

SHADOWRUN 2050



CATALYST GAME LABS

AN HISTORICAL SETTING SOURCEBOOK

2050



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SHADOWRUN 2050

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WORK'S WORK

From his quiet spot on North Avenue Beach, Alexander Black—Trench to his shadowy associates—looked to the north and watched the sooty black clouds drift out to the lake. They reminded him of his life, darkness adrift on the winds. The regular soot clouds billowing from the smokestacks of Northside had helped him choose his name, or at least his fake name, Black. Trench was a street name. That moniker had been slapped on a kid who loved old film noir and wore a black trench coat almost all year round. His real name was a secret he kept tightly locked away from all but his closest friends. He didn't have many of those.

He leaned back in the worn old beach chair, with its white chips of paint peeling and blowing off in the breeze, and thought about his life in the shadows. It hadn't been long, three months so far, but he was making himself useful to a team of mostly out-of-towners. His youth made it tough. They all still looked at him like a kid. He couldn't blame them. He was young, only eighteen, and honestly pretty starstruck. His teammates all had such rich histories, but histories that took place in other parts of the world, like Texas, Tír Tairngire, and even the old U.S.A. They were real shadowrunners. He was just cutting his teeth on the streets, trying to escape the restriction, misery, and boredom of a corporate life. Someday, he thought.

He had met them when they needed some local news. One of his pals, Edge, directed them to him as a good source. They'd been followed. He managed to take a bullet meant to finish Wicker and got off a few lucky shots that put their assailants on the run. Then, he patched up a nasty gash on Hick's back, received while rushing to Wicker's aid. He hadn't helped Cirolle, but the elf respected the aid he'd given the rest of the team. The rest was history. He'd been on two jobs with them since. The work was hard but the money was good, and the guys weren't too hard on his rookie mistakes.

His brief reminiscence was interrupted by the owl hoot of his pocket secretary announcing a message from Wicker. Before he could sit up and dig the device out of his pocket, the hooting was replaced with the Dixie whistle indicating a message from Hick, and no sooner had that finished than the high-noon face-off tune played for Cirolle's message to complete the message trifecta. All the beeping panicked him, and the fancy handheld PDA fell in the sand. It was only his expensive reflex system that saved the device from an incoming wave and the

oblivion of an electronic recycling bin. Lake Michigan water was not good for electronics.

Brushing away the sand, Trench pulled the slim datacord from the side of the device and plugged it into the datajack behind his ear. He pulled up all three messages to display in his cybereyes before he started walking toward his car. They all said basically the same thing. Work, head back ASAP. Meet at F&F. Once they were read, he erased them, clearing his vision before he tripped. Getting used to the reflex system was tough, but the eyes were the toughest. Too many things passed through his vision at once.

Vision cleared, he picked up the pace and started the process of hoping his car was still in one piece after being parked at the north end of the Noose for almost twenty minutes.



A tall, extremely slim elf sitting behind a desk too small for his lengthy frame typed in the day's receipts with long, slender fingers best made for manipulating mana, not keyboards. Many years before he had been happy to do the work. It was fresh then, and there was a sense of excitement to a new business venture. Twenty years later the shine had rubbed off. It didn't help Wicker's mood that times were troubled. Business was slow, he was getting some unwanted pressure by the mob, and he was feeling lost on the Wheel. He'd taken to the shadows recently for a little extra cash, mainly to keep the shop afloat. It was the first time in almost a year he had felt as if the Wheel was turning for him.

Four months ago, he'd made a connection with a Tír expat who stopped in the shop to talk about ordering a weapon focus. The idea of making a weapon focus was intriguing; he hadn't made one in years, but the elf didn't have anywhere near the cash flow to fund the project. The elf, Cirolle, was new in town and knew an ork looking for income. Wicker knew a fixer who was always looking for talent, so the trio hit the shadows and picked up a fourth after a month. That fourth, a human kid named Trench, took all of five minutes to save Wicker's life for the first time. When that

happened, he knew the Wheel was finally spinning full speed again.

With a final tick of the Enter key, Wicker smiled at the numbers. It wasn't a profitable day, but it was up ten percent from the previous week, a trend most of the days this week had followed, so there was reason to smile. He also smiled because he was done. But the Wheel turned and the smile faded as he heard the chiming of the bell on the front door. Someone had entered the shop, uninvited, an hour after closing. That was rarely a good thing.

He typed out a quick message to Hick on the terminal—he always seemed to get places fastest—then grabbed his worn cowl and walked through the beaded curtain into the front of the shop.

"I'm sorry, we're closed. I must have forgotten to lock the door," Wicker said to no one in particular. He didn't see anyone in the shop, but he spotted wet footprints just inside the door. The rain had started only half an hour ago, so he knew someone had come in.

When no one replied Wicker mentally commanded Eyre, the building's hearth spirit, to locate any other living person in the store, manifest, and politely ask them to leave. He was shocked to hear the spirit begin to speak above his head. When he looked up he spotted Hick, legs contorted to support himself between two beams in the ceiling. The ork had his rifle in his hands and a pissed off look on his face.



Cirolle slipped his pistol from the holster quietly. He was tucked back in a tight corner of bookshelves listening for a sign of Hick's presence. When he heard Wicker call out he ignored him, hoping the old elf wasn't feeling jumpy. Then he heard the wispy voice of the hearth spirit start talking, politely asking someone to leave the store, and knew it must be talking to Hick. The game was over. Cirolle stepped out quickly, aimed high toward the voice, and fired. The FunRound, a paint filled gel round, struck Hick's visible thigh, and the big ork dropped out of the rafters.

Another win for Cirolle in their little training game. Series was tied 3-3.

"One of these days ..." Wicker started to talk but didn't bother to finish. He'd warned them enough.

"Ya'll're just pissed we don't let you play," Hicks taunted in his thick Texas drawl.

"I'm sure that's what it is," Wicker said. Wicker

had played once. He won, hands down, over both of them. He felt it wasn't necessary to play anymore.

"I know what yer thinkin', but we went easy on ya. First time and all. Beginners luck," Hick continued, obviously unhappy about being bested in a game like this by the scrawny elf and likely a bit ticked about this loss due to his spirit's interference.

Cirolle listened as the two continued their duel of verbal strikes, feints, and blocks. They amused him at times, so different than his former teammates. These guys were pros when they needed to be, but the rest of the time they were regular guys. They'd have never made it in the Peace Force. Not cocky enough. Not enough Tír attitude. He liked it that way.

Cirolle was the closest to the door when the bell rang again. No one snuck in this time; instead they strolled in like they owned the place. Two orks and one human, all nicely dressed. Cirolle could tell the human was the boss from the cut of his suit, his position in the middle, and the fact that he carried himself like the pompous princes he had left behind in his old life. Arrogance was universal. The lead ork spotted him and stepped into a position that cut Cirolle off from the human while the rear ork stopped to turn the deadbolt on the door. The click was almost ear-splitting in the quiet shop.

"We're closed," Wicker said as he stepped into the central aisle of his shop, clearly visible to all three of their new guests.

"Perfect. We can avoid interruptions," the human said. His voice was deep, his speech highlighted with the faux-New York-Italian accent so many low-end mobsters liked to use even though they had never set foot in the neighborhoods where it originated.

"I already told you Mr. Fryzek, I'm not interested." Wicker spoke politely, but anyone with an ounce of sense could hear annoyance in his tone.

"I know you remember the terms of my offer. There is no 'not interested' option. I'll take this as a no, and we'll move on from there." Fryzek's face spread into a self-satisfied smile to fill a carefully timed pause. "Unless you'd accept an alternative to this month's arrangement."

"As my other option is 'an unfortunate accident', I'm willing to renegotiate," Wicker said.

"All right. Gather your team and meet me at the Excalibur down in Southside. 95th Street, west of 88th Ave. Party name will be Merlin." The grin shifted, replaced by the 'I think I'm so funny' face. His goons chuckled, one even mumbled, "Good one boss," before the trio left with little more than cursory nods.

The door clicked shut, and Cirolle stepped up and locked it again. As Hick popped up in the corner of the shop, Cirolle noticed the clip in the ork's rifle was no longer ringed in the blue tape he used to mark

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DEED



FunRounds. Wicker turned and walked back into his office without a word. Cirolle knew he was pissed. This same goon had been putting pressure on him for a few months. So far Wicker had been lucky. An injured nephew in need of healing saved him one month, a short-lived crush saved him another, and now a job offer held them off for a third, but Cirolle was sure his buddy's luck was running out.



"Why did all of you message me if you were all in the same place?" Trench asked after getting the short version of the earlier encounter.

No one bothered to answer his question as they cruised down I-55 headed for the meet. He was driving Hick's van while the others sat in back and looked out for trouble. Go-gangs weren't common in Chicago, but they were there, and they would make the trip more difficult. The gangs on the highways were thrill-seekers, not road warriors. Trench had warned the team about the gang's vengeful side before their first encounter, and Hick came up with an effective plan, using the FunRounds to hit any approaching gangers and prove a point. The method had worked against the WolfPack, but word had hit the street that they were looking for some entertaining payback. Trench hadn't gotten details on what that meant yet, but he was sure it would be momentous.

A quarter mile from the meet Trench slowed a little extra on a corner and Hick rolled out the side door into the dense forest underbrush along the side of the road. The area around the meet didn't have much good high-ground but it had a lot of forest preserve for Hick to locate a quiet spot to cover the team. At the front door Trench dropped off Cirolle and Wicker. The pair of elves looked well-suited for a restaurant with Excalibur's reputation. High-class but bring your own security. Very Southside, and very mob.

As the pair strolled in Trench pulled the van to the back corner of the parking lot and waited for either a pickup call, or for all hell to break loose.



The astral shadow of Excalibur was one of many Chicago astral oddities, but that didn't stop Wicker from taking in the aura of the man at the door, healthy with very little cyber, before gawking at the place. Most places had a dim grey shadow on the astral. Some objects, if they were transient enough, never even reflected into the arcane realm. But Excalibur was fully present and looked very little like its physical counterpart. When magic was first developing, people had thought it was caused by wards set up by a recluse trying to build the reputation of the restaurant/banquet hall. The place was studied, and the astral shadow was deemed more. It was like an astral overlay of a genuine castle over the whole place. It even extended up where there was no building. Wicker didn't know what was in any of the four corner or single central towers, and he had no desire to find out.

The whole place made astral recon tough. The two places, astral and physical, didn't match up, and their Johnson, Kurt "da Goon" Fryzek, might have known that and wanted to use it to his advantage. For now, Wicker was keeping his astral eyes peeled for trouble and relying on Cirolle to keep the physical world checked out. It was business as usual.

As extra insurance Wicker reached out to the spirit of the building for a little backup. The powerful force acknowledged his request and politely granted him aid if he so needed within his domain. The creature was happy to aid a fellow traveler from across the pond. Wicker didn't have time to ask exactly what the spirit meant. He figured it was likely a side effect of the strange astral phenomenon.



Cirolle had been in some pretentious places in his life. He'd stood guard in the grand dining halls of two different elven princes. Nothing he had seen in the presence of princes came close to the garish overindulgence that was the interior decor of Excalibur's private dining area. Heavy dark velvet curtains embroidered with gold draped from the ceiling between thick, ornately carved wooden tables. Electric torches "burned" on the walls, and gold candelabras on each table were filled real flickering candles.

Before he picked up any of the serveware details, Cirolle spotted da Goon and his goons. They were all seated, Fryzek at the back of the U-shaped booth, his two goons at the end of the curved bench facing



out. The goons rose and stepped to the center of the table when they saw Cirolle and Wicker approaching. They blocked their boss and opened up the seats in one smooth move. Cirolle appreciated their efficiency and thought they might even have a little skill. His assessment of their skill went up another notch when one stepped forward and produced an older model MAD-scanning wand while the other took a half-step to continue blocking their boss.

Both Cirolle and Wicker accepted the scan and warned the goon of the location of weapons. Wicker gave up his machine-pistol and the small boot-knife he carried. The guards didn't know it, but the boot-knife was a lot more deadly than the TMP. Wicker used it as a fetish for one of his spells, though Cirolle didn't remember which one exactly. Cirolle handed over the Predator he carried and volunteered to remove the finely crafted katana. He rarely let anyone else touch it, not even just the sheath. Cirolle pretended to forget about the survival knife at the base of his spine, and when the guards stepped away, satisfied they had disarmed the pair, he bowed politely. The bow was respectful but it also hid the small grin he always wore whenever anyone failed to actually disarm him. He still had six knives on his person, all ceramic instead of MAD-detectable steel. Cirolle was no less deadly now than the moment he walked in. In fact, he was probably more deadly, since the guards now expected him to be unarmed.



Wicker mentally shook his head at the self-satisfied flash that passed over Cirolle's aura as he bowed. It was a dangerous game he didn't approve of, but he was the elf's teammate, not his boss. He took a second to scan over the auras of the mobsters and found everything he expected. Cyber and attitude all around. He let his astral senses fade, giving the place one last glance. He was still amazed.

"Now that we have that bit of unpleasantness behind us, gentlemen, please take a seat." Fryzek made a grand hand gesture to the open ends of the booth.

Cirolle stepped to the side, and Wicker moved past to take a seat. Cirolle stayed standing and joined the mobster's goons at the end of the table. They all faced away from the meeting, watching Excalibur, and each other, for signs of trouble.

"I like your style. Mano a elfo. Let the goons be goons," Fryzek said, laughing at his own little pun and giving a condescending little head nod over to Cirolle and the others.

"I'm not here for a social visit. What's the job? What's the pay? And how can I get you to understand I don't need your protection nor do I have any desire to sell my shop to the mob so they can turn it into a laundry?" Wicker was polite but to the point. By the look on Fryzek's face, Wicker could see the man was not happy with his direct approach.

"Don't you want to order dinner first? Enjoy my hospitality." Fryzek put on a fake 'I'm hurt' face as he spoke.

"Mr. Fryzek. You and I have been dancing this dance for months now. I have no desire to anger a man in your position, but I also have no desire to hand over my life's work to the mafia. What will it take to avoid unpleasantness between us?"

Wicker made sure to emphasize the last sentence just right. He knew Fryzek was a just a soldato in the Capone family thanks to Trench's Chicago connections. The man, even with his two goons, was no match for their shadowteam, but Wicker didn't want a war with the Capone family—they couldn't handle that. He also knew Fryzek was working to move up the food chain. To move up you needed good connections and solid assets. Wicker wanted to work that angle. He wanted to be developed as an asset for Fryzek, not a pawn.

"Straight to the point. I respect that." As Fryzek talked, he slid open a well-hidden panel in the table and flipped a switch. Wicker recognized the dull hum of a white noise generator and knew business was about to begin. Without a pause, Fryzek said, "I want your team to kill my wife."



Cirolle spotted the movements first. He heard Fryzek's request and was turning to give Wicker a look of disapproval, since wetwork like this was not a welcome addition to his reputation. Years of training helped him decipher between an adjusting shrug and the move of someone going for a gun; the goon was pulling the latter. In a smooth, well-practiced set of motions, the ork popped the fake buttons on his suit jacket with his left hand while sliding his right

into the opening. Cirolle knew what was coming. He worried the other ork might be doing the same but knew to focus on one problem at a time.

With a quick clench and flick of his forearm, one of his ceramic knives dropped into his hand. It came down in a blade-back position, not optimal in the current situation, but he didn't risk a grip switch. As the ork's hand cleared the coat, Cirolle planted one hand on the goon's massive forearm up near the elbow and then slashed the blade across his wrist. The attack was intended to disarm by slicing tendons, but Cirolle could tell by the resistance and the sound that the arm underneath the coat wasn't flesh and bone. The strike failed to disarm, but it put Cirolle just where he liked to be, too close for (other's) comfort.

Tucking in tight, he continued the slash upwards, toward the ork's throat. Cirolle was faster than the ork by a wide margin thanks to his adept training, and his moves were simple reflex. He made a quick slash on the upstroke, creating a fountain of blood from the big ork's throat. He re-angled the knife and was driving the ceramic blade deep into the goon's throat when he realized where the ork was looking. It wasn't at him. Instead, the ork's face was already looking toward the table, his eyes filled with anger and hate that shifted to shock and sadness as the blade slipped out. The elf only fully processed the looks as he spun on the other goon.

Cirolle heard the ork say, "Drop the blade!" as he spun, and he found the second ork goon now outside knife swing range. He had a compact shotgun pointed at Cirolle's midsection.

Wicker didn't want the distraction of sustaining his reflex spell while he negotiated, and he felt like he might be paying for that choice with his life. He felt blood hit him from the mob goon Cirolle had just killed with his knife out of nowhere. He was sure something had caused the violence. He knew Cirolle was a fight ender, not a starter (the latter was Hick's job). He didn't even have time to consider a spell before Fryzek had a pistol pointed at him, the second goon had a shotgun pointed at Cirolle, and Fryzek was reaching into his coat. They were beat.

Wicker gave a mental command to the building's spirit to attack the man at the table with him if he was attacked. He said nothing aloud, just kept his eyes locked on Fryzek. Fryzek spoke first.

"Well, that worked out just like I planned," he said with a smile. The hand in Fryzek's coat reappeared as he spoke, retrieving two slim credsticks from an inside pocket. "Your payment," he continued as he tossed them on the table.

"For?" Wicker asked as he picked up the credsticks. He gestured to the bleeding ork on the ground. "I don't think that's your wife."

"It's not. But he was screwing the slitch. That should drive home the point for her. And if it doesn't, we can finish this conversation another time." Fryzek laid the pistol on the table. "That's for this job. I'm only paying you two. The rest of your team doesn't get paid to do nothing."

"What does this mean for our relationship?" Wicker asked as he slipped the credsticks into his coat pocket.

"Not sure. We can talk again next month," Fryzek said with a smile.

Wicker considered arguing but thought better of it. If this was the game they played every month, so be it. It was better than a war with the mob. He thanked Fryzek for the work, gave a cursory salutation about next month, then left the restaurant with Cirolle in tow.

They messaged Trench for pick-up, and he was at the door by the time the pair stepped out. They picked up Hick then Wicker explained what happened. Hick was full of expletives about snake-like Yankees. Trench was quiet. Wicker was pleased the Wheel had conspired to join him with these men. They seemed special in the shadows. Not because of their talents but because of their personalities. Most of all Wicker was proud of them because they never once asked the question that separated them from the guys like Fryzek.

None of them asked, "Where's my money?"



INTRODUCTION

- The minute I get nostalgic is the minute I start thinking about things I did once that maybe I can't do now. That's a minute that will never arrive.
- FastJack

Now, as always, we have great respect for FastJack's opinion. But here we are, looking at the past. *Shadowrun 2050* gives shadowrunners the chance to use the most current rules for the game with the oldest setting information. It's a one-shot return to the past, the chance to look at the setting the way it was when it first started, using the award-winning *Shadowrun, Twentieth Anniversary Edition* rules to make playing in that setting easier than it has ever been.

Mechanically, most of what works in fourth edition works in 2050. Guns still shoot the same way, sneaking into a Mitsuhamma zero-zone still requires great skill and patience. There are, however, a few changes players and gamemasters need to know about to bring their games to this era.

The first section of the book details the in-universe differences. **The Knife at Your Throat** details the *Shadowrun* world the way it was in 2050, while **The Darkest Shadows** chapter provides info on three major sprawls—Seattle, Chicago, and Hong Kong—as they were in that era. **Hiring Board** provides an in-universe look at the types of jobs available in 2050, as well as several specific plot hooks.

The second section provides the rules info needed to adapt the current rules into this era. First, the **Life in 2050** chapter details some of the important ways daily life is different, such as the ways you get paid. **Runners of 2050** provides sample character builds and archetypes to help you get involved in the 2050 setting.

Some changes in rules need to be addressed to run in 2050. While magic largely works the same, there are some differences tied to traditions noted in the **Magic** chapter.

Perhaps the most significant change between 2050 and 2074 is the Matrix. While in 2074 hackers navigate the wireless Matrix with the help of small, palm-sized commlinks, in 2050 the warriors of the

Matrix were called deckers, and their decks were the size of a keyboard. Also, wireless wasn't around. If you wanted Matrix access, you plugged in, and most deckers did it with a jack right into their skull. The **Matrix** chapter contains what you need to deal with the decks of 2050 and the rules concerning their use.

Gear in 2050 is also quite different, so we've catalogued what's available in the **Gear** chapter, along with complete statistics for each item.

Finally, interspersed throughout the book is fiction to give you the flavor of *Shadowrun 2050*, the grit and grandeur that first made *Shadowrun* a legend.

So why are we doing this? Why dip our toes into the waters of nostalgia FastJack warned us about?

Because we love it. We love the grime, the decks, the jacks, the VR Matrix, the gangs, the street-level clashes, all of it. We're not forsaking 2074—we love it too, and we are just as committed as ever to moving it forward and keeping it vibrant and exciting (witness *Runner's Black Book 2074* and *The Clutch of Dragons*, two current-era books coming out at the same time as this one). So enjoy *Shadowrun* as it continues its drive into the future, but also have fun with this one-time dip into the headwaters of the greatest role-playing universe ever.

A Note on Characters

If you are creating a new character for use in *Shadowrun 2050*, in general the SR4A rules will serve you well. Use only the gear in this book, remember that technomancers don't exist yet, and also note the available programs and utilities in the Matrix chapter. If you want to bring your existing character into the 2050 setting, remember that time-travel does not exist in the Sixth World, so you'll be bending the laws of reality to do so. But if you must call on the power of house rules to make the shift, use the latter portion of this book to adjust your character's gear, magic tradition, and program load-out appropriately. Note, though, that if your character is a technomancer and attempts to play in 2050, they disappear in a puff of smoke. Even house rules can only do so much.



SHADOWRUN 2050



THE KNIFE AT YOUR THROAT

- If you're going to run in this world, you have to know it, because the entire world is sharp, dangerous, and ready to hit you somewhere sensitive. We'll take this in three parts—the first is a general overview of the dangers waiting for you, the second looks at pop culture because it's part of the world too, and the third looks at our favorite speed bumps—Lone Star officers. Have at it!
- Captain Chaos

THINGS THAT CAN KILL YOU

Posted by: Rides On Buses

- As you can imagine, this is a popular file. Seems people are interested in the things that might get them out there, if you can believe. The comment file is about a megapulse away from the buffer limit, so some cleanup is in order. If you'd like to volunteer to help moderate some of these comments, use the contact info on the Shadowland main menu. Don't worry, there will be no censorship. Everything removed from the main file will be archived and available for full download.
- Sysop

The 2050s are interesting times, to quote the old curse. Oh, it's easy enough to become a cog in somebody else's machine. You can be relatively secure as a permanent employee. Get a corp paycheck, corp housing, corp food, and if you're lucky, a corp pension. If you've got talent, you might even get promoted once or twice in your career.

That's not good enough for you or me, though. You're a shadowrunner, and your standards are a bit higher than that. Sure, there are threats to your existence. You navigate the shadows of a system that would prefer to see you dead. You thrive on conflict, deftly beating the odds and securing your fortune, or at least next month's rent. You've already put a down payment on agricultural property, trading the safety and security of corp or civilian life for freedom and the dangers that come with it.

- It's not just that. I mean, I didn't exactly choose to become a shadowrunner. It's more like it chose me. I thought I was going to be a scientist.
- Profzezur

- Not for me. I chose this life and I'm glad I did. Screw the corps, this is all about personal freedom in a world that's trying to lock down everybody and stick them into little boxes.

Okay, that's probably a bit overboard, but you scan my meaning, ne?

- Captain Chaos
- You have a good point, Cap'n. Look at Mother Earth herself. Just about the time science was figuring out everything about her, locking her down and sticking her various aspects into little boxes, the Awakening happened. Now science is at a loss to explain the natural world, and Gaia is free and mysterious once again.
- Hazel-Eyed Sage
- Are you saying that the Earth is a shadowrunner? I like that.
- FastJack

Since you've already bought into the lifestyle of the shadows, here's a little bit of information about all of the things that could threaten that lifestyle you've been enjoying. But hey, it's chill. It's not like the world is deliberately trying to kill you.

THE WORLD IS DELIBERATELY TRYING TO KILL YOU

The first thing you have to do to survive as a shadowrunner is conquer the everyday threats to your life. Normal things like finding a safe place to stay, staying out of the acid rain, getting food that won't kill you, keeping the police from looking at you too closely, finding breathable air during the bad smog days, and keeping up with vaccinations.

It's something we do all the time, but nobody's bothered to point it out. Once you've got the basics squared away, we can talk about the other people who will at some point in your career be trying to kill you.

- He ain't kidding. A mate of mine came down with a bad respiratory virus back in January. Wouldn't you know it, we get a big run from Mr. Smith the very next day. Well, me mate's a decker, so he don't need his meat, but the run's got an isolated Matrix grid, so he's got to come along for the ride. The rest of us can't afford to be down, so we make him buy this high-tech respirator rig with a super-chem seal and anti-viral filters, custom made to fit an adapter for his jacks. Near cost him half his pay for the run, that did. If the bugger had kept up his basic hygiene and medico visits, he wouldn't have been Moby Dick, would he? Lesson to learn from.
- Ham'n'Eggs

Where You Hang Your Helmet

A shadowrunner's home is her castle, a place where you can leave your stuff while you're on a job. It's a bonus if it's someplace you actually want to hang out, but it's hardly a requirement. A set of good, strong maglocks is probably enough to give whatever it is the security you want it to have. It's best if you can afford to live someplace with a community security contractor, but if not you can always pay the local street gang to watch your place for you.

When you find a place to live, make sure it suits your needs. If you work on your bike, make sure your place has room for your tools—room for the bike, of course. If you need a medicine lodge, make sure it's not also your kitchen 'cause those don't mix (rest in peace, Hides-With-Spirits). You want a minimum of two exits, preferably four. You can make it defensible if you like, but if somebody's got a grudge big enough to find your home and attack you there, you're already hip deep in the drek; it's better to buzz turbo.

- If somebody does find your home, it's best to stop thinking about it as home immediately. That's why I keep a secret secondary place in the basement of the old Redmond library, just in case.
- Nengena
- Wait a minute, the one on 85th and 106th? That's been my secret emergency squat since '48 you hoopfragging squat-jumper!
- Perennial
- You are both idiots.
- JTF

Fine Dining

Sure, a diet entirely consisting of flavored nutrisoy paste sounds unappetizing, but once you've been on it for a couple of weeks it becomes completely vile. Find a couple of really good grocers and make them your best friends. Insist that you'll only talk biz with Mr. Johnson at a nice restaurant that serves real food. You'll thank us for it. When you're working in a job that can kill you at a moment's notice, do you really want your last meal to have been out of a squeeze tube?

- Do not follow the advice about making Mr. Johnson feed you at a nice restaurant. That kind of demand makes you look like a hoopfragging poseur. You're a contractor, and if you come across as a snobby dilettante you're not going to be one for long. You go where Mr. Johnson feels comfortable.
- Matador
- So we're supposed to turn down a real meal? Chummer, what do you think the perks of this job are?
- Bull

- Sure, accept the meal (or booze or joytoys, whatever) that you're offered. But you're not being approached to receive gifts, you're being approached to do a job. Mr. Johnson is there because he needs you, but you're there because you need him.
- Matador
- Lighten up, omae. This biz isn't as serious as you make it out to be. Professionalism is nice, yeah, but where's the fun in that?
- Bull

Modern Environmentalism

If the bullets don't get you, the monoxides might. Get a respirator for the really bad days, or the times your run takes you into a toxic zone. Some runners say it looks dumb, but how much dumber is it to be eaten by a swarm of devil rats because you ran out of breath after a couple of blocks of running from whatever might be chasing you? Likewise, acid rain does more than just stain your armor jacket. Repeated exposure can cause all sorts of bad mojo, so stay out of it, get cleaned up right away, or get some chemical protection. While you're at it, try to keep up to date on known toxic and radiation zones in your area, since the corps aren't very good at updating people and it seems like there's a new one every month or two.

Avoiding the Law

Death is the most common end of a shadowrunner's career, but arrest comes second on the list. The easiest way to get free housing, food, and medicine (and the occasional routine cavity search and/or beating by guards or inmates) is to blatantly defy The Man in the wrong place. High-level security zones, like most neighborhoods of Bellevue or the entire district of Downtown Seattle, have cops who are constantly out looking for trouble to arrest. If you've got a badly concealed weapon, illegal vehicle mods, or obvious magic use, you're asking for trouble, chummer.

The same goes in non-public places where people gather. Private clubs have private security, and private security likes its private paycheck. Club Penumbra might cater to the shadowrunner look, but if you misbehave you'll find that being a shadowrunner doesn't automatically make you welcome there.

GANGS

The Star can't cover every square inch of the metroplex. Megacorps don't care what goes on outside the electrified razor wire. The streets are harsh and often deadly. So who can blame a guy for joining a gang? Gangs are mostly small, from around two- or three-dozen members. Some have over a hundred



SECURITY ZONES

When Lone Star recently released a map of Seattle, breaking it into zones and rating each zone based on how important police coverage is to that area, other security service providers followed suit with maps of their own jurisdictions. The so-called Security Rating of each area helps define both the security level and the response time of law enforcement in a given zone.

Each security service provider has a rating system based on its own policies, customers, and jurisdictions, which some readers find misleading. For example, Lone Star rates the Renraku Arcology a Z-zone because they provide no coverage in that area, but to the Renraku Guard it's a AAA zone.

SECURITY ZONE RATINGS

AAA: The highest security rating, triple-A is unique to high-class places (mostly Luxury lifestyles with a sprinkle of High lifestyle places in there). AAA zones are patrolled on foot and by vehicle, and drones or spirits on patrol are not uncommon. The security personnel are the best of the best (Professional Rating 5+). Every block has at least one PANICBUTTON™ booth, and every corner at least one camera. Response is immediate, even for the most minor infractions. There's some talk that the appearance of tight security is more important than actual security in a AAA-zone, which can work for or against you, depending how you play it.

AA: This rating is for mostly High lifestyle neighborhoods. The patrols aren't as frequent as AAA-zones, and you'll rarely see spirits and drones. The people on the beat aren't as elite as the ones covering the AAA shifts, but they're hardly average street cops. PANICBUTTON™ booths replace foot patrols in most areas. The coverage is good enough to offer a quick response, especially if there's no action in any nearby AAA-zone.

A: Most parts of any metroplex that are built up and maintained (Middle lifestyle residences and businesses) are rated A on the security scale. There are regular vehicle patrols, some surveillance devices, but drones, spirits, and astrally projecting magicians might only make the rounds once a day, or they may make a cursory pass on their way to a higher-rated zone. Security service providers depend mostly on reports and emergency calls rather than direct patrolling to deter criminals.

B: This rating is just like the A rating, except that it's intended for industrial and commercial neighborhoods where people rarely congregate except for work. These are areas that are highly likely to be targets for acts of industrial espionage and sabotage (in other words,

prime targets for shadowruns). Patrols are rarely useful against shadowrunners, who will just avoid them, but the response to a call in a B-zone is swift and three or four times the strength of a normal patrol.

C: This essentially is A-zone coverage at the Low-lifestyle tax bracket. Patrols are weaker and less frequent, and PANICBUTTON™ hook-ups and booths are rarely maintained. Response times are sluggish at best, as most security service providers prefer to investigate the crime after the fact. If you see air or magical support, it's because shots have been fired or something has exploded. When there is a response, it's usually very well armed.

D: D-zones are related to B-zones in the same way that C-zones are like A-zones. Most investigations involve a newbie cop who asks a couple of questions, takes a couple of pictures, and leaves to fill out paperwork and get a donut at a soycafe.

E: This rating is reserved for low-rent industrial areas and slums filled with squatters and homeless people. People living in E-zones rarely have a SIN, which means that by policy they are considered non-people by most security service providers. A "patrol" consists of driving through the zone on the way to a higher-rated neighborhood. Law enforcement only responds to people with SINS, or if there's enough violence to warrant media attention or a concern that it might spread to "real" neighborhoods. When there is a response, it is overwhelming, very well armed, and ready to shoot anybody that seems to be doing something illegal.

Z: These districts, known as Z-zones, are hands-off areas as far as security providers are concerned. They are mostly confined to the Barrens of a metroplex, like Redmond and Puyallup in Seattle. Initially, the rating was intended to mean "anywhere outside our jurisdiction," but on the street it's come to mean lawless places where anarchy reigns and the strongest rule. The only enforcement done on Z-zones is to keep violence or other criminal activity contained and out of neighboring zones. On those rare occasions when security goes in, they go in full force, with mil-spec armor, weapons, and vehicles, air and magic support, and numbers that are counted in dozens. They tend to be trigger happy, willing to take out anyone who shoots them so much as a nasty look.

Some cops welcome the chance to work in a "downtown militarized zone." They get hazard pay just for stepping into the place. They also get to do a little side business in salvage, recovery of property, collateral damage, civilian casualties, and other popular euphemisms for fun and profit. There's no such thing as police misconduct in a Z-zone, at least according to Internal Affairs.

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members and are growing into 'plex players in their own right.

While most non-human metatypes are seeing some acceptance some four decades after they showed up, gangs are like corporate boardrooms in their level of segregation. Most gangs are made up of only one metatype and are usually intolerant of at least one other metatype. The racism is somewhat less prevalent among ork and troll gangs, but beyond that the mixed-meta gang is unheard of in most metroplexes.

Every sprawl has gangers, full stop. Hong Kong has around one hundred fifty gangs, and Seattle has over twice that number. At some point in your career, you're going to be shooting at gangers, probably because they're shooting at you. Maybe they're your main opposition, maybe they're in the way, maybe they just thought it would be funny to take some shots at you. For the most part, they're not out for blood and they'll run away rather than face a deadly fight, but if you're invading their turf, if they're out for revenge, if they're backed into a corner, or if you've otherwise caused them to lose face, all bets are off.

Street Gangs

Street gangs are the ones that have claimed territory in the metroplex. They're armed with pistols, the occasional SMG, and all manner of nasty blades and clubs, and they're not too shabby with them in a pinch. They're used to violence as a means to get their way, and they use it reflexively.

A street gang is mostly concerned about their turf. They wear specific colors or patterns to identify themselves to others. They tag everything in sight with their own symbol, using paint and chalk (or blood if they're the crazy kind of gang). A savvy shadowrunner will learn to ID these signs and keep current with the inter-gang politics of the day.

For the most part, street gangs want to survive in their constant struggle against other gangs, the law, and the government and corporate powers that be. Some gangs have been able to go beyond that and take over turf from other gangs, profit by running drugs and BTL chips, and even hire themselves out as muscle. So they just want to be loved. And to get smashed and beat up people, and get a few bucks when possible.

Street gangs are everywhere, even in AAA neighborhoods like Downtown. As you'd expect, the higher the security rating, the more well behaved the gangs are, but only the Renraku Arcology lacks street gangs, and as far as we know, they've got one or two in the private sectors of the SCIRE.





GANGS TO KNOW IN SEATTLE

As of the end of June 2050, there are 323 gangs in the Seattle Metroplex. Most of them are relatively mild street gangs. The ones you really need to know about are the thrill gangs. Here is a selection of gangs in the Seattle Sprawl.

GANG NAME	COLORS	TURF	NOTES
Nova Rich	Lemon/Denim	Bellevue	Human gang made of mostly crazy rich kids
405 Hellhounds	Red/Orange	Bellevue I-405	Human go-gang
Bloody Screamers	Blue/Green	Downtown	Ork gang
Disassemblers	Gray/White	Downtown	Troll gang
Halloweeners	Black/Orange and Halloween masks	Downtown	Human gang
Troll Killers	Green/Red	Downtown	Racist human gang that targets trolls and orks
Eye-Fivers	Blue/White	Downtown I-5	Human go-gang
Leather Devils	Red/Black	Downtown I-90	Human go-gang
Red Rovers	Red/Chrome	Everett/Snohomish I-5	Ork go-gang
Trogs	Red/Black	Ork Underground	Ork and troll gang
Black Rains	Black/Gold	Puyallup	Ork gang
Reality Hackers	Chrome/Gold	Puyallup	Human decker gang
Silent P's	White/Gold	Puyallup	Elf gang
Forever Tacoma	Red/Orange	Puyallup/Tacoma	Ork and troll gang, live in Puyallup, enforce turf in Tacoma
Brain Eaters	White/Black	Redmond	Human gang, only pretends to eat brains. Probably.
Crimson Crush	Red/Gold	Redmond	Ork gang
Red Hot Nukes	Gray/Red	Redmond	Dwarf gang with penchant for explosives
Blood Rumlbers	Red/Blue	Redmond I-90	Human go-gang
Rusted Stilletos	Black/Rust	Redmond, Glow City	Human gang with a reputation for being crazy, even for a thrill gang
Cutters	Gold/Green	Seattle	Business-oriented human gang
Ancients	Green	Seattle (sort of)	Elf go-gang, travels all over the sprawl
Spike Wheels	Brown/Gold	Tacoma I-5	Troll go-gang

- The Ancients aren't really much of a thrill gang anymore. They're almost like a small criminal syndicate, like a dandelion-eating Seoulpa Ring. They run rackets, distribute drugs, and otherwise act like a respectable outfit.
- Stainless
- Don't let their respectability fool you. The Ancients still go out on rides for fun and mayhem. Unlike other go-gangs who stake out their own territory, the Ancients pretty much go wherever they like in the Seattle Sprawl. I've even seen them tear through Downtown with only a token Lone Star pursuit.
- Dead End
- There's been a bunch of elves riding around the Atlanta sprawl wearing Ancients colors. Maybe they're just posers, or maybe the Ancients are going international.
- Kane



GANGS TO KNOW IN SEATTLE, CONT.

- Halloweeners have been switching from masks to face paint, outlandish makeup, or facial tattoos. Seems like one too many have lost fights because their masks slipped just enough to cover their eyes.
- Rattus Rattus
- Contrary to the official story, the Rattlers Combat Biker team wasn't replaced with all rookies because of a contract dispute. You see, when Annabelle "Sleek" Creek was riding the I-5 alone on her combat bike, she ran into the Spike Wheels on a rampage. She was tough, but outnumbered, and in the end they hit her hard enough that her body landed on the 38th Street overpass. The rest of her team rode up from Portland to take revenge. The fight closed I-5 for three days, and in the end every Rattler player was either dead or getting evac from DocWagon.
- Miss Gnomer
- The Bloody Screamers really are both bloody and screamers. I don't know where they get the blood they use to paint their bodies, weapons, clothes, and hideouts, and I don't want to know. But it's weird since they don't really commit as much assault and metahuman violence as most gangs, since the screaming warns people away when they're in a berserk mood. Mostly they just inflict property damage.
- Moleskin
- The Silent P's and the Black Rains have been fighting an open war in Puyallup for three years straight. It started because they both wear gold as their colors, and both sides want it exclusively.
- Red Rover
- Bulldrek. That's a rumor started by posers who think they're street. The Reality Hackers use gold, too, and they're not involved. The war in Puyallup is about racism. The Silent P's are elves who hate orks, and the Black Rains are orks who hate elves. Their hatred goes all the way back to the Night of Rage.
- Former Viking
- The Disassemblers have a thriving side-business in organlegging and secondhand augmentations. They prefer to kidnap people to keep the meat fresh until they sell it. They'll even let their victims get away rather than killing or wounding them, because they can always come back another day. The good news is that they only go after people who are smaller than they are. The bad news is that they're all trolls.
- Outsane

Go-Gangs

Go-gangs are thrill gangs on motorcycles. They usually find a patch of highway or a disused air field to call their own. They spend their mayhem time racing, hitting things with spiked bats from their bikes, motor jousting, and occasionally running down unsuspecting motorists and robbing, assaulting, or otherwise mistreating them. You can

find go-gangs anywhere you find street gangs and motorcycles.

Since they're always on the move, go-gangs are a real pain in the side of Lone Star and other law enforcement providers. Trucking companies pay a protection fee, either to the gangs themselves or to a security company, to dissuade go-gangs from interrupting their commerce. Go-gangs also pay to fuel their bikes (and their unwholesome desires) by smuggling, running guns/drugs/BTLs/whatever and occasionally resorting to legitimate courier work.

Thrill Gangs

In general, street gangs are violent, but not psychotic. Thrill gangs, on the other hand, have cornered the market on psychotic. Thrill gangers are adrenaline junkies, constantly on the lookout for the next big thing, which for them usually involves murder and destruction. They're dirty and morally corrupt, and most squatters know to stay the frag out of their way. A lot of them have stolen or scraped together enough for combat augmentations, and how they love to use them.

Thrill gangs live almost exclusively in the Barrens and other bad neighborhoods, and have their own turf. In addition, they split the 'plex into zones, the same way that law enforcement does. Their zones have other, less savory ratings, like Bloodbath, Breeders, Fragfest, and Playground. Thrill gangs will move into an area, commit all sorts of mayhem, and then buzz back to their hole-ups in the Z-zone they call home.

Thrill gangs are usually lumped in with street gangs and go-gangs (based on whether they have bikes, mostly). The discerning runner should know the difference. With a street gang or go-gang, you can negotiate if you don't want to fight. With a thrill gang, that's rarely an option.

Mr. Johnson: Ganger

Not all gangers shoot at you. Sometimes, they're Mr. Johnson. Most of the time, the ganger hiring you will have money and a tricky and potentially embarrassing situation they need you to fix, meaning they're probably high up the ladder within their gang's power structure. Sometimes a gang will look to hire some extra muscle, or more likely some expertise they can't provide from within their own ranks.

For the most part, gangers aren't bad at filling the anonymous principal role. They live on reputation, so they're good for their debts. A lot of them hold shadowrunners in a kind of awe that borders on reverence. As a result, the chances of getting double-crossed are pretty low ... although so is the pay.



CRIMINAL SYNDICATES

Another group you might find downrange some day is the criminal syndicates. These guys are like gangs with a long reach and a longer history. Like gangers, the criminal operative is interested in preserving the reputation of the syndicate to which he or she has pledged honor, life, and worldly goods.

The syndicates are a lot more well-off than gangs. The barrels you'll be looking down when facing an opponent like the Mafia or the Yakuza are going to be bigger and longer, and you're going to see a lot more magical support. The stakes will be higher, too, because most big criminal organizations are international, with lots of irons in lots of different fires.

There are a few things that separate criminal syndicates from street gangs, other than resources. Most notably, the syndicate is out for power and money, while the gang is usually just out for a thrill. Aside from making the stakes higher, this also lends a certain character (some would say dignity) to the mobster and his organization. Many of those features that set them apart are common in criminal syndicates. If you can learn them, you'll have an easier time negotiating your way around in the underworld.

There's one more secret weapon that mobsters have that gangers don't possess in high quantities: loyalty. And how does a criminal syndicate create such a powerful advantage? They start with four basic ingredients.

Tradition

The average mobster is part of a long and honorable tradition, at least as far as she's concerned. Every branch of every family and clan of every syndicate has its own traditions, rites, rituals, and values that are passed down from member to member, parent to child, leader to successor. Some mobsters would rather die than breach such ancient traditions.

If you've noticed that a strong sense of tradition can be a weakness, here's your gold star. Don't go on to underestimate the strength it can give those who hold it, though. You're probably good enough to take down one mobster, but how about an entire family's worth of thugs gunning for you? If you're that drek-hot, good for you, but otherwise your friends are going to be happy to divvy up your stuff.

Secrecy

Not to say that syndicates don't advertise (where would they be if they didn't?), but members aren't allowed to talk about syndicate business. Sometimes the secrecy just covers operations,

but some syndicates go as far as to hide internal power structures, meetings, leadership roles, and membership.

You might think this isn't a big deal on the threat scale, but think about it. You deal in secrets all the time, and the thing that always bites you in the hoop on a run is the thing you didn't know about. And you know that sense of fraternity that sharing secrets gives people? It goes double for organized crime, which means that crossing one of them means crossing them all.

Respect

Members of a syndicate are usually organized in some kind of hierarchy. This means that lower-ranked people are expected to act with deference toward higher-ranked people. This doesn't make it a paramilitary operation, though. High-ranking mobsters are expected to show respect to those of lower station, too.

This is another round in the clip that helps bind a crime family together. It means that you can probably scan the situation with a bunch of mobsters by watching how they act toward one another, but it also means that an insult to one of them is an insult to all of them. Are you starting to see a pattern yet, chummer?

Honor

Personal responsibility. Principles. Virtue. Integrity. Whatever you want to call it, the mobster has it, or he isn't a mobster very long. Those who have joined a criminal syndicate are held to a very high expectation, and they're not allowed to fail to meet it (Puget Sound has more than a few dishonored former mobsters littering its sea floor). A lot of them extend this expectation to runners, of course, and while they can't exactly enforce their standards on the hired help, they can and do use it to feel superior and smug. That said, they have great respect for those who can act in a manner they consider honorable, which can be a great way to make friends in low places.

Mr. Johnson: Mobster

You could do worse than a criminal syndicate as an employer. They're polite, respectful, discreet, and most importantly willing to give you a retainer. They also make a big deal about settling their debts. That goes both ways: you'll definitely get paid if they like the work you do, but if you've crossed them (on the run in question or previous runs), they might be planning to pay you in lead instead of nuyen. And either way, they tend to settle up promptly.

SEATTLE CRIMINAL SYNDICATES

Posted by: Sly Fax

Want to know who's who in the underworld? Me, too. I started a file on what I already know, but Shadowland is probably the best place for it to be if it's going to be thorough. I know a little something about the Yak, so I'll start with them.

YAKUZA

The yakuza are currently one of the strongest professional criminal syndicates in Seattle. They use a traditional Japanese clan system of different extended families and *kobun* ("foster children"). They've been a bit battered in recent crime world battles, but they still have big plans for the sprawl, especially in light of the resurgent Mafia taking back some of the underworld business in Seattle.

The yakuza has traditionally been mostly made up of Japanese nationals, with a number of Korean foot soldiers handling a lot of the dirty work and muscle jobs. Recently, the yakuza "purified" its ranks, expelling all non-human, non-Japanese members, including the Koreans. These dismissed professional criminals went on to create Seattle's Seoulpa rings, which immediately declared war on the larger yakuza families.

- Don't think their activities are limited to Seattle. The various Yakuza groups have influence throughout the West Coast of North America, and plenty of other cities. Wherever the Japanacorp, especially MCT, go, the Yakuza tend to follow.
- Blitzen
- Or sometimes they go in first. Organized criminals have fewer infrastructure demands than a megacorp, so they can move into an area quicker. They start doing their business, bringing in some money and recruiting soldiers, and they can pave the way for the arrival of a corp like MCT.
- OKFella

SEOULPA RINGS

Posted by: SPD

The Seoulpa rings, as mentioned by Sly, are the remnants of the Korean elements of the Seattle yakuza. This means they have training, experience, and equipment, but not that they are all Korean. While their organization is patterned after Korean organized crime, many of them are no more Korean than the Big D is. In order to thrive, the Seoulpa can't be too picky about who they recruit. They're more interested in loyalty and ability than your heritage.

What happens is that some member of a Seoulpa Ring rises to a leadership role, and a "ring" of followers joins him or her. These rings operate independently, although rings whose leaders are friendly tend to work together. This network of friendship creates *kye*, a system of shared resources between rings. If a leader dies, resigns, or leaves the Seoulpa, their ring dissolves and its members either form a new ring around one of their own or they are absorbed into new rings.

- Just because there's a lot of networking doesn't mean there's a lot of trust. Alliances can be broken up with the right influence in the right place, and kye can be a weak spot if that's your goal.
- Brother Keeper
- The influence wielded, and the danger imposed, by Seoulpa rings waxes and wanes, seemingly at random. They're kind of like mildew: they'll grow anywhere that's been neglected long enough.
- NWO

MAFIA

Posted by: Quinn an Sionnach

The Mafia in Seattle is loosely related to the Sicilians, but leans much more heavily toward the Irish side of the Family. You can find both in the sprawl's underworld.

A few years back, all of the various European mafia families got together and formed the *Commissione*, kind of a global board of directors for the mob. They had to: the yakuza were pushing out mafia interests all over the world, and the Families needed to get together to push back. The *Commissione* started pushing back, and they started by pulling James "the Hammer" O'Malley out of retirement to act as the *capo* of the Seattle Sprawl.

- It was no mistake that O'Malley was sent to the yakuza's biggest stronghold in North America. His hatred for the yaks was what got him put into forced retirement in the first place.
- Twofers
- I was on a run into the O'Malley stately manor to extract one Rowena O'Malley, James O'Malley's daughter, for a Mr. Johnson of the Irish persuasion (it was Ian O'Toole, if you can believe it). Everything went smooth, we'd planted evidence that the yaks were responsible and everything, up until the part where we grabbed the girl. The girl wasn't there. Turns out she's studying law at Harvard. What the frag? Didn't get paid that run, either.
- Quince of Darkness



SEATTLE CRIMINAL SYNDICATES, CONT.

- I just finished reading your post, Quince, when I see that O'Toole's body has been found hanging upside down from a crane downtown, hoop-naked and beaten up real good, bones crushed and the whole nine meters. Scared the hell out of a busload of school kids.
- Alley Kat
- Yeah, I should watch what I post. I just got a hologic of the body, along with a fat certified credstick and a bloody hammer. I can take a hint.
- Quince of Darkness
- This file shouldn't ignore the Triads. They're not as powerful in Seattle as they are in Hong Kong, and they're definitely not on the same level as the other organizations we've already listed, but they're still a force to be reckoned with in the sprawl.
- Wing
- The Triads are very powerful in Hong Kong, it's true, but in Seattle they're somewhere between gangs and the big syndicates. I'd be lying if I said the Triads weren't worth notice, but really most Triad influence in North America is in the California Free State.
- SPD

#NCRUN#000#Y

POLICLUBS

What happens when it becomes pretty clear that your government is run by corrupt politicians of every party elected solely on the backing of megacorps, criminal syndicates, dragons, and other big-money interests? Somebody in Europe had the idea not ten years ago: make a policlub.

A policlub is the Sixth World's answer to political parties. They push a certain agenda, collecting money, recruiting supporters, and otherwise getting extremely pro-active about everything. Some are small grassroots policlubs, like Mothers of Metahumans or the Ork Rights Committee. Some are openly anarchistic, like Der Nachtmachen policlub. Some, like the murderous Alamos 20,000, are nearly indistinguishable from terrorists.

The Party Line

The biggest thing to remember about policlubs is that they're all working toward a single cause. MOM has its pro-metahuman goals, Humanis wants to "preserve rights for humans," SEQUOIA wants to plant trees and reduce logging, and The Dream Policlub

advocates education for all children. There are also religious policlubs that we're not going to list here; it seems like every sect and denomination has three policlubs attached to it.

Most policlubs are pretty harmless, or at least inoffensive. They collect donations, lobby governments and corporations, have fund drives, and raise awareness of their cause. Some can be downright ruthless in their goals. It's these last kind of policlubs that can hit you where it hurts when you're not looking.

Generally speaking, if the other side is a policlub, expect to face more passion than actual tactical ability or combat prowess. When you do face real opposition, it's either because you've hit one of the more militant clubs, or it's because they've hired real muscle. The real threat a policlub poses is through publicity: a policlub is more likely to hit you in the media than in the face.

Mr. Johnson: Policlub

Letting yourself get hired by a policlub is like owning a leshy and a hand grenade. The situation might not blow up in your face, but you rarely come out ahead. Still, policlub nuyen is just as digital as anybody else's nuyen, and if you agree (or at least don't violently disagree) with what the policlub stands for, the jobs usually pay well for what the client needs.

GOVERNMENT FORCES

When a shadowrunner hears that the government is out to get her, it's probably literally true. Most of the time, unless the run is against the government itself or against an innocent (as in until-proven-guilty) civilian or non-extraterritorial business interest under the government's protection, they don't care.

Take the example of the van full of runners who were pulled over by the police. The cop asked them what they were doing. The driver told him: we're about to make a run on an unnamed megacorp. The officer asked if they were armed (yes), and if they intended any mayhem on public streets (no), then just wished them luck and sent them on their way.

When the run is against the government, however, you might be facing some big guns. While not every district clerk's office and water treatment plant is guarded like Fort Knox, there are plenty of high-security areas that belong to The People. Don't forget that the local government has access not only to police forces, but government militias, national guards, and standing armies, and fighting military means facing lots of augmentations and big guns.

All Politics is Local

Most of the time, governments have what they need (or more likely just under what they need) to function. Unfortunately for you, the part of the budget that rarely gets skimmed on is security. You'll be facing professional security, militia, highly trained agents, or even military personnel, depending on what level of government you're running against. There will definitely be some drone coverage (thanks to ever-present lucrative military contracts), and probably magical support, definitely in runs on sprawl-level government or higher. The good news is that if they end up overwhelming you, you can always surrender and they probably won't kill you, just toss you in prison with a criminal SIN.

Mr. Johnson: Government

For the most part, it's not the government as a whole that hires you. The money might come from national or local coffers, but Mr. Johnson is rarely representing more than one or two people. Sometimes investigative wings need some help going where they're not allowed to go. Sometimes it's a clandestine agency that needs some help. The great thing about working for a government employee is that you'll get paid well, since your jing isn't coming out of Mr. Johnson's budget. On the other hand, you're not getting much back up, either.

Another related employer (or target) is the political candidate. An election is a great time for shadowrunners. There's work for datasteals, blackmail, bodyguarding, even kidnapping and network. Political candidates really like to keep things tidy, which can be good or bad. It means they'll either pay in full or try to get rid of you. Either way, it's an opportunity that only comes once every couple of years or so.

GOVERNMENTS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Posted by: **Borderwolf**

If your run is going to take you out of Seattle, and some day it probably will, you're going to need to know what else is out there.

THE SALISH-SHIDHE COUNCIL

Seattle is surrounded by the Salish-Shidhe Council lands. The nation is itself made up of five tribal states. Some of these tribes are tribes with a long history, and a couple have formed since the Awakening during the Plains Revival. Its government structure is very weakly federal, with most of the power in the hands of the individual tribes and the inter-tribal Council acting as envoys between the tribes and other nations, and as mediators as necessary.

Cascade Crow

The Cascade Crow tribe borders Seattle to the north and east, extending east and north into the Cascade mountains. They are strongly traditionalist, from their natural cultivation to their storytelling to the way they wear their hair (two long braids for women, one long braid for men). They use paths and horses rather than roads and cars, except at oases and trading posts along I-90. They are up-to-date in at least one respect: They use modern weapons and armor, along with other military hardware as required.

It is the current stance of the tribal council that all those of African, European, or Asian descent be removed from North America, but so far all they've managed is to send those in their own tribal lands packing to other lands or to Seattle.

- We Crow aren't racists. We just want our land to belong to the tribe, and folks from other continents aren't part of the tribe. We don't mind if you're visiting on business, just don't take our land or our resources.
- Bright Bird
- If you're not racist, why are you at war with the Cascade Orks? They're Crow, too, but they were kicked out of the tribe when they goblinized back in the day.
- Half-Keg

SHADOWRUN 2050



GOVERNMENTS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST, CONT.

Cascade Orks

The Cascade Orks formed when about fifteen percent of the Cascade Crow tribe became orks and trolls in the early 2020s. These changed members left the main tribe and formed their own tribe in the Cascade mountains proper, due east of Seattle. They absorbed other goblinized members of other tribes who felt that they had been mistreated, along with other orks and trolls from surrounding countries. They tried to cultivate the land, but found that trade (both legal and illegal) was more profitable for the tribe as a whole.

The Cascade Orks have a democratic society that borders on anarchical. Those who make it to the nightly meetings may vote on simple issues. If debate goes on for too long, the matter is referred to the next weekly meeting. Issues not resolved at the weekly meetings go to the monthly meeting, where they are resolved one way or another. Necessary tasks, like executive leadership, project leadership, participation on committees to change tribal laws, and so forth are assigned to tribe members by random lot.

- The Cascade Orks are not bandits, really. True, they don't ask a lot of questions when travelers come rolling in for refueling, or to rest, or just hide out, but very few of them are actually trafficking in illegal goods. They're more like the safe house of the North Cascades. For the most part, they're polite and friendly.
- Choppa
- They're not exactly polite and friendly during border disputes with the Cascade Crow. More like angry and merciless.
- Breaks Rocks
- The random delegation of authority works in small numbers, but I'd hate to see what happens when the Cascade Orks try to keep that system when they get too big.
- Texas 2-Step
- If they get that big.
- Bright Bird

Makah

The Makah are the geeks of the Salish-Shidhe, controlling the Olympic Peninsula. They use their lands as efficiently as possible, using both technological and magical techniques along with the very best natural resource maintenance policies to create a very productive and sustainable tribal state. As a result, the Makah tribe is easily the wealthiest of the tribes in the Council. They keep a tight control on both tribal

immigration and trade, but if you prove valuable to the tribe, they will welcome you with open arms.

- Carla Arrigucci is the chief of the Makah Executive Board, which means she's in charge except when she's vetoed by the board. The Makah are a small enough tribe where if you deal with them, you'll deal with her.
- GN Time
- The Makah tribe also has three old decommissioned Ohio-class submarines they inherited along with the Kitsap-Bangor Naval Base. They're in the process of refurbishing them as cargo carriers for lumber. Rumor has it that they're building a shipyard there as well.
- Montello
- Word on the Peninsula is that the Makah also have a pair of draconic allies. They came on the scene in '45 and are rumored to be living in the mountains.
- Speaker with the Trees

Salish

The Salish tribe is the most influential tribe in the Salish-Shidhe Council. Their territory extends from southwest Seattle south to the old border of Washington state and west to the ocean. Their main industry is trade and providing power for most of the Pacific Northwest. They also maintain a larger military, which includes the elite Salish Ranger Force and the Border Patrol. Salish maintains the Council lands' borders, keeping an especially close eye on Seattle.

- No drek, they're the most influential tribe in the Council. Their fraggin' name's on it.
- Bull
- The Salish have a Tribal Council and a Tribal Chairman. The current Chairman is Geoffrey Pale Horse, who spends most of his time herding cats with the other tribes. His lieutenant, Avery-Anne N'llamqeh, is less of a right-hand woman as an underhanded facilitator.
- Local Colour
- I've met with Avery-Anne "Double A" N'llamqeh. She's got that combination of kindness, delight, and ruthlessness that's just so darn fun to work with.
- Stoner
- How do you pronounce "N'llamqeh?"
- Sitter
- "Ms. Johnson."
- Stoner



GOVERNMENTS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST, CONT.

Sinsearach

The Sinsearach tribe is the most populous tribe in the Council. For membership, they require you to be an elf, the child of an elf, or Awakened, so nearly all members of the tribe are elves. They cultivate the land with a philosophy similar to the Cascade Crow, only with a much stronger bent toward magic.

The Sinsearach control the area to the southeast of Seattle. They are a loose meritocracy with several hierarchies that control different aspects of tribal affairs.

- It was the meritocracy part that split the tribe fifteen years ago. The Salish-Shidhe Council used to control all of what is now Tír Tairngire, you know. Some of the tribe thought that birthright was more important than personal merit, so they broke off and started themselves a monarchy.
- Blue Torch
- Miles Sarley is the name of the current tribal chieftain, although he prefers to go by the name Treats With Spirits. He's a powerful magician, but peaceful, almost zen, really.
- Errand
- He comes off as disassociated with reality, yet he manages to stay in power. He's either a step ahead of everybody or he's a puppet.
- Ten Tasks
- Either way, the Sinsearach aren't typically troublemakers. Unless you're making trouble in their lands, in which case don't forget that they've got a higher percentage of Awakened people than most places do.
- Absent Mind

NEAR NEIGHBORS

If you wander far enough, you'll run into some other nations in and around Seattle. This is just an overview. If you're going on a road trip, make sure you do some real reading first.

Tír Tairngire

Tír Tairngire separated from the Sinsearach tribe of the Salish-Shidhe Council and closed its borders. They are a very secretive nation that has a strong policy of isolationism with respect to its neighbors. Here's what we do know.

Tír Tairngire is a monarchy, although it is unknown whether it is a constitutional monarchy, an elected monarchy, or a hereditary monarchy. It's also not clear if the monarch's powers are

dictatorial in nature. The High Prince, Lugh Surehand, proclaims his nation is a "Principality of Magic." His Council of Princes, apparently an oligarchic advisory committee, advise the High Prince on policy.

Tír Tairngire is a member of the United Nations, but not a signatory of the Business Recognition Accords, which means that the megacorporations are barred from the country. Travel visas are rarely issued, and then almost exclusively to non-humans or the Awakened.

- The High Prince does have absolute authority in the country, but absolute authority does not always produce absolute power. The Princes of the council have their own motives and powers, even if they are technically sworn to the service of the High Prince. There have already been a number of attempts on the High Prince's life, none of which have succeeded.
- Aegis
- With great power comes great conspiracy stories. Do tell.
- Never Thrill
- I can't tell you who is on the Council of Princes at the moment. While it's predominantly elves, as you would expect, it currently includes two dwarfs, two dragons, one sasquatch, and an ork. Needless to say, all are magicians of the highest caliber.
- Spes
- Not all of them, Spes.
- The Laughing Man
- My team was dodging a Salish Ranger t-bird near the Tír border. We didn't have many options, so we crossed the river into the Tír. Next thing we know, we're waking up two clicks north of the border. We've got a few extra wounds, all of which have been treated and bandaged. Not the spookiest thing that's ever happened to me, but the only time I've been to the Tír.
- Hugo
- You were no doubt intercepted by the Tír Tairngire border patrol, defeated, captured, dosed with laés, and deposited across the border. More than likely, you had a guard watching over you until you woke.
- Aegis
- What the frag is laés?
- Doctor Grim
- It's a drug derived from the laésal tree, an Awakened kind of appley thing that grows in the Tír. It causes drowsiness and memory loss.
- Dodger



GOVERNMENTS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST, CONT.

- There is a megacorporate presence in Tír Tairngire, and even an extraterritorial one. The corporation must be screened by the Council of Princes and gain a corporate charter from the High Prince himself, with even more red tape if the corp wants extraterritorial status. Needless to say, very few megacorporations have made the cut.
- Spes
- It is a nation rich in both material and magical treasure. A foothold in Tír Tairngire is something all corporations desire.
- Aegis

Tsimshian

The Tsimshian Nation is one of the most modern of the former members of the Native American Nations. It is very much like the UCAS: an industrialized democratic republic with a free-market economy. Tsimshian has many ports along its Pacific coast, and its primary industries are shipping, manufacturing, and fishing.

Most of the traditional symbols and customs of the Tsimshian tribe are still observed, but almost exclusively with a modern flavor. Families live in modern apartments and homes rather than longhouses, but family groups tend to stay in the same neighborhood. Major social events include a potlatch, but the gifts are often wrapped in festive paper or come in the form of a gift certificate on a credstick. Formline artwork covers everything, but it's made of plastic, ferrocrete, or faux wood.

- Tsimshian has a lot of industry and manufacturing places, especially near the coasts where goods can be easily shipped. A lot of wageslaves and sararimen can be found in Tsimshian, even if their suits have fringes.
- Juice McCune
- Mitsuhamas has a strong presence in Tsimshian. Ever since the legislature gave MCT preferred trade status, they've brought a lot of business to the country.
- Sister Bro
- Don't confuse business with GDP. Tsimshian has the worst pay for labor in North America. Whatever Aztechnology is doing to Aztlan, MCT is doing worse to Tsimshian.
- Watches Through Windows

Dunkelzahn's Domain

Lake Louise is a glacial lake nestled in a large forest west of Calgary. The mountainous terrain and nearby glacier feeds the lake, and the forest stretches across the border between the Algonkian-Manitou Council and the Athabaskan Council. The lake is famous for the Chateau Lake Louise, a grand hotel built in the nineteenth century style. Shortly after the great dragon Dunkelzahn appeared, he flew to Lake Louise and declared it, along with the entire forest touching it, as his domain.

- No one argued.
- Brand
- To be fair, the Big D did give fair market value plus ten percent to the owners of the Chateau, and it's not like anybody was using the forest as anything other than a national park. Now the tourists' money goes to him instead of A-M or the Athabaskan Council. I don't hear them complaining, either.
- Dracophile
- And how do you argue with a great dragon? Besides, he's a good neighbor.
- Calgary
- Dunkelzahn switches between calling the place Lake Louise or the Lake of Little Fishes. I'm not sure why. Maybe that's the name in whatever mojo language dragons speak.
- Undertaken
- That's a lot of land to just take, over half a million hectares. That's many times bigger than the Seattle Sprawl. Did the Big D pay off the countries he took the land from?
- Polygon
- No idea. I can't find any transaction records for any deals with either the Algonkian-Manitou Council or the Athabaskan Council, but then looking up financial records for a great dragon is ... tricky.
- FastJack
- If you didn't find anything, then nobody's going to find anything.
- Polygon
- Hey Borderwolf, Lake Louise isn't exactly in the neighborhood of Seattle. It's not even in the next country over. Why is it on this list?
- Findler-Man
- No real reason. It was just too cool to pass up.
- Borderwolf

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CORPORATE FORCES

A lot of runs, probably close to half, are jobs that will wrap you all up in corporate interests. That's not to say that every megacorp has its hand in every shadowrun, or that every corp sponsoring a run is one of the almighty ones with infinitely deep pockets. There are corporations and there are corporations. The Corporate Court rates businesses from AAA to D. The ones with the A's in their ratings are multinational players, and everybody else is just investment or buyout material. We'll start with the low end.

Low-End Corporations

The corporations rated from B (small but safe investment) to D (in default and spiraling out of control) are small enough to be barely worth the notice of the other rated companies. Their security looks a lot like local security, and all but the largest of these corps rely on local law enforcement for protection. In really critical times, they'll bring in a security service provider, mercenaries, or even their own shadowrun team to provide whatever extra help they need.

The thing about the little guys is, well, they're not that big. That means that they're trying to protect pretty much everything they have going for them. If you go up against the unrated companies, you may not encounter the armies that the megas can throw up against you, but you'll be facing another weapon that can be just as dangerous as bullets or spells: desperation.

The Middle Tier

A-rated and AA-rated corporations are a different story. These businesses aren't running the world, but they have plenty of clout. Middle-tier corporations have their own full-time security, probably with augmentations, undoubtedly with drone and magical back up. Their buildings include security riggers, their Matrix hosts are packed with more IC than an organlegger's van, and AA-rated corps even have extraterritorial privileges, so shooting first and asking questions later is standard operating procedure.

The Megacorps

The big corps with the AAA rating are the big time when it comes to shadowrunning. Most often, you'll be running against subsidiaries, outlying assets, or plausibly deniable facilities outside of main corporate territories. Once in a while, you'll find yourself on a run against one of the Big Eight.

Know this: The megas don't care about you. If you're somewhere you're not supposed to be, they'll try to kill you. They'll tear into you with lead, spirits, spells, IC, and anything else handy that they can throw at you. And that's the sugar-coated version. Corporate security ranges from competent to elite, and they're all augmented. Standing security forces (I mean the ones with the big guns, not just the security guards who are trained to observe and report) are like standing military, with regular practice, drilling, on-site barracks, and a command structure. They're ready for anything, and they're ready to give better than they get.

It's not easy to survive an encounter with them, but if you do, you're definitely in the big time.

Mr. Johnson: Corporation

Corporations are probably the only place you'll find people who act as Mr. Johnson professionally (they're often known as short-term contract managers or freelance resource executives). Corp jobs for megas are lucrative and dangerous, demanding the utmost in professionalism, talent, and risk. Any given professional Mr. Johnson is used to keeping secrets, and he gives out information like it's his own blood. Rated corps have their own operatives, of course, but using shadowrunners allows them to disavow any knowledge of your actions with little to no evidence linking your job to their machinations.

When they pay, they pay well, but sometimes burning a runner team is in the budget. If Mr. Johnson has his own agenda, or he hasn't been allocated the full amount you agreed on, or any number of other things happening behind the scenes, you're not going to get paid. There's not a whole lot you can do about this, so get a good fixer who can vouch for Mr. J. and maybe even hold fees for you. Still, there's probably only one in six or so runs that will go bad, and unless you're prepared to bring down a corporation larger than a nation, you're just going to have to suck it up.

Most of your jobs from corporations are going to come from the unrated B-through-D crowd. Most of them can't do much on their own. Their motivations are a lot less convoluted at that level, too, which makes for a safer run all around. It's always nice to have an employer that actually wants you to succeed as much as you do.



THE BIG EIGHT

By Nightfire

There are eight megacorps that have a AAA rating from the Corporate Council. They have all the gold, so they make the rules. Altogether the Big Eight make up more than half of all of the commerce in the world, and they have an impact on most shadowruns, even the ones not paid for or directed against them, so you need to know the basics about them if you want to make it in the shadows.

ARES MACROTECHNOLOGIES, INC.

Most shadowrunners know Ares from their Ares Arms division, and with good reason. The Ares Predator is the staple sidearm for the discerning runner, and not by accident. Ares weapons are reliable pieces of solid craftsmanship, but they're only part of what makes Ares a mega.

Ares was started by Nicholas “Old Nick” Aurelius in Detroit around the turn of the century. He passed his legacy on to his son Leonard after jumping on the extraterritorial bandwagon and laying the groundwork for the globe-spanning corp his son owns most of today.

- Used to own most of. He and Damien Knight are neck-and-neck for percentage of shares in the company. That's why Knight is the CEO and Aurelius is the chairman of the board.
- Showme

Another big player in Ares Macrotech is Damien Knight. He shocked the world when he managed to get his hands on twenty-two percent of Ares in a move known throughout economic history as the Nanosecond Buyout. The board was so impressed that they immediately made him CEO of the company. His close partnership with Leonard Aurelius means the corp has run smoothly ever since, with the day-to-day business handled by Knight.

- Close? Smooth? Aurelius and Knight are bitter rivals. The only reason that Knight has any traction in that corp is that he's got something on Aurelius.
- Blitz
- Knight and Aurelius aren't the only big shareholders of Ares—together, they own less than half of the corp's shares. Gavilan Ventures is the next biggest owner with about twelve percent of Ares, which means that both of them need to be nice to the venture group, which in turn means being nice to whoever owns Gavilan.
- The Chromed Accountant

THE BIG EIGHT, CONT.

- I have some paydata that claims that Gavilan is a shell company for Damien Knight. I can't confirm it, but the source is good.
- Silicon Hit
- Is Gavilan industries any relation to Major David Gavilan, the guy who created Echo Mirage and practically the whole Matrix? Maybe that's what he did after he disappeared back in the early thirties, start a holding company for his retirement.
- Press
- Wait a minute! Ares is owned in part by Damien Knight, who appeared in the early thirties with a "major Matrix" coup just after "Matrix Major" David Gavilan disappears, whose name appears in the name of another major shareholder of Ares, which means ... Damien Knight is David Gavilan! Conspiracy theory!
- Span'd Axe
- Sounds silly, but so did dragons once.
- Tinear
- Damien Knight is one shrewd dude. He's a master of strategy, predicting his opponents' moves before they make them. He's friends with Dunkelzahn, who has spoken highly of him on occasion. They play chess, and *Wyrm Talk Monthly* published a game that Knight won. Apparently that doesn't happen too often, but often enough to make you respect Knight.
- Captain Chaos
- I find that hard to believe. The Big D has had thousands of years to master chess.
- Bunting
- D learned chess after the Awakening. The game's only been around for like 1,500 years, drekhead. How do you think he learned it while he was asleep, with subliminal tapes?
- Shootz
- Cap, you subscribe to a talk-show magazine?
- Bull
- Shut up.
- Captain Chaos
- I met Leonard Aurelius once. He met my team after a run, introducing himself as the real Mr. Johnson who had hired us. He was very impressed and wasn't above inviting us to the Hilton so he could say it to our faces. He's all right for an exec.
- Grape Yo-Yo

Ares is split into mostly autonomous divisions. This means that Ares Arms, AresSpace, Hard Corps,

Ares CAS, Ares Asia, Knight Errant, Ares Global Entertainment, and so on are usually unaware of one another's operations. Each division creates its own sub-divisions that also operate autonomously.

Sometimes there is competition between divisions. This often comes on the edges of markets that the divisions peripherally share. In the worst case, as with Hard Corps and Knight Errant, the divisions are competing in the same market and will escalate to rivalry.

- There's a pretty good internal rivalry going between just about all Ares divisions. I'd say about half of the runs I've had that I could trace to a Mr. Johnson from Ares actually targeted another division of Ares.
- Argent

Security is handled by each division separately, so runners performing different runs on Ares can find different situations each time. Most divisions hire within Ares, usually choosing Hard Corps, Knight Errant Security, or Ares Arms (in that order, based on how tight the security needs to be).

- Hard Corps is a bunch of thugs, and KE is pretty much like any cop in the world. Ares Arms security forces are pro-military who know their biz, so if you see that Spartan helmet logo on the sleeve, duck.
- Princess

AZTECHNOLOGY

As the most diversified of the Big Eight, Aztechnology has fingers in just about every pie in the world. Their holdings include textiles, agricultural and manufactured food, heavy munitions, medical supply and technology, pharmaceutical manufacturing, heavy industry, cybertechnology, light construction, education, media, software, thaumaturgical products, and the proverbial partridge in the pear tree.

The president and CEO of Aztechnology is Juan Atzcapotzalco, an Aztlan citizen and charismatic spokesman for the company. It's good for the corp that he's so well received and photogenic, since just about nothing else about the company is known publicly. Aztechnology is a privately traded company, so its list of shareholders is not available to the public. It has no military assets or security services listed in any public database. We know that each continent has its own division with regional sub-divisions, but beyond that the company's structure is unknown.



THE BIG EIGHT, CONT.

