terms of price and diversity. Light firearms and armor can be traded legally. Wasteland Traders has an especially strong presence in Gaza as their equipment is perfect to survive the harsh environment of the surrounding deserts.

Most Gazans buy secondhand weapons in the markets. These usually cost half as much as new weapons, but suffer

technical failures with a roll of 1 on the skill die, regardless of the Wild Die. Secondhand guns tend to be obsolete models with venerable Soviet and IDF assault rifles dominating the field. Yeah, the term “secondhand” is applied somewhat generously here.

Market traders set prices at two to three times the market value in the hopes of catching a sucker. PCs who simply question the high prices automatically get a 50% discount. Successful Persuasion rolls result in an additional 10% discount per raise.

Vehicles can be purchased right off the ship with discounts ranging from 10% to 20%. However, due to Gaza’s tiny size, the choice is mostly limited to family-friendly town cars and safe and sound fishing boats. Faster machines must be ordered from abroad or hijacked from the marina.

If the PCs are looking for heavier weapons, explosives or military-grade vehicles, they will have to turn to the black market. Due to very loose law enforcement and a corrupt police force, all Streetwise rolls to locate black market profiteers are made with a +2 modifier. There is a small chance of the deal turning into a robbery — but isn’t it always the case?



CARD	EVENT	EFFECT
2-4	Angry residents drop random objects on the runner's head while cursing in half a dozen languages.	Roll 1d6 attack for 1d6 damage. Hit runners automatically lose 3 points.
5-7	A group of Brazilian tourists with a local guide and 2d3 armed guards suddenly fill the streets.	Failed movement roll results in a hail of gunfire, but no pursuit. Use fierce hybrid ronin stats (see the <i>Interface Zero 2.0</i> core rulebook) for guards.
8-10	Workers are repairing the electrical network beneath the street.	Each runner passing through must succeed on a Climbing roll or take 2d6 electrical damage.
Jack	A market brawl causes a massive amount of extra-slippery olive oil to spill all over the pavement.	All rolls related to ground movement suffer a -2 difficulty modifier.
Queen	Six cops are drinking coffee and smoking hookah outside. They do not appreciate the wild street race.	The men will call reinforcement and start chasing both the PCs and the Kutaytat. They drive beaten Hood Ratz pick-ups. Use human police officer stats ( <i>Interface Zero 2.0</i> core rulebook).
King	The runners find themselves in a sheik's funeral with dozens of emotional family members, 4d6 of whom are firing into the air.	Same as 5-7, except that attackers use Banu Hamid (page 6) stats.
Ace	An aging street peddler drags his cart in front of the racers, oblivious to their rapid approach.	The runner must choose between moving around the peddler and losing one point or trying to jump above his cart (Agility roll). If this fails, the runner loses three points.
Joker	A Porsche 9035 SI is parked on the runners' path. The key is in the switch and the owner is nowhere to be seen.	The fancy sports car can be used to win the race. However, the owner is likely to turn out to be the last person you'd want to mess with.

Additional points can be granted for knocking hats off respectable gentlemen, making people laugh or wow, and other kinds of mischief or acrobatics (Agility or Smarts rolls). Of course, the latter can only be attempted if the basic roll was successful. It's hard to look impressive when you're stuck in traffic or half-buried in garbage.

The streets of Gaza, in addition to being narrow and winding, are also nearly always crowded. To reflect this general state of mayhem, each Initiative card also generates one of the events found above.

## HACKING

Not many people know this, but the streets of Gaza are carefully monitored by thousands of hidden cameras, a useful relic from the Second Occupation. PCs can hack the central city system to download a video of the attack.

The street cameras are part of a GAN. The network is managed by an AI sysop known as The Roc.

- **Defense Rating:** 8
- **Die Type:** d10+1 to all rolls.
- **Damage Dice:** 1d10+8 (Lethal)
- **Toughness:** 10

If the hacker wishes to take on the AI directly; use the stats for the Roc. Otherwise, resolve any hacking attempts using the GAN's stats, above.



### THE ROC

**Attributes:** Smarts d10, Spirit d4, Vigor d4  
**Skills:** Hacking (Data mining, Firewall Penetration, Hyper Combat, Systems Control) d8, Knowledge (Programming) d8, Notice d6  
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Firewall:** 8; **Toughness:** 7(3)  
**Engrams:** Sprite Armor (3), Sprite Firewall (4), Skill Specialization Bonus (Hyper Combat +2), Lethal damage Engram (d10+d8)



Because shutting down thousands of cameras would be a major inconvenience, the Roc has been programmed to locate hackers and call the police to their location. After sounding the alarm, the Roc starts increasing security until the police arrives. Every other round, the Roc will increase the Firewall Rating of the network by 1. Unless the PCs have already committed serious crimes in Gaza, the police will arrive in 2d6 minutes and will include a Ravenlocke police cruiser and two armed policemen (see the *Interface Zero 2.0* core rulebook for stats). With a successful Persuasion roll, the PCs can get off the hook with a bribe of about 5,000 Credits. Otherwise, they'll get first-hand experience with the Gaza justice system.

If the hack is successful, the PCs can view the attack on Michael at Kuntar Street. Michael is seen practicing his Nakamura Jump Board maneuvers with a Kutaytat girl. Two Kutaytat boys stand nearby and laugh at his fumbles. Suddenly a Wasteland Traders ground car that looks like something regurgitated by a camel stops nearby. Two armed thugs aim guns at the Kutaytat, while the leader grabs Michael. As the boy struggles, he manages to rip the keffiyeh off the face of his assailant, revealing the man's face.