- That's not strictly true. The information gets out, but Aztechnology fervently and enthusiastically goes after it whenever it pops up on the Matrix. So at least we know they've got some drek-hot deckers, to complement their vaunted public relations apparatus.
- Captain Chaos
- Okay, then let's pool what we *do* know about the Big A. All I've got is that they own Trés Chic, Hawker-Siddley, Pemex, Nat Vat, and ChinanTech.
- Bugsy
- Don't forget Stuffer Shack. Stay what you want about the Azzies, but don't dump drek on my Shack.
- Stuph
- Aztechnology is heavy into magical research, too. You see a lot of spirits, wards, and other indirect magical security at their facilities.
- Thistle Charmer
- I've heard some pretty scary drek from some chummers who have gone deep into Aztlan on a run. Spirits of blood, plants rising up to strangle them, all kinds of nightmare things. Most of them didn't come back. The ones who did have pretty bad post-traumatic stress.
- Toby K
- I've gone against the nightmare things you're talking about, or at least I think I have. Spirits can take all kinds of forms, even scary bloody ones. Your chummers just ran up against a spirit of man, probably conjured by a wage mage that was pretty fragged up in the head. I'm sorry that your friends pulled a run that went sideways, but that's the risk we take.
- Safe Hex
- Aztechnology has long studied the very edges of magic, where there is both power and darkness. It is best not to look too deeply.
- Man-of-Many-Names
- Aztlan uses a lot of automated security and security riggers. I'm prepped for pop-up turrets every time I hear the word "Aztechnology."
- Sahara Stripe
- Speaking of Aztlan, what about Aztechnology's ties to Aztlan? The corporation practically owns the country, and only a Corporate Court injunction keeps them from being blatant about it. The ORO Corporation, which is what Azzie used to be called, invented the Matrix-based elections back in the teens and sold it to Aztlan. After that, it was Aztechnology and Aztlan, best chummers forever.
- Red Block
- Atzcapotzalco is a charmer, all right, but he's the only one you see representing Aztechnology proper. There's hundreds of spokesmodels and execs for the different pieces once you go far enough down the corporate

- structure (I mean, who doesn't think Stuffie is adorable?). Once you hit regional, though, it's all hush-hush.
- Bloodcrusher
- I've got it on good authority that the corporation is run by a conspiracy of dragons—feathered serpents to be exact.
- Dragonslayer
- That guy running around your neighborhood wearing nothing but boxer shorts on his head and using a rusty colander as a shield does not count as a "good authority." What would a bunch of feathered serpents want with running a metahuman corporation? And dragons don't work together, drekhead.
- Slowhand
- Ever heard of Lofwyr, Slowhand? And it's not unknown for lesser dragons to band together against larger forces. Here's a question for you: Why has no one ever been able to assense Atzcapotzalco's aura properly?
- Dragonslayer

FUCHI INDUSTRIAL ELECTRONICS

Fuchi is hands down the most advanced computer and Matrix corporation on the planet. They invented the ASIST technology used for the virtual reality of the Matrix. They own the rights to the programming languages used to make more than eighty percent of the tech used in the modern world.

- We have a lot to thank Fuchi for. The decks we use, most of the cyberware, just about all of our trids and personal dataterms, not to mention the entire global economic infrastructure. Heck, Shadowland wouldn't exist without Fuchi's innovations. The war to free information couldn't be fought without them.
- Fuchi Mama
- Don't forget that we've got Fuchi to thank for IC, too, including Black IC. Fuchi's fighting on both sides of that free information war you're talking about, and they're making billions off of it.
- Captain Chaos

Fuchi's "board of directors" is really just a triumvirate of the three biggest shareholders, each owning about a third of the company. The first of the three is CEO Richard Villiers, a New York native who spends most of his time at Fuchito Tower in Tokyo. He brought technology from Echo Mirage into the company. Next is Shikei Nakatomi, head of the Nakatomi family and direct heir to the ancient and powerful Nakatomi clan. The third is Korin Yamana, founder of Yamana Electronics.



THE BIG EIGHT, CONT.

- The Fuchi Three aren't the only ones who own Fuchi shares, just the biggest ones. There are a few holding companies that own less than one percent each. Then there's Villiers' ex-wife Samantha, who owns two percent and still runs Fuchi Northwest.
- The Chromed Accountant
- Samantha Villiers is the face of Fuchi in the Pacific Northwest nations, and the western half of the UCAS. If you're running in Seattle, she's definitely one of the players. She's powerful, brilliant, deadly, ruthless—oh, and smoking hot and completely eligible if you want to try your luck.
- Trimmer
- You could try her daughter, too. She's got to be turning eighteen soon, ne?
- Rampant
- There's another two percent Fuchi owner: Sepan Private Investments.
- Halloweenie
- Sepan? SPI is one of Dunkelzahn's holding companies. What do you know.
- Maurice
- Villiers got enough of the company to become CEO in exchange for his Echo Mirage tech, true enough, but it wasn't all that clean and simple. Shikei's dad, Kiyoshi Nakatomi, owned the Nakatomi half of Fuchi when Villiers approached the corp. Yamana was all for giving Villiers an equal controlling share of the corp for the ASIST tech he offered, but Kiyoshi Nakatomi was dead set against it. Emphasis on "dead," because the elder Nakatomi was assassinated by his own driver. Shortly thereafter, Shikei stepped into his father's shoes and put his stamp of approval on the deal, vaulting both Villiers and Fuchi into the megajing.
- Papa P
- Where do you think Villiers got the rights to the ASIST tech? He started by buying Matrix Systems in Boston just before it went under. Then he hired two former Echo Mirage techs to use their experience to recreate, refine, and share the patent of the technology. Then, when they were separately, "accidentally," brutally killed (a complete coincidence in the timing, of course), the patent was owned wholly by Matrix Systems, which sold it to Villiers on its way to bankruptcy and dissolution for a song.
- Watches Through Windows
- The three guys in charge of Fuchi don't really play well together. When it comes to external threats, they put on a united front, but they're constantly at each other's throats behind the scenes. That's not to say that they're ever rude or even uncooperative, but there is a constant internal shadow war in Fuchi that's going to tear the mega apart if it's not resolved.
- Kultureshock
- Fuchi has the smallest military and security forces of the Big Eight. As you'd expect, what assets they have use bleeding-edge technology. Even their magical staff has some kind of electronic assistance or augmentations.
- Whizzer
- It goes without saying that their Matrix security is far and away the tightest and deadliest in the world.
- FastJack
- That's why I didn't say it.
- Nightfire

MITSUHAMA COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES

Mitsuhamas is number two compared to Fuchi in the computer industry, but they are more diverse. MCT specializes in physical interfaces (if you're reading this on a screen, it probably says MCT on it), robotics, and engineering machines. When your datafax turns silicate powder into your morning screamsheet, it's using an MCT-patented process. MCT also has major holdings in industry, the media, and magical research and production.

Mitsuhamas was built from the ground up by Taiga Mitsuhamas. After a decade of hard work, the company had an initial public offering that made Taiga and his son fantastically wealthy and rocketed the company into the ranks of the megacorps. MCT is still a publicly traded company, with the four biggest shareholders holding only about a ten percent share each.

- Those four biggest shareholders are Samba Oi, Yuriyasu Shin, Oguramaro Saigusa, and Akai Uehara. They are the oyabun of the four biggest yakuza clans in Japan. To frag with MCT is to frag with the yaks.
- Tuna Phish
- What happened to "Tiger" Mitsuhamas, anyway?
- Brolin
- He and his son own like two percent each in the corp. I suspect they're spending their days relaxing. They're still technically on the board, they're just not all that active about it. The Yakuza are good to their people.
- Golf Tango
- Luckily, it's never the other way around.
- Central

THE BIG EIGHT, CONT.

- Most MCT shareholders have holdings in other places, most notably other AAA and AA corps. That means that just about every action that Mitsuhamas can take ends up potentially harming the interests of at least part of its body of shareholders. That makes for interesting board meetings, interesting shareholder meetings, and lots and lots of shadowruns.
- The Chromed Accountant

Mitsuhamas security and military forces are almost the smallest of the megacorps. They make up for it in readiness and training. Regular MCT security forces might as well be military. They also have a security policy known as the *Zero Zone*. The perimeter of a Zero Zone is protected with deadly and overwhelming force. Any intruders into that zone are terminated without question or hesitation.

Mitsuhamas does nothing to camouflage its security forces. Its security is always present, formidable, and not in any way discreet. The corp includes strong magical security in all of its facilities and every MCT property, from their HQ in Kyoto to the Ding-n-Dent Outlet at the mall, have astral patrols.

- If you hear “Zero Zone” anywhere in a job description, you’d better be charging double.
- Blake
- MCT isn’t something to be feared that much. It’s not like they’re out for your blood.
- Mace
- Yes it is. It’s exactly like they’re out for your blood. It’s not just MCT either—a lot of other megas and some government militaries have adopted the Zero Zone concept. It’s just that MCT enforces it in all of their territories, all of the time.
- SPD

RENRAKU COMPUTER SYSTEMS

Renraku is yet another computer giant. Where other computer megas focus on the virtual world, interfaces, and devices, Renraku has the biggest software patent portfolio in the world (and orbit). The programs, utilities, and IC that Fuchi sells is made up of sub-programs and algorithms licensed from Renraku, who also licenses control utilities and firmware to MCT.

Renraku is controlled by CEO Inazo Aneki and board president Yukiako Watanabe. Aneki founded the business as a holding company in 2029 and



THE BIG EIGHT, CONT.

has been at the reins ever since. Watanabe is a competent businesswoman with a long history of success and has been called “the only human being in creation who can keep Aneki in check” by one anonymous shareholder.

- I'd love to know which shareholder. There might be some leverage in that.
- Our Lady of Ordinance
- Don't bother. Nobody in the company, not even Inazo, owns enough shares to be mentioned in CC filings. Heck, even Yukiako and Inazo don't have more than four or five percent each, and they're among the most major shareholders.
- Abukuma
- It's true that Inazo can be a bit ... eccentric. He tends to focus on his own projects, sometimes to the detriment of other parts of the corp. It used to be that if you kept tabs on his pet of the month, you could figure out which parts of Renraku's Matrix intergrid were more vulnerable for datasteals.
- Sprinkler
- That was also true of physical security, and magical security too. That was before he decided to make the Red Samurai one of his pet projects.
- Footballer

Renraku is the owner/operator of the Red Samurai, an elite military force based in Chiba City (along with Renraku headquarters). They are one of the world's most formidable elite units, stationed globally in major Renraku facilities. They are deployed in squads of five soldiers, at least one of which is an initiated Awakened magician or physical adept. Each team trains and lives together, becoming a closely connected unit.

- The selection process for the Red Samurai is pretty strict and very Japanese. A bit sexist, very racist. The result is that it's hard for them to covertly infiltrate into any social scene that has any diversity beyond male Japanese humans. They'll usually contract those out to shadowrunners.
- Kukri
- More jobs for us! I was part of a team that was hired for covert ops by a Red Samurai squad. We almost freaked and started a fight in the club we were using for a meet. Some of us were casing the joint, looking for Mr. Johnson's people in the crowd, while I talked to Mr. J himself. We pegged that they were Red Samurai by the time we found the third one. A minute later, we'd made the fourth and were looking for the fifth when I realized that number five was the guy I was sitting with! I nearly jumped out of my seat, but I covered it by spilling some soycaf and Mr. Red Johnson was polite enough not to notice.
- Synthpop

- The Renraku Arcology has a Red Samurai unit in at least company strength. They're not shy about leaving the arcology to cover other company interests in the Seattle Sprawl, either.
- Hatchetman

SAEDER-KRUPP AKTIENGESELLSCHAFT

Saeder-Krupp is not famous for being the most powerful megacorp in the Sixth World. It's not famous for its near-monopoly on heavy industry, nor its large holdings in financial and chemical economic sectors. Saeder-Krupp is known for being owned by a dragon.

The great dragon Lofwyr is the President and CEO of S-K, and he did it practically under the noses of the previous owners. In 2037, he revealed his ownership of the three hundred or so holding companies that owned a total of sixty-three percent of the corp, elected himself president, appointed himself CEO, and fired the board of trustees. Since then, Saeder-Krupp has disappeared from public markets and is listed as a privately traded corporation.

- I had heard that Lofwyr now owns one hundred percent of S-K.
- Blue Slim
- There's no real difference whether he does or doesn't. For all intents and purposes, he's the owner.
- The Chromed Accountant
- What went on before Lofwyr took over?
- Catfire
- Saeder-Krupp used to be BMW back in the teens. When Michel Beloit took over BMW, he chartered the growth of the company, developing t-birds and bringing more companies into the fold, including both Saeder Munitions and Friedrich Krupp AG, which is where it got its modern name. Beloit died under mysterious circumstances (natch), leaving his stake in the company to his wife, Wilhelmina Graff-Beloit. She started expanding the now-megacorp even faster than her husband had and was blindsided (along with her entire staff and the board) when Lofwyr took over.
- The Chromed Accountant
- She fought Lofwyr tooth and nail for control of Saeder-Krupp, in the end confronting the dragon directly. Nobody knows the details of what happened except that she wasn't eaten. Even though he won, Lofwyr pays for Graff-Beloit's very posh suite on Zurich Orbital out of his own pocket.
- Dracophile



THE BIG EIGHT, CONT.

Lofwyr keeps a close eye on all corporate operations. The rule against micromanagement doesn't seem to apply to dragons, or at least not Lofwyr. The S-K CEO seems to enjoy keeping tabs on his holdings at all levels. Most employees have reported that as a boss he is supportive, helpful, grateful, and as quick to reward as to reprimand.

- Well, now we know who's subsidizing this file.
- Sobriquet
- Hey, I'm just reporting the facts, chummer.
- Nightfire
- No metahuman on earth could possibly keep track of the biz of an entire megacorp. Are dragons really that much more advanced than us?
- Montague
- Apparently, chummer. That's why you shouldn't cut a deal with one.
- Wiz-Bang

While Saeder-Krupp has civilian and military security for its holdings, there is little distinction between the two except for insignia. In typical S-K publicity-focused fashion, security forces rarely use deadly force unless fired on first, seeking to find a peaceful resolution first. There are no Saeder-Krupp Zero Zones. The mega is also very fond of hiring shadowrunners for their less overt operations.

- I call bulldrek on the no Zero Zone thing. A chummer of mine walked into an S-K lab on a run and was smacked with mojo the moment she set foot across the threshold. I watched her get paralyzed and then *freeze-dried* before my eyes, and suddenly she was burning like napalm. Six seconds later there was nothing left but a smoldering grease stain.
- Image
- That was an accident caused when your friend unfortunately breached the lab's containment due to her failure to follow posted safety protocols. Rest assured that Miss Redfeather's next of kin have received our deepest condolences and are being provided for unstintingly in recompense for this regrettable tragedy.
- S. K. Johnson, Esq.
- A number of runners have been hired with S-K money by a Mr. Johnson named Hans Brackhaus. I've heard that he's an elf, a human, a dwarf, an ork, short, tall, skinny, fat, dark-haired, light-haired, and bald. What's going on with that?
- Everybody's Favorite Fixer

- Hans Brackhaus is probably another layer of secrecy over the Mr. Johnson moniker that Saeder-Krupp execs use when they're hiring shadowrunners. It makes sense for a corp like S-K to have some fictional personnel files for plausible deniability.
- Bushmech
- It could be the Saurian CEO himself, in metahuman form. It makes sense for a micromanager like Lofwyr to get his hands dirty with shadowrunners every now and then.
- Zeus Wayne
- Just goes to show: always assense Mr. Johnson.
- Liberty Spell

SHIAWASE CORPORATION

Shiawase is a publicly traded megacorp with the majority share being held by members of the Shiawase family. It is known for both its diverse holdings and the care and attention devoted to its employees, giving it a reputation as a true family company. Almost every part of Shiawase is centered around the application of sophisticated, cutting-edge technology.

- Okay, let me try to shed some light on this "family company" drek. It's true that the Shiawase family owns almost a controlling share of the company. You've got Daddy Sadato as the chairman of the board and his son Tadashi as CEO. Aunt Soko and Uncle Ryoji (Sadato's siblings) are the other two major shareholders.
 - Thing is, not all is quiet in the Shiawase home. Sadato and Soko hate each other with the mad passion of a thousand burning hot suns. They routinely try to have one another assassinated, and they only agree on two things. Tadashi mostly sides with Soko, mostly because she's slightly less psychopathic than Sadato, but he remains filially loyal to his father, but rather than just staying out of the feud he increases the drama by throwing himself between them. Meanwhile, Ryoji is dead.
 - VU
 - I'm sorry, I thought you just posted that one of the major shareholders of Shiawase Corporation is dead. Must be my pocket secretary acting up again.
 - Philharmonic Ork
 - Yep, he's dead, killed in the fallout from his other siblings' domestic open warfare. Except that both brother and sister insist that his spirit still inhabits the office in which he was killed, which means he hasn't really passed on, which means he still owns shares and makes decisions. They've got a "spirit medium" on retainer, a CAS woman named Jerri Howard, who "interprets" his decisions for them.
 - VU



THE BIG EIGHT, CONT.

- What a gig. Where do I sign up?
- Charlie Tan
- I wouldn't. The situation means that Reiko Shiawase, Ryoji's only child, hasn't inherited her father's shares of the company. Reiko Shiawase isn't happy, but she hasn't exhibited the homicidal streak that seems to run in the family. Yet.
- VU

Shiawase is split into divisions by function rather than region. The Seattle Metroplex is home to three major Shiawase divisions: Shiawase Atomics, Shiawase Biotech, and Shiawase Envirotech. There is a rumor that Shiawase Aerospace has purchased industrial land near Sea-Tac, but that rumor is unsubstantiated.

- I hope that rumor remains unsubstantiated. If it isn't, I just lost a lot of money investing in industrial land out there.
- Highline

YAMATETSU

Like every other megacorporation, Yamatetsu is a diverse company with a lot of fingers in a lot of pots. While they hardly have a corner on any one market, they have worked the idea of "metahuman factors engineering" into every one of their products. According to the brochure, the aim of the company is to "push back the limits constraining the metahuman spirit and unleash the potential in everyone." From clothes and tech designed for the larger, smaller, or just weirder metahuman to performance enhancing augmentations, Yamatetsu markets directly to people who just want something more comfortable to use.

- Smartgun and smartlink are actually what we call generic trademarks, trademarked names that have been used to mean all similar products so much by the general public that the original trademark holder has lost the trademark. Guess who owned SmartGun™ and SmartLink™ before they turned generic?
- Polygon
- Don't forget Wired Reflexes™. Say what you want about other "brands," Yamatetsu's still got the best direct neuralware on the market.
- Hatchetman
- DocWagon is fighting hard to keep their brand name from becoming genericized, which I mention most cleverly here, since Yamatetsu's Crash Cart service is often called "a DocWagon service."
- Stringer

- Let me get this straight. Yamatetsu is a zaibatsu, steeped in Japanese culture and tradition. Modern Japanese culture is strongly biased against non-humans. The leading corporation in sales to non-humans is ... Yamatetsu! How does that work?
- Lefty
- Just because you disdain somebody doesn't mean you won't take their money. Don't tell me you have warm fuzzies for every Mr. Johnson you've connected with.
- Picador

The chairman of Yamatetsu's board of trustees is Tadamako Shibanojuji, a solid businessman and a strong traditionalist. Other than Shibanojuji-san, the major shareholders are Newton Chin, of the Vladivostok Chins, and Ms. Buttercup, a young Japanese heiress.

Yamatetsu is one of the few corporations of size AA and larger to have hired outside the corp for their CEO. Saru Iwano is reportedly building a portfolio including Yamatetsu, but he's got a long way to go before he reaches the same level of influence his peers in other megacorps enjoy.

- Rewind the sim a sec. Buttercup? What kind of name is that? And how young are we talking?
- Relatively Lucid
- She's available, if that's what you mean. She was a teenager when she inherited something like eleven percent of Yamatetsu from ... well, I presume Daddy Buttercup, so she's in her mid-twenties now. She doesn't give her first name, and her records are private and sealed, so as far as anybody knows, her first name is "Ms." When you're that rich, you're allowed to be eccentric.
- The Chromed Accountant
- If you scan the fashion magazines like I do, you'd know that she doesn't make public appearances often, and when she does she's surrounded by her people. She's never been seen on a date, so if she's got someone on the side it's a secret. Her fashions are both creative and innovative, and you see a lot of imitators after a public appearance, but nobody ever gets it quite right.
- Bloodcrusher
- Here's what I know from picking through garbage files while waiting for my team to finish killing security guards. Ms. Buttercup's first name is Kasumi. She's 25, her blood type is AB+, and she visits a private thaumaturgical doctor four times a year. Kasumi Buttercup isn't her birth name, she had it legally changed when she was sixteen; before that, I got nothing. She's definitely a woman with many secrets.
- FastJack

THE BIG EIGHT, CONT.

- She does have secrets, but what megacorporate board member does not have secrets? I believe you'll find hers to be relatively tame, when the time comes.
- The Big D

Yamatetsu organizes its divisions regionally, and then sub-regionally, and so on down to the sprawl level. The organizational chart is very complex, with multiple lines of communication vertically and horizontally within the company. The head of Yamatetsu Seattle is Mary Luce, the youngest exec to be appointed to a sprawl-level management position.

- The over-connected network makes Yamatetsu rife with internal politics, which means a lot of Yamatetsu-generated, Yamatetsu-targeted shadowruns. Just try not to get too involved or you'll get sucked into something you don't like.
- Argent
- Luce has plans and is willing to work in both the boardrooms and the shadows to make them happen. I'd say that getting in good with her people now should be thought of as an investment for the future.
- Kodiak
- An investment if things go well. A death sentence if things go sideways.
- 222
- This cannot be the full sum that is the beautiful convocation of knowledge of the free people on the festering, pestering, and sequestering monsters of mega. We the free need to be, to know, to see, to grow if we're to survive and thrive in a world that hates the individual and celebrates the drone duty to an oppressive society. I will scan, I will run, I will soar through the Matrix and find the unfindable, and I'll be back to share my song with all of you, chip truth. Download or die, omae.
- Black Iris
- Looking forward to it, Iris. We'll save you some storage space, but please write in prose next time.
- Captain Chaos

SHADOWRUN 2050

DIGITAL THREATS

The Matrix is a separate world. It's great for broadcasting trid shows, delivering screamsheets to your InstaFAX at home, and calling home to lie to your parents about what you're doing for a living. It's a world created by metahumanity for metahumanity. As a runner in the real world, you are safe from anything and everything that might be in the Matrix to harm you. It just runs programs.

Feel safe? Good. Don't read on. If you're a decker, though, you know enough to ignore everything in the last paragraph. There's plenty of stuff trying to murder you remotely. All kinds of IC, security deckers, and fast-response meatworld teams poised to raid your apartment complex the moment you're traced there. All sorts of nastiness I dare not talk about here.

- I think when it says "dare not talk about" it means "have no idea about." Which means it falls to deckers like me to explain things.

Intrusion countermeasures—IC if you prefer (and we do)—is your main threat in the Matrix. That stuff can slow you down, trace you, damage your deck, or even harm or kill you. I've heard rumors of IC mixed with BTL algorithms that can mess with your mind while it tries to kill you. Once you've experienced that ozone-and-burned-flesh smell from a dead decker, or your own datajack if you can jack out before the very end, you never forget it. Some console cowboys can't get back on the horse after an experience like that, which is probably for the best, cuz the best fight on.

IC isn't the only thing that'll get you when you trip the digital fantastic. A security decker can spoil your day. Scanners and IC are easy to fool, but a metahuman actively looking for you is more dangerous than a host full of tar babies. It's kind of the same difference between cameras and patrols. Any person with a gun can shoot you, and any decker on the Matrix has the chance to do you damage. All deckers have some level of savvy, even if they're corp.

Believe it or not, it's not just IC and deckers that can get you geeked. Ordinary shaikujen users can be a decker's downfall. If you're in a node that somebody's using, even if they're on a tortoise, they might panic if you do something they're not expecting. Since they're already connected to the system, it's easy for them to submit a security request and bam, it's time to jack. Some old grandma perusing a yarn catalog once tipped off an Azteck technology decker, who responded in force with Black IC and Attack programs. That didn't happen to me personally, I heard about it from a chummer.

- Fastjack
- It's not the Black IC that's the worst, although it'll frag you up. I almost got geeked by a trace-and-burn in the Fuchi Seattle mainframe. I thought I was clear and then WHAM! I'm getting smacked around at my jackpoint.
- Silicon Hit

So aside from deckers, you're perfectly safe. Despite all of the hysterical Chicken Littles (who incidentally use the very same Matrix to spread the alarmism about the Matrix) screaming about



another Crash, nothing inside the Matrix can hurt you when you're outside of it. This isn't a sci-fi trid show. It's not like programs can come to life and start killing people.

- It'll be more dangerous when we have total cybernetic connections with the Matrix. I don't mean the current plug-and-play technology we have today. I'm talking about full-scale, full penetration Matrix available everywhere, when everybody uses the Matrix directly, full time. Then people will be attacked on buses, identities will be stolen on a regular basis, and the dangers of the Matrix will be a harsh reality for everyone. The tech is only fifteen or twenty years away, people.
- Oconomowoc
- I hate to burst your digital bubble, but that tech has been "only fifteen or twenty years away" for more than fifty years. It's kind of a running joke in decker circles, like a permanent base on Mars or world peace. Call it highly unlikely.
- FastJack
- It's true that if they trace you, they'll try to hunt you down. I was running an Ares Macrotech host on the Seattle RTG. The run was pretty touch and go, and I got the payday I was looking for, but I got trace-and-dumped by the IC at the last millisecond. Ares cluster-bombed the Puyallup flat I was using as a base of operations.
- Dodger

- I remember that. It was around two months ago, wasn't it? Ares called it an autopilot error. The whole building was turned into rubble. How'd you survive?
- Bramble
- Armored fridge. Yes, you heard me correctly—that's my story. The neighborhood belonged to Ares, anyway, even though it's in the Barrens. I used it because it had a direct connection to the Ares grid that I wanted. Knight Errant was on the scene in moments (no doubt dispatched before the missiles dropped) and did a "thorough investigation." They reported no civilian casualties, of course. I can tell you that I saw a few dozen casualties on my way out of the place, just none of them with SINS and none of them me. My guess is that if there were survivors, KE "investigated" them thoroughly to keep the witness count down. Ares even managed to collect a few million nuyen on the insurance.
- Dodger
- Don't tell me it's not possible to be killed by something in the Matrix. I was almost killed by the Matrix once, and I'm a shaikujin who doesn't even have a datajack. I spent three days in ICU because some random Matrix virus switched shipping orders between a soycafe latte flavoring plant and a pesticide factory. Thankfully, DocWagon was able to grow me a new esophagus and stomach! I don't know where I'd be without my DocWagon Platinum card.
- Curious Georgia
- Most runners find themselves saying the same thing, sister.
- Deck Tripper



MAGICAL THREATS

The Awakening changed everything for everyone. Lots of people turned into things that are still people while also being something different. Some of those people throw mana around like it's going out of style. Animals became monsters, monsters became people. Things from outside of our world crossed over, wreaking their own kinds of havoc. And don't even start with dragons.

But to a shadowrunner, a threat's a threat, whether it's a gun or a blade, a claw or a spell. When you take that walk on the wild side of the sprawl, you'd better be ready to deal with the wild things in it, chummer. Here's a brief rundown on some of the magical ways you can die.

Magicians

For the most part, you're going to be running against people. When people and magic combine, we call them magicians. Magicians come in all sorts of flavors. There's the pseudo-scientific Hermetic and Wuxing wizards, spiritually-guided Shamans and Buddhists, and all variety of other philosophies, theologies, and charlatans who can all sling spells and send spirits against you.

There's one simple strategy that has stood runners in good stead, known simply by the battle cry, "Geek the mage!" Magicians are usually too busy warping the fabric of reality to worry defending themselves, so they tend to be soft, squishy targets. Magicians are high-priority targets in any conflict. Plus, they can burn off your face by thinking about it.

Toxics

Magic and toxic environments don't mix well, at least not for shadowrunners. Something about the corruption of the life force that fuels the mana of something or other (ask your team's magician if you have one). There seems to be something in it, though, and some magicians go for the toxic path to power. They're almost always completely insane in a violently psychotic way, which means they're especially dangerous to you and your chummers when you come calling. Treat them the same way you'd treat magicians, but watch out for some of the nastier aspects of toxic magic, like toxic spirits, disease, radiation, and poisons. Speaking of diseases ...

Vampires

The Human-Metahuman Vampiric Virus (HMHVV) has a more scientific name, but what you need to know is this: it creates vampires. And banshees, wendigo, goblins, and all kinds of nasty but intelligent

ruthless killers. While there are rumors of "nice" vampires, don't assume the one staring you down falls into that group. If you find yourself going up against one, prepare for a vicious fight. They're smart, strong, have magical abilities, and oh, want to eat your soul. Plus, they can turn you into one of them if you're not careful, so play it smart.

One of the most insidious weapons in the vampiric arsenal is the ability to blend in with ordinary metahumans. Treat them the same way you'd treat a corporate security with magical backup: watch for augmentations and spells, and use overwhelming force if you can muster it.

- HMHVV-positive people aren't all evil bloodsuckers walking around in dark capes seducing young women. HMHVV is a paranatural disease, nothing more, nothing less. It causes changes in a person's body that range from uncomfortable to excruciating, depending on the person's genetics and the strain of virus he or she gets. People who are HMHVV-positive need help adjusting to their new life. True, some of them can't handle it and become psychotic from the stress, but that's not the majority of those affected.
- Tish Bite
- What you say is true for the most part, Tish, but there's more to it than that. Both the retrovirus and the provirus are very active in a metahuman body. The changes that are caused by HMHVV are profound throughout the body's cells. All strains are active in neurons, and changes to a subject's brain are inevitable, even in the least invasive form. To date, there are no documented cases of HMHVV infection that did not result in at least some personality change in the subject.
- KAM
- So all vampires are genetically batty. I get it.
- Tierce
- Not exactly. There are always personality changes associated with an HMHVV infection, but we don't know how much is physiological and how much is psychological. As Tish stated, different people cope with the disease in different ways. There are at least two strains of the retrovirus, and undoubtedly there are more that will be discovered some day. Every one of them has an unpredictable effect on those who are infected by it.
- KAM
- Here's an easy guideline from someone with experience: Vampires are people too, except for the ones who are not.
- The Laughing Man

Ghouls

Ghouls are like vampires, except they're feral and dirty. Like vampires and their ilk, there are rumors of "nice" ghouls out there, but they still probably want to eat you. Ghouls are weaker than vampires for the most part, but they tend to get together in packs. Some ghouls have magical abilities, too, but



the greatest threat is the Krieger-strain HMHV strain they carry in their blood, saliva, and sweat. On the other hand, there are plenty of government jurisdictions and private organizations that offer bounties on dead ghouls, so if your run sends you to a graveyard, abandoned neighborhood, landfill, or other place where metahumans don't hang out, you might be able to make a few hundred nuyen on the side.

- Here we go again. People with Krieger-strain HMHV aren't monsters, either. They're people who have been unfortunate enough to contract HMHV. Simply calling them ghouls is dehumanizing.
- Tish Bite

- Yeah, dirty HMHV. I think the HMHV did a better job of dehumanizing them than we could by calling them ghouls.
- Scope

- Krieger-strain is a bit different than the normal HMHV. It really does a number on the victim's brain. Ghouls are feral, really feral. I've had to gun down enough of them to keep them off of myself, my teammates, or my principle. I've never had a conversation with one.
- Street Sweeper

- Some people infected with Krieger-strain handle the process of change well enough to keep most or all of their mental faculties. These people can be a part of the community and contribute to society without limitation, although between social stigma and a dietary restriction considered taboo they rarely have an easy time of it.
- KAM

- In the meantime, right or wrong there's still a bounty on ghouls in most of North America.
- Findler-Man

- I just got a line on a big nest of ghouls in Redmond, about halfway between Glow City and Pine Lake. Who wants to help me make some quick jing?
- Kitty Quake

- You're a murdering snake, Kitty. I'm going to [0.24 Mp deleted]
- Tish Bite

- Tone it down, people, we're all chummers here.
- Sysop

Paracritters

In most sprawls, you don't need to worry about angry magical beasts larger than a devil rat (those fraggers can swarm, though, so stay icy). Outside the sprawl, or in some of the Barrens close to untamed nature, you could run into all sorts of nasties. The most important thing to have is knowledge. Download a copy of *Paranormal Creatures of North America*:

Awakened Animals (listed on the Shadowland BBS as *Paterson's Guide*) and keep it handy if you're hired for a safari.

Bugs

We're not talking about the normal insect-type bugs here; we're talking about insect spirits. Insect spirits aren't the nice kind of being that shows up, pummels you a bit, and then goes back to whatever astral waiting room they came from. The bugs want into our world, they want to stay, and they use people's bodies to do it. Usually, they use a queen-and-drone set up, with one spirit in charge and others serving her, but solitary insect spirits exist.

If you're in direct conflict with insect spirits, the queen is your main target, but where there's a flea circus, there's a ringleader. Bug spirits can't get into our world without being invited by a shaman. Shaman brings in queen, queen brings in other bugs, and it's all bad from there. Usually, an insect shaman has summoned a bug queen that is more powerful than himself, but he's still a magician, and he's going to try to help his queen.

Luckily, insect spirit hives don't get all that big, and they never cooperate with one another (can you imagine what would happen if they did?). Do not underestimate them: they won't just kill you, they'll try to lay a bug egg in your body, take it over, and move on to try to collect your friends and loved ones. Shoot to kill.

Mr. Johnson: Paranormal

There are plenty of magical entities that might look for runners to hire. A paranormal Mr. Johnson is a wild card among Johnsons. Most of the time, their motivations are out of whack with metahuman society. Most sapient paracritters are naive about the modern world, which gives them a terrible head for biz but can actually make them more trustworthy, because they're not experienced enough with the normal ins and outs of a run to use them to take advantage of you. The pay is rarely in nuyen, except with vampires and the like. The job won't be dull, though.

DRAGONS

Going up against a dragon isn't just a bad idea; it's completely insane. Dragons, even little ones, are highly intelligent. The dracoforms that don't quite make the dragon grade are at least as clever as apes. They've all got magical abilities, many of which go beyond what mere metahumans can achieve. That's not to mention the teeth and claws that can cut through an armor jacket like a bullet through butter.





“Regular” dragons, the kind that are smaller and younger, have their own biz going. In addition to all the powers, almost all of them are accomplished magicians. Add to that the fact that a lot of them have already established themselves in modern society and have built up some business interests, or at least a secure lair, and you’ve got one tough lizard to crack.

And we have not yet taken the great dragons into consideration. They’re called the great dragons because they’ve decided they’re the great ones and nobody, not even other dragons, has been able to tell them otherwise. Great dragons don’t just have their own powers, they have entire organizations to back them up. It’s like going against a paracritter, a corporation, a military, a powerful magician, and a policlub all at once—perfectly coordinated, perfectly deadly.

If you absolutely do have to go against a dragon, your best bet is to do it indirectly. Make sure you’ve got a lot of mojo and that you’re chipped to the nines. Plan ahead and try to keep the dragon guessing. Most importantly, try to avoid a direct conflict. Even if you do all that, chummer, your chances are not good.

But if you can cross a dragon, a real dragon, and live to tell the tale, you’ll have some legendary cred in your jander.

- Don’t bother, ever. The cred you’ll have in whatever a jander is will not be worth it to you. Dragons have a reputation for being the most powerful creatures on Earth, and they do not hesitate to uphold that reputation.
- Masaru

Mr. Johnson: Dragon

No.

Seriously, no. What part of “never, ever” did you miss in the old street adage about cutting a deal with a dragon? Sure, they’re the best paying gigs around. Sure, a dragon can be very convincing and will often offer you exactly what you want (or think you want). Make a deal with a dragon, and you could live the rest of your life on a posh retirement island that you own.

But they’re all greedy, self-centered masters of return-on-investment. If a dragon wants to hire you, you’d better believe they’re getting a lot more out of it than you are. If it seems like a cakewalk (*especially* if it seems like a cakewalk), you can bet it’ll be somewhere between bad and completely fragged to hell. And if some wizworm does convince you that working for them is a good idea, go back and re-read the first paragraph under “Mr. Johnson: Dragon.”

And if that’s not enough, you’ll have a great story if you live to tell it. Good luck with that, chummer.

- Nothing in the paragraphs above is untrue. But dragons are just like other kinds of people. Some are more trustworthy than others. It’s true that some view non-dragons with disdain, using them as an ork child might use a screamsheet in the latrine. Some dragons, for example ones who have highly rated and critically acclaimed talk shows, have a fascination and even a fondness for metahumanity, and are so much more trustworthy as employers.
- The Big D
- That entire comment is self-serving. Nobody’s going to trust you on your say so. Dragons are out to control the world. Dunkelzahn himself has let slip hints about the world as it was the last time magic was free, and they all point to a tyranny of draconian city-states ruled by dragons. With wastelands in between.
- Dragonslayer
- That’s your opinion. Dunkelzahn for Mayor of Denver!
- Bronco
- Denver doesn’t have a mayor, drekhead. Dragons are about as electable as the Humanis policlub. If either of those get elected to office in Seattle, I’m moving to Tokyo.
- Bull
- Oh, I don’t know. Given the current climate, I think we’ll see a dragon get elected to a national office long before we see an ork there.
- Reggie Mental
- Lofwyr is on the Tír Council of Princes. That’s sort of an elected position, even though only the other Princes on the council get a vote.
- Gwleidydd

THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

It goes without saying that most of the threats you’re going to face as a shadowrunner aren’t going to be world-threatening. Maybe they’ll threaten your own personal world, but not the one the rest of us live in. That’s not to say that global-doom-style events don’t exist. We’ve already seen the rise of magic, the Great Crash of the Matrix, the appearance and sudden (but thankfully limited) takeover of a bunch of dragons, and earth-shaking magicians with a nation-shattering will. Any of the threats in this chapter could spiral out of control faster than you can download the latest Concrete Dreams album (can you imagine a global thrill gang epidemic?). If we’ve learned anything from what’s happened, it’s that anything can happen. Probably will, too.

- This file makes shadowrunning out to be more dangerous than it actually is. Sure, it’s a high-risk, high-reward job. We have our moments of extreme danger. But Rides On Buses doesn’t talk enough about the importance of planning and creating contingencies. You need to know what you have, what you’re up against, what they have, and what they’re doing. Know the enemy, know thyself, and you’ll make it through a hundred battles without danger.



You're never going to know everything, of course. That's part of the preparation. Minimize the unknowns by reducing your exposure to them. Even if it's a rush job, you have time to take a moment to plan what you're going to be doing during what might be the last five minutes of your life.

- Argent
- Preparation and training can only go so far. If you don't have an edge, you're meat for organleggers. Argent knows as well as any of us that the only real advantage is to get chipped. If you have the nuyen, you can be faster, stronger, smarter, and deadlier than anything you might be facing. Sure, prep work has its place, but you can be completely prepared for all angles and just not have the edge over the guy that geeks you.
- Simple Psyman
- Chip truth, Psyman. Even more important than being chipped is to stay current. If you're not on the bleeding edge of the state of the art, you'll be left behind. I'm always on the lookout for the next evolution in augmentation.
- Hatchetman
- You don't need to be a vatjob to get an edge. If training isn't enough, and you don't have magic, brush up on your social skills. The easiest fight to win is the one you don't have to have, it's not what you are it's who you know, and other pithy proverbs. They're repeated because they work.
- Spes
- There are more threats out there than just what was listed here. My chummers and I had a run into a Renton neighborhood once. We had to round up civilians and sararimen, house-to-house, and secure them in their homes while the Star held a perimeter to protect people from a "gas leak." It turns out that the neighborhood was a testing site for a new subliminal trid advertising method. You'd think that a crazed dwarf housewife with a monofilament chef's knife wouldn't be a threat, but we had to fire her weight in gel rounds to drop her. And that one kid who locked himself in the house and laid traps for us ... the vote was four to three to let him live, lucky for the little drekker. Moral of the story: expect the unexpected.
- The Chariot
- Maybe we can get Rides On Buses to update his file. I've got a few ideas of my own, too. Does anybody have a commcode or a way to get in touch with him?
- Snake Doc
- Rides On Buses is no longer with us. He died a month or so ago. He was a good runner—I got to work with him once.
- The Smiling Bandit
- Which of the zillion ways to die got him in the end?
- Nada
- None of the above. Turns out he had a congenital heart condition and died in his sleep.
- The Smiling Bandit





KA-POWER LIST: 2050

- All right, people, because I like you I'm going to give you the chance to pretend you're all normal people, who go out to concerts and trid shows and the like and sit around talking about your favorite stars. I could come up with a justification for this, like how there are some of these people with a presence in the shadows, or people you might run against because there's intrigue surrounding them, but look—it's the world you live in, so you should know about it. So have at it.
- Captain Chaos

Every year seems crazier than the last. Leave it to us to root out every outrageous quote, every scandalous image by keeping our cybercams up close and personal with everyone worth spilling electrons over. This part of the year is the hardest, since we lock all of our cybersnoops in the office with a single bottle of whiskey. We don't let them out until they choose the personalities that made the biggest impact on what you see, what you buy, and what you feel. This isn't some sleepy list of CEOs and corporate executives. They got power, maybe, but they're nothing without their stars. And they're *bo-ring!* This isn't for them or any other suits. This is for everyone that dances to the shadowbeat.

- These lists are always so useless. I pulled up their KA-POWER list from five years ago and most of their choices are washed up, dead, or worse. What the frag does "influential" mean, anyway?
- Everyone's Critic
- If nobody cares about this list, why are you coming in to talk about it?
- Pick Ross

NEIL THE ORK BARBARIAN

This year was one to remember for grown men in fur boots. Everyone has had something to say about this media franchise, either in the amazing numbers racked up by the rerelease of the original adventures, the record-breaking season finale of the trideo series, or the stunning announcement that the original Neil was being replaced by a third actor. This franchise has been a reliable moneymaker for almost a decade, but anyone in the biz will tell you that what comes up must come down—or smash through the ceiling like nothing else before.

Nobody expected the first Neil simsense to take off like it did. The reviews were tepid. Another series, *Paradox Bots*, was being pushed by the studio as their tentpole release. Yet the public was apparently hungry for some swords, sex, and sorcery. A modern ork transported back to the last cycle of magic let people connect with the character, as well as cut

through the thick backstory these epics often have. Three more titles came out during the 2040s, each one grossing more money than the last. Even though he was not an actual ork, series star Walker Metcalf became an advocate for the ork community. The video of his Ork Underground tour nearly crashed our LTG thanks to the number of people logging on to watch it.

- His visit to the Ork Underground curiously came two weeks after some screamsheets were digging up some family connections with Humanis Policlub.
- Tusker
- Metcalf had a dumb hick cousin he never met who got arrested at a rally outside of Atlanta. Big deal. You don't have relatives you hate?
- Cleate Us

Neil was a cultural phenomenon by the mid-2040s. The next step was to bring him to the masses not looking to strap down trodes to get their entertainment. The trideo series was an interesting meeting of budget and concept. Neil returned to the modern day, which cut down on big-budget fantasy vistas. But Neil's barbarian tactics still save the day as he wanders the continent looking for a way to get back to the past and his true love. The series cast a different actor as Neil to save money, and they got Peter Nevinski at a steal. Fans argue about the better Neil all the time, but they often give Nevinski the edge because of his actual ork heritage.

The trid series made some good money for a while but eventually dried up, and the recent announcement of a new Neil simsense adventure shocked some insiders. The lack of involvement of either Walker Metcalf or Peter Nevinski lit up discussion boards across the Matrix. Many fans believed Peter earned a chance at a big-budget sim, others wondered if his acting style was too old-school to convey proper simulated emotion. Metcalf was supposedly offered a chance to return, but he wanted a bigger contract since his three-chip deal was up. When the producers didn't cave to his demands, he walked. So the search is on for a new Neil the Ork Barbarian actor. Well-known stars and complete unknowns are on a level playing field, since the franchise will bring in audiences, at least for a time, regardless of who is in the role. The studio could want an established face to guarantee some extended receipts, but casting an unknown is a chance to save money while playing starmaker again.

While the moment for the ork barbarian is bright, the future is much more unclear. Will the producers lure Metcalf back if their search doesn't turn up the next hot star? Will Nevinski walk from the trideo

show after his contract is up next season? Will the fans pressure the creators to cast an ork actor in all future productions of the property? Will the next feature be a continuation of the trideo story, a reboot, a prequel, a preboot, or some other gaudy monstrosity as yet unimagined? Fans will be refreshing their newsfeeds by the nanosecond in the hopes that Neil is not slain by the one thing even he can't kill with his trusty axe, Broodslayer: corporate greed.

EUPHORIA

A hot simsense actress seems about as common as a short dwarf. Unless you are THE hot simsense actress. Everybody was talking about Euphoria this year. Her releases straddled the line between being provocative enough to entice skinchippers and demure enough to see release in mainstream outlets. She's the perfect mix of action star, sex symbol and pedigreed actress. She's smart enough to keep an air of mystery about her, even though her face is almost everywhere.

Amanda Lockhart comes from a show biz family. Her parents, Meredith and Louise, were two of the last big stars of flat-screened television. Amanda grew up on screen in the burgeoning explosion of trideo programming. She hit the path to stardom after switching from her parent's representation to a new agent. Her new agent wasn't afraid to exploit her natural beauty. Fans first got a taste of Euphoria's simsense chops in the *Wicked Witch of the Ward*, not to mention a few gratuitous scenes of magic duels in the group showers. It's the oldest trick in the book, but filmmakers keep going to that well for a reason.

Any one of Euphoria's six full-budget sims could be spun off into a franchise. She also had the good fortune of finding the perfect leading man in Hans Vandenburg. Vandenburg's performance in *Hijack Holiday* is just as wicked hot as Euphoria's. His chiseled features are a match for the star, and the two of them share a chemistry unrivaled in any medium. Maybe the fact their management teams haven't tried the old "romance on the set" publicity ploy makes them even more special. Euphoria is curiously unattached, so maybe they want to drum up a little scandal now that Vandenburg has his sights set on Lois Bridge, lead singer of Sleeveless. Love triangles always sell more downloads. But she's good in everything, not just her pics with Vandenburg. We even liked *Attack Ships of Orion*, even if it didn't make as much as her previous chip, *Spells and Sweet*.

MegaMedia snatched up Euphoria's contract this year. That means bigger budgets, bigger explosions and bigger pushes. They won't be able to franchise out her roles from previous films, but they will be very

happy to make new ones. Euphoria is just twenty one years old, making her a coveted get for MegaMedia. They've got her locked into a contract for the most productive years of a sim-starlet's life. Euphoria is living a charmed life at this moment. We don't know much about her upcoming sim *Jungle Huntress*, but it looks to be hot, steamy, and action-packed.

Rumors abound that Euphoria recently picked up an endorsement from food conglomerate Strice Foods. We admit that it's a move that bugs us: part of Euphoria's appeal is her reclusive nature. Sure, she lets people inside her head for dozens of sim chips, but outside of her roles, really not much is known about her. We understand that the real money comes in endorsements and cross-promotion, but we truly hope Euphoria's team hasn't made a mistake. The heat on a simsense star fades quickly without the loving public. It's a move that could change her image forever

JETBLACK

The voice of a generation. The face of angst rock. Visionary. Tortured artist. JetBlack still cuts an imposing figure even two years after his death. Every generation has a star that burned too bright and died too young. JetBlack is that star to the Sixth World. Fans still gather outside the important places in his life: the small club he started at, the alleyway where he was killed, the unmarked Seattle grave rumored to be his. Walk down the street and you'll see a handful of people styled like him. Long black hair. Long black coat. Pale white face.

- Styled after him, or the thousand other musicians that have sported that look in the past hundred years.
- Peri

The world never heard true angst rock until JetBlack's first album, *Down The Street*, was released. The crunching synthaxe and rumbling baritone spoke to music fans tired of manufactured pop and over-produced corporate soft rock. The reaction was immediate. Fans painted their faces and dyed their hair. What began as a tour of small clubs in Seattle ended in the Kingdome fourteen months later. JetBlack's whirlwind rise birthed his next album, *Infinite Failure Renaissance*. The message was even more grim. *Eat your heroes, you cowards*, he sang. And his fans did. They ate it all up. When his words were contentious, he was embraced. When his words were bizarre, he was called a prophet.

JetBlack disdained fame. The interviews he gave mocked the very installations that made him immortal. He spoke through his music and at infamous



concert incidents like the riot in Rio de Janeiro and the accusations of on-stage sodomy in Tallahassee. Screamsheets spent pages passing on the slightest rumor of his bad behavior. When word broke of his murder, the victim of a random street crime, it was initially written off by many as a hoax. But then, little by little, piece by piece, fans confirmed the truth. JetBlack was dead from two shots fired by a Fichetti.

- Who is writing this drek? Sounds like JetBlack himself or his PR department
- Everyone's Critic
- This is poetry compared to some of the stuff I've seen on fan sites. Want a link to the erotic fiction featuring him and Lofwyr?
- Black Backer

No sooner had word spread about JetBlack's death then a second wave of rumors rippled through the Matrix. Dozens of stories spiraled outward, telling of conspiracies surrounding his death or activities covering up the fact that he was still alive. He was killed by the recording industry, some said. He faked his death to start a revolution. He was secretly the leader of a rival gang. He lived a double life as a rock star and a shadowrunner. He was the victim of a botched extraction. He was enlightened and left to live on the astral plane. Ask any one of JetBlack's fans and you'll get some combination of any of the theories listed here to explain that a simple street crime didn't take him away too soon.

- JetBlack lives!
- Hero Eater

So what is a dead man doing on this list? JetBlack's influence is all over the current wave of artists like Dark Angel and Colourblind. His prolific recording schedule before his death allowed for an album of all new material to be released this year. *Yorick's Last Laugh* debuted at the top of the charts, and JetBlack's estate management has hinted there may be additional material in the vaults. He became immortal through dying, and that means his influence continues on.

- If that's true, that means there's a node on a system somewhere with digital masters just begging to be stolen.
- Slap Happy
- Yeah, protected by IC so black it will make people forget you existed. Whoever holds that material knows it's a golden goose, and they're not gonna let anyone else get the eggs
- Fairly Legal

HAIRY KRISHNA

While Starfire had a pretty good year on the charts, the real news story behind the band was one of its members. A sasquatch going by the punny name Hairy Krishna sang backup on three of the band's songs. Though his singing was not noteworthy, Krishna found himself in the limelight because of what he did outside of singing harmony on a solid rock record. Celebrities often use their status to push their message and help causes important to them, but Krishna is unique in that his causes have increasingly become the reason for his celebrity.

Krishna gave his cut of the album's proceeds to multiple environmental protection organizations, and he talked about these organization at every Starfire concert. Toward the end of the tour, Green Machine Collective and Preserve Reverse Now! had major booths at every venue. Reissues of *Chemical Reaction* featured more obvious environmental messages. Krishna became a fixture as a talking, or sometimes singing, head on media debate shows whenever the environment was part of the issue. He stopped being billed as a member of Starfire as was known as an environmental activist.

- I heard he's deep into environmental causes because one of his close friends had a bad brush with a toxic shaman during a run.
- Bellicose
- Why does everyone think that musicians and shadowrunners always hang out together?
- Pip

He also became a high-profile symbol for the sasquatch sentience movement. This year has seen ups and down for the push to have sasquatches declared a sentient species. Supporters feel they deserve the rights of other metahumans due to their displays of intelligence, but detractors claim that since they are not directly descended from humans like elves, orks and trolls, they are not human. Similar rights groups have popped up around intelligent paranormals like ghouls. It remains to be seen how successful these bids will be, but they have changed the ever-fluid human rights landscape of the Sixth World yet again.

- Funny how nobody seems to be protesting for dragon's rights.
- Pumper
- Yeah, because if you mess with a dragon, it will slot you and your five closest chummers so fast you won't know you are dead until you smell something burning. They don't need us protecting anything of theirs. They're fine.
- Gaijin Pepper

- What are you guys smoking? Hairy Krishna on the same list as fragging Concrete Dreams and Euphoria? What a joke.
- Everyone's Critic
- And whom would you have picked?
- Chic
- My dead grandmother was more deserving of a spot on this list.
- Everyone's Critic
- Maybe next year.
- Chic

This newfound fame has supposedly come at a price. Rumors of tension between Krishna and other band members have bubbled to the surface. Starfire has been around for five years, but only when their third album featured a sasquatch singer did their sales go anywhere. Krishna's sudden illness the week before Starfire's RockNet appearance was seen by some as a power play. Of the three songs the band played, two of them were ones that featured Krishna. At this point, it's hard to say if Krishna needs Starfire more than Starfire needs Krishna. Both sides have been officially silent, but industry watchers say the time will come when Starfire will need to go back into the studio. If they chose to do so without Hairy Krishna, the rumors of strife will be shown to be true.

Krishna's next move should prove to be interesting no matter what. His celebrity is drawing people to his causes. He's networking with other celebrities by showing up in their videos and promotions while his relationship with the band that brought him into the public eye is in doubt. Questions are swirling around him. Can he sustain the fame he got from music if he doesn't make music anymore? If he breaks from Starfire, is the world ready for a sasquatch solo act? Hairy Krishna burst onto the scene this year in a surprising way. He needs to stay unconventional to stay on this list.

CONCRETE DREAMS

This is the only act that has been on the KA-POWER list every year since it began. Frankly, we admit we're cheating here. Each member of Concrete Dreams could probably warrant their own slot on the list. If we were ranking it, it would be Concrete Dreams and then everyone else. Everybody remembers where they were on March 21st, 2032, when *Sons of Thunder* debuted on RockNet (even the people who weren't there to see it), and the group has not slowed down for eighteen years. They've released a new album every year for the past six years. Each one runs away with both critics awards and top sales awards. This year's *Kingdom of Knives* was the best yet.

Moira Thorton is the skeleton that supports and gives shape to the Dreams. She's a virtuoso programmer and singular songwriter. Her solo projects push more and more into experimental territory, including her famous collaboration with astral artists Kyoto Nailbiter in Tokyo this year. These experimentations seem to let her clear her head for when she comes back to write for the band that make her famous. It's why each album sounds just different enough to be new but still fits as part of the catalogue.

The ethereal vocals of Andrea Frost give Concrete Dreams records their melodic sounds. This year found Ms. Frost using the synthlink to help her reinterpret classic music, including her memorable rendition of all of the national anthems at this year's World Series. Andrea also released the next in her series of albums singing her way through the Great Western Songbook. We all know that "Stormy Weather" wasn't written with a 16-channel synthlink in mind, but now we can't imagine that classic song without Frost's unique delivery and arrangement.

The heartbeat of the band belongs to Francois Nyanze. His drumbox mastery can drive a song into an unrelenting frenzy or cool it down into a ghostly whisper. Francois' reputation as the band's bad boy nearly put this year's album into jeopardy. When the incriminating videos of the infamous Tenochtitlán club's VIP celebration went missing, Aztlan officials released him, and rumors say he's been banned from returning to the country. Guess we'll see if he announces tour dates with his Goblin Rock outfit, Noiz 2 C U.

Warren Cartwright is the genius behind the band, mixing a media-savvy artist with the philosophical waxings of a warrior poet. The success of last year's Club Penumbra acoustic set has everyone on the edge of their seat waiting to see who will be included in this year's show. Warren's natural charisma is matched only by the ease in which he brings a maestro's touch to the various guitars he plays for the band. Concrete Dreams records are the only place you can see him switch between electric, acoustic, and synthaxe parts in the same song.

- So which member supposedly died this year?
- Little Voice
- Is that why they don't play live anymore? Because they are all dead?
- Butcher
- Nyanze is the leading candidate each year because of his hard-partying lifestyle. But I saw the court documents from the nightclub arrest, and it's definitely him. After that, most people think Thornton is dead and the Dreams are operating with their pick of songwriters and Song-O-Mat programs.
- Unmarked Helicopters



MARIA MERCURIAL

If Concrete Dreams are rock royalty, Maria Mercurial is the princess ascendant. The blend of her tough-girl persona and sweet vocals appeals to fans of music no matter what the genre. “Who Weeps For The Children?” spins out of speakers from the hottest elite club to the diviest ork go-gang bar. The famous picture of her provocatively showing off her silver-skinned dermal sheathing appears on the walls of teenagers’ bedrooms and in high-powered office suites. Girls hear her music and want to fight on the streets alongside her. Men hear her ballads and want to sweep her up into their arms.

- Wow, how sexist is that?
- Fembot
- That silver sheathing is custom cyberware. Probably something in the five-figure range. Either she was a high-class escort rather than turning tricks on the street, or that part of her life that she seems to have forgotten has some interesting things in it.
- Hachetman
- How is being a high-class escort not interesting?
- Nub

Her story reads like it was written for a trideo musical. She grew up an orphan with a past she claims not to remember. She worked the streets as a prostitute. Her chip habit dug her deeper in debt until she was rescued by her manager Armando Hernandez. He helped her clean up, got her first club gigs, and with the slightest of pushes she took off. Her fluent grasp of Aztlaner endeared her during her first tour of the country. It also pushed her from local Seattle songstress to novahot international superstar.

Mercurial’s downfall may be her addiction to BTL, or better-than-life chips. Though she’s supposedly clean now, not a week goes by where a screamsheet doesn’t offer exclusive proof that she’s back on the beetles. Behind-the-scenes stories of irrational behavior and frequent fights with Hernandez have plagued her. Former tour members claim Maria has a fierce temper and is given to mood swings that verge on psychotic.

Her last album is two years old, but Mercurial is keeping busy. She recently played an acoustic set with Warren Cartwright of fellow list resident Concrete Dreams. The set was released this year and is smashing sales records across the globe. Her silver-skin siren pose is her most famous, but her standing next to one of the fathers of modern music is an image that is almost as indelible. The next generation of musical royalty has been anointed.

TEDDY "THE TERMINATOR" TARTIKOFF

The more advanced the civilization, the more it requires a release for sport. Ancient Rome featured gladiators fighting to the death. Aztlan featured court ball. The Sixth World has many nasty distractions to keep us from focusing on how far we've come as the human race. The nastiest of these is combat biking, where some of the toughest and scariest members of metahumanity mount motorcycles to play a game that featured three fatalities in a single game last year. Combat biking has a ravenous following amongst young male sports fans thanks to three key elements. The sport is fast. The personalities are huge. And every game might be somebody's last.

The rising star in combat biking is Teddy "The Terminator" Tartikoff, thunderbiker for the Texas Rattlers. Teddy is perhaps most famous for his energetic complaints about the officiating in combat biking matches. The dwarf has no problem circling a ref and giving the official a piece of his mind while revving his custom-rebuilt Harley-Davidson Scorpion.

Tartikoff is everything you want in a combat biker. He's scary when he's barreling down at full speed—with his face brands, extensive tattoos, and spiked uniform, he looks like everyone's vision of an apocalyptic warrior. And when he talks to the media, he always says something memorable. Any interview with Tartikoff will have at least one moment where the readers will recoil in disgust, and one where they will be laughing hysterically.

Tartikoff makes the list for coming out on top in his heated rivalry with Anson Pettingil over the last season. Their teams, the Texas Rattlers and the DeeCee Shurikens, met in the first match of the season. Pettingil cut off Tartikoff and sent the dwarf crashing into the guard rails. He was out for the rest of the game, which ended with the Shurikens victorious. Pettingil found himself assaulted by Tartikoff in an Atlanta nightclub a month later. This cost The Terminator thousands of dollars in legal fees and fines, which he was quoted as saying he paid gladly. The war of words heated up when the two teams met each other again late in the season. Though Texas was eliminated from the playoff hunt, the team felt a moral victory when Tartikoff pulled Pettingil off his bike and exacted some revenge on the field.

Big companies are finding no issues getting into bed with The Terminator. Giving up his kaiser-inspired helmet or real leather jacket would be like asking Mickey to remove his ears or NERPS! to tell us exactly what the hell it does, but the sponsors have no interest in asking him to change. Teddy has sponsors plastering his bike and always seems to have a can of Bloody Muddy Beer in hand whenever he's

seen in public. Tartikoff comes off as an ordinary guy, but there is a deep intelligence underneath the blue collar facade.

- Urban brawl is way better. Combat biking is fixed. It's a huge moneymaker for organized crime.
- Brawl Buddy
- What about those three guys that died in Bakersfield?
- Findler-Man
- They didn't want to go along with the fix.
- Brawl Buddy

HERCULE "HERCU-LEECH" THORSON

Trolls in the media are usually portrayed in two ways. One is as the big, bad villain full of rage and contempt for metahumanity, usually the big, dumb muscle to some mastermind's evil plan. Otherwise, the troll is the gentle giant who won't fight until her friends are threatened and then only in a brutal display of self-defense. The captain of the Tacoma Wings, Hercu-Leech Thorson, embodies both of those qualities perfectly, navigating through the seeming contradictions. On the playing field, his ferocity and athleticism led him to become the first troll urban brawl team captain in ISSV history. Off the field, he's charming, quiet, self-deprecating enough that one would never guess he holds the league record in most opponents' bones broken.

Thorson's background isn't a typical hardscrabble kid up from the streets. His parents were Saeder-Krupp project managers who sent him to a decent school in North America. His goblinization made things harder for him, rendering him ineligible to play football. Without his scholarship, Hercule was forced to study to stay in school. His marks were unspectacular but good enough to qualify for Amherst College. His Awakening happened during his freshman semester and he soon spoke with Bear. A troll of Norse descent speaking to a Native American totem is quite unusual. It caught the attention of the sports marketers at Lindehelm and Associates, and they offered to represent Hercule and found him a spot on the Wings.

The troll is rapidly becoming well known off the field as one of the world's most recognized Awakened personalities. The advantages of having a shaman on an urban brawl team are obvious, even if the rules say he can't use his magic during the game. Hercule takes it a step further and donates a lot of his wealth to charities connected with the shaman community. Watching Hercule around his teammates makes it easy to see why he and Bear fit so well. He believes in his boys, and they believe in him



back. Johnny Thunder elected to sign on through the remainder of Hercule's contract rather than make a killing in free agency last year. An urban brawl game is one of the least likely places in the world to feel safe, but if a two-and-a-half-meter-tall spellslinger can't take care of himself out there, who can?

Hercule's management played up his unusual background when he began his career. In retrospect, the Viking horn on his helmet is a ridiculous touch, especially when you see them next to his actual horns. But looks aside, he started to turn things around for the Wings. They went from a step above a go-gang sponsored by the local pub to the top non-franchise team over the course of Hercule's first three years as an urban brawler. This got them into the post-World Cup Franchise Fight, where they battled the Cleveland Chaos. The Wings were the first non-franchise team to win themselves into the big leagues. This year, Herculeech has his eyes set higher and wants to be watching that game from the Championship Box when he wins the World Cup.

- Oh, look, the token troll mention.
- Remember the Alamos
- Slots like you come out when you think you can hide in the Matrix. You think trolls can't speak decker, omae? I've got a token, Alamos. And I know where you can put it.
- Trog Heaven

MASAHIRO OROCHI

Baseball is the most traditional professional sport. Most other sports embraced cybernetic enhancements within limits and drafted rules for astrally active participants. As other sports shattered records and expanded business, Japanese baseball clung to its traditions, even discriminating against non-human metahumans playing the game. That barrier was broken in an unexpected way when, two days before starting in the first game in the All-Japan Series, ace pitcher Masahiro Orochi admitted he was an elf and had undergone cosmetic surgery to be allowed to play professional baseball.

Masahiro was on track to be the first baseball legend of the decade. His appeal crossed team lines, sport lines, and continental borders. Even North American fans spoke of him as a legendary pitcher. He was something for traditional baseball fans to be proud of. Born into a Shiawase family, he wowed scouts during an open tryout. Masahiro's first three seasons saw him on the rise. His agent must have been salivating at the contract he could get if he could lead the Dragons to their first World Series in decades. The press conference was expected to be a softball

question-and-answer period before the big game. Instead, Masahiro turned everything on its head.

There are millions of data pulses devoted to talking about why Masahiro made his announcement. Was he forced? Who dug up the evidence in the first place? Were the Yakuza involved in trying to fix the series? The Dragons were favorites heading into the series. Without their ace pitcher, they were swept by the Seattle Mariners. The only people who can answer these questions are Masahiro, his family, and whatever members of the shadow community were hired to bring this affair to light. This seems tailor-made for shadowrunners to brag about in a few years once the heat has died down. Talking about it now just invites people who lost money to take it out in blood.

Masahiro still has plenty of fans. His contracts and endorsements are troubled, but a lot of fans still like him. His admission has also brought up the ugly truth of discrimination in baseball. Most teams looked the other way because of Japan's discrimination, even as the Japanese side of the sport became the most successful. Masahiro brings that issue to the forefront and has emboldened metahuman fans and players to diversify their teams. This idea will probably take a while to root in Japan, but North American teams are already lobbying for metahuman players to be active during next year's rounds of intercontinental play.

It seems like Masahiro will be away from the sport he loves this year. His contract with the Dragons is under legal review, and the photo bounty on him is in six figures. Even with the disgrace he's caused the Japanacorps, they seem reluctant to exile him to the North American League where he would be the hottest free agent since Babe Ruth. Both Tír nations are rumored to be in negotiation to bring him in as a new symbol of elf pride. Whatever his motivations, Masahiro Orochi's admission of his elven heritage has people talking about baseball again.

THE NEO-ANARCHISTS GUIDE TO PISSING OFF LONE STAR

- Got one more piece of everyday life in our world to cover here, and that's the Star. You may run for corps, you may run for the mob, you may run for yourself, or whatever, but in the end you're going to come up against Lone Star, or one of the other private security organizations out there, because they're the front line of defense. They're cannon fodder, and you're the cannonball. Or is it the other way around?
- Captain Chaos

Lone Star is a corporation and a police force. That's a problem, because the buddy-buddy nature of the corporate elite and the various paramilitary forces of

the world is a big reason the world is in the shape it is. A for-profit police force highlights all sorts of conflicts of interest, and yet cities across North America are signing on to let the Star keep the peace. This sits with any good neo-anarchist about as well as washing down a ChemYum Burrito from the Stuffer Shack with milk found in the dumpster out back. The neo-anarchists want those for-profit fascists to work hard for every nuyen they crack out of a skull. We hope these tips, tricks, and hints keep you out of the lockup and in the shadows fighting the good fight much longer.

- Can we turn down the propaganda a click? Next thing I know I'll be doing runs out of my hatred of money instead of for piles of it.
- Slick
- There's some good tips on how to beat any raps coming your way that follow. Put on your big boy pants and muddle through.
- Captain Chaos

THE BIG SCORE AND HOW TO KEEP IT

Everything went according to plan. The fixer made the call. The Johnson made her pitch. You and your chummers found yourselves in the right place at the right time. The snatch went like clockwork. You dropped the package at the warehouse. The certified credsticks are green. It's time to split the loot and rock the Barrens, right? Nope. Now the real work begins. Stealing from the corporate jackals is only half the gig. Making sure you don't get caught is the other, more important half. Can't spend the cash if you are plugged into a cellblock.

The old wisdom is that if the cops don't catch a break within the first forty-eight hours of the case, the odds that the case will be solved drop by fifty percent or more. This is true today, perhaps even more so. Detectives are incentivized to solve cases quickly as well as maintaining a certain clearance rate. The last thing any detective wants is being saddled with a case that is going nowhere. They are the ones at the bottom of the pile of pressure that starts with the company that just got ripped off.

- Cases are never technically dropped. Losers get transferred to a cold-case list and assigned to an officer that is in some stage of retirement. Some of these guys work the cases like they were still on the streets. Others just do it for their pension and never look at anything in the file. Either way, Lone Star gets to save face with its clients, because having a name next to the case means the investigation is ongoing.
- SPD

Most runners are smart enough to cover their tracks after being inside a job site. The decker erases the security footage. The doors jacked open are shut

again. Any physical evidence is scrubbed down. Every piece left behind inside offers the Star a bite at the apple. Runners that can get in and get out like ghosts fetch high prices for this sort of professionalism. The less day-to-day operations are disturbed, the less motivated the corporation is going to be to lean on Lone Star. The less financial damage done via dead security guards and rebuilding facilities, the less likely the corporation will want to take that cost out of your hoop.

The next obvious step is going to ground. Find a secure, out-of-the-way location and hole up there for a day or two. The fewer people that know about this safe house, the better. Some crews hole up together. Others go their separate ways and only regroup once the Johnson has the rest of the payoff ready. If the Star doesn't know where to look for you, it can't catch you. Dropping off the grid in 2050 seems like it should be impossible, but it can be done. Remote locations outside of the city work well; even squatting in the Barrens can throw up some challenges in tracking you down.

If you were smart, either you own a vehicle or you stole one before the run began. Conventional wisdom says you should ditch the car in a river or some other body of water once the job is done. This can work, but hiding a car in plain sight can also be useful. Park the car someplace where the parking lot is always in use, like an airport or bus terminal. Some crews park hot cars in tow zones, because the bureaucracy of finding a vehicle in an impound yard adds to the troubles law enforcement has tracking the crew down promptly. Chop shops are also excellent contacts to have in this situation. If the vehicles used in the run disappear, they can't be traced back to anyone.

Guns are an important part of the runner toolset. These tools are a huge link for Lone Star to trace, so make sure they stay squeaky clean. Know where they are at all times. Everybody knows at least one runner who treats a firearm like a spouse. Make sure that firearm stays out of sight for a while. If the safe house has a secure storage option, use it. If it doesn't store the weapons in a place that is secure, pass it to someone you trust, like a fixer. Make sure the fixer doesn't try to make some side money by loaning that machine pistol out to a go-ganger looking to knock over a fast food joint. If that gun geeked the special mage security officer on a black project, that's going to draw a big red line back to your crew if it ends up on the street.

Some crews throw away as much weapons and equipment as possible. Destroy as much as you can. Scrub the guns down with bleach and cleaning products. The river or other large bodies of water are classic dumping spots for a reason. Guns sink

faster than cars do and can be thrown over the side of a bridge in a much quieter fashion. Fire is another useful method for getting rid of unwanted equipment. But scraps will persist, and these scraps need to be collected and dealt with. Remember, a mage detective can contact a fire elemental to discuss what it burned a few hours ago.

- Destroying equipment has about the same advantages and disadvantages as keeping it. The act of destruction is usually a big chunk of any argument involving premeditation if you end up in any sort of hearing. Professionals are loath to get rid of equipment they designed for themselves, but getting nabbed with that sweet push-button sniper rifle makes an investigator's job ten times easier
- SPD

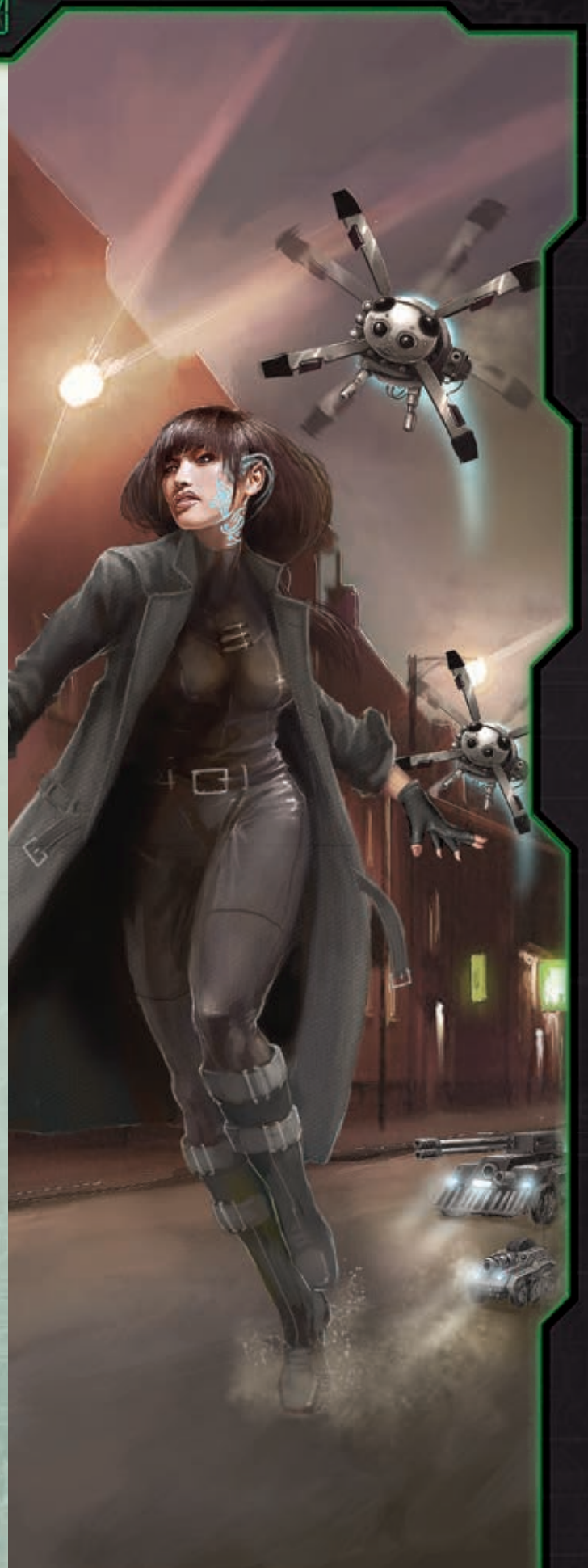
One thing to try to do before a run is pay off as many debts as you can. Lone Star investigators love to flip markers into informants by offering to pay off gambling debts or money owed for rent. This also means that if you forget to pay this off ahead of time, staying away from people you owe money to is a sound tactic. Never take a job to earn cash specifically to pay off a debt. Earmarking some of a take is fine. Showing up the day after a run to pay off a bookie you've been ducking for the last six months is something the Star watches for.

- That assumes that you have a choice in the matter.
- Fix-It

One final tip? Drive like a saint. The amount of cases broken open by a routine traffic violation is staggering. Vans with thousands of nuyen of stolen merchandise get stopped for a busted taillight. Then there was the guy who ran a red light to get to his girlfriend's house, and he turned out to be the leader of a heist that nearly ruined the launch of Fuchi's latest cyberdeck. These little mistakes can easily be the crack in the foundation that brings the whole thing down. The teams that become legends are the ones that mind the small stuff like this.

BOUND (AND GAGGED) FOR GLORY

So the donut pounders got the drop on you and yours. It's an embarrassing moment, but it happens to the best of us from time to time. The trick is to turn this loss into a win. Accept the fact that it can happen. Prepare for it. That way, when the time comes, and the Lone Star grunts turn their back to you to root through your gun stash, you're ready. You pop the cuffs, pick up your backup weapon or weapons, and get the drop on them. All we ask for our help is that you leave them naked on the precinct steps with a neo-a soyainted on their shaved heads.



Many street patrols still carry mechanical handcuffs that require a key to operate. It's a combination of poorly organized budgets and superstitious resistance to new equipment any chummer can use to his advantage. The easy way out of these, especially if you've got chrome or mojo, is to pull a Neil the Ork Barbarian and power your way out. This will do in a pinch, though there are two major flaws with this plan. The first is that breaking the chain means having the bracelets stuck around your wrists. Getting those off will take someone with a hacksaw and a few minutes of time. Until that happens, get used to funny looks and concerned citizens whistling up more Star patrols. The other flaw is that when someone is resisting arrest, Lone Star protocols on the use of deadly force are much more forgiving. Bust the cuffs and the cops will have no problem putting a shotgun blast in your hoop to save on paperwork.

Always keep a handcuff key on you at all times. Keys are standard across makes and models to keep dumb cops from locking themselves up. Putting one in a spot accessible to you when your hands are clasped behind the back is easy enough. Find someone you trust, think is cute, or both to lock you up so you can practice getting the key and quietly popping the lock. This way is also better because you can do it at any time and then concentrate on the best time to make a break or overpower the boys in the front seat.

Plastic zip cuffs are the standard restraint in precincts with decent budgets. They are strong, disposable, and easy to replace. They are favored by officers because they can be resized for ork, troll, and dwarf wrists. Multiple ties can also be used to restrain individuals with boosted strength. Most officers carry ten ties on their person and have access to at least a dozen more in their patrol vehicle. This means that someone with the tools to cut the ties, like carefully applied hand razors, can get free. Ties are usually employed on suspects that don't sport cyberware or magic.

These ties are usually cut by heavy wire cutters once the prisoner is secure at the lockup. Officers aren't going to leave wire cutters on your person, obviously, but if you get away, seeking out a pair is a good idea. Another option is a chemical available on law enforcement Matrix sites that eats away at the binders' plastic. It's meant for use in secure lockdowns that don't want to risk a suspect getting their hands on wire cutters as a weapon. The chemical jug is large and awkward—the fluid is meant to be used in a spray bottle. Keeping a little on your person could make the difference between a night in the cooler and a night celebrating your big score. Fill up a fingertip compartment, and then let it drip over the plastic for a few seconds before working yourself free.

The state-of-the-art in restraints are pulse binders. They fit over the entire hand to restrict finger movement. These are usually applied to cybered suspects since the electromagnetic field can be set to disrupt cyberware. They can also be used in a pinch to deal with mages by restricting their hands, which can mess with the mental patterns of spellcasters who like to wiggle their fingers when they work. Pulse binders can affix to any metallic surface. A full charge will hold a suspect for eight hours. Plus, if the battery runs out, the cuffs automatically stay in lockdown mode. The same tools that can get mechanical cuffs off can be used to remove pulse cuffs, but a much defter hand is needed to avoid damaging the hands within.

- Cyberware disruption usually means "make it feel like hot, broken glass and rusty nails are being dragged along your nerve endings."
- Hatchetman

Magemarks in the cop shows always look impressive and a little spooky. The ones in the field are far less impressive. They are essentially an opaque plastic bag with a breathing tube stuck through the bottom. The bag goes over the mage's head to restrict line of sight, and the tube allows the mage to breath while restricting the ability to speak. Most patrols have one of these in their car just in case, but they usually aren't even out of the packaging due to the rare sightings of mages on the street. Most patrol officers were shown how to put one on in training camp but will likely need to re-read the instructions to do it in the field.

One item of law-enforcement gear to look out for is the small compression hypodermic gun. It's part of the first aid kit, but a lot of veterans keep that hypo gun handy during a bust. When the cops run across a suspect they are unsure how to deal with or one that's being uncooperative, the veteran doses the suspect with the gun. Often times it's loaded with painkillers from the medkit to act add a sedative. Street improvisation might mean the gun is full of narcotics or hallucinogens to use on a suspect. This is technically not part of Lone Star protocol and could be used in the suspect's defense, but only in places with a regard to suspect's rights. If you know of any such places, let us know. In practice, almost all processing houses turn a blind eye when a pair of patrol officers haul in a snoring ork and dump him on the floor of a holding cell. Toxin filter cyberware will defeat this trick. Otherwise, keep a stim patch handy to counteract the downer and get ready for that back-and-forth feeling for a few hours.

GRAND THEFT ANARCHIST

There are two reasons to be inside a Lone Star vehicle. Either you didn't read the last section carefully enough to keep you on the streets, or you want to take some of the goodies inside for a quick buck or to supplement your own stash. We'll take a look at the most common vehicles on the streets, how to get in, get out, and cash in the goodies before the sucker gets out of the Stuffer Shack bathroom.

Chrysler-Nissan Patrol One

Lone Star and Chrysler-Nissan's partnership goes back many, many years. The Patrol One is the most popular urban security vehicle because of it. It features a completely separate passenger/driver section, full comm gear, and runflat tires. The trunk has a reinforced lock and is able to hold riot gear or specialist gear securely.

The easiest way into the vehicle's driver area is through the front hatch that allows officers access to the vehicle. The tinted glass is very resistant to small-arms fire. The hatch locks, but the engineers skimped on the hinges. While the hinges themselves are made of the same durasteel alloy as the rest of the frame, the covers are simply aluminum. Get a torch to heat up the aluminum covers, peel them away, and unscrew the hinges. Once you're inside the front section, the locks to the prisoner compartment and the gear truck open like Christmas.

- Like I carry an acetylene torch with my run gear.
- Hard Knox
- Sure you do. It goes by the name "Mage."
- Topper

Standard packout for the trunk is a Mossberg combat shotgun and a box of shells. Often extra ammo for service weapons is also stored in back. There is also a first-aid kit, auto-repair kit, extra batteries, rubber gloves, crime-scene kit, and blankets. Riot loadout includes heavier armor, riot shields, tear gas grenades, and SMGs. Specialty loadouts include additional restraining gear like mage hoods and pulse cuffs. The nice thing about the additional loadouts is that they are very portable. Grab the handle on the lining, and the whole kit will come up for easy transport.

Getting out of the back is a bit of a challenge. The doors are controlled from the front passenger side. The wall between the front compartment and the prisoner area is reinforced. Someone on the outside assisting can get under the chassis and remove some of the underbody armor. Then it becomes a matter of kicking out the floorboards to freedom. The

other option is cutting through the backseat to the trunk. An ork or troll is likely strong enough for the second option or two humans working together. The major downside to this method is a complete lack of subtlety. The trunks are rigged with alarms to alert the officers.

- The Patrol One is the plain vanilla cop cage on the streets. Undercover units use a modified Ford Americar, and highway patrol units feature a souped-up GM-Honda 3220 ZX Turbo. The Star lets officers modify them as they see fit, so be careful out there if you want to try and collect the whole set.
- Wheelie
- The Patrol One also ends up at a lot of cop auctions. Just because they took off the siren and gave it a quickie black paint job doesn't mean they took the time to remove all the upgrades before it hit the auction yard.
- Joliet

Ares Mobmaster

Once gangs started showing up to rumbles in Ares Citymasters tricked out for urban warfare, those lovable gun runners pulled a classic move. They sold a bigger, meaner version to the other side. Lone Star bought into the Ares Mobmaster pretty heavily thanks to its milspec readout, twin medium machine guns, and multiple grenade gas launchers. If you're picked up by one of these, you are doing the neo-anarchists proud, chummer.

- Milspec my sweet hoop. The only thing military about this ride is the price tag. 3.65 million nuyen for extra guns and more armor? I know a go-gang that will make a Renault-Fiat Eurovan twice as tough for a round of beers and a few joygirls in the clubhouse.
- Pumper

Getting inside a Mobmaster seems like a suicide run. There are a dozen armed and armored Lone Star HTR guys who are most likely looking for your crew. Getting in requires a maglock passkey and dealing with any stray personnel inside. Most deployments feature twelve HTR and up to four support personnel. The support personnel are the medic, the tactical commander and the rigger. The Mobmaster seats sixteen, so the tactical commander can choose reserve tactical personnel or reserve support personnel, or they can fill the extra spot with more supplies. The support troops stay inside the vehicle at most times, but they sometimes leave during an engagement. If you hit the Mobmaster during a deployment, you have to be sure to subdue anyone inside. That means as many as five personnel, if the commander has an element stay behind to help guard the ride.

There's a candy store inside the Mobmaster just waiting to be looted. Shotguns, heavy armor, chemical



weapons, ammo for almost a dozen riot cops is kept inside. This doesn't even count the ammo for the big mounted weapons on the side. Stripping these takes more time, but the payoff is worth it.

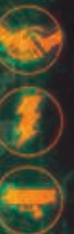
Ultra Security Prison Transport Vehicle

The Ultra-Security Prison Transport Vehicle, aka the USPTV, is a true sign that you've made it. It means the Star is not messing around and doesn't think you're some gutterpunk running secondhand cyber. This is usually what pulls up when you're caught red-handed inside of some executive suite. She's run by two riggers, one who drives the thing and another to run the guns on either side of the vehicle. In addition to the guns, the "blind spots" are rigged with a combination of flash-paks and explosive charges meant to discourage anyone from admiring the paint job too closely. To top it all off, the prisoner compartment contains a fragmentation grenade set to explode if triggered by either operative. It also goes off if both operatives goes offline.

- Not only that, but the "Black Mariah" can also be sent into the field with a protective circle to hold anyone of a magical persuasion.
- X-Star

Getting inside the vehicle isn't the tricky part. Removing the option for the riggers to blow everybody away is the important part. This usually means a few minutes of underbody work to locate the electrical systems that connect the explosive to the rigger control unit. Of course, the unit is rigged to explode if it is tampered with, so be careful. Another option is to trigger the explosive without your target inside. But if you can get them out before they get put in the USPTV, why are you wasting time trying to crack it?

The USPTV is meant for transporting high-threat prisoners through high-threat areas. It is not meant to have a lot of equipment stowed for the looters to steal. The prisoner compartment is 3 meters by 2.5 meters by 2 meters. It is also heavily armored, which means if the grenade triggers, the explosion is contained and won't wreck the vehicle. It can blow during transit and the rigger will barely be able to distinguish it from any other bump in the road. It's a risky move, but the best way to keep someone inside away from prison is to wreck the vehicle in a way that it incapacitates the crew and keeps the explosive from detonating. That compartment is strong enough to withstand an explosion from within, so it's strong enough to withstand a wreck.





TRUTH OR DREK: FIVE MYTHS ABOUT THE LONE STAR LEGAL PROCEDURE

You have the right to remain silent: Truth.

Anything you say can be used against you in your corporate tribunal. The Star will want a confession to save paperwork. Depending on the client, they can use a variety of techniques that range from uncomfortable to actual torture. Take a look at the company's extraterritorial constitution to see what you might be in for in the Star's clutches. Or have the decker read it and give you the short version. This right is all yours because that's why Johnson pays you. Half of it is for your skill. The other half is for your silence. To be clear, we're not saying that your silence will not be used against you, but it may keep you alive.

Aiming for a kneecap means a lesser charge: Drek.

Shooting to wound is a noble pursuit. All those pudgy security guards have families, right? Not their fault they came across your bleeding-edge crew in the wrong warehouse at two in the morning. But the Star is often paid by the conviction, and they're not looking to go easy on anyone, no matter how merciful they might have been to their targets. Even carrying cyber weapons is usually going to get an attempted murder charge chucked onto whatever it is you actually did. They don't make cyberspurs for non-lethal wounds, so in Lone Star's eyes, merely having them is enough to show deadly intent. Actually wielding them in combat is worse. Long story short, the Star will not ease up because you kept your body count low. If you want a lesser charge when you are dumb enough to get caught, use Narcojet weapons and clubs exclusively.

You must give consent for your vehicle to be searched: Truth.

Really, the answer to this one is a bit of both. Consent is needed for an officer to search a vehicle. Cops rely on folks being rattled when they get pulled over and agree to a search while they aren't thinking straight. Just make sure that you clearly state you do not give permission. Lone Star records officers to make this stuff clear during court cases. There's also a bit of wiggle room due to probable cause and plain

sight. If the cop sees a pistol on the passenger seat or bloodstains on your hands, that's probable cause to search your vehicle. The last resort is the officer holding you for a warrant. That's usually a last resort. If they go through the trouble of getting a warrant and find nothing, that's a lot of paperwork back at the station and an unhappy watch commander. Lone Star can dig around in your vehicle without your permission, but doing so gives your lawyer a head start in fragging the charges.

Keep in mind one important fact, though—if you don't have a SIN, all this goes out the window. You're a criminal by the mere fact of your existence, so whatever the officers decide to do to you, or whatever they decide to search, is justified.

If you ask an undercover officer to reveal him or herself, he must to avoid an entrapment defense: Drek.

Undercover officers don't sit around with BTL dealers crossing their fingers and praying that the dealer will just forget to ask them this simple question. Joygirls and joyboys also cling to the hope that if they start off their transaction with this question, they are off the hook. Just like criminals can lie to cops, cops can do the same back. Entrapment isn't about lying, it's about a cop causing someone to do something illegal that they wouldn't have done in the first place. Keep that in mind the next time the fixer sets you up with a Johnson you don't know.

Not ratting out your friends can get you an obstruction charge: Drek.

You can always refuse to talk to the cops. Most of the corporate extraterritorial constitutions were adapted from the old U.S. version. That document contained the 5th Amendment, which says you can't incriminate yourself. The corporate forefathers didn't want to have to worry about that if their necks were ever on the line, but that trickles down to the poor slobs in the shadows too. They can use a lot of things to get you to talk, including going a couple rounds with your hands behind your back, but you never have to do it to avoid a charge. Unless they start manufacturing evidence against you, but that's another subject.

GETTING OUT OF JAIL WITHOUT ONE OF THOSE CARDS

Don't give up hope if you've been brought all the way back to one of Lone Star's precinct houses. Getting out here will most likely require a few friends willing to get dirty or run a con on the desk sergeant. Hope is not lost if your whole crew is cooling off beside you. Somebody probably owes you something. Hopefully it's enough for them to come to the rescue. Or maybe it's time you owed somebody.

If you have a SIN, all the crimes you are accused of are attached to it. If you refuse to give a SIN or don't have one, a SIN will be provided for you. Even if you are exonerated, those charges are going to be available to see for anyone that runs your SIN. Some chummers use their criminal SIN as something of a resume, but it's kind of a black mark, because having it still means that at some point, you got caught. Getting caught means the Johnson will likely cut your fee anywhere from ten to thirty percent because of it.

Most Lone Star buildings keep their holding cells in a fortified wing of their station, or sometimes in the basement. They tend to be dark, cold, and pretty secure. Even if you get out of your cell, they can shut down the main exit, including elevators or stairs, to keep you in place. Entry areas into cell complexes tend to have gas nozzles in the ceiling so that the guards can put you to sleep then drag you back in your cell during naptime. If you can get a chance, survey the Lone Star precinct closest to the site of your run. If it's an older building, you might be in luck. Lone Star often inherited municipal police buildings from city governments. Many of these buildings are decades old and were built before the Awakening. That means that they weren't built to withstand things like a troll hitting it with a motorcycle or a powerbolt to a support wall. Many of these older buildings have temporary fixes for these problems, but only the precinct with fat juicy budgets ever took the time to upgrade to permanent fixes.

- If it's a new building, all is not totally lost either. Generally the lowest-bid contractor is responsible for the new building. Those low bids usually mean they may have skipped a few things in the construction process. Building maintenance is usually one of the first casualties of a down year for the company, so you might walk out of the county clerk's office after a gander at the blueprints with an idea of how to bust out should you ever need to.
- Who, Dini?

- If you are given a SIN and you are convicted, it's billed to the area authority as part of Lone Star's security services. If you are proven innocent, you get billed for your new SIN. They usually try to collect payment when they process you for your release. If you can't pay then, they'll tail you and hope to ambush you after you've picked up some cred.
- X-Star

Small arms are kept in the building in evidence lockup. Anything of a submachine gun-caliber or smaller stays in the lockup. These weapons are kept for six months from the processing date and then meet a variety of fates. Licensed gun dealers are able to purchase them at auction. Some weapons are absorbed into weapons storage for use by Lone Star employees. Any remaining weapons are destroyed.

Big guns are shipped to a central lockup off-site. The physical guns are locked up in the station's armory until they are transferred. The shipping process is fairly quick. Most large weapons are sent away between eight and twenty-four hours after their arrival in the armory. Even weapons that are legally registered to an offender are shipped off-site. If the offender is released in the meantime, they are given a receipt allowing them to reclaim the weapon once the case finishes processing.

- So, how often do the tin stars take the Panther Cannon up to the roof with a six pack and fire off a few rounds into the DMZ?
- McGavin
- The real question is how often those weapons fall off the back of the truck and end up back in our hands?
- Tickler
- Sometimes when a heavily cybered individual gets picked up, they get processed and never come back. Strangely, a few months later, some of the local officers are sporting cyberware that would look familiar to friends of that individual. Almost every city that Lone Star operates in cuts a deal with one of the local secondhand body shops to look the other way in exchange for "repurposing" cyberware.
- Hatcherman

The one thing you need to do is to get out the door before being sent off-site. After forty-eight hours, if you're not released on bail or bond, you are transferred to an off-site secure facility, which is polite corporate terminology for a prison. Getting out of prison is a subject for a whole other article.

THE DARKEST SHADOWS

SEATTLE

Posted by: Bubba Love

Look, this is the way it is: Either you work Seattle or you're second-class. Now, before you go off firing me angry e-mails and drek, take a deep breath for a second. I'm not saying there aren't good runners anyplace else. I'm not saying there aren't tough jobs. But there can only be one highest point in the world, right? There is only one Mount Everest. There is only one Carnegie Hall. In every field in the world, there is one place that tells you you're at the top. You've made it. You're playing in the biggest game in the world, with the highest stakes.

That's Seattle.

I'm not saying everyone needs to be based in Seattle, or needs to run there all the time. But if you want to consider yourself a prime runner, if you want to show off your world-class cojones (even if you're a woman—maybe *especially* if you're a woman) you've got to come to town and pit yourself against the sprawl. If you survive, you'll know you're good. If you thrive, you'll know you're the cream of the crop.

So I'll assume you're going to follow my advice and come to town, if you're not already here. To that end, I've put together the essentials of the sprawl. Don't be fooled—you could know all of this and still get eaten alive within two seconds of setting foot here. Knowledge is power, but so is a gun, and the city is full of dead bodies with guns clutched tightly in their hands. What I'm saying is the things I'm going to talk about can help, but nothing can substitute for staying on your toes. And, you know, being good.

So what puts Seattle at the top of the shadow-running pyramid, with all the other cities out there? Well, for one thing there's its unique political position. It's technically part of the UCAS, but it's not contiguous with any other part of that nation. That means it attracts the attention of people who want to strike at the UCAS, but it doesn't always get the full support of the government when it comes to defense. Additionally, the fact that it has Tír Tairngire and the Salish-Shidhe Council next door make it a crossroads where a variety of people with a variety of interests come together. It's a modern-day Casablanca, where everyone has an agenda, everyone is playing an angle, and the air crackles with the promise of money, sex, and death. Almost everything there is

in the world is for sale in Seattle; all you have to do is figure out who's selling it and how to pay for it. The wealthy of the city have enough cash to support themselves and a hundred others like them for thousands of years, while the poor—and there are legions of them—are often grateful to have a meal that isn't insect-based (unless they're orks and they're about to chow down on one of their favorite six-legged delicacies, but that's another story.)

You will never completely understand Seattle, but that's because major sprawls were not built to be understood. They are to be experienced. If you want to have a chance to survive the experience, though, you need at least a minimum of knowledge. So let's start with the basics—the sections of the city and who lives in them.

PLACES

Downtown

Like any sprawl, Downtown is the place most outsiders think of when they think of Seattle. It's where the buildings are tallest, metahumanity is the densest, law enforcement is tight, crime is both brutal and sophisticated, wealth is dangled in front of everyone's eyes, and poverty is swept under the rug so that everyone can pretend it doesn't exist.

Governor Marilyn Schultz loves Downtown, and it shows. She knows this is the face the sprawl presents to the world, and she works hard to ensure it makes a good impression. Schultz is not subtle; if she's going to make an impression, she's going to do it with buildings that knock people out with their size, that make them crane their necks back and drop their jaws in wonder. She's going to hit you over the head with how awesome her city is.

The megacorporations love this, of course. They compete with each other anyway, so having the municipal government clearing land for them and expediting the permit process so they can get a leg up on the competition delights them. The end result is a towering Downtown, where every surface is reflective, glowing, or somehow both, where the megacorporations work overtime to remind you that you're in their space, and while you're there you need to pay the proper obeisance, dammit. And if you're here in the shadows with the rest of us, that makes you want either to take their stuff, punch them in the face, or both.



One of the things to remember when you're on Downtown's streets is that Downtown is more than its streets. There are catwalks, pedways, bridges between buildings, and all manner of connections between buildings. It's quite possible to go from one end of Downtown to another without ever entering open air, and you'd better remember that if you're tailing someone. So don't just assume that you can watch someone go into a building and then sit by the door and wait for them to come out again. It's practically guaranteed that there's some other way out of the building, one you wouldn't know about through a cursory glance around the premises.

Naturally, each member of the Big Eight has a presence Downtown, but at the moment none of their structures are quite as imposing and impressive as the Renraku Arcology. Currently this beast has 276 stories, it will have 320 when it's finished, and it will eventually be home to 92,000 loyal Renraku citizens. If you want to know what the future of architecture and interior looks like, join one of the tours of this place. And if you want to earn some nuyen learning about the future of technology, get to one of the floors that houses engineers and dig one of them out.

One of Renraku's rival Japanacorps, Mitsuhaman, also has an impressive presence Downtown with its cluster of six black-and-silver skyscrapers. It's a pretty surface that nicely covers the bloodstains of everyone that's died trying to get where they're not supposed to be. If you're in town to show how good you are, then break in here—telling people you survived will boost your street cred something fierce.

Besides the AAAs, Seattle hosts some other big corps. Perhaps most notable is Federated Boeing, and they have a massive shipyard Downtown where they put together a lot of the toys they make for those who can afford them. Attempted data steals there seem to be a near-daily occurrence.

- Some of that is because Federated Boeing has been reviewing their security protocols lately, with an eye to making them stronger. People feel like they need to get in while the getting's good.
- Corcoran

Downtown's about more than business, of course. Governments of all sorts have facilities here, most notably the thirty-story Metroplex Hall where Governor Schultz has her office. The UCAS government also has offices here—just follow the sounds of protest and you'll find 'em. The Metroplex Supreme Court is also Downtown, but most of you will probably have more cause to visit the Metroplex Prison, home of one of the most sadistic wardens you'll ever meet.

- Yeah, Growler Grotem's tough to deal with, and not just because he likes to torture his inmates. The tricky part is finding something to bribe or blackmail him with in order to make him a little pliable, or help you in your effort to get your chummers out. Blackmail is tough because his superiors already know about his nastiest habit and seem not to care; bribery is difficult because it's unclear what he wants out of life besides abusing people he doesn't like.
- Sally
- Then treat him like you treat a ghoul—promise him the kinds of bodies he wants.
- SliceNDice

The University of Washington also has its main campus Downtown, and their professors and students can provide resources if you're smart enough to take advantage of them. If you need info from a professor, the key thing is to feed their ego. Make them feel like an expert and that each insight they provide is incredibly useful and mind-expanding, and you can usually keep them talking for hours. Students, on the other hand, tend to be eager for two things—relevant job experience and cash. If you can offer something that seems plausibly like the former, you can absolutely rip them off on the latter. Remember, though, that a lot of times you get what you pay for.

The corp drones have their offices downtown, and we have ours. Chief among them is Dante's Inferno, a hell-themed nightclub dedicated to helping people commit as many of the seven deadly sins as they can fit into a single evening. If you're looking for a member of Seattle's social elite, go here, because they'll show up sooner or later.

- You're not going to get in if you're a nobody in normal clothes. About two blocks away is Rasha's, a clothing boutique run by a dwarf named (you guessed it) Rasha. He likes shadowrunners—tell him a few good stories and you can get a discount on clothes stylish enough to have a chance at getting into the Inferno.
- TopGunner

Downtown is also home to the epicenter of Seattle's trog scene. The Big Rhino exists to give orks and trolls the food they crave and to give tourists the chance to walk on the wild side and eat some things that in normal circumstances they'd never consider letting anywhere near their mouth. The place has one other notable feature besides its food—it's one of the main public gateways to the Ork Underground, for those brave enough to venture down there.

- Don't make it sound so scary. We're civilized people. We don't bite. Unless you're a grass-eater.
- Bull





- Don't go making people feel welcome. It's our place, and we worked hard to make it that. Everyone else can stay the hell out.
- Karkfal

Council Island

You want a contrast to Downtown? Come here. You got trees. You got grass. The only neon you can see is the glowing lights on the other side of the water. Buildings are made of hand-cut logs, clothes are made of hand-woven cloth. One thing is similar to Downtown, though—security. The island is Salish-Shidhe territory, and they are quite invested in protecting it. They may not bring as many guns to bear on a situation as Lone Star would, but they make up for it in magical force. If you really want to see Council Island light up, check it out on the astral. The spells, wards, and spirits provide more than enough light to read by, if astral reading was an actual thing.

Council Island sits in the middle of Lake Washington. You can get there by car if you want, but Intercity 90 is a closely watched road, so you'd better be okay with being caught on camera if you drive it. There are ferries going there, but there are also plenty of small boat slips, so your best bet may be just using or renting your own boat.

- Don't fool yourself—there's mundane police on the island, too. The Council Island Police are effective and no fun to deal with. They're also about the most closed-mouth police force you'll ever meet.
- Soul Man

The center of power on Council Island is the Grand Council Lodge, and that's where Jon Moses, Salish-Shidhe Council ambassador to Seattle and island chief has his offices. Security is exactly what you'd expect it to be for a person of his stature, so don't wander in there carelessly. But if you have any sort of experience, you know that it's best not to make a head-on run against a place like this. You look for an end run instead. The best place to find such a thing could be the Council Island Inn, where distinguished guests of the ambassador and other luminaries reside. The inn likes to boast of its high security, but whispers in the shadows say they've got some leaks, most likely due to employees who have found exciting ways to get new personal revenue streams. A few precious pieces of art recently went missing from the inn, and rumors persist of a secret underground tunnel traveling from the inn's basement to ... well, somewhere. No one who has been to the other end is talking.



- It doesn't go to the Grand Council Lodge or Moses' home, that's for sure. That would be too obvious, and too unsafe. I'd wager it goes to a nice, secluded spot in one of the island's woods.
- Silverlark
- It does. Right next to a powerful magical lodge.
- Whizzer

Redmond

Redmond is Seattle's angle of repose. When rocks are rolling downhill, there's eventually a place where they stop, and you get a big accumulation of loose rocks. When people's lives are rolling downhill, you also get a single place where they stop, and you get an accumulation of burnouts, junkies, psychopaths, mad men, and monsters. That's Redmond, and it's ours.

I kind of feel like describing Redmond to you people is describing the woods to a bear. You know it. You know how it smells. You know how hard it is to find food and a decent place to sleep, and you know how fierce you have to be to protect those things. Despite the bromides sometimes preached by ultra-environmentalists, nature is not kind or beneficent. Nature is full of things waiting to frag you so they can survive another day. That, also, is Redmond.

The district is mostly flat—both the ground and the buildings have been leveled to a large degree. A high percentage of the structures that are still standing are husks, empty shells that can serve whatever purpose the current inhabitants have in mind. There may be legal owners of these properties somewhere, but they don't matter. The people that matter are the ones who can convince their neighbor that the building they're in is theirs, and anyone who tries to kick them out is in for a rough time.

If you're a runner, sooner or later you're going to go into the Barrens, either because you need to meet with or find someone who's there now, or because it's the only place that will take you. It's not friendly, it's not welcoming, but if you're lucky and crafty enough you can find a place to sleep where you won't wake up either in jail or dead. We've learned to not ask for much more than that.

It's sometimes easy to forget that Redmond is a legitimate district, with a full-on mayor and everything. Jeffrey Gasston currently holds the title, and he's cute. He acts like we're just another normal district, and if he provides a mall and some new housing, we'll all fall into line like good corp drones. That's why, for the most part, he's ignored by his citizens. We do what we need to do, and usually the best we hope for from Gasston is that he doesn't get in our way, and that the security in the new mall he's building isn't too trigger-happy.

- Not surprisingly, they're having trouble finding people to staff those positions. I plan to sign up, act normal long enough to collect a paycheck or two and get a good feel for what valuables are kept where, and then go nuts in the place.
- SliceNDice

I'm not going to cover Touristville much, because we're not playing around. We're not visiting Redmond because we want the illicit thrill of dipping our toes into the murky end of the pool. We dive in all the way, because we have to. So let's talk about where we might end up.

If you're a trog looking for shelter, or if you're looking for a trog who was looking for shelter, head over to the Plastic Jungles, a collection of twenty huge greenhouses that don't grow much anymore besides insane conspiracy theories and paranoid grudges. Squatters are hiding beneath any part of the structure that might give them even the smallest protection from the elements, and many of them will fight for their square meter patch of land with everything they've got. But like any community, they've realized there's a certain strength in looking out for each other, so the residents have some awareness of who else is around and what they may be up to. Just don't let them think you're not on their side.

If you're targeting human squatters or people too dumb to understand the long-term effects of radiation, then go to Glow City, the site of the failed Trojan-Satsop nuclear power plant. That place had its partial meltdown thirty-seven years ago; some of the elements contaminating the soil have a half-life of thirty years. So in maybe another sixty years, perhaps Glow City will be somewhat manageable! But to be on the safe side, better wait ninety.

- Guy who first brought me there told me not to worry about the radiation. He said I'd be lucky if I lived long enough for the radiation to be the thing that kills me.
- Cayman

Another major gathering place is the Body Mall, home to the best under-the-radar docs in the business. Now, fair warning: Most of the people here were legit docs who lost their license for one reason or another—too much novacoke, too little skill, that sort of thing. So they may be more skilled than your pal Vinny, but it's still a crapshoot. The good news is that, freed from the tyranny of licensing boards and ethics, they can do just about anything anyone offers them money to do. So get some nuyen and get creative imagining how your body could be.

- This is also the place to dump used cyberware you found. The docs here know how to find buyers.
- Bonesaw

One other place to know about is Crusher 495. Ork-owned, ork-operated, and ork-friendly, these guys have been targeted by enough Molotov cocktails to make a fire elemental stone-cold drunk. While the patrons are not afraid to take on the racist goons who pop up in hand-to-hand fashion, the club owners have worked hard to build a presence in their community, such as it is. They make loans sometimes, they transport people to hospitals, and do other things to make them liked by humans and trogs alike. Whether this will be an important landmark in human-ork relations or will be crushed by virulent racists to show that cooperation between metatypes is impossible remains to be seen.

Everett

The rain still falls regularly in Ever-Wet, but lately it's been raining cash as new money and economic development have been pouring into the area. That's always an exciting time for a district, both inside and out of the shadows, since there's a scramble for power as groups look to get as much of the new money as possible flowing into their pockets. Organized crime in particular has been jockeying for position in the area, with the Mafia, Yakuza, and Seoulpa all showing interest in gaining power in Everett. It won't be long before their clashes draw blood. This is especially true if the area's leading go-gang, the Red Rovers, decides to assert its control over its territory and lash out against the newcomers.

- If they do, that'll be the end for the Red Rovers. They may be a big deal in a relatively poor area of town, but if they awake the wrath of either the Yaks or Mafia, they'll be promptly and thoroughly squashed.
- OKFella

Right now, the jockeying between the various organized crime elements is happening mainly in the shadows, which is of course perfect for us. Head to the Gravity Bar North to catch up with some area shadowrunners and get the lowdown of what they've been up to. In particular look for a bartender named Vic, who usually has the latest info. Vic's the most frustrating guy in the world. He's lucky enough to have some magic talent, and instead of cashing in on it, he just uses it to play pranks on customers and get laid.

- Sounds like he's using it exactly right to me.
- Carmine

With all the wrangling going on, it's going to be interesting to watch the fate of current district mayor Samantha Tillman. She sometimes manages to be one of those politicians who actually gets things done, but elections are about to get harder for her. It's one thing to be elected in a district that no one's really interested in; it's another to go up against handpicked mob candidates who have a big financial incentive pushing them to get into office. The politics are going to get nastier, and Tillman's going to find out just how much of a spine she's got.

- She's toast. She's going to come up against a whole brand of dirty tricks and nastiness that she's never encountered. They're gonna steamroll her into the pavement.
- PlainRain
- Not so fast. This whole economic renaissance started because Tillman was tough enough to muscle some investment into her district. She's pushed around developers, and she's been pretty creative in doing it. If organized crime wants to pull out their bag of tricks against her, I'll bet she'll come up with some pretty inventive defenses on the fly.
- The Everett Watcher

Bellevue

Downtown not wealthy enough for you? Do you still have some self-esteem? Have you not yet seen the many, many ways that people of means could buy and sell your hoop? Then come to Bellevue. It's got the same level of obscene wealth as parts of Downtown, but since it doesn't depend on businesses and other facilities that are open to the public, it doesn't have to cover up the fact that poor people exist—it simply refuses to admit them.

Okay, that's not entirely true. That's the image of Bellevue, built on the incredible wealth packed into places like Beaux Arts and Rosemont Beach. There are other neighborhoods there, though, like East Gate and Newcastle, that are not packed with money. What they are packed with, though, are corp people. Bellevue is corporate top to bottom, from the high-powered executives with ocean views to the bleeding-edge research taking place at electronic companies like Microdeck and Fuchi to the drones happy to have a roof to call their own, even if it sometimes leaks.

If you're doing business in Bellevue, chances are you're visiting one of the research facilities here. The Cavillard Research Center, which is connected to Mitsuhama, is perhaps the most secretive of a very private group. No one knows what's going on here, which means if you can find out, you can make a nice chunk of change selling the info to the highest bidder.



- Or take the slightly safer route of having an imagination and manufacturing evidence that's convincing enough to make someone pay you for it.
- Belocq

To navigate the area, it helps to have an insider, and in Bellevue, that means Marcy Rivera, a.k.a. TechTool. Marcy worked for Global Technologies for twenty-three years, then was abruptly dismissed when her supervisor was pushing a bad piece of gear and needed someone to take the fall for its shortcomings. Marcy hadn't had anything to do with the bad piece of gear, which means she wasn't too happy about being the scapegoat. She took her revenge by staging a series of punishing data steals against her former employer, and she found she loved the rush of it. She set herself up as an information broker, doing her best to find out all of Bellevue's secrets and working to connect people who want to know things to the information they need to know. She doesn't stage too many data steals herself these days—just enough to keep her fingers in the game and her pulse racing—but she's *the* source for information on who's looking for what in the Bellevue high-tech corridor.

- Just be careful with her. She's kind of got an "information should be free" mind set, so a lot of times she'll give someone else the same information she just gave you. That means if you're doing a run based on something you got from her, you could well have competition.
- DeckHead

Tacoma

Let's be clear on one thing—Tacoma is still the younger sibling in the relationship with Seattle. Its skyscrapers aren't as big, its downtown is not grandiose, its corporate power not as overwhelming. But that said, let's be clear about another thing—in most parts of the world, except for next to Tokyo or Hong Kong or some other world-class sprawl, Tacoma would be an impressive city in its own right. So don't be a snob. Take your hoop to Tacoma and see what kind of nuyen you can scare up.

Now for a warning: If you run in Tacoma, get ready to hack off the Yakuza. In Tacoma, the Yakuza have the upper hand in the battle of criminal organizations, and they're exploiting their advantage for all they're worth. The recent assassination of Mayor Michael Alvarado shows how confident they've become in their power.

- Hold on. There is no concrete evidence connecting the Yakuza to Alvarado's death. Last I heard he was offed by some random wacko.
- Rising Son

- Random wacko. Right. That would be convenient for a lot of people, but there were too many people who wanted Alvarado dead for it to be random. From the wife he was cheating on to political enemies to the Yaks, lots of people were gunning for Alvarado, and one of them finally got him. The story going around says that the killer said something to Alvarado as he was dying, and Alvarado said something back. That sound like a random madwoman to you?
- SPD

If you're doing business in Tacoma, you're eventually going to visit the docks. All kinds of goods flow into there, which means all kinds of thieves are there, too. A lot of people focus their efforts on what's coming into the city, but what's going out can be interesting, too. In particular, Federated Boeing sends a lot of machinery out through this port, so if you want to get a look at their latest without breaking into their factories, you can try to lift something from here.

The Sheraton Tacoma doesn't sound like anything of great interest, but ever since it served as a shelter to orks during the Night of Rage, it's had a good reputation among them and other non-elf metas. Ork travelers often make a point of staying there, and rumors persist of a pro-ork policlub meeting at the spot. Even farther-out rumors say there's a secret passage to the Ork Underground in the hotel.

If you need information about Tacoma—or any other place—track down Abe Heep, code named Tangent, at Basil's Faulty Bar, which was the place he opened when he retired from the intelligence game. That wasn't so long ago, so the information is still fresh, and he's willing to share if you rub him the right way.

- Pro tip: Bone up on your geographical knowledge. Tangent thinks of himself as a man of the world, and he values people who have been exposed to things beyond their front door. So share some stories of your world traveling that emphasize how well you fit in with the natives, and he'll be more inclined to show you sympathy. Doesn't mean he'll give you anything for free, though.
- Smiley

Despite the Yakuza power in Tacoma, the Japanacorp with the most significant presence in Tacoma is not Mitsuhamas but rather Shiawase. They have a pair of mammoth towers in the heart of the district, and the fact that they put this investment down in the aftermath of the Night of Rage did a lot to endear the corporation to area residents. Some of the best cybertech research in the world goes on inside these towers, which means security is tight and sneaky.

- No drek. Most of the uniformed security people in that thing are decoys. I was with a team that carefully shunted the uniformed guards to one end of a floor and managed to get in a closed room with a bunch of nerdy-looking





people in lab coats. The nerds then whipped out their submachine guns and opened fire—turned out that at least half of them were undercover security. I think I still have enough lead in my hoop to set off metal detectors.

- Kraven

Renton

Some people, when they see row after row of apartment buildings, think one thing: yawn. But most of these people are poor, and with that kind of limited thinking they're going to stay that way. If you're thinking right, you understand that areas like this are full of people looking for some kind of entertainment outlet, and in these circumstances, there's going to be drugs, simsense, and BTL trafficking. And where there's a demand for things, there's going to be organized crime. Just because they're not shooting it out in the street everyday doesn't mean they're not out there, constantly maneuvering for position.

It's tough to say who has the upper hand here, but there's lots of business to go around. It's not just about drugs, either—gambling dens and protection rackets are other significant sources of criminal income in the area. In fact, there's so much criminal money floating around Renton that smaller gangs are popping up all the time, looking for ways to keep some of the green for themselves. The Blood Mountain Boys are one of the most enduring gangs here, and they also are one of the most likely to laugh while shoving your face in a bowl of broken glass. They like the protection business the best, mainly because they have such a good time when someone falls behind in their payments. They're a go-gang at heart, which means they have plenty of vehicles and mobility to get around the district.

- You'd think the leader of a group like this would be a complete psycho, but you'd only be half right. Yeah, Necrosis is a tough, vicious dude, but he's also shrewd and quite capable of long-term, strategic thinking. He's cut a lot of people, but always for a reason, not just because he feels like it. He's respectful to the Mafia and Yaks, because he knows full-out war wouldn't work for him. At least, not yet.
- Highway Petrol

Any sleepy community needs a place where its dark secrets can play out, and in Renton it's the Meredith Comfy Cubicle. It's not well kept, but it's got one prime virtue: thick walls. That means all kinds of stuff can happen there and be kept quiet. Meetings with Mr. Johnson, recovery from illicit bodyshop operations, and chip dealing and using all take place here. If you've got an interest in any of these activities or anything associated with them, drop by.

- Just look out for this short girl named Trixie. She's either a short human or a tall dwarf, and she comes across as really friendly and open with information. What she really is, though, is a spellslinger who specializes in emotional manipulation, and if you're not careful you'll be telling your secrets to her in a matter of minutes. And then she'll promptly sell them.
- SPD
- Stay away from room 23. I don't know what happened there, but the aura is exceedingly messed up. I sent a spirit to look into it, and it sent me a scream of anguish right before it disappeared from this plane. I haven't heard from it again.
- Whizzer

Auburn

On the one hand, Auburn is full of salt-of-the-earth types, the type of people who are incredibly useful because they fix the kinds of things that bring the rest of the world to a screeching halt, because we don't know how to deal with 'em broken.

- What you mean we?
- Stands with Screwdriver

On one hand, this is a nice place, the kind of location you graduate to when you've finally scraped together enough money to get the hell out of the Barrens. On the other hand, Auburn is just this side of total chaos. The streets are not full of trash and the buildings are not on the verge of collapse, but crime is rampant, the gangs are vicious, and residents keep a tight grip on their credsticks when they're walking down the streets.

Both versions of the district are true, of course. It's a matter of perspective. If you were born and raised in Bellevue, you see Auburn as a lawless pit; if you grew up in the Barrens, Auburn is a dream of a more ordered life that seems obtainable, unlike the unreachable wealth of the luxury communities.

No matter how you feel about Auburn, you gotta love Mayor Zax Pound-Down, who likes to hold spontaneous one-vehicle parades in his limo where he stands up in the sunroof and waves to his people. He also makes memorable commercials and gives great press conferences.

- Damn right he does. There have been drek-filled rumors trying to say Pound-Down is in the pockets of the Yaks, and reporters bring it up every time he has a press conference. Not once has Pound-Down responded with anger. At the last one, a KSAF stringer started in by saying "Mayor Pound-Down, I hate to bring up the Yak issue again ...," and he immediately broke in and said "Look, I never would have slept with the beast except for its dreamy, flowing brown hair!" That ended that line of questioning, at least for one press conference.
- SPD

Pound-Down has been on an environmental crusade lately, which means he's falling into the megacorps' crosshairs. The people of Auburn love him, and if they lose him you can't be sure how the already unstable streets will react.

One must-see spot in Auburn is the Magician's Feast, run by two former corporate insiders. Wesley Nickerson was a wage-mage for Renraku, while Mark Hiems rigged drones for Aztechnology. Both of them stepped away from the corporate lifestyle, and they seem perfectly content with their new lives. They still have connections to their former corporations, and some execs from those spots drop by from time to time. Mitsuhamas people tend not to be welcome, as it was a fight with their people that burned Hiems out of the rigger life. So if you have MCT connections, keep them to yourself while you're there.

- Nickerson can talk a lot about how magical security is working at the arcology. He may not be with the corp anymore, but he's almost worshipful when he talks about the arcology, saying how advanced it is in every way and how when it is finally complete, it will be the safest spot in the world.
- FranklyWright

Snohomish

Ah, country life. Free from the ills that plague the big city, like violent crime and drugs. Snohomish is filled with open fields, plant life, and the kind of people who tend to like those sorts of things. It would be completely idyllic if it weren't for that pesky tendency of some country people to be suspicious of meta-humans who are not like them. And to be fair, some of the outsiders that tie Snohomish residents' undies in knots have done their best to earn that suspicion. Across the northern border of Snohomish sits the Salish-Shidhe Council, and citizens of that fine nation sometimes like to ride in just to make sure the residents don't get too comfortable. Their raids are usually more annoying than anything else, but there can be significant property damage involved. This means that if you have a Native look about you, don't expect immediately warm greetings from the people here.

- Oh, try to stay current, would you? The current mayor, Mike Walkstrong, is Native, with a strong anti-Humanis bent. All the hype about Snohomish-Native American tension is overblown!
- Jethro Tall
- Right. Just like all racial tensions in the old United States totally went away when they elected the first black president!
- Hole Truth

The source of the anti-ork and anti-troll sentiment is less clear. Yes, there have been crimes committed

by orks and trolls in the area, but other metatypes have committed violence too. It's tough to find a clear reason for the sentiment other than the same reason people all over the world have—orks and trolls just don't look right to them.

Whatever the cause, there are parties willing to exploit the fact that this divide exists. Small bands of armed thugs have been attacking independent farmers across the district, and it's not a big leap to guess that the corporate farmers are sending them around. They've been making a point lately to fill up those gangs with orks and trolls, the better to play on people's fears of the Other.

- Wonder if that'll backfire. Might stiffen people's resolve to stand up to these evil metas and not abandon their homes to fear.
- Knowing Cop

Snohomish is not generally known for its corporate intrigue, but there's one exception: Edmond's Instruments. Edmond's is one of the few independently owned corporations left in the area, and they'd been doing well for themselves with their big client: Federated Boeing.

- Federated Boeing? What do they have to do with music?
- Turkey Vulture
- Not those kinds of instruments, drekhead. Think about the instrument panel on an airplane.
- Chumley

They've come upon some misfortune lately, including a damaging fire in a new factory and the murder of their chief designer, Alf Lucklesh. Some people think this is Federated Boeing trying to strong arm their way into ownership of the corp; others think it's one of the AAAs striking out at Federated Boeing by messing with their supply chain. Either way, Federated Boeing is in the middle of this, so it's the first place I'd look if someone was paying me to do some looking.

- Federated Boeing has close-mouthed employees and rock-solid Matrix security, but their magic security sometimes lags behind. Get a good spellslinger on your side if you're looking into this.
- StarCaster
- Or just sign up a decker who's better than theirs.
- FastJack

Fort Lewis

It's the nature of the Sixth World that when we see a place like Fort Lewis, with its green forests and its

concerted anti-pollution efforts, our first reaction is to wonder what kind of evil crap is hiding under the surface.

The reason Fort Lewis remains sparsely populated is right there in its name. It is, and has been for decades, a military base. The Seattle Metroplex Guard is stationed there, and for many reasons that means the criminal and shadow elements steer clear of the area.

- Many? How about two. First, not too many people want to mess around with a literal army of armed and trained targets. Second, the military generally doesn't pay well enough to make it worthwhile to steal these guys' stuff.
- Hole Truth

But don't make the mistake of thinking there are no shadows in Fort Lewis. The people living here are soldiers, and they share some of the same tendencies and vices that soldiers have been showing since Alexander the Great told his troops to maybe make honest women out of the hangers-on they were regularly paying for sex. The Soft Landing is the most notable brothel in the district. While the mob would love to control some of the action that goes through there, they're stymied for one simple reason—the place is legal. Given how soldiers (or anyone else) get when it comes to pillow talk, you know the guys and girls working there have some juicy info, but to get it you have to get past Madame Bitchslap, a towering ork who is very protective of the people that work for her and more than willing to demonstrate how she earned her name.

- Look, jackass, Bitchslap is just her nickname. If you really want to get her respect and get on her good side, call her by her real name—Madame Florin. Don't think that gives you a free pass, though, as she's watchful of anything happening in her building. She's got cameras and astral overwatch everywhere.
- Marked Joan

The Big "O" is the other place runners should know about here. It's got a common denominator with the Soft Landing: naked people are a big draw. At the Big "O," they're strippers, and the place usually draws a good crowd even though it's pretty much a dump. The owner, Karl "Pain" Nelson, used to run the streets, making him sympathetic to our kind. There's a good selection of private rooms here, and Nelson often gives runners a discount. Some people like to meet here because of its out-of-the-way nature, while others are drawn by the fact that sometimes soldiers have runs of their own that need to be done.

- Roger that. I have a decent stream of grunts coming to me looking to alter duty logs so a few minor derelictions of duty won't be noticed and put them on report. You also get the occasional CO looking for background info on someone who's being a pain in the hoop. If you're lucky, you get the chance to look into soldiers plotting to frag their lieutenant.
- DeckHead
- That's all internal stuff, and there's a reason for that—soldiers don't have an easy time going off base. External runs, like those looking to gather the military secrets of the Metroplex Guard, usually won't meet at the Big "O," since it isn't smart for Mr. Johnson to just pop up in the middle of the people he intends to screw.
- Sam Marlowe
- I avoid this place like the plague. Nelson's just pretending to be retired. The whole place is part of one long, elaborate con, and eventually he's going to use the secrets he's gathering to frag the Metroplex Guard something fierce. I don't want to get caught in the inevitable blowback.
- Rikki Ratboy

Puyallup

For reasons all of us have trouble understanding, Puyallup seems to be doing its damndest to become Redmond. As is the case with the neighborhood kid who worships the hot-tempered go-ganger whose face is a mass of scars and stitches, you constantly wonder why they couldn't have picked someone else as a role model.

There are some differences between Puyallup and Redmond. First, Puyallup's prettier, if only because a black lava plain looks better than an unending stretch of trash and rubble. Second, while no one can claim to control Redmond, organized crime has a firmer grip on Puyallup. Any big crime organization needs an out-of-the-way place where they can hold weapons, drugs, and other merchandise that they just can't stockpile in any meaningful way in the more legitimate parts of town. Puyallup is that place. This means that the Mafia and the Yakuza watch this part of town much more carefully than they do Redmond. They're not going to step on you for breaking the law, of course, but if you have a history with either group, you'd best stay away.

Puyallup's equivalent to Glow City is the place known as Hell's Kitchen. After Mount Rainier erupted, geothermal plants popped up on the lava plain, but the Crash led to them being abandoned. Squatters eventually moved in, attracted by the promise of a roof, and that's where things stand today. That's not all the area has to offer, though. Wild nature spirits, odd critters, and rare minerals can all be found in the area, so talismongers and Awakened scholars often make journeys out here. The residents, who are usually more concerned about shelter than anything else, tend to leave them alone.



- Lillian Hammett of UW is leading a major study of the whole area, and she's out here daily. She not only knows the area well, but she's developed a formidable array of defensive spells to keep her safe while she does her work. She knows that publishing exclusive knowledge is important to her academic career, though, so sometimes you have to be extra persuasive to get her to share.
- StarCaster
- Hammett used to fly in via helicopter, but after a few of the helicopters carrying people taking a tour of Hell's Kitchen took a dive into the lava field, she decided it would be safer to travel on land. She'd love to have her copter back, though, so if you can figure out what's causing the whirlybirds to drop, she'd be pretty grateful.
- The Electron Glider

If you're going to visit Puyallup, drop by the Black Junk Yards, where people take things they want to be destroyed so they can stay out of everyone's view forever. You can scavenge cyberware, look for parts for your broken-down vehicle, or try to find that missing dead body that no one else in the sprawl can locate. You have to be careful, because the owners don't like scavengers digging through the stuff, but the place is huge, and there are a million spots to hide in the piles of junk. The guards can't be everywhere.

- Just remember that the largest pile of junk in the world does jack to hide your aura. Cecil Pfost, owner of the place, got tired of Rat shamans getting into and out of his place, so he hired one of his own to keep an eye on things. The new hire goes by the name of Yersinia, and he likes nothing more than stringing up intruders and watching them twist in the wind while they beg for mercy. Which he almost never gives them.
- Rikki Ratboy

The other must-see spot in Puyallup is the Crime Mall, where rows of criminals try to get your attention by proclaiming how bad their hoop is. Once you get by all the posers, though, you'll find some capable people, so if you're looking for a boost for your team—or a team to join—you'd do worse than come here.

After hours, the place to be in Puyallup is Underworld 93, a club that serves as the stepping stone to the big time. People are still talking about the star-making show Maria Mercurial recently put on here. If you want to see the next big thing—or if you want to be seen seeing the next big thing—go here.

- Remember that Newt, the troll who works the door, has a weakness for novacoke. Slip him some, and your chances of getting in go up dramatically. The owners don't like him using the stuff, though, so be subtle.
- Rawhide

Ork Underground

Everyone that can blame the orks and trolls for seeking out a little place to call their own after the Night of Rage, raise your hand. Right, me either. When they went looking for shelter, the Underground was there waiting for them. It started with a network of tunnels and passages connecting the basements and other underground chambers, and it grew from there. The orks brought in dwarves to help them excavate more, and they were aided by pre-existing natural spaces and dynamite. These days the Underground is an extensive network, and no one knows just where it goes or how far it extends. Which is just the way the inhabitants like it.

If you're an elf or a human—especially an elf—the best advice I can give you is to stay away. Each second you spend down there increases the odds that you'll be attacked just for looking the way you do. Having an ork or troll along with you can help, but it still does not guarantee your safety.

If you're a dwarf, you can get by, but don't push your luck while you're down there. You're a guest, and if you do anything that anyone feels crosses a line, they'll toss you out on your can. Dwarfs were kicked out not too long ago, and there's still some hard feelings down there.

If you're an ork or troll you can walk in without a problem and take a stroll around, but you still have to show a little caution. The residents of the Underground are far from united, and they have their own different internal divisions and accompanying rules of etiquette. If they think you broke one of those rules, you could be a target before you know what's happening.

- Let me give you an example. There are some orks who are very paranoid (and understandably so) about surface dwellers, and so they're on the look out for any interlopers from above. In the minds of some—but not all—of them, one of the signs of a surface dweller is wearing a tank top without a jacket, because the caverns are generally too cool for that. So they'll attack just about anyone in a tank top on sight. Point is, it all can be awfully arbitrary.
- Roofus

Talking about fixed locations in the Underground is a fool's errand, since it changes constantly. The only thing close to fixed points are the entrances, but there are so many rumored secret entrances, and occasional changes due to collapse, that even those can't be counted on as permanent. There are a few guarantees; the entrance in the Big Rhino is and will remain there, as will the entrance under Lordstrung's Department Store.





- Locations in the Underground may change, but one way or another, Maxine's will always be there. It has good barbecue and strippers—which means that no matter what happens in the Underground, the orks will make a place for it.
- Jack Hilborn

GOVERNMENT

The first step in understanding Seattle's government—or any government—is to remember that they are not there to enforce some abstract notion of justice or fairness. They are there to make it easier for the corps to do their business. Does that sound cynical? Too damn bad.

At the top of the government sits the governor, our beloved Marilyn Schultz. As is the case with most executives in the world, she has a legislative body to deal with. In Seattle, it's the one-hundred-member (ten from each district) metroplex Congress. Their meeting schedule tells you almost all you need to know about them—they meet once a month, on the first Thursday of the month. That's it. You might think that they have more pressing business than they could handle in that amount of time, but you'd be wrong. They're just that useless.

The main purpose of Schultz and her lackeys is to make the city look good for those who might be inclined to spend money in it. Primarily, that means corporate investors and tourists. That's why so much government activity and investment is focused Downtown.

- Or to put it another way, if those of you in the Barrens feel your government doesn't care about you, you're absolutely right.
- Rikki Ratboy

Schultz also has a cabinet to help her with executive tasks, and those twenty-one individuals tend to tilt heavily toward corporate interests. For example, Public Works Commissioner Sarah Desanter is on loan from Shiawase Envirotech, and Public Database Commissioner Olivia Yoshida is from Renraku.

- It was long ago decided in some quarters that private companies can provide services more efficiently than the public sector, and Seattle government operates entirely on that principle. The government doesn't do much besides decide where the money goes; the work is done by the corps. Ostensibly the government provides oversight to make sure the work is done well and with the interests of the people in mind, but I'll let you decide just how effective you think that is.
- SPD

A lot of the action in the city happens at the district level. Each district has a mayor and district council, and they focus on the nuts and bolts of what's

happening from block to block—what permits are approved, what roads are resurfaced, and that sort of thing. The mayors have at least some power, and they have a significant public profile. In many ways, they are the face of their districts, and when corporations want to knock the government down a peg, embarrassing a mayor is a good place to start.

- You got that straight, and Bellevue Mayor Tian C. Campbell is case study number one. Campbell was starting to get a big head, talking to the corp execs like he was one of them and occasionally even making demands. The corps didn't like him taking on airs, so they decided to bring him down a peg. Next thing you know, the president of the under-construction Bellevue Vista Mall (a pet project of Campbell's) has disappeared, the project is stalled, and Campbell is running around town making excuses. He's definitely feeling stressed over the whole affair, but he should be grateful. The megacorps have far heavier weapons in their arsenal—they took it relatively easy on him.
- Slug Bug
- What about Ed Cartwright? Should he feel grateful too?
- SPD
- Who?
- SliceNDice
- Exactly. He's the mall president who disappeared. Or, as he has now become, just another pawn in a megacorporate game.
- SPD

Outside of the government, the political powers you need to take into account are the policlubs. If there is a constituency around any issue—any issue at all—there's a policlub organized around it. Naturally, some of them are more influential than others. The Lower Queen Anne Commercial Club, for example, has an easier time bending the ear of their district mayor than the director of the Redmond Kennel Kombat Klub would have. The big boys these days are the Ork Rights Coalition, the Awakened Workers Party, and the Green Party. Humanis, Alamos 20K, and the Ancients are also pretty big and powerful, but they're outlawed, so officially they don't have power with the government. They spend plenty of time demonstrating that there are plenty of ways to wield power other than working with the government.

- The policlubs were an anachronism before they even got under way. They're operating under a grassroots power ideal that doesn't really work anymore, since the people as a mass generally can't hope to compete with the power of the megacorps. The government knows that, so when they meet with the policlubs it's mainly about working to co-opt them. The policlub representatives help the government leaders take the pulse of the people, and then the leaders see how much of their agenda they can safely seize to enhance their own power base.
- Demosthenes

- Why would they do that? Didn't you just say that grassroots power is meaningless today?
- SkepticSkull
- When it comes to government leaders, what they're gathering is a little bigger than grassroots power. They need popular support, and lots of it, if they want a chance to occasionally stand up to the megas. Most can't build up enough support, so they never get the chance to show they have a spine.
- Demosthenes

ORGANIZED CRIME

Look, we all know that in reality, the three branches of government are not executive, judicial, and legislative. They're corporate, government, and organized crime. Those are the forces that determine the flow of money and merchandise into the sprawl, decide what people are working where, and most importantly plan the runs that we might be going on.

Organized crime is hopping in Seattle, since they've got plenty of work in front of them. Drugs, BTLs, prostitution and human trafficking, protection rackets, underground gambling, murder for hire—it's illegal and can be done in an organized fashion, they're doing it. And sometimes, doing it in an organized fashion isn't really required.

Mafia

The Mafia and Yakuza vie back and forth for title of largest crime outfit in Seattle, and that rivalry leaves blood on the streets most mornings. James O'Malley retains a strong control of the Mafia, and he regularly demonstrates why the leading Dons on the continent decided to coax him out of retirement to lead things in Seattle. He sees red at the mere thought of the Yakuza gaining ground on him, and the "messages" he sends to the competition to keep them in line are notable for the imagination and savagery of the gore involved.

- I don't want to get into too much unnecessary detail here, but let's just say that O'Malley has a tendency to use intestines like party streamers. Often, the smell alone is enough to get his message across.
- YakHerder

Naturally, the Yakuza are not going to sit back and let O'Malley pound away at them, and many of his people are concerned that he is heading straight down the road to a gang war, though some of them are actively cheering for that outcome. The question is where David Galucci, O'Malley's second in command who runs things in Puyallup, is going to fall on the issue. Galucci is charismatic enough that no matter what he decides, he'll bring a lot of people along with him. He could be feeling like a power broker, which makes him dangerous.

- Let's not pretend there's any suspense here. Galucci has had plenty of run-ins of his own with Yaks in Puyallup, and he's not in any mood to make nice with them. If O'Malley wants to go full out against the Yaks, Galucci will be right behind him cheering him on.
- OKFella
- I wouldn't be too sure. Galucci might just see his sparring with the Yaks as a normal part of doing business, and he could be willing to take advantage of any schisms in the mob to overthrow O'Malley's leadership. It helps that O'Malley has him recruiting a whole bunch of goons from Puyallup, and those goons have a pretty intense personal loyalty to him. If he wants to go against O'Malley, he'll have a small army immediately at his disposal.
- Devil Rat

Yakuza

While O'Malley may be spoiling for a full-on fight, the Yaks seem like they want to keep things to a simmer for a while. They simply have not been able to fully rebuild from the last series of clashes, and they want their ranks to swell with a few more people, and get the people they have some more experience, before anything terribly violent happens.

Hanzo Shotozumi is overseeing the rebuilding effort, and he has decided that emphasizing tradition is the way to go. He hopes the sight of Yakuza soldiers walking through neighborhoods proudly sporting their traditional tattoos—along with new handguns and sharp, shiny blades—will help bring in more young recruits.

- The Yakuza is also trying to exploit their tech edge. Their BTLs are simply the best there is, and that helps them corner that market. Along with the fact that they regularly garotte anyone they catch at the docks bringing in BTLs that they don't control.
- Chip Truth

Seoulpa Rings

There are a number of observers who think that the Seoulpa Rings are crazy for trying to horn in on territory well trod by the Mafia and the Yaks. I'd think they were crazy, too, except for the amount of money they've been raking in. Not that this money is gathered in one place—the Seoulpa Rings are not as centrally organized as the other two groups. This has helped them gather recruits, as they can fan out across the sprawl and bring people in to a variety of tasks.

Their specialties are low-impact burglary and street gambling, and for the most part the individual Rings are content to operate separately. They've shown some ability to work together on longer-term scams, and lately they've been displaying some top-notch decking skills, aided by the fact that they seem to have an easy time getting their hands on the latest bleeding-edge decks out of Korea. The



main surprise in this isn't that corp forces are supporting organized crime, only that they're being more obvious than usual.

- So what's a corp's angle on this? Just hurting the competition?
- Slithereen
- That's part of it. But it's not like they're giving the decks away. They're just selling them at a discount, so they get some revenue, and they also often get first crack at any interesting paydata the deckers recover.
- OKFella

Go-gangs

Go-gangs are perhaps the criminal element that strikes the most fear into the hearts of poor, normal Seattle folks. It's not that the Mafia and Yakuza aren't scary, but generally speaking they operate within known boundaries. They are going after a certain goal, and if you don't want to get in trouble with them you keep your head down and stay out of their way. In the eyes of the fear-struck corp drones, though, there is no clear way to avoid the go-gangs. They live for violence, cruising up and down the roadways of the sprawl hunting down anyone who looks at them the wrong way, or even just someone they don't like, and tormenting them to death. Now, I'd like to dispel that myth of random gang violence and tell you that if you're not tied to a gang, you're not likely to be targeted, but then I'd be out-and-out lying. Go-gangs thrive on random violence, and the stories they most love to tell and retell are the ones about how surprised their victims looked when their cars went flipping end over end.

- Yeah, these guys are a bunch of psychos. Other mob guys want money, so if you're lucky you can buy them off and save your skin. Go-gangs wanna wreck you, and money don't buy them a better wreck, at least not at that second. And to them, "that second" is all that matters. So you can wave a credstick of whatever color you want under their noses, and like as not they'll throw it in your face right before they steer you into a tree.
- Interceptor
- You're separating go-gangs from the Mafia and Yakuza, but a lot of the time there isn't really a Gil between them. The big boys like to use the go-gangs as their foot soldiers, or even couriers. They can be useful tools, because sometimes random violence serves the syndicates quite well.
- OKFella

Knowing the names of the go-gangs doesn't necessarily do a whole lot for you, but in case it comes up in some bar trivia contest, here are the five largest go-gangs in the city: The Red Rovers (North Intercity 5), The Eye-Fivers (Central Intercity 5), the Spike Wheels (South Intercity 5), the Leather Devils

(Intercity 90), and the Hellhounds (Intercity 405). Main thing is, if you're on the highway and see more than one cycle with similar paint jobs closing on you, don't speed up, don't slow down, don't make eye contact, and look to get off the highway as soon as you can.

Gangs

Blah blah, street gangs are a plague, filler text, they range from things like block clubs to well-oiled criminal machines, frowny-face of concern, standard gesture of concern for the youth of our city, final plea for us to stop the violence that is senselessly claiming so many young lives. Okay, now that we've quickly dispatched all the boilerplate text people spout off when they're talking about gangs, let's talk about who you need to worry about.

First and foremost are the Ancients. This is a gang that doesn't so much claim territory as they do a heritage. They are about elven pride through and through, and that's a phrase that clearly means different things to different people. Some people see a certain tinge of nobility to the Ancients, a desire to live by a code that gives the best and strongest a chance to rise to the top. Others see the gang as a bunch of elves trying to excuse their own psychopathic behavior with a lot of fancy words and meaningless rituals. However you want to see them, it's clear that there's lots of them and they're tough. And if you're an ork and you see a lot of elves in dark green and blue closing on you, you need to change your plans for the day, because things are about to get rough.

When it comes to sheer chaos, it's tough to rival the Halloweeners. While their members are generally human, their activities usually don't have much of a racial tinge to them. They tend to simply look for things they can burn, explode, or otherwise reduce to smithereens. They have a visceral reaction to order—it annoys them, and they'll be damned if they're going to stand for it.

- They may love chaos more than anything else, but even freaks in ghoulish masks have gotta eat. Paying them a few nuyen to act as a distraction is one of my favorite gambits, one I like so much that I have to be really cautious about over-using it.
- St. Thecla

In Redmond, one gang to be aware of is the Crimson Crush. Based near the trashed apartment complex known as the Bargain Basement, the Crush has demonstrated more drive and initiative than your average street gang. They have a very healthy prostitution operation in their territory, and sooner

or later they're either going to attract the attention of one of the big boys, who will try to either co-opt their operations or crush them, or they're going to feel tough and wealthy enough to move on the big boys' turf themselves.

- Good luck to them on that. Sometimes small-time operators need to learn the virtue of staying small.
- OKFella
- The Crush can't help themselves. Their customer base keeps growing, and they feel they've gotta do something with all the nuyen coming their way. Of course, a lot of that money is coming from Yak-affiliated customers who are deliberately pumping up the Crimson Crush in the hopes that the gang will eventually move into the Mafia's territory. While the Yakuza occupies themselves regrouping, they're more than happy to put someone forward as a proxy in their fight against the Mafia.
- Simone Says

THE RUNNING SCENE

If I were going to give you an exhaustive list of who to contact and where to go in Seattle, it would be like a whole book or something. And it would be a little out of date as soon as it hits the streets. People die, bars and dives shut down, and things change too fast for anything to be considered truly authoritative when it comes to running. But since I set up Seattle as the acme of running at the beginning of this piece, I guess I should give you some information about who your competition is and who you may be willing to help you navigate the urban wilds.

Keep your eyes out for a grifter named Yankee, who sometimes posts here. He has all the tools needed to make him quite deadly—fast hands, exceeding charm, a way with a gun, and a considerable amoral streak. A lot of people think he's slumming by staying in the con game, but he hasn't quite managed to put all his gifts together yet. When he does, watch out. He's the kind of guy that could lead an army, either to victory or to a rowdy but foolhardy charge. Straight over a cliff.

- I always find it interesting when people accuse a shadowrunner of being amoral. To me, those words are essentially synonyms.
- Yankee
- Just because it's hard to live by some sort of honorable code doesn't mean you shouldn't try.
- Argent

If you want to find a runner with an unrivaled set of contacts, track down a guy named Dirk Montgomery in Auburn. Dirk's exactly the sort of guy who would use his actual name instead of a

street name—he's cut right out of the "lone man walking down these mean streets" mold. If you believe shadowrunners can have a streak of decency, Montgomery's your man.

Or maybe Argent is. He's another straight shooter and pro's pro, a Desert Wars veteran with black cyber-arms that move like dark lightning. He's got principles, but don't let that fool you into thinking he's soft or not able to do what needs to be done. He's been on the streets a long time and knows the shadows of Seattle backwards and forwards. You don't survive that long without knowing when to bend your principles and break a few skulls.

- I hear people wonder sometimes if it's really that hard to find a shadowrunner who won't try to stab you in the back in the course of a run or cheat you out of your fair share of the take. If you've done more than two runs—or sometimes even just one—you know the answer is yes, damn straight it is.
- Kham
- Y'all are just jealous of the people with the smarts and the speeds to get theirs before you can get yours.
- Mancuso
- You just tell yourself that, 'Cuso, and ignore the three different groups of gangers closing in on you to collect bounties on your hoop. Bounties gladly funded by your former chummers.
- Hatchetman

If you talk to runners on the street about who's doing it right, chances are you'll hear plenty of mentions of the crew headed by Sally Tsung. There are lots of groups with a good range of skills out there, but few get themselves out of a jam with the creativity and flair of this bunch, which includes Dodger on the deck, Ghost Who Walks Inside on katana, and Kham on brute force and occasionally an array of street drugs. People are still talking about the extraction of a Mitsuhamma exec they recently pulled off, which at one point included dropping the guy out of a 110th-story window, BASE-jumping after him while machine gun rounds poured through the window, disappearing in mid air, re-appearing seconds later long enough to dive into the sewers, then emerging ten kilometers away carrying two dozen devil rat pelts.

- Sounds amateurish to me. Doesn't everyone know that the best runs are the ones where you're not noticed?
- Fantom
- Yeah, you go ahead and not be noticed while tip-toeing through a zero zone. The fact that they're alive at all is a huge boost to their rep.
- Fidler-Man



When you're on the streets, keep your eyes peeled for a guy named Serrin Shamandar. He doesn't come to Seattle all that often—he's based in Europe—but he pops up occasionally, and he's worth watching out for. He's pretty much a stand-up guy, one of those white-hat runners you hear about, but since some of us aren't, that means we could find ourselves on the wrong side of a fight against him. If that happens to you, look apologetic and move your hoop, because you do not want to have a straight-up showdown with this guy. He's a spellslinger who's also pretty handy with a smartgun, which means he thinks of twelve different ways to kill you before breakfast. He's got that honor thing working against him, though, so if you're not threatening him and showing that you're willing to withdraw, he probably won't come after you. That's your best strategy. Shamandar's an elf, and you can recognize him by his limp, but don't let that fool you into thinking he might be easy prey.

Finally, if you see an elf in clown makeup, run, don't walk, in the other direction. I have zero concrete information on this guy, but as far as I can tell, no encounter with him has ever brought anything good to anyone.

- I am wounded to my very core.
- The Laughing Man

IN CLOSING

If you're going to run in Seattle, treat it like a music career, or like an apprenticeship at a smithy. Or any career where you have to pay some dues before you can ascend to the top of the heap. Act with some humility. If you don't know the territory, be ready to take lessons from people who do. Don't walk into a meet like you're God's gift to Mr. Johnson. You may indeed be very good, but in this town, odds are Mr. Johnson has seen better. Go into the scene with a mind to learn, and hitch yourself to a group that gives you an education on the fly. Then see how high you can go.

CHICAGO 2050

Posted by: Old-Timer

- I dropped a line to an old friend I met in Chicago back in the '30s who I knew still lived in the Second City. He happily talked my ear off for an hour before I was finally able to just ask him to give me the inside scoop for the scene in Chi-Town, emphasis on info of value to runners. Five hours later this arrived in my inbox. The old man recorded it via voice record so try to ignore his occasional ramblings. I was going to edit it out when I realized

some of the rambling parts have good tidbits. Commentary is allowed, but keep it civilized.

- Captain Chaos

CHICAGO GEOGRAPHY: CITY ON THE LAKE, SPRAWL FOR MILES

I love my hometown, but despite living in the same place for most of the last 70 years, I don't call Chicago my hometown. Let me explain something about "Chicago" that many people fail to realize. The City of Chicago is very different from the concept of Chicago. All my life I've lived at, or at least owned, the same residence. Growing up, anyone who ever asked me where I was from got the same answer, "Chicago," but I have never lived in the City of Chicago. I grew up in Palos Hills, but it was a drek-load easier to tell people Chicago instead of saying "Palos Hills" and getting the 99 percent guaranteed "Where's that?" question. Back then, I'd need to just explain that it's a suburb of Chicago. Now it's actually part of the Chicago sprawl down on Southside.

Chicago has six geographical districts; Downtown (also know as The Elevated), the O'Hare Sub-Sprawl, Northside, Westside, Southside, and The Noose. Each one, except The Noose, is broken down into political wards and contains dozens of cities, towns, and villages. Many areas still identify themselves by the town, village, or city they once were, but now they are all Chicago. The Noose, which is a big chunk of what most people once thought of as Chicago, is now a wrecked mess.

The sprawl around Chicago is mostly flat, part of a glacial moraine that was leveled during the last ice age. Due to the rivers and the work of men, though, it is not completely flat. Rivers have carved and shaped this land, and men have created new waterways, reversed rivers, and built hills of displaced dirt and rock. None of these, though, are as large as the mammoth towers that make up many of the neighborhoods.

Downtown (also known as The Elevated)

Bright lights, big city. This is the glitz and glam of Chicago. Way back when, it was the Lake Michigan skyline that was the definitive image of Chicago. After the Sears Tower came down, though, downtown never recovered, and that classic image was forever a reminder of the loss the city had felt that day. But now, the skyline of The Elevated is just as famous. The cloverleaf train passing into all the glass and metal towers is now the definitive depiction of Chicago, especially when the old city and lakefront are in the background.



Downtown is corporation central, especially the center of the cloverleaf, known as The Core. Not only do the Big Eight all have offices here alongside some strong local Chicago firms, but this is also where you will find all of the high-class entertainment spots like SkyView, Almost Heaven, Icarus Reach, and Tru.

The Core is also where you will find the most expensive property in town. Above the elevated Skytrack Monorail that cloverleaves the entire Elevated, you'll find ever-increasing property prices the higher you rise into the sky. No one earning under 100k¥ annually lives above the monorail tracks, and if you hit that level you'll only be scraping by at track level, which is seven stories up in most of the Core. Some of the worker bees who keep the Elevated shiny, smiling, and running smoothly commute, some from Southside and Westside, but most live below track level or in the rest of the Downtown sprawl that is not the Elevated. Remember that there is a lot more to Downtown outside the Elevated.

Downtown has a vast array of interesting places and people for runners to know about. I'll offer the highlights for the low-lives and try to stay on track.

The Core

If the heart of the old Chicago was the Loop, the heart of the new Chicago is the Core. At the center of Downtown, this is the business and entertainment hub of the city. Wealth and fame are drawn to this skytown of glass, glamor, concrete, and steel. Fitting in is key here. Security is tight, and guards have no qualms about questioning anyone who looks out of place and busting some heads to make a statement.