## LEGWORX

Once the PCs learn the identity of the attacker, they need to determine his current location to proceed with the investigation. There is little information about the man in the Global DataNet. A simple Investigation or Streetwise (if they are asking around on the streets) success reveals nothing, and a success with a raise reveals the man is banned from several clubs in the city on account of antisocial behavior and sexual misconduct. He is identified simply as "Muhammad."

The Ministry of Interior Affairs databank has more information: Muhammad is a suspect in two ongoing investigations; international sex trafficking and murder. Both investigations haven't progressed in months.

The alleged murder took place on the edge of the city last year. According to the file, Muhammad and several unidentified accomplices allegedly beat an old man named Robert

Hariri to death after a business-related argument. The file has information on Robert's address and living relatives.

If the PCs pay a visit to Robert's home, they learn from his eldest son that Robert was a small time art dealer who fenced items for Muhammad. When Robert decided to end the business relationship with Muhammad, the latter took it as a slight to his honor and murdered the old man in a fit of rage.

Robert's son, George Hariri, knows that Muhammad usually visits the Banu Hamid tribe on his way in or out of Gaza. George doesn't know the current location of the encampment, but nevertheless offers to join the PCs to avenge his father's murder.

Being a good-natured clerk in an obscure government office without so much as a traffic ticket to his name, George won't be much help for the PCs. His mother and sisters would try very strongly to dissuade him from going on this foolish and dangerous mission, but George is too young and stubborn to listen to sound advice.

If the PCs do accept his aid, use human office worker (*Interface Zero 2.0* core rulebook) for George's stats. George's only weapons are an old Aga Thunder shotgun and a hefty kitchen knife. He is fluent in Arabic, Hebrew, English, Persian, and Chinese, and speaks basic Russian, Portuguese and Greek.

## WORD ON THE STREET

The PCs can ask around about Muhammad or the Banu Hamid tribe. While Muhammad has made enough of a name for himself for residents of the poorer neighborhoods on the edge of the desert to recognize him, asking too many questions might be risky. Gossip spreads quicker than wildfire in the region and leaves equally vicious burns.

Apply the following modifiers to Streetwise rolls:

CONDITION	MODIFIER
Character doesn't speak Arabic	-4
Character is obviously foreign	-2
Character is not male	-2

A successful roll reveals that the image the PCs have is of Muhammad the Knife, a Bedouin smuggler and notorious gangster. A raise reveals Muhammad mentioned several days ago his plan to deliver several packages from Gaza and the Banu Hamid tribe of the Negev Desert to Israel.

Failure lands the PCs in a sticky situation. They have inadvertently offended someone, possibly an associate or kinfolk of Muhammad. This draws the attention of a 4d6 relatives and neighbors, at least half of whom are armed with assault rifles (1d6 on all rolls). The PCs can solve the situation by Intimidation, bribery (3d6 × 1,000 Credits) or violence. Note that a massacre in broad daylight will not go unnoticed. Soon, half of Gaza will be looking for the PCs.

## GOING STRAIGHT TO TEL AVIV

It is possible for the PCs to forgo all investigation in Gaza and go straight to Tel Aviv. While this won't bring the adventure to a dead end, this will certainly make matters more challenging for the PCs. If you wish to keep the adventure on track, you can have the PCs run into the Banu Hamid, by chance. Otherwise, feel free to skip straight to act three.



### BANU HAMID BEDOUIN

*"You were lucky you ran into us. Few more hours and radiation would have you. Where were you going anyhow? Mitzpe Ramon? You're way off course, brother. That's what you get for trusting all these shiny new gadgets – the Negev is no place for boys with toys... Before you continue, you must join us for some tea. I don't care if you're in a hurry. You must join us for some tea." — Abdullah Ibrahim Abdel Rahman Abdel Yazid Mubarak al-Masri al-Hamid*

**Race:** Human  
**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d10  
**Skills:** Fighting (Unarmed) d6, Intimidation d4, Notice d6, Riding (Camel) d6, Shooting (Rifle) d6, Survival (Desert) d10, Tracking d6  
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9(2); **Firewall:** —; **Strain:** 0  
**Hindrances:** Code of Honor, Off the Grid, Unplugged  
**Edges:** Scavenger, Wastelander  
**Gear:** BKI Golemmech Combat Survival Suit (+2), melee weapon (varies), ranged weapon (varies)  
**Special:** Immune to low radiation and pollution



### BEDOUIN SMUGGLER

*"Listen, sweetheart, I know we agreed on 50,000 Credits travel fare, but this not cover eyes. If you want your eyes to get to Egypt too, you gonna have to pay 100,000 extra." — Muhammad "the Knife" al-Kinjal*

Bedouin smugglers make their living smuggling counterfeit goods, arms, narcotics and people across the vast Middle Eastern wasteland. They are harsh, brutal and hypocritical, respecting traditions and Islamic law only when it suits them, and indulging in the most sordid and immoral behavior when it doesn't. The word of a smuggler is worth less than nothing – you're as likely to be harvested for organs and cybernetics and be left to die in the desert, or sold into slavery, as you are to be delivered to your destination.