All of the AAAs have offices Downtown, and most have their own buildings. Ares, Aztechnology, Federated-Boeing, Fuchi, Mitsuhama, Saeder-Krupp, Truman Tech, and Yamatetsu all have skyscrapers downtown. Hometown AA Truman Tech dominates the skyline with their 1,435-meter-tall monster. For perspective, that's over triple the height of the Sears Tower when it stood.

Most of the work that has taken me here was security work for some rich dude who pissed off another rich dude and needed protection. For guys hired on the other side of the coin, success means blending in, like I said earlier. Street punks straight up from the lower levels don't even get close before Eagle stops them and sends them back down to hell. I have taken a few jobs working against the corps up in the Core. Rough jobs with tight security, limited access, and poor escape routes; on the positive side there is usually a quiet little corner in the lower levels where you can stash your decker. Speaking of deckers, there are even a few junction points in the

lowers where they can snatch access to more than one Core building. These spots can be contested by other teams and their deckers, so make sure you keep your eye out, or better yet let your decker work their network and make sure no one else is planning to be there when you are.

If you are headed up for a meeting, make sure you dress right and have a solid SIN to hide behind if you get stopped. There are a few Johnsons who use some of the Core's nightspots for meets just to test whether the runners are good enough to get there. Also helps to limit the muscle a team can bring thanks to their terrible habits of visible chrome and poor fake IDs. Be careful about any exchanges after the job that happen above the tracks. A double-cross is easy when Mr. Johnson has not only their security but the Core security too, so be wary.

- He doesn't say it, but I will. Don't be SINless in the Core. A lot of the sky-parks make great spots to toss the valueless from. Cleanup becomes the responsibility of the lowers.
- TowerofPower
- Pardon. What's a Skypark?
- NooseGoose
- Up that high the execs want fresh air but don't want to go to ground level, so a lot of outside connections exist between the buildings, and most have parks and gardens built on them. Fresh air, pleasant landscaping, and not a prole in sight—corp exec heaven.
- TowerofPower

Asher Dust

This is not a place, but a person. Asher is the guy everyone wants to know if they are running the shadows anywhere Downtown, but especially in the Core. Asher is an elf with the fashion sense of a bad trid actor. Long coats go with every outfit, hats are an irreplaceable accessory, and cowboy boots go with everything.

Asher has eyes and ears all over the Elevated and solid connections in every area of the Downtown shadows. Mob, corp, runner, tech, arms, armor, info; he's a one-stop shop for all your needs. Sounds really great doesn't it? Waiting for the catch aren't you? Well, catch is, Asher only works with the good guys. I don't mean the cops (we all know they aren't really "good" anyway); I mean runners with a bad case of the waks, WKS (white knight syndrome). His eyes and ears feed him info on runner operations as well, and if there are too many nasty rumors about you, you'll fall right off his Yule list. Stay on the lighter side of grey and you're all good; turn to the dark side and you lose Asher. Now people make mistakes or get





jammed up and need to get a little dirty getting out and he knows that, but in order to get back in Asher's good graces you need to do some work for him, do it the right way, and quite often not get paid for it. That's the price for having access to one of the best information networks in Chicagoland.

- The nice-guy image is great, but it means all the bad guys don't like you. Asher has tons of enemies all over the city. If you get on Asher's bad side you may be able to hook up with the "Black Hats," who are a group of spurned runners, fixers, and Johnsons who all got dropped by Asher and now exchange information together out of spite. Be careful with them though, they sometimes desire payment in the form of messing up Asher's endeavors, and then Asher's people don't like you.
- Chi-Guy

Yamatetsu Spire

I'm not exactly sure why, but Yamatetsu decided to recreate the Chicago Spire in the Core. I'm sure some old PR file somewhere says something about honoring the past, but the Spire is still there. Personally I think they would have honored it better by rehabbing the original, but that would not have allowed them to add all sorts of more modern amenities. Well, that and they would have had to build in the Noose. The Yamatetsu Spire is built near the eastern edge of the Core. I remember reading once that they put it there so it could see the old Spire, but I always thought it was to make a statement. It's the only tower at the center of the eastern edge of Downtown, and it stands three times the height of every building around it. Though the Truman Tower directly to the north still looks down on it.

The Spire has Yamatetsu's Chicago office on the upper floors, condos and entertainment for their employees on the middle floors, and shopping and rental offices for other companies on the lower floors. All of that is relative to the monorail tracks. Below the track level Yamatetsu has rental housing for Chicagoans, a few retail outlets, and some of their more dangerous research laboratories.

- Yamatetsu does some crazy drek here. I noticed a lot of wards down there and quite a few crazy spirits. I don't know what they're doing to make them crazy, but they're really quite unpleasant.
- Arcanum
- They aren't doing anything. Yamatetsu has a "spirit prison" here that they use to house nasties. The ones people encounter are escaped cons.
- Astral Diva
- Yamatetsu Chicago is run by one Yamatetsu Imora, a corp citizen born and bred who adopted the company name in place of his own family name. He's your standard high-level exec, ruthless about profits, and conservative in

the extreme. Some of the younger execs would love to get him out of the way, but he's got a grip that doesn't budge. No vices that I've ever found, either. He's a fraggin' robot. His left hand is Mister K, a problem solver who acts as bodyguard, assassin, and fixer. If your Johnson is paying in Yamatetsu scrip, it comes from K.

- Katie Kite
- Yamatetsu tends to run against Ares the most, but anyone's fair game for Imora as long as they're not Japanese. Rumor has it that he's had Mr. K sniffing around local fixers, trying to find out what groups run against what corps the most. In theory, this lets them pick from top assets. In reality, it's a hit list that he'll likely give to the other Japancorps as he tries to curry favor. The slot.
- Second City Trog

Malony Government Complex

I love this place for the statement it makes about the power of governments compared to that of corporations. If I'm being honest, though, I have to say I really don't like the place, in and of itself, much at all. Near the southern edge of the Northwest loop of the Skytrack rails sits a cluster of squat utilitarian white, grey, and brown buildings. You can see them from almost any tower in the Core with a clear western view, but picking them out of the masses of other buildings would take some time. That's why I enjoy the statement. The government is now a distant speck, something that's hard to detect and blends in with the background.

A lot of work for the mob comes out of this little complex, along with a decent enough number of jobs for the government. Chicago's political machine is still running and still has power in this town that it needs to protect. The feds have their offices around here too, and the few agents and officers that work in Chicago are kept pretty busy. There's a lot of crime to investigate, and it's hard to do with so many jurisdictional borders to cross. All that politicking means the feds here are pretty well versed and well connected, and a handful really like letting some vital bit of information slip to the right source that will do something about it.

- Never forget they are still Feds though. They still like to catch criminals, not clean up a murder scene. Go too far and the next job call might be a sting on you.
- Wolf
- Agent Black—that's the only name I know for him—will accept dead criminals showing up in his district. He saves his efforts for serial cases.
- SPD
- George Tollison was a good man, but what the mob can't corrupt, they kill. The former DA was gunned down behind the Dinkly building two years

back. His daughter's about to graduate with her law degree—let's hope that she's smarter than he was.

- Tony Mamaluke

The Monorail

Chicago has always had a great public transportation system with Metrorail. Skytrack continued that tradition with their elevated monorail around Downtown, centered in the Core, an effort that reminded many of the old Loop track by the lake. Skytrack didn't want to create just another city transit system, so they made the monorail something special. In the Core, the monorail rides on tracks seven stories above street level. All the stations are at that height, and many of the stations have additional attractions built above the track level (and below for different sorts of entertainment). One of the main Core stations is inside Truman Tower. That station creates occasional security issues as Skytrack owns the station and in essence the entire seventh floor of the tower but uses Eagle Security while Truman uses their own forces. Jurisdictional issues have arisen, especially during times when the parent corporations are not getting along. The entire system is like one long amusement park, including special cars on certain trains for simsense rides, cocktails, dining, and even banquets. My son held his wedding reception on one of these banquet cars. We cruised around downtown for hours while drinking, dancing, and celebrating. It also made the ride home easy for those who lived around downtown.

Outside the Core, the monorail tracks range from ground level at the far ends of the loops where they built the trainyards to seven stories, just outside the Core. Most of the tracks range from three to five stories over most of downtown, and all of the stations are built into larger buildings with entertainment plazas at each one. Near each station is a car elevator to move off broken-down cars, get work vehicles onto the tracks, and add and remove cars to the tracks during differing volume periods. Both inside and outside the Core, the stations often have elevators for travelers to reach other rail lines run by Metrorail and Amtrak. This way commuters can make smooth transitions to other parts of the city and even the country without ever being exposed to what could be terrible Chicago weather.

- Security getting on and off is tight but less present on the train itself, making the monorail a great place for a meet or handoff.
- Trench

Wind Transit Terminal

This huge complex is located on the northern edge of the Core and serves as the bus-transit hub for the entire city. This place is massive, but most Core residents will never see more than a sign over a large garage door or maybe take the tour if their corp sponsors one. Even on the tour you don't get to see a tenth of this transportation behemoth. Beyond just the command center for all communication between the busses, this place contains a garage capable of storing five hundred full-sized busses with maintenance, repair, and modification facilities, including armoring facilities for the busses that run to the Noose and Northside.

Other than the fact that many of us rely on public transportation, I mention this place for two reasons. First it's too large to be completely policed at all times. If you can get down here and hunker down in a nice quiet corner, it's a great place to hide for a day or two (or squat for longer). Second, the night crew in the repair facility take the occasional side job to repair or modify a ride as long as the requests and mods are discreet. They charge a pretty penny, but it's worth it for the quality of the work, the fact they don't ask for a SIN, and the fact that it's one of the few places in town to get this kind of work done.

- Chicago's always thick with orks, but nowhere's as thick as bus stops. Tuskers blend.
- Downtown Brown
- I'd like to point out how Core-centric this guy's report is. There is a whole lot more to Downtown than just the Core. Business complexes, research labs, retailers, houses, schools, a few farms, cemeteries, forest preserves, and lots and lots of roads. It's great to know about the public transit, but most of old Chicago, especially in this area, is a very well-laid-out grid system. There are a few exceptions to this rule, particularly in smaller private neighborhoods, but overall it's a great city for a skilled driver.
- Chi-guy

O'Hare Sub-Sprawl

This part of the city has everything a good travel hub needs. O'Hare International Airport is the busiest air travel hub in North America and the second busiest in the world. Millions of travelers pass through its terminals every year, and the Sub-Sprawl caters to the needs of all the weary, wary, wired, and wandering that need something at or around the airport. Even with all those travelers coming to, going from, or passing through this place, it's not the people that fill the runways here but the cargo. With a nice central location on the continent and a rail hub that runs in every direction, billions of tons of cargo lands and leaves from this Midwestern metropolis.



For us that means extractions, B&Es, truck-jackings, train robberies, and the opportunities to be security on the other side of all those things. Every corporation in the world, mega or otherwise, moves things and people through Chicago. Some use Midway or one of the private fields scattered about the countryside outside the sprawl, but most use O'Hare. The main reason for this focus is security. Midway is still owned and operated by the City of Chicago and used primarily to move high-level corp executives and mafia bigwigs. O'Hare is owned privately and has arrangements with the various corporations as well as the city government to keep things running smoothly and profitably.

The Sub-Sprawl is not airport property but might as well be. Immediately surrounding the airport is the entertainment hub and the corporate and national enclaves. Beyond that are the labor neighborhoods that house the workers and the luxury neighborhoods that house the rich and the executives of the airport.

Corporate and National Enclaves

All of the land surrounding the airport is designated as corporate and national territory, making the airport an island of the UCAS surrounded by foreign powers. The governments of Aztlan, the CAS, California Free State, and England all own sections of the land, each walled off from its neighbors, along with corporate lands owned by Ares Macrotechnology, Aztechnology, Federated-Boeing, Fuchi Industrial, Truman Technologies, and IBM, owner of the former Sears Tower. Each piece of property is sovereign foreign soil, and you can certainly imagine the jurisdictional issues that go on during runs here. Air space is the best part, since they all surround an airport.

Each country maintains their own security force, but the Sub-Sprawl does not allow a military presence greater than thirty troops. They all ignore this and simply dress up their soldiers in different suits. All of the security here is military. And on top of that, many of the desk-jockeys are military trained and simply retired or taking a break between tours.

Nice thing about this place is that the ten (well, nine—we know Aztlan and Aztechnology aren't really separate) different entities here are separated but have a lot of movement between them. A lot of meetings amongst governments and corporations go on here. A good fake SIN from Ares could get you some time in the CAS or CFS, as could an FB or TT SIN. Before you do any ops in this area, though, make sure to check on relations between the enclaves. Knowing where to run could be a lifesaver.

- Knowing someone at each enclave who can help you out works too. Contacts are great from here since there is so much intermingling, just be careful you aren't being played by a spook. There are almost as many here as in the Shattergraves.
- Downtown Brown
- O'Hare is owned by the Chicago Outfit. Yes, the mob. And since Midway is owned by the city, a.k.a. the mob, then you can see who controls transportation in this city.
- Trench
- Yes and no. The families own the company that runs O'Hare, but the liens and loans on the properties are owned by Z-OG Bank. Makes for a very interesting situation.
- Glasswalker
- UCAS does not have the same military restrictions, and it uses O'Hare as a base for the Air Force and the Army.
- Colonel Cobra
- The army units also maintain security on the stretches of I-294, I-90, I-190, Irving Park Road, and York Road around the airport to maintain smooth traffic of goods and citizens.
- Sgt. Slaughter

Labor-hoods

Metaphorically, this would be the housing for the buzzing beehive of activity that is O'Hare International. This is where all the drones spend their hours between work shifts. Continuing the insect analogy, I can tell you that these bees have no sting left in them after a long day at the airport. Like many of the denizens of Chicagoland, the majority of workers here are simsense addicts. After work they spend the majority of their free time lost in simsense dreams. Most keep it light, but some are hot-sim junkies, and a small percentage are full blown BTL-heads.

The neighborhoods these folks live in reflect a preference for the fantasy world of simsense. Houses are usually small, tightly packed, single-family deals or apartments complexes. What little plant life that is present tends to be either overgrown or dead. The streets are usually lined with five- or ten-year-old cars with the occasional newer ride. What this means to us is a quiet place with quiet neighbors. Security is decent thanks to the airport but not so bad you'll get hassled for looking out of place. This holds true with the exception of the metahuman neighborhoods, but even those aren't totally pure. In those places you are more likely to be hassled by the locals than the law.

- "Hassled" is a nice way of saying "beaten." Most of the workers may be simsense addicts, but they have kids and they are anxious to protect the purity of their neighborhoods from punks like us, especially the frogs among us.
- Forgotten Son



Luxury Neighborhoods

What makes jobs here so tough is not the security but the connectivity of the residents. This is where all the airport execs live and where all the criminals businessmen that provide the entertainment for the airport district live as well. Three towns make up these neighborhoods: Elk Grove, Elm Park, and Spring Heights. They are separated from the masses by highways, forest preserves, and a hoopload of cash and class (according to them).

If you work in these neighborhoods, you need to be very controlled. One stray bullet hitting a random citizen—or, heaven help you, some kid—could mean a whole lot of heat coming down from the Capone family even if the kid wasn't related to them. This place is so interwoven between the execs and the mobsters they are frequently the same guy.

Speaking of the mob, if you pick up a job and the Johnson wants to meet at Madame Wing's, you can be fairly certain the job is for the DeLuca family. I would also recommend keeping it in your pants while you're there. The girls in that place can easily cost double what a good run will net you.

Housing here is the polar opposite of the laborhoods. The houses are large, with big yards, lots of landscaping, the occasional decorative fence, and plenty of well-hidden security features. Nice thing

about it is if you have the cash and the right connections with the Chicago Outfit, you can rent a spot here. Best keep business far away, though. They don't like messes in their yards and have few qualms about cleaning out the neighborhood themselves.

- Wing's is having trouble getting their signature talent lately. They usually have a wide selection of Asian girls, but quite a few have gone missing lately. Word is this is because of extractions by Yaks or the Triads in retaliation for the mob's anti-Asian campaign of late.
- DaMob
- Needless to say, the only orks around here fold laundry or mow lawns. If you're a trog, go unarmed and make sure your SIN is up to standard as you'll get stopped every five minutes. Elves never get that treatment unless they're in street fashion. Funny that.
- Downtown Brown

Northside

Urban blight at its finest best describes Northside. This section of Chicago stretches out along the lakefront north of the Noose. What were once some nice areas fell into decay back around the turn of the century, and some new businesses moved in. The new business interests had very little care for the local population outside of giving them jobs. Two major industries have made Northside their home,



and they give this district quite a bit of atmosphere. This is not a good thing.

Factories and slaughterhouses provide most of Northside's economy. The factories produce plastic of all grades and shoot tons of black soot into the air every day. The soot is mostly harmless—or so the corp-funded scientists say—but it covers huge swaths of this area depending on which way the wind is blowing. In the winter the snow falls black, and in the spring and fall the rain creates rivers of black everywhere. The slaughterhouses don't pump anything into the air (except methane, which is gathered for power) that you can see, but you sure can smell the work they do. Depending on the winds, the slaughterhouses can be smelled for kilometers, and that smell is often accompanied by the soot from the factories.

The location of the factories and slaughterhouses helps break this part of town into different neighborhoods. The neighborhoods are strongly influenced by where the residents work. The four largest are nicknamed Barbieville, Black City, Blood Town, and The Village. This part of the city is so downtrodden that most of the residents have at least one severe addiction. Many escape through alcohol or simsense, but a growing number are starting to utilize some old favorites like cocaine, meth, heroine, and marijuana.

- I'm not sure why, but this guy doesn't point out that the ethnic concentration here in Northside is due to the internment that occurred after the Sears bombing got blamed on metas. These are not happy trolls.
- Meta-Friendly
- A lot of those drugs are made, grown, or processed here, giving them some interesting side-effects. Go retro at your own risk.
- FarmerBob
- Alice in Barbieville is a good source for "Black Lady," a special strain of marijuana grown in Northside. Careful, it's got a lot of kick.
- Alien8
- Bigg Pigg keeps their slaughterhouses out here. You'll see their billboards everywhere, "If it ain't Pigg, it ain't bacon!" (or ham or whatever). Big Mama Pigg's on her fourth husband and her third fortune. She used to be a gangster moll thirty years and a hundred kilos ago. Her whole family's in deep with the mob, but nobody will move on them. Real meat's too valuable.
- Tallyman
- Speaking of meat, there're ghouls out here, slinking around in the sewers. Cheap way of getting rid of waste product, I guess.
- Little Al
- Or evidence.
- Made Man

Blood Town

With such a fearsome name you would expect more from Blood Town, especially when you find out the population is sixty-eight percent orks, thirty percent trolls, and two percent everything else. All of them work for Fast Flesh at the slaughterhouses, and most of them are the kindest, most gentle creatures you will ever meet. I always assumed something sinister in their docile nature, like drugs in the water or food, but I've met and talked to quite a few Blood Town residents and it's really their upbringing that makes them so calm and gentle. Their corporate upbringing, to be specific.

Let me frame Blood Town for you. The whole place is built to a troll-comfortable scale. High door frames and ceilings, modified public transportation, scaled goods of all kinds, etc. From the time they are born here they get to live in a world that understands them and is built for them. They have a future at the slaughterhouses, a home built just for them, and a group to belong to that is not a gang. That's how it was explained to me. And it is corporate brainwashing at its best. The truth, though, is classic dark Chicago.

Now remember a minute ago when I referred to the kindness and gentleness of "most of them." That was an intentional phrase, with particular exceptions in mind. The exceptions are trolls and orks that have been forced into violence in order to protect their families. The slaughterhouses in Chicago have long been run by the mob. The mob is not only sending beasts to slaughter, they are growing massive enforcers able to carry a full-grown bull on their shoulders, brutes who don't shy away from a little blood. When the mob needs an enforcer, they just lean on the family of a local ork or troll and pow!, instant physical intimidation. Over time they even learn to fight a little, and in the long run improve the life of their family at the cost of their gentle nature.

- The mob goons often develop a taste for violence and spend their free time at the United Center. The Horned Brawl, an event between a troll and a wild bull, always draws a crowd. Plus, for an extra charge you can get a loser meat steak after the match. You gotta pay up front, though.
- Trench
- I love when the troll loses. The ghouls that come out walk out happy as clams.
- Rek
- Don't forget the Skarz Mob. They do their part in keeping the masses poor and chipped out, just like the Mafia.
- DaMob

Daley Gardens Complex

Northside meets the Noose with these lakefront “luxury” condominiums. Built along the lakefront just north of the Noose (in walking distance of Cabrini-Green) this one-hundred-story façade of glass fell far short of its luxury designation. Shortly after completion, with only two percent of the units sold, the developer went to the City and federal government with a request to switch this complex from luxury condos into low-income housing. The result was a boatload of cash for the developer and a new, high-elevation place for the downtrodden to jump from without having to get past corporate security.

As you can guess, it is also the kind of place that a person who might not have a valid SIN can rent an apartment. The apartments aren’t luxurious, of course, but many of the upper-floor condos are quite spacious. Ring condo 7802 and ask for T-Rex if you are looking for a room. Avoid floors thirty-four through thirty-seven, fifty-one, eighty-two through eighty-five, and one hundred. These spots have fun features such as gang-claimed territory, an angry recluse who shoots first, an illegal casino and chip den, and a creepy shaman who never lets people leave if you get my drift.

- And I’m avoiding the casino and chip den cuz why?
- Marv
- One of my favorite aspects of this place is the lakefront view through reinforced windows. Part of the luxury construction was making all the lakeside windows out of reinforced ballistic glass. Takes a rocket, explosives, or a little engineering skill to take out the windows.
- LastLine
- From the lake it’s actually kind of eerie looking. All the ruins sit around and south of it, and then there’s this glass face one hundred stories tall and two blocks long that looks practically untouched from the outside.
- LakeLover

The Village

Don’t think about it. If you have a target inside this place, go back to your Johnson, say no thank you, and walk away. If he’s insistent, ask for double the pay and medical benefits. Now, I was never one to back down from a challenge, but when it came to this place, I should have. It’s not the black wall (painted, not soot covered) or the electrified barbed wire that make this place so secure. It’s the size and familiarity of its population. Inside the Village, everyone knows everyone else. If an exec hires a new bodyguard, he has a party to introduce him to the neighbors and then makes sure to always introduce his new Executive Protection

Specialist at every opportunity. That means no matter how good your fake ID is, you don’t fit in. You’ve been warned, now on to the little I know.

This is where all the factory executives and management live. Most commute by helicopter or VTOL and never have to mingle with the workers. They keep the soot off the buildings with automated cleaning systems, and when black snow falls they push it to the wall where it’s melted. Beyond those few facts, I’ve got nothing for you.

- I do. Sec’s tight, but getting on an exec’s payroll and working the long game is not a bad play here.
- Shield
- The guards also use their familiarity to mingle too much sometimes. They get good dirt sometimes, and in Chi-town, dirt hurts.
- Chi-guy
- Never forget the mob angle. If they want you in, they’ll find a way to get you in, along with a patsy to take the fall for the security breach.
- DaMob

Black City

This section of town immediately surrounding the plastic factories is almost all housing. No matter how much rain or snow falls, it doesn’t get clean, and it hasn’t been clean since the first factory started belching black smoke into the air. On most days some portion of Black City is completely clouded over by sootsmoke. A few times each year the winds are dead or mild enough for a couple days that the cloud hangs over the whole place. The factory and the houses for about two miles in each direction enter a perpetual night, like living at a pole during winter.

The residents of Black City are no cleaner than their buildings. Most wash on a fairly regular basis but if you spend enough time in the soot, it stains your skin. Longtime residents of Black City (what few there are) are easy to identify by their coal-black skin. Speaking of the residents there is a higher population of elves (36 percent) and dwarves (42 percent) living in Black City than other places. Humans make up only three percent of Black City’s residents, and most of them live on the outskirts where they never face the “dark days,” as the locals call them.

Rumors in Black City abound with tales of vampires living in the area, but I’ve never seen one. From what some of my more arcanelly inclined friends tell me, the astral in this area is particularly unpleasant. I don’t know what that would mean for vampires or anything else, but I thought it was something I should pass along.



- Well, not exactly vampires, but whatever it is that elves and dwarves turn into. Creepy drek.
- ArcaneArrester
- The factories are frequent run targets by corps looking for intel and green groups looking to shut these pollution-pumpers down.
- Mr. Johnson
- Believe it or not, this is a prime area to find Humanis members. They initiate new guys by dropping them off here and telling them not to come back without a tusk or an ear. The brave ones gang up and try to drag someone down. The smart ones wait for the brave ones to come back, then take their trophies and claim them on their own. Only about one in five of the rookies make it back, but it weeds out the stupid and some of the weak. They later go on to political fields and do more damage behind a desk than they ever could in the street. The tough ones get moved to law enforcement. Find a scared human teen out here, save him, and you have a friend for life. Or a patsy. Your call.
- Douglas Stevens

BarbieVille

Directly connected to the plastic factories is a small neighborhood others have begun calling BarbieVille. Plastic factories cause lots of burns, and burnt workers are unproductive workers, so the companies that operate the factories have an interesting policy. They support specialized burn clinics with mediocre plastic surgeons who use quick cosmetic surgeries to smooth over scars. The result is smooth skin that looks almost plastic. Workers who have been burned are always sent back to their original jobs, and most get burned again, and again, and again. The repeated surgeries create people who look like plastic dolls. These folks all live in the same little area where they all understand each others' deformities.

Now you ask me what this means to you. Well, BarbieVille's clinics are not as mediocre as they seem. The docs just don't get paid enough to do a good job on the workers. But they get a lot of practice, and when it comes to getting a new face, this is a great place to go. The docs operate at the factory clinic and then allow for recovery in BarbieVille. The BarbieVille residents get a cut, and many go in to have their work modified, usually to look even more doll-like as this has become a status symbol in the strange little community.

- The easiest way to escape BarbieVille is to let the docs change your face and install a chipjack, cybereyes, and headware memory. Can you guess why?
- ChipTruth
- Beware those knives. Corps own the docs and know what they do on the side. You can get a lot more than you bargained for.
- Glasswalker

Westside

No matter how much time passes, I always find it difficult to call this place Chicago. Growing up it was the western suburbs and was as far from the fast-paced Second City image as you could possibly get. The city was all edge and excitement, while out here the rat race changed into keeping up with the Joneses. That part hasn't changed much, but now they call this place Chicago and just refer to the neighborhoods by their old names like Hinsdale or Downers Grove. This area is also *huge!* This district has the same square meterage as Northside, the Elevated, and the Noose combined.

Out here, the sheer vastness is to our advantage. There are plenty of places to hide, including some fairly large forest preserves if you really need to drop off the radar. Motels and hotels are all over if you need a short stay; apartments and houses are rented across this area too. Plenty of squatters have found some nice spots to hang out in a few of the neighborhoods that emptied out over the years. Viral outbreaks did quite a number in the neighborhood of Burr Ridge. This place looks a lot like a ghost town, but the houses could easily nab a couple million if folks could get past their fears of a dormant virus. Squatters and teenagers looking for a make-out spot or party house haven't had the same fears. Same can be said of some runners who have quietly moved into a few of the old mansions.

I could easily kill hours on end talking about this place—did I mention it's huge?—but I'll put in a few highlights and then see if Cap wants a more detailed rundown of these districts. So let me discuss the Corporate research parks, the quiet arrival of another crime syndicate in town, the famous Dream Town, and something that seems to only be plaguing this little suburban chunk of the city, the go-gangs.

- "Kill hours" would be right. This area is lame-central outside Dream Town.
- WestSnide

Corporate Research Parks

Ares Macrotechnology, Mitsuhamma Computer Technologies, and Truman Tech all have research parks out in the vastness that is Westside. I say the full names for a reason, since all of the corps have multiple research facilities for several of their divisions within their parks. Truman's park unsurprisingly borders Dream Town. MCT's park is the largest, and it includes several private neighborhoods for their employees on the property.

Ares Arms actually has a facility at the center of the Ares park with underground testing facilities on what used to be Argonne National Laboratories properties in Darien. In fact, Ares owns all of those

facilities, the docks along the I&M Canal to the south of the property, and all of what was once (when I was a kid) Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve. They maintain tight security and often arm guards with the latest in arms and armor from Ares Arms.

The Truman research park has fifteen “clean” factories that churn out all the chips and deck parts the company needs while still maintaining (if barely) pollution standards that meet government regulations. These factories are frequent targets for runs looking to steal pre-release simsense materials, to stop the release of a particular title or line, or just to get data on the latest designs or manufacturing techniques. There are also frequent runs to try and push the factories to the “dirty” side to sully the Truman reputation. The facility sprawls over much of the land between I-290 and I-55, west of Cicero and east of Harlem, the same section of sprawl where Dream Town is located.

- Ares' park also runs some paracritter training on their property. It's a good place to grab something you can enroll in fights at the United Center.
- KnightWatch

Dream Town

Dream Town is a section of Westside that could also be called Trumanville. It's connected to the Truman research park and filled with a whole lot of people looking to have a lot more fun than is good for them. Truman started this area as a focused community of artists whose visions would eventually color the simsense of Truman Tech. It's not all painters and drek like that, though. Many of the artists work on the canvas of the human mind and produce brain-bender concoctions that give many Truman releases an otherworldly feel. A lot of other companies love making grabs for these folks, but when you're in there be careful not to take any treats they offer or the run can go sideways real quick.

Dream Town is also home to the major simsense studios in Chicago, like the old Hollywood in the days of my youth. Oh, when 3D was high tech. Brilliant Genesis, Fox, and Living Life all produce their sims from here in Chicago and deal through Truman for distribution. It's a win-win for all concerned but means some brutal competition for stars, stories, programmers, and directors. Security in this part of town is tightest around these famous folks, and more than one run has been cut short by being mistaken as an extraction.

- Aztechnology is always busy here, trying to keep tabs on Truman. Always keeping an eye on young talent for use in their PR department, creating ads for products and lies for citizens.
- Pyramid Watcher

Go-gangs

The massive expanse that is Westside is the perfect spot to develop the majority of go-gang activity in the sprawl. About ten (give or take two based on the week) Chicago go-gangs cruise the streets and highways out in this area. Most just terrorize each other, but sometimes they look for thrills by going after the locals. They stay away from corp security but occasionally mess with Eagle patrols.

These gangs are fiercely territorial against outside go-gangs and will actually stop fighting amongst themselves to kick out an intruder. The Ancients have made attempts to build up a crew here and failed twice since '46. I think the big reason is protection of the thrill. These gangs don't smuggle or run protection rackets; they ride for fun. Though their idea of fun and yours might vary drastically. If other gangs were to come in and expand into criminal activities other than vandalism, assault, and disturbing the peace, that might draw extra heat down on these gangs who only ride for the thrill.

Longstanding gangs currently on the streets include: the Eye-Riders, a group of interstate cruisers; WolfPack, based out on Wolf Road; Chi-Rish, expatriates from the nÓg; and Speed, Inc., a group of business-suit-wearing wackos. Most have a particular base of operations, but they really roam over most of Westside and even shoot out into other districts if there is fun and mayhem to be had.

- Old-Timer knows nothing. These guys do more than thrill ride. They pay their piece to the mob, and if they don't, they go out like the Eighty-hates. Real messy.
- Chi-Rider
- The 80-Hates (know who you're talking about, kid) were getting cozy with the Triads. That's why the mob went after them. And just so you know, they may be down, but they're not out.
- Old-Timer

Southside

I was born and raised a Chicago Southsider. I rooted for the White Sox, I hated the Cubs, and I worked hard for everything I had and thought anyone who didn't was cheating the system. Then and now, the South Side is blue collar through and through. Suits that are smart don't live here, they commute to their office jobs at the factories, steelworks, and power plants that call Southside home. That's not because the neighborhoods aren't nice here—some of them are remarkably so—it's because when Southsiders go out for a drink or want to relax, the last things they want to be reminded of is their boss. In fact, once the drinks start flowing the boss is a frequent target



for some angry verbal ranting, and if the boss were physically present he might just be in for an old-fashioned Southside hoop-whoopin'. That's Southside for you—work hard, play hard.

Now you aren't reading this to listen to some old-timer tell you how awesome the past was; you want the dirt that might just get you one more day in the sun (or the smoggy haze throughout most of Southside). As I said, Southside is home to three main things: factories, steelworks, and power plants. Each creates their own particular flavor of Southsider, and that in turn flavors the areas they live in and the way of life in their part of town.

Factory Towns

The factories are diverse down here. Toys, guns, appliances, dog food, vehicles, chocolate, synthanol, plastics, clothing, diningware, furniture, cheap electronics, and a hundred other things and tons of varieties of each are made here. If Chicago were ever cut off from the rest of the world, they would still be able to maintain production and be self-reliant for years, maybe decades or longer, with a proper recycling program. That kind of attitude runs through the factory workers.

The factory neighborhoods are full of Chicago-made goods. People own lots of local goods, both because they have neighborhood pride and because they get considerable employee discounts at the factories. Most factories have nearby neighborhoods developed by company where all the workers live and can walk or take a bus to work. Even in the winter they are close enough that major snowstorms don't hinder production. Most of the neighborhoods sport single-family housing along with a few apartments for single folks. It's a corporate suburbia with tiny yards that residents mow on the weekends. Most of the time the only way anyone would know they are on corporate grounds is the GridGuide warning from their car.

This is a nice place to hide if you have family or friends you can stay with, but the company doesn't rent to anyone besides their employees. There are some more-rundown neighborhoods in between the factory neighborhoods where the corps don't own the land. These places are usually full of disgruntled former employees who were fired and forced out or kids who refused to work for the company when they turned eighteen. Hiding here is easier, and it's a great spot to gather intel from people who spent plenty of time on the inside.

- Correction: The corps don't officially rent to outsiders. Some mid-level execs make extra cash renting out vacant spots to "consultants."
- Chicago's Finest

Steelworks

UCAS Steel is headquartered in Chicago, and their neighborhoods are some of the best in Southside. A large number of the workers in the steelworks are trolls and orks, and the UCAS Steel neighborhoods reflect this. Schools, businesses, and homes designed with bigger metahumans in mind make the place seem a bit oversized, but the trolls look right at home. All this makes UCAS Steel appear very meta-friendly, but nothing is ever so simple. The cost of this design is a level of existence just above indentured servitude. The trolls pay a housing tax that takes about ninety percent of their income, compared to the forty percent tax on the other metatypes.

The neighborhoods around the steelworks are nicer than the factory neighborhoods by a small margin. The homes tend to be a little less cookie-cutter, the yards a little larger (and somehow greener), and everything seems to have a little more friendly of a feel. These neighborhoods are also protected through limited access and tighter security.

Extractions are rare but not unheard of and are focused mainly on the research gurus in the Advanced Materials division. Be warned, the bodyguards for most UCAS Steel personnel are trolls. They may be big and dumb, but they make great cover and look fraggin' intimidating in a three-piece suit.

- Steel deliveries are targets during the Alderman Wars. Usually followed by another job to steal some steel.
- DaMob
- UCAS Steel is a wholly owned subsidiary of AmericOre, a division of AG Jastorf, which is owned by Saeder-Krupp. Ain't that a fraggin' kick in the head?
- Hatchetman

Power Plants

Many of the power plants in Southside are reserve plants. When demand gets high, they kick these ones on to prevent outages. Or at least to prevent outages in downtown and Dream Town. I can remember hot summer days when the power blacked out in my neighborhood, the reserves went online, and I'd watch downtown light up while laying on my roof trying to catch a breeze. Due to the automated nature of the plants, they don't have a huge staff and most don't have designated neighborhoods.

A lot of the employees have taken it upon themselves to buy houses in the same area as others in their specialty. One area holds mostly engineers and brain-boys, while the other is the grunts who oil the works. The engineers moved into an area bordered by forest preserves on the west, a small lake to the north, an interstate to the east, and only two streets

that enter the neighborhood from the south. They dug out a canal in the middle, and many own small boats they take out fishing on their stocked lake. The barriers make life quiet.

The grunts didn't have quite the cash to be so picky, so they all bought into a rundown little condo-plex called The Terrace in my old hometown, Palos Hills. They all work together to keep up each others' places and maintain the grounds around the place. They don't own the whole place, but they made a few object lessons of some unpleasant neighbors early in the collaboration, and the disturbances are usually limited to rowdy teens. This is a great place to doss down if you like solid neighbors, but don't bring trouble home with you. Extra caution comes from the fact that Eagle Security uses the old police station across the street.

- Remember the reserve plants when looking to cut power. Some areas of Downtown and Westside have redundant wiring for downed lines, so they're not going to blackout easy.
- SINful

Go-gangs

There are only two big ones here, 55 Alive and the Top Guns, both of which operate on I-55. They usually only cause trouble for each other and some of the Westside go-gangs they bump into, but sometimes regular folks—and runners—get caught in the middle of their shenanigans. The two gangs have a rule against killing, at least on purpose. This rule applies to members of the other gang and anyone else who gets caught in the crossfire. The rule lasts right up to the point that someone violates it. When a death occurs, the fighting stops and the gangs break-off. If the killer was a gang member, they are sent to joust the other gangs joust champion. Win, all's good. Lose, all's good. Scores are settled honorably between these two gangs. As for outsiders, no such luck. The gangs band together and come after the transgressor after they have done some legwork.

All of this is probably best illustrated with a story. A runner named Arson was cruising 55, dropping Molotovs off the overpasses for fun. He drives into the middle of some go-gang mayhem and decides the gangers would be great moving targets. He hits a Top Gun member with a firebomb, and the ensuing crash kills the ganger. Both gangs clear out, and Arson thinks he's the drek. LaGrange, leader of the 55 Alive, makes some calls and finds out that Arson runs with a solid runner crew that, according to word on the street, will back their mate. These gangers aren't dumb, and they know they don't have the resources to off a whole runner team without some

serious losses, so they call a meeting between both gangs. At the meeting they pass around the hat and get together a decent stack of bills. They contract another team of runners to back them up. Not do the job for them, mind—just back them up and help them end it quick before it gets out of hand. Arson and his team never worked another job. And guess how many 55's and Top Guns died in the retribution? Zero. Not even a hospital visit.

- Don't think they're soft because they hire out. And that bulldrek about no killing is hogwash.
- Street Talker

The Noose

I am a child of the old Chicago. I remember driving into the city as a young man and staring in awe at the skyline as it came into sight. The Sears Tower stood at the center of the city, a massive black spire pointing to the sky. I felt a sense of giddiness every time I saw it. Imagine the sensation I had on that fateful day in '29 when I heard the tower had fallen. And that feeling was nothing compared to the first time I drove toward what was once downtown and didn't see the skyline.

I'm not sure if it's that youthful connection to the old city or just a love for the underdog developed from years of running as that underdog, but I love the Noose. After the Sears Tower fell and trashed the structural integrity of the rest of downtown, Chicagoans lost a part of themselves. They lost a piece of their identity in the attack. Some have tried to fill that void with a love for the new Downtown, but true Chicagoans still feel the sting of Alamos' attack.

Now the Noose is a shadow of its former glory. Where once shoppers poured through the wares of Chanel and Escada, now ghouls lurk and hunt for their next meal. I know I add a little of the dramatic to it, and in truth the ghouls really keep to the Shattergraves (the actual area affected by the fallen tower), not the slightly cleaned-up area around it. This area never really got business back, because no one wanted to get that close to those painful memories, but the rest of the Noose is a really hoppin' spot for us runner types. First off, it's a long stretch of lakefront that no one really polices (except the water plant—leave that fortress alone). For shadowy types it means a way to get goods in and out of the city that might get frowned upon in more upscale channels. The goods never stop here, the local residents are not the friendliest, and Chicago's shattered coast makes a nice transfer point for not only Chicago proper but for other Midwestern cities toward which the spiderweb of train tracks and highways that lead from the lake spread out.



For those not lucky enough to be just passing through the Noose I recommend body armor, a loaded weapon carried where everyone else can see, and friends—lots and lots of similarly armed friends. Folks in that part of town will think twice about going after a group who's packing, but the mentality of the desperate often accepts the losses of taking down a single armed foe. I personally lost two associates who thought they needed to be lone wolves running ahead of the pack. One was only a block ahead. We heard gunfire start, but by the time we reached the corner where we lost sight of him, all that was left was some blood and a few parts too squishy to carry. The locals stripped all his gear and even took most of his body to trade to the ghouls in the Shattergraves. Second guy just started screaming over the micro-trans while hanging out on a rooftop to cover us. I've no clue how much of him was left. We didn't go check. Point is, keep your drek together in the Noose.

Now I don't want to ruin tourism in this part of town, so let me give you some positive highlights. Remember, these are positive highlights for the Noose, so keep your expectations low.

- I read ahead, and this guy doesn't mention Murphy's Law or Alderman Jack Strong. The Law is a gang ruled by Jack. They hold court in the old Circuit Court building and operate the biggest protection racket in the city.
- DaMob
- Hold court. Ha. Jack hears cases, and if you don't like his verdict you best keep it to yourself, unless you know a good street doc.
- AttorneyGeneral

The Shattergraves

This four block circle around the Sears Tower is home to a large Awakened population. And by Awakened I mean ghouls, wraiths, and specters. No one in their right mind would live there (a few crazies do) but the ghouls are a great source of goods and information. Information brokers and secondhand goods dealers (including cyber) have set up shop in the old Post Office building and train station where I-290 turns into Congress. Don't expect glitz and glam, and make sure you don't eat before you go. The place reeks, and not just from the bartered bodies the ghouls often take but from the folks who don't come down here with the right mentality and drek themselves at this year-round haunted house.

I never promote suicide, but in the interest of thoroughness I'll talk about going into this area. I will remind those not fully versed on the history of Chicago and the Alamos 20K attack that in the aftermath, nothing got cleaned up in the hub of the disaster. The outskirts of this area may have had some

shoring up and gotten a thorough rinse off by the rain, but the center got nothing. Some of the info the ghouls sell is recovered from inside, not just from the Pocket Secretaries of unlucky meals, but the ghouls definitely don't have the tech-spertise to deck the toughest systems or the electrical know-how to get them running. Even twenty-one years later, this section of town is still full of corporate secrets. For those who can brave the ghosts and ghouls, plenty of big scores can be made here.

- The big scores have all been made, but suicide runs are still there. Bring in some serious firepower and some solid deckmeisters (plural) if you want a chance to get good paydata.
- Chi-guy
- Not worth it.
- One-Legged Bandit
- Unless you know where to look.
- FastJack

Cabrini Green

The Mather Group picked this place up back in '39 for redevelopment. They've been trying to clear out the tenants annually ever since without much success. In '44 they emptied an entire tower, only to have the residents move back in when the security force Mather hired headed for the next tower. Most of the other years, the goons they hire run into a runner or two who doss down here and way outclass the thugs. In '48 the place made headlines again when four of the Mather goons took flight from the top floor. A lot of the apartments are empty, and with the right cash transfer to Mather you can get a spot where their goons won't stop by, at least until they successfully clear out the place (haha).

- Mather is putting serious money out this year.
- Harlem Knight
- There will be a permanent base on Mars before that place gets cleaned up.
- TopSpin

Chicago Spire

Located on a small strip of land between the Ogden Slip and Chicago River, this former marvel of the architectural world now stands as a crumbling tower of twisted glass and steel that occasional spits deadly panes of glass onto the city below. Its proximity to the water treatment plant means it gets at least a semblance of security to protect the plant from terrorist attacks. The side of the Spire that faces the treatment plant has lost most of its glass from target

practice and “security actions” performed by Eagle and the UCAS Coast Guard.

- There's something weird on the upper floors. I swear I've seen things flying to and from the tip of the screw.
- EyeSpire

The (Formerly) Magnificent Mile

When the Loop died from the destruction of the Sears Tower, the Magnificent Mile was one of the first places to fall. Built on the cash of the rich willing to spend thousands of dollars on a single dress and then hundreds on shoes and a purse, this place closed quickly when they couldn't draw the rich into their stores. Some held out for a few months while they sold their remaining stock over the Matrix, but most just shipped out what was left to another store and walked away. Many didn't even bother with that; they simply closed up shop and left the merchandise.

- All I gotta say is ghouls in Chanel. And even with some No. 5 they still smell like number two.
- MooseGoose

That was then, and now this strip of marble and stone storefronts has another purpose. Hedonism. Sex, drugs, chips, and gambling have taken over the Magnificent Mile, and boy does it do well. The old store windows that once held mannequins in expensive dresses now hold real women in barely present dresses on sale by the hour or the day. The Drake Hotel, once a destination for the rich and powerful, provides rooms for illicit activities and its entrance halls are lined with dealers of every sort. From Gold Coast to red light district it's still a colorful place.

- If you go to the Drake Hotel, only ask for the “good stuff” if you're running a platinum credstick. They don't take kindly to being jerked around.
- One-Legged Bandit

United Center/Malcolm X College

Chicago was always a big sports town, and that tradition didn't die just because this part of town is a drek-hole slum that no one wants to go to. The sports have just changed and the attendees take a little more risk to get to these games. The Chicago mob has resurrected the sports arena and college at this spot and added some new blood—and lots of it.

The United Center now hosts cage fighting and courtball, both with rules played fast and loose to increase the bloodsport aspects of these violent pastimes. Note that not all the cage fighters are volunteers or metahuman. The college campus plays host to a small urban brawl zone with a few modified

rules, like no bikes. They host bi-weekly weekend-long matches between local gangs. The gangs are also allowed to rent the field during the week to practice with paintball guns instead of real ones. The area can be rented by anyone with enough cash and a desire to play. The mob offers dumping services for a fee for those who don't survive the game. I still have quite a few connections for work getting folks to and from these games. Anyone heading to or hanging out in Chicagoland looking for some protection work can look me up.

Goose Island

Once made famous for its brewery, this spot's current claim to fame is that it is a bastion of civilized (read: corporate) life in the slums. The island still houses a decent number of corporate executives and employees who use the privacy of the location to minimize exposure of some of their more dramatic genetic-manipulation experiments. The island has a four-meter-tall fence and wall around most of the perimeter, as well as connected walls separating the different sections of the island that belong to different megas. Ares, Fuchi, and Aztechnology each own about a third of the island. Ares owns the brewery and still produces a small line of microbrews. Goose Moose Ale is a favorite and wins awards all over the world.

The small southern tip of the mile-long island is home to the aquatic version of a go-gang that cruises the river near the island, terrorizing those crazy enough to take a boat out on the murky waters. The Jolly Rogers number about thirty members, most with their own watercraft. When everyone is hanging out it's quite a show. The corporations let them stick around because they provide an extra level of free security.

- Aztechnology owns the section of the island that borders the Jolly Roger harbor and word is the Azzies like giving the Rogers experimental toys to play with.
- AzzMaster

DuSable Harbor

Located just south of the water treatment plant this harbor once held scores of million-dollar boats. While many of those boats sailed away in late 2029, some stayed and have sunk in the winters since or been “borrowed.” The harbor rarely sees boats like that anymore, but it still gets plenty of traffic. Thanks to its design this harbor has survived well with its limited maintenance since this section of the coast was abandoned. Currently, the harbor provides a sweet little smuggling spot. It has its fair share of problems,



though. Once the lake freezes this place is useless for anything but ice-skating, and at least once or twice a year the UCAS Coast Guard decides it needs to do some extra policing in this area. Additionally, regular patrols of Eagle Security cruise past this place while running from Northside stations to Southside stations. They rarely chase anyone into the harbor (they lose too many boats that way) but have been known to make stops outside the safety of the harbor.

- There are better harbors all up and down the coast still in Noose. DuSable is easy to cover for a sniper in the Spire. Not sure if that's good or bad—I guess it depends on just what you're up to.
- Nobody's Fool

The Edge of Despair

These areas, located out by Western Avenue and along North Avenue and Cermak Road on the north and south respectively, are far from the destruction and blight that caused the death of this area. They hold a lot of the population for this section of town in what were once quaint little ethnic neighborhoods that have now become desolate ethno-meta neighborhoods. In today's world, having horns, tusks, or pointy ears causes just as many problems as almond shaped eyes, extra skin pigmentation, or a funny accent used to, depending on what block you're currently traveling.

The nice thing about these parts of town is that since they are so ethno-meta-centric, residents pretty much know everything about everyone in their neighborhood. If you match the local flavor and your pursuers do not, these areas are also great places to lay low. Problem is you can't bring any friends along who don't fit the motif. Another great feature in these areas is the empty real estate. On paper I'm sure there is a bank or other corporate entity that claims ownership, but around here ownership is a long word and one you won't have time to say before someone shoots you to take what they want. What this means to guys and gals like us is a lot of available floor space we can use to lay low or even run operations with minimal overhead costs.

This holds true over most of the north and west ends, but the south end, down by Cermak, has a lot of industrial space east of Laflin. I have to admit some ignorance here. The industrial area is full of warehouses, industrial parks, and a few retail strips, all of which are used by such a wide variety of folks that I can only scratch the surface and begin to describe what you'll find down there. Gang hangouts, mob chop shops, corporate storage for things best kept off the books, underground fight clubs, unlicensed body shops, runner hangouts, communal housing, and hundreds of other

things are there, not all of which I have experienced. I can recommend staying away from the area of Cermak and Morgan, near the power plant on the canal. There was a chemical leak of some sort there a few years back that never got properly cleaned up.

- Which gives us the rise of "Cermak rats," your basic devil rats only bigger, meaner, and uglier if you can believe that. Swear to God, I've seen one bite the fender off a trash truck.
- Two-Ton Tony

CHICAGO: POLITICS WITH POWER

In my lifetime I've watched as the mightiest governments in the world began to bow down and beg at the feet of the corporations. Power in the world shifted from the G8 summit to the Corporate Court, and that is the world we live in—unless you live in Chicago. I'm not saying the corps are getting pushed around here, but the Chicago political machine doesn't ask "how high?" when corporations say "Jump!" Instead they ask "What's in it for us if we do?" and it works. This powerful political machine has just as many infighting and corruption issues as any other government body, but they know when to stick together for maximum bribe profit.

The political layout seems simple at first. There are 124 wards, each with an elected alderman that sits on the City Council. The mayor presides over the council. Simplicity ends there. The aldermen are bought by various corporations or criminal elements, usually before they are even elected. In office they provide favorable city contracts and local ordinances to their private backers as long as the money keeps flowing. For the people who ostensibly elected them, they do just enough to keep from getting lynched. This makes for an interesting dynamic, since the folks in the poorest wards are the most likely to commit unpleasantness on their alderman. To prevent this unfortunate circumstance, the aldermen in these wards often recruit the most volatile of their constituents to work for them. Most of these thugs work off the books and help out in the "Alderman Wars." I'll have more to say about that later. Now to be fair, not all of the aldermen are corrupt. Some alderman—on the street they call them "Honorable"—actually fight for the little guy, but not enough to make it a citywide activity. Currently about a dozen say they do this, but I would only trust three or four of those.

Above the aldermen is the Mayor. With an election next year the current Mayor, Jerome Standish, seems to be a shoe-in for re-election. All sorts of rumors surround this former mercenary, but all I have to say about him is that he's not a total piece of dreck. Though Standish is a shoe-in, he still has



some competition. Alderman Anthony “The Banditt” Presbitero, is doing his damndest to seem useful to the city without upsetting Ares, his biggest funder. He may have problems though. Word on the street is that he had a falling out with Don O’Toole and he’s no longer the mob favorite, which means a lot in this city and was really his one chance at the mayor’s office. We—well, you now—can expect a lot of mob business coming soon. O’Toole is pissed enough that Presbitero won’t make it to his mayoral inauguration even if he does get elected.

- Tools may have a little bit tougher time of taking out “The Banditt” than he thinks. Presbitero has a trio of seriously nasty bodyguards: a Wolf shaman who goes by Wolf (real original), a massive cybered-out troll named Burst, and a wired up elf named Osiris.
- DaMob
- Osiris isn’t an elf. He’s not even a person. He’s a cyborg.
- Exposé
- Oh gods, here we go again. Cap, cut him off before he starts to rant this file into obscurity.
- IcePick

Talking about O’Toole reminds me of how important the Chicago Outfit is to the strength of the Chicago political machine. They are the mighty fist to the politicians’ silver tongues, and their ability to disregard city laws and live outside corporate laws makes them perfectly suited to sway corporations by threatening their bottom line and middle management. This arrangement occasionally causes some personal issues between corp execs and mobsters, but going after the mob would be bad for business. Often this doesn’t stop the execs, and they end up in more trouble than they expected. This often ends with them in the mob’s pocket.

- The arrangement of power is part of the reason for the city’s huge gap between the haves and have-nots. Politicians, organized crime, and corporations are all powerful haves, leaving the rest to squabble over crumbs.
- Chi-guy

Alderman Wars

Every alderman wants to keep as much of his bribe money and funnel as much public funding into their pockets as possible. This means getting work done cheap and obtaining materials at minimal cost. Free is best. The aldermen steal from each other constantly, wrangling with the finite resources of government to see just how much they can hold and keep. Making materials cheap is easy if you steal them but getting cheap labor is sometimes a lot trickier. Every alderman

keeps track of employment in his ward and knows where the SINless hang out. When work needs to be done cheap, they send thugs out to round up some of those types, dangle a little cash in front of their desperate faces, and *voilà*, instant workforce. Problems often arise when the unemployed and SINless don’t want to work and the thugs think a little cajoling might help persuade them. And cajoling translates to beating (or, on rare occasions, death) in the minds of thugs.

For those of us in Chicago, these wars are always occurring and can be a steady (if small) paycheck for any runner willing to do the politicians’ dirty work. They also cross our paths when the thugs mistake runners for potential workers, since most runners are also SINless.

- Try to keep some local SINless on your payroll. Doesn’t take much ... an old jacket here, a warm cup of soup there, paying for a medical visit, whatever. They’ll keep you posted when new jobs come up. Good for when times are tight, but you can turn knowledge of these needs into leverage for higher jobs. Is Mike “Mistrial” Mizzeri hiring a bunch of streetscum? Odds are, he needs to distract people from a scandal, which means he’ll be speaking in public, which means his office is vacant. If there’s something he wants kept quiet, his rivals will want to know.
- Old Man Murray
- The alderman will sometimes contract the more professional poor to do runs for them. Real jobs. But be careful of the posers and the plants. The mob likes to drop in some of their guys sometimes to make sure the run goes sideways, thus saving them money.
- StreetWatcher

CHICAGO UNDERWORLD

Chicago is and forever will be a mob town. A big part of the reason for Chicago’s political power is the backing of the mob. When New York got shaken up in the Quake and Las Vegas went to the NANers, Chicago was the last major power base for the Mafia in the US/UCAS. A lot of the best and brightest (conniving and ruthless in mob terms) made moves to Chicago, and nature took its course. The strong survived, the weak were culled from the herd, and Chicago was left with nothing but apex predators swimming in their criminal pool. That pool is getting a little bloody lately. The Mafia has been working to cast out anyone with almond-shaped eyes to slow the Yaks’ progress, and sometimes their methods cross over the border into madness.

- This means that anyone associating with the slants might want to reconsider. The mob doesn’t always make their statements with Oriental blood.
- FeralWon

Chicago is home to two major Mafia families, one mid-size family, and a half-dozen smaller families.





All of these families make up what is known as “The Chicago Outfit,” and all of them answer to a single don. The big families are each granted control of certain operations to prevent a lot of overlap and infighting but every family still has operations of every sort. They all know enough to keep their individual operations small, and they always pass a cut to the right family. The mob here in Chicago has a rich history, which I ain’t gonna bore you with, but I will give you some details on the current operators.

Capone Family

Don Jim “Tools” O’Toole heads up all the families in Chicago and rose up through this famous family. He’s the exception to the rule in the Chicago Outfit that bosses should be Sicilian or Italian. He’s not one hundred percent Irish—his great grandfather was Sicilian (and a descendant of Capone)—but he’s a whole lot more mick than any other Chicago top mobster.

The Capones control the three Gs (gambling, guns, girls) throughout most of Chicago. These aren’t exclusively theirs, but the other families make sure to inform the Capones if they do any work in one of those fields. A lot of the top members of the family live Downtown, and O’Toole has a place in the Truman Tower. O’Toole doesn’t trust anyone, so he makes sure to spread the rest of his boys all over Chicagoland to keep an eye out.

- You can tell who’s currently on Tools’ drek list by who has to work the Noose.
- MafiaDon
- The Noose is actually pretty sweet. The money’s solid, and it’s easy to make problems disappear.
- DaMob

DeLuca Family

Capo Angelo “Copdrop” DeLuca is the only family head who still has the family name. He’s the great-great-grandson of Joseph DeLuca, a Midwestern mobster from the early 1900s. He got the nickname while coming up in the family when he tossed an Eagle Security Lieutenant out a window of the Skydeck Restaurant in the Hancock Building. He has no qualms about getting rid of anyone who gets in his way.

The DeLucas are the second-largest family in the Chicago Outfit, and they control drugs, protection, money laundering, and smuggling. The variety of work within the DeLuca family makes them a very diverse bunch. Smooth-tongued dealers, muscular enforcers, genius accountants, and gearhead smugglers are just some of the folks that make up this family. They definitely have the widest spectrum of

goons of all the families, and they are spread out all over the city. Capo DeLuca lives inside The Village in Northside but also has a house just north of the Ares research park in Westside.

Of special interest are the money-laundering operations in Chicago. To work against the tide of megacorporate wealth in this city, the DeLuca family uses their connection to the government and the control they still maintain giving out business licenses to create a healthy smattering of small mom-and-pop operations all over the city to nip at the heels of the big boys. They’re not supposed to win any business wars—they’re just supposed to be annoying and maybe bring in some nuyen, either through sales or through collections on fire insurance once the places are closed down by their owners. These places rarely survive a year or two before they close up shop, and often another similar store opens up soon after the first closes. Sometimes the little businesses see a lot of success and get bought by a big Chicago player. When this happens the mob tends to not argue and sells for whatever price the corps offer. If the corp really low-balled the offer and the mob wants a little extra satisfaction, they will find certain agreeable individuals to inhibit business after the deal is done. In all my years these have been some of the funnest jobs I’ve ever taken, because the mob pays extra for creativity.

- Copdrop is not having a good year. ‘49 brought all sorts of harassment by Eagle and the Feds on his operations. Look for some internal turmoil coming down the road or some work from Tools to get business back on track.
- DaMob

Giancana Family

Capo Cecilia “Queen Mary” D’Angelo rules her small family with an iron fist. She got her name from her ruthless first kill where she beheaded a man with an axe. The name stuck, the beheadings continued, and now she controls the most vicious family in Chicago. They only control one major business in the city: wet-work. The Giancana family has connections to some of the best assassins around the world, and they are the people to talk to in Chicago if you need someone to disappear without a trace. As a side aspect of their business, they have great cleaning services. International Car Care in Southside can have a ‘48 Land Rover car-lot clean in under two hours, even after four trolls bled out from gunshot wounds inside it.

- Also makes them a great family for high-end weapons and all sorts of dirt.
- DaMob
- Hit up Phoenix Gunworks in Southside for some primo custom work.
- Phalanx

Yakuza, The Rising Sun

Since the mid-'40s the Yakuza has been slowly building strength in a very harsh environment. With the help of their strong ties and connections within Mitsuhamas, they've managed to make a foothold in Westside. With the recent completion of Mitsuhamas's HQ in the Core, expect to see some more expansion into that area as well, but expect that to be a bit bloody since the Capones don't want the other families to see them as weak.

If you're looking for work or info from the Yaks, check out the bunraku parlors around Dream Town. They offer some interesting chipped girls that I've never heard of anywhere else in the world, including full-immersion alternate personalities. I've never visited any of the parlors myself, but it sounds interesting. Most of the parlors also have gambling dens attached or close by to get more bang for their buck, and also to provide protection services.

Be careful doing work for the Yaks. Mistakes aren't tolerated, and they are small enough to take things personally and feel the need to make examples. If you know how to be a true pro and get the job done, these guys will keep you as busy as you want. Also be careful of the mob. They've been known to make examples of runners working for the Yaks so that the rest of us understand what's good for us.

- The Yakuza is a very professional organization. If they take things personally, you will never know.
- Nippon
- Mitsuhamas is supplying the wires and chips for these unique girls. All experimental. The data they collect could be valuable to any number of other corps in the city.
- Iron Core

The Up and Comers and Small-timers

The Chicago streets are dangerous, and often individuals will band together to try to protect themselves and what they have from the meat grinder. I'll talk about it here only because most folks consider the activities criminal in nature, but often the only criminal enterprise these groups partake in is violence while defending what is theirs. Don't take everything I say for chip-truth, though. I'm old, with a reputation from my younger days, so I get treated a little different than some young punk looking to cut his teeth on the streets. Remember your manners when it's prudent, remember threats only work on the weak, and when the shooting starts, drop the leader and declare yourself new king of the tribe. It's worked at least once in the history of Chicago.

- Before some calls bulldrek, I'll back the fogey. Back in the twenties he was making a delivery for the Capones into P-Kill territory. The gang stopped him, and he opened his big mouth. When the gunfire started he went for the leader, an elf named MDK. When the leader went down he yelled out to declare himself the new boss. It worked. He stayed leader for a month before MDK's faithful in the gang ousted him.
- Chi-Guy
- Old-Timer iced three of MDK's boys before he decided to quit.
- Harlem Knight

Gangs

I'll keep it brief here. The go-gangs, what few there are, are mostly speed freaks and thrill junkies. They can be useful for delivering things and distractions but do very little in the way of organized criminal enterprises. Same tends to go for the gangs in Chicago. None of them are huge, and all of them are territorial. Most of the gangs are actually just locals banding together for a sense of belonging and safety. They can be violent and crazy and have clashes over parts of neighborhoods that overlap or if something of particular value to them is on a block they don't call their own. Most never venture much further than a block or two from their territory.

Triads, the Chinese Mob

Small and focused in what remains of Chinatown, the Chinese mob (or Triad) has kept in business by keeping their niche and not expanding into other territories. They've had some trouble lately with the Chicago Outfit's lack of precision in targeting Asians, and some members are definitely ready to retaliate. They focus primarily in Awakened drugs and opium but keep business small enough to not cut into the mob's profits.

- The flesh trade's a secondary source of income for them. Lots of families don't need daughters in the Land of Warlords, so they pack 'em up and ship 'em off via the slave trade. They stop briefly in Seattle, then head to Chicago (the natives turn a blind eye if they're given enough nuyen. The same smugglers run Sioux-made guns back to the warlords on the return trip. Handy way of getting rid of old milspec gear that's gone out of date). From Chicago, they fan out across the continent. The ones that don't survive the trip are ghoulish fodder. Everybody wins.
- Foo Manchoo
- Magical extortion's also a thing. The Triads don't have the mob's connections or the Yak's firepower, but nobody can match 'em when it comes to the mojo. They rarely go for public displays, but if you read the local papers, you'll see a lot of suicides of the "stepped in front of a bus" or "fell off a roof" type. If you deal with the Triads, make sure you keep an eye on your material links.
- Pan



Neo-Anarchists

Though technically little more than a gang, I wanted to separate out and give the neo-anarchists a little special distinction because they deserve it. Joined together by a general distaste for what society has become, the neo-a's are still in the grassroots movement phase of their existence here in Chicago. They despise big government and the corporate control of the world. They are all about getting the wageslaves to wake up and realize the life they live is not really a life at all. They are spread all over the city in small cells—they like to call them tribes—but their heart lies in Northside. They do a lot of contract work with runners, especially hooders, and often pay in goods instead of cash. The neo-a's also have some of the hottest deckers in the Chicago, and they are always willing to sign on for a job with a team if they get the chance to cut up some corporate IC. Be careful, though, since they tend to be a bit showy and they often like to add some extra chaos to the corporation. These deckers and the massive variation they have in their membership also makes them a great source for information on a wide variety of topics. Information is another popular payment, and they frequently keep books of how much individuals “owe” them. When they call on the debt, don't refuse or you'll lose your info broker.

- If you hire a local, it's important to remember that it's all about big shows and leaving marks for them, not getting the job done quietly. If you have a reputation, expect to be drawn into far more duels than you'd care to. God, if I had a deci-nuyen for every time I've heard the line “So I hear you're fast, 'Jack...”
- FastJack
- Your fault for being so drekkin' wiz, you know. Maybe you should take a dive.
- Quickdraw
- Sorry Quicks, not gonna happen. Get used to being Number Three.
- FastJack

Drug Scene

Drugs are a criminal enterprise, but there are a lot of places in Chicago where you wouldn't be able to tell. For most of the wageslaves and workers who trudge through life in Chicago, their only escape is some sort of recreational habit. Marijuana, synthahol, and sim-sense are the three most common escape strategies. BTL usage in places like Northside and the Noose are common, and Dream Town was built on pushing the limits of sim. Life in this city takes a toll, and most of the everyday folks can't afford to get away physically so they follow the street adage, “Pop a chip, take a trip, get a grip” to solve their stress issues.

Most of the harder physical drugs like heroine,

meth, coke, etc. are only common in the Noose or with the SINless. Workers can't afford the loss of productivity those drugs cause. The out-of-work folks don't care much about getting anything done, so they hop a ride to cloud nine with whatever they can get their hands on. It's an ugly scene, and a lot of the pushers really prey on the down and out.

- There has been a rash of killings lately targeting dealers of these hard drugs. A few dealers have looked to contract security from us.
- Baron Aaron
- Those same guys are also hiring some of us to get their biggest competitors off the street.
- Burst

Art Thieves

I'm putting this little Chicago snippet here because I feel what initially happened was a crime. I'm talking about the museum district of Chicago and the events that transpired there after Alamos ripped up the Sears Tower. For those not up on that bit of history, let me explain. When the tower came down and downtown took a hit like no other, a large number of the museums suffered damage. To pile on the injuries, insurance companies were unwilling to pay to recover lost art.

Corporations and wealthy individuals started hiring runners to hit the museums and recover the art for them. It was the worst pillaging of priceless art since the Nazis' actions in WWII. These pieces are now part of various collections that are targeted by thieves of all walks. Neo-anarchists want to give the collection back to the museums, runners want to steal and sell them to other interested parties, collectors hire runners to build their personal collection, and many more, often trivial, reasons and individuals get involved. It's work, but most of the pieces are up in towers of the Core. Which means they're not easy targets.

- Executive mansions in other parts of the city are easier, but still only something pros should try.
- LadderClimber
- The biggest buyers are the wanna-be types that orbit around a Mafia nephew or middle-managers who are trying to look more suave to the higher-ups. Of course, if they had the money to buy these things legit, they'd be better poised to get those promotions on their own merit. These fraggers will always try and renegotiate a deal on you so they can skip out on as much of the bill as possible. Be forewarned and bring some heavy hitters with you to help enforce the deal you originally signed. No point in killing anybody for it, but since these yutzies sometimes get to climbing up the ranks, I can't advise giving them a limp, either. Proudful, revenge-minded, petty, greedy ... brats are brats, no matter how they dress up.
- Katie Kite

CORPORATE CHICAGO

Self-sufficiency is the name of the game in this town. I've done a lot of traveling in my life, read a lot of books, and lived a lot of what most folks call history. I remember when I was a kid and everything affordable was made in a sweatshop in some Asian country. Made for a lot of foreign dependence, and I'm sure that was one of the many nails in the coffin of the old USA. Now Chicago learned from this, and they have done one hell of a job making themselves as self-sufficient as possible. Materials may still have to come in from other places, but this 'plex has the blue-collar crowd to put it all together right near home. Add in a few of Chicago's own hometown AAs and a healthy AAA presence, and you have the Chicago corporate scene. It's important to point out that there are very few A-rated or mom-and-pop operations in Chicago (and as noted previously, many of the mom-and-pop organizations that are there are propped up by the man mainly to annoy the megas). The A-level corps tend to get gobbled up or torn apart by the sea of sharks that is Chicago, and the gap between the haves and the have nots is huge in this city.

All of the Big Eight have offices in the Core, most in their own towers, spires, or pyramids. Work is always coming from them to go after one of the other seven or one of the AAs here in Chicago. It's the scene every runner knows so I won't rehash it too much. Chicago was the Second City, and now it technically is the largest city in the UCAS since most of New York is corporate ground, and no one cares about a Metroplex surrounded by hostile Native Americans, and companies have known that for decades. This is still the big leagues, it's just a lot more doom and gloom than glitz and glam.

Here's a rundown on a few of the major players in town.

Truman Technologies

This is truly Chicago's hometown corp, and they are happy to show it. The Truman Tower is the icon of downtown. The building features an amazing lobby on the eighth floor, just above the seventh floor Skytrack Monorail station. Below the station is building maintenance, including some housing for most of the staff. Due to the height of the building, the street level is nowhere near the bottom. There are at least seventeen subfloors that I know of, and there could be more. The seventeenth subfloor has a Gentech research facility. I don't know what is on any of the other subfloors, but it can't all be building maintenance.

The company made its fortune with ESP Systems but now operates almost completely under the

Truman logo. Truman Simsense Systems makes the hardware, while Truman Distribution Network gets the chips to the people. There are dozens of other Truman-branded operations, and Truman is definitely the most trusted corp in Chicago. They aren't AAA and have plenty of enemies in the city who are, but thanks to the hometown advantage none of the Big Eight have been able to challenge their Chicago supremacy.

Daniel Truman is the head of the company, but that really doesn't matter to us. He'll never be the one hiring you, and if he is you better line up your affairs, cause you'll be dead before the op is over. The big fish in this city don't hire the deniable assets. Truman uses a lot of local fixers and Johnsons instead of trying to keep it all in house. That gives them one more level of plausible deniability, especially when they are playing against competitors who have a seat on the Court.

Fuchi

I only mention Fuchi Americas because they have a big office downtown and they are the biggest rival to Truman Tech. The two probably spend more cash stealing ideas back and forth than developing them in the first place. At the top it's some bigwig pissing contest, but down here on the street it's work. Sometimes the jobs are so fast and furious you are turning around and stealing things you just handed over to Mr. Johnson. Luckily here in Chicago everyone remembers that biz is biz. We are deniable assets to everyone; if that wasn't the case, we'd go from being shadowrunners to company men real fast.

Another issue Fuchi is facing right now is the trouble MCT is bringing in for all the Japanacorps by backing the Yaks. Fuchi has been running some of their own ops to try to help cut those ties lately because they are sick of having their employees beaten and bruised for the shape of their eyes. It's not a one-way street, though, and MCT and the Yaks fire back regularly.

Fast Flesh

Though everything we average folks ingest is soy, soy, and more soy, the well-to-do all over the world still get real meat, and ninety percent of the meat that chews American grass comes through Chicago for processing. Fast Flesh is the reason. But all this meat coming through isn't their real money maker. Fast Flesh has some super secret hormone/steroid/synthetic protein blend that they use on their own livestock that allegedly brings the stock to full (and beyond) growth in only a month.

This growth research could mean a fortune in other industries as well, so Fast Flesh is the frequent target

of Matrix attacks looking for the formula. Break-in attempts are pretty regular in an effort to find samples, but these guys are tough nuts to crack. They have solid security, but their best defense is red herrings.

Brilliant Genesis, Fox, Living Life

The big studios do a lot of jobs against each other, and that pays off on both sides for those in our line of work. These three are the biggest names in simsense in Chicago and though they all distribute through Truman, they fight tooth and nail for the best actors, directors, and writers in town. The problem is they use their runners like they use their stars. They only like what's new, hot, and shiny. Once you've worked a few jobs and they've wrung what they can about your life story out of you for their next flick, you stop getting calls. A lot of the work is baby sitting jobs. It's decent work, as long as you can tolerate stars and starlets who need protection from extractions or from their own dumb-ass selves and who are clear in the opinion that they are a whole lot more important than street scum like you.

They all operate offices in Dream Town, but their work takes them all over the city, even into the Noose for recording. Some of the best jobs are the ones that involve protecting the stars while not letting them know what you're doing. The studios want the real feel for the recordings but don't really want to risk their cash cows to a random ghoulish attack.

UCAS Steel and Manufacturing

No one in this city ever seems to remember the dark side of UCAS Steel. Back in the early thirties the workers at one of the plants near Calumet went on strike. To end the strike the company closed the plant where they worked. It was an efficient solution—if there were no jobs, there could be no labor dispute. The workers had no other employment options, and eighty-seven percent lost their homes. UCAS Steel bought up the foreclosures. Eight months later they announced they were reopening the plant. Workers were offered employment as long as they lived in company housing, accepted the pay schedule as presented, and accepted the housing fees the company charged. UCAS Steel made a killing by increasing their net value through property-value increases. At the same time they increased their profit margin and productivity by making sure the workers understood the alternative. They know how to play hardball and aren't afraid to do so.

Their CEO, Linda Jenkins, who was the plant manager in Calumet who shut the place down, is now looking to further expand the corporate portfolio. She's completely obsessed with Dream Town and simsense productions in general. She's begun cultivating relationships with some of the smaller studios by

offering UCAS Steel plants as settings for sims. (*Hot Steel*, from Forbidden Garden Studios, has been a big hit in the adult sim sector and was filmed at a UCAS Steel plant.) The efforts have not gone unnoticed by Truman (who is rumored to be an ex of Jenkins). It looks like all the passion may not be gone from that relationship—it's just now a passionate hatred. Trouble and work aplenty can be expected from here.

- You're overlooking Shiawase, who own the trash and sewer contracts, and who are always trying to get better deals with the City Council. Shiawase Envirotech is interested in cleaning up Cermak, but no one will meet their price.
- Purple Nurple
- Lone Star is all kinds of hot 'n' bothered for Eagle Security as well.
- SPD
- What do the cops have to do with corporate raiders?
- NOOb
- I could write a book, kid.
- SPD
- That's actually a pretty good idea.
- FastJack
- Me? I don't have patience for it. But maybe I know a guy ...
- SPD

ARCANE CHICAGO

This is not the sprawl to be playing out your latest Sukie Redflower fantasy. Chicago has a rich supernatural history and as has been explained to me, the history of a place often flavors the astral and the mana. A shaman friend once told me that many of the buildings in Chicago appear different on the astral and then explained how weird it was for inanimate objects to vary in the astral. If it weren't for the limited population of astrally sensitive people he had thought Chicago would make a great place for an astral tour to all these "reflections of the past" as he called them. He even said that the old Sears Tower appears on the astral every once in awhile. I'd pay dearly to see that.

He also told me how dreary most of the city's astral space is and blamed it on all the misery and the sense of hopelessness that fills the lives of so many Chicagoans. He said the Noose is the worst, followed by Northside. Downtown and the O'Hare Sub-Sprawl were the least affected, though the Core varies by altitude in his assessment. Southside and Westside varied by neighborhood, and Dream Town was an "astral kegger" according to him.

My associate did the majority of his explorations in the Chicago astral while researching for his



Masters thesis at University of Chicago in Downtown. The University has one of the most highly acclaimed thaumaturgy programs in the world, a program built around studying the larger-than-average number of free spirits around Lake Michigan. The University even has a campus, Elemental Hall, out on the lake. A lot of theories have arisen, but no source or reason has been verifiable for this strange phenomenon. Elemental Hall is a frequent target for extractions in April and May, grabbing students before graduation time.

Due to frequent attempts by corporations and other schools to undermine their programs and their research, the University of Chicago often hires “advisors” to accompany students and professors on research trips. Mages are always the first choice, but recently the school has been using some of the “Arcana of the Body” students and those like them in a pinch. Street sams are at the bottom of the list since they rarely have anything that can harm spirits so they only serve a single plane purpose. Research trips into the Noose are frequent and even the occasional astral request occurs from U of C. That sounds like a lot of fun if you ask me.

The neighborhood just south of the U of C campus is full of mages and shamans who are not quite bright (or rich) enough to make the cut for the university but feel drawn to the culture. “Little Earth,” as they call it locally, is the cult mecca for arcane students who can’t cut it, or couldn’t afford college. Some of the best thesis works begin here where the rich kids steal ideas from their less-fortunate peers. A reflection of life everywhere else.

- Little Earth has a nice little shop called F and F owned by a guy named Wicker. He’s entered the shadows recently but still does great foci work at a decent rate.
- EarthMover

- Word is he works for the mob, so be warned.
- SkyNet

IN CLOSING

Word to the wise for the up and comers, this town has been chewing up and spitting out meat since the 1800s. I can’t emphasize how important it is to work hard in this town. Short cuts fall short. Do your homework before an op and know who you’re working for. Not so you know who to blame or get revenge on, that’s a losing game, but to know who you might not want to work for in the future or who might be good to work for again. Don’t skimp on the legwork and make sure to keep up with your contacts, even between calls to get info. I didn’t survive this long because I’m the fastest, best shot, or toughest SOB in the shadows. I survived because I knew how to work the shadows and how the shadows were going to work me.

I tried to keep out opinions as much as possible while babbling here. Yeah, I know, I forgot that a few times, sorry. But here’s my opinions. Eagle’s as buyable as the CPD they arose from, just don’t tell them that. Lone Star and Knight-Errant have a cinderblock on their shoulder. They’re tough SOB’s and they act like cops when you kill one of their own so watch it. Aztechnology pays the best and screws you the least. Their Johnsons are matter of fact and don’t negotiate much. Try to avoid the personal jobs. Make sure business stays business and you aren’t getting corporate revenge for a spurned lover.

Remember, shoot straight, conserve ammo, and—well, I’m sure you know the rest.

- Fuchi is ... weird. Some days, they’ll go after the Japan bloc, other days, they line up shoulder to shoulder and hold the line. Upper management there is screwy.
- Wendy City



- Mitsuhamma is seething right now. Ares got one over on them a few weeks back, normally no big, business is business, but Toshiro-san had just come into town to tour a facility in his father's name. That kind of embarrassment buys a few belly knives to say the least. The recently promoted Chief Operating Officer, Masaki Korin, is sure to want to restore his corporation's honor. Expect something personal to come down, and soon.
- Harry Kari
- Yamatetsu Imora also has a bug up his nose about Seattle being the North American HQ instead of his own spire. In most cases, I'd figure some dictator wanted his toy and was frustrated he couldn't add it to his empire, but Imora's a different kind of guy. He feels that the corporation would do genuinely better with him leading the way and is willing to sacrifice personal power for the opportunity to enrich his corporate masters. The man has giri like few others.
- Mister Roboto
- Ok, remember back when I was talking about the power plant near the south edge of the Noose and to stay away because of a chemical spill? Well, I lied. Not about the stay away part, but about the chemical spill. You should still stay far, far, away from that little corner of hell. Why, you ask? Because there is something living there, or more accurately some things. I've been out that way after dark and seen things creeping about in the dark that I can't even describe. Definitely not metahuman, but not animals.
- Old-Timer
- Wonder if they are related to the residents of the Chicago Spire? Anyone want to go exploring? Hit me up.
- GreatWhiteHunter
- GWH, what did you find?
- Pac-Man
- Anyone heard from GWH? He took a pal of mine with him to nose around the Spire. Ain't seen Wheels since.
- Pac-Man
- Sorry. Lost touch for awhile. I'm fine. We didn't find anything. GWH said he was headed to Denver for some work.
- Wheels

HONG KONG

Posted by: Marco Solo

I've been in plenty of long, bleary-eyed arguments about which Asian city it's better to run in, Tokyo or Hong Kong. The supporters of Tokyo always point to the same thing—the sheer amount of money pouring through the city. Yeah, not all of the major Japanacorps are based there, but it's still the heart of the country, so they pour plenty of cash into the place, and then you have all the money from the government too. They treat that like an asset, and that's

when I turn it around on them. That's the problem, I say—the sheer amount of cash, the concentration of power. That's the kind of thing that can dwarf people like us, crush us. If we're going to thrive, we need some space where we can operate. We need places that are our own, we need long stretches of utter lawlessness, we need chaos in action. On that, Hong Kong delivers. And it still has plenty of cash floating above it all.

The chaos in the city comes from a dozen different directions, and often it's from the same sources of the money. We may not have the Japanacorps based here, but we do a ton of manufacturing for them, and that keeps the shadows lively as firms of all size scramble for contracts. We also have our own homegrown corp, Wuxing, and the Wu family do plenty to keep the city interesting, from buying up entire blocks on a seeming whim to summoning up hosts of spirits in professionals whose purpose is impenetrable to outsiders. And we have the fruits of war, as refugees from mainland fighting pour into our city, bringing the poverty and strife that forever has been the wake of war.

On top of that you have the city's pressure-cooker weather—it's either the wet season, when things are hot and wet, or the poorly named dry season, which is slightly less hot and slightly less humid. But it doesn't rain as much. This puts everyone outdoors a lot (except in the penthouse district, of course, where people prefer to never let their leather loafers touch the plascrete of the streets), and as any law enforcement officer will tell you, people outdoors plus heat eventually equals violence. I'm not saying that Hong Kong is a tension-filled city where violence could break out at any time or place, because that would make it seem more violent than it is, but I'm also not *not* saying that, because it's still kind of true. It's okay, though—gives the joint atmosphere.

- Street brawling is not something you see a whole lot of in Hong Kong except for in the very poorest neighborhoods. It's simply too big a breach of social etiquette for people to engage in it. Plus the amount of social debt you incur for punching someone in the face in broad daylight is considerable.
- Young and Fat
- The culture just creates more opportunities for quiet shootings in back rooms. I've found that many of my Hong Kong contacts are quite skilled at that sort of thing.
- Yankee

Now, there's lots of cultural stuff going on in Hong Kong that may be different than what you're familiar with, and if you think you're going to get



on top of all that in a short document, then enjoy being shunned while you're there. Instead of trying to become some sort of autodidact on Hong Kong culture, get someone who knows the place, hire them to show you around, and listen to them. One tip—remember that foreigners are not especially welcome, though they're not as despised as they were at times in the past. If you hear someone call you a *gwailo* you shouldn't necessarily be insulted, but you should at least note that you've been marked as a foreigner.

In Hong Kong, you'll be expected to have a network of people who do favors for you, and for whom you do favors. You need to spend effort keeping both sides of the equation balanced. If you let the balance tilt too far toward the former, your social life is going to dry up and your network is going to fall apart. If it tilts too far to the latter, you'll never get any of your own work done. If someone wants to do you a favor, let them so that they can save face for themselves, but then make sure you don't let too much time pass before you do something for them. Unrepaid favors can become a heavy burden.

- This is bullsh*t. I'll treat people there like I treat everyone else—making them do what I want and then telling them I don't owe them nothing.
- Bullhorn

- Yeah, and the three different contracts out on you testify that your strategy works *real well*.
- Fidler-Man

There are a lot of other things to know about the culture—numerology, *feng shui*, action movies with baroque gunfights, and so on—but you'll be better served learning where to go and picking the other things up on the fly. We're supposed to be good at that.

PLACES

Downtown Hong Kong

At night, there's enough neon Downtown to make the city visible from the moon, but that display of power consumption is nothing compared to the ongoing struggle for the mystic energies of the Earth, what the natives call *qi*. Geomancers rake in plenty of money advising people on the latest breakthroughs in their practice, helping them design buildings, internal structures, and even interior design that will best channel power to their sites.

- It gets crazy over there sometimes. Here's something that happened two years ago. Fuchi had won themselves an ally in city government, and that individual was speeding through permits to allow them to build a



skyscraper that would dwarf every building around it by at least forty stories. More importantly, several geomancers claimed their design would soak the *qi* from the surrounding buildings like a sponge. Wuxing wasn't having any of that, so they put pressure on some people they've placed in government to say the spot was far better suited to a park than a new skyscraper. Then they had a large portion of the city administrator's *guanxi* network claim that he was far delinquent in returning favors, and the eventual disgrace forced him to resign. He was promptly replaced by one of Wuxing's people, and plans for the park moved forward. Fuchi wasn't about to take that lying down, so the government found that each geomancer they hired ended up missing or dead. Eventually the two sides came to a compromise—Wuxing's administrators let Fuchi build a skyscraper on a spot that took *qi* from lots of people besides Wuxing, while Wuxing got a park built that acted like a hypodermic needle injecting *qi* into their building. And all it cost was several million nuyen, one city administrator's job, the lives of several geomancers, and who knows how many shadowruns.

- Blister Bob
- I'm just impressed that Wuxing got one over on Fuchi. They're punching above their weight, but it helps to have the hometown advantage.
- MegaMole

The strength of Hong Kong's Downtown, besides the various tourist attractions that you normally find in a major sprawl, is finance. Hildebrandt-Kleinfort-Bernal has a considerable presence there, as does Saeder-Krupp's SwissBank and several smaller corporations. If you know the secrets about how money moves, or you know people who know that, you'll find plenty of ways to use that knowledge here.

The government of Hong Kong is also based in Downtown, headquartered in a building called the Government House. Since the Hong Kong government is not of an overly regulatory bent, this is not a densely packed building, but it still has information on things like planned developments and public utility blueprints, which means some runners might end up breaking into this during the course of their Hong Kong career.

Eastern Hong Kong

Building the perfect corp enclave in a sprawl requires a few definite elements. You want to be close to where the action is, but not immediately adjacent for reasons of traffic and crowding. You want limited access to the area to keep the undesirables out. And you want something pretty to look at.

Eastern Hong Kong has all this. Sheltered by two mountains, it has scenic vistas and comfortable houses, along with the creature comforts your typical corp drone demands. It's not far from Downtown, but the slopes make it not easily walkable—instead, you need to take a tram, and access to that tram is highly controlled.

- The tram's not as controlled as people think. There's a Triad group that placed a member on the tram security team, and he breezes his people through without a problem. This group has more spellslingers than most Triad groups, and they've got something on their mind besides just raking in money. They've been shuttling a lot between Eastern Hong Kong and Kowloon, and they had bound spirits in both places. Beyond that, I couldn't tell you what they're up to.
- Orient Xpress

The Southern Coast

When telling newcomers about this spot, you usually have to repeat the name three or four times to convince them that there is in fact a place called Aberdeen in Hong Kong. Once you have that fact through their heads, you've got a second piece of cognitive dissonance—a fishing village next to a massive sprawl. Then you have to explain that one of the city's biggest corporations, Wuxing, is based here. In a fishing village.

The reason for this is simple, and if you've read this far, you should know what it is—*qi*. Wuxing geomancers are over the moon about the flow of *qi* around Aberdeen, and more than one of them believe that the flow of *qi* is the major reason the corporation did not succumb to the troubles of the last decade. Whatever the future holds for Wuxing, you can be assured that they will keep some form of headquarters in Aberdeen.

- And as the Fuchi story above should illustrate, they're going to do everything they can to keep others out so that the flow of *qi* does not change much.
- Blister Bob
- They won't have a chance. If the Big Eight decide to go all-in on this *qi* business, they'll run roughshod over Wuxing.
- Guy Low

Another notable spot on the Southern Coast is Ocean Park, a former oceanic tourist attraction turned research lab. If you need to know something about the latest developments in aquatic critter research, ask one of these guys. Or follow the lead of many of the corps looking to expand their operations into the oceans and extract one or two of the scientists based there.

- They've been slow, but these jokers are finally getting the message that their security could stand to be a little stronger. Naturally, the first thing they thought about was how to use their research subjects in their security structure. Long story short, be careful dipping your toes in the water anywhere near there, as something could be waiting to bite it off.
- Sting Ray

You should also take a look at the Drunken Monkey, a place that's popular among mercenaries

but shunned by everyone else, who worry (quite rightly) about the dangers of being in the middle of a bar fight involving mercenaries. If you're looking for some extra hired muscle, or news of any combat operations in the area, this is the place to go. Just keep your tone respectful.

Yau Tsim Mong

Dense populations pressed into buildings practically stacked on top of each other. Markets where merchants spend as much time chasing down their wares as they do selling them. Pickpockets dodging and weaving through tightly packed crowds of meta-humanity while trolls clear a path for themselves with a series of broad arm swings. These are the scenes you've seen in trids about Hong Kong, and this is what's happening every day in Yau Tsim Mong.

If you're there, pay particular attention to the arcane trinkets offered in Yau Ma Tei. Just like most open-air markets in the world, ninety-nine percent of the stuff you see there is crap, but in that last one percent you'll find some astonishing things. Leading magic researchers from every big arcane group in the world, including plenty of Mitsuhama R&D guys, fan out through this market every day to find that one magic talisman that glows like a mini sun on the astral plane, acquire it, and then attempt to unlock its secrets while keeping it away from the competition.

- You're usually not going to find a full-on finished piece of magic craftsmanship there, but you can find a good amount of reagents. I have no idea what kind of supply line these guys use, but they have pieces of obsidian and crane feathers with auras like nothing I've ever seen. I'd love to see what these things can do in the hands of the right craftsman.
- Colton Croft
- Don't get your hopes up. This market has all sorts of con men, and there's a good chance that what you were seeing is not the result of some unique properties of the item, but rather someone nearby who has skill in manipulating auras.
- Whizzer

If you're coming to Yau Tsim Mong, chances are you're coming to visit the Golden Mile, one of the great stretches of street markets in the world. You never know what you're going to find there, and that's part of its charm. Look especially for people in suits wearing a lapel pin showing a monkey—that's the accepted code for people with work available.

- No thanks. If you don't know how to find the right team for your job and have to resort to that sort of fishing for runners, I'm not going to work for you.
- Sally

Kowloon City

Yau Tsim Mong is what happens when hundreds of thousands of poverty-stricken and low-income individuals are tightly packed into a small area and learn how to cope with their surroundings. Kowloon is what happens when they don't.

Kowloon is packed with the people no other area of the city wants to accept—the poor, the diseased, war refugees, addicts, and criminals. The government has all but stepped out of the area, leaving a void that organized crime was only too happy to step into. The Triads quickly realized that the most valuable resource in a city area packed with people who have no money is the people themselves. And I don't mean that in any kind of uplifting or inspiring sense; I mean it quite literally. From being sold into slavery to being mutilated and cashed out for parts, metahumans in Kowloon can become commodities in a number of different ways, limited only by the imagination of Triad foot soldiers.

- Rule number one in Kowloon is don't be attractive. Triad eyes are everywhere, and if they see someone walking down the streets who radiates sensuality, they'll kidnap them in almost no time and put them to (profitable) work in a brothel. Stay plain or ugly, and you'll have one less thing to worry about if you're foolish enough to wander through this part of town.
- Fidler-Man
- I knew there was a reason you liked Hong Kong.
- Rutter

As bad as Kowloon is, it can't compare to the horrors of the Kowloon Walled City. Everything about Kowloon is amped up here—the density, the desperation, the despair, and the odor. In many ways it's like a completely built-up version of the Barrens, with warrens of decaying and shoddily built structures replacing the stretches of empty blocks and half-standing warehouses. Many of the buildings in Kowloon seem only to be standing because they are leaning against each other. It sometimes seems that if you found the right support beam, you could take it out and bring down an entire block.

- Or more. There was, at some point in the past, some street planning done in the walled city, but the residents don't care much about it. Impromptu buildings pop up in the middle of some roads, and some streets are so badly crumbled that no one recognizes them for what they are supposed to be, and they are entirely built over. Which means any nav systems you have are going to betray you at some point when a street ends where it's not supposed to. On the plus side, residents occasionally dig new passageways out of the decaying materials of some buildings, meaning you can sneak through areas no one would guess was there. Except of course the natives, which is why a local guide is extremely useful.
- The Dragon Reborn



There is no actual wall around the walled city, but it's close enough. The density of the structures make the area immediately recognizable, and with numerous blocked streets it can be difficult to find your way in.

- The walled city attracts detritus in both human and spirit form. Be cautious—no spirit thinks entirely like a metahuman, but this is even more the case in Kowloon. Making a bargain with them is not easy, since often their terms are not the things we are accustomed to offering.
- Man-of-Many-Names

Kowloon also hosts the Chop-Chop Shop, your source for discount cyberware and unlicensed medical care. If those words don't send a chill down your spine—and if you're a real runner, they shouldn't—then you know how useful they can be.

- If you go, avoid Dr. Lee. He used to be pretty reliable, but lately he seems distracted and his instruments are less than clean. It's never good to see someone coming at you with a twitchy eye, shaky hands, and a blood-stained scalpel.
- BlazerBeam
- Yeah, that's helpful. Half the people there are named Dr. Lee.
- Butch
- Don't forget that where there is poverty there is crime, and here a lot of the crime comes from the Yellow Lotus Triad. They run the Kai Tak Night Market in Kowloon, which sells anything that's even the least bit illicit. Weapons, drugs, magical goodies—it's all there. Along with some raging BTLs.
- The Dragon Reborn

Kwum Tong

Corporate headquarters are nice and pretty and all, and city governments fight tooth and claw with each other to get the big boys and girls to locate in their sprawls, but if you really want to do something for your people instead of just for your image, you try to get the corps to drop manufacturing in your backyard.

- And you just explained why the cities fight over headquarters more often than they do factories.
- Bear Stains

Manufacturing isn't pretty, but it's jobs. Not glamorous jobs and not fun jobs, of course, and if you work here you stand a chance of losing a limb if you're not alert, but still, they're *jobs*. Jobs that can go to the less-educated classes and still give them enough income to maintain some semblance of dignity in their lives.

- What the hell century are you living in? First of all, manufacturing doesn't have many jobs, because most of the processes are done by drones. Second

of all, with the death of labor unions, the conditions suck, the hours are long, and the pay is a pittance. Your definition of "dignity" is nothing like mine.

- Guy Low
- At least there's some work for drone riggers. Won't someone please think of the riggers?
- Shen Lo-Fun

When the Japanacops looked to expand their manufacturing capacity, they came to Hong Kong, and when they came to Hong Kong, the government all but presented a newly paved super-expressway taking them into Kwun Tong. There's a lot of manufacturing here, and thanks to the sprawl's laissez-faire attitude, most of it is filthy. People joke about the fog rolling in from Kwun Tong until it actually does and is so toxic that bodies are strewn throughout the streets when it finally lifts.

- There aren't a whole lot of residents in this district, but the ones who are there form the core of Hong Kong's anti-corporate forces. The on-the-job deaths and the killer air combine to provide plenty of motivation for people to join these groups. The corporate death squads are what make them rethink that decision.
- The Dragon Reborn

Sai Kung

Let me tell you a joke. Once upon a time, governments acted like they cared about the environment. Ha! Get it? Anyway, that was before the megacorporations permanently shoved their collective arms up governments' collective hoop, if that's not too vivid of an image, and the governments started to give the corporations anything they wanted. In Hong Kong, one of the things they wanted was Sai Kung.

This used to be protected land, but when you say "protected lands" to the megas, what they hear is "land that is nowhere close to realizing its profit-making potential." The corps successfully persuaded the government to remove its protections, then descended on it in a furious, buzzing mass, stripping it of any valuable resources and leaving a barren, pock-marked, contaminated landscape when they were finished. Naturally, no one was eager to settle in that kind of area, but it had one remaining positive feature—a rugged coastline full of coves that could hide pirates and the like. So that's who moved in, and that's who's there now, along with fishermen who enjoy having a relatively low level of competition, with the trade off of random cannon shots occasionally whizzing over their heads.

There are two pirates you should know about if you plan on messing around in Sai Kung. One of



SHADOWRUN 2050





them, known as Long I Sao, styles herself as the queen of Hong Kong pirates. Not all of the other pirates haven't bought into this, of course, but enough see her leadership as a good path to riches that she has become considerably dangerous. She received a boost recently when one of the larger pirate bands in the area, the Joho-Lowah, offered their support to her (though they stopped short of pledging their full fealty). If you are operating in her territory without her permission, there's a good chance she'll come after you hard.

- Right. She's got a take-no-prisoners attitude and some mages on staff. With the optics they've got at their disposal, they can put holes in a ship's hull from five kilometers away. Long I Sao much prefers taking on a hobbled opponent to a full-pitch battle—but don't we all? Anyway, don't get on a boat in those waters without either a mage for protection or a really good bailing system.
- Guy Low
- Her name means "Bride of the Dragon." Is there something we need to know here?
- Sally
- Yes, and it's this: Chinese people consider dragons to be good luck. And that's as far as her name goes.
- Shen Lo-Fun

The other pirate to know about is Fei Yu, one of a handful who have been actively resisting Long I Sao for several years. Fei Yu stays alive and reasonably powerful by keeping links to money from outside the district, and he does this by making friends with people such as shadowrunners. He's a good source of information about the area as well as tips about steering clear of the pirate queen.

- He's got some good divers in his crew. If you've got some sensitive cargo, get on a boat cruising by Sai Kung's coast, dump the stuff over the side, and then pay Fei Yu's people to retrieve it for you. Just make sure the water's not too shallow—you don't want just anyone retrieving it.
- The Dragon Reborn

Tolo Harbor Complex

If you're like me, when there's a chance to get somewhere by boat, you take it. It's less visible than air travel, less dependent on using specific roads that travel designated paths than ground travel. Plus, most police forces are much stronger on the ground than they are on the water. But before you think about conducting shenanigans near Hong Kong on a boat, you need to take the Marine Authority into consideration, and if you want to learn about them, then you need to visit Tolo.

Officially, Hong Kong does not have its own military, but you'd be hard pressed to keep believing this once you see Tolo. The complex looks exactly like a naval complex should—boats of all sizes coming in and out, regular maintenance being conducted by drones with a smattering of quick-moving metahuman technicians, and uniforms everywhere. If you watch the boats at Tolo long enough, you'll get some idea of what kind of craft you might encounter on the waters, which can help you be prepared. The Marine Authority knows this, of course, so don't let them catch you watching.

- Don't forget about what's going on under the water, as the Marine Authority has a decent submarine force. They love to park these under commonly used smuggling lanes and then blow any unauthorized craft out of the water, no questions asked.
- Pasha

Northern Reaches

If it wasn't for the Northern Reaches, Hong Kong might well smash into Shenzen in the Cantonese Confederation. And both sprawls would be rather hungry. The farmlands of the Northern Reaches give Hong Kong room a little room to breath while also providing fresh food to those that can afford such things. Since this is mostly farmlands, it's not exactly a hotbed of running activity, but it still has its uses. For one, farms are always great for laying low. Find a farmer, give him a cut of your proceeds, and you might be able to hide out in a barn until the heat dies down.

Second, while rural lands have a smaller population density than urban areas, they still have metahumans on them, and where there are people, there is also weirdness. For one, check out Chow Brothers Amalgamated Livestock. They spent a long time genetically engineering cows to be beefier or produce more milk, when they were suddenly struck with the realization that there were more profitable ways to use their gifts. They erected a three-meter-tall wall around their facility, put guard posts every three hundred meters or so, and then brought in regional critters for experimentation and alteration. Along with their genetic manipulation fun, they have become one of the area's leaders in extracting reagents from critters.

- Their treatment of Awakened critters has drawn the attention of Lung, and he's not thrilled about it. Expect him to take action, though I have no idea what form it will take.
- The Dragon Reborn

Kwai Tsing

Every major sprawl needs a receiving point for the bulk of goods coming in, and in Hong Kong that's Kwai Tsing. It's got everything you expect a major port to have—row after row of warehouses, security giving everyone the evil eye, mages posted near sensitive goods, and smugglers continually building pathways no one else knows about. The smugglers have gotten a little too successful lately, and the Marine Authority has authorized a joint operation with Hong Kong's Special Police Forces to infiltrate the ranks of smuggler rings and smash them from the inside. If you like a little espionage in your runs, this would be a place to look—the authorities are recruiting infiltrating agents, the smuggling rings are looking to turn people into double agents, and up-and-coming smuggling groups are hoping the authorities and larger rings distract each other enough that they can make a nice haul for themselves.

- Who do you think is manipulating this whole crackdown? There's a new smuggler in town, who everyone calls the Void because no one really knows anything about him, who's been feeding the authorities information about how to crack down on the smugglers, while also providing counter-espionage advice to the smugglers. He's not doing it directly, of course—for a newcomer, he seems to have an awful lot of people willing to carry his water.
- Tin Helmet
- You seem to know an awful lot about a guy no one knows anything about.
- Findler-Man
- You guys are forgetting how much pull the Red Dragon Association has in this port. They could be manipulating this whole struggle to eliminate some competition. This Void person could easily be a Red Dragon plant.
- OKFella

Lantau Island

Lantau Island is the playground of Hong Kong's well-to-do. It used to be parkland for all, but as poverty spread throughout the sprawl, the wealthier classes decided they needed this land for themselves. So now it's private housing enclaves, private clubs, private resorts, private parks—if it sounds luxurious and has the word "private" in front of it, it's there. The one nod to public access, sort of, is the massive Hong Kong Disneyland, though the residents of the island have done their best to drive up admission prices to make sure the lower classes don't even think about coming round.

- Theme parks offer a lot of places for the inventive to hide, and while they have some security, they generally aren't armed. Word is there is a band of former runners hiding out in the park, living off the scraps the tourists dump, plotting for their return to glory—or at least employment. Rumor is

the best way to contact them is scrawling a coded note on one of the boats in the Tunnel of Love. Seriously.

- Guy Low

I mentioned that geomancy was important in Hong Kong, and if you're going to rely on geomancers so much, you need a place to train them. The best such place in the sprawl is Po Lin monastery. The services of the geomancers and astrologists in the monastery are highly sought after, to the point where the occupants are often targeted for extraction. But don't even consider taking on such a job unless you've got some spellslinging heft, because otherwise the monks will mop the floor with you.

GOVERNMENT

Everything else here will go more simply once we make this clear: Corporations are the government. The government is the arm of the corporation. So the structures we're talking about are there to carry out corporate policy, not undertake any of the quaint notions of government responsibility from years past. You know, things like protecting human rights. Anyway, the structure and activities of Hong Kong government generally make sense when you see them in that light.

The heart of Hong Kong's government is the Board of Governors, which is a group of corporate people appointed by the corporations. There is a lot of jockeying for position among the corps to tilt the board in favor of one mega or another, though the resolution of their disputes has little effect on the rest of the city. No matter what, the board is going to be staffed by corporate lawyers and the like, and they are going to make sure that Hong Kong runs in ways amenable to their interests.

- SwissBank has been doing well with their investments in the Far East lately, and that has given them, and by extension S-K, more power in the Board of Governors. Their representative, Carlton Grieg, has been named board chair, which gives him the power to set the board's agenda. In the immediate future: Exploring ways of loosening Hong Kong's regulations on finances, investments, and trading, which came as a shock, since most people didn't know they had any.
- The Dragon Reborn

While the government of Hong Kong is minimal, there still is a considerable amount of work that needs to be done, and the corporate personnel on the Board of Governors aren't really interested in putting in the time to do that work. So instead, they created the Executive Council, where they put eight lucky Hong Kong citizens. The appointees are chosen



after an extensive, detailed search that carefully examines their ability to do what the corps want in any circumstance.

The current Executive Council chair is Evangeline Shaw, whose British ancestors moved to Hong Kong five generations ago. She believes firmly in the idea of Hong Kong as a free enterprise zone, which is what the corporations love about her. They don't need to work to keep her on message—she already fully supports their views before they give her their talking points. She is an especially strong supporter of Hong Kong's hometown corporation, Wuxing, and has been looking for ways to help them rebound after the strife of the '40s.

- Good luck on that. Wuxing's seeming recovery is an illusion. Their profit margins are thin, and their employee loyalty is not what it needs to be. The big boys are going to let them take a few more steps forward, maybe make an acquisition or two, then gobble them up. It would take a tremendous act of fate to save the company, and that's beyond the powers of the Executive Council.
- Shen Lo-Fun

CRIME

The major criminal force in Hong Kong is the Triads. They have deep roots in Hong Kong culture, and that appeal to tradition helps attract many new recruits. They also do things with blades that will give you nightmares for decades if you get in the wrong side of things.

The first thing to understand about the Triads is that their organization is a mess, as you'd expect from any organization that had 1) Been in existence for hundreds of years, and 2) Was deeply steeped in numerology and superstition. If you're going for a degree in criminology or sociology or something, maybe then you could study and fully understand Triad structure. Until then, it's best to understand a few basics:

- There are several Triad organizations, and they tend to not have a lot to do with each other. That means there is no one Triad leader in the world.
- Which is exactly what the seven members of the Ring of the Burning Phoenix want you to believe.
- Tin Helmet
- Different ranks in the Triads tend to have both names and numbers. The street thugs, the ones you'll be most likely to mix it up with on the streets, are called Sze Kau, or 49s. Above the Sze Kau is the Hung Kwan, the 426 (or 12, since sometimes they like to add the digits of

a number together to get a new number. Don't ask). If you meet someone from a Triad with a different name and number, that means you're getting noticed by people farther up the ranks, which nine times out of ten is bad news for you.

- The two largest Triads in Hong Kong are the Yellow Lotus Triad and the Red Dragon Association. They have a shaky peace between them at the moment, and it would be best for everyone if that stayed in place, because war between the two would shake the whole city. The Red Dragons' primary base is in Kwai Tsing, while the Yellow Lotus' stronghold is in Kowloon.
- Triads have more Awakened members than other criminal syndicates, but don't make the mistake of thinking they are all Awakened. They're not. Not by a long shot.
- While individual Triads have their particular strengths (the Smoke Circle Society does drugs, the Broze Jian specializes in protection), you can find one Triad or another in every sort of criminal activity in the sprawl. In other words, if you are going to be involved in Hong Kong's criminal element, sooner or later you're going to be involved with a Triad. Probably sooner.

Unlike Seattle, where you have constant turf wars between the Yakuza and the Mafia, the supremacy of the Triads when it comes to organized crime is undisputed. Since there is no one central Triad leader, though, various Triads will often battle each other instead of other syndicates. Individuals have been known to set two Triads against each other mainly to see what happens, which usually makes life interesting for them right before they die.

- You won't die if you're subtle about it. Everyone in the underworld knows how the Red Dragon Association and the Yellow Lotus feel about each other, and many think it would be good for them if these two groups took each other down (others think a gang war between the two would be so destructive it would hurt everyone else in the sprawl by catching them in a large blast wave, but pragmatic opinions like that often get overlooked in gangland discussions). This means there is a lot of effort being put into setting these two gangs against each other. Much of it is unsophisticated—killing a Yellow Lotus 49 and then putting a Red Dragon symbol on his body isn't going to stir anyone up at this point—but other efforts are longer-term and could eventually prove effective. In one week last month, the Red Dragon lost more than two dozen high-quality prostitutes (each of them had thousands of nuyen in cosmetic work) from various brothels. None of them has been seen in Hong Kong again, but reports have been trickling in about a few showing up in brothels in Macao, which is a Yellow Lotus stronghold. The particular brothels are not Yellow Lotus affiliated, but there are a lot of suspicions about how they got there.
- The Dragon Reborn

While the Triads have kept other gangs out of their city, they can't entirely keep the street gangs down. The Chungking Chargers, a go-gang, have been a particular annoyance lately, since they're generally faster than any Triad looking to track them down. The Triads have promised a spot on the Hong Kong Cavaliers combat biking team to anyone who can help them do some damage to this gang.

Another group the Triads have trouble keeping up with is pirates. They tend to fare better on the ground than they do in the water (their troubles with the Chargers excepted), which means pirates are largely able to carry out their practices without their interference, though they sometimes run into problems fencing the goods they have captured. The feared Joho-Lowah pirate crew in Sai Kung had a decent understanding with the Triads until recently. Their pledge of support to the self-appointed pirate queen Long I Sao has rankled the Triads, as many groups feel she is attempting to build an organization that could rival even the larger Triads. Look for the Joho-Lowah to have some extra difficulty in their land-based activities.

RUNNING IN HONG KONG

If you're only going to come to Hong Kong once, great. Have fun, get a local guide to help you find your way through the streets and culture, and don't leave behind a huge mess. If you're going to be here long-term, though, you've got a chance to do more than earn a few nuyen. You can put your name into the ranks of the top runners in the world and make yourself into one of those globe-trotting trouble-shooters we all dream about who actually eats real food once or twice a week.

If you're going to pull that off, though, you're going to have to take care of your network. If you keep taking jobs from your fixer but never give back useful information, your reputation and your network are going to suffer. In Hong Kong's runner circles, that can be almost as bad as taking a bullet. And yeah, we know how cool you look with your trench coat billowing out behind you while you dodge a hail of bullets, but the calmer you can keep things, the better off you'll be. People will be angry if you hurt them in the course of your runs, but their anger will be significantly multiplied if they look bad or foolish because of you. Don't go out of your way to have people build grudges against you.

- Right. Sneak some data out from an office complex at night, then they have to do some covering up, but if they're good at it, they can mostly carry on like nothing happened. Go in guns blazing, blasting out a bunch of windows and killing a few security guards in the process, then you just announced the failure of organizational security to the world. A bunch of people will be fired, some might off themselves, and their replacements' first order of business will be to show that they are stronger, their security is better, and they mete out appropriate punishment to wrong doers. That means they're coming after you, and they're coming strong.
- Guy Low

Remember your basic etiquette when you're there. You don't have to believe in numerology. You don't have to put any stock in *feng shui*. But if you can't show respect for the people who do believe these things, you're going to have trouble getting steady work. Sometimes the amount of respect you have to show is extreme—like, when you're invited to sit down, don't adjust the position of the chair you sit in. That chair may be there for a *reason*, buster.

- It's not all about not doing harm. Study principles of feng shui and qi and adapt them into your work. Need to go in hard for an extraction? Study various points of entrance and see which ones do or do not interfere with qi lines. Your employers will notice and appreciate your diligence.
- Shen Lo-Fun

Hong Kong natives are aware that it's sometimes difficult for outsiders to integrate into their culture, and they're also aware that there's money to be made smoothing this process. There's a place in Yau Tsim Mong called the Lucky Coin, and a woman named Trina Chow often occupies booth number eighteen (a lucky number in Hong Kong; it helps that its digits add up to nine, which is another lucky number). The booth is appropriately located in one of the darker corners of the place, which features a lot of nooks, crannies, and tight hallways rather than the traditional open dining space. Trina was a good runner in her time, and according to some accounts remains a skilled art thief. Her main work, though, is taking money from *gwailos* in return for helping them navigate the city. For a few thousand nuyen, she'll even assign you a kind of mentor to shadow you and help you navigate the city. Just remember—the more you pay, the better the mentor.

- Also remember that Trina can be paid in tips about art coming to the city. Or with a Rembrandt sketch or something that you lifted yourself and are having trouble fencing.
- Young and Fat

HIRING BOARD

/LOGON:***** <encrypted>/OpenChat:OddJobs/
/Access Granted/

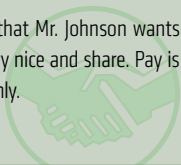
- Attention all users: Shadowland is not and will not be held responsible for any misuse, misrepresentation, endangerment, or otherwise stupid behavior undertaken on the basis of any information obtained here. In the immortal words of former USA President Ronald Regan "Trust, but verify." In other words, be careful of what you post, use, or act on in here. And follow security protocols—this is limited access here, and we need to keep it that way if this is going to work. You drekheads have been forewarned.
- Sysop
- Hoi, and welcome to the Shadowland "Odd Jobs" board, a place for wannabes up-and-comers to talk about the biz and get some (hopefully good) advice from some of our cadre of psychopaths veteran runners; some of whom have been nice enough to write some primers about the types of jobs you may run into, with a few actual job offers thrown in as well. So, if anyone has anything interesting to share, feel free to post it in the appropriate sections.
- Captain Chaos
- To save space, the last 400 pages in replies have been archived. [GO HERE](#) to review.
- Sysop

HELP WANTED

>>>**Possession is Nine-Tenths of the Law**

>>>Need some help tracking down an item that Mr. Johnson wants back. I know who has it, but they refuse to play nice and share. Pay is exceptional but time is limited. Professionals only.

LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 445 (79-4122-567)



- Speaking of finding something, I need some paydata on the Tacoma docks. Heard something hot went down a few days ago, and the entire place is still locked down tight. Anyone got anything worth anything?
- WarPig
- According to Lone Star reports, a group of four individuals penetrated the freighter *Rachel Lynn* to raid a specific container. They were eventually discovered by the ship's crew, and a massive firefight ensued with a quarter of the crew and six Port Authority officers killed along with several response drones destroyed as the group made their egress. Damage to the ship was extensive. Reports indicate at least two more crews were involved—one who penetrated the ship's systems via the Matrix, and another in an unidentified vehicle providing escape and destroying response drones. No official mention of what was in the container targeted by the raid. Suspects still at large.
- SPD

ASSET ACQUISITION,
DENIAL, OR RECOVERY

Posted by: **The Neon Samurai**

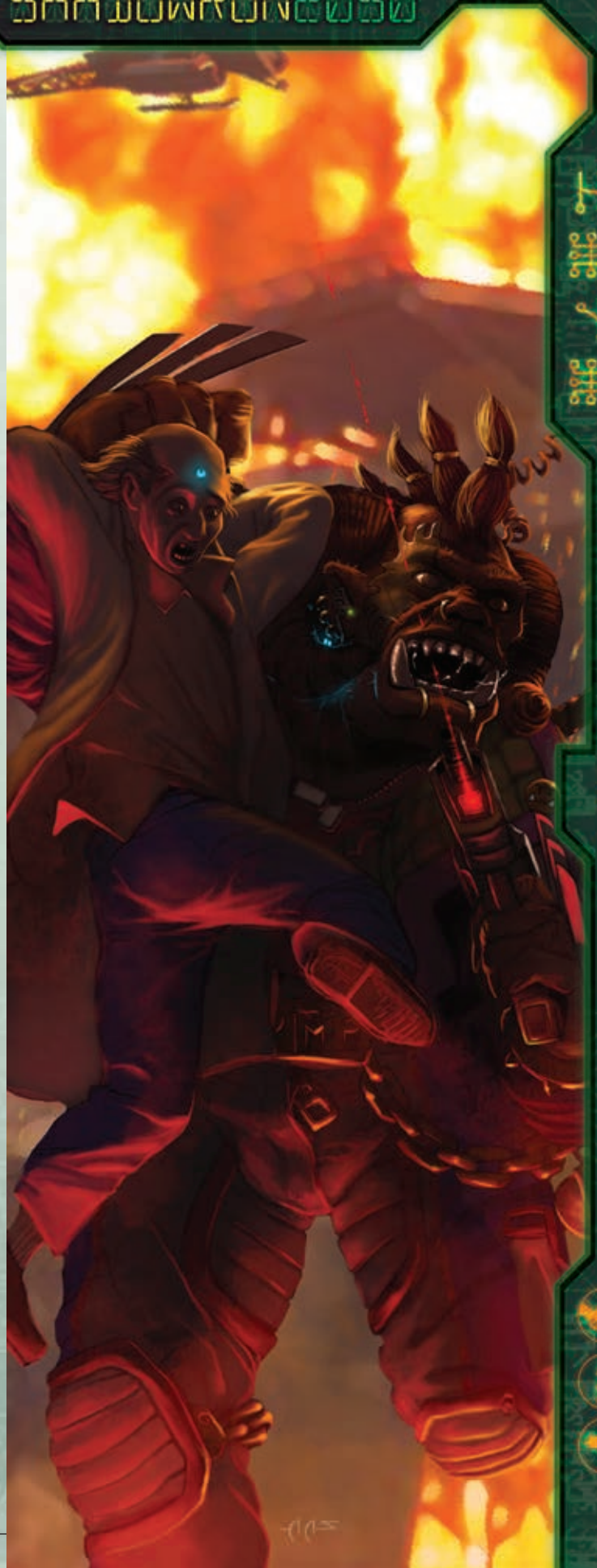
This is really just a fancy way of saying theft, or something related to it. The general idea is to take something from someone so they can't use it or getting it back so they can. Sometimes, someone doesn't even want the thing; they mainly want to make sure someone else doesn't have it. It can be anything, from the source code for a new novahot IC program, a prototype weapon, a bounty on someone's worthless hoop, or a competitor's recipe for soy-burger patties. Extractions, both willing and non-willing also fit in this category. No matter what the thing is, someone is willing to pay either to get it, to get it back (the latter usually with some kind of message not to do such a thing ever again), or just to trash it. How much you're going to get paid generally depends on what the item is and how much it's worth to all parties involved. The risk involved in getting it also varies, as your target can be located or stored anywhere, and the security set up to guard it can range from nothing more than a locked box to bleeding-edge security tech supplemented by the best hoop-kickers cred can buy. Best bet on this kind of run, or any kind of run for that matter, is to do your legwork, scope out the target, and work out a plan.

#NCSJUN#00000000

- I heard about that job—it turned into a royal cluster-frag. Wonder what happened?
- Hatchetman
- I don't know all of it, but I know at some point a troll member of the crew, guy named Marv, used a monocircular-saw like an axe on some Port Authority cops.
- The Neon Samurai
- Ouch, that'll leave a mark. But why did it come to that is the 64,000\$ question.
- Fidler-Man
- It was supposed to be a simple snatch-and-grab that Mr. Johnson was paying a ton for. We had it all scanned out. I used invisibility to get us on board, and we only had to subdue two sailors on our way in. Once we found the right container, Marv used his saw to cut through the

locks while I cast silence on him. Wildcard, our leader, and a Gillette named Plague who's a recent addition kept watch on us while ICeMan and Hotwire covered us outside. Worked great until Plague broke from the plan. If he had done what he was told, stayed in position, and let Wildcard take the shot, this never would have happened. But no, Plague just HAD to show off his new spurs and geek the sentry himself. The sentry managed to crank off a few shots, which sounded the alarm. We had to fight our way through the ship, and twice Wildcard saved Plague's hoop when he rushed ahead and exposed himself to gunfire. Both 'Card and Marv eventually ran out of ammo, and I knocked myself unconscious deflecting grenades with a barrier spell. When I woke up in Hotwire's van, we were on our way out. Wildcard had saved Plague again, but he took a shot to the neck for his trouble. He bled out before I woke up. Hotwire and his van were shot up after taking out several Port Authority drones; still haven't heard back from ICe, but his doss was trashed when we got there. Marv and I are leaving; it's too hot to stay around.

- Gabby the Great
- Sorry to hear that, Gab. Wildcard was one of the best. Just goes to show, all it takes is one fragger not on the program to drek up the works. If you don't mind me asking, what happened to Plague?
- Hatchetman
- Marv ripped his head off and tossed it into the sound. The rest was left for the ghouls.
- Gabby the Great
- Good riddance. Plague was a drekhead anyway. His kind always gets the good kind killed.
- Findler-Man
- Well I hope Gabby, Hotwire, and Marv are listening up. Had a meeting a couple days ago with a Mr. Johnson who screamed "Yak," and he wanted a particular item returned. After doing some digging, I think it was what they grabbed from the *Rachel Lynn*. Johnson wants it back bad, with a capital BAD. The payoff is enough to keep me flush for six months. If you chums feel like helping me out, I'll cut you in.
- Black Flagg
- Nice drekking try, Flaggie! I know it was your boys who visited my shop yesterday. Major bad manners to bring SMGs but no cake or cookies, or even some 'Za. S'okay though, I have several of my own, mostly mounted on the drones next to the LMGs and GLs. Hoped your chummers liked the lead-burgers with the side of grenades I served. Maybe next time you'll think twice before messing with a combat rigger in his doss, *omae*.
- Hotwire
- *sigh* I wanted to make this easy and spread the cred around. That's okay, we can do this the hard way. Anyone else who's interested, see my ad above. I pay very well.
- Black Flagg





- That's yours? Pass, I'll never take any Yak's blood money again. Besides, I just don't like you very much, Flagg. I know how you operate. Being on the other side of a run is one thing, that's biz. But the way you do things, nope. I know what you did to that girl in Everett; you didn't have to cut her up like that.
- Hatchetman
- Never figured you'd let personal feelings get in the way of easy cred, Hatchet. I thought you were better than that.
- Black Flagg
- Well, good luck, Flagg. Oh, and if you find Marv (or if he finds you), better take him down quickly and don't get within reach. Remember Plague.
- The Neon Samurai
- Not to interrupt, but my team needs a few more people to round things out for an upcoming extraction job. I'm looking specifically for riggers with experience in counter-surveillance and/or ECM/ECCM techniques, and another decker to back up my primary. This job is big—expect at least five to six figures apiece. Fire me off a message if you're interested.
- Hangfire

HELP WANTED

>>>*Speed and sharpness required*

>>>Razorboy needed. Team specializes in high-profile extractions. First run will be pulling a Mitsuhamma research assistant out of a Puyallup facility. Experience with heavy weapons, explosives, and close combat a must. Interested trolls must have their own transportation.
LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 425 (46-6524-700)



- There's no MCT facility in Puyallup.
- SeaGrinder
- Seriously? Why do you post? Puyallup has more undocumented corporate research facilities than anywhere except maybe Redmond. None of these places sport glowing neon signs, but they're there. Ask some orks about the OU in Puyallup and they'll tell you all sorts of stories about places best left undisturbed.
- Fulcrum

DATA SNATCHING

Posted by: Dodger

The thing about data is that it is not something one can pick up and just take in the traditional sense. Data in itself is intangible, an idea that has not been given form. Only when one puts it to some kind of medium, like the writer of old with pen and paper, can it truly be shared and used by all, for good or ill. This is also when it becomes vulnerable, because once it has form, then it can be taken. In today's electronic wonderland known as the Matrix, ideas are given shape like never before. One merely has to but look at the various landscapes the world presents to see this. The Sixth World is a place where many seek to hide the ideas that have been given form, and where some are called upon to find such ideas hidden in the Matrix and either liberate them or to make sure they never see the light of day. As such, the data snatch or data steal, whichever term you prefer, is often the purview of deckers, explorers in the virtual dark seeking hidden secrets held in the depths of the Matrix. We sometimes see ourselves as virtual ronin, fighting our battles in the Matrix's scarred landscape, but sometimes we need assistance, since the fruit we are looking for occasionally rests far from the tree. The truly intelligent, those who wish to keep their secrets hidden, keep them away from the Matrix altogether. When this happens, it falls to our allies to make the door and allow us access to that which is hidden.

- When the what keep where???
- 6-Teen Bit
- That's Dodger-speak for a standalone system. Despite what anyone wants to believe, no level of encryption or IC keeps people out forever. Just like in the meat-world, eventually someone is going to figure out how to get past the security. A standalone system is the best way to keep data secure because it has no connection to the Matrix and no chance of remote access. The drawback is that while it's secure from the Matrix, there is usually one way to access this system, directly and on location. And ultimately, the true security of the system depends on the level of physical security on site. Nothing a good B-and-E specialist(s) can't handle.
- FastJack
- Don't make it sound so easy. I lost a team a few years ago on an MCT run. They "just" had to get into a supposedly middle-level security zone to attach a transmitter that would get me inside one of their standalone systems. All of our research backed up what Mr. Johnson said about site security. What we didn't know was that a few days before the run, on surprise orders from a high-ranking divisional manager, they had secretly installed a new security suite complete with hidden rail-drones packing

LMGs. They went in, but I lost contact seven minutes into the run. I didn't learn the whole story until a few months later from a contact of a contact, who said that they were gunned down with no mercy. Lesson learned the hard way; never stop your legwork until right before the run.

- Crowbar

HELP WANTED

>>>Need to make them pay

>>>Know of a Mr. Johnson who is looking for individuals to retrieve proprietary information from what he calls his "life's work." Details are few, but leads indicate Fuchi agents perpetrated the theft, and Mr. Johnson is looking for someone to retrieve said data, but to trash the system it was stored in. Only professionals with proper skills need apply. Contact **LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 452 (71-9843-950)** for details and meeting arrangements.

>>>Hell hath no fury

>>>Ms. Johnson is looking to determine if Mr. Johnson is in fact hiding/denying certain financial secrets/assets from her. In need of an information-retrieval specialist to look into the matter. Mr. Johnson is a mid-level employee with Renraku-North America. Contact **LTG# NA/UCAS/DET 551 (73-5790-112)** if interested.

- I just met with Ms. Johnson and turned it down. The money was good, but when I started to look into Mr. Johnson, I found out who he was: Dr. Jonas Lane, head of Special Matrix Projects. Mid-level my white hoop—this guy was rumored to use captured runners. Major bad news. Sorry, not worth the risk.
- Eye-Spy
- Awww afraid of da widdle corp man? That's just an urban legend to scare the newbs. Think I'll give Ms. Johnson a call, seems she needs a real decker to handle things.
- IC-Breaker
- Have fun with that. Renraku IC is some of the blackest out there. You better have your deck slotted right if you want to last more than ten seconds in their system. A smart decker knows when the job is too much and isn't worth the risk. Rep and nuyen are worth nothing if you're geeked.
- FastJack
- Even worse is some kind of new psychotropic IC they're rumored to be working on. I've heard that it will eventually brain-fry you, but only when a kill code is given. Until then, you become a puppet and don't even know it. Scary drek.
- Findler-Man

HELP WANTED

>>>Teams looking for deckers

>>>Hey chummers, my name's Dale but you can call me SystemSleazer or Double S. I'm drek-hot, running a custom deck based off classified Fuchi specs, and I'm for hire. Here's a free sample of something I put together. Feel free to use it. When you've made your easy payday, give me a chirp at **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 873 (76-0932-789)**

Target: Ares Arms digital backup facility

Location: Chicago, 1425 Wayside Dr. (Westside), Building 3

Gate code: 49653, one guard (KE) in booth.

Grounds: Forested southern area used as K-9 training facility, 1 trainer (KE), 7 German shepherds, 2 basset hounds, 4 Doberman Pinschers.

Building 1: Vehicle storage (repairable); Building 2: Vehicle parts;

Building 3: Data storage. Junk lot on northern grounds contains KE vehicles waiting for repair or scrap. Building 4: Repaired vehicles, repair facility, offices for Ares Salvage.

Additional security and personnel: Weekdays 7 a.m.-7 p.m., 4 techs, 1 patrol guard (KE), office manager. Other times, no techs, 2 patrol guards, 1 data storage facility guard (KE)

Building 3 maglock code: 00500213

- Really. Do we look that stupid? Fragging Ares sellout. Remember, never trust anyone who describes themselves as "drek-hot." That's something you gotta earn.
- Magnum
- Sometimes, when something looks like a trap, it's fun to go, spring the trap, then take down whoever's closing in on you and take their stuff. But then, I have a weird sense of fun.
- Marv

HELP WANTED

>>>I leave all I have to you

>>>Goodbye cruel world and frag whoever offed me. And while I'm at it, frag all you bastards that pissed me off along the way. Runners get ready—it's independent operation bonanza time. Some of this is old, some is newer, all of it is free, but I ask a favor. Leave a little message, something that says, "Jester was here!" at every job. Remind all these bastards who they've been fragging with all these years. [Link ...](#)

- Oh my gods! Seriously? This stuff is great. I like the material they have on Alderman Presbitero. Should make for interesting activity before the upcoming election.
- Guido
- Anyone else think that little piece on the sightings in the Cal-Sag seems possibly draconic in nature?
- Magophobe



- I hate to say it, but I think the stuff on Truman's kid seems overly personal. But I'm a corp kid who wanted out from my parents shadow, too. Boy, was that fragging stupid of me.
- TowerSpotter
- He had me until the crap about the Fast Flesh super-soldier serum. That rumor is so overdone. Makes me doubt all the rest of his material. Though I'd love to believe the bit on vampires in Little Earth and that old monastery in Southside.
- Darkside

HELP WANTED

>>>**Not just a decker—the decker you need**
 >>>I'm Tech420. I crack systems. I'm good. Check out this work. Link ...
 Hire me at **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 708 (59-8610-321)**



- Social skills equivalent to my four-year-old niece, but he's actually a damn good decker. The data makes me want to check out Synergy Spa out by O'Hare. I've seen some similar strangeness from that place.
- Bane
- This is actually a couple of deckers hiding behind a single name, but yeah, they definitely have skills. I'm most interested in trying to find out what that research team discovered in Union Station. Might have to get there for a look myself.
- Torch

HELP WANTED

>>>**Data run requires muscle**
 >>>Looking for help accessing Archon Designs. Corporate sponsored; I'm just a middleman short on gun-bunnies. Contact **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 773 (80-0811-198)**



- Archon Designs? Sounds like a gothic interior decorator.
- Shooter
- Cyber design firm with some top-notch talent. Word is they have a few major developments waiting to clear CC patents. I guess one of the members of the Court wants the designs before they get all encumbered.
- Trench
- Guess it's time to call Archon and get some security work. Whoever takes this joker up on his offer, see you soon!
- Paladin

LEGBREAKING

Posted by: Hatchetman

Legbreaking is a catchall term I like to use to describe any action where one uses a combination of intimidation and applied force to achieve a desired outcome. What, don't understand that? Let me dumb it down a bit for those who are brain-fried out there. You know that mook who goes after John Q. Wageslave because he lost a bet on the last urban brawl game and didn't have enough to cover the spread? Or when a rice-eater tells the local Stuffer Shack owner that this is a "very dangerous neighborhood" and bad things could happen, yadda yadda. You get the idea. Basically, legbreaking is the typical work done by thugs, gangsters, and their like. But sometimes, the thugs can't do their own dirty work and need to hire outside help to get things done. Peace is a relative yet sensitive condition for criminal organizations. While they will take every opportunity to frag with their rivals, they can't blatantly do it without risking all-out gang war, which is bad for business. The money for these jobs can be good, especially if you're starting out in the biz and need to make a rep. But be warned—once you start working for any of the crime syndicates, even one or two jobs, they tend to start thinking of you as theirs and will treat you as such. You show them any disloyalty, and they come for you. That goes double for their enemies, who will see you as an easy target and object lesson to anyone who runs against them in the future.

HELP WANTED

>>>**This is not a charity**
 >>>Have a problem with specific tenants in Tacoma apartment not wanting to pay their back rent. Need individuals with "persuasive skills" to convince them to pay what is rightfully owed or to aid in removal of said deadbeat squatters. Preferred applicants should have their own gear, but will provide under right circumstances. Contact Sonny at **LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 445 (81-2234-990)** to set up possible meeting.



- Sonny D'Marco is an up-and-coming thug working for the Finnegan family who's been padding his rep of late. The Seattle Dons like him because he uses his various contacts (read shadowrunners) to get things done without it leading back to the family. He's smart, he's slick, and ruthless like your typical family man. He pays very well for success and loyalty, but rumor has it he feeds failures to the pack of pet ghouls he keeps in his basement.
- SPD

- That's nothing. I know of a Triad shaman (is there a technical term for them? If there is I don't know it) that likes to play with nagas. He used to run the shadows in Hong Kong, but now he works out of LA. Works as an interrogator now, I hear. If you give him what he wants, he only takes a body part. If you don't and if you slot him off, guess what: You're naga-chow.
- Will English
- The various crime syndicates are making a push into areas where Lone Star refuses to go, namely the Barrens. Several local groups have tried to band together to defend what little they have, but the various families have access to heavy firepower. Recently, several groups of shamans, mostly those who follow Dog (along with a few others), have lent a hand. It's working so far, but I don't know how long this will last.
- Rikki Ratboy
- I've said it before, and I'll say it again. I will never, *ever* work for an organized crime family, clan, syndicate, or whatever cute name they may give them. I had enough of that when I was starting out. In the end, you sell your soul more than what you would for your average Johnson. And I can't stand the hypocrisy. They all talk about honor, but are nothing more than a bunch of murderous thugs. Now, some of my best friends are also murderous thugs, but at least they're honest about it!
- Hatchetman
- Whoa, don't go getting all respectable on me, Hatchet! I can't have an introspective, self-righteous, do-gooder as a chum, think of what it will do to my rep, ya big drekker!
- The Neon Samurai

HELP WANTED

>>>Starting a Fight

>>>Humanis is looking to crash a Mothers of Metahumans meeting in downtown. I know where their staging location is. Anyone up for some pre-emptive protesting of our own to show these pukes that their days are numbered? Contact **LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 551 (73-5790-112)** if you want to bash some heads!

- Frag yeah, I'm in! I haven't been up to no good for far too long. I think it's time to vent my frustrations on fraggers who genuinely deserve to have their hoops kicked in!
- RADical
- Me too, I want to bash some heads in! And the rest of my crew are ready to go! WHOOO!!!
- Asp
- You all realize that the local Humanis chapter used this same tactic six months ago, right? They leak out where they'll be to a bunch of nit-brains like yourselves to make them do something stupid, like say set up an ambush and then turn it around? Last time they did this, six orks and two trolls were killed, and their bodies strung up as macabre trophies. Hell, can

anyone place a back trace on this number? Maybe this time they just cut out the middleman and posted this themselves.

- Hondo
- Wow, I'm almost curious enough to care what happened.
- Winger
- No go on the number, Hondo. As far as I can tell it's legit, but it's unregistered. But now I'm worried that someone with some skills may have gotten unauthorized access on the board. I am not amused.
- Captain Chaos
- Ya know, I don't know what all of you are cryin' about. People are gonna be stupid, who cares? But anyway, why is it such a bad thing to work for one of the clans or the families? Big fraggin' deal. I've worked for the family for years, never once had a complaint about my work. As long as you do what you're told, all's chill. I've now got access to a steady stream of cred, cars, and a whole lotta perks. And even if one of these pasta-munchin' smoothies tries to come after me, I got an arsenal big enough to make them think twice about trying to geek me. But I know it won't come to that. I'm too valuable an asset to throw away.
- Long Tom
- Really? Check out a few sections further down, under the "network" heading, chummer.
- Hatchetman

INFILTRATION

Posted by: Ghost Who Walks Inside

The classic image of an infiltration is black-clad individual(s) entering a secure facility to relieve it of something of value and getting out undetected, or a group of military special forces sneaking past enemy lines to cause havoc. While these kinds of infiltrations are normal, they are not the end-all, be-all of infiltration jobs. People tend to forget, especially new runners, that infiltration can be a long-term job, where an individual or group goes undercover within a target group to achieve specific goals. Infiltration can be a job in itself or part of an overall plan, especially if the plan has to deal with multiple factors such as time, location, and security. A lot of the legwork vital to a successful run involves infiltrating a target to learn necessary information. Methods also vary with the current level of technology, and with the growing prominence of magic as a stealth tool. A decker scoping out a host system is just as important to infiltration plans as a magician astrally assessing the target for magical threats. No matter what the method or objective, the basic idea of infiltration is for someone to get into somewhere undetected and get what they want without the target knowing you were ever there.



- Rule of thumb when executing an infiltration run: You can never do too much legwork. Learn everything you can, even if it seems trivial at the time. I once saved a run by knowing that the sec manager at my target site was a Seahawks fan.
- Thorn
- How the frag did that work out?
- Hawk
- Long story short, that piece of knowledge helped convince the guard on duty that I really did know his boss. I could tell you the rest, but it could compromise that and possible future runs.
- Thorn
- Whatever. Ya know, I'm sick of slags coming in here talking all high and mighty like they're god's gift to shadowrunning. I don't need to do any of this drek, that's what the others in my team are for. Just let me know when you need a big hole put into something.
- Slugg
- And that's why you only get the low-end jobs.
- Nameless

HELP WANTED

>>>Guns o- gears looking for cyberboys

>>>Hey riggers, Ares is working on a new VCR implant at their Chicago research park. I have details on a prototype location and the decryption key for their specifications datafile. Hit me up at **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 312 (76-8364-209)** if you're looking for work and this sounds in your league.



- Sounds right up my alley. I owe Ares.
- SliceNDice

HELP WANTED

>>>Into the Lion's Den

>>>I require an expert for a long-term undercover assignment. Background in military, security, or law enforcement is essential. Job is extremely high risk, and pay will reflect that. Cover ID will be provided. Target is Knight Errant Security, Seattle Division.
LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 446 (31-2598-993)



- Holy frag! You gotta be slottin' me! Whoever takes this one has a big brass set.
- Bruno

- Recently, an internal investigation was launched within KE after a former security officer turned freelancer geeked a section captain in front of several security officers. All information, leads, and evidence (including the security footage) related to the incident were labeled classified and sealed away while the witnesses were immediately transferred to several, how should we say, out-of-the-way postings.
- The Neon Samurai
- Sounds like a SOP to me, but the obvious question is what was so bad that KE had to go to all this trouble?
- Conspir-I-See
- They are the first of many, they are the evil that hunts the evil that has found its foothold in our world.
- Man-Of-Many-Names
- It was the act of a former employee who could not handle life outside of the company. The victim was a friend who was attempting to help him regain some semblance of life and was killed for her generosity. While it was an embarrassment that several security protocols were broken, those transfers were simply a combination of protecting some and disciplining others per company policy. There, I saved you all the trouble.
- Nightfire
- *sniffs* Am I the only one who smells bulldrek?
- Wedge

HELP WANTED

>>>The earth is ours if we are willing to take it back

>>>Looking for like-minded shamans to reclaim Red Gate Woods. Contact Toxic Avenger at **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 708 (10-1974-818)**



- What? I just did a little library research on this and WTF. A buried nuclear reactor!!! Is this drek for real?
- DarkMaster4ever
- Yep. Early nuclear research by U of C got snagged by the government and moved out here. They buried the original reactor, and the place has been public land since the 1950s and open to the public since the '90s.
- Avi
- Thanks for the history lesson Now for something useful. There are a few groups out in that area who have become very territorial lately. They possess magic and aren't right in the head. That's a bad combo.
- Hornblende
- They've been digging out there. That's a major government no-no, but no one from the government has been around to check on the place in probably twenty years.
- Fallout

COURIER

Posted by: Fidler-Man

In our line of work, runners often come into contact with some very valuable items. Now, just getting our hands on them for whatever reason is hard enough, but sometimes Mr. Johnson just isn't satisfied with that. Sometimes, we have to make sure that whatever we have gotten for him makes its way into the proper hands. Courier work includes some of the most lucrative and dangerous jobs out there. Because you're transporting or have possession of something valuable enough to steal, it's safe to assume that it's valuable enough for someone to get it back. Couriers range from specialists with specific gear for transporting specialty items such as paydata, to a slag with a car, to a full-blown smuggler vessel. No matter the item in question or the method of delivery, the runner's biggest concern during these kinds of jobs is getting the package there on time.

HELP WANTED

>>>Kick the tires and light the fires!

>>>Hot gearjammer with the heat comin' down looking to make rapid egress out of Seattle with precious cargo. Need reliable chummers to ride shotgun. Have a gun, car, truck, whatever; will travel. Johnson says money is no option as long as cargo is on time. Need reply within twelve hours; after that, you're left in the dust.

LTC# NA/UCAS/SEA 419 (94-4587-333)

- Oh drek, Hotwire's making a run for it! GO CHUMMER GO!!!
- Iris
- Stupid, very stupid.
- Black Flag
- Never learn do you? Wonder if his Garage chummers will show.
- Wheelie
- I thought the Garage didn't have a Seattle presence.
- Hatchetman
- Hotwire tried to get a chapter going, but there were too many other interests for it to happen. But all was chill, and we managed to work out some wiz deals and builds together.
- Nightmare
- OK, stupid question, the Garage?
- Big Dave

- Co-op of riggers, mechanics, and tech-types. Mainly work out near Detroit but have smaller chapters in Denver, Chicago, and all over the East Coast. Anywhere you can get a vehicle out and go fast in the Midwest or the eastern seaboard, they're there, and they have a lot of toys. If you need to get some nova-hot parts or the latest wiz-bang vehicles, they're the ones to call.
- Wheelie
- Yeah, KE officers in Detroit all the way down to Cincinnati hate us because they tend to lose a lot of patrol cars when someone is dumb enough to get in the way of one of our "field tests."
- Gearjammer

HELP WANTED

>>>Bulk shipping

>>>I've got a shipment schedule for Ares Arms. Need a solid muscle crew skilled with the big stuff. Multiple operations possible. Runs from Westside research park to O'Hare.

LTC# NA/UCAS/CHI 773 (45-5121-234)

- You always gotta read between the lines on these things. Westside research park + big stuff + solid muscle = something living, not all that responsive to logic, and mean. So it's prototype critters or Marv.
- The Smiling Bandit

HELP WANTED

>>>Same-Day Delivery

>>>I require the safe and prompt delivery of a specialized package. Origin is Atlanta, CAS, destination is CAS Sector, Denver. Method of delivery unimportant, timely arrival is. Bonus for quick response; will compensate for any damage or injury during transport. Contact LTC# NA/CAS/ATL 215 (09-2222-267) if interested, timetable for job is extremely narrow.

- *whistles* Frag, hope someone has a lot of traveling papers, that's a lot of borders to cross. And that's before Denver!
- Road Warrior
- If the timetable is as tight as indicated, best bet would be aircraft, preferably a t-bird with a lot of hoop and a lot of gas.
- Airman Al
- Better be packing a wiz ECM/ECCM suite. Depending on which route they take, they'll have to deal with NAN and/or UCAS border defenses. Both of them love to go t-bird hunting whenever they can. A good trick to get past border security is to use several decoy aircraft (cheap drones are great for this) to overwhelm the defense systems with sheer numbers. Odds are good to decent that any anti-air systems or patrol craft will go after the wrong target, but that's still a gamble.
- Blackhawk



- I don't know anything about t-birds, other than I hate riding in them, but it reminds me of a run my crew and I pulled off at SeaTac last year. Pretty simple job—target was a courier coming off an international flight from Australia, and Mr. Johnson wanted to have a private meeting with him. Now, it took us a month to get everything into play: bribing the janitor to get disassembled weapons into the terminal and to be conveniently sick the day of the run, getting the back door into the airport system so we could frag with security communication systems, and paying another team to cause a distraction at the other end of the terminal. So, the big day arrives and we're all in position. I'm posing as the janitor, cleaning the floors near the projected exit route of the target. Stalker, our street sam, is dressed up like one of those harri-kari guys with the white robes and shaved heads preaching peace, which is hilarious because he's forgotten more about killing than what most people learn in a lifetime. Another member of our team, a phys-ad named Hat Trick, is covering the terminal, while Percival our decker is ready to let loose all his little surprises, and our man Clutch is ready outside the terminal in her cab for our big exit. Second team was also in position. Target was a little late because of a rain delay, but not a big problem.

About thirty seconds before the target arrived at Trick's position, team two went into action, posing as a couple having a *really* big fight. Percival makes the system think that a weapon's alert has gone off, drawing the bulk of the armed security forces while continuing to send them bogus orders. This has the added benefit of making the target and his escorts hurry. Now as the target passes Trick, he lets off the small flash-bang he has in a garbage can, causing everyone in the area to freak. Target makes for the exit, moving right past me. I then let the water elemental I had hiding in my mop bucket come out and play. It sprays the entire floor area with enough cleaning solvent to make the floor a zero-friction surface just in front of the target. As they try and keep their balance, Stalker lets loose with the smuggled Narcojet pistol he had hidden in his robes, giving the target's two escorts a well-deserved nap as Trick comes sliding in and gives the target a shot to the neck, which puts him out cold. For good measure, Trick then slides the both of them out of the puddle of cleaner and out the door. Stalker put two more darts into some Wolverine sec-guards, and I manabolted one more to clear our area of hostiles. Thirty seconds later, we were in Clutch's cab on our way to meet Mr. Johnson and collect our pay.

- Greenfire
- Slick, Green, very slick.
- Chuck-Chuck Razool

HELP WANTED

>>> Seeking fast wheels, tight lips

>>> Looking for skilled driver to provide transport from Chicago O'Hare airport to St. Louis. Vehicle provided, set to rig but using that is not a requirement. Evasive driving skills a must. Cargo is fragile and time sensitive. Contact Kurt Fryzek at **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 708 (54-2235-765)** if you are interested.



- Not to be a downer but Kurt "da Goon" Fryzek is a low-grade soldato for the Capone family. Don't expect much from this work.
- DoorKicker
- Goon's looking to move up in the ranks. He recently posted for another op that went well and paid a little extra because he's cutting out the Johnson.
- Caliber
- Cutting out the Johnsons. Not a great idea—they're in their place for a reason. Kurt's gonna get himself a bad rap.
- ShockJock
- These aren't the only mob operations that are cutting out the Johnsons. There is little sense in paying a criminal middleman for anonymity if you're already a criminal.
- Darkstar

INVESTIGATION

Posted by: SPD

Sometimes, things occur and we're left wondering: what the frag was that, or more popularly, what the FRAG just happened?! Either way, when something does happen, someone wants to know why. That's where an investigation starts. Now, an investigation doesn't always have to be some involved process sucking in a cadre of specialists or investigators eating a lot of pastries and sucking down pots of soykaf (although it can help). But no matter what the situation, most investigations have some key components. 1) First, like I already said, someone wants to know why something happened and who did it. 2) Someone has to go out and get this information. Sometimes it can be as easy as a simple data search. But more often than not, it's some poor schmuck going out to physically gather information by talking to people and chasing down leads. Runners can and are often hired by investigators to watch their back because they may have to go into places and talk to people who really don't want to be bothered. Trying to get a chromed-out street sam to roll on his associates is not always the best way to ensure a long life. And step 3), go and get the ones responsible. Although to be fair, that's sometimes given to someone else. Either way, runners, especially those who have the right skills and background, can be hired to look into things that can't be investigated through normal channels. And while there are a fair number of such qualified individuals in the shadow community, more often than not runners are the subjects or targets of an investigation. Let's face it, shadowrunners are usually the ones who do things that warrant people asking what the frag just happened.



HELP WANTED

>>>Repost from outside source-sysop<<<

>>>**Please help find our daughter**

>>>Our daughter has gone missing under mysterious circumstances, and Lone Star will not investigate. Do not have much to pay, but may be able to work out arrangements for appropriate compensation. If you can help contact us at: **LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 419 (99-4489-507)**



- Don't bother, this one was completed. Good chum of mine, Blackthorn, is an occult investigator, and I've seen some serious drek working for him. Last time was a week ago when we took this job. Thornie (he hates it when I call him that) had been hired to track down a young girl under the influence of a free spirit, and the few leads he had found indicated they had taken up residence in the Barrens. So obviously, he didn't want to go in without some serious backup. So we approach the location, a Barrens-standard falling-apart apartment building. After taking out a couple of street-scum acting as lookouts and dealing with some critters, we're in.

So far, so good, right? Well, this is where it gets fragged. We head down to the basement and find what looked like some kind of—well, the only way I can describe it is as some kind of nursery school from hell. About twenty or so kids, the oldest no more than nine or ten, were sitting in a semi-circle around this ... *thing* that looked like a dried up corpse wearing

a blood-stained white dress. It was teaching the kids the alphabet using cards with smeared red lettering. To this day I try and convince myself it was just paint. Several pictures with the same, ah, paint lined the walls, and there were more red-smeared toys piled neatly along the walls. This thing continued to read to the kids for about a minute after we arrived—it didn't even acknowledge our existence until we took our first step into the room. The teacher-corpse thing then let out a scream that would make a banshee envious. The kids then all stood up in unison, turned around, and started walking toward us, each carrying some kind of blade, mostly rusty knives but a couple of scalpels mixed in. Now, Blackie raised his hands and let fly with his mojo at the thing, while I dealt with the incoming kindergarten class of doom. I've been in the biz for a decade and I have my fair share of blood on my hands, but I just couldn't geek the kids outright. Well, I managed to keep them busy and got several lacerations for my troubles and as soon as Thornie took care of that whatever it was thing, they stopped. We got our girl back and collected the rewards for several other missing kids. Payday was good, but I can't look at a group of kids anymore and think of them being anything close to innocent.

- Blaster
- Did you ever find out what that was?
- Miss Tick
- No, Thornie wouldn't say and I didn't ask. I think I'll sleep better that way.
- Blaster



HELP WANTED

>>> **Experienced astral recon expert needed.**

>>> Looking to do some work at the Aztechnology Obelisk Tower in Chicago. Message **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 909 (76-1203-194)** with meeting preferences. Astral meeting preferred.