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8  
**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting (Short Blade) d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Shooting (Rifle) d6, Stealth d8, Survival (Desert) d6, Streetwise d4, Taunt d4  
**Charisma:** -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8(2); **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 0  
**Hindrances:** Greedy (Major), Mean  
**Edges:** Thief, Tough as Nails  
**Gear:** BKI Golemmech Combat Survival Suit (+2), Wasteland Trader's Disemboweler Chain Dagger (Str+d6, AP 2), Wasteland Rifle (varies)



# ACT TWO: BLOOD AND SAND

The distance from Gaza to Tel Aviv is tiny, and yet presents the traveler with many dangers and hardships. The Bedouin are tough nomads, who treat city folks with suspicion that can easily turn into hostility over a minor misunderstanding. Israeli border patrols are infinitely more high-tech, but no less trigger happy. However, the most formidable danger the PCs will face is the desert itself. Inhospitable at the best of times, the depredations of the Death and subsequent industrial pollution made it truly a hell on Earth.

**Difficult Terrain:** While the distance from Gaza to Tel Aviv is less than 80 kilometers, the lack of roads and the rocky desert make it a very long drive for ground vehicles. The entire way consists of Difficult Terrain. Furthermore, due to sudden cliffs and craters, quicksand and scattered boulders, ground movement is generally limited to 20 kmph.

**Radiation and Electromagnetism:** Nuclear detonations, EMP blasts, illegal experiments and irresponsible industry have all left the Negev desert dangerously radioactive. The *Savage Worlds* rules have information on the effects of low radiation.

Another legacy of the Death is powerful electromagnetism that can cause electronic devices to malfunction. This is the reason the natives prefer genetically-modified camels to manmade vehicles. Unless the PCs' electronic equipment has radiation protection, draw a card for each hour the PCs spend on the below table to determine the damage caused to the electronics. Draw once for each suitable item. TAPs and cyberware are also susceptible. Long distance electronic communication is impossible.

If you draw a result already in effect, don't draw a new card. Even in the desert, some days are lucky.

CARD	EFFECTS
Ace or Joker	A random malfunction is inexplicably fixed.
Jack-King	No malfunction
9-10	Sensor Malfunction
7-8	Software Malfunction
6-5	AMS Failure
3-4	Circuits Failure
2	Annihilation

**Sensor malfunction:** Sensors return static, inducing -4 modifiers to all related rolls. If the sensors are cybernetic augmentations, their owner might find himself devoid of the sense in question until the system is fixed.

**Software malfunction:** a random engram stops working and must be re-installed.

**AMS Failure:** some vital information such as maps, passwords or communiqués is lost. However, it can be restored with a successful hacking (programming) roll with a -2 modifier. This roll can only be made once. If it fails, the data is lost permanently.

**Circuits Failure:** The device's circuits have burned and must be replaced.

**Annihilation:** All electrical elements have been utterly destroyed. The device is useless and cannot be repaired in field conditions.

**Extreme Temperature:** the temperature can reach up to 120 degrees in the day and drop down to 20 degrees during the night. PCs who are forced to travel without air conditioning will have to find some way to deal with these extreme temperatures. For more information on this hazard, see the *Savage Worlds* rulebook.

**Industrial Pollution:** the air is rich with various toxins and mutated bacteria. Consult the below table to determine what manners of pollutions the PCs are exposed to, based on their level of protection.

PROTECTION	CHECK MODIFIER	HAZARDS
Nothing	-2	Poison*, disease**
Gas Mask	-1	Disease
Chemical Suit	+0	Disease
HEV Suit	+0	None

\* Failure: Death in 2d6 hours, Success: 1 Wound and Exhaustion, Raise: Exhaustion  
 \*\* Airborne, Long-Term, Chronic and Majorly Debilitating

**Bio-hazards:** If the PCs are traveling by ground they're likely to be attacked by another legacy of the Death — genetically altered monsters. Due to the extreme radiation and isolation of the area, each of these monsters is unique and utterly bizarre. Feel free to use any exotic monster you'd like to pit against the PCs, or create random horrors using the Bio-Horror Generator from the *Interface Zero 2.0* core rulebook.

## THE SONS OF HAMID

Muhammad and his men are presently guests of the Banu Hamid tribe. The Banu Hamid is a medium-sized tribe with





about 40,000 members spread all over the Negev, Arava and Sinai deserts. They are hardcore purists and traditionalists; they'd never willingly set foot in a city or accept city laws, and they recognize no borders or political authority. Instead, they follow a very strict interpretation of Islamic law and Arab tradition. Times may have changed, but these harsh men didn't. As far as they're concerned, they're the only true Arabs in the world, everyone else has been spoiled by outsiders.

The Banu Hamid have lived for multiple generations in a highly radioactive environment. During this time, they developed an unusual set of physical traits that sets them apart from any other people in the region. Members of the tribe are very tall, often reaching seven feet in height, have dark skin, and light hair and eyes. It is near impossible to masquerade as a member of the tribe.

The camp where Muhammad and the PCs are likely to stay is home to around 900 people who make a living from recycling prewar garbage they find in the desert, growing fungi in special mobile containers and herding mutant sheep. Unlike their ancestors, the Banu Hamid have forsaken camels in favor of beaten trucks from a hundred different brands, all of which are hopelessly obsolete in the 2090s.

Because the Banu Hamid view cities as corrupt, they use intermediaries like Muhammad to trade interesting items they recover in the desert for vital commodities. Even though Muhammad is useful for the tribe, they think little of him and will not go out of their way to protect him from outsiders. However, he is presently their guest and as long as he maintains this status, they're obliged to protect him.

Presently the clan is camped in the shadow of a crescent shaped hill that provides them with shadow and some measure of protection from the howling winds of the wilderness. This location is called the Eye of Ibrahim, though no one is quite sure where the name comes from. While the slopes of the hill are green with palms and shrubs that have miraculously survived the Death, the Banu Hamid refuse to let their sheep graze at its slopes, believing it to be bad luck. Instead, the little oasis serves as an endless source of entertainment for kids who've finished the day's chores.