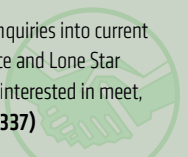


- Seriously, the fraggin' Obelisk. This ad should be over on the "Looking for Nutbags" page. The Obelisk has some of the best astral security in Chi-town. I worked for AZT for over a decade, and there were spots in that building where magic did some wacky drek.
- Hardrock
- I've spent a little time in the astral there, and they have some very strange spirits coming and going. And Hardrock is right, magic can get strange inside.
- Diablo
- Probably why they're looking for a recon expert. To avoid drek like that. Just a note from a meatbag—keep your eyes on the real world too. The Aztecs have almost the same zero-zone policy as MCT, they just torture you before they kill you.
- ArcherFive
- Teela's not dead Archie. I've still got a link to her. She's in the Obelisk. Maybe we can get her out?
- Linea

HELP WANTED

>>> **Looking for Skeletons in the Closet**

>>> In need of professionals to make discreet inquiries into current activities of several members of Seattle DA office and Lone Star Security. Subtlety and confidentiality a must. If interested in meet, contact at: **LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 031 (91-4937-337)**



- DA's Office? If they're talking about that new ADA, good luck. The slag's so clean, he squeaks when he walks.
- Legal Eagle
- I think it's the other way around. That new ADA, David Beatty, has been doing some digging into the pasts of his fellow DAs and he's not just looking for blackmail material. Slag's actually looking to launch corruption probes! It's cute how he thinks people will care.
- X-Star
- Looks like we have a crusader. A modern day Elliot Ness.
- SPD
- Who?
- Bung

- *sigh* Nevermind, it would take too long to explain.
- SPD
- Someone actually trying to weed out corruption, in Seattle? I give him a week before he ends up floating in the Sound.
- Streetwise

OPEN WARFARE

Posted by: Matador

War is a paradox. It is one of the few constants in history, yet it is ever changing and evolving. New technologies bring new weapons, tactics, doctrines, and objectives to war. And despite any change, there will always be a need for someone to fight in it. New technologies such as the Matrix have increased battlefield communication by a hundredfold in the last fifty years, and magic, as seen in the Great Ghost Dance, has caused most military planners and tacticians to totally discard their old ways and change their methodologies. This has also increased the need for those with the skills and talent to counter or integrate these new factors in warfare. While large-scale wars such as the World Wars, the Vietnam Conflict, and the EuroWars are (hopefully) becoming the exception, not the rule, there are several spots around the world where many brush wars, or low-intensity conflicts, still rage. While the professional soldier and/or mercenary remains responsible for traditional, open-type operations including those involving combined units of infantry, armor, and air support, independent operators (shadowrunners) may find work in such situations as irregular assets who operate outside the chain of command for objectives such as intelligence gathering, asset denial, or strategic target elimination. And while many a mercenary or ex-professional soldier have gone on to become shadowrunners, most shadowrunners (while skilled in their specific areas), simply do not have the background, training, and frankly discipline to operate in a traditional military or paramilitary setting. And that is fine—open warfare is already a chaotic and bloody business. No need to make it even worse.

- Oh frag off you arrogant hoop-licker! You think that because you're some big-time merc that you're above everyone else. Try and operate on the streets sometime, omae. See how long you last against a street sam like me!
- Big Tyme
- And the point is made.
- Colonel Cobra

HELP WANTED

>>>Professional Soldiers Wanted

>>>Aztechnology Corporation is seeking professional independent soldiers or units to help protect against the increasing threat from insurgents in and around the Yucatan area. Various positions and mission profiles needed. Pay is competitive and benefits excellent. Rank and position determined by skill level and experience. Incentives for units or individuals with specialized equipment/skills are available.

LTG# NA/AZT/TEC 113 (59-4782-027)

- Who the frag posted this here?!
- Wedge
- I did, with permission from the sysop. A job is a job, and some of us have no problem taking cred from a corp. It spends just as well as anyone else's.
- Major Pain
- And such service is always appreciated.
- Nightfire
- Oh no, it's gonna be Tizimin, Celestun, and Xpujil again.
- Steel Lynx
- What? Care to elaborate?
- Thrasher
- All three are towns in Aztlan where security forces cracked down hard after riots broke out in 2035, '39, and '45 respectively to protest poor treatment by the government. Even before these incidents, the entire area had been a simmering cauldron of discontent for decades. Looks like things are about to boil over again.
- Matador
- It's definitely not a good scene here. I've only been in country a few weeks, but already the Yucatan is a potential flashpoint. Tensions between the locals and the sec-forces are near the breaking point, and it doesn't help that several Aztlan commanders are itching for an excuse to fight. They keep sending us on patrols with RoE orders that don't make any sense unless you're deliberately trying to frag someone off. My unit has come under heavy fire several times and had to use lethal force to defend ourselves against the locals each time. Twice my CO has had it out with the theater commander, but if we don't follow orders we're threatened with breach of contract. And if we get hit with a BoC, we can say bye-bye to most of our assets, including our equipment! Only reason we're here is because Aztechnology co-opted our contract along with several smaller, high-ranked merc units (like mine) and selected individuals. Guess no one's taking them up on their offers because they're tired of being nice and have resorted to ramming them down our throats. Best advice: If you've been approached by an Azzie rep and turned them down, check the fine print of your contracts for transfer-of-client clauses. Don't let this happen to you, because it's gonna get ugly around here.
- Bravo Two-Six

- What unit are you in?
- Major Pain

- The unit that uses slags that ask too many fragging questions as target practice, scan?
- Bravo Two-Six

HELP WANTED

>>>Professional Soldiers Wanted in Nairobi

>>>Independent soldiers or units wanted to help for missions against warlords in the Nairobi as their activities threaten the stability in the area. Various positions and mission profiles needed. Pay is competitive and benefits excellent. Rank and position determined by skill level and experience. Incentives for units or individuals with specialized equipment/skills are available. Mechanized, air-cavalry, and anti-insurgency-type units given top consideration.

LTG# NA/UCAS/DET 113 (59-4782-027)

- Wow, the Azzies *and* Ares are busy. But then, business in that part of the world is very good at the moment.
- Arctic White
- This makes no sense. Nairobi has no military value and has no major fighting going on, other than the usual tribal thing. Its strategic value is zero. Are they trying to quell the fighting? And if so, why? What's so bloody valuable there? Did someone find an orchalcum deposit there or something?
- Airman Al
- Some of my contacts in the area tell me that there are plans for a new kind of spaceport on Mt. Kilimanjaro, but the locals, especially the spirits, could cause problems. This is a preemptive measure.
- Matador
- A spaceport. On a fragging mountain. Yeah right. But, if the job pays, who cares what they want to build there?
- Gunn Bunny
- Aztechnology is the public face on this one, but there are also a lot of silent partners, many I do not know of just yet. The only reason Ares hasn't stepped up is that they're already dealing with issues in other parts of Africa and have several assets already deployed. But my sources indicate that several corps are getting into this facility even though the Big A is taking point.
- Argent
- The spirits have seen what will be and they will retaliate. This will not be over quickly.
- Man-Of-Many-Names
- Chum, you've been nothing but a ray of sunshine lately.
- Recoil

WETWORK

Posted by: Yankee

The term “wetwork” comes from the idea that when you kill someone, you are close enough that their blood will get on you. I personally feel that if this is the case, you have poorly executed or planned your operation, so I’m not fond of the term. While it may be poor labeling, the term has become synonymous with murder in general, and more specifically murder for hire. While it’s the second-oldest profession known, murder for hire is considered something of a taboo among the more righteously inclined (read: hypocritical) members of the shadow community. Still, there is a thriving demand for such employment and opportunities for those willing to engage in them. Like any job, the method in which the job is ultimately accomplished depends on the need of the client, who will likely seek out those with the proper skill set, be it with blades, guns, poisons, sabotage, or even magic. Some tasks require misdirection, so as to make the target’s death look like an accident or natural causes. Others may want the target’s death as spectacular as possible to send a message. Others may simply want the target to vanish. Despite the methods or the “moral implications” with such work, know this: there is always someone willing to pay someone for it.

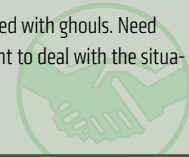
- Hey, I got a good one. I know a lot of you have a thing about geeking unnecessarily, but in this case, I think it’s totally justified. Axel is a known fixer in Seattle; he’s also one of the worst bottom feeders, preying on new runners and sending them against things they have no right to go up against. More than once he’s double-dipped, hiring runners for a job, and then when it’s done calling the target to tell them who it was that hit them so he can collect a nice fat bounty. He did that to my team just a few days ago, and I know of at least three more teams he’s hosed that way. I’m too fragged up to do anything myself, but I managed to put away a nice bundle of cred, and I think this is the right time to use it. Anyone want to contribute or do the deed, let me know at **LTC# NA/UCAS/SEA 467 (12-1562-364)**
- Jade
- I hold no sympathy for anyone who fails to take the proper precautions when researching their target. That is just stupidity, and the stupid deserve to die in this case. However, the idea of trying to play both sides of the game, it just does not sit well with me. I will think on this.
- Nix

HELP WANTED

>>>Need Cleanup of Some Big Pests

>>>Underground warehouse in Everett infested with ghouls. Need individuals with necessary skills and equipment to deal with the situation. Willing to pay two times normal bounty.

LTC# NA/UCAS/SEA 756 (22-3482-124)



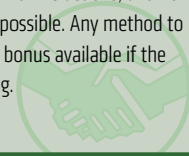
- Ah, the ghoul hunt. A classic for all the beginning runners. Lots of danger, usually for low pay, and a high chance your hoop will end up a late afternoon snack, literally. Still, great way to break in that new Vindicator or Panther Cannon.
- Steel Lynx
- Just make sure there's enough of them left to claim the bounty. I know a few runners who used HE grenades and tried to pad their kill count by using multiple parts of one ghoul. One Johnson didn't buy their dreck, and it got ugly to the tune of his troll bodyguards bending them in ways the body was never meant to go.
- Centerfire

HELP WANTED

>>>Object Lesson

>>>In need of someone to handle a particular problem with a former associate. This individual disgraced my family with his actions, and now he must answer for them in the severest way possible. Any method to remove this individual is acceptable, though a bonus available if the method is slow and inflicts maximum suffering.

LTC# NA/UCAS/SEA 453 (67-3857-285)



- Oh frag me. That is *bulldrek!* That slitch wanted it, she practically begged me for it! And how was I supposed to know that she was Maurice Bigio's god daughter? This can't be happening, after all I did for them ... I gotta get out of here.
- Long Tom
- Ciao, Tom! Good luck, let us know how it turns out. Personally, I give 50-1 odds he doesn't live to see another month.
- Hatchetman
- I'll take some of that action.
- Findler-Man
- Nah, I only give him about a week. They don't call Bigio “the Butcher” for nothing.
- The Neon Samurai
- Would it be considered bad taste to bet while also trying to directly influence the end results?
- Nix

BODYGUARD/PROTECTION

Posted by: Sally Tsung

There's an old saying: To catch an outlaw you have to send an outlaw. The same can be said of shadowrunners. Runners aren't always hired to break into places, steal other people's stuff, or blow drek up. Sometimes we're hired to prevent these things because we (hopefully) know all the tricks. This may seem like a kind of sell-out, but hey, biz is biz. Now, most of the time Mr. Johnson isn't going to hire runners to be some kind of glorified security pukes, but they have been known on occasion to hire runners to test their security or to provide personal security (especially during negotiations with other runners). Be careful, though, and be very clear of the conditions accompanying these jobs, as this is the perfect way to set up runners. Mr. Johnson doesn't have to pay anyone if they're geeked. But why use runners instead of specialized and dedicated security? For one, sometimes there is a special threat that only runners are suited to deal with (i.e., other runners). Or, like with any other piece of work that comes our way, this job has to be done off the books. Runners can also be chosen because of the chill factor of having them guard someone, especially if that someone is looking to raise their rep through association. Just be careful if you take this kind of job, because glory hounds sometimes do stupid things to further raise their profile. And remember, every dirty trick and tactic you may use on your run can and will be used against you if you're protecting a mark.

HELP WANTED

>>>**Need protection from my many fans**

>>>It has come to my attention that there are some who disagree with my business practices. No one has ever said that life was fair, and if you can't handle the biz, you should get out. I wish to continue in the biz for a long time and am willing to pay anyone willing to help me do so in any capacity. Contact me at **LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 757 (45-9283-524)**

- Frag off, Axel.
- Jade
- Just protecting myself, little Jade. You of all people can appreciate that. By the way, how's the shoulder?
- Axel

- Ease up you two, take it somewhere else. Don't make me get the banhammer out for you two.
- Captain Chaos

HELP WANTED

>>>**Need reliable guides and bodyguards**

>>>Planning a trip into the Ork Underground to study geological strata and area stability. Will need those familiar with the area and with proper connections to act as a guide and prevent any unnecessary interruptions to my work. Pay is negotiable, expenses will be included. **LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 451 (92-1082-111)**

- I'm guessing a smoothie needs help from some poor, downtrodden trog like me.
- Tusker Tom
- Hey, chummer, just because someone is human doesn't mean that they hate you and want to geek you on sight. And you don't even know if this Johnson is human! Live and let live—in the shadows, we have enough crud to worry about. I say focus on the real target: corps.
- Freedom Fighter
- Never been on the run for your life from a gang of Humanis goons now have you, term? When you can say that you've been persecuted all your life and seen family killed because they don't have smooth skin, or pointy ears for that matter, then we'll talk. Until then, keep your soy-hole shut!
- Tusker Tom

HELP WANTED

>>>**Another night on the town**

>>>Notable celeb wants to see what life is like in the shadows. Mr. Johnson is looking for a group of individuals who can oblige while also keeping this celeb from actually hurting themselves. Job takers must be ready to earn their pay based on their performance; payment is totally dependent on client's satisfaction. **LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 471 (32-2282-205)** if interested

- Ugh, I did a run like this not too long ago. As we used to say in the Army, it was a total Charlie Foxtrot. Mr. Johnson hired us to babysit some doofus named Dreyfuss. This slag was pathetic. Skinny as hell, and he tried to pack a Panther cannon on a "meet" for some job that Johnson had cooked up for this little scenario. Dreyfuss tried to intimidate a troll bouncer at Club Penumbra and almost got his face bashed in for his troubles. If I wasn't scared drekless that the fight might actually happen, I might have laughed at the scene. Thankfully, my team's mage was able to sweet-talk him into ditching the fragging thing. From there it was just one land mine after another as the doofus kept trying to pick a fight with anyone who even remotely looked tough, or hit on anything with breasts and a pulse. I swear to ghost if I had



to hear him ask "So, wanna hold my cannon?" one more time, I would have said frag it and geeked him myself. We finally decided to spike his drink, have him pass out, and take him back to his doss. Later we fed him some bulldrek story about how he got knocked out in a barroom brawl, but not before he managed to take out two orks and that troll who gave him drek earlier. He seemed pretty pleased with himself over that and gave us an extra five-k for our troubles that night and said "If I ever need backup again, you'll be the first chummers I call." We took the money and told our fixer to forget our numbers if he ever called again. But at least we got some extra yen out of the deal for almost getting our hoops kicked protecting this doofus.

- Hangfire

OTHER JOBS

Posted by: Man-of-Many-Names

Sometimes, we are called upon to undertake tasks that defy all normal definitions and preconceptions. Such things often start out small and familiar but can quickly become something else entirely. What may initially seem to be a simple endeavor can turn into a struggle with the fates of many on the line. These tasks may seem absurd and almost humorous, depending on what is to be accomplished. But too often, one is swept up in the the moment like a leaf on the wind, and all one's skill and spirit will be needed to accomplish the tasks that have been set out in front of them. The hand of fate does not choose lightly. Should you find yourself in her grasp, trust in yourself to do what you need to do.

- Well that was slightly less than helpful and very odd.
- Grey Knight
- You get used to it. I think what MOMN was trying to say is that sometimes, there are jobs out there that defy all preconceptions and definitions or those that start weird and just keep going in that direction. But speaking of odd things, anyone know why the Yakuza are on a hiring spree of late? I've had at least six offers from my fixer in the last two days.
- Dirk
- In the past few months, there've been a lot of meetings between the various clans, particularly the Nakatomi of Seattle and Tanaka of New York. So far, they've been (mostly) successful at keeping the meetings under wraps. Nobody, from the feds to Lone Star, the Mafia, even other Yak clans, has any idea of what these gatherings are about, and it's making a lot of people very nervous.
- SPD
- Makes sense. I think Mitsuhamas has an interest in this too. I just did a quick run against a local megacorp subsidiary, and without giving anything away that will get me in trouble, there were a lot of names associated with the Nakatomi in those files.
- FastJack

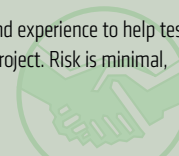
- Oh wow, brilliant work, you found a connection between MCT and the Yakuza. I had no idea.
- Spinner
- Don't slot me off, Spinner. I'm having a bad day and am not in the mood.
- FastJack
- You need to calm down, Jack. You're gonna spike your blood pressure and geek yourself before your time. And you should listen to him, Spinner, because having FastJack mad at you is like having the entire structure of the Matrix hate you.
- Fidler-Man
- You can save the health tips. I don't plan on living very long. Should have died too many fragging times already.
- FastJack
- I wonder if this has anything to do with the son of the Nakatomi-sama and the daughter of the Tanaka-sama being seen together in a very close way outside of Dante's Inferno two nights ago.
- People Watcher
- No way, those clans have been at each other for generations. Even the hint of something like that would be taken as a major insult by both sides and could start a war. Nakatomi-sama has been under a lot of pressure from the Mafia dons of late, and the last thing he needs right now is something diverting attention from that threat.
- Hero
- Maybe, but I do know of several people who would love to mess with the Yaks, and this is something they could be taking advantage of. If they're not involved already.
- SPD

HELP WANTED

>>> **Be a part of the newest, best thing!**

>>> Need individuals with specific skill sets and experience to help test new sim recording technology for upcoming project. Risk is minimal, pay considerable.

LTG# NA/UCAS/SEA 456 (92-1182-024)



- OK, I'm curious, but not enough to call for myself.
- Hondo
- Don't! This is a major cluster-frag. The slag running this is a wanna-be producer who thinks he has the next biggest thing in sim-rig technology. It's a bunch of drek. He wants runners to wear his new rig for a project he's doing about "real" shadowrunning. The so-called device he's using is nothing more than a jury-rigged sim-recorder. But something's wrong with it. Two chums of mine tried this thing out. Fried their brains right in the middle of a firefight with the Star, and the rest of the team was taken in.

If anyone has any paydata of where this fragger is, let me know. I have a score to settle.

- Chuck Chuck Razool

HELP WANTED

>>>*Shamans Unite*

>>>Dog shamans interested in joining The Kennel contact **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 708 (90-4112-782)**.

- What's The Kennel?
- Rex
- It's an organization for Chicago's Dog shamans. Initiatory in nature if you can handle that kind of thing. They operate an arcane veterinary service down near Little Earth. Don't worry cat-lovers, they'll still treat your pet.
- DogCatcher
- They treat more than animals. The shamans there will patch you up for the right donation. They also contract out work on occasion that they repay with service credit.
- Gideon
- Don't leave your pet there for extended care. A buddy left his cat there for a week after it was hit by a car. Came back healthy and spry as a kitten but seemed off. Started hunting birds and squirrels and stashing the remains all over his place. Then it died suddenly from a pet-friendly insecticide. Weird.
- Hatchetman

HELP WANTED

>>>*Enter the Bank Accountants!*

>>>Credit scores got you down? No problem, we give our marmosets the choice wedges of cheese every time! Nothing says "can't we be friends" like our new spring-scented industrial solvent-topped cookie dough! She'll love the real authentic imitation motor-oil flavoring! NOW IN TRAVEL SIZES!!! Hurry now, before that embarrassing stain is erupted on your next job interview! General Issue, Stopsign, CANDY BAR!!!! **LTG# *ERROR***

- I have a job for someone—find out who keeps posting this fragging drek on the boards! Six times I've scanned the network and purged anything that looks the least bit suspicious, but I keep getting stuff like this approximately three minutes and thirty-three seconds after each purge. And every trace I run comes up with nada. If I ever find out who this is, I'm gonna nuke their deck and dumpshock their hoop so hard their grandkid's grandkids are gonna be born drooling for a year!
- Captain Chaos
- But isn't everyone born drooling? Ha! Just a little joke! Please don't hurt me.
- Sludge

HELP WANTED

>>>*Need some paydata on a particular Mr. Johnson*

>>>My team and I are heading to the Land of the Rising Sun to do a job for a particular Mr. Johnson. Could really use some background on him. Also looking for anyone with contacts in the Kyoto-area we can go to for assistance. It would be appreciated. Individuals with knowledge of exotic plants and martial arts needed. Will compensate, of course. **LTG# NA/UCAS/DEN 766 (52-1144-038)**

- Strangely enough, I know of a slag that fits that bill. Go to the Shinto temple about fifty clicks south of Kyoto, ask for Sanouske-san and be VERY polite about it. If they tell you he is not there, try again the next day. If they say he is not there again, come back again the next day. On the third day, do this again. If he is truly there, he will see you. Don't ask me why he does this, but he does. Something about patience and persistence, I think. Anyway, as long as you are respectful, he will help you, and he knows his stuff. Just ignore the horking big sword he carries and do *not* let him challenge you to a sake-drinking contest. You will lose.
- Prime Runner
- Why does this guy sound like some reject from Hong Kong action trids?
- Hangfire

HELP WANTED

>>>*Your life can have meaning beyond chasing nuyen*

>>>I used to be Mr. Sk33lz. Now I try to guide those of us who have been dealt an unfortunate hand in life to find a better way. I came to the Universal Brotherhood looking for food and instead I found a rejuvenation. Come and see what I mean. Contact me at **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 312 (97-4189-374)**

- "Sk33lz" here sounds a bit cracked, but my wife recently started helping out at our local Universal Brotherhood chapter, and she's happier than she's been in a long time. They come off a bit like a cult, but I haven't been able to dig up any dirt on them, and they really do seem to be making a difference in the neighborhood. Kinda nice to see a spark of good in this bleak, fragged up world we live in.
- Bull

HELP WANTED

>>>*Looking for Mages*

>>>I didn't see a board for it but I'm looking for an adept to teach me the ways. Contact me at **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 773 (92-8180-765)**



- This guy is a scam. He's no adept, he's a corp researcher looking for test subjects. Make contact at your own risk.
- Psi-Ninja
- That's bull-drek. The guy's legit. Obnoxious, but legit.
- Forester

HELP WANTED

>>> *You oughta be in trids*

>>> Wanna be a star? Willing to get a few implants? Contact Les Jenkins at SIMPLY Talented. **LTG# NA/UCAS/CHI 312 (77-7777-777)**



- Fragging joke. I've got two yeses to his questions, and he put me out the door without a line spoken. Spotted some sweet toys around the office, though.
- ActionJackson
- Free cyber. Hot chicks. Cool toys. If you're good, he really is everything he promises. And remember, AJ, he has plenty of cybered "actors" who didn't ask him if they'd get to do porn, unlike certain other visitors to his offices. You also need to remember that Les has a vengeful side. Ask Starman. Oh wait, you can't. He's dead.
- DarthBrawl

DEALING WITH MR. JOHNSON

- Listen up folks, I am seeing a lot of positive feelings for various Mr. Johnsons here, and it worries me. It can be a very dangerous thing to drop your guard with a Johnson, regardless of how many jobs you have done for them in the past. Remember, they too are criminals, otherwise they would not be hiring shadowrunners. The story below is a cautionary tale, so pay attention to what Mercer has to say, especially for you less-experienced runners. Before you meet any of the people looking to connect you to work on this board, remember the moral of the story you're about to read.
- Captain Chaos

Well Cap'n, I put together this file, as you suggested. I may have rambled in a few places, but at this point, I'm too frazzled to care.

We met this particular Mr. Johnson about two years ago.

He did the red herring routine of having misleading indicators of who he actually worked for. Some were obvious, like his large Ares pinky ring, others less so, like his wearing of currently trendy Shiawese clothing to his occasional use of current S-K buzzword choices. We didn't care, as long as his nuyen was good. It took a lot of runs before we were sure who he worked for, but eventually we found out that he was Aztechnology, not that it matters

which corp it was for this ... what did you call it? Right, cautionary tale.

We did a lot of runs for him. We did datasteal jobs, data replacement jobs, we acquired items for him, we did extractions (both hard and soft), we did surveillance, we gathered blackmail material, we did destroy-everything jobs—both the discreet kind and the “let the world know” kind—and once he found out that we didn't really object, we did wetwork for him.

We didn't work exclusively for him, and we didn't become company men or even affiliated with Aztechnology. This particular Mr. Johnson liked our track records; we were a known quantity and reliable, so he kept giving us jobs.

We really liked having regular runs, since it made making ends meet a lot easier. Hell, BeeBee even made us a fair chunk of change on the markets, putting together what we did so we knew when to buy certain stocks and when to sell others. We were able to move our families out of Puyallup Barrens. We didn't go far, just over the line into Tacoma, but none of us needed to wear breath masks when we went outside, nor did we have to worry about the acid rain washing the flesh off from our bodies. I know that we could have moved to an even better area, but we wanted to stay fairly close to our weapon and gear caches in Puyallup, plus with several of us sporting obvious cyberware and/or gang tattoos, we would not have been welcome in those better neighborhoods ... Sorry, wandering down memory lane again.

We actually liked it when we had an internal Aztechnology job to do, as we often had inside information on the set-up, patrols, onsite security, and anything else Mr. Johnson could give us so that the job was smoother and sufficiently covert. We knew he was using us, and we were okay with that. He was furthering his career, making his internal competition and some of his bosses look weak, corrupt, stupid, and/or incompetent, and he was paying us. Win-win.

We did one run where we had several unlinked tasks. He wanted a datasteal, a data replacement—both undetected, natch—and he wanted a prototype stolen from a lab, followed by the complete destruction of said lab. And it all had to happen on the same night. It was a beautiful run. By that point we were old hands at datasteals and replacements. But to get a large prototype out of the Aztechnology Pyramid without security twigging to it was the challenge.

Weasel, bless his twisted little mind, came up with a perfect solution. We got ourselves a used Dalmatian recon drone, armored it up a bit, reduced the fuel tank and fitted it with a contoured gel padding compartment big enough to carry the prototype. Weasel wanted to have a big explosion that



would not only destroy the lab but would throw out all kinds of debris, one piece of which would be the camouflaged drone on a tumbling flight that would conveniently end right beside our truck. To get that explosion, he suggested that we steal a helicopter that refuels several rooftop-landing pads. Well, we did exactly that, getting our hands on an Ares Dragon cargo helicopter when it arrived full of fuel at the Mega-Media building. Weasel had it loiter for a bit, and when the time was right he directed it into the Aztechnology Pyramid, broadcasting a distress signal throughout its approach. There was a huge explosion that wasn't centered on the lab but still managed to fully destroy it while shaking the entire Pyramid. The rest of the team, data in hand, then blended in with the several hundred sararimen fleeing the explosions and fire.

- Hey, I remember that crash. It happened on December 12th, 2050 at 01:00 hours. The final investigative report concluded that it was an accident, based on the distress call and the fact that the bodies of the pilot, copilot, and cargo master were found strapped into their flight position. It caused a recall of a couple of parts, and I had to change those parts in all of the Dragons that I fly. The parts manufacturer took a beating over those "faulty" parts. Dang.
- Wheelie

On our last job for him, Mr. Johnson said he wanted to prove that Plasteel-7 was not graffiti-proof, as claimed by "some people" (we read that as referring to his competition) and that it would not stay a pristine white, even inside, after a few months of being put in place. He had a chemical agent, an aerosol that would mess with the surface finish of Plasteel-7. Mr. Johnson wanted some sprayers put in place in Puyallup that would create a slightly toxic cloud that would drift on the wind and carry right over the Aztechnology Tacoma Research Park and its Plasteel-7 walls. He also wanted the inside garage walls, floor, and especially the support columns sprayed at the same time, so that it would look like it was leakage from the drifting cloud that did the damage. He provided us with good intel on the site to help us find the right spots to do our work.

Everything went like clockwork. Green Demon even left an Ancient graffiti tag on one of the doors. But we got sloppy, and it cost us. Boy did it cost us. We didn't check into what the aerosol was, nor what it would do to the Plasteel-7. We didn't do that because we made the cardinal mistake of trusting our Johnson. Because he deliberately set us up. Set us up to be killed, every one of us.

What did the aerosol do? Well, it caused the Plasteel-7 matrix to become unstable. And I can



hear your next question, what happens when the Plasteel-7 matrix becomes unstable? Well, it turns to dust. And where was my team when the foundation, the exterior walls of the building, and the main support columns in the garage turned to dust? Yes, we were still in the garage, right where several tons of floors, furniture, computers and still-stable Plasteel-7 fell right on top of us.

Weasel, in our armored truck, was crushed when the truck went from just over two meters tall to about ten centimeters tall in a matter of seconds. Green Demon and most of the others became very thin films at the bottom of the huge pile of rubble that used to be the Tacoma Research Park. The only reason I survived was that when the Plasteel-7 floor under me became dust, it dropped me down into an unoccupied part of the underground, in the middle of old sewer lines and maintenance tunnels.

Once I found my way out after wandering underground for a bit over two days, I did what we should have done in the first place. I still had some of Mr. Johnson's aerosol left over, and getting a piece of Plasteel-7 from the ruin was fairly easy. I used a few contacts and favors to get them tested and find out where the aerosol came from.

Mr. Johnson had directed the creation of the aerosol, and he knew what it would do to Plasteel-7. He knew that it would turn it to dust, and he set up the run so that we would be at the bottom of the pile when the building collapsed.

I wanted my pound of flesh from Mr. Johnson. My team had been a close-knit group, growing up together and watching each other's backs. I also wanted to know why he set us up. We had never failed him and never betrayed him, so why turn on us?

I sold off most of the team's assets and gear to be able to afford hiring another team of shadowrunners to do a hard extraction of Mr. Johnson. I took him into the underground, right under what was left of the Aztechnology Tacoma Research Park. And there I tortured him, made him eat raw pieces of his own flesh, and I mindprobed him. I dug through his mind with sharp claws to find out why he set us up.

It turned out that he murdered my team because we were loose ends. He was moving up in the ranks, and the Tacoma job would put him at a level where he didn't need shadowrunners anymore. He'd have dedicated Aztech company men and mages assigned to him. So he was getting rid of people who could, maybe, possibly one day cause him some embarrassment or blackmail him. We were SINless, second-class low-life criminals to him, not even worth a second consideration.

I let my rage take me, but it was a cold rage. Mr. Johnson suffered for days before he died. I found

all of the dirty things that were laid at the feet of Aztechnology blood rituals, things that were only rumored to be done to sacrifices, and I kept him alive long enough to suffer through all of them. Then I placed his body on display in a park not far from the Aztechnology Pyramid.

- Well that explains a lot.
- SPD

- What do you mean?
- Smiley

- A few things. First, there has been a sudden increase in newly discovered creatures in the Puyallup Barrens, some of them strangely mutated combinations of several creatures. It was assumed that toxic chemicals, ash, and the skewed magic of the area had reached a weird conjunction, and these new creatures had emerged from that murky stew. But I no longer think that's the case.

The Aztechnology Tacoma Research Park specialized in metavirus research, including a recombinant DNA process to graft the abilities of one creature onto another one. Mercer's survival shows that the creatures located in the lower labs may have been able to escape through the sewers. It's known that the Ork Underground extends from Downtown out to places like Tacoma and the Puyallup Barrens, among other places, so there are ways for creatures from the Research Park to escape to the Puyallup Barrens, which are located nearby.

I now know that it wasn't Aztechnology that ritually executed an up-and-coming rising star who had just been appointed to a vice president position. It had always puzzled me why they would do that to him, as it didn't make any sense. Now I understand what happened.

And finally, it explains a mystery. A building under construction disappeared overnight in February this year. When the construction crew left the night before, they left a skeletal building of twenty stories, but in the morning, it was simply gone. The magic conspiracy theories ran rampant. I did a bit of research on the disappearing building and discovered that it was being made of Plasteel-7. Clearly, this was the target of Mercer's cloud.

- SPD

- Anyone know where Mercer is now? I can't seem to reach him
- Holly

- Mercer has "died" twice in March. The first time was by a single sniper shot to the head that blew him off of a hotel roof, but his body wasn't found. And the second time was a few days later, when he was not only shot twice with a sniper rifle, but his body was promptly picked up and ripped apart by a blue-and-black western dragon.

Coincidentally, Kyle Morgan and a male traveling companion were seen boarding a sub-orbital flight to Aztlan the following day.

- Pyramid Watcher

- While I will miss the extra nuyen, I am glad to know that there will be an end to the glut of new nasties being found in the Ork Underground and Puyallup. I made a fair bit of nuyen on bounties for these things, and made even more escorting parazoologists so they could watch the creatures in

their natural habitat. I even made a fair bit by escorting and helping a bored big game hunter while he picked off some of the more dangerous ones. Like I said, nice cash, but I have enough new scars from sharp teeth and projectile toxins to last me for a while and make me content to not have to deal with any of these things.

- Jasper
- Anyone know anything about these rumors about a drone in the Ork Underground, near the harbor that can cast spells? From what I hear, several corps have either sent in their own teams or hired runner teams to acquire this thing.
- Winger
- Not this bunk again. Only living creatures can cast spells, not even mythical. Als would be able to cast spells. It's an urban legend, nothing more!
- Skeptic

- ROFL. This is just too good not to share.

The drone does exist. Really.

What it really is, is a team of two who call themselves Mr. Roboto, and their drone has some weird dance moves programmed into it. One of them is an ork rigger and the other is a sapient critter, a pixie, who is also a mage. For those of you who don't know, a pixie looks like a fairy, about a foot tall with working wings.

Their ride is a tracked hazmat drone, heavily modified. The sprayer tank and part of the sample storage area have been converted to hold a small crash cage for the pixie. There are multiple pixie-sized one-way armored windows, no bigger than your thumb, in the torso, allowing the pixie to see out and cast spells at targets outside of the drone, or on the drone itself. The sprayer has been replaced by a weapon mount, and they switch out the weapon on a regular basis.

Typically, the rigger remote-pilots the drone, while the pixie casts any needed spells. This allows the drone to operate normally, use its mounted weapon, fly around, or toss off offensive spells as needed.

Here's the kicker for me. Since the Mr. Roboto team knows that the corps are interested in them, they keep allowing themselves to be seen and chased by corpsec squads. They want those squads to chase them, because they lead them to the lairs of all kinds of nasty creatures, like large devil rats, firedrakes, loup-garous, even a greater wolverine once—basically anything that is a threat to those living in the Ork Underground. This way, the corps take care of the critter problems for them, and they don't even have to pay the corps to do it!

Admittedly, they have lost a few drones to the corps, but when that happens, the pixie sets off a self-destruct charge as it leaves, flying away while under an invisibility spell. Old hazmat drones are cheap, so sooner or later a new Mr. Roboto emerges, while the corp squads never retrieve more than a few pieces of scrap metal, leaving them with no real information about what's actually going on.

- Butch
- I stand partially corrected. The drone isn't casting spells; its passenger is. But that is nasty, as twisted as a lawyer's mind and soul.
- Skeptic

- Speaking of lawyers, you may want to keep them in mind for more than just who to call if or when you get arrested. A fair number of them can use the services of deniable assets services, and they get paid enough to be able to afford us.

There is one crackerjack-hot environmental lawyer who often uses runners to discover the dirty secrets of the companies that he's bringing to court, looking to press them into settlements so he can avoid the trouble and expense of the courtroom. If he can't find anything, well, a little accident can go a long way to convincing people to settle sooner, or even offer more generous terms. And if all else fails, he gets you to dig up the dirt on the opposing lawyer, company representative, etc., until you get someone who is dirty (and you don't usually need to dig far to find one) so that they can be persuaded to settle at favorable terms. As a bonus, these runs are generally easier than your run-of-the-mill run too, since they often involve people who are newcomers to our particular ways of life.

- Nightfire
- While we're on the subject of cautionary tales, I'll add one in here too.

Do legwork. Not only should you do legwork, you should make sure your contacts let you know if anyone else is interested in the same things as you. For the not-best-friends-since-forever contacts, make sure you do nice things for them when they pass important information of this nature along to you. A lot of times, this will provide your first hint that an opposing team is coming into play.

Arthur Vogel (that's the name of the hotshot dwarven environmental lawyer that Nightfire was talking about) hired my team to arrange a little accident at a Hawkshorne Chemical plant in the Puyallup Barrens. This plant was making a pesticide that was just a bit too strong, as it would kill just about anything, even adult trolls.

We were to arrange for them to have an accidental spill that would clear the place out and shut it down for a bit while they made sure the spill wouldn't kill their employees. We had it all planned out, with the key part of the plan being acid that would make a pipe joint look corroded and make it burst at the right time. If we did it right, there would be no indication that it was anything but an accident.

Once we were inside the plant, we realized that security had been ramped up. Way up. So far up that they had a fully outfitted and ready-to-roll strike team onsite. We almost backed out of the place, but we only had a narrow window to get the job done, so we left a drone watching them so that we would have some warning if they started to move on us.

We had just finished applying our acid to the pipe when another team showed up and reacted badly to seeing us. One of them took a shot at us, which was a bad move. A very bad move.

Our wee drone let us know that the corp strike force was off like a rocket, heading straight for both runner teams. My team knew, but the other team didn't.

Since our job was done—the acid had eaten enough of the pipe that internal pressure would cause it to burst in the next hour or so—we decided to get out of Dodge.

Maybe I will add in another cautionary point here. Make sure you use the right ammo for the right job and the right location. I mean, what kind of idiot uses exploding ammo, or even live ammo, in a plant filled with very, very toxic chemicals that run through high-pressure pipes all around the place? Apparently both the other team and the strike force commander ... drek, they not only used live and exploding ammo, they used frag and in-



secondary grenades! We had gel rounds loaded and a few clips of live ammo if we really needed it.

My team broke contact with the other runners and bounced flash grenades to distract the strike force so that we could get out of there before one of those idiots shot something that would explode or release toxic gas into the place. We were almost clear when one of the sammies got an arm sprayed with the pesticide. Fortunately, our other sammy was very fast and managed to use her monofilament whip to cut off that arm before the pesticide could get into his bloodstream or nervous system. We kept moving, and just before we got out I looked back long enough to see an elven Dog shaman pitch into a pool of chemicals after a catwalk collapsed beneath him.

I found out afterward that the other team was a TerraFirst! eco-terrorist cell, and that they'd been wiped out to a man. Most of the security strike force was dead too, either from gunfire, explosions, or contact with the pesticide.

Vogel paid for a cyberarm for the newly renamed Lefty. He wanted to make sure there were no hard feelings, and with the size of the settlement he negotiated with Hawkshorne, he could afford to be generous.

Anyway, my point is that if we had known that another team or terrorist cell was casing the place, we would have gone about the job differently. The TerraFirst! cell likely gave themselves away when they did their legwork, which is why the strike force was there.

- Winger
- You know that you could have said all that in a line or two, right?
- Smiley
- Probably, but I have found that without the visceral description, most novice runners, or even experienced runners, don't listen. But if you put in something gruesome, then they remember it and take it in.
- Winger
- What I want to know is where is all of this activity in Puyallup coming from? I always thought that the place only had a couple hardscrabble neighborhoods, a few isolated corp facilities, ash, and toxic air.
- Holly
- Ah, another delicate flower that is uncomfortable where real men and women live and work.

All kidding aside, there is a lot going on in Puyallup; most of it below the surface, unseen by a lot of residents and even less so by everyone else in the Emerald City.

Well, to follow in the spirit of Mercer's tale and Winger, I'll see if I can make this an educational post. Gather round now and listen to Uncle Jasper.

I figure that over a third of all black-market goods enter Seattle through Puyallup, half through the docks and the rest by way of Redmond. That is a lot of gear and toys going in and out of Puyallup, with guides and escorts needed for a lot of those shipments. The Cascade Orks run t-birds all the time, running over the lava flows, creating small ash storms behind themselves, and usually making their exchanges in Puyallup.

Since the corps are afraid to move to and from their facilities on the ground, they move about by air, with their helicopters adding to the ash storms. But, all of that traffic helps hide the smuggling and other illicit activities.

There are also prospectors looking for magical reagents or rare minerals brought up by the lava. Most of these need guides and guards, and Puyallupans can be bought cheaper than pretty much any other Seattle resident.

There's no doubt about it, Puyallup can be a very hard place to live. Most metahumans living there are SINless, with little prospect of enjoying all the benefits of corp living or even being confident that their children will outlive them. Security, with a few exceptions, is provided by gangs (which change with dreary frequency) or by whatever you are packing.

But if you are willing to grab on to any chance that comes your way, there is a lot you can do. Since the corps and the city have abandoned the place, there are few restrictions on what you can do. A fair number of shadowrunners are from Puyallup, assuming they have managed to keep themselves alive and learn a bit of couth.

Let's take Mercer and his crew as an example. They started off as a gang, running protection for their neighborhood.

When the opportunity presented itself, they jumped at the chance to start running escort jobs for the Tartarus ring, which is Puyallup's Seoulpa ring. Mercer knew that this would help the gang learn a lot more of Puyallup, including some of the short cuts, semi-secret ways into Seattle from the outside by way of Puyallup. They would also be learning a few more ways into the Ork Underground and who they could deal with for certain goods.

The Tartarus ring has ties to Tamanous, which means some of the shipments were organs. The spoiled or unneeded parts were given to ghouls, which caused a lot of shuddering in the gang, but over time they got used to the ghouls and even developed friendships with some of them. Once that happened, anyone that the gang killed, they gave the bodies to the ghouls, with the understanding that the ghouls would not do any hunting in their neighborhood.

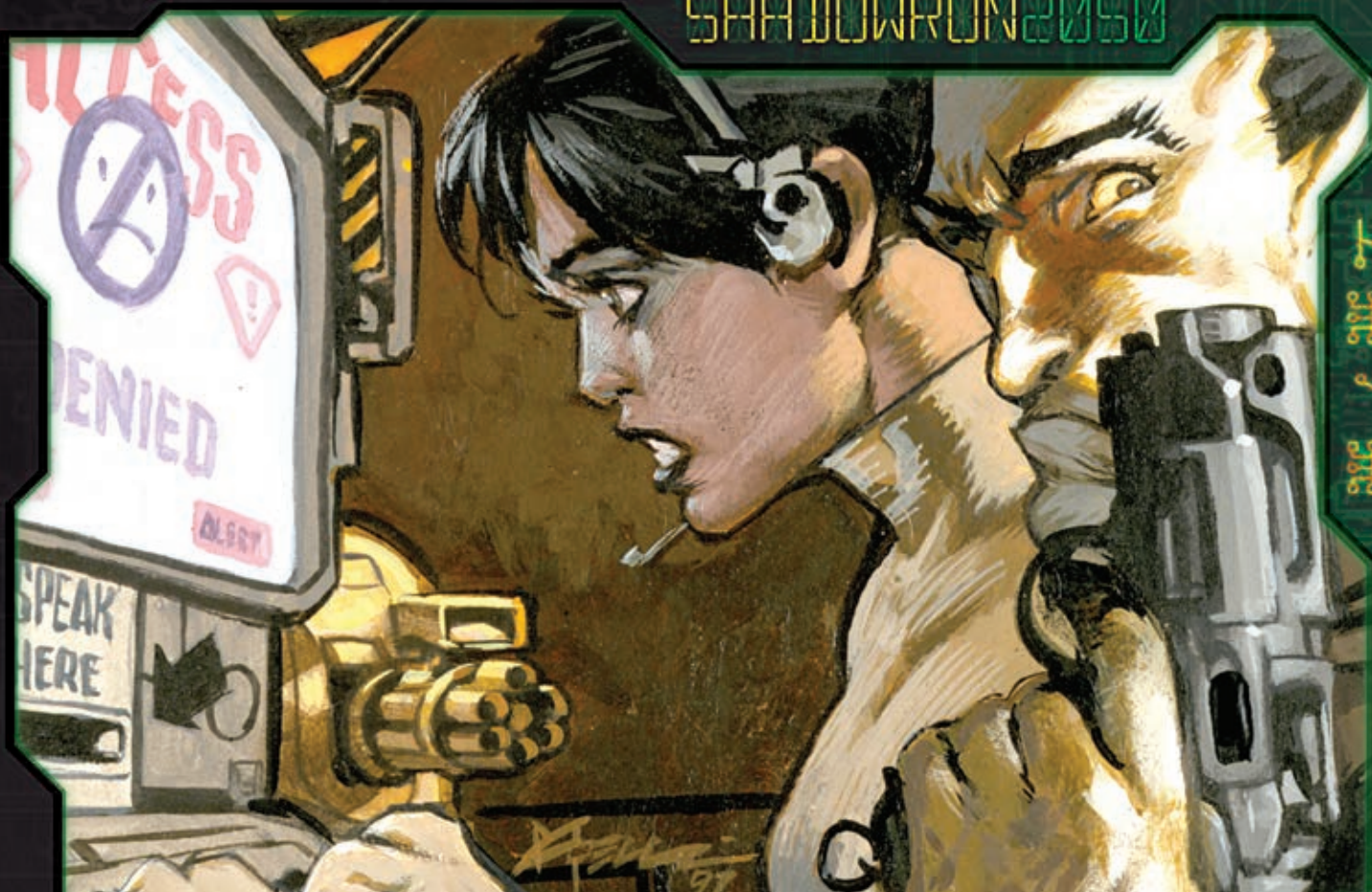
Two years later, while running escort for a large shipment, the convoy was hit by an Ares strike team. Mercer told me that the reason that they didn't run and leave the fight was that they were too stupid to know when to quit.

The Ares strike team came in with drones, air support, and eight bodies on the ground. It was a running battle covering a couple of kilometers in the badlands of old lava flows. A Cascade Ork t-bird nailed the Ares t-bird and claimed the wreckage as payment for their assistance. By the time it was over, Mercer's gang had lost a third of their members, but they had killed the strike team, recovered some of the drones, and blown the choppers out of the sky. Nasty as the fight was, there wasn't a single peep in the news.

Mercer had made sure to mark where each of his crew went down, as well as each of the Ares guys. After making the delivery, he went back and collected all of the bodies. He then made a hard choice and handed over the bodies of his friends to the ghouls, along with the Ares bodies.

I talked to him about that choice, and he said that they weren't using their bodies anymore, and as their bodies would go to feed some of their friends he didn't think that they would mind. That kind of hard thinking shows him moving toward being a true professional.

The ruckus that that decision caused died the next day, then stopped dead when some ghouls showed up and gave the gang several boxes full of clean, almost polished cyberware. Apparently seven of the eight Ares guys were heavily cybered, and then there were the small bits of cyberware that the dead gang members had owned. Coincidentally, a lot of Mercer's gang spent a good portion of the next couple of months recovering from surgery tied to new implants.



There was one negative consequence of Mercer's gang getting all of that cyberware. Ares really wanted to re-acquire one datajack in particular. This datajack had some hidden files in it, files that Ares didn't really want anyone else to see. They sent in another strike team to get it back.

Mercer's gang was still providing protection to his neighborhood, and because he was actually protecting them and not squeezing them hard, he got a lot of warning when that strike team came after him.

Mercer just about fried himself with the spirits he threw at that strike team. Even with that and the extra cyberware and weapons from the previous strike team, he lost half of his remaining gang. But his gang took them out.

He did some kind of mumbo-jumbo astral thing and found out why Ares came after them. He traded that datajack to Ares for a truckload of gear.

But with his gang down to less than a dozen members, even if a lot of them were now heavily cybered, he felt that he couldn't provide proper protection to his neighborhood, so he turned his turf over to another gang, giving them a leg up with some cyberware and gear. Mercer's gang became a large shadowrunning team, getting their first few jobs from the Tartarus ring.

Mercer made sure that any recovered gear from a run was not sold, but instead cleaned, packaged, and then stored in various caches that he set up in Puyallup.

Mercer had one that I know about that was something special, a safe house that was practically a hidden fortress. BeeBee, his decker, got him the pre-eruption city and building plans. He had the current location of the lava flows added to those plans and found several building that had extensive basements and garages that weren't in the lava flows, even though their entrances were. He went out to one site that had a lot of ash that fell in the area. He had a tent put up against the obsidian rock and then had a spirit

raise an ash storm, which camouflaged the tent and erased any tracks leading to the tent. They cut a tunnel into the obsidian and then looped down into the basement. He had a set of doors covered with a shell of obsidian placed to conceal the entrance. He now had a secure safe house that no one else knew about. To make sure that others could conceal their tracks when he wasn't around to have spirits raise ash storms, he bought a few leaf blowers.

Oh, I should also mention that he sold off a lot of the stuff that was found in the garage, a fair bit of it as antiques as it was all pre-2017 eruption goods.

Mercer rarely missed a trick. He took advantage of pretty much every opportunity that came along in his journey from gutter trash to respected shadowrunning team leader.

I know of only two real mistakes that he made. Trusting Mr. Johnson and not going to ground after making an example of that Johnson. I don't know what he was thinking, as he could have hidden out long enough for Aztechnology to get bored.

- Jasper
- He's not dead. After getting shot the first time, he conned someone into being his double. The double was who got ripped apart.
- Anonymous
- The safe house story contains an additional bit of learning while we're on the topic of getting hired by Mr. Johnson. Sometimes, if you're clever enough, you can be your own Mr. Johnson and find a way to scare up income if you can find something everyone else has missed.
- The Smiling Bandit



WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE

No drek, there I was.

That's how you're supposed to start this kind of story. No drek, there I was, in the middle of what would one day become one of the ugliest moments in our long history of ugliest moments while enough lead was flying to show up on weather forecasts. It's not the proper way our tribe starts a story, but this is my story. It starts about twenty years ago, in 2050.

Mr. Johnson had collected a few established shadowrunners for a job. When I say "established," I mean that we had all gone at least six months in the shadows without buying agricultural property. Still, that's better than most people who start calling themselves shadowrunners. The average time from shadow loner to organ donor is usually around thirteen weeks.

There were five of us at the table: four runners and one man with money. It wasn't my kind of bar. Keeping the lights low was more than just for atmosphere—it kept the electric bill lower, and they had to clean the place less often. I preferred the open air, even on the days you needed a breathing mask, and I could have done with more light. The flavor of the soycaf was a nice surprise, though.

Mr. Johnson was done praising all of us for our longevity and starting to give background on himself and his organization. We were ignoring that drek. The ork across from me interrupted him and said that he was Mr. Johnson as far as we were concerned, and that meant that nobody would hear about him before, during, or after the run. The rest of us nodded, except for the old Tokyoite in the shadow of the exposed ductwork, who took a moment before giving a curt bow of his head. "Besides," none of us said out loud, "you're probably lying about your biz, anyway."

So on to the job. It was a distraction-extraction in the Cascades, so I immediately knew why Wichapi had called me the previous night and tossed me this job. There was a small but well-armed gang working out of a series of caves in the mountains, and I filled in "Cascade Orks" before he finished the sentence. We were to keep the security forces busy while someone slipped in to retrieve something, and then we were to extract the operative. The pay was good, but not suspiciously good.

All four of us agreed to take the job. Q-and-A time didn't last long, and it was the wizard that asked the most important question: how do we know who the inside man is? Mr. J. said that all we needed to do was extract the first person to tell us, "The first truth is

that we are all brothers." Easy enough to remember. Other than that, it was all coordinates and expected resistance, which was a bit high for an ordinary gang, but nothing like a corporate high-sec force.

After that, Mr. Johnson bought us another round and shifted. That gave us a chance to get to know each other. I'm a pretty sociable person, so I went first. I didn't tell them about my augs, but they could see the eyes and the jacks. "You're a Crow, aren't you?" said the mage, and I said, "The braids aren't for decoration, chummer." We both got a chuckle, but the other two just blinked at us.

The ork was called Cap, which I found out later was short for Capreolus. He introduced himself as the dumb muscle with big guns. He looked the part with his camouflage-dyed Mohawk and faded black synth-leather armor jacket, but his augs, a cyberskull, obvious muscle-replacement bulges, smooth dermal armor lumps, and that unnatural electronic grace that could only mean wired reflexes made me think that he had secrets, too.

The other two looked at each other a while, and then the mage spoke. I say mage because he didn't make it subtle. Arcane symbols twisted all over his long coat, jewels twinkled at his pointed ears and around his throat. Add in the goatee, and the man looked like an elf version of some demented circus ringmaster. Nobody flashes that much jing without an ace up his sleeve, probably a magical one. He took a drag on one of the filterless cigarettes he'd been chain-smoking during the meet and introduced himself as "the Dutchman." He explained (and I mean explained, not just said straight out) that he'd be handling astral overwatch and magical defense during the run. Fair enough, chummer, was all I thought.

The last fellow, a small, older Japanese human who looked like a sarariman out of his element, paused for a long time, and then said with a heavy accent, "No English." The Dutchman chuckled again, and Cap rolled his eyes, but I asked, "*Nihongo-desu ka?*" in my best drekky Japanese. He nodded, and I held up a palm while I fished in a pocket for my linguasoft. I slotted the chip and got that "how could I have forgotten this?" feeling that I always get when I slot, and translated for the rest of the group. His name was Gandalufu and he was a rigger. He assured us that he had onboard linguasofts in his vehicles, and that he would be able to communicate with us over the radio when he was jacked in. I tried to get more out of him, and he was polite, but he didn't say

much more, except to invite us to his garage so we could plan with some privacy. We all wanted to gear up, and I wanted to get some intel from some people I knew, so we agreed to split up and meet there.

I won't bore you with the details of the conversations I had with Wichapi and the rest of my friends, but about five hours later we were in Gandalufu's garage with a bunch of printed survey maps and satellite images. Actually, it wasn't a garage so much as a hangar, out on the wild end of the Redmond. The most noticeable feature of the decor in the big room was the Hughes WK-2 Stallion helicopter. That and a rack of missiles sitting next to it, red safe tags still attached. On a hunch I looked up and saw that the roof could open like a garage door. For once, I thought, this run is going to be truly wiz.

Cap had bulked up his form even more with form-fitting body armor stuffed under his street clothes and an armor jacket over all of it. He had a number of weapons slung about his person, and I couldn't decide whether the feathered war club, or the assault cannon was more interesting. "Just in case," he said. He grinned at me and patted the portable cannon. Biz is biz, but you should never trust a smiling ork.

I'd brought my assault rig. My assault rifle (with underslung grenade launcher, of course) had its smartgun cable wrapped around the stock. I had my Ares Predator on my thigh, where I've always worn it. My treated armored jacket had my braids tucked into it, which isn't my most intimidating look, but it keeps them out of the way, and anyway you would barely see it once I put my helmet on.

The mage showed up with pretty much everything he had at the soy joint, but with the addition of a shiny synth-leather top hat with a jeweled band. Chip truth.

The Dutchman started, spreading out my maps on a plastic card table with his hands. "What's the plan? We could move up quietly and pick them off one by one."

Gandalufu made an X with his hands. "We need to be a distraction," I translated into English for him, "and my equipment is loud." Cap grunted in agreement and I continued for myself, "Plus, the operative is already in position, and the longer he's there, the more likely he'll get caught."

"Or she," muttered the smiling ork. I nodded brusquely and continued.

"Look, I see a chopper, six missiles, an assault cannon, and a magician confident enough to wear sparkles. We're up against what my sources say is a Cascade Ork gang. If we go in there breathing hell and fire, they'll scatter. Orks are big and strong, but they're stupid and easily frightened." I realized what I'd said right after I said it, and flicked my eyes to Cap,

but he was holding his belly and guffawing out loud. Spirits, if you should never trust a smiling ork, what the frag are you supposed to do with a jolly one?

An hour later, we were in the air, flying east at treetop level toward the target. I was on the left machine gun and Cap was on the right, trying to decide whether to use the mounted weapon or his assault cannon. The Dutchman was buckled into one of the back benches. The rigger himself was up front, the fiber optics strung from the jack behind his right ear to the console of the helicopter. As if in a trance, I watched the cable swing back and forth with the motion until I jolted out of it and plugged the machine gun into my secondary smartgun jack, and my assault rifle into my primary. Then it was just watching the pines go by.

"Four minutes to target," a voice said over the radio. The Dutchman was using ear buds rather than a more reliable headset, because apparently that would have interfered with him wearing his hat. Cap and I had headware radios, so we could communicate and hear the outside world with equal clarity. "I am receiving telemetry from radar that I need to confirm. Please stand by." Gandalufu wasn't kidding when he said his hardware would translate for him. The simulated voice was almost perfect and, honestly, a bit sexy. Maybe it was just the adrenaline.

"I am detecting a fortification," the voice said after a few seconds.

"What?" I was mumbling sub-vocally, but my headware made the words clear over our secure channel. "It's not a bunch of caves?"

"It is a fortification," repeated Gandalufu's voice.

"We have a couple minutes," said the Dutchman, louder than he needed to. "What do you think? Should we abort? It's pretty clear that our information is flawed."

We were all quiet for a moment, thinking our own thoughts. Chip truth, I was frightened that the Cascade Orks had become a lot more organized than they ever have before, and for the first time in over a year I was thinking about my tribe.

Then, Gandalufu's synthetic, emotionless voice came on the radio, quoting a single number. That figure was good, but not suspiciously good. I didn't have to look, I could feel the others silently agree: we had taken a job, and we were going to do it, even if the whole thing was fragged from time zero.

When time zero arrived, things were pretty fragged. There were about a dozen targets waiting for us in a pair of bunkers. The mountainside itself had been built up, so rather than facing a couple of caves we were about two hundred meters from a ferrocrete fortress. The muzzle flashes started the moment we were past the tree line.



The Stallion just shrugged off the small-arms fire. I heard a *thoomp* from behind me and knew that Cap had settled on his own weapon. I opened up with the mounted machine gun, sending one enemy spinning back into his bunker and leaving a pattern of pockmarks on its surface as my smartgun system tried to adjust my aim to counteract the movement of the helicopter, the wind, the range, and my own combat jitters.

“Foxtrot three,” said Gandalufu’s placid radio voice, and everything was drowned out by a cascade of burning missile propellant. The rigger didn’t hold anything back, and three shaped-charge high-explosive missiles arced toward each bunker. The detonations were nearly simultaneous, and my cybernetic ears dampened the sound as Gandalufu’s piloting turned the shockwave into a gentle rocking motion. There was no sound but the rotor blades for a moment, and then the popping of the enemy weapons started again, but less frequently than before.

Suddenly, the chopper lurched to the left. I lost my grip on the machine gun and would have fallen out if I hadn’t been strapped in. I looked around and saw what appeared to be a troll made of stone floating next to our vehicle, swinging at it with its fists. “Spirit!” called Cap, and the Dutchman said, “I think this is my bailiwick.” The mage slumped over, unconscious, and I was sure that his spirit had left its body to fight the opposing spirit on its own turf. Sure enough, the floating stone giant stopped swinging at us and started grappling with something only it could see.

The chopper started moving around the airspace above the smashed fortress like a frolicking gazelle. I righted my weapon and started using it again, amazed by our pilot’s ability to move so much but keep steady enough for Cap and me to put lead onto our targets. When the Stallion looped around the north side of the clearing, I saw the spirit burst into pieces, each pebble dissolving before it reached the ground. The Dutchman woke up, a bit bleary, “That’s better. Now, if we can find the shaman that—”

I saw the air ripple like a huge bullet trail just before it slammed into our helicopter. Gandalufu screamed as his sensory rig overloaded, and I could smell the ozone. Despite the crazy lurching of the aircraft, I followed the path of the trace back to its source and saw the shaman. She wasn’t an ork, I could see that right away, and she certainly wasn’t from the Cascades. No right-thinking Native American shaman would be waving a bent piece of rebar decorated with Fizzy Pop cans of different colors.

“Where did it come from?!” yelled our magician.

“She’s in the southeast quadrant, forty meters from the bunker!” I yelled back my best estimate.

He unbuckled and lurched up behind Cap, “Where is she? That fragging slitch is a tree!” Leaning over his shoulder and peering out, he got that faraway look you get when you’re using zoom optics, and I wondered if the only pair of natural eyes on the team belonged to the guy who never used them on runs.

The Dutchman took a long drag on his cigarette and blew the smoke out with deadly calm. The smoke roiled down to the shaman as if it was on a zip line, enfolding her in a plasteel-colored cloud. Her skin darkened and wrinkled, her fingers elongated, and branches sprang from her neck and head. I saw rather than heard the scream, but I didn't know if it was because it was too far, too soft, or too late.

The mage flopped back onto his bench, wiping the sweat from under his hat. "I can't hold her that way forever. Cap, would you do the honors?" The assault cannon made one more loud crack and the sound of splintering wood was unmistakable. The area seemed clear so I unplugged the machine gun and readied my FN HAR assault rifle, mentally commanding it to switch from safety to burst fire and to chamber the first round. Gandalufu put the chopper down before slumping out of his seat and onto the floor. I'm no medic, so I stepped out to cover the facility entrance and the woods. Cap must have had the same thought, because he did the same on the other side. The mage tended to the rigger, but neither one of them looked like they were doing very well.

I started looking at the debris and death we had just dealt out. "Cap?" I asked sub-vocally, over the radio, "Take a look at these bodies. They're not Cascade Orks."

"Nope." A man of few words, but at least he wasn't jolly any more. "Look at what they're wearing. They're not uniforms, but they might as well be." I could see what he meant. The armor and clothing looked secondhand, cast off, or stolen, but they were all too new. No stains, no permanent wrinkles, no real wear or tear.

"Cover me," I said as I moved up to a small cluster of body parts. Among the bloody mess, there was the unmistakable glint of chrome and plastic. "I'm seeing augmentations, here, Cap." I got to the shaman, who had been splintered, and then turned back into flesh. There wasn't much left that couldn't be described as a smear.

"These guns aren't old, either," Cap said. "They're Ares models. I don't recognize any of them, do you?" I didn't, and I was too distracted by the possibilities of covert Ares ops armed with prototype weapons to notice that Cap hadn't been covering me, which is how we were surprised enough to almost shoot our extraction target when she appeared.

"You must be the extraction team," she said cheerfully and then collapsed on the grass. It wasn't the right code phrase, but it was close enough for us. Her DocWagon emergency bracelet was flashing, but we were many, many clicks out of range of any DocWagon evac team.

Cap scooped up our operative and carried her

back to the Stallion. His look said, "Told you it was a her," without actually saying it. By the time I was strapped in again, Gandalufu was plugged back into the console, and the Dutchman was muttering an incantation over our paycheck. "She's probably going to make it," he said wearily, "but no guarantees. There's no external wounds, but I think she's still bleeding internally. Let's get her back in range of DocWagon." I nodded.

On the way back, I looked over our operative. She was human, though short enough to be a dwarf. I noticed she had a few jacks in her skull, including a datajack and a cranial cyberdeck. I looked at my companions, who were, from front to back, jacked into the chopper, gazing out at the forest, and snoozing. Curiosity got the best of me, so I grabbed a data cable and jacked myself into her deck.

I'm in my hide, waiting for the distraction team that I was promised. I realized, somewhere in the back of my mind, that the operative had a sim rig and had recorded the entire mission. Not just recorded, but annotated and narrated. It was like being back in school, watching documentaries for four hours and writing about them for another four. Then I hear it, long before the rest of the base does. I'm up and moving, dropping into the ventilation shaft, using the approaching helicopter to cover the noise of my descent. The terminal is right where I expected, within reach of the vent. I jack in and I'm in a red room, glistening with static data. No IC? How stupid of them. Wait, there it is, a thin red centurion, barely visible against the backdrop. Nice. No time to admire, I buff up my sleaze programs and hit the main datastore. Search, search for the files. Anti-Astral Readiness Report, Esoteric Shamanic Traditions, Assay of Astral Space in Seattle Homeless Shelters—all copied to cranial memory and deleted from server. Turn to log off, too late to see the IC moving. Sword into persona, too late, fight down stack overflow of biofeedback commands, too late ... too late ... I love you all ...

"Black IC!" I screamed, tearing out the connection at my temple. I was safe, it was just a simulation, but once you've been burned you never forget. I looked around to see if I'd been caught spying on our operative, but the mage just murmured a bit in his sleep, I don't think the rigger was paying attention, and the ork was at least pretending that he didn't hear a thing.

I sat back and thought about it. I couldn't figure out why these files were important, why they were stored way out here, why we were paid to retrieve them, and why this operative was paid to get them and get out. I had a sinking feeling, and I've always listened to my sinking feelings.

Except this once. The pay was good, but not suspiciously good.

RUNNERS OF 2050

The environment of 2050 offers particular challenges to shadowrunners; here are some characters designed to work in the particular circumstances that 2050 offers. They are entry-level characters and are presented with complete game statistics as well as flavor text illustrating how that character might react with the rest of the world.

ADEPT

"You move like a pregnant baboon in mud! Don't know what a baboon is? Frak! You ruined a good line; I'll just have to show you how to fight."

"Hey babe, I treat my body like a temple, why don't you worship it?"

"I know what you're thinking, yeah I could break a brick with my bare hand, but how can I handle a firefight? Yes, I can shoot back and probably kill someone, but a true master would not get into a firefight in the first place. A person of my talent would be able to avoid your security guards as you checked into the hotel room yesterday. A person of my skill would have not triggered any of the alarms entering the back room window as you were still shaving and steal your watch and socks. So here's your watch back. So—am I qualified for the job?"

The adept is a magically active individual who has learned to empower their qi (chi/ki). Instead of casting spells and summoning spirits, he channels the magic internally to improve his physical and mental capabilities above and beyond a normal person. The adept has the capability to use his body as a weapon and move at speeds on par with that of a street samurai. The adept fits into the shadowrun world with many skills that allow him to be a bodyguard, spy, or thief, among other roles. The adept is more than a non-cybernetic killing machine; he has honed his skills through patience and mental discipline, allowing him to avoid conflict through stealth and anticipation.



ADEPT

HUMAN MALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	EDG	M	ESS	INIT	IP
5	4	4 (6)	4	3	3	2	3	3	5	6	7 (9)	1 (3)

Armor (B/I): 8/6

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 11/10

Skills: Athletics skill group 3, Escape Artist 2, Etiquette (Street) 2 (+2), Hardware (Maglocks) 1 (+2), Perception 3, Infiltration 3[5], Shadowing 3, Unarmed Combat (Martial Arts) 6[8] (+2), Pistols 2

Knowledge Skills: Herbalism 3, Martial Art Trids 4

Languages: English 4, Japanese 4, Korean N

Qualities: Allergy (Uncommon, mild), Natural Athlete, Sensitive System

Adept Powers: Great Leap 1 [0.25], Improved Ability (Infiltration) 2 [0.5], Improved Ability (Unarmed Combat) 2 [1], Improved Reflexes 2 [2.5], Improved Sense (Thermal Vision) [0.25], Killing Hands [0.5]

Gear: Armored jacket, certified credstick, DocWagon contract (gold, 1 year), electronic tool kit, fake SIN (Rating 4), maglock passkey (Rating 4), middle class lifestyle (4 months paid), 2 x spare clips (20 rounds of standard ammo), pocket secretary, 4 x tranq patches (Rating 6)

Contacts:

- Fixer (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)
- Street Urchin (Connection 1, Loyalty 1)

Weapons:

- Browning Max-Power [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 10 (c), w/ 10 rounds of standard ammo]

BODYGUARD

“Keep away from windows, stay along the planned route, and if I tell you to run, you run to the location I’ve uploaded to your pocket sec.”

“You could use corporate security, but can you be sure you know where their loyalties lie? Do they care about protecting you or protecting the corporation? Others may be cheaper, but my price comes with references and great reputation. My eyes and ears are always on alert, but my memory is kinda faulty if you get my drift.”

“When you are working, you lead and I follow, but when drek hits the fan, I’m in charge. So it’s kind of like dancing. Or urban brawl.”

With shadowrunning comes the knowledge that there are always jobs available to protect people against whatever’s out there, both on a personal and professional basis. Bodyguards are a unique group of characters who have devoted their time and skill to protecting others. The respected ones are called yojimbo by Japanese corporations, and they live and die by their reputation. Fail once and the yojimbo might as well look for another profession. Whether

it’s as boring as watching some secluded hermit, as annoying as babysitting a corporate brat and making sure she doesn’t get kidnapped, or as exciting as protecting the latest young simsense star while she’s on tour, the jobs bodyguards take on will find new ways to test their mettle. Bodyguards live by a moral code, the promise they give to risk their lives to save the life of a stranger. The bodyguard has a varied range of friends and contacts, including those that he has protected, giving him a good reputation. Unless, of course, one of those clients is currently six feet under.

BODYGUARD

ORK MALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	EDG	ESS	INIT	IP
8	3	4 (5)	5	3	4	3	3	2	1.25	8 (9)	1 (2)

Armor (B/I): 8/6

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 12/10

Skills: Electronics skill group 2, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Perception 4, Negotiation 4, Pistols (Semi-Automatic) 3 (+2), Stealth skill group 2

Knowledge Skills: Seattle Street Gangs 4, Seattle Safe Houses 3, Security Design 2, Street Knowledge (Puyallup Barrens) 3 Street Knowledge (Tacoma) 4

Languages: English N, Japanese 3, Salish 3

Qualities: Adrenaline Surge, Restricted Gear, School of Hard Knocks, SINner (Standard)

Augmentations:

- Dermal plating 3*, skillwires 3, smartlink, wired reflexes 1

Active Softs: Unarmed Combat 3, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Pilot Aircraft 3, armored jacket, bug scanner (Rating 4), Doc Wagon contract (Basic), 3 spare clips, fake SIN (Rating 4), Hyundai Shin-Hyung, middle class lifestyle (2 months paid), pocket secretary, portable phone (earplug phone), Très Chic clothing, white noise generator (Rating 2)

Contacts:

- Fixer (Connection 3, Loyalty 3)
- Lone Star Beat Cop (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)
- Halloweener Seattle Street Gang Leader (Connection 2, Loyalty 1)

Weapons:

- Ares Predator [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15(c), w/ smartlink, 10 rounds of ammo]

* Restricted Gear

BURNED-OUT MAGE

“Magic is like working with electricity. Sure it can be used for all kinds of things, but at some point you’ll be using too high of a voltage and electrocute your hoop. The adage of what doesn’t kill you will make you stronger is a load of drek. Trust me kid, sooner or later in this line of work, you’ll find that a smartlinked weapon is much more reliable than a fireball. It won’t cost you a thing except the price of ammo.”

The burned-out mage has become disillusioned and cynical about the path of magic after some personal loss or injury that has crippled his magical capability. The burned-out mage has turned to substituting magic with technology. The installation of cybernetics has put him on a bitter path to complete severance from what few people could ever dream of seeing or doing. Ironically there’s still a small part of him trying to kindle the spark of magic he once loved, holding onto talisman and fetishes. He lives a new life in the shadows, avoiding the circle of contacts he once knew, both to avoid a reminder of what he could do and to keep anyone from taking advantage of what he has lost. When he has rebuilt his skills—whether they be magic-based or not—then perhaps he will make contact with them.

BURNED-OUT MAGE

HUMAN MALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	EDG	M	ESS	INIT	IP
4	3	3	3	3	3	4	5	5 (3)	2	5.7 (4.7)	6	1

Armor (B/I): 6/4

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 10/11

Skills: Arcana 3, Assensing 3, Binding 4, Blades 3, Dodge 2, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Longarms (Shotgun) 2 (+2), Pistols (Semi-automatics) 3 (+2), Perception 3, Spellcasting 5

Knowledge Skills: Magic Theory 6, Music Groups 2, Parabotany 4, Parazoology 4

Languages: English 3, Spanish 3, Uto-Aztec N

Qualities: Addiction (Moderate), Geas (Gestures), SINner (Standard)

Augmentations: Smartlink (alphaware), cybereyes [w/ low-light, thermographic], hand razors

Magic: (all learned with Fetish) Combat Sense, Detect Magic, Fire Ball, Mana Bolt

Gear: Certified credstick, fake SIN (Rating 4), 2 x Combat spell fetishes, 2 x Detection spell fetishes, DocWagon contract (gold, 1 year), elemental binding materials (Force 3), lined coat, low-class lifestyle (4 months paid), 2 spare clips (standard ammo), 5 extra rounds of ammo for shotgun, pocket secretary, smart goggles

Contacts:

- Fixer (Connection 1, Loyalty 2)
- Bartender (Connection 1, Loyalty 2)
- Talismonger (Connection 3, Loyalty 2)

Weapons:

- Fichetti Security 500 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC (1), w/ smartgun system, 10 rounds explosive ammo]
- Defiance T-250 [Shotgun, DV 9P(f), AP +5, SA, RC —, 5(m), w/ 5 rounds regular ammo]



DECKER

"I am a wizard of technology. My cantrips and incantations are comprised of bits and bytes ordered in the language of the machine. The mighty computer is at my command, ready to perform with my merest thought."

"I'm no script-kiddie hacking from a turtle in my parent's basement. I am a decker. This is my deck. You want some IC cracked? You need some pay data retrieved? I'm your girl. I've got some SOTA software that can slide past the best. Ain't no corp tracer or ground hound is going to pick up my trail. I am a ghost in the grid. Only the whisper of my street name can be heard in the Matrix, if I let it."

"You better have plenty on your credstick chummer, I ain't cheap. I'm a big leaguer, up there with Fastjack, only with better toys and a youthful attitude."

The decker is the next generation of the computer hacker of the latter part of the 20th century. With the advanced technology learned from the great Crash and the Echo Mirage team that fought the Crash virus, she has given corporations a run for their money in a brutal virtual combat of wits and software. The decker jacks in to manipulate the dataflows to her will, while seeking a big payoff or legendary run that will put her into the annals of Matrix history.

DECKER

HUMAN FEMALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	EDG	ESS	INIT	IP
4	3	3	3	3	4	5	3	2	5.7	7	1

Armor (B/I): 6/4

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 10/10

Skills: Clubs (Bats) 2 (+2), Cracking skill group 4, Electronics skill group 4, Etiquette (Street) 4(+2), Perception 4, Pilot Groundcraft (Motorcycle) 2 (+2), Pistols (Semi-automatics) 2 (+2)

Knowledge Skills: Computer Theory 6, Matrix Games 4, Matrix Hangouts 4, Matrix Security 4, Musical Groups 4

Languages: English N, Gaelic 3

Augmentations: Datajack (Rating 3), Headware Memory (20 Mp)

Gear: Armor vest, concealed holster, 2 x cylinders standard ammo, data codebreaker (Rating 3), dataline scanner (Rating 4), dataline tap (Rating 4), fake SIN (Rating 4), middle class lifestyle (3 months paid), pocket secretary, smartlink goggles, Fuchi Cyber-2, Fuchi Cyber-4 [MPCP 4, Hardening 3, Memory I/O 3, Storage 500], Yamaha Rapier

Programs: Attack 6, Browse 4, Deception 4

Contacts:

Fixer (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)
Reporter (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)

Weapons:

Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, DV 6P, AP -2, SS, RC -, 6 (cy), w/ smartgun system, 6 rounds standard ammo]



DETECTIVE

"So you say your husband didn't come home from work last night? Are there any bunnaku parlors in the area? Never mind, I can find him. Send me his telecom number and my proposed fee and I'll have him back to you in a few days."