## SHOPPING IN THE NEGEV

The Banu Hamid have little to offer to outsiders and even less they need from them. Nevertheless, trade is possible. The Banu Hamid are willing to sell bullets, provisions, beasts of burden and basic medical supplies at standard prices (after much haggling). While all their equipment is worn and of inferior quality, the few electronic devices they use are equipped with makeshift circuit protection, which might prove vital for the PCs' survival.

The Banu Hamid have numerous curious artifacts recovered from the desert that they are keen to trade for Credits or useful provisions. We're leaving the nature and quantity of these items open on purpose. GMs can use this opportunity to plant the seeds for the PCs' next adventure, possibly a treasure hunt in the desert, or add rewards or dangers to this mission.

**The Guide's Hospitality:** The current leader of the camp is Sheik Khalid ibn al-Jarrah who styles himself "the Guide." While blatantly and openly xenophobic, Khalid has a strong sense of

tradition and extends basic courtesy to anyone who behaves properly in his camp.

As long as the PCs are modestly dressed and well-behaved, they'll be granted three days' worth of hospitality without too many questions. Khalid speaks decent English and is fond of flowery expressions such as "O most excellent ones," "may you never thirst or hunger under Allah's sky," "peace be upon you and blessing" and so forth.

However, politeness does not equal niceness. One wrong move and an honored guest can find himself a hated enemy. Actions that are likely to enrage the Banu Hamid include:

- Entering vehicles or tents without permission
- Handling weapons in a threatening manner
- Operating drones and high-tech devices in the open
- Speaking in a foreign language in a tone that can be interpreted as mocking
- Checking out Banu Hamid women and girls
- Eating haram foods or publicly breaking Islamic law
- Physically or verbally attacking people or animals
- Hunting or harvesting without permission
- Overturning stones or digging without permission
- Asking too many questions in a non-conversational manner
- Exposing too much skin in public
- Touching the tribe's possessions without explicit permission

In any case, the offended party will call up a dozen armed relatives and demand compensation from the PCs. Because this compensation is likely to take financial form, the PCs might find themselves the victims of provocation by greedy elders. Additionally, rejected romantic advances by locals can lead to false accusations or blackmail. This is a risky ploy, however, because the Banu Hamid take romantic scandals very seriously, and are as likely to turn their guns at the accuser as they are at the accused.

**Sheik's Justice:** The Sheik couldn't care less for Muhammad's crimes against strangers, so asking that Muhammad be extradited in the name of UAR law or even universal human decency will be dismissed without a second consideration. Any complaint made by Muhammad against the PCs will be equally dismissed with a speech on the virtue of unconditional love and the fellowship of all races and religions. Khalid will insist on the belligerents hugging, kissing and swearing their eternal friendship before Allah, and then consider the matter resolved.

However, if the PCs manage to trick Muhammad into breaking Islamic law or the rules of hospitality within the camp, the offending party will be kicked out after paying a hefty fine and possibly losing some limbs.

Because the Sheik is distrustful of strangers, all rolls to affect him are made with a -2 penalty (-1 if the PC is Arab). However, if the PCs convince one of the locals to act as their witness, this penalty is replaced with a +2 modifier.

The most likely candidate is the camp's doctor, Amina. She is the only Banu Hamid woman with university education from Tel Aviv and high social standing in the camp. Coincidentally, she is also the Sheik's niece. Amina is far more cosmopolitan

than the rest of her people and can be understanding of the PCs' mission of rescue and of Muhammad's many outrageous crimes.

**Direct Action:** The PCs can raid the camp in the night and attempt to snatch Muhammad or his men from their tent. Since a host is obliged to protect his guest from all harm, the Banu Hamid will fight to protect Muhammad's gang. If Muhammad was killed or captured, the men of the tribe will pursue the PCs into the desert to exact vengeance.

The smugglers sleep in a single tent (M) on the edge of the camp. If they are aware of the PCs, they will have a watchman outside at all times. The smugglers are a loud bunch, so simple shouting, name-calling and breaking objects will not draw attention. Shots and explosions, however, will cause 1d6-1 armed men to arrive each round and see what's going on.

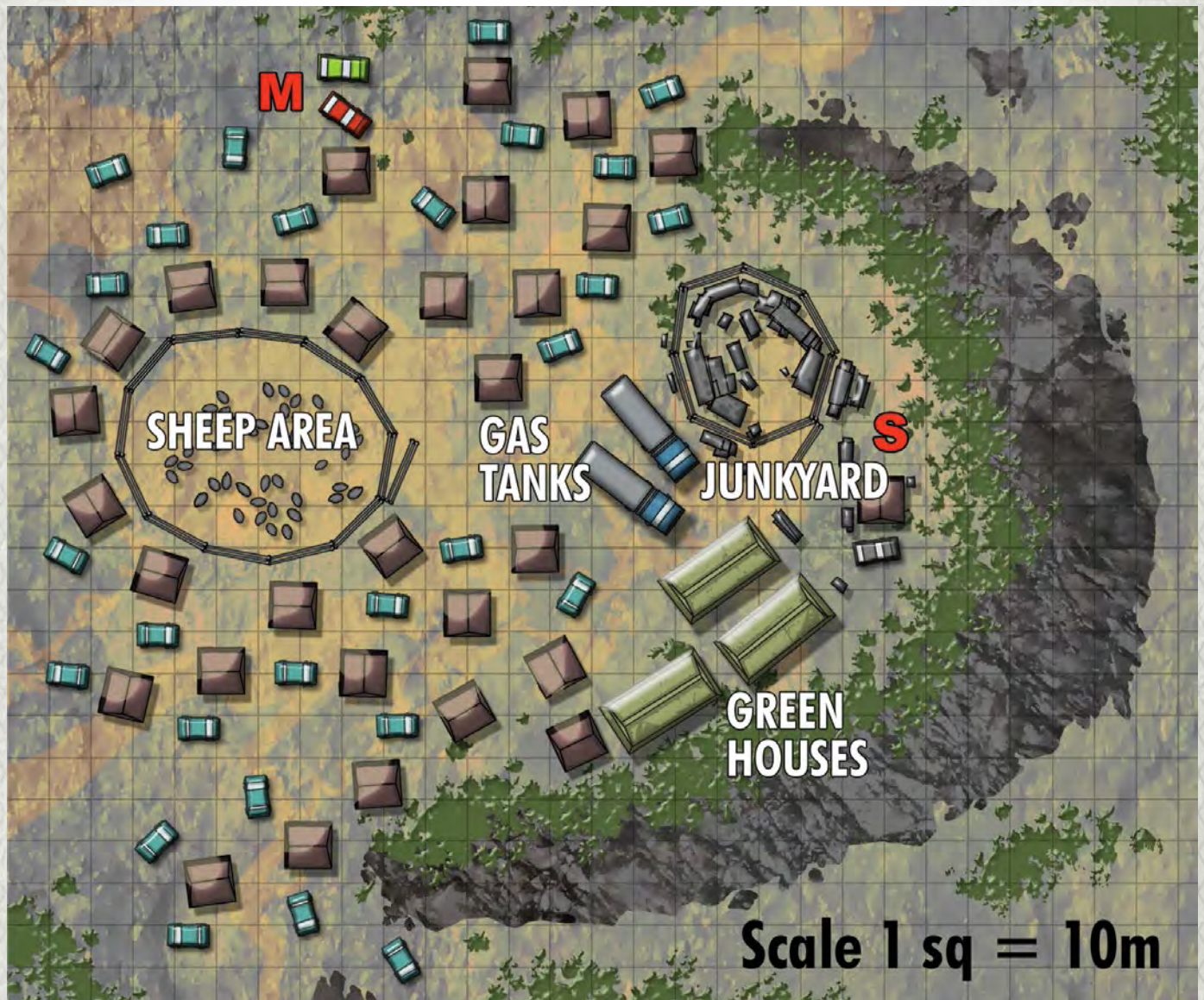
The tribesmen will demand that the combatants lay down their arms and face the Sheik's justice. Unless their demands are met within three rounds, they will attack the PCs, regardless of who started the violence. Muhammad might be a lowlife, but he's still closer to the Banu Hamid than the PCs.

If there are Banu Hamid casualties, both the PCs and the smugglers will be expelled into the desert after compensating the families with nearly all their equipment and possibly brutal physical punishment. If no natives were hurt, the Sheik will hold a forgiveness feast called *sulkha* and try to get the sides to resolve their conflict. Failing that, he will kick them out of the camp into different directions and order them never to return and dishonor his tribe with such ignominy.

**Speaking with Muhammad:** Muhammad will not provide information on his latest job without a very good reason. Very good reasons could come in the form of blackmail (for example, catching Muhammad stealing from the Banu Hamid, or having a tryst with a local girl), or bribery, though Muhammad's price will be extravagant. Intimidation fails automatically because Muhammad feels that in the camp, he has a clear edge over the PCs.

## CROSSING THE BORDER

Israel takes its security very seriously. If the PCs are Israeli citizens or have valid visas, then entering is simply a matter of submitting to a full search and entering the country without any weapons or "dangerous items," as defined by the caprices



of the border patrol officer currently on duty. Anything from a bottle of shampoo to a piece of string could be confiscated in the interests of national security. The items can be retrieved on the PCs' way out. For each item, draw a card, in case of a 2, the item has been "misplaced" and cannot be recovered.

Alternatively, the PCs can try to infiltrate into the country. Since Israel is separated from the Negev by a massive concrete wall that is nigh impenetrable, the PCs' best chance to get in is by sea.

The Israeli border patrol employs several tools in defending the nation's borders. Due to Israel's good relations with her neighbors in recent years, the border patrol became slightly lax in their duty, enabling proficient infiltrators to trickle in.

**Combat Drones:** Hundreds of drones patrol Israel's borders beginning from a distance of six kilometers from the wall. IDF drone jockeys are fairly proficient, but take a -2 penalty on their initial Notice rolls due to being more occupied with last

night's premier of mimshak efes 2 or next week's university exam than with their actual job. The drones are part of the IDF's MAN, one of the hardest-to-hack networks in the Middle East.

If a drone spots an intruder, it sounds an alarm that alerts nearby drones and orders the intruders to wait until a border patrol Ravenlocke MK-IX Interdictor arrives to take the PCs in for questioning. If ignored, the drone fires warning shots in front of the PCs. If ignored again, it fires at the PCs' vehicles or feet with the purpose of incapacitating them.

**Gunboats:** Border Patrol cruisers patrol Israel's beach line and desert wall. Each cruiser, in addition for a pilot and a navigator also carries six border patrol soldiers. Use infantry stats (see the *Interface Zero 2.0* core rulebook). Gunboats follow the same procedures as combat drones.

Ships from Gaza are searched at sea before being let into the port. If the PCs are stowaways or traveling with forged documents, these are the guys that might detect them.