"Peter. Look, remember that time I helped your brother out with evidence in his divorce? I just need a quick peek at the shipping logs for last Tuesday. It's not like I'm going to steal the contents, you've seen my office. Where would I hide it all?"

The detective is not quite a street samurai, and she lives in the grey area of legality that traditional shadowrunners often only visit. The detective works her contacts and the streets to get the answers her client demands. Corporations have many things to hide and it's no surprise that her work is sometimes in conflict with their policy. The detective is not above doing a little B&E or espionage in order to complete her work. While her day job is legit, she could moonlight as a shadowrunner with her talents when cash is tight.

DETECTIVE

HUMAN FEMALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	EDG	ESS	INIT	IP
3	4	3	3	3	5	3	4	3	4.4	8	1

Armor (B/I): 6/4

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 11/10

Skills: Electronics skill group 3, Etiquette (Corporate) 4 (+2), Negotiation 4, Perception 4, Stealth skill group 3, Pistols (Semi-automatics) 3 (+2), Unarmed Combat 3

Knowledge Skills: Ares Corporation 4, Corporate Politics 4, Seattle Street gangs 5, Security Systems 5, Seattle Black Markets 4

Languages: English N, Russian 1, Tlinglit 1

Qualities: Day Job (1,000/10 hrs), SINner (Standard)

Gear: Armor vest, concealed holster, earbuds [Rating 2 w/ select sound filter], electronic tool kit, Ford Americar (weather-beaten), glasses [Rating 3 w/ thermographic, vision enhancement 2], low class lifestyle (4 months paid), micro-recorder, pocket secretary, portable phone (wrist phone), smart goggles (w/ low-light), 1 spare clip (standard ammo)

Contacts:

- Fixer (Connection 3, Loyalty 3)
- Corporate Secretary #1 (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)
- Corporate Secretary #2 (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)
- Beat Cop (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)
- Troll Club Bouncer (Connection 2, Loyalty 1)
- Mafia Enforcer (Connection 2, Loyalty 3)

Weapons:

- Ares Predator [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15(c), w/ 10 rounds of ammo]
- Walther Palm Pistol [Hold-Out, DV 4P, AP -, SS/BF, RC -, 2(b), w/ 2 rounds standard ammo]



SHADOWRUN 2050



FORMER COMPANY MAN

"Let's get one thing straight, my allegiance to the father company has ended. If you have a job against any of its assets, I'm all for it. Do you really believe the rumors over at Federated Boeing last month? Only an amateur would make that much noise. Besides, no one can prove I was there. Look, I still work with the same professionalism as I did back then and I still use the same 'no questions asked' attitude in completing a job. If I can't do the job, I probably know someone who can. So let's talk price and details."

The former company man had steady employment, perks, and privileges within the corporation. He had every advantage that corporate backing could provide. Then one day, the company man realized the corruption or injustice that his company was doing. Even worse, understanding the jobs he had to do for the corporation caused some of that injustice. He terminated his employment and set out on his own, occasionally below the corporate radar so they won't come looking for the toys that were appropriated after leaving. One day he'll finally right a few wrongs, settle a few scores, and retire.

FORMER COMPANY MAN

HUMAN MALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	EDG	ESS	INIT	IP
5	3 (4)	4 (6)	4 (5)	2	4	3	3	3	1.8	10	3

Armor (B/I): 8/6

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 11/10

Skills: Automatics (SMG) 3 (+2), Computer 2, Close Combat skill group 4, Etiquette (Corporate) 4 (+2), Intimidation (Physical) 1 (+2), Perception 4, Pilot Groundcraft (Wheeled) 2 (+2), Pistols 3, Stealth skill group 3

Knowledge Skills: Corporate (specific company) Politics 5, Corporate (specific company) Security 5, Lone Star Procedure 4, Security Devices 4

Languages: English N, German 3

Qualities: Record on File, SINner (standard), Tough as Nails (1), Vendetta

Augmentations: Datajack, display link, muscle replacement 1, smartlink, wired reflexes 2 (alphaware)

Gear: Armor jacket, bug scanner (Rating 4), Bulldog Step-Van, fake SIN rating 4, glasses [Rating 3 w/ thermographic, vision enhancement 2], low class lifestyle (3 months paid), jammer (Rating 4), medkit, portable phone (earplug phone), pocket secretary, 2 spare clips for SMG (standard ammo), 1 spare clip for Fichetti Pistol (standard ammo), survival kit, 5 x tranq patches (Rating 5), 5 x trauma patches, white noise generator (Rating 6)

Contacts:

- Fixer (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)
- Corporate Secretary (Connection 3, Loyalty 1)
- Corporate Security Officer (Connection 2, Loyalty 1)
- Lonestar Lieutenant (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)
- Yakuza Boss (Connection 2, Loyalty 3)

Weapons:

- Fichetti Security 500 [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC (1), w/ smartgun system, 10 rounds explosive ammo]
- HK227 SMG [Submachine Gun, DV 5P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC (1), 28(c), w/ standard ammo]



FORMER WAGE MAGE

"You can see that my skills are proficient enough for you to not ask for references. Let us not sour our mutual and profitable arrangement to deal with trivia, as I refuse to bring up the past. I am a free agent and am well versed in sorcery as well as a few rituals and enchanting. Please sit, tell me what your problem is and I'll see how my talents can help solve it."

The former wage mage lived the sheltered corporate life with a free education, access to advanced occult libraries, even indoctrination into a corporate-sponsored guild for mentorship. But like the former company man, the wage mage didn't connect well with the company. Maybe she fled in disgust after uncovering corruption; maybe she got caught up in the imagined thrill of running the shadows; or perhaps she just wanted to get out from under the oppressive smothering of the company. Whatever the case, the wage mage became a self-employed freelancer, launching into a career in the streets with whatever she managed to take with her. This doesn't sit well with her former employer. With so much invested in the mage, they attempt to make life difficult for her to force the wage mage back into the fold. She has the skills and training she learned from the company and uses them at her discretion, hoping to even up a few scores.

FORMER WAGE MAGE

ORK FEMALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	EDG	M	ESS	INIT	IP
4	3	3	4	5	3	4	5	2	5	6	6	1

Armor (B/I): 6/4

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 10/11

Skills: Banishing 3, Binding 4, Counterspelling 4, Etiquette (Corporate) 3 (+2), Negotiation 2, Perception 3, Pistols (Semi-automatics) 1 (+2), Spellcasting 6, Unarmed Combat 2

Knowledge Skills: Corporate (specific corporation) Politics 3, Magic Theory 6, Parageology 4, Psychology 4

Languages: English N, Sperethiel 4

Qualities: Allergy (Common, Mild), Hung Out to Dry, Record on File, SINer (Standard)

Spells: Armor (Physical), Fireball, Heal, Increase Reflexes, Manabolt

Gear: Certified credstick, computer media hermetic library (Rating 3), concealed holster, DocWagon contract (gold, 1 year), elemental binding materials (Force 3), fake SIN (Rating 4), Fuchi Cyber-2 (data terminal), lined coat, middle class lifestyle (6 months paid), pocket secretary, smart goggles, 1 spare clip (standard ammo)

Weapons:

Ares Predator [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15(c), w/ smartlink, 10 rounds of ammo]



RIGGER

"If you want to get around town, call a taxi. If you want to get out of town and shake off pursuing security at break-neck speeds, call me."

"Most people don't understand riggers. It's one thing to be behind the wheel, driving at speeds exceeding the speed limit, it's another to be the vehicle. Experiencing the revving of the turbine engines like flexing of muscle or the rush of air over your hull. It's an adrenaline rush beyond comparison."

The rigger is a specialized driver—a console cowgirl, a vehicle persona. She trades in her mundane sensations for a digital translation of all the components of a vehicle. Jacked in, she experiences and controls the vehicle as she would her own body. The immersion allows for faster reaction and finer control that even a great driver couldn't handle. Damage to a vehicle is equally relatable as painful feedback back to the rigger's mind. At the end of the day however, she can separate her perceptions from the machine and walk away without giving it another thought. Until she sleeps later and dreams a vehicle's dreams.

RIGGER

HUMAN FEMALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	ESS	INIT	IP
4	4	5	4	2	4	2	3	1.35	9	1

Armor (B/I): 8/6

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 10/10

Skills: Automotive Mechanic 3, Clubs 2, Computer 2, Etiquette (Corporate) 2 (+2), Gunnery 4, Hardware 2, Perception 4, Pilot Groundcraft (Wheeled Vehicle) 6 (+2), Pilot Aircraft 2, Pilot Anthroform 2, Pistols 3

Knowledge Skills: Historical Ground Vehicles 4, Internal Combustion Engines 4

Languages: English N, German 4

Qualities: Juryrigger, Thrillseeker

Augmentations: Cybereyes (w/ low-light vision, flare compensation, protective covers, and thermographic), datajack (Rating 3), radio, smartlink [.5], vehicle control rig (Rating 2)

Gear: Armor jacket, DocWagon contract (Gold, 6 months), Eurocar Westwind 2000 (Rigger Adapted), fake SIN (Rating 4), Harley-Davidson Scorpion, pocket secretary, 2 clips of standard ammo

Contacts:

Fixer (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)

Weapons:

Ares Predator [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15(c), w/ 10 rounds of ammo]





MERCENARY

"I'll work for money, marbles, or any cause you believe in, provided my price has been met."

"Conservation of ammo is for sissies. If I'm going to shoot you, I'm going to give you everything I got, both out of respect for an adversary and because I don't want you to shoot back. Is there a problem with me being a troll? There better not be. A watari-kashi troll is an expensive combination to double cross."

Mercenaries and street samurai may sometimes look and act alike, but they are distinguished by moral/code of conduct differences. Mercenaries work for the highest bidder and don't care what the job is, so long as they get paid; street samurai have a code of conduct beyond simply getting paid. Mercenaries are called watari-kashi by the Japanacorp, and some Mr. Johnsons have distaste for hiring watari-kashi for any job that requires finesse or contains some element that can be exploited for retaliation. A mercenary's reputation is both a curse and a blessing. Work is plentiful and without much thought, but it's brutal and taxing on the body. Cybernetics becomes a necessity for life, not just the lifestyle.

MERCENARY

TROLL MALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	ESS	INIT	IP
8	3	5 (7)	8	2	4	2	4	14	9 (11)	1 (3)

Armor (B/I): 8/6

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 12/10

Skills: Athletics 2, Blades (Combat Axe) 3 (+2), Demolitions 2, Etiquette (Street) 2 (+2), Firearms skill group 4, Gunnery 2, Infiltration 3, Perception 3, Pilot Groundcraft 1, Unarmed Combat 3

Knowledge Skills: Architecture 4, Demolitions 4, Historical Firearms 4

Languages: English N, German 4

Qualities: Distinctive Style, Media Junkie (Mild), Resistance to Toxins, SINner (Criminal)

Augmentations: Cybereyes (w/ low-light, thermographic), cyberleg [alphaware, obvious, lower, left, w/ hydraulic jack 3, spur], cyberleg [alphaware, obvious, lower, right, w/ hydraulic jack 3, spur], datajack, smartlink (alphaware), wired reflexes 2 (alphaware)

Gear: Armor jacket, Doc Wagon contract (basic, 1 year), fake SIN (Rating 4), Harley Davidson Scorpion, low class lifestyle (6 months paid), micro-transceiver, pocket secretary, 100 rounds of regular ammo, 50 rounds of explosive ammo

Contacts:

Fixer (Connection 2, Loyalty 1)

Weapons:

Combat Axe [Blade, Reach 2, DV 8P, AP -1]

AK-97 [Assault Rifle, DV 6P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC -, 38(c)]

Ingram White Knight [LMG, DV 6P, AP -1, BF/FA, RC 3, 50(c), w/ laser sight, hip-brace]

ROCKER

"The glare of the lights, the camera, the beat, and the roar of the crowd; I live and breathe rock music! It's the wiz chummer. No one can silence me or bring me down while I'm out on stage. What I say energizes the masses! I may not have hit big time yet, but you know Concrete Dreams played here before they hit big time. It's my turn now. Launch code for the stars chummer! Launch code for the stars!"

"Better change your tempo chummer or you're hoop is going to feel a drum solo from an LMG!"

The rocker is not a professional shadowrunner; he's someone addicted to the experience, in it for the rush of running, using it as his muse to fuel his music. The rocker has many skills to work different angles of a shadowrun other than killing people. This becomes helpful when a frontal assault is out of the question. He came up from the streets the hard way and is determined not to go back. He'll use both the shadows and the spotlight to get to the top."

ROCKER

ELF MALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	ESS	INIT	IP
3	4	3 (5)	4	5	3	3	3	4.4	6 (8)	1 (2)

Armor (B/I): 8/6

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 10/10

Skills: Artisan (Synthguitar) 4 (+2), Computers 3, Con 4, Disguise 2, Etiquette (Media) 4 (+2), Infiltration 3, Perception 2, Pilot Ground Craft 1, Pistols 3, Unarmed Combat (Mixed Martial Arts) 3 (+2)

Knowledge Skills: French Cuisine 3, Latest Music Bands 3, Music Theory 5

Languages: English N, French 3, Japanese 4

Qualities: Day Job (2,500/20 Hrs), Fame (Local), SINner (Standard), Thrill Seeker, Trustworthy (Con)

Augmentations: Boosted reflexes (Rating 2), datajack (Rating 3), synthlink [15]

Gear: Armored jacket, luxury class lifestyle (3 months paid), fake SIN (Rating 4), Glasses [Rating 3 w/ thermographic, vision enhancement 2], pocket secretary, synthguitar, Très Chic clothes, Yamaha Rapier, 1 spare clip (regular ammo)

Contacts

Fixer (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)

Music Agent (Connection 3, Loyalty 4)

Media Blogger (Connection 1, Loyalty 2)

Weapons:

Beretta Model IO1T [Light Pistol, DV 4P, AP -, SA, RC -, 12(c), w/ detachable stock]





SHAMAN

"The Grey Sky and Winter Wind will watch over us on our mission. No, really, I'm on good terms with them. I see connections of living things to the astral world and I see that you seem agitated about something. Tell me your troubles as I may be able to fix it."

"I have a foreboding feeling within this house. Allow me to contact the hearth spirit of this abode to guide our path."

When magic returned to the world, it gave strength to the many tribes and led to the formation of the Native American Nations (NAN). Shamans, those who practice magic in the traditional ways of their people, could be found in numbers similar to hermetic mages working in the shadows. The shaman is more in tune with the astral plane and seeks to preserve its harmony more than an ordinary mage. He also abhors the encroachment of technology that sterilizes the world and invades the body.

SHAMAN

HUMAN MALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	ESS	INIT	IP
3	2	3	3	5	4	3	5	6	7	1

Armor (B/I): 6/4

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 10/11

Skills: Arcana 2, Assensing 2, Banishing 4, Enchanting 2, Etiquette (Tribal) 3 (+2), Perception 3, Pistols (Semi-automatics) 1 (+2), Sorcery skill group 4, Summoning 5

Knowledge Skills: Magic Theory 6, Parabotany 4, Parazoology 4

Languages: English 3, Salish 4, Sioux N

Qualities: Allergy (common, mild), Mentor Spirit (Free), SINner (Standard), Spirit Affinity

Spells: Heal, Improved Invisibility, Mana Barrier, Manabolt, Powerball

Gear: Armor vest, fake SIN (Rating 4), sustaining foci (Rating 3), middle class lifestyle (6 months), medicine lodge materials (Force 5), pocket secretary, smart goggles, 1 spare clip (regular pistol ammo)

Contacts:

- Fixer (Connections 2, Loyalty 2)
- Talismonger (Connections 2, Loyalty 2)
- Tribal Leader (Connections 3, Loyalty 3)

Weapons:

- Ares Predator [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15(c), w/ 10 rounds of ammo]



STREET MAGE

“Slotting the clock to turn nuyen for the corp is like selling your body, chummer. You prostitute the magic. I have quite a collection of arcane books—a few, you should note, are digital copies. I keep an open mind on the various theories and magical formulas in order to improve my own skills. It beats being kept in a corporate closet and fed mandated arcane scripts sanctioned by a corporate guild.”

The street mage has avoided the lure of corporate money to keep herself free to do whatever she wants. Her raw magical talent has been honed and sculpted by surviving the streets. The street mage has gathered tidbits of arcane knowledge from others out there, allowing her to pick and choose her own path of enlightenment. She has all the heart, energy and stubbornness of youth, slightly tempered by reality. While she is often forced to take jobs that may seem to contradict her goals, she figures that everything will work out in the end.

STREET MAGE

HUMAN FEMALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	EDG	M	ESS	INIT	IP
5	3	2	3	4	3	5	3	3	6	6	5	1

Armor (B/I): 6/4

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 11/10

Skills: Banishing 2, Binding 5, Etiquette (street) 4 (+2), Perception 3, Pistols 2, Sorcery group 4, Unarmed Combat 2

Knowledge Skills: Latest Trids 4, Magic Theory 6

Languages: English N

Qualities: Astral Chameleon, Sensitive Systems, SINner (Standard)

Spells: Chaotic World, Improved Invisibility, Lightning Bolt, Manaball

Gear: Armored vest, Chrysler-Nissan Jackrabbit, computer media hermetic library (Rating 3), concealed holster, elemental binding materials (Force 4), fake SIN (Rating 4), low class lifestyle (4 months paid), pocket secretary

Contacts:

Fixer (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)

Weapons:

Streetline Special Pistol [Hold-out, DV 4P, AP —, SS, RC —, 6(c)]



STREET SAMURAI

"The streets may look like chaos and misery, but it's the land of opportunity for me. I've been working the shadows long enough. Believe me; I have enough experience to handle whatever work you want done. I'm still alive aren't I? That should be all the credentials that you need."

"You requested a street samurai, so you should understand what that all entails. I have a reputation to uphold, so if it's mindless destruction and mayhem you want, call a mercenary. I can respect you keeping some details ambiguous in your line of work, but if you do not tell me something that I need to know, you will find how sharp my edge is."

Street samurai survive on their ability to kill, and kill quickly, but they are not mere death machines. Being a street samurai means following a whole code of conduct somewhat similar to European knights, American gunslingers, and Japanese samurai. Many people claim they are street sammies, but only a handful can live up to the reputation. They may be romanticized, but they are born of the streets and are as tough as their alloy steel bones. They run the shadows, protect others when the drek hits the fan and protecting their honor at all turns.

STREET SAMURAI

ORK MALE

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	ESS	INIT	IP
6	4 (6)	3 (5)	6 (8)	2	3	3	3	1.1	6 (8)	1 (3)

Armor (B/I): 8/6

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 11/10

Skills: Automatics (SMG) 3 (+2), Close Combat skill group 4, Electronics skill group 2, Etiquette (Street) 3 (+2), Infiltration 4, Perception 4, Pistols (Semi-Auto) 2 (+2), Shadowing 3

Knowledge Skills: Corporate Security 4, Redmond Barren Area Knowledge 4, Seattle Black Markets 4, Seattle Safehouses 4, Seattle Real Coffee Shops 2

Languages: English N

Qualities: Addiction (Moderate), Distinctive Style (1), High Pain Tolerance (1)

Augmentations: Cybereyes (w/ low-light, thermographic), hand razors, muscle replacement 2 (alphaware), smartlink, wired reflexes 2 (alphaware)

Gear: Armored jacket, bug scanner (Rating 4), DocWagon™ contract (platinum, 3 months), fake SIN (Rating 4), Harley-Davidson Scorpion, pocket secretary, middle class lifestyle (6 months paid), microtransceiver, portable phone (wrist phone), white noise generator (Rating 4), 1 spare clip for Uzi (explosive ammo), 1 spare clip for Ares Predator (regular ammo)

Contacts:

- Fixer (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)
- Lone Star Cop (Connection 3, Loyalty 2)
- Mafia Enforcer (Connection 2, Loyalty 3)

Weapons:

- Ares Predator [Heavy Pistol, DV 5P, AP -1, SA, RC -, 15(c), w/ 10 rounds of ammo]
- Katana [Blade, Reach 1, DV 6P (7P), AP -1]
- Uzi III [SMG, DV 5P, AP -, BF, RC (1), 24(c), w/ silencer, smartgun system, regular ammo]





LIFE IN 2050

THINGS ARE A LITTLE WEIRD

Welcome to 2050, chummer. It's a world filled with squatters and megacorp execs, magicians and Matrix deckers, gangers and street samurai, spirits, secrets, and dragons. Yeah, it looks a lot like the 2070s, but if you spend most of your *Shadowrun* time in that decade you're going to find 2050 a little weird. This section is here to help.

For the most part, you'll be able to play *Shadowrun: Twentieth Anniversary Edition* just like you always have. There are no real changes to the rules here (although there are for decking and magic, so if you're looking for hard game mechanics, scan those chapters). Still, there are differences.

CALAMITY, DISASTER, AND CARNAGE

The sun rose on the new year of 2050 at the end of a series of destabilizing and depopulating events. War in North America was just a start. When ten percent of the world goblinized from humans into orks and trolls, not all of them survived. The Crash of '29 was directly responsible for the deaths of thousands and indirectly for the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives. Rebellion seized the world with various levels of violence, resulting in the fracturing of nations. Terrorist groups learned how to use magic and technology to create even more spectacular incidents of death and dismemberment. The rising megacorps took care of their own employee-citizens but took resources away from those on the outside, resulting in widespread famine. The VITAS plague killed millions, and then millions more on its various comeback tours. The number of people who have died due to lax regulation of air, water, and soil pollution, is uncountable, mostly because nobody bothers to count them anymore.

Humanity has been rocked back on it's heels, to be sure, and it hasn't been given the time or the tools to recover yet. The megas are tucked into their own holdings, with only the barest cooperation up on the Zurich Orbital station. Governments try to muddle along as best they can, navigating budget cuts, policlubs, and corporate interests while trying to keep their citizens just alive enough to vote. Your average Joe Wageslave gets by as best he can. It's a perfect storm for shadowrunning.

CASTING SHADOWS

Those with a lot of power, like megacorps, governments, big criminal syndicates, and dragons in their webs of puppet strings, are too shackled by the big clumsy instruments of their might to make anything happen quickly. Power players like that cast big shadows, but they're shadows that don't really move. Shadowrunners are the go-getters that the suits need to make things happen without all the red tape, approvals, or paper trail.

On the other hand, folks with the organizational get-go to make things happen don't have the power they need to back up what they want. Policlubs, street gangs and petty criminal organizations, smaller corps, and innocent individuals usually have a plan, but they don't have the resources or the ability to make it happen. Shadowrunners have the ability to put pressure in all the right places, which makes them the perfect people to hire when you're a small soy-potato substitute.

Of course, there's also the whole discretion thing for both kinds of clients. Deniability is a key advantage of hiring shadowrunners. It's something they're good at. The ones that are still around, anyway.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE INFORMATION

In 2050, the Matrix is pretty much the global computer network it always has been. It's a staggering network of host machines connected to thousands of local telecommunications grids that are attached to regional telecommunications grids that are connected to each other by various wiz technical wires and widgets.

But (ain't there always a "but" somewhere?) it's not actually designed for everyone. Most people don't use the Matrix directly. For the most part, it's their wrist phones, home dataterms, trid sets, and email clients that are really using the Matrix on behalf of their owners. Matrix searches for data are unheard of, partially because nobody's providing information for free searches, but mostly because most people think of the Matrix the same way folks used to think of the telephone grid. Deckers aren't most people, but you can read all about how they do it in a different chapter.

Of course, knowledge is power, and you've got jobs to do and shadows to run. That's where your contacts come in. Shadowrunners in the '50s rely on their contacts like your itchy trigger finger relies on Fabrique Nationale d'Herstal. And they're happy to

help, as long as you don't interfere with their day jobs and make sure it's worth their time with cash, gifts, or favors. Be good to your contacts, and they'll be good to you. You need them.

REACH OUT AND TOUCH SOMEONE

For the most part, communication in 2050 is done through email, or via phone call (with or without vid). There are a few private mail carriers for the old-fashioned hardcopy folks who like the smell of Calci-Sheet™, and of course there are package delivery carriers galore.

Most wireless phone carriers are local, so you need to buy a new phone if you leave your metroplex. The radio signals aren't encrypted, of course, so you always risk operational security when you use them. Phones that are hooked up to the system directly are better (everybody knows that you can't bug a fiber optic cable), but of course the megacorps would be stupid to carry so many phone conversations and not record them in some way.

Short-range radios are even better when you're on a run. Anybody can pick them up if they know your frequency, but at least they have to be close to pick up your conversations. Encryption can be had for your radio, if you have the resources, and that will help even more.

In the end, face-to-face meetings are safest. Not safe, chummer, just safer than the other ways.

YOU NEED MORE STUFF

It's hard, these days, to find something that isn't branded, trademarked, or advertised. Almost nothing is made any more, just manufactured. Consumerism is the way of the future, and the future is here.

You want a suit? That's great, but it comes cut in a very distinctive design that everybody recognizes as Creek's End, a wholly owned subsidiary of De Button, part of the Aztechnology family of companies. That simsense player you got looks great, but unless you paid a premium for it, the planned obsolescence is going to kick in after another couple of months.

Even charity work comes with branding. Who can forget the images from the Seattle mall bombings, especially the stunned little elf girl, face streaked with tears, covered by a Renraku-red blanket with the large logo wrapped like a warm, reassuring embrace around her side? That sort of thing is par for the course.

Expect to be advertised to everywhere you go. It might be in the form of direct advertisements vying for your attention at you as you travel through the sprawl. It might be passive, with branding everywhere, even on the things you find cast-off in the barrens and slums.

Stuff in the Shadows

The fact that people don't use the Matrix all that often is a good thing for those of us making a living buying and selling things without reporting it on our tax returns. Inventory control is just as good as it ever was, which is to say it's not that hard for things to fall off the back of a truck every now and again. Maybe somebody will figure out a way to make it easy to use the Matrix to keep the embezzlement to a minimum, but until then, there's a thriving black market for everything from salt shakers to assault cannons.

But (definitely always a "but") making the goods move from the legitimate distribution chain to the one that only takes cash is really hard work. The theft redistribution needs to be covered up by the driver, retailer, or wholesaler if they're going to keep making a profit. The corps themselves are in on the action, not wanting to miss a sweet deal on black-market fluctuations, but it's not easy to set up and maintain the back channels they need in order to maintain deniability with the shareholders. In the end, it means that shadowrunners can pay up to four times as much for goods and services when they're purchased off the black market.

You could buy your stuff the legit way, if your fake SIN and licenses are up to the task. Most people just buy things through their contacts, who can usually offer what you need at little to no markup, if it's in their bailiwick. If it's not—well, good luck buying a spell focus from an automotive mechanic or a political activist.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

Corporations, governments, and pretty much everybody else want to keep tabs on who you are, what you buy, to whom you owe taxes, and under whose jurisdiction you fall. Shadowrunners by definition rely on anonymity in their dealings with the Sixth World. We believe the conflict of interest here is obvious.

SINs

Everyone born in the civilized world is assigned a System Identification Number, or SIN. It's a really long number that encodes your basic identification information, circumstances of birth, parentage, upbringing, education, demographics of all kinds, credit rating, and a lot of other things. Shadowrunners have, of course, ditched their SIN (if they ever had one to begin with), and probably have a number of SINs that aren't theirs. This makes basic commerce tricky for a shadowrunner, but that's why we have friends, ne? If you've been paying attention, you know that your contacts will never ask for your SIN, just your nuyen.



Credsticks

A credstick is a digital wallet. It's also a keyring, debit card, stack of membership and customer loyalty cards, file full of licenses and certifications, credit record, and if you have two of them you can eat ramen with them. Sure, you've probably seen them around in 2070, but there's almost no call to use them in the wireless world.

Most credsticks are about the size and shape of a ballpoint pen, only slightly larger and longer. Each one has an interface that varies by manufacturer, ranging from two or more stubby buttons, dial rings, and even touch panels on the more wiz versions, and of course a display so you can see what you're doing. Security on a credstick ranges from a passcode to biometric data like fingerprints, retina pattern, etc. There are lots of novelty credsticks available, like knife handles, pocket watches, jewelry, chibi JetBlack dolls, really anything that can fit a small screen and a computer the size of a dwarf's thumbnail.

Credsticks have a pointed plug to connect to credstick readers, as well as their own small jack that can receive other credsticks for transfers between individuals. Slot the stick and shift the cash. When that happens, your bank, (or money changer, or shadow escrow service, or whatever service is holding your cash) communicates with the other bank (or whatever) and, based on the settings of both parties, transfer the money directly from account to account. No fuss, no muss.

Certified credsticks work a little differently. They're like cash envelopes, and can be used by anybody. The money's still in an account somewhere, but the information for that account is stored in the credstick's firmware based on an encryption that ... aw, who the frag cares about the technical details? Certified credsticks are cool untraceable cash, plain and simple.

Rated Credsticks

Credsticks (mostly the certified ones) are rated by banks in a sort of unofficial rating system of colors, and people use them the same way you might flash a fat wallet or drive around in a posh Saab 776CI with the top down. A silver credstick usually means that it's worth more than 5,000¥. A gold credstick says twenty grand, and a platinum one practically screams that its worth over 200,000¥. An ebony credstick is normally only issued for a pile of nuyen worth over a million. The banks charge a fee for certifying a credstick with a certain rating, usually between three and five percent of the minimum for the rating you buy, whichever is greater. Credstick ratings are great and all, but anybody can buy a rated credstick and



flash it around, even if it's only got enough on it for a bag of soy chips. Besides, the actual credstick doesn't have to physically be the color of its rating, and there are plenty of unrated credsticks colored gold or ebony available from your local CheapMart, but once you slot them the difference is obvious.

Documents, Please

Credsticks are also used for ID or to check your licenses. When this happens, it's just like a SIN check (p. 267, *SR4A*). These checks only happen when your credstick is actually being used to check your identity and/or documentation. Nobody cares where the money is coming from as long as it's coming to them.

THE FASHIONABLE AND THE FASHION

Shadowrunners have been around for a while now, but it hasn't been until recently they've come into fashion. We live in a world where most people are prisoners of circumstance, whether it be poverty, wage slavery, a dead-end middle management job, corporate responsibilities, or high-society expectations. To them, you as a shadowrunner represent freedom, personal empowerment, independence, and (thanks to Mr. JetBlack) sexiness. Take a bow, chummer.

As a result of all this shadowrunning romanticism, cyberpunk is all the rage. High-class gatherings saw plenty of rich people sporting expensive faux-armored clothing until somebody figured out they could charge even more for real armored clothing. People slip Cityspeak into their colorful language instead of older curse words to show that they are deep into the shadowy mystique that is shadowrunning. Dilettantes galore have their armored jackets, datajacks, cyberware, hold-out pistols, and rugged, hard-edged looks.

Of course, there's a danger in popularity. The more successful you are as a runner, the more likely somebody will be following your career. The more people follow your career, the more likely you are to be recognized. Some people have managed to pull off this public/secret life, but don't count on it being you.

IN SHORT ...

Shoot straight. Conserve ammo. And never, ever, cut a deal with a dragon.

SLANG AND CITYSPEAK

Part of walking the walk is talking the talk. Shadowrunners have lots of exposure to the underworld and the streets, and there's a lingo that goes with those places. For some, slang is part of their identity.

Some areas of the sprawl are so thick with slang terms and crude grammar that it's become another language: Cityspeak. Cityspeak is technically English, but almost unintelligible to those from more civilized areas of the sprawl.

To help you out, here's a free list of some slang and Cityspeak terms you can use in your career. It's hardly a Cityspeak dictionary, but you can use it to get by on your next trip to the Ork Underground.

angel *n.* A benefactor, especially an unknown one.

arc *n.* An arcology.

biz *n.* Short for *business*.

breeder *n.* Ork slang for a "normal" human.

business *n.* The quasi-legal or illegal activities common to shadowruns.

buzz *v.* Go away. Buzz off.

chill *adj.* Good, cool, acceptable.

chip truth *n.* A fact or honest statement.

chipped *adj.* Senses, skills, reflexes, muscles, and so on, enhanced by cyberware.

chrome *n.* Cyberware, especially obvious enhancements.

chummer *n.* Friend, used in the same sense as "pal" or "buddy."

clip *n.* A box magazine for a firearm.

comm *n.* A telephone.

corp *n.* Corporation. *adj.* Corporate.

cred *n.* Money. Reputation, especially good reputation.

dandelion eater *n.* (vulgar) An elf.

dataslave *n.* Corporate decker or other data-processing employee.

datasteal *n.* Theft of data from a computer, usually by decking.

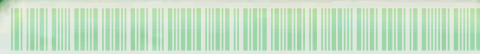
deck *n.* A cyberdeck. *v.* To use a cyberdeck, usually illegally.

decker *n.* A person who illegally uses a cyberdeck. Derived from twentieth-century term *hacker*.

deckhead *n.* Simsense abuser; anyone with a datajack, chipjack, or cranial cyberdeck.

drek *n.* (vulgar) Feces. A common curse word.

SHADOWRUN 2050



SLANG AND CITYSPEAK

- drekky** *adj.* (vulgar) Very bad, unpleasant, or covered in feces.
- dump** *v.* To be involuntarily ejected from the Matrix.
- exec** *n.* A corporate executive.
- fetishman** *n.* A talismonger.
- frag** *v.* (vulgar) Common swear word referring to the act of copulation.
- fragged** *adj.* (vulgar) Broken, in trouble.
- geek** *v.* To kill.
- go-gang** *n.* A bike gang.
- go-ganger** *n.* A member of a *go-gang*.
- halfer** *n.* (vulgar) A dwarf.
- hoi** *interject.* (Dutch) Hi, a familiar form of greeting.
- hoop** *n.* (vulgar) A common curse word referring to a person's backside.
- hose** *v.* Louse up. Screw up.
- ice** *n.* Security software. From "intrusion countermeasures" or IC.
- jack** *v.* To connect or disconnect to the Matrix or other device via a jack. Use *jack in* to mean establishing the connection, *jack out* to mean breaking a connection. Using *jack* alone refers to changing from one state to the other.
- jander** *v.* To walk in an arrogant yet casual manner; to strut.
- jing** *n.* Money, usually cash.
- keeb** *n.* (vulgar) An elf.
- kobun** *n.* (Japanese) A member of a Yakuza clan.
- meat** *n.* A physical body. Pertaining to the physical world. Organs harvested for sale.
- merc** *n.* A mercenary.
- mojo** *n.* (Caribbean) Magic. A spell.
- Mr. Johnson** *n.* Refers to an anonymous employer or corporate agent, regardless of gender or national origin.
- mundane** *n.* (vulgar) Non-magician. *adj.* Non-magical.
- nutrisoy** *n.* A cheaply processed food product derived from soybeans
- nuyen** *n.* The world's standard currency.
- omae** *n.* A close friend. Can be used sarcastically.
- organlegging** *v.* Trading in organs or cyberware harvested from formerly living people.
- oyabun** *n.* (Japanese) The head of a Yakuza clan.
- panzer** *n.* Any ground-effect combat vehicle.
- paydata** *n.* A datafile worth money on the black market.

SLANG AND CITYSPEAK

- pixie** *n.* (vulgar) An elf. An elf poser.
- plex** *n.* A metropolitan complex, short for *metroplex*.
- poli** *n.* A policlub or a policlub member. *adj.* Pertaining to a policlub.
- razorgirl** *n.* A female with extensive combat enhancements.
- razorguy** *n.* A male with extensive combat enhancements.
- samurai** *n.* (Japanese) Mercenary or muscle for hire. Implies an honor code or a good reputation.
- sarariman** *n.* (Japanese) A corporate employee. From a mispronunciation of *salaryman*.
- screamer** *n.* Credstick or other ID that triggers alarms if used.
- scrip** *n.* A currency that is not nuyen, usually referring to currency issued by a megacorporation.
- Seoul man** *n.* A member of a Seoulpa ring.
- Seoulpa ring** *n.* A small criminal gang with connections to others like it.
- shaikujin** *n.* (Japanese) A corporate employee. Literally, "honest citizen."
- simsense** *n.* ASIST sensory broadcast or recording.
- SIN** *n.* System Identification Number. Identification number assigned to each person in the society.
- SINless** *adj.* Lacking a SIN. *n.* A SINless person.
- SINner** *n.* A person with a SIN. An honest person.
- slot** *n.* (vulgar) Mild curse word referring to female genitalia. *v.* To insert a chip or credstick into chip or credstick reading device.
- slot and run** *v.* Hurry up. Get to the point. Move it.
- so ka** (Japanese) I understand. I get it.
- soykaf** *n.* Ersatz coffee substitute made from soybeans.
- sprawl** *n.* a metroplex (see *plex*); *v.* fraternize below one's social level.
- squat** *n.* Abandoned urban area used for housing. (vulgar) A dwarf.
- squatter** *n.* A person living in a squat.
- squishy** *n.* (vulgar) A dwarf, elf, or human. Usually used by orks and trolls.
- Star, the** *n.* The police. Originally referring to Lone Star specifically.
- static** *n.* Trouble, usually social in nature.

SLANG AND CITY SPEAK

suit *n.* A person with a management job.

trid *n.* The three-dimensional successor to video.

trog *n.* (vulgar) An ork or troll. From *troglo-dyte*.

tusker *n.* (vulgar) An ork or troll.

vatjob *n.* A person with extensive cyberware replacement, reference is to a portion of the process during which the patient must be submerged in nutrient fluid.

wagemage *n.* A magician (usually mage) employed by a corporation.

wageslave *n.* A low-level corporate employee.

network *n.* Assassination. Murder.

wired *adj.* Equipped with cyberware, especially increased reflexes.

wiz *adj.* Wonderful, excellent.

wizard *n.* A magician, usually a mage.

wizworm *n.* A dragon.

Yak *n.* (Japanese) Yakuza. Either a clan member or a clan itself.

zaibatsu *n.* (Japanese) A megacorporation.





MAGIC

When magic hit the scene in 2011, the vast majority of the planet simply wasn't ready for it. Ranges of volcanoes simultaneously erupted, dragons appeared in public, people walked through fences and gunfire, a lot of religions had an assortment of crises of faith—spirits invading Jerusalem, drek going sideways all over the place, shadowhounds and talis cats living together, that sort of thing. And the world did what it does best: it muddled through.

But magic works a bit differently in 2050, or more accurately the people channeling it worked a bit differently. Metahumanity lacks the knowledge and wisdom of an extra twenty years of research. Most magic is still the practical kind, building on what's worked before. By 2070 standards, most magicians of 2050 are amateurish and even naive. That doesn't stop them from leveling entire city blocks or summoning forces no mortal could restrain, of course, it's just that the mayhem in 2050 is less refined.

Short version: magic in 2050 works a bit differently than in the award-winning *Shadowrun, Twentieth Anniversary Edition*. The selection of spells and the way they function remain largely unchanged, but that is not the whole of magic. This chapter's got the skinny.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION

Magic has been around for four decades, but it is still rare enough that the average wageslave will probably only see it in sim shows or on the trid. Magicians live in a different and unknown world, and what people don't know scares them. Magicians are very much a minority in the world: competent magicians make up about one tenth of one percent of the population, which means there are something like three thousand magicians in the Seattle Metroplex. That makes them a tiny minority of people with unknown personal power, and that breeds distrust and even hatred.

At the same time, corporations and governments recognize the value of magicians and go to great lengths to recruit them. Most wage mages have lifetime contracts with good incomes but very little liberty. Over four-fifths of the magical corporate workforce consists of hermetic magicians, who are more familiar to recruiters for having a tradition closer to science and engineering than the shamanic tradition. There are rumors that some megacorps are running eugenics programs trying to breed more powerful

magicians, or at least arrange some marriages that are magical for all the wrong reasons.

TRADITIONS IN 2050

Magic was discovered, or rediscovered, by a lot of people around the world all at once. This meant an awful lot of parallel studies going on, with different groups hitting on different facets of magic at different times. As a result, each tradition in 2050 is distinct, even more than they will be in twenty years. It won't be until the Nevada Breakthrough in '67 that some of the techniques reserved for specific traditions will be shared.

The two major traditions in North America are the shamanic tradition and the hermetic tradition. Shamanic magic is based on the traditions of the various Native American tribes and their religions, calling on the power of the spirits for guidance, protection, and empowerment. Hermetic magic is based in Ancient Greek mysticism by way of European astrology, alchemy, and theurgy. The two traditions do not mix well. Even though most of the results are the same, each tradition approaches magic in a way that the other finds to be somewhere between alien and completely fragged up.

In Hong Kong, the major traditions are the Buddhist and Daoist Wuxing traditions. The Buddhist tradition is based on meditation and the reflective seeking of enlightenment. The Wuxing tradition studies the interplay of the five basic elements and how their interactions can be harnessed.

OTHER TRADITIONS

There are many other traditions in the world, including Voudoun, Norse, Shinto, Druidic, and even Black Magic. These are not included in this book because they are very rare in the locations we're covering. If you want to play one of these, use the traditions listed here as a guideline, work with your gamemaster, and remember that your character will be viewed with even more fear, suspicion, and mistrust than "normal" magicians of the era, so add the Distinctive Style quality (p. 103, *Runner's Companion*) to your character without getting the bonus for it.



ADEPTS

Adepts, known to thaumaturgical scholars in 2050 as *physical adepts*, are becoming more prominent in 2050. They are almost twice as common as full magicians, but can be difficult to identify without astral perception or other magical means of detection. An adept is often unaware that her abilities are from an innate source and not merely dedication and practice.

THE SHAMANIC TRADITION

The shaman is connected to nature and emotion. They feel the heart of the land they walk, even when that land has been bulldozed and slathered in ferrocrete. The world is a living, breathing being made up of all of the living, breathing beings within it. The shaman's power comes from his connection to this spirit.

Shamanic magic developed through an oral tradition, with each magician sharing knowledge with other shamans he meets on his journeys. Each shaman has his own techniques to connect to the manasphere, and he often changes the technique to suit his needs, feelings, preferences, and environment.

Except as listed in this section, shamans follow the normal rules for magic. Shamans use Charisma + Willpower to resist Drain.

Shamanic Totems

A shaman in 2050 is first introduced to magic by connecting with his *totem*. A totem is simply the mentor spirit of a shaman. If you play a shaman in 2050, you get the Mentor Spirit quality for free. You may choose any mentor spirit (p. 200, SR4A). Choose a mentor spirit based on nature, or alter a less natural mentor spirit to fit a shamanic or Native American tradition. For example, you might choose Fire-Bringer but change its name to Raven (not to be confused with the mentor spirit of the same name), because in the traditions of the Pacific Northwest, Raven stole fire from the sun and brought it to humanity.

Shamanic Conjuring

Shamans cannot learn Binding, but they can learn Summoning and Banishing. Yes, we know that messes up the Summoning skill group, but not everything goes swimmingly when you turn back the clock. Besides, *omae*, you got a free mentor spirit.

Shamans are very connected to the land, and their summoning even more so. Shamans believe in the idea of *domains*, where each part of the land is separated by its nature and character. A shaman summoning a spirit can only summon the spirit of

the domain in which they are performing the summoning, and that spirit cannot move out of nor effect anything outside of that domain.

Domains vary in size. A building is a single hearth domain, while the entire Pacific Ocean is a single sea domain. Generally speaking, the more restricted domain takes precedence over a larger one, so an orchard in a forest would be a field domain, not a forest domain. It is possible for domains to overlap slightly, as when it rains in Seattle (both the city and mist domains could apply).

The actual type of spirit that you summon is determined by the domain you're in when you summon it. The list and descriptions are on the Shamanic Domain Table. When you summon a spirit, it is limited to the domain in which you summoned it. This means that it cannot directly affect targets outside of the domain, nor may it leave the domain. If you leave its domain while you still have services, the spirit is dismissed, and the remaining services are lost. This is true even if the spirit in the new domain would be of the same type as in the old domain (for example, moving from a swamp to a forest would lose you your spirit of beasts, even though the new domain could also be home to a beast spirit).

EXAMPLE

Darting Lark the street shaman is under fire from a go-gang in Seattle. It's raining (natch), so she has two options for summoning a spirit. She can choose a spirit of air as part of the mist domain, or a spirit of man. She chooses to call on the nature of the city and summon a spirit of man. The spirit finishes off the gangers, but one breaks into a closed soycafe to escape. If Darting Lark wants to use a spirit to finish him off, she will have to enter the building and summon a new spirit of man.

The Medicine Lodge

The shamanic tradition has access to magical lodges (p. 178, SR4A), except they are called *medicine lodges*. Otherwise, it's exactly like a magical lodge.

THE HERMETIC TRADITION

Hermetic magicians are the closest thing to magical scientists the mystical world can offer. The mage focuses on reproducible results, laws, theorems, and relationships. To her, magic is not a matter of emotion as much as it is the art of going insane in a very specific way.

Hermetic mages follow the normal rules for magic, except as listed here. They use Logic + Willpower to resist Drain.



SHAMANIC DOMAIN TABLE

SPIRIT TYPE	DOMAIN	DESCRIPTION
Spirit of air	Mist	Natural mist, fog, rain, or snow
	Storm	Natural thunderstorms, hurricanes, and tornadoes
Spirit of beasts	Forest	Forests, woods, wild vegetation
	Swamp	Swamps, marshes, bogs, and wetlands
Spirit of earth	Desert	Open desert and naturally arid lands
	Mountain	Rugged mountains and mesas
	Prairie	Wild fields and tundra
Spirit of man	City	Streets, open malls, alleys, completely abandoned buildings
	Hearth	Homes, occupied buildings, businesses
	Field	Farm fields, orchards, and cultivated areas
Spirit of water	Lake	Lakes, inland seas, ponds, lagoons
	River	Rivers, streams, inlets and outlets



Hermetic Circles

Hermetic mages are not able to use magical lodges, but they are able to create areas of magical focus called *hermetic circles*. A hermetic circle is the same as a magical lodge for all intents and purposes, except that it's smaller, cheaper, and temporary.

To create a hermetic circle for yourself, you need time and some way of marking the circle onto a surface. Chalk will do, and there are a number of different retail lines of paint marketed to the discerning mage, but really a stick in the dirt is sufficient. Choose a Force for your circle, which determines its size and the length of time you need to create it. A hermetic circle's diameter is (Force + 3) meters, and it takes (Force) hours to make.

If you wish to use the circle for ritual magic, to learn a new spell, or to enchant a focus, your circle must be dedicated to that spell or focus. You can create a hermetic circle to learn the Stink spell, for example, but you cannot use that circle to ritually cast a Turn to Tree spell later. Instead, you need to create a new circle for each different application. Look on the bright side, chummer, it's free.

A hermetic circle lasts as long as it is undisturbed. If you keep looking after it, it will last indefinitely. As a rough guideline, a circle preserved indoors or otherwise sheltered will last a number of days equal to its Force. A circle open to the elements probably won't last more hours than it's Force, maybe twice that. It only takes a number of Complex Actions equal to the circle's Force to deliberately destroy a hermetic circle.

Other than that, a hermetic circle is pretty much the same as a magical lodge. It creates a mana barrier, it has the astral signature of its maker(s), and you can use it for every reason you'd use a magical lodge.

Remember, hermetic circles are temporary, and you'll probably want some privacy to do what you plan to do with it. Find a secure location, or at least a private or secluded spot, to create yours.

Hermetic Conjuring

Hermetic magicians cannot learn Summoning, but they can learn Binding and Banishing. This does not prevent them from binding spirits (called "elementals" by mages), but it does change the rules a bit. Rather than summoning a spirit and then binding it, a hermetic mage summons and binds the elemental in a single Binding test, as though the spirit were already summoned with zero services (p. 188, SR4A). This means that you need to spend a number of spirit binding materials equal to the spirit's Force (500¥ times the Force of the spirit), a number of hours equal to the spirit's Force, and make an Opposed Binding + Magic test against the spirit's Force x 2. For every net hit you gain on the test, you get one service from the spirit. The Drain is equal to twice the hits (not net hits) the spirit gets on its Opposed Test, and is Physical Drain if the spirit's Force is greater than your Magic rating.

Hermetic mages may only summon spirits of fire, spirits of water, spirits of air, and spirits of earth. You may rebind the spirit normally (p. 189, SR4A).

EXAMPLE

The Dutchman needs some elemental back up for an upcoming run. Just in case something goes horribly awry, he sets up in the basement of his apartment building (the other tenants will have to do their laundry another night). He uses 2,500¥ worth of spirit binding materials, setting a small fire as befits the type of elemental he is binding to himself.

The mage rolls Binding + Magic plus a focus bonus (12 dice) against a dice pool of (Force 5 x 2 =) 10 dice. He gets 4 hits and the spirit gets 2, giving him two services from the spirit and a Drain Value of 4S.



HERMETIC SPELL CATEGORIES AND SPIRITS

SPELL CATEGORY	SPIRIT TYPE
Combat	Fire
Detection	Air
Health	Sorry, chummer, none discovered yet
Illusion	Water
Manipulation	Earth

THE BUDDHIST TRADITION

The Buddhist magician sees the world as a single whole, with magic being woven into reality as much as energy, matter, and thought. The magician seeks enlightenment, not power, but finds both on his path. A female Buddhist magician is called a *yogini*, and a male is called a *yogi*.

Aside from the rules listed in this section, yogis and yoginis use the normal rules for magic. They use Intuition + Willpower to resist Drain. Due to the personal focus of the Buddhist tradition, its practitioners cannot take the Mentor Spirit quality.

Magical Meditation

The Buddhist magician does not use hermetic circles or magical lodges. Such material tools would be an anchor preventing progress on the spiritual path. Instead, the magician meditates, contemplating himself, his environment, and the magic he wishes to perform.

When you begin a magical meditation, sit (or stand, or lie) in quiet contemplation, becoming one with the world and the manosphere. After one hour, you become your own personal magical lodge, with a Force of 1, extending in a radius of one meter from your body. For each full hour of meditation after that, both the Force and the radius in meters increase by another 1. If you're meditating with other magicians of the Buddhist tradition, your meditation-based lodges overlap without interfering with one another. In fact, if you want to use your meditation to perform ritual spellcasting with other magicians of the same tradition, your meditation lodges *must* overlap.

You may use astral perception, Sorcery, or Conjuring without interrupting your meditation, but any other actions (including astral projection) end the meditation. If you are physically disturbed or take damage, your gamemaster may ask you to make a Composure Test (p. 138, SR4A), with a threshold she chooses, to avoid losing your meditation



session. When your meditation ends, the benefits end immediately.

Your meditation “bubble” acts for all intents and purposes like a magical lodge, including its uses, astral signature, and its function as a mana barrier.

EXAMPLE

Lan Fu begins meditating in preparation for a ritual spell. She selects a Force 4 spell, so she must meditate for at least four hours before the spell can begin. She sends a spirit of air she has previously bound toward her target as a spotter and begins her ritual. The ritual takes five hours to complete, so by the end of it the meditation lodge is Force 9 and has a radius of nine meters.

Buddhist Conjuring

Buddhist magicians cannot learn Summoning, but they can learn Binding and Banishing. Much like hermetic magicians, a buddhist *yogi* summons and binds the elemental in a single Binding test, as if the spirit were already summoned with zero services (p. 188, SR4A). This means that you need to spend a number of spirit binding materials equal to the spirit’s Force (500¥ times the Force of the spirit), a number of hours equal to the spirit’s Force, and make an Opposed Binding + Magic test against the spirit’s Force x 2. For every net hit you gain on the test, you get one service from the spirit. The Drain is equal to twice the hits (not net hits) the spirit gets on its Opposed Test, and is Physical Drain if the spirit’s Force is greater than your Magic rating.

If you’re a yogi(ni), you can summon spirits of air, guidance, earth, fire, and water. You may rebind the spirit normally (p. 189, SR4A).

BUDDHIST SPELL CATEGORIES AND SPIRITS

SPELL CATEGORY	SPIRIT TYPE
Combat	Air
Detection	Guidance
Health	Earth
Illusion	Fire
Manipulation	Water

THE WUXING TRADITION

The Wuxing tradition sees the world as a balance of elements and an energy called *qi* (pronounced “chee” ... sort of). Practitioners are called *wushi* in Hong Kong and study the strict categories and

classifications of the magical side of Daoism. In many ways, the Wuxing and hermetic traditions are very close to one another.

Except as listed below, wushi use all of the normal rules for magic in SR4A and *Street Magic*. The Wuxing tradition uses Logic + Willpower to resist Drain.

Wuxing Spellcasting

Wushi are very much in tune with the Five Elements of Daoist tradition, not to mention all of the baby elements you get when you mix, imbalance, insult, or overreact one or more of the big five with one or more of the others. It’s complicated, but they’ve got a handle on it, and it gives them an edge in the element department.

As a wushi, you can cast a spell with an elemental effect (p. 204, SR4A and p. 162, *Street Magic*) as a Simple Action rather than a Complex Action. If you use this ability, you must take a -4 dice pool modifier to your Spellcasting or Ritual Spellcasting Test. You can cast multiple spells in the same Simple Action with this trick (Casting Multiple Spells, p. 183, SR4A) as long as they all have an elemental effect; the dice pool modifier applies to each spell separately in this case.

EXAMPLE

Miantiao has bitten off more than he can chew, and he knows it. He needs to escape Kowloon City, so he sets up a Fire Wall behind him. He draws on his knowledge of Wuxing to cast faster, using a Simple Action and taking a -4 dice pool penalty, leaving him a spare Simple Action to sprint the diyu out of there.

Wuxing Feng Shui

Wushi have their own tradition of *feng shui*, a sort of geomancy that allows them to create their own magical lodges. To do this, a wushi needs a *feng shui compass* of a Force equal to or greater than the Force desired and a number of *feng shui forms* equal to the desired Force. A *feng shui compass* is an intricate tabletop sized tablet made of wood, stone, or metal, etched with guidelines and diagrams. *Feng shui forms* are building materials purified and prepared to be used in the practice of Wuxing. The forms are expended in the creation, becoming part of the lodge, but the compass can be reused to erect future lodges.

Except for the materials required, everything about a Wuxing magical lodge is the same as a medicine lodge.

Wuxing Conjuring

The Wuxing tradition teaches wushi how to guide elemental forces, not imprison them. Wushi cannot learn Binding, but may learn Summoning and Banishing as normal.

WUXING SPELL CATEGORIES AND SPIRITS

SPELL CATEGORY	SPIRIT TYPE
Combat	Fire
Detection	Earth
Health	Plant
Illusion	Water
Manipulation	Guidance

SORCERY

Sorcery, including Spellcasting, Ritual Spellcasting, and Dispelling, is unchanged from SR4A. Well, there are one or two important additions.

Grounding Spells

Normally, when you're in astral space, you can't cast physical spells. In the 2050s, you can cast physical spells at dual-natured targets and have them manifest in the physical world. This practice is called *grounding* a spell.

To ground a physical spell, you need a bridge between astral space and physical space. A dual-natured critter would work, as would a magician or adept using astral perception. Active foci are also fair game for grounding, and usually are the most popular option.

When you cast the spell, make your Spellcasting Test, subtracting the Force rating or the Magic rating of the target through which you are grounding the spell as a dice pool modifier. If your spell is an area spell, the center of its radius is the focus or being that you are targeting; otherwise your spell only affects the target or whoever is carrying it.

When you cast a physical spell in astral space, the Drain is always Physical damage.

THE DECLINE OF GROUNDING

An excerpt of "The Decline of Grounding" by Dr. Iordanes Whitman, HIAS *Journal of Thaumaturgy*, vol. 23, pp. 2-4, 06 Feb 2073

There are many theories put forth about the gradually increasing difficulty of transmitting physical spells through dual-natured bridges between the physical world and the astral one. Many of these theories can never be tested, partially because of the intrinsic difficulty of applying scientific principles to magical phenomena, but primarily because the decline was so gradual as to go undetected until 2063. There have been no recorded instances of this so-called "grounding" effect since mid-2068, leaving aside the unreliable reports of draconic activity in the Ruhr Valley last month.

Some scholars say that the "veil" between the astral plane and physical space was weak during the Awakening and has been growing stronger since. This theory is congruent with the remarkable escapes of the Great Ghost Dance movement and the appearance of Ghostwalker. It fails, however, to offer a means of measuring the strength of this veil, nor does it predict when such a strengthening might plateau.

A similar theory suggests that astral space itself was not strong enough to prevent the formation of physical spells, and that practitioners were therefore able to "overpower" it and force physical spells into corporeal space. Like the previous theory, this theory fails to provide a method of measuring changes of the alleged strength of the manasphere over time, nor is it predictive.

A number of papers are being published claiming that the evolution of enchanting techniques over the decades has prevented the dangerous and unpredictable practice of grounding. This theory lacks documentation to support its assertion and ignores the fact that the efficacy of grounding through dual-natured living beings dwindled along with that of grounding through inanimate foci.

Some fanciful theories on various Matrix sites claim that grounding gave magicians an unfair advantage, and so the practice was ended. The idea that magicians around the globe would terminate any magical practice out of a sense of fair play is ludicrous.



MATRIX

“There are more things in the Shadows and the Matrix than are imagined in your Profit/Loss Statements, Sir Johnson” –Dodger

The Matrix is a massive collection of interconnected digital systems meshed together through the use of fiber optic cables.

The Matrix contains the electronic ghosts of everyone who died during Echo Mirage’s fight against the Crash virus.

The Matrix is addictive, and everyone who has ever jacked into it is hopelessly tied to it.

The Matrix has children in it that either can access it by a datajack alone, or are just brains in a jar.

The Matrix was created in order to better control the world after the Crash of 2029.

The Matrix is a collective hallucination of the combination of every person able to access it through Direct Neural Interfaces (DNI).

All of these statements are false. But maybe some of them, maybe are also true. The reality is that the Matrix is a system so complex, one that has grown so exponentially beyond where it was originally designed to be, that no one knows everything about it. This, of course, just adds one more mystery to the mid-21st century as we know it.

HISTORY OF THE MATRIX

In the chaos of the VITAS outbreaks, the destruction of various pieces of infrastructure due to the after-effects of the Great Ghost Dance, and the physical damage caused by the Crash Virus of 2029, the Internet was destroyed, save for major fiber-optic backbone lines. In the chaos that ensued when the world’s economy attempted to eat itself, mobs of people blamed computer companies, Internet service providers, research and development companies, and even utility companies that had nothing to do with the Internet for the disaster. Riots smashed and burned entire office buildings, lynched workers in the street, and sometimes even crucified managers on telephone poles. Combined with the destruction of computer files, this created a hole in humanity’s knowledge that threatened to bring about another dark age. The destruction brought communication down to a level not seen since the telegraph was invented; only primitive radio systems survived.

Throughout all this, a special project named “Echo Mirage” tested the first *cyberterminals*, room-sized computers and sensory deprivation chambers that allowed a person to mentally access computer systems and manipulate them at the speed of thought. Two things were discovered during this fight against the Crash Virus: That the virus itself could induce lethal feedback on a human brain, and that no current computer security system could withstand a virtual attack by a person using a cyberterminal.

Luckily for global stability, a number of people who knew the nuts and bolts of the telecommunication grid escaped the mobs and were able to lead their corporations and governments to the major areas that required replacement and repair in order to start the long rebuilding process. As the system was rebuilt, it was done so with the idea that cyberterminals would become increasingly prevalent, and that the need for a standardized form of reference for this new network was needed. Thus was created the Universal Matrix Standards Consortium, a group that developed a series of geometric shapes and colors that confer an instant recognition of a node’s purpose and security level, thus instantly telling a user where they are going and if they have the clearance to be there. These standard three-dimensional avatars are known as the Universal Matrix Standard (UMS) icons.

Despite the many legitimate systems, organizations, and people using this new Matrix, there was still the hacker and shadowy element that wished to have their own access and usage of the system. Urban explorers found many forgotten and disused fiber-optic lines and distribution areas that could be sold, traded, or just given to their fellow anti-establishment associates. Unauthorized BBSes surged back into existence as their forgotten locations prevented them from being traced. Shadowland became the most infamous of these systems, and the most popular.

Now, twenty years later, the systems have finally caught up to what they had been in the 2020s, with miniaturization being the only leap forward in technology since the days of the Crash. In 2050, new seventh-generation keyboard-sized cyberterminals, dubbed “cyberdecks,” have made the scene, allowing for quick, portable methods of getting around modern security and interacting with computer networks that are not connected to the Matrix. Hackers have thrown off their old title, and gleefully accepted their new name of “decker.”

WHAT THE MATRIX IS AND HOW IT APPEARS

Matrix topology is both complex and simple. Each major area of the Matrix is set up in a Regional Telecommunications Grid (RTG), which is depicted by a continent code (two or three letters), a slash, a country code (usually the shorthand for the country in question), a dash, and a smaller regional code (also two or three letters). For example, Seattle is listed as NA/UCAS-SEA. Each regional grid is then separated into Local Telecommunications Grids (LTG), which is a number that also doubles as a phone number for the person or company in question. The style of how it's laid out is based on the region and its Matrix population. It can be as short as four numbers or as long as twenty.

If you are jacked into the Matrix and take a look at an RTG map, your avatar will hover over a giant globe, with a different neon-colored area designating each RTG. When you fly down into the RTG, you enter the LTG of the area, which appears like a featureless plane with (typically) green gridlines crisscrossing the "floor," "walls," and "sky," and a massive number of systems floating in apparently random placement. While there is security placed on every RTG and LTG system to ensure that it's used properly, if for nothing else than to make sure people pay for the services they use, any decker worth their stripped deck is able to easily outfox this basic security, to the point where most just have a macro set up on their deck to do so (which is updated whenever the telecom companies upgrade their security). This also allows deckers to make free long-distance phone calls, while legitimate users need to call up directory assistance, pay 1¥ to get the information they'll need, and then pay for their long distance usage.

NO WIRELESS

The most significant difference between the Matrix of 2074 and the Matrix of 2050 is that there is no wireless access in 2050. That also means no augmented reality overlays. If you want to see the Matrix, you either need a screen or other visualization device, or you need to physically jack in. Most everyone uses the Matrix in 2050, but it does not surround them and permeate every aspect of their lives the way it does to people in 2074.

GAME INFORMATION

WHAT THE MATRIX LOOKS LIKE

The Matrix is what the world would be if human designers were not restrained by things such as gravity, physics, reality, historical accuracy, and good taste. The virtual reality can look however you want it to be, or at least however you can convince someone to make it for a price you can afford.

Every sort of design can be found in Matrix systems. Some are non-flashy and functional, preferring to simply mimic their real-life counterparts. An office's virtual reality system, for example, might feature desks and file cabinets and the like; a police station may feature programs that appear as officers walking around a virtual building identical to the one that exists in reality. Other systems, however, take more advantage of the possibilities to reshape reality. Sculpting a system based on an historical theme is popular, as is picking a setting from favorite books or movies. Some sculpting also likes to forsake meta-humans' tendencies to move along the ground and instead has them hurtling through space or flying through the clouds. Some systems are completely abstract, perhaps using the basic Matrix constructs (see p. 152) as a theme or devising an original pattern of shapes, textures, and patterns that make sense to whoever designed it.

In some sculpting concepts, there is an obvious relationship between form and function. Places where files are stored resemble file cabinets, bookcases, briefcases, or possibly treasure chests, while IC is made to look like guard dogs, threatening warriors, or even a dragon. Other sculpting concepts are subtler, in part to disorient the unsuspecting decker who has broken in. That bunny hopping across a sunny meadow could be a ferocious piece of Black IC, or it could be the paydata the runners are looking for. The golden statue sitting in a lit cavern at the end of a labyrinthine series of caves might be the file the runners are looking for, or it could just be an empty piece of data, while the real paydata is hidden in a carving on the wall far away, or even in a nondescript rock. Gamemasters are free to use the sculpting to present an entertaining and challenging environment to their players.

Users in the Matrix are defined by a *persona*, a digital avatar used to allow users to orient themselves in the Matrix, while also allowing other users to interact with them. The default avatars come in two varieties: Corporate-sold cyberdecks and cyberterminals use an obsidian man in a chrome suit wearing the corporation's logo on the breast over their heart, while commercially available items use an androgynous human made completely out of chrome with no facial features. These default avatars are typically



modified by their users according to their tastes (within boundaries that their provider and/or corporate master may set). No matter what modifications are made, avatars they almost always come out looking high tech, and are always human-sized, even if the avatar is that of a mouse or a dragon.

The point is to be imaginative. Corporations use their virtual reality sculpting to impress or awe their clients and visitors; deckers use it to show off their skills. The environments, personas, and icons a gamemaster puts into the Matrix should show just how far the gamemaster is willing to push her imagination.

NETWORKS OF NODES

The first trick in navigating the Matrix is understanding its structure. The basic building blocks of the Matrix are nodes. A node can be something as simple as a cyberdeck or pocket secretary, or it can be a number of devices linked together, like a group of security cameras. Usually a number of nodes are linked together to form a system, and generally a system is controlled by a mainframe. Each system is laid out in a specific pattern based on the use and design of the network in question and the components it uses. The different nodes can be assigned various security codes, resources, and permissions based on the needs of the designers. In the virtual

realm, each node is made up of a three-dimensional geometric shape called a construct that denotes its purpose. Constructs are then color coded to show how much security is set up on its hardware. In a system, nodes are connected by datalines, which are visually represented by white lines that pulse with information. Your avatar can travel between the nodes along these lines. To perform any action, you need the proper access codes and cyberterminal serial number; if you don't have it, the system is going to use whatever means it has at its disposal to stop you. Naturally, if you're going to be breaking into a system, you're usually not going to have the codes you need (unless you have a good inside source). Most deckers also have stripped the serial numbers from the chips in their decks, which prevents the telecommunications companies from billing them and prevents them from being tracked by a simple review of the access logs, so legitimate access tends to be beyond their reach.

The basic characteristics of nodes are the appearance of its construct, its connectivity (the types of nodes it can connect to), and system operations that can be performed within it. Note that system operations can be performed by anyone that has managed to gain control of the system. The following are the types of nodes that make up all networks:

Central Processing Unit (CPU)

Every system has one and only one Central Processing Unit or CPU. It is the heart and brain of the system. Most systems have powerful IC guarding the CPU.

Construct: A huge octagonal room built of massive circuit boards pulsing with dazzling energy. Screens display the data flowing through the computer and the status of the other nodes in the system.

Connectivity: The CPU can connect to any other type of node in the system. Because of the node's extreme importance however, it is usually protected from the other nodes by a layer of sub-processing units so that no access port can get directly to the CPU.

Datstore (DS)

Datstores hold information or files. From the decker's point of view this is where the loot is. Datstores also tend to be heavily loaded with IC.

Construct: A maze of rectangular blocks of energy files filled with swirling letters and numbers in different colors. Each file is 2D6 x 10 Mp in size.

Connectivity: Datstores can connect to other Datstores, SPUs, or the CPU.

I/O Ports (I/OP)

An I/OP is a limited-access node that opens the system to various data input/output devices: terminals, cyberdecks, printers, cameras, graphics displays, data readers for optical chips, and so on. You can jack into the system through these devices using a cyberdeck or a program carrier. In big systems, a single I/OP node could be the access point for hundreds of devices.

Construct: A pyramid-shaped, white chamber. If the I/OP controls a number of terminals, you are in a cluster of pyramids connected by datalines, usually radiating out from a large, central pyramid.

Connectivity: I/OPs can connect to SPUs or the CPU (though the latter is rare).

Sub-Processing Units (SPU)

An SPU is a small computer slaved to a more powerful one. The CPU gives it orders, and the SPU does various jobs for the boss node. Some SPUs act as Matrix traffic cops, connecting datalines to other nodes. Others might lead to datastores or other goodies.

Construct: A large chamber filled with pulsing banks of circuits and sizzling lines of energy.

Connectivity: SPUs can connect to any other type of node in the system.

SYS OPS: CPU

Display Map: If you succeed in this operation, the gamemaster must show you a map of the system controlled by the CPU. The map displays its nodes along with their security codes (see p. 154), but it does not reveal the location of any files, including IC files or anything else.

Shutdown: This crashes the system and dumps the decker for more information on the Reboot CPU action.

Cancel Alert: Cancels an Internal Alert. If there is an External Alert in progress, that is beyond your control. If you trigger one it won't prevent any further alerts you may trigger. (For Alarms, see p. 164)

Change Node: This action sends you directly to any node in the system. Once you have arrived at that node, you cannot use this action to return to the CPU.

SYS OPS: DATASTORE (DS)

Transfer: Copy data to a cyberdeck's storage (downloading) or from storage to the datstore (uploading). This is governed by the deck's I/O speed. The decker must stay in the node until the transfer is complete or else it aborts.

Erase: Wipe out one file (for example, erase a police record. Note that this deletes the entire file).

Edit: Change contents of a file (Such as awarding someone straight A's on a college transcript, or altering only. Portion of a police record instead of deleting the whole file).

Read: Reading a file works like downloading it. You don't actually copy it, so you don't need storage to hold it. You are reading quickly, skimming its contents. If you want to find the private commcode for a corporate officer, read the personnel files. The gamemaster is the judge of what a decker can get from a file by reading. Simple facts like names, dates, phone numbers, addresses, and so on are easy to remember. Highly technical data cannot be memorized. For example, if you want to sell a complex formula, you must download it instead of simply reading it.

SYSOPS: I/O PORTS

Display Message: Display a message on the terminal the device's display. This may be limited to a blinking light on a camera or a hardcopy message spewed out from a printer.

Lockout: Lock the I/OP out of the system. Once this action is performed, nothing the I/OP controls can contact the computer. If the I/OP represents a cyberterminal that someone is using, the decker must crash the terminal through cybercombat first.

System Access Node (SAN)

A SAN connects to other systems or to the larger Matrix. They are the doorways into systems, meaning that deckers are very familiar with them.

Construct: Complex doorways or airlocks through the walls of the system architecture.

Connectivity: SANs can connect to an SPU. They can also connect to the CPU, but this is rare in large systems.

Slave (SN)

A Slave Node controls some physical process or device, anything from an electric coffee maker to an assembly line to the elevators for a corp HQ building. You can jack into the system through a Slave Node, but only by using a program carrier and going naked (see p. 164).

Construct: A small, cubical room, its walls covered with flashing patterns of light. The more complex the slaved system, the larger the room, and the more complex the pattern of lights.

Connectivity: SNs can connect to SPUs and to the CPU.

While these are the standardized constructs and descriptions of Matrix networks, alterations can be performed by the designer of the network to give it their own personal touch. Major alterations require a lot of processing power and can slow networks down, but sometimes such actions are done as a showpiece or a demonstration of the owning company's power. Fully designed networks with individual icons are called *sculpted systems* and are exceptionally rare, typically a sign of a AAA-Corporation's major network.

A node's Security Rating is based on a color (the Hardware Security) and a number (its Software Security). These ratings represent the node's ability to passively resist any attempt at unauthorized access. The Ratings are as follows:

SECURITY RATING

COLOR	RATING
Blue	3
Green	4
Orange	5
Red	6

The Software Security Rating is also used to determine the ratings of some forms of IC and can never be more than double the Rating of the Hardware Security (e.g., a Green Node can only have

SYS OPS: SUB-PROCESSING UNIT

None

SYS OPS: SYSTEM ACCESS NODE (SAN)

Lockout: The decker can lock the SAN, preventing any other persona from using it.

SYSOPS: SLAVE (SN)

Control: You can control whatever the Slave Node controls, whether it be making all the coffee boil over or shutting down the assembly line.

Sensor Readout: You can read any sensors or cameras run by the Slave Node. For example, the Slave controlling building security would let you use the security cameras.

a Software Security Rating of 8 or less.) Every time a Decker attempts a System Operation, they must beat this rating on a Hacking + Logic Test.

CYBERTERMINALS AND CYBERDECKS

Intensely complex devices, cyberterminals (and cyberdecks) are state of the art for the middle of the 21st century. If you're serious about your Matrix interactions, this is what you use. They contain an exceptional amount of computational ability combined with a simsense interface equivalent in strength to that of illegal BTL-level simsense entertainment units. Thanks to ASIST, which stands for Artificial Sensory Induction Systems Technology, deckers in the virtual realm receive neural feedback that makes the experiences their feel real. Food has a taste. Leather furniture has a feel. And pain hurts. This is vital to simsense experiences and recordings, where you not only see what's going on around you or what was recorded for you, but you taste, smell, and experience it emotionally. Most people keep the feedback levels under control so that the pain you would feel never does serious damage, but that can also mute other experiences. To access the full range of simsense experiences and make them as good, or better, than reality, some people turn up their feedback levels into the danger zone, meaning it is

possible for the Matrix to do them serious damage, or even kill them.

CYBERDECKS

A different animal altogether from their larger forefathers, cyberdecks are the very bleeding edge in technology used for Matrix access and interaction. Used almost exclusively with a datajack, their small size limits their input to a simple oversized keyboard with extensive macro and customizable function keys. With only a shock-resistant case as a standard accessory, these systems are packed to the breaking point with high-end, heavily miniaturized electronics and optical circuitry designed for minimal energy use and heat build-up. While obviously the choice of shadowrunning deckers, they're also used by professionals that need to move from site-to-site frequently, as well as wageslaves that wish to work from home without having to risk the hazard of a home-to-workplace Matrix connection that comes with built-in employer monitoring. Expensive items, cyberdeck ratings are unable to be upgraded beyond their current status, as they are the very pinnacle of their design. The one exception is their memory, which can be doubled from their stock amount.

Cyberdecks contain the following elements:

CYBERDECKS IN VIRTUAL REALITY

When decking in 2050, remember that cyberdecks by necessity work with the decker through virtual reality. They also come with BTL-quality simsense, which in SR4A terms means the decker is operating in hot sim. That means that while on the Matrix, deckers using a cyberdeck have three Initiative Passes.

Master Persona Control Program (MPCP)

A combination of a lot of small programs as well as the standardized operating system, the MPCP is an indication of how "tough" a cyberdeck's persona is in Matrix combat, as well as how stable it is against new and unusual circumstances in the Matrix. A cyberdeck's damage track is equal to $8 + (\text{MPCP} \div 2, \text{rounding up})$.