## ACT THREE: THE BIG CITY

### SHOPPING IN ISRAEL

If the PCs got into Israel legally, they're likely to be in need of new weapons and armor. The problem is that unlike Gaza, Israel has an insanely overprotective government with eyes everywhere and laws so tight, that a foreigner could be detained for carrying an overly sharp pencil. Even buying a knife could require a background check. To reflect this, count the number of unsuccessful Streetwise and Hacking rolls made by the group. Once this number reaches five, the group is taken in for questioning by the Shin Bet.

The PCs will have to acquire weapons in the black market. This is risky because many arms dealers are Shin Bet agents tasked with catching terrorists and criminals. Make a Streetwise roll in secret. If the roll is snake eyes, then the PCs do find arms dealers, but the men are heavily armed and trained Shin Bet agents, who will arrest the PCs right after the Credits change hands. Such stunts typically include three undercover agents, a sniper situated on a nearby roof and a drone jockey operating an AGA reconnaissance drone. Use human police officers stats (*Interface Zero 2.0* core rulebook) for both agents and sniper, except that the sniper has d10 Shooting.

Prices are double the market price, but can be haggled to half again market prices with a successful Persuasion roll.

Once inside Tel Aviv, the PCs have several directions they can explore:

### PAYING MARAT A VISIT

Marat is staying at the Sheraton Hotel by the beach. As befitting a man of his status, he has an entire wing of the hotel for himself and enjoys the protection of five well-trained bodyguards, the service of two handsome young maids and a personal chef he brought from Paris. In addition to the bodyguards, Marat is also protected by a dog-shaped robot called Satan.

The hotel has a very efficient security system and an overzealous security staff that treats all non-customers as potential

terrorists. The PCs will not be let past the lobby unless they rent a room for the night. Even if they do rent a room, they will be searched for weapons, explosives and other dangerous items, and will be carefully monitored 24/7 while inside the hotel.

**No Partner for Peace:** Marat will not agree to meet with the PCs unless presented with clear proof that they have his children. In any case, after speaking with the PCs, he will contact Uzi and order him to remove the PCs by any means necessary.

**Hacking Marat's TAP:** The PCs might be interested in hacking into Marat's TAP to gather more information on their mission. Depending on the PC hacker's Smarts and equipment, this will require renting a room above or below Marat's suite, or possibly even breaking into his carefully guarded floor.

Marat's TAP is protected by an engram, Excon-Aelph, which is programmed to sound an alert and then try to disable the intruders.

If the PCs successfully hack into Marat's TAP they can read his communication with Uzi. This will not only reveal Uzi's current location, but also that he has two "secret agents" posing as civilians, ready to surprise attackers. Furthermore, it will reveal that Marat refers to the children's kidnapping as "rescue from those Kurdish killers, may they all burn!"



#### SATAN

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

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Notice d8, Tracking d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Firewall:** 4

**Special Abilities:**

- **Armor +2:** Reinforced structure.
- **Bite:** Str+1d4+2, AP 2
- **Frenzy:** Satan may make two attacks with a -2 penalty.
- **Vision/Olfactory Sensors:** +2 to Notice rolls.





### EXCON-ALEPH

**Attributes:** Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Hacking (Hyper Combat) d6, Notice d6  
**Virtual Pace:** 6; **Firewall:** 4; **Toughness:** 6  
**Engrams:** Nonlethal damage (1d6+2), Omniscience Module (negates 1 level of Stealth Modules)



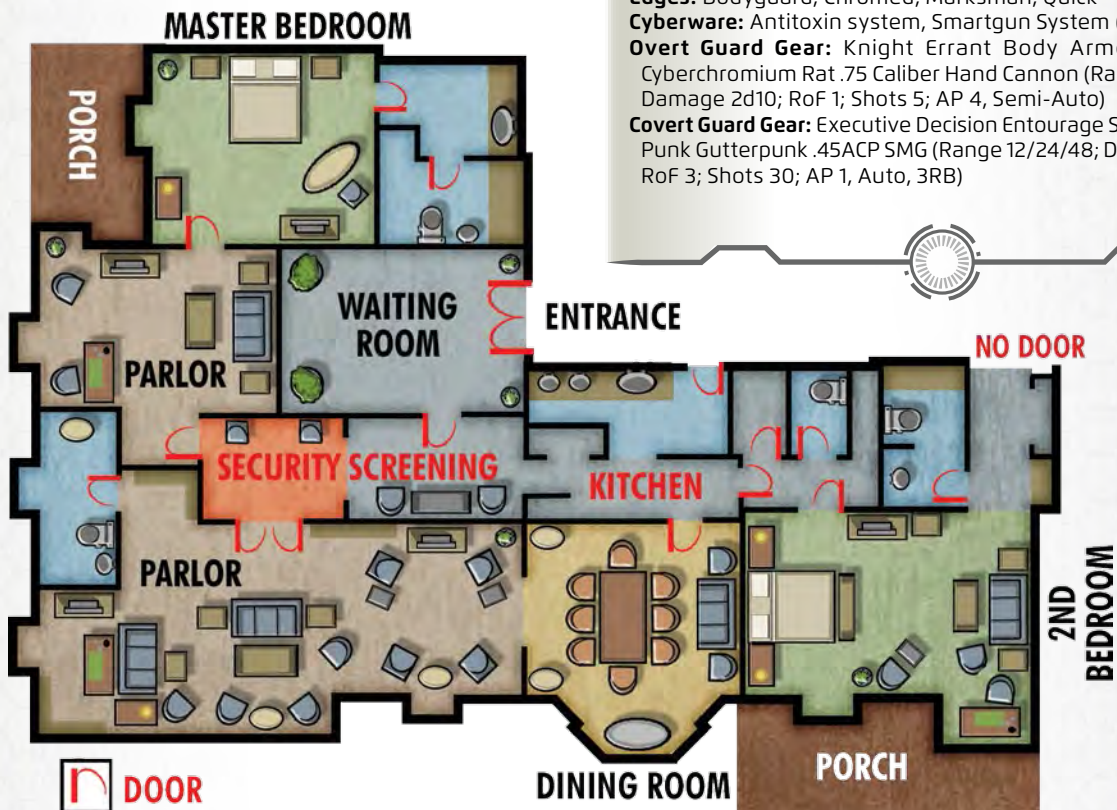
**The Hotel Network:** Since the hotel is favored by foreign diplomats and corporate executives, its network is maintained by the Shin Bet, making hacking a very dangerous proposition.

- **Defense Rating:** 12
- **Die Type:** d12+2 to all rolls.
- **Damage Dice:** 1d12+10 (Lethal)
- **Toughness:** 12: Treat as a Wild Card if the network is taking damage.

PCs who successfully hack into the system can temporarily shut down the security measures in Marat's floor, making it possible for them to attack him without having to worry about hotel security or the Shin Bet coming to rescue Marat.

**Invading Marat's Suite:** If aware of an attack, Marat will alert security and barricade himself in his suite's panic room (door Toughness 20). He will observe outside events using a control monitor in the room. Marat will use the microphones in his suite to communicate with the PCs and try to bribe them to leave him alone or at least stall them until security arrives. He will not open the door under any circumstances.

Although not a trained fighter, Marat is no coward. He will defend himself with a gold-plated, enamel-encrusted shotgun and Satan the metal hound if the panic room is breached.



Marat is loathe discussing his children and will only do so to save his life. He will tell the PCs that he had the children kidnapped because it was the only way to save them from his treacherous wife and her Kurdish accomplices.

### RAIDING THE SHELTER HOUSE

The children are kept in the basement of Tamar, a café favored by middle class teenagers. The owners of the café have been handsomely paid to turn a blind eye on anyone coming in or out of their basement. They wrongly assume it's an operation of the Israeli Mafia.

The kids are overtly guarded by Uzi and two of his men (use stats of Elite Security Guard. Uri is a Wild Card), two of them stand watch outside the basement door and another one monitors the hall. Two more guards masquerade as a female waiter and a male customer. Make a secret and separate Notice roll with a -2 modifier for each PC to recognize the



### ELITE SECURITY GUARD

*"Allo! I'm talking to you! Can I help you? Ah... you're just walking. Well, how about you're walking somewhere else, sababa?" — Sgt (Ret.) Shmuel Rosen*

The IDF has a reputation for military excellence. Many former soldiers use this to find employment as bodyguards, security guards and mercenaries.

**Race:** Human  
**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
**Skills:** Fighting (Unarmed) d10, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Shooting (Pistol) d10, Tracking d4  
**Charisma:** 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9/8(4/3); **Firewall:** 4; **Strain:** 6  
**Hindrances:** Loyal, Overconfident, Off the Grid  
**Edges:** Bodyguard, Chromed, Marksman, Quick  
**Cyberware:** Antitoxin system, Smartgun System (Advanced)  
**Overt Guard Gear:** Knight Errant Body Armor (+4), AGA Cyberchromium Rat .75 Caliber Hand Cannon (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d10; RoF 1; Shots 5; AP 4, Semi-Auto)  
**Covert Guard Gear:** Executive Decision Entourage Suit (+3), Urban Punk Gutterpunk .45ACP SMG (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1; RoF 3; Shots 30; AP 1, Auto, 3RB)





secret guards. Successful PCs notice the two are too tense and focused for café patrons. PCs who succeed with a Raise notice the bulge of hidden weapons.

If the secret guards hear fighting or see the PCs leaving the café with the kids, they will open fire, not caring about any innocents that might be hurt in the firefight. However, they will take care not to hurt the kids.

**Asking Hard Questions:** Uzi and his men are tough. They will not speak unless severely tortured (–4 to Intimidation rolls). If they are broken, they will reveal the same information as Marat.

In the case the PCs’ attack leaves no survivors, Maria can give a fairly accurate analysis of the situation based on bits of conversations she heard while in captivity. Both children will note that they were not mistreated in any way, either by Muhammad or by Uzi.

Any obvious violence outside of the café draws 1d4–1 drones immediately. Each round 1d2–1 additional drones arrive at the scene. Drones that detect firearms use lethal force without warning.

### TYING LOOSE ENDS

The way back can be as simple or difficult as you want. It can simply be a matter of sailing to Gaza on the first ship that leaves port, or it can include attacks by Marat’s men, Kurdish spies and vengeful Bedouin fighters, both on the ship and on the busy streets of Gaza.

There are several ways in which the adventure can end. Some of these can have serious repercussions for future jobs in the region.

Mustafa is a fanatic and would choose death before dishonor. If the PCs even imply knowing Mustafa’s true nature or objective, or refuse to hand him over the children over some other ground, he attacks without warning, fighting to

the death. Fully equipped, Mustafa is a monstrous fighter that will pose a considerable challenge even to a well-equipped and trained party.

Eyal, however, is a different story. A man without any loyalties except for himself, he will betray Mustafa without a second thought to save his own skin. He will skillfully feign innocence, lie, offer bribes or try to blackmail the PCs. If all else fails, he will attempt to flee from the PCs using a secret passage in his office that leads to the Gaza marina where a DB Flying Fish is waiting for him. Eyal is not one to forget a slight or a hindrance. With his extensive contacts and personal skill, he can make the PCs’ life very miserable from afar.

Much like Eyal, Marat is one to bear a long, hard grudge. With his mob and corporate connections in Eurasia, Israel and the United Arab Republic, he can make a terrible enemy. Unlike Eyal, he will not go for elaborate, soul-crushing schemes with many stages and actors. Instead, he will just send wave after wave of killers until either he or the PCs are dead.

On the other hand, if the PCs chose to help Marat, he will show his gratitude by showering them with credits (at least twice as much as the sum they agreed on with Eyal). He will also offer to hook them up with more decent employers. The latter can serve as a good way to start the PCs on their next adventure in your campaign.

While Regina and Marat’s marriage is irrevocably ruined by Regina’s betrayal, the two can remain on friendly terms for the sake of the children and to boost each other’s careers. If the PCs manage to orchestrate this happy ending, a rare event indeed in the gritty world of 2090, then they may win a powerful ally and a perfect gossip girl who will serve as their stepping board into high society and its many intrigues.

# DRAMATIS PERSONAE

All of the following NPCs are Wild Cards.

## MARAT MAMATOV, BELARUSIAN OLIGARCH

Marat is the quintessential East European oligarch with business interests ranging from the export of potatoes to development of combat sims. He is loud, aggressive and vulgar. His body is powerful and imposing, but appears to be missing a neck and a waistline. His eyes are small and cunning, like the eyes of a fierce and greedy hog.

Being a self-made man who rose from a poor street gangster into a powerful and feared businessman, Marat lacks the genetic or social refinement of old money businessmen. Indeed, he differs from a mobster only by the source and size of his income.

For all his faults, however, Marat is not without honor, though this honor is closer to the ancient Russian thief law than to modern business ethics. Marat loves his children deeply and would do anything to protect them. Anyone who threatens his children, be they a hired gun or an ex-wife, will be destroyed.

*Note about Gear:* Being incredibly rich, Marat can procure almost any item in a matter of hours. The below list only refer to items carried on his person that are consequential to his interaction with the PCs.

**Race:** Human

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

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

**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 7(2); **Firewall:** 7  
**Strain:** 0

**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Bad Luck, Greedy

**Edges:** Charismatic, Corporate Mogul, Rich, Strong Willed

**Gear:** BOB Formal Wear (+2), BKI Tiger Claw Shotgun (Range 15/30/60; Damage 1–3d4; RoF 2; Shots 12; AP 2, ornate), T-APP 4th Dimension Security

## MICHAEL & MARIA MAMATOV, ZEEK KIDS

Unlike their lowborn parents, Michael and Maria are the products of some of the finest genetic laboratories on the planet. Michael is an arrogant and strong-willed boy with the air of a medieval aristocrat. He likes to boast of himself as a Human 3.0, despite his father telling him time and again that there is no such thing. Maria, on the other hand, is a shy and gentle child. She is more careful with her words, but no less sure of her superiority to the rest of humanity. She is curious, polite and has a great interest in absolutely everything.

Ironically, it is the children's superb genes that might well lead to their early demise. Blessed with limited psionic abilities stemming from an inexplicable genetic mutation, these two golden-haired angels are likely to find themselves spliced and diced in a bloody laboratory in Kurdistan unless the PCs manage to rescue them in time.

**Race:** Human 2.0

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

**Skills:** Knowledge (Academia) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Riding (Horses) d6, Taunt d6

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



## NEW HINDRANCE

### ZEALOT (MINOR)

There are some peeps who believe in a cause — and then there are some peeps who not only believe in it, but they believe everyone should share their opinion and can't keep their mouths shut about it. And although this character may not realize he's so fanatical (and certainly won't realize if he's just plain wrong), he's one of the latter. When around like-minded individuals, there's no real problem, but in most groups he's likely to speak up and be annoying to less ideological people, incurring a –2 Charisma modifier. A character with this Hindrance may spend a Benny to keep his opinions to himself for the duration of the scene (thus causing no problems).



**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Stress Trigger (Minor), Young

**Edges:** Arcane Background (Psionics)

**Michael's Powers:** Confusion, mind reading

**Maria's Powers:** Beast friend, elemental manipulation

**Gear:** Normal clothing

## RAHAMIM JUBRAN (MUSTAFA UYGHURAN), KURDISH SPY

Mustafa is an elite Kurdish agent who specializes in infiltration and assassination. He has killed dissidents and enemies of the state, stole data and technology, and betrayed countless lovers without ever betting an eye. In the service of the Party, the weathered agent has no red lines.

Mustafa has no private life to speak of. Over the course of his struggle against the Imperialism, Capitalism and Fundamentalism, he has changed so many faces and backgrounds, that his real past feels no more concrete than any of the fictions he's told his victims. He is, essentially, whatever the Party wants him to be.

His current mission is to arrange the transport of Regina's children to Kurdistan. He doesn't know why and he doesn't care. As soon as the children are on their way to Kurdistan, he will murder Regina, Vladimir and anyone else with whom he exchanged more than a dozen words.

**Race:** Human 2.0

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Climbing d6, Fighting (Exotic) d8, Intimidation d6, Investigation d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Shooting (Rifles) d10, Stealth d6, Tracking d4

**Charisma:** +2; **Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9(2); **Firewall:** 6; **Strain:** 8

**Hindrances:** Arrogant, Code of Honor, Owned, Secret (Major), Zealot

**Edges:** Assassin, Attractive

**Cyberware:** Bone Reinforcement, Cyber arm [Chemical Injector], Cyberears [Amplified Hearing], Cyber legs [Ligament Enhancement], Smartgun System