Hardening

There are error-correction algorithms and auxiliary portions of the OS code that effectively work as armor against cyberattacks to the persona. This is used to resist damage from deckers with Attack programs, as well as Grey IC that attempts to attack the persona.

Memory

Onboard, active memory holds programs that are ready and able to be used. Cyberdecks can use the rating of programs equal to the deck's Memory, in any combination. (e.g., if the cyberdeck has a Memory of 4, it can load two Rating 2 programs, or a Rating 3 and a Rating 1 program, or a single Rating 4 program).

Input/Output (I/O) Speed

The speed in which the cyberdeck is able to upload or download programs and files from the deck to the Matrix, or vice versa. When being used to upload a program into the deck, the rating represents how large of a program it can transfer in a single round. For example, with an I/O Rating of 3, a deck could upload a single Rating 3 program, or both a Rating 2 and a Rating 1 program. A Rating 4 program, by contrast, would take two rounds. When uploading or downloading Matrix files, the speed is five times the I/O rating in Megapulses (Mp)/turn.

Storage

The amount of space on the cyberdeck to store programs and files. This can be doubled from its standard amount by buying additional storage rewriteable optical chips that are then installed in designated slots inside the cyberdeck.

AVAILABLE CYBERDECKS

MODEL	MPCP	HARD	MEM	I/O	STOR	COST
Radio Shack PCD-100	2	0	1	1	10	6,200¥
Allegiance Alpha	3	1	1	1	10	13,200¥
Sony CTY-360	4	3	3	3	20	111,000¥
Fuchi Cyber-4	4	3	4	3	100	150,000¥
Fuchi Cyber-6	5	4	5	4	100	364,000¥
Fuchi Cyber-7	5	4	5	5	200	514,000¥
Fairlight Excalibur	6	5	6	6	200	990,000¥

CYBERDECK OPTIONS

There are a few optional features available for those deckers who enjoy aftermarket mods to their rigs.

Chip Burner

External unit for burning data onto blank datachips for easy carrying, storage, and exchange.

Cost: 250¥

Response Increase

The Matrix equivalent to wired reflexes, this hardware upgrade adds additional co-processors, memory cache, and a wider system bus to the cyberdeck, allowing it to process and recover faster than standard decks. If the cyberdeck is destroyed by IC such as Trace & Burn, the Response Increase hardware is also destroyed. Response Increase adds +1 to the Matrix Initiative, as well as an additional Initiative Pass.

Cost: 35,000¥

Hitcher Jacks

Simsense electrodes that allow another person to ride along in the Matrix, and communicate with the decker. While they're not at risk while doing so, they are also unable to control anything, and can just see what the decker is currently seeing.

Cost: 1,000¥/jack

Vidscreen Display

A roll-up flatscreen that displays what the decker is currently seeing in the Matrix. It can also display any messages they want to send into the real world while they're working. Perfect for shadowrunner teams that want to lay bets on cybercombat, and more interesting than watching the decker just sit there typing while staring into nothing.

Cost: 500¥

STORAGE

In 2074, storage is assumed to be cheap and universal, meaning players do not have to track how much memory they have on their commlinks and how much has been used. In 2050, though, storage was not quite so prevalent, especially without access to wireless, cloud-based servers. Deckers need to remember to keep track of how they are using the space in their cyberdecks, as well as which programs they have loaded at any given time.

GAME INFORMATION

CYBERTERMINALS

These are older model or upgraded systems that are designed with an office space in mind. These systems are typically kept in one place (they do not have internal power supplies) and often can be utilized by a user without a datajack. Extensive peripherals are available, including but not limited to a keyboard, monitor, mouse, trackball, and/or joystick. The extensive and complex nature of the Matrix requires quite a bit of control, but with the standard iconography system in place, basic training in computer

systems is all that is needed to perform normal tasks. Cyberterminals are oversized for their abilities, and each attribute can be upgraded by two levels, with the exception of Memory, which can be upgraded to four times its standard size.

Cyberterminals have the same statistics as cyberdecks and perform the same function. If the user is not jacked into a cyberterminal, they are at -4 to their Matrix Initiative and have only one Matrix initiative pass due to the clumsy controls they are using. Response Increase cannot be used on cyberterminals. Trace IC attempting to find a cyberterminal have a +2 to their Security Rating due to the fact that cyberterminals are generally fixed in their location. Moving a cyberterminal removes this penalty for two weeks, which is a measure the more paranoid corporations take.

AVAILABLE CYBERTERMINALS

MODEL	MPCP	HARD	MEM	I/O	STOR	COST
Radio Shack DTU-2500	2	1	2	1	15	620¥
Microdeck Deskmaster	3	1	2	1	20	1,300¥
Sony R4J	4	3	4	3	50	11,000¥
Fuchi Cyber-2	4	4	4	3	100	15,000¥
MCT Sarari-Man	5	4	5	4	150	37,000¥
Renraku Desukuwa-Ku	5	4	5	5	200	51,500¥
Fairlight Joyeuse	6	6	6	6	300	450,000¥

LUGGAGE

Sixth-generation cyberterminals are often nicknamed "luggage" since they resemble, and are often utilized as, carry-on bags for sub-orbitals and ballistic flights. Smaller than most cyberterminals, they are portable only in the loosest sense of the term due to their weight, which is a hefty fourteen kilograms at a minimum. Less than five-years old, they are still used by corporations for mobile facilities and can be equipped with a cyberterminal's peripherals or use a datajack with equal ability while still carrying the same processing power as their younger relatives, the cyberdecks. Due to the availability of cyberdeck technology, they can now be upgraded by one level for each attribute, and they can have their Memory tripled in size.

AVAILABLE LUGGAGE

MODEL	MPCP	HARD	MEM	I/O	STOR	COST
Radio Shack PCD-50	2	0	1	1	10	3,000¥
Microdesk Luggable	3	1	1	1	10	6,500¥
Sony CTY-180	4	3	3	3	20	60,000¥
Fuchi Cyber-3	4	3	4	3	100	75,000¥
Amalgamated Tech. & Tele. Tragbar	5	4	5	4	100	364,000¥
Microtrónica Azteca Maletín	5	4	5	5	200	250,000¥
Fairlight Sharur	6	5	6	6	200	499,999¥

UTILITY PROGRAMS

If you're going to run the Matrix in 2050, you're going to have to get used to a different set of programs than the ones you're used to in 2074. Here's a rundown of what you'll be loading up.

Utility programs are the backbone of a decker's Matrix experience, the tools that serve as your skills and gear in cyberspace. Utility programs must be loaded into your deck's memory to run. Each utility has a rating that measures its strength and effectiveness. It also has a size multiplier that measures its complexity. The rating times the multiplier is the program's size in megapulses.

Utilities tie up onboard memory of the device that uses them, even after they have crashed. If you want to load a new utility and you don't have enough free memory to hold it, you must erase one or more of the programs currently loaded. Erasing one program from memory requires a simple action. To load a utility from storage to memory also takes a simple action, while large programs may require several turns to complete. See **Cyberdeck Specifications** for details.

You can load only one copy of a given utility in onboard memory at any time.

PROGRAMMING ON THE FLY

If you need a utility that isn't loaded (or that you don't even own,) you can write a temporary version of the program using a Software + Logic (2) Test; the rating of the new program is equal to half the number of hits on this test, rounded down. You can only make an improvised utility of each type once during a single run in the Matrix. Temporary programs use memory just like other programs.

COMBAT UTILITIES

Combat utility programs are the virtual ice picks that are used to shiv IC to pieces and disable personas protecting a Node. Combat utilities are complex programs designed when sneaking around won't cut it, and you need to do some damage. They can crash, rather than simply manipulate or fool, a node. It doesn't happen automatically—in 2050, nodes are designed to resist such gross modifications through the means of progressive evaluation software and redundant source code. You need to have good gear, and you need to be good yourself.

Combat utilities function the same way as offensive programs in *SR4A* (see **Matrix Attacks**, p. 236, *SR4A*). For Matrix initiative in 2050, use Intuition + MPCP Rating. In general, cybercombat in 2050 follows the same rules as given in the **Cybercombat** section of *SR4A* (p. 236).

Attack

The Attack program is your main weapon in Cybercombat, damaging your target on a successful attack. Every net hit on a Matrix Attack inflicts an extra point of damage on the target's condition monitor.

Size: 2 Mp x Rating

Slow

A Slow program slows down IC, but it has no effect on anything else. If a Matrix Attack action with this program is successful, any net successes are subtracted from the target's Reaction. If the Reaction is reduced to 0 or less, the IC program is frozen and stops working. Frozen IC cannot initiate any alarms or trigger traps.

Size: 2 Mp x Rating

DEFENSE UTILITIES

Defense utilities improve the persona's ability to avoid or resist damage. Because they are run on your deck, they do not require a Success Test to execute them; instead, you make a test to determine how much damage is repaired. Roll the number of dice equal to the Program Rating for the test. Programs that repair damage to your persona also fall into this category.

Medic

A Medic program repairs damage to the persona. Every success rolled heals one "wound," clearing one box on the persona's condition monitor.

Size: 2 Mp x Rating



Mirrors

By subtracting its rating from the dice pool of an opposing decker or IC program, Mirrors makes it harder for unauthorized programs to be executed against your persona. No test is required to execute this program.

Size: 2 Mp x Rating

Shield

A Shield program acts as auxiliary armor for the Cyberdeck's MPCP and Hardening. The program automatically stops a number of wounds equal to its rating. The negative effect is that the Shield program suffers from the absorbed damage, and it loses one point of its rating every time it stops damage. It also does not protect the Decker from Black IC.

Size: 2 Mp x Rating

Smoke

A Smoke program simulates a burst of high-volume system activity, confusing perception around your persona. Executing a Smoke program requires a simple action, but no tests are required. While you are in the node, the Smoke program's rating is subtracted from the rating of every program in that node, including ones you use. The Smoke is cleaned up quickly; for each turn it is active, its effective rating decreases by one until it reaches zero. It can be re-launched two turns after its rating hits zero. If your persona changes nodes while the utility is active, the effect follows you. This program is particularly useful against nodes or deckers that have low-level Software Security but high-level Hardware Security.

Size: 1 Mp x Rating

SENSOR UTILITIES

Sensor utilities analyze data or other elements of the Matrix. Usually this program is used before a decker's persona enters the target node, so that they can receive information about it before any IC is triggered. Your persona must be in range in order to use a Sensor, which means the number of datalines between your persona and the target node cannot exceed the Sensor Rating. This usually means the persona is not close enough to the IC to trigger it. Exceptions to this may occur when the IC system is in an Alert; in these cases, your persona must be within [Sensor Rating - 2] datalines. In general, to execute a Sensor program, make a [Sensor Rating] + Logic Test, where the threshold is the target node's Security Rating. Gamemasters may wish to use secrecy in resolving this test to avoid giving away information—if the player knows the threshold, he then also knows the node's Security Rating.

Analyze

To retrieve critical information about a node, deckers use Analyze programs. Analyze programs can provide information on things such as the type of IC present, the type of node a target is and its primary function (for example, "You are facing a Barrier IC program," or, "This is a slave node controlling the employee coffee station on the 37th floor"). You can also use this program to analyze the ratings of various programs on a node. If used against an IC program, make an Analyze + Logic Test using the IC's Rating as the threshold. Tests against nodes use the Security Rating as the threshold (since these ratings can be high, gamemasters may opt to make them Extended Tests, with an interval of one Combat Turn. Take away a die for each successive roll on the test per the rule on p. 64, *SR4A*). An Analyze program will not reveal any information about another persona.

Size: 2 Mp x Rating

Browse

A Browse program analyzes the contents of datastores. You must specify the subject matter of your search. For example: "I am looking for data on the corporate security division's covert activities." Make a Browse + Data Search Test; simple data, such as office work schedules and the like, have a threshold of 2; project data for groups using the node has a threshold of 3; confidential data from those groups has a threshold of 4; and classified data has a threshold of 5 or more. If the decker is successful in running the program, he knows what files in the datastore contain references to that subject, and their sizes, though at this point he doesn't learn any details. See **Network of Nodes** for details on datastores and files.

Size: 1 Mp x Rating

Decrypt

Decrypt functions essentially the same as it does in *SR4A* (p. 229), with the additional power that it can be used to defeat Scramble IC. Scramble turns data into garbage if someone tries to access it without knowing the right passcode. If Scramble IC is active, make a Decrypt + Electronic Warfare Test, using the IC's Rating as a threshold, to preserve the data it is guarding. For more information, see **Intrusion Countermeasures (IC)** (p. 159).

Size: 1 Mp x Rating

Encrypt

The companion to the Decrypt program, this utility makes files and transmissions impossible to understand without the proper password using

large number equations that makes pi look short. To use Encrypt, deckers make an Encrypt + Electronic Warfare Test and note the number of hits. Anyone later attempting to decrypt the file uses that number of successes as the threshold on a Decrypt + Electronic Warfare Test.

Size: 1 Mp x Rating

Evaluate

An Evaluate program is a complex collection of algorithms that scans datastores looking for any information of value on the open market. The program must be regularly updated to that it continues looking for relevant information (in game terms, this means players must pay Rating x 10 nuyen monthly or have their Evaluate program lose a point of its rating). If you write your own Evaluate program, you can upgrade it from time to time to offset the penalty for not staying current. Make a Software + Logic (2) Test monthly to keep the program current. Failing the test means the software is corrupted beyond repair. A critical glitch on the test means the software seems to function as normal, but it begins returning wildly inaccurate results.

To run an Evaluate program, make an Evaluate + Hacking Test, using the target node's Security Rating as a threshold. If the program successfully runs, it finds any paydata files in the datastore. Evaluate tells the decker how many valuable files are present, the size of the files, and the approximate market value of each one.

If you are on a mission to find information on a specific subject or subjects, Evaluate will also tell you if the datastore contains that information, just as Browse does. You cannot program Evaluate on the fly.

Size: 1 Mp x Rating

MASKING UTILITIES

Masking utilities attempt to fool IC into leaving your persona alone. To execute the program, the decker makes a Masking + Hacking Test, using the Security Rating of the node as the threshold. Success means your persona is successfully hidden from the node's view. If the IC wins the test, it may trigger Attack IC, a System Alert, or take other programmed action. New tests must be made every ten Combat Turns your persona spends in the node, or when the persona switches nodes.

Deception

A Deception program generates fake passcodes to deceive IC. These passcodes are logged by the IC, which means Deception leaves a trail of sorts.

Deception can defeat Access and Gray IC. It does not affect Barrier or Black IC. Deception does not work if the IC is already attacking or otherwise activated.

Size: 1 Mp x Rating

Relocate

A Relocate program defeats Trace IC, security software that tracks a decker back to his entry point into the Matrix. If the decker makes a successful test to execute a Relocate program, it sends the IC on an endless wild goose chase through the Matrix. The IC will think it is doing its job continuing the intrusion and will not trigger any alarms.

Size: 1 Mp x Rating

Sleaze

A Sleaze program bypasses Access, Barrier, Gray, or Black IC without leaving tracks. If the decker succeeds at Masking, his persona is effectively invisible to the IC. Sleaze does not work if the IC is already attacking or otherwise activated.

Size: 2 Mp x Rating

A FIELD GUIDE TO IC

Intrusion Countermeasures (IC) may be installed in any node with a Security Code of Green or higher. IC (or Ice, as it is also known) makes life difficult, or even impossible, for deckers. Every IC program has a rating, which is usually its "skill."

There are three classes of IC: White IC, Gray IC, and Black IC. White IC offers only passive resistance. Gray IC actively attacks intruders or traces their entry point into the Matrix. Black IC is the aggressive variety, outright trying to kill deckers. Each is more fully described in the following sections.

WHITE IC

White IC reports or logs system access, blocks illegal access, and encrypts data. White IC is passive. When a persona comes into contact with the IC and detects it, the persona must use a legitimate passcode to identify himself or else activate a Utility that can defeat the IC. Things shift into cybercombat only if the utility fails or the IC is attacked. On its actions, the IC tries to trigger an alert (see **Alarm!**, p. 164). A decker can try to jam the IC by performing a Hacking + Logic Test opposed by the node's Security Rating. If the IC wins, it triggers the alert. White IC does not fight back against an attacking persona. Access, Barrier, and Scramble programs are examples of White IC.



Access

Access looks like a barrier of shimmering light consisting of billions of tiny alphanumeric characters swirling at ultra-high speed. A decker can defeat Access with Deception or Sleaze, or crash it using a Combat Utility. If attacked and damaged by Slow or Smoke, Access cannot issue an alert.

Barrier

Barrier is a solid security lock on a node. It resembles a wall of jagged, pulsing lightning bolts. Barrier can be defeated with Sleaze or killed with a Combat utility. It reacts to Slow and Smoke Programs in the same way as Access.

Scramble

Scramble is found in datastores and occasionally on individual files. It generally resembles a softly glowing light across the entrance to the datastore or wrapped protectively around the file. If a persona tries to touch the data, the light glows brighter and gives off a humming sound. If the program is still present when you read or download a file, the file is turned into garbled junk.

Scramble can be defeated by Deception or Decrypt or crashed with Combat utilities. Instead of trying to sound an alert, Scramble attempts to destroy the data it is guarding by heavily encrypting it in a method that only an offline decryption program sold with the IC can break. The persona can try to jam this program the same way it jams alarms. If attacked by Slow, Scramble reacts like Access.

A persona can try to download a file protected by Scramble, transferring both the data and the IC into storage. This adds the IC's rating to his threshold for operations in that system. Though the downloaded file remains protected, if the decker manages to make it out safe, she can work on it in a more leisurely fashion once she jacks out.

GRAY IC

Gray IC is capable of attacking a persona. It looks like White IC and has the same functions while adding some particularly nasty traps. You won't know whether IC is White or Gray without successfully scanning it.

All Gray IC requires a trigger of some kind. This means that once the program sets off an alert the way White IC would, the Gray IC emerges and attacks the persona. The Gray IC is activated even if the persona jams the alarm. If the persona defeats the White IC without using a Combat utility, the Gray IC is also fooled and stays quiet.

Gray IC usually waits for the persona to reach the node before acting. If the system is on alert, the IC closes in on the decker's persona and demands the passcode as soon as the persona is in the same node as it. If not given a right passcode or fooled with the Deception or Sleaze programs, it attacks the persona.

Blaster

Blaster is attack IC that engages the persona in cybercombat, doing normal damage (see **Cybercombat**, p. 236, *SR4A*). If it crashes the persona, the IC then tries to damage the deck. The IC rolls its Rating, opposed by the MPCP + Hardening Rating of the deck. If the test succeeds, the IC fries the deck, turning it into junk, and forcing the decker back into reality while suffering from dumpshock.

Killer

Killer IC attacks the persona in Cybercombat. Killer tries to destroy the persona, which causes the decker to be ejected from the Matrix and suffer dumpshock (p. 237, *SR4A*). No further damage is inflicted on the cyberdeck or decker.

Tar Baby

Tar Baby is a nasty virtual trap. It resembles White IC, but if it is attacked or if an attempt to fool it fails, it crashes—and takes the persona's Utility program with it. The crashed utility must be reloaded.

Tar Pit

Tar Pit is similar to Tar Baby, but when it does its tick, it not only crashes the intruder's Utility, but it also poisons all copies of that Utility in storage. This means the program cannot be reloaded. A new version of utility will need to be purchased or restored from a back-up.

Trace

Trace locks onto the decker's access path and locates his entry point into the Matrix. When it finds the entry point, the trace is completed. When Trace IC is activated, make a Success Test using its Rating + Software Security Rating of the Node for the number of dice and the MPCP Rating of the opposing deck for the threshold. The IC needs five Combat Turns to complete its action, though each net hit reduce this by one (to a minimum of two). Note that once Trace has a lock on a decker, the clock for it to complete the trace keeps running, even while the decker is fighting Trace or attempting to run away from it. It will not pursue him because it doesn't need to. The persona can try to kill the Trace before it completes the



action. Like White IC, Trace IC only fights defensively. A decker can also use Relocate instead of a Combat utility to try to give it a false trail to follow.

There are three types of Trace:

Trace and Report: When this Trace completes, it reports to an operator, automatically triggering an external alert. The trace reports the real-world address or location of the decker's entry point to the system owners.

Trace and Dump: This program resembles Trace and Report, but the decker is also automatically dumped if the Trace works, and they subsequently suffer dumpshock (p. 237, SR4A). In addition, the decker's physical location is reported to the network's security or the local police department, depending on the type of company that was being decked into.

Trace and Burn: This program resembles Trace and Dump, but the IC also tries to fry the cyberdeck. If the Trace works, the cyberdeck and the IC make an Opposed Test. The IC uses its Rating + Software Security Rating of the node, while the cyberdeck uses MPCP + Hardening. If the cyberdeck wins, the decker is dumped and suffers dumpshock, but neither he nor his deck is otherwise harmed. If the IC wins, the decker is dumped and the cyberdeck is scrap, its delicate circuits destroyed. And, just to continue the bad day, the IC reports the decker's physical location to the nearest individuals who want to jump up and down on the decker's fingers in order to keep them from typing on a deck ever again.

BLACK IC

Black IC fights just like Blaster, but it damages the decker, instead of his persona. This illegal, military-grade IC is based off of the 2029 Crash Virus and is usually programmed to do as much physical damage as possible, but can be set to do stun damage if the system owner does not want to kill intruders. Dead men tell no tales, but prisoners can be made downright talkative. See **Cybercombat** (p. 236, SR4A) for details.

Black IC requires a trigger, just like Gray IC. Once triggered, it attacks. Once Black IC scores a hit on a persona, the decker has only two options. He may either Hang Tough or Cut and Run.

Hang Tough

In this option, the decker resists damage so he can keep fighting, reminding his compatriots that there's a fine line between brave and stupid. The IC attacks as normal in Cybercombat, but the decker has to resist with his Body, gaining no bonuses for any armor worn, any Shield program currently active, or Hardening the cyberdeck has. If the IC wins in the Opposed Test, it does one physical or stun wound





(depending on the settings made by the owner of the IC) for each success.

Cut and Run

The decker tries to jack out. That's it, run away like some poser! Go cry to your motherboard!

The decker makes a Willpower + Body Test, with the IC's rating as the threshold (if the decker has the Guts Quality, adds its bonus to this roll). If the decker succeeded, he's out of the Matrix and safe, but he suffers from dumpshock. If not, then the IC rolls its rating + the Software Security Rating of the node it's in. Each hit results in a point of physical or stun damage, based on the setting of the IC. The damage can be resisted by the decker's Body, with no additions for armor.

MATRIX ACTIONS

The following actions are Matrix actions and may be performed by users. Almost every Matrix action requires the use of a running program—listed in parentheses with the action—and an appropriate skill. Note that this is not an exhaustive list of actions that may be performed in the Matrix, but a list of actions designated as “Matrix actions” for the purposes of game mechanics, such as the bonus for having a response increase on the cyberdeck. When attempting to take any action on a node, make an Hacking + Logic (node Security Rating) Test.

FREE ACTIONS

Alter/Swap Persona Appearance (MPCP)

You change a detail of an icon representing your persona or one of the programs, files, or nodes you own, or switch the icon to a pre-rendered icon you have stored.

Jack Out (MPCP)

You disconnect from your persona. If the decker jacks out without logging off, he suffers dumpshock (p. 237, SR4A). This requires a Complex Action and a successful test if your connection is jammed open by a Black IC program (p. 161).

Terminate Data Transfer (I/O)

You terminate a data transfer you initiated. You may also terminate data transfers initiated by others if you have the appropriate access and permissions on at least one of the nodes involved in the transfer (p. 152).

SIMPLE ACTIONS

Analyze IC on Node (Analyze)

You use Analyze to determine what kind of IC is stored on a node. See **Analyze** (p. 158) for more details.

Deactivate Program (MPCP)

You switch a program's status from running to loaded.

Decrypt (MPCP/Decrypt Program)

If you have the key to a particular encryption, you decrypt it with this action. If you use this on a file, the file becomes decrypted. If you use this on a node or Matrix traffic, you may access the node or read the traffic, but it remains encrypted to others.

Encrypt (Encrypt)

You encrypt a file, set of files, or a radio transmission. You also choose a passcode that you or another user can use to decrypt the file. You may encrypt multiple files together into a single archive file.

Issue Command (MPCP)

You give a short list of commands to a device that accepts you as authorized to do so. To become authorized, you either need to have an authentic passcode recognized by the system or hack your way in. To hack, perform a Hacking + Logic (System Security Rating, Complex Action) Extended Test. For each action the decker takes in the attempt, the system should make a node Security Rating (decker's MPCP) Test; successes mean the decker is detected, per the hacking rules on p. 235, SR4A. You may send the list of commands to multiple recipients, but it must be the same list of commands; different commands require the use of another Simple Action.

Jump Into A Drone/Vehicle/Device (Rigger)

You jump into a drone, vehicle, or device. This action is described in detail in *Jumping In*, p. 245, SR4A. Remember there is no wireless network to aid jumping in.

Log Off (MPCP)

Your persona logs off of a node, severing the subscription and connection to that node. You may also use this to gracefully disconnect from your persona, avoiding dumpshock. Note that Black IC programs are capable of preventing you from logging off (p. 161).

Transfer Data (I/O)

You transfer a file or set of files from one node to another. Most transfers last until the file is transferred in full, based on the cyberdeck's I/O speed.

COMPLEX ACTIONS

Control Device (MPCP)

You control a device through the Matrix, using your cyberdeck like a remote control or video game controller (though remember, no WiFi!). The dice pool of any test you make using this action uses the rating of your MPCP in place of the attribute you would use along with the appropriate skill as normal. For example, firing a drone-mounted rifle at a target would require a Longarms + MPCP test, and using a remote underwater welder would call for a Nautical Mechanic + MPCP test.

Note that if the action to be performed is normally a Simple Action, performing it through the Control Device action is still a Complex Action.

Crash CPU (Node Command)

You crash a network that your icon is currently accessing the CPU of. If you are successful in defeating the CPU's Security Rating (p. 154), the network is crashed and reboots. Any users accessing the network via a datajack, including the decker, must resist dumpshock when the node crashes. Anyone accessing the network via a cyberterminal without a datajack finds they can no longer access the network. They can only work with the programs and files they have in working memory, and they cannot save any files or changes to programs to anything except an attached chip writer.

Attack Program (Attack)

You initiate an attack on a running program or IC. The target program must be running in the same node as your icon or run by an icon that is in the same node as your icon. Make an Opposed Cybercombat + Attack vs. the target's Hardening + MPCP or Armor program (whichever is higher.) If you succeed, you crash the program, which changes its status from running to loaded.

Data Search (Browse or other)

You search the datastore you're currently accessing for information about a topic. This is a Data Search + Browse Extended Test with a variable threshold and interval, depending on the general availability of the information in question and the area being searched (see **Browse**, p. 158, for some notes on thresholds).

Some information is protected and kept secret, stored in a node that is not accessible from the Matrix, and so cannot be found without directly accessing the nodes on which the data is hidden, although a Data Search might be made to at least find the location of the information.

Not all Data Search actions use the Browse program. This action can be used on any large amount of data, such as a list of icons in a node or network traffic. When using this action for these special searches, use the program that is used to collect the information through which you are searching. For example, use Data Search + Evaluate to find out the value of any files in the datastore that might interest a Filemonger Fixer.

Edit (MPCP)

Edit allows you to create, change, or delete any kind of file. A Complex Action is required to alter one detail of a file: for example, approximately a sentence of text or a detail of an image or about a second of video or audio (gamemaster's discretion). This requires a successful Computer + Intuition Test with a threshold set by the gamemaster using the Success Test Difficulties Table (p. 62, SR4A) based on the extent, quality, and complexity of the edits being made. Continuous editing of a device's output requires the expenditure of a Simple Action every Initiative Pass for the duration of the edit.

Note that controlling the device (via the Control Device action, p. 163) may allow you simple control that, in the end, is similar to Edit (i.e., by freezing image capture at source or turning off audio reception).

Initiate Cryptanalysis (Decrypt)

You have your Decrypt program start working on an encrypted file to which you have access. Cryptanalysis is an Electronic Warfare + Decrypt Test; the threshold is the number of hits achieved on an Electronic Warfare + Encrypt Test for the file. If you reach the threshold, the encryption is broken. When you use cryptanalysis on a node, you may access the coded information there, but it remains encrypted to others.

Intercept Traffic (MPCP)

You intercept traffic between two nodes. To do this, you must have access to a node through which all of the traffic passes; if the traffic is being split between intermediate nodes (see p. 151), you cannot intercept it unless you are in the CPU of the network. To eavesdrop on traffic, make a Hacking + Logic Test; the hits from this test are the threshold for others to



detect the snooping with a Matrix Perception test (see p. 228, *SR4A*). The traffic may be copied and recorded or forwarded to a third party with no additional tests. If you want to block or alter some of the traffic before sending it along, you must use the Edit action. To insert fake traffic, you must succeed in an Opposed Test pitting your Hacking + Intuition and the targeted node's Security Rating. If the traffic is encrypted, you must break the encryption before it can be intercepted.

Log On (MPCP)

You open a connection to a node, and your persona appears there. This requires no test, but you need either the proper authentication to an account (such as a passcode) or a hacked account (see **Hacking**, p. 235, *SR4A*). You also, of course, need a connection to the node.

Matrix Attack (Attack)

You make an attack against another persona or construct in a node where your persona currently exists. You may only make attacks against targets with a Condition Monitor, such as IC or other persona icons. This follows the general rules for *Cybercombat* (p. 236, *SR4A*).

Reboot CPU (MPCP)

You initiate a reboot of a device with a Complex Action. You must be in the CPU node of the network, and you must make a Hacking + Logic (CPU Security Rating, 1 Combat Turn) Extended Test. When enough hits are achieved, all programs stop running, and anyone who is still running their persona on the device is severed from the Matrix, suffering dumpshock (p. 237, *SR4A*). Restarting the system takes a number of Combat Turns equal to the CPU's Security Rating. The device then reboots itself by making a Security Rating (10, 1 Combat Turn) Extended Test.

Redirect Trace (Relocate)

You muddle your active datatrail against an active tracking attempt, making it harder for a Trace IC program to find your persona's node. Make an Opposed Hacking + Relocate vs. the Tracking IC's Security Rating. You may take this action multiple times against the same target. This action only works against a tracking attempt in progress.

Repair Persona (Medic)

You heal the Matrix Damage that a persona or IC program has suffered. Make a Computer + Medic

(damage taken x 2, Complex Action) Extended Test. When the threshold is reached, all damage is removed from the target icon. Note that it is possible for the threshold to change during the Extended Test if the target suffers further damage.

This action only repairs Matrix damage.

Run Utility (MPCP)

You run a utility that is loaded into the cyberdeck's memory. This changes the program's status from loaded to running. Programs must be running in order to be used.

JACKING IN NAKED

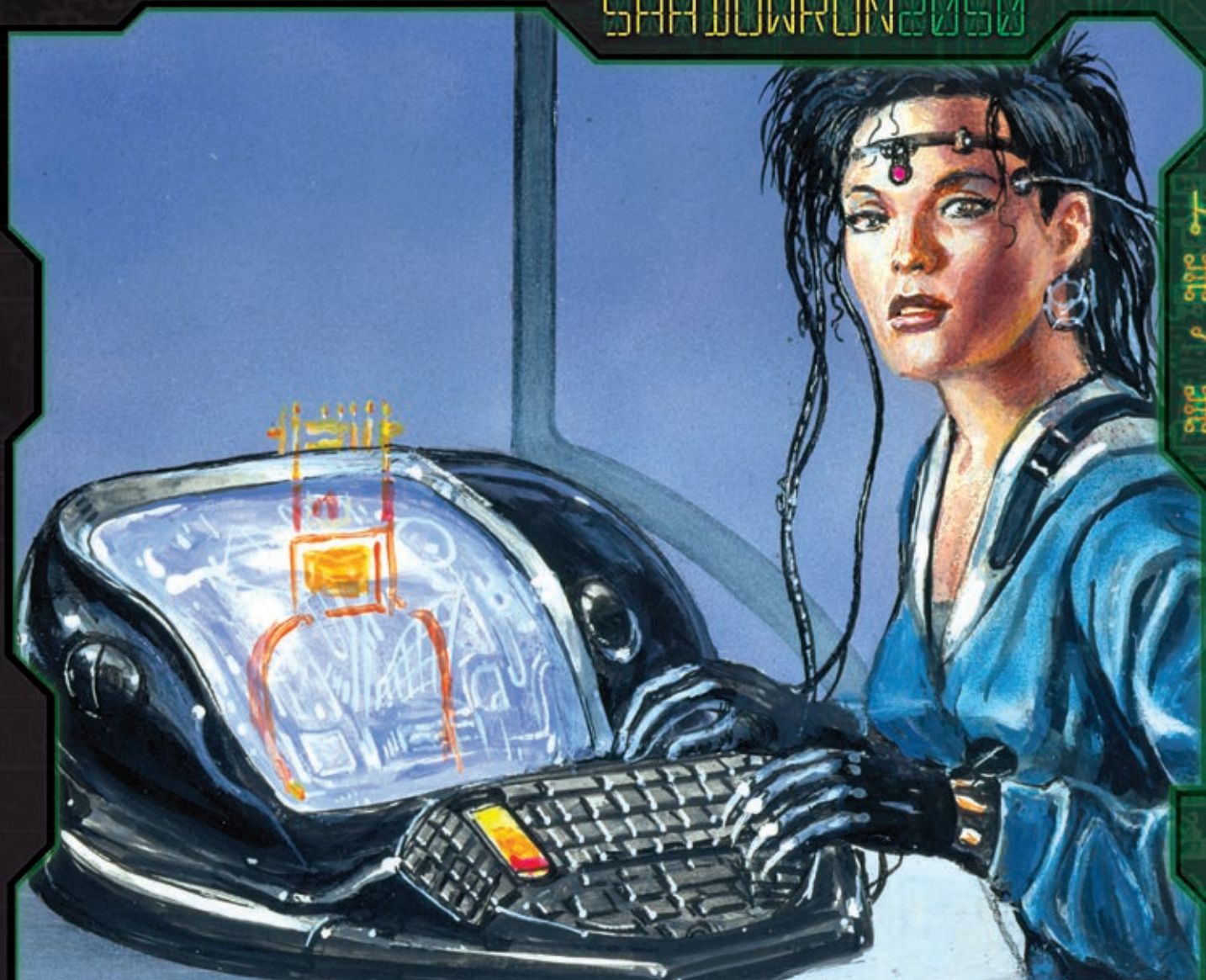
The major issue for deckers is that their tool of choice, a cyberdeck, is a rather high-end and single-use tool. It's used by deckers—beginning, middle, and end of story. Trying to infiltrate a corporate environment as janitors with one will raise eyebrows of even the lowliest of paid and trained security guards. Don't worry however; deckers have a solution to that problem as well. They'll just deck the system naked.

Put your pants back on, that's not what it entails. What you need is a particular piece of cybernetics called a *program carrier*, which carries the bare minimum of your persona information and most of a cyberdeck's MPCP. The character's Willpower substitutes in for the other normal statistics of a Matrix run, and all utilities must be programmed on the fly (p. 157). Matrix Perception is performed by your own Perception + Intuition; any damage the decker takes while jacked in this way is counted as stun damage. Finally, if the decker has headware memory, they can download files to it, with their Logic stat substituting for an I/O Rating. The character's physical statistics still have no involvement in their virtual adventures, except the Body Rating when resisting dumpshock.

ALARM!

Almost all IC is able to set off some sort of alert, either internally informing every node that there's a possible intruder, or requesting assistance from an outside source, such as a company decker or law enforcement authorities.

Internal Alert: Unsure if it's been invaded or not, the network's security goes into overdrive, slowing down all other processes as it investigates every area of the network to see if it can find any anomalies. Like, say, as a decker messing around in a datastore. While an internal alert is on, all IC increase their rating by fifty percent (round down),



drawing extra processing power from every other system on the network. These types of alarms last until the intruder is discovered, or the decker gets to the CPU and turns it off (p. 153). Additionally, if an alert has been ongoing for an hour (sometimes less, depending on how the security is set up) and nothing has been found, the alert generally shuts off. As stated, this takes an exceptional load from the network and slows down productivity, so the alerts are not usually on all the time. Security personnel on the Matrix tend to find the alerts annoying, wanting them shut off as soon as possible. While in an internal alert stage, if the network is alerted to another disruption in its usual processes, it will stage an External Alert.

External Alert: The network has decided there's something going on and has alerted its human operators for further assistance. Those operators will begin to take whatever action is normal

according to their guide books, which can mean sending in security deckers to investigate the situation, or rebooting the nodes that declared the alarms, thereby dumping everyone out that is currently in those nodes (making them suffer dumpshock) or shutting down the entire network. This renders the nodes offline until they start up again (Security Rating X 10 minutes to reboot a node, Security Rating of the CPU X 30 minutes to reboot the network.) It takes 2D6 Combat Turns to send the reboot command to the nodes, and 4D6 Combat Turns to send the reboot command to the CPU. A network or node shutting down sends off a lot of alarms inside the affected areas as files save safely and programs wind down properly. This is usually flashing red lights and lots of klaxons, but can be a gentle flashing light to the musical strains of soft, soothing music, depending on the temperament and resources of the node sculptors.

GEAR

As the street proverb says, nothing to fear if you've got the gear. And we've got the gear, omae. You may think 2050's tech is primitive, but if you've got the talent, we've got the tools. And the guns.

Note that in most cases, terms used here have the same definitions as they do in *SR4A*, because that's a good way to not be confusing. For example, gear providing low-light vision works with the same modifiers as it would in 2074 games.

WIRELESS CONNECTIVITY?

You want to know what's wireless in 2050? Radios and phones. Telecommunications have been in the hands of the megacorps for over a century, and they'll never loosen their grip (unless some big catastrophe happens, like another global Crash or something).

So what does this mean for you? It means that if you want a mental connection with something, you're going to need to be plugged into it. Otherwise, you have to physically interact with the devices you want to use. You have to key in the commcode of your fixer manually, open doors yourself, and type email messages. If you want to use those smartlink bonuses and Simple Actions, you need the induction pads that come with the cyberware, or to use a cable if you're using smartgoggles.

Don't worry, though. I'm sure you'll get used to it.

CONCEALABILITY

Concealability is kind of a big deal in 2050. Security forces are, generally, entirely reliant on their eyeballs for finding armed suspects to hassle. As a result, concealability is also a big deal to shadowrunners, both for spotting other people's weapons and hiding their own.

CONCEALABILITY AND PERCEPTION

When someone is searching you for a weapon or anything else suspicious, add the highest Concealability modifier of all your gear as a dice pool modifier to the searcher's Perception Test. She only needs one hit, but if you're actively trying to conceal the weapon/packet of drugs/baby devil rat/whatever, you can resist by causing her to make an Opposed test against your Palming + Agility.

CONCEALABILITY TABLE

CONCEALABILITY MODIFIER	EXAMPLES
-6	Bug, slap patch, micro-electronics
-4	Hold-out pistol, monowhip, ammo, credstick, chips/softs, sequencer/passkey
-2	Light pistol, knife, sap, microgrenade, jammer
+0	Cyberdeck, heavy pistol, taser, grenade, goggles
+2	Machine pistol, medkit, club
+4	SMG, stun baton, sword
+6	Assault rifle, katana

GEAR LISTING

Here they are, our favorite selections from Street Samurai, Bodyline, Merx Magica, that one shop on 80th and Redmond, and all of the best grid catalogs, fixers, and talismongers.

MELEE WEAPONS

Weapons for when you're up close and personal. Check out *Melee Combat*, p. 156, *SR4A*, and *Melee Weapons Table*, p. 158, *SR4A*.

Combat Axe: If your fashion statement is "frag off," this two-handed laser-honed axe is for you.

Forearm Snap-Blades: All of the style of cyber-spurs without the elective surgery. These blades extend and retract with a gesture (as a Free Action).

Katana: The two-handed "samurai" sword. Wearing one of these marks you as a true street samurai. Or a poser. Either way, it's a deadly weapon.

Knife: The perfect tool for cutting ropes, fabric, food, and gangers.

Monofilament Sword: A shiny new development from Ares America combines the deadly cutting edge of monofilament with the street cred of a sword.

Monofilament Whip: The retractable monofilament isn't quite monomolecular, but you can see it from



there. The weight on the end of the monofilament makes the weapon dangerous. If you glitch when you're using it, you might snag it on something irritating, and if you critically glitch, you'll wrap it around yourself and take damage equal to the Damage Code of the whip.

Polearm: A blade on a long stick says one of two things about you: either you're a troll and don't care what other people think, or you're not a troll but can open them up from two meters away.

Shock Glove: Reach out and electrocute someone. Each glove can hold eight charges and takes about an hour to recharge fully.

Staff: Popular with magicians, people who look like magicians, people who wish they were magicians, and people who like to hit other people in the face with sticks.

Stun Baton: The "riot management apparatus" of choice for the Lone Star cop on the beat, this weapon does electricity damage (p. 163, SR4A).

Survival Knife: This knife includes a tiny compass, a micro-lighter, a glow stick, and a (replaceable) trauma patch.

Sword: The sharp part goes into the target, who ideally screams and bleeds.

PROJECTILE WEAPONS

Like a gun, but more quiet. Check out p. 155, SR4A for details on how to kill people with projectile weapons.

Bow: Load, draw, shoot, create pincushion. Repeat as necessary. Bows in 2050 follow the same rules as they do in 2070 (p. 155, SR4A).

Crossbow: These come in three grades: light (ow!), medium (OW!), and heavy (hrk ... gurgle). Each needs a Ready Weapon action to reload.

Shuriken: Light, sharp, easily hidden, and very stylish. You can ready (Agility/2) shuriken with a Ready Weapon action.

MELEE WEAPONS

WEAPON	REACH	DAMAGE	AP	AVAILABILITY	COST
Club	1	(STR/2 + 1)P	—	—	10¥
Combat Axe	2	(STR/2 + 4)P	-1	8R	600¥
Forearm Snap-Blades	—	(STR/2 + 2)P	—	6R	150¥
Katana	1	(STR/2 + 3)P	-1	4R	1,000¥
Knife	—	(STR/2 + 1)P	—	—	20¥
Monofilament Sword	1	(STR/2 + 3)P	-1	8R	1,250¥
Monofilament Whip	2	8P	-4	12F	3,000¥
Pole Arm	2	(STR/2 + 2)P	-2	4R	1,000¥
Sap	—	(STR/2 + 1)S	—	—	10¥
Shock Glove	—	5S(e)	-half	3R	950¥
Staff	2	(STR/2 + 2)P	—	—	50¥
Stun Baton	1	6S(e)	-half	4R	400¥
Survival Knife	—	(STR/2 + 1)P	-1	—	550¥
Sword	1	(STR/2 + 3)P	—	4R	350¥



PROJECTILE WEAPONS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	AVAILABILITY	COST
Bow	(STR Min + 2)P	—	Rating x 2	Rating x 100¥
Arrow	—	—	Rating x 2	Rating x 5¥
Crossbow, Light	3P	—	2	300¥
Crossbow, Medium	5P	—	4R	500¥
Crossbow, Heavy	7P	-1	8R	750¥
Bolt	—	—	2	5¥
Shuriken	(STR ÷ 2)P	—	2	30¥
Throwing Knife	(STR ÷ 2 + 1)P	—	2	20¥

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Throwing Knife: The choice of bar fight snipers. You can ready (Agility/2) throwing knives with a Ready Weapon action.

FIREARMS

You can't shoot straight without something to shoot. All firearms come with the ability to fire either cased or caseless ammunition, and the one can't fire the other's cartridges. Most runners go for caseless these days (it doesn't leave as much evidence). Firearms also come with a built-in digital ammo counter.

If you need a refresher on rules for using firearms, check out p. 155, SR4A.

Tasers

Tasers are fired using the Pistols skill.

Defiance Super Shock: Most law enforcement agencies in North America use this double-barreled people-zapper. It comes with an integral low-light imaging scope. The standard model fires a dart that trails a ten-meter wire. An electric charge surges down the wire to incapacitate the target as long as the current flows. A variant on these weapons fires darts that contain high-capacitance batteries. The darts discharge on contact, stunning the target as per Electricity Damage, p. 163, SR4A.

Hold-Out Pistols

Hold-outs have a Concealability modifier of -4 and are fired using the Pistols skill.

Streetline Special: Small, lightweight, highly concealable, highly available, but of limited reliability. The choice of successful squatters and unsuccessful gangers everywhere.

Tiffani Self-Defender: A pistol that's compact to sit next to your compact. Sleek, stylish, and classy.

Walther Palm Pistol: Slick and European. Its

over-under configuration allows its two-round capacity to be fired at the same time with +1 DV and a -1 Recoil modifier.

Light Pistols

Light pistols have a Concealability modifier of -2 and are fired using the Pistols skill.

Ares Light Fire 70: This weapon is a bit smaller than its counterparts (Concealability modifier -3), making it the perfect little piece for when a hold-out just doesn't pack enough punch.

Beretta 200ST: The sidearm of choice for municipal and military police. While it has a burst-fire setting, firing a burst with the Beretta 200ST is a Complex Action. It comes with a detachable stock.

Beretta Model 101T: When you fieldstrip a dead security guard, you'll probably find one of these.

Colt America L36: This pistol is the most popular choice of safety-conscious *sararimen* thanks to its reliability and availability.

Fichetti Security 500: This weapon is designed for light security work. It comes complete with a 10-round clip, a 22-round extended clip, and a detachable shoulder stock.

Machine Pistols

Machine pistols have a Concealability modifier of +2 and are fired using the Automatics skill.

Ares Crusader MP 6: It's got an integrated gas-vent 2 system and an extended clip, so feel free to run this puppy dry the next time the organic drek hits the airflow enhancer.

Ceska Black Scorpion: This Czech weapon is pure gold on the street; it doesn't pack the same amount of features as the Crusader, but that usually means you can get it for cheaper. This machine pistol comes with a folding stock.

TASERS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Defiance Super Shock	8S(e)	—	SA	—	4 (m)	3R	1,000¥

HOLD-OUT PISTOLS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Streetline Special	4P	—	SS	—	6 (c)	4R	100¥
Tiffani Self-Defense	4P	—	SS	—	4 (c)	2R	450¥
Walther Palm Pistol	4P	—	SS/BF	—	2 (b)	3R	200¥

LIGHT PISTOLS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Ares Light Fire 70	4P	—	SA	—	16 (c)	3R	475¥
Beretta 200ST	4P	—	SA/BF*	(1)	20 (c)	5R	750¥
Beretta Model 101T	4P	—	SA	—	12 (c)	4R	350¥
Colt American L36	4P	—	SA	—	11 (c)	4R	350¥
Fichetti Security 500	4P	—	SA	(1)	10 (c)	6R	400¥
Fichetti Security 500a	4P	—	SA	(1)	22 (c)	3R	450¥

* Burst fire on this weapon requires a Complex Action.

MACHINE PISTOLS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Ares Crusader MP 6	4P	—	SA/BF	2	40 (c)	5F	950¥
Ceska Black Scorpion	4P	—	SA/BF	(1)	35 (c)	5F	850¥

Heavy Pistols

Heavy pistols are fired using the Pistols skill.

Ares Predator: The end of the barrel of a Predator has been a calling card for runners since time immemorial. Its popularity, which is tied to its price, punch, and profile, has made it almost as iconic as the katana.

Ares Viper: This pistol fires flechette ammunition (already in the Damage Code). It has an integral silencer, so it'll be quieter than your target.

Browning Max-Power: Browning tried to make a weapon as good as the Predator, and ended up making pretty much the same weapon. To state it somewhat more positively, if you can't get an Ares, this one's just as good.

Colt Manhunter: Designed by and built for Andrea McBaine (a famous bounty hunter, for those of you still living under a manhole cover), this pistol sports an integral laser sight.

Remington Roomsweeper: The other iconic heavy pistol for shadowrunners, this "hogleg" shotgun uses heavy pistol ranges but the rules (and ammunition) for shotguns. When asked whether the Roomsweeper was available in a slug-round version, a Remington spokesperson snickered.

Ruger Super Warhawk: This weapon doesn't accept a silencer, partially because it's a revolver, but mostly because you don't buy a Super Warhawk because you want to be subtle.



HEAVY PISTOLS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Ares Predator	5P	-1	SA	—	15 (c)	4R	450¥
Ares Viper	8P(f)	+5	SA/BF	—	30 (c)	5R	600¥
Browning Max-Power	5P	-1	SA	—	10 (c)	3R	450¥
Colt Manhunter	5P	-1	SA	—	16 (c)	4R	300¥
Remington Roomsweeper	7P(f)	+5	SA	—	8 (m)	4R	300¥
Ruger Super Warhawk	6P	-2	SS	—	6 (cy)	3R	300¥



SUBMACHINE GUNS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
AK-97 Carbine	5P	—	SA/BF/FA	(1)	30 (c)	5F	800¥
Beretta Model 70	5P	—	BF/FA	—	35 (c)	5F	900¥
HK227	5P	—	SA/BF/FA	(1)	28 (c)	4F	1,500¥
Ingram Smartgun	5P	—	BF/FA	2 (3)	32 (c)	4F	950¥
Uzi III	5P	—	BF	(1)	24 (c)	4F	600¥



ASSAULT RIFLES

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
AK-97	6P	-1	SA/BF/FA	—	22 (c)	3F	500¥
AK-98	6P	-1	SA/BF/FA	—	22 (c)	6F	2,500¥
Grenade Launcher	Grenade	—	SS	—	6 (m)	—	—
Colt M22A2	6P	-1	SA/BF/FA	2	40 (c)	4F	1,600¥
Grenade Launcher	Grenade	—	SS	—	6 (m)	—	—
FN HAR	6P	-1	SA/BF/FA	2	20 (c)	4F	1,200¥
Steyr AUG-CSL						10F	4,500¥
SMG	5P	—	SA/BF	1	40 (c)	—	—
Carbine	5P	—	SA/BF	1	40 (c)	—	—
Assault Rifles	6P	—	SA/BF/FA	1	40 (c)	—	—
LMG	6P	-1	SA/BF/FA	1	40 (c)	—	—



Submachine Guns

Submachine Guns are fired using the Automatics skill.

AK-97 Carbine: The baby AK-97 is just like its mommy, but with a shorter barrel and a folding stock.

Beretta Model 70: Its bullpup design, integral laser sight, and sound-suppressor barrel make this compact and powerful weapon perfect for covert action.

Heckler & Koch HK227: If you're facing corporate autofire, chances are it's coming out of an HK227, so why not send some back the same way? This SMG

comes equipped with a retractable stock, an integral laser sight, and a gas-vent 2 system.

Ingram Smartgun: The first submachine gun to feature an integral smartgun system, this samurai sidekick includes a gas-vent 2 system and a folding stock as well.

Uzi III: The famous Israeli Uzi is gone, but Fabrique Nationale picked up the popular series and kept it going strong, adding an integral laser sight and a folding stock to the standard model.

SPORT RIFLES

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Remington 750	7P	-1	SS	—	5 (m)	3R	600¥
Remington 950	8P	-1	SS	—	5 (m)	3R	800¥
Ruger 100	7P	-1	SA	(1)	5 (m)	3R	1,300¥

SNIPER RIFLES

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Ranger Arms SM-3	8P	-3	SA	—	6 (m)	12F	4,000¥
Walter MA-2100	7P	-3	SA	—	10 (m)	12F	6,500¥

SHOTGUNS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Defiance T-250	9P(f)	+5	SA	—	5 (m)	3R	750¥
Enfield AS-7	9P(f)	+5	SA/BF	—	10 (c) or 24 (d)	8R	1,000¥
Mossberg CMDT	9P(f)	+5	SA/BF	—	8 (c)	8F	1,500¥
Mossberg CMDT/SM	9P(f)	+5	SA/BF	—	8 (c)	12F	1,900¥

Assault Rifles

Assault rifles have a Concealability modifier of +6 and are fired using the Automatics skill.

AK-97: Originally a Soviet weapon, this assault rifle is now found worldwide. It's quite versatile, available in a carbine model (see submachine guns) or as the AK-98, which includes an integral mini-grenade launcher mounted on the under-barrel (that model runs 2,500¥).

Colt M2A2: This affordable engine of death features built-in vision magnification, underbarrel grenade launcher, and a Gas-Vent 2 system to help put more lead on the target.

FN HAR: This weapon is selling like hotcakes with corporate security forces. If you were one of the lucky few who pre-ordered, you also got an exclusive signed Irma Crackshot poster. It (the gun, not the poster) is tricked out with a folding stock, gas-vent 2, and an integral laser sight.

Steyr AUG-CSL: Four weapons in a single system! You know it's a good weapon: seven hundred thousand Confederate troops can't all be wrong. This weapon can be configured in under a minute to be an SMG, an assault rifle, a carbine (sporting rifle), or an LMG, and all that can be

packed away into a large suitcase. All the barrels in the system use a gas-vent 1 system.

Sport Rifles

Sport rifles have a Concealability modifier of +6 and are fired using the Longarms skill.

Remington 750: This long, sleek sport rifle is perfect for picking off gangers, dropping drones, and occasionally even for hunting. It comes with a top-mounted magnification scope and no underbarrel mounting options.

Remington 950: Bigger and louder than its little sister, this weapon is otherwise identical to the Remington 750.

Ruger 100: This sport rifle is made with solid woods rather than cheap plastics, making it more rugged and tolerant to abuse than other sport rifles. It features a built-in imaging scope and a rigid stock with shock pad.

Sniper Rifles

Sniper rifles have a Concealability modifier of +6 and are fired using the Longarms skill. They're not sturdy when they're being used for something other than



HEAVY WEAPONS

WEAPON	TYPE	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
ArmTech MGL-12	Grenade Launcher	Grenade	—	SA	—	12 (c)	6F	2,200¥
Ingram Valiant	LMG	6P	-1	BF/FA	2 (3)	50 (c) or 100 (belt)	6F	1,500¥
GE Vindicator Minigun	LMG	6P	-1	FA*	—	100 (belt)	24F	2,500¥
FN-MAG 5	MMG	6P	-2	FA	2	50 (box) or 100 (belt)	18F	3,200¥
Stoner-Ares M107	HMG	7P	-3	FA	3	50 (box) or 100 (belt)	18F	5,200¥
Panther Assault Cannon	Assault Cannon	10P	-5	SS	(1)	22 (c)	16F	5,500¥
Missile Launcher	Missile Launcher	Missile	—	SS	—	1 (ml)	16F	1,000¥
Disposable Rocket Launcher	Rocket Launcher	Rocket	—	SS	—	1 (ml)	12F	500¥

* The fixed fire rate is 15 rounds per Complex action instead of 10.

static sniping (like a running gunfight or a hand-to-hand fight). Runners must make a Simple Edge (2) Test at the end of every Combat Turn when misusing it. If they fail, they receive a cumulative -1 dice pool penalty for using it until they readjust it with an Extended Armorer + Logic (8, 1 minute) Test.

Ranger Arms SM-3: This rifle features a silencer, and an imaging scope with magnification, and either thermographic, or low-light vision enhancements. For the assassin on the go, it breaks down to fit into a briefcase.

Walther MA-2100: This is the CAS armed forces' favorite sniper rifle. It's more rugged than most sniper rifles, which means that the Edge test only applies to it when used in melee combat. It comes with an internal smartgun system.

Shotguns

Shotguns have a Concealability modifier of +6 and are fired using the Longarms skill. All shotguns fire flechette ammunition.

Defiance T-250: This snub-nose shotgun has a Concealability modifier of only +3 but uses heavy pistol ranges. It also can't accept a barrel mount.

Enfield AS-7: Nothing says massive firepower like ten kilos of supersonic lead flying through the air in the form of deadly little pellets. The weapon also boasts an integral laser sight and plenty of ammunition capacity.

Mossberg CMDT: Is your Enfield not covering the street with paste fast enough? Try this shotgun.

Comes in the vanilla version, and the enhanced /SM version with an integral smartgun system.

Heavy Weapons

Heavy weapons are fired with the Heavy Weapons skill. If you want to conceal one, try the trunk of your car, because there's no way you're hiding it on your person.

ArmTech MGL-12: Why say "I hate you" when you can say "THOOMP! THOOMP!" instead? This grenade launcher doesn't take barrel accessories.

Ingram Valiant: Like you, this light machine gun comes loaded for bear with a hip-brace shock absorption, and a gas-vent 2 system on the barrel.

GE Vindicator Minigun: This light machine gun has six rotating barrels to keep it cool while it unleashes the full fury of its devastating fire rate. Due to its speed, it fires fifteen rounds per Complex Action rather than only ten. If you want to add some barrel accessories, make sure to buy six!

FN-MAG 5: A popular weapon to mount on utility vehicles, command turrets, and "ice cream" trucks, the FN-MAG 5 sports an integral laser sight and a gas-vent 2 system.

Stoner-Ares M107: Technically this weapon is called the Stoner-Ares M107 General Purpose Heavy Machine Gun, but all its friends call it 107. It's got an integral laser sight and a gas-vent 3 system.

Panther Assault Cannon: This mini-tank gun comes equipped with a shoulder strap and a hip pad to reduce its recoil. That helps somewhat, though the bruises on the hips of many users say "not enough."

SPECIAL WEAPONS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Ares MP Laser	7P	-half	SA	1	20 (battery)	Good luck with that	2,500,000¥
Narcoject™ Pistol	As toxin	—	SA	—	5 (c)	6R	600¥
Narcoject™ Rifle	As toxin	—	SA	—	10 (c)	8R	1,700¥

Aztechnology Striker: A cheap metal tube with just enough electronics to give a loaded missile the intel it needs to home in on its target.

Disposable Rocket Launcher: The rocket launcher sold in a black-and-white box. If you thought the Striker was cheap, check out this puppy. There are no big-name manufacturers that make this weapon, but its price reflects that.

Special Weapons

These weapons, while very wiz, require a specific Exotic Ranged Weapon skill to use.

Ares MP Laser: Finally, we're living in The Future! Ares has put a laser weapon on the market, and corporations and security forces are scrambling to not buy it. Seriously, it's pretty expensive and impossible to find, but on the bright side it cuts through armor like butter and IT'S A FRAGGIN' LASER GUN! It comes with a full-body harness to carry the batteries and generate the power, and an attached pistol to do the actual killing. Targets resist damage with half Impact armor. See *Laser Weapons*, p. 41, *Arsenal* for additional rules.

Narcoject™ Pistol: Sometimes you need to bring your targets in unhurt. Well, unharmed. Well, maybe just not dead. This little number fires darts with Narcoject™ patented toxin and uses light pistol ranges.

Narcoject™ Rifle: This is basically the same as your Narcoject™ pistol, except it uses shotgun ranges for those hard-to-reach targets.

FIREARM ACCESSORIES

All firearm accessories take up an accessory slot (top, barrel, or under-barrel), and each one increases the weapon's Concealability modifier by +2. So if you've got your assault rifle (+6 already) decked out with a scope, grenade launcher, and gas-vents, the weapon's Concealability modifier is +12. Stuff that doesn't take up a slot (like holsters) don't affect Concealability.

Bipod: A two-legged brace that can be folded down along the barrel. When you use it with the





FIREARM ACCESSORIES

WEAPON	MOUNT	AVAILABILITY	COST
Bipod	Under	2	400¥
Concealable Holster	—	2	100¥
Gas-Vent 2 System	Barrel	2R	450¥
Gas-Vent 3 System	Barrel	2R	700¥
Grenade Launcher	Under	8F	1,700¥
Gyro Stabilization, Deluxe	Under	4	6,000¥
Gyro Stabilization, Standard	Under	4	2,500¥
Imaging Scope	Top	3	500¥
Laser Sight	Top/Under	6	500¥
Shock Pad	—	2	200¥
Silencer	Barrel	4F*	500¥
Smart Goggles	—	3R	3,000¥
Smartgun System, External	Top/Under	4R	600¥
Smartgun System, Internal	—	6R	Weapon Cost
Sound Suppressor	Barrel	6R/F*	750¥
Spare Clips	—	2	5¥
Speed Loader	—	2	10¥
Tripod	Under	10	600¥

* As weapon it is bought for.

bipod resting on something (usually the ground or a low wall), it gives you +2 recoil compensation.

Concealable Holster: This custom-fit holster modifies the Concealability of the weapon in it (pistol size or smaller, thank you) by -2.

Gas-Vent System: Attach this boxy accessory to your weapon's barrel to vent the firing gasses to help counteract recoil. This modification is permanent. The system adds its rating to the weapon's recoil compensation.

Grenade Launcher: This under-barrel addition adds grenade launching to your slug-throwing fun. The grenade launcher is single-shot and can hold up to six mini-grenades in its internal magazine.

Gyro Stabilization: Sure, the harness makes you look like you're wearing lederhosen, but the system gives you +5 recoil compensation (+6 if it's the deluxe version) and lets you apply your recoil compensation against movement modifiers. It takes five minutes to get into the thing, but only a Complex Action to hit the quick release and drop it and the mounted weapon to the ground. As far as Concealability is concerned, don't bother: it's pretty noticeable.

Imaging Scope: Imaging scopes can be digital or optical. Both varieties come with magnification.

You can cast spells through optical scopes, but only digital ones can take vision enhancements (sold separately).

Laser Sight: When you touch the trigger, the laser sight puts a red (or green, or blue, or whatever your taste) dot onto the target to let you know where you're going to hit. Laser sights can be installed as top or under-barrel accessories (or both, if you're in the mood).

Shock Pad: This shock-absorbing pad is added to a rigid shoulder stock, not a folding one, or the hip brace of a heavy weapon. It adds +1 recoil compensation to the weapon.

Silencer: Silencers reduce the sound and flash from a single-shot or semi-automatic weapon, which means a -4 dice pool modifier to Perception Tests to notice the shot.

Smart Goggles: These oversized goggles use a fiber optic cable to connect to a smartgun. Since the goggles don't include the motor feedback of a real smartlink, they only give you a +1 bonus to firing. You can get low-light and/or infrared included in the goggles for an extra 1,000¥ per feature.

Smartgun System: This is either an internal or external smartgun system, intended to work with a

AMMUNITION

AMMO, PER 10 SHOTS	DAMAGE MODIFIER	AP MODIFIER	ARMOR USED	AVAIL	COST
APDS	—	-4	Ballistic	14F	70¥
Assault Cannon	As Cannon	As Cannon	Ballistic	10F	450¥
Dartgun Dart	As toxin	—	—	4R	200¥
Explosive Rounds	+1	—	Ballistic	8R/F*	50¥
Flechette Rounds	+2	+5	Impact	3R/F*	100¥
Gel Rounds	-1 (Stun)	+2	Impact	4R/F*	30¥
Regular Ammo	—	—	Ballistic	2R/F*	20¥
Taser Dart	As Taser	-half	Impact	6R	50¥

* As weapon it is bought for.

smartlink or smart goggles. If you don't have a smartlink or smart goggles, don't bother buying it.

Sound Suppressor: This is like a silencer for burst-fire and fully automatic weapons. It imposes a -2 dice pool penalty to those using Perception to notice your violence, but it only works for about three hundred rounds of ammunition before it wears out and needs to be replaced.

Spare Clip: Um ... it's a spare clip. Pick a specific weapon model that the clip fits.

Speed Loader: This ring of holes is used to load a revolver quickly (p. 324, SR4A).

Tripod: A giant bipod with a third leg, a tripod offers +6 recoil compensation. Its Concealability modifier is "hey look, a tripod!"

AMMUNITION

You should choose ammo as carefully as you choose your shoes—in both cases, the right decision makes whatever situation you're in work better while making you feel somewhat more comfortable.

When you buy ammo, you get it for a weapon type. You buy rounds for, say, a light pistol, and you can use those rounds in other light pistols, but not in a heavy pistol.

APDS: Nobody calls it armor-piercing discarding sabot anymore, but that's exactly what it is. When the bullet hits the target, the dense sub-projectile punches through any armor, barrier, or troll it might hit.

Assault Cannon: Your assault cannon needs ammo, too, and this is what you'll buy when it's time to feed the Panther.

Dartgun Dart: Designed for the Narcoject™ non-fatal dart gun series. Toxin sold separately.

Explosive Rounds: Like tiny grenades, these rounds explode loudly on contact. They have a

tendency to misfire and explode in the weapon when you critically glitch, and they're extremely allergic to fire and electrical attacks, but otherwise they're perfectly safe (for you, at least).

Flechette Rounds: Whether in the form of buck-shot or frangible solid rounds, this ammo does a number on unarmored targets, and is even a bit more dangerous to armored ones.

Gel Rounds: Sometimes you can't actually geek your target, and these crowd-control rounds are the perfect solution. They change your weapon's damage to Stun Damage, but otherwise act like normal rounds. Also good for uncooperative extraction targets.

Regular Ammo: Regular, vanilla, lead rounds. Send some down-range today.

Taser Dart: You need one of these to fire a taser.

GRENADES, ROCKETS, MISSILES, AND EXPLOSIVES

The solution to the problem of boredom on a Friday night.

Hand Grenades: Hand grenades are intended to be thrown by hand (natch). They have a timer, detonator, and, of course, an explosive. You can set them to explode anywhere between two seconds and two minutes (a Simple Action). There are two kinds of grenades: non-aerodynamic ones that are round or cylindrical, and aerodynamic grenades that are designed to fly farther (but scatter farther). Offensive grenades, also known as fragment grenades, blast shrapnel into their targets. Defensive grenades rely on the overpressure from a high-explosive, affecting a smaller area than frag grenades. Concussion grenades are what you get when your high-explosive grenade is a bit more



GRENADES

TYPE	DAMAGE	AP	BLAST	AVAIL	COST
Concussion	6S	-3	10m Radius	5F	30¥
Defensive	10P	-2	-2/m	4F	45¥
Offensive	12P(f)	+5	-1/m	4F	35¥
Smoke	—	—	10m Radius	3R	30¥
Mini-grenade	As type	As type	As type	8F	60¥



ROCKETS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	BLAST	AVAIL	COST
Anti-Personnel	16P(f)	+5	-1/m	8F	1,000¥
Anti-Vehicle	16P	-2/-6*	-4/m	8F	2,000¥
High Explosive	14P	-2	-2/m	8F	1,500¥

* AVR/AVMs have an AP of -2 against people, -6 against vehicles



MISSILES

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	BLAST	AVAIL	COST
As Rocket	As Rocket	As Rocket	As Rocket	+4	+Sensor rating x 500¥



gentle. Smoke grenades throw smoke in a ten-meter-radius cloud.

Mini-Grenade: Buy this for your grenade launcher. Use the mini-grenade Availability and cost for all types.

Rockets and Missiles: Rockets are fired from rocket launchers and blithely plow into whatever's in front of them when they're fired. Missiles, on the other hand, are self-guiding (p. 156, SR4A). Anti-vehicle rockets and missiles (AVR or AVM) are great for penetrating vehicles and barriers. If you're doing a bit of street sweeping, the anti-personnel models (APR and APM) scatter fragments at very high velocity through your targets. If you're looking for something a bit more utilitarian, the high-explosive models (HER or HEM) are for you.

Explosives: Things that make you go boom. Modern explosives are moldable and even a bit sticky, and explode following the normal rules for explosives (p. 325, SR4A). Radio detonators have a range of about half a kilometer.

CLOTHING AND ARMOR

If clothes make the man, armor makes the shadowrunner. You're going to want some armor to help keep your insides in and turn blows that might kill you into blows that hurt a lot. If you need a refresher on the workings of armor, check out p. 160, SR4A.

Armor Clothing: Subtle, tasteful, and reasonably bullet-resistant, this gives you a minimum of protection while allowing you to go out in public without looking like an extra from a war movie.

Armor Jacket: Most runners find this padded-and-plated jacket to be the best compromise between protection and fashion.

Armor Vest: Not as much protection as the jacket, but more versatile. You can wear this under your clothes, although it might look a bit bulky.

Clothing: Regular old clothes. No armor plates poking out, but no protection from flying death. It's a weapon of a different kind, though, as the right look always helps pave the way for good relations (*Social Tests*, p. 130, SR4A).

EXPLOSIVES

EXPLOSIVES, PER KILO	RATING	AVAILABILITY	COST
Commercial	3	6R	60¥
Plastic, C-6	6	8F	80¥
Plastic, C-12	12	10F	200¥
ACCESSORIES	RATING	AVAILABILITY	COST
Radio Detonator	—	4R	250¥
Timed Detonator	—	4R	100¥

CLOTHING AND ARMOR

ITEM	BALLISTIC/IMPACT	AVAILABILITY	COST
Armor Clothing	4/0	2	500¥
Armor Jacket	8/6	3	900¥
Armor Vest	6/4	2	200¥
Clothing, Ordinary	0/0	—	50¥
Clothing, Fine	0/0	—	500¥
Clothing, Tres Chic	0/0	—	1,000¥ and up!
Form Fitting, Full Suit	+2/+2	5	500¥
Form Fitting, Half Suit	+2/+1	4	250¥
Form Fitting, Shirt	+1/+0	3	150¥
Heavy Armor, Full	12/10	16R	20,000¥
Heavy Armor, Partial	11/9	8R	10,000¥
Helmet	+2/+2	12	200¥
Leather, Real	2/2	—	750¥
Leather, Synthetic	1/1	—	250¥
Lined Coat	6/4	2	700¥

Form-Fitting Body Armor: Armored underwear—what will they think of next? This armor adds directly to your armor rating. It comes as a shirt, half suit, and full suit with gloves and a hood.

Helmet: This bit of outerwear adds to your armor rating. Most corporate helmets come with logos or distinctive styling, like Lone Star's swept visor. Naturally this means that subtlety goes right out the window.

Heavy Armor: This unsubtle, uncompromising suit of armor is intimidating as well as protective. Partial suits cover the torso and joints, while full suits cover the entire body, from boots to brainpan.

Leather: Nothing says style like a set of leathers. Not only does it look great, but it even provides a bit more protection than ordinary clothing. And hey,

there's nothing wrong with synthetic if you don't have the jing for the real thing.

Lined Coat: This armored trench coat or duster (or an Ulster coat for that classy look) modifies the Concealability of things hidden under it by -2. Also looks really excellent when the wind is blowing or when you are jumping off something.

ELECTRONICS

The electronics industry has been a growth industry since the 1970s. When they ran out of places to put electronic devices, they started putting them into computers. When they ran out of space for computers, they started putting them into people's bodies. But just because the entire industry is dominated by



soulless, money-grubbing corporate entities bent on the destruction of anything between them and their bottom line doesn't mean you can't get the edge you need on the street.

Vision Enhancers

There's gear that helps you see better, and then there's gear that helps you see. Check out p. 333, SR4A, for the lowdown on vision enhancement rules.

Binoculars: Opera glasses if you're classy. They're usually digital, but you can get them with optical glass if you want to use them to cast spells. They come with vision magnification, but the digital version can also take low-light and thermographic systems.

Goggles: These either strap onto your head or attach to a helmet. They can take magnification, low-light, and thermographic enhancements.

Low-light: Ever wondered what an elf sees at night? This enhancement gives you low-light vision when you use it.

Magnification: This lets you zoom in up to fifty times normal. It also lets you use image magnification in combat (p. 150, SR4A).

Thermographic: Now you can see in the dark ... sort of. Mostly, you see heat patterns. Point being, you've got thermographic vision when you use this enhancement.

VISION SENSORS/IMAGING DEVICES

DEVICE	AVAIL	COST
Binoculars	—	100¥
Magnification	4	+50¥
Low-Light	4	+200¥
Thermographic	4	+250¥
Goggles	4	1,500¥
Magnification	4	+200¥
Low-Light	6	+500¥
Thermographic	6	+700¥



Credsticks and ID

If you want to make legal monetary transactions in the 2050s, you're going to need a credstick. Credsticks are described in detail on p. 140, but this is the information you need if you want to buy one.

Certified Credstick: A certified credstick is like cash in this day and age. The funds on it are not attached to any particular SIN. It's perfect for buying

your lunch at Stuffer Shack or making anonymous transactions, but most of the more snobby places won't accept certified.

Credstick: This is a normal, boring old credstick bearing your real, honest-to-goodness SIN, or at least somebody's SIN. If you want a premium credstick, check p. 140.

Fake Credstick: Don't get me wrong, we don't mean a credstick that doesn't work. The fake credstick comes with a series of fake accounts, fake credit reports and, most importantly, a fake SIN. If you use a fake credstick as an ID (as opposed to just using it to pay for something), see p. 267, SR4A.

CREDSTICKS

ITEM	AVAIL	COST
Credstick, Certified	—	25¥
Credstick, Standard	—	5¥
Credstick, Fake (Rating 1-6)	(Rating x 2)F	Rating x 1,000¥



Communication

The world doesn't have a global wireless system that reaches everywhere. If you want to make a call, you need to have the right equipment—either something you own, or something you can get your hands on. Trid shows, movies, and music work the same way.

Telecom: Your basic telephone, videophone, home computer (Memory 1, Storage 20 Mp), trid television, calendar, movie screen, and game console, all rolled into one convenient box. Optional features include handset, headset, keyboard, datajack port, simsense port, hardcopy printer, and cup holder.

Portable Phone: Reach out say hoi when you're on the move. Models include wrist-phones, handsets, and ear-plugs with boom mics. Most come with a datajack port.

Pocket Secretary: A portable version of the telecom, basically, only without the entertainment functions.

Personal Computer: This is much more souped-up than your average consumer telecom (Memory 1, Storage 30), but it's not as wiz as a cyberdeck.

Data Display: This device displays data, you know? The most common form of display is a roll-up flat monitor, but it's also available in other form factors, including trid display, flat-screen projector, heads-up display for helmets (popular among corporate security forces), glasses, or even monocles.

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

DEVICE	MEMORY	STORAGE	AVAIL	COST
Telecom	1	20	—	1,000¥
Portable Phone	—	—	—	500¥
Pocket Secretary	1	20	—	3,000¥
Personal Computer	1	30	—	5,000¥
Data Display	—	—	—	500¥

Surveillance and Security

Many surveillance devices have a Kleen-Tac™ backing that lets them stick to surfaces yet be easily removed. Surveillance and security devices also often have ratings, which are used as dice pools in Opposed Tests in device-on-device conflicts.

Bug Scanner: This is a handheld device that scans for monitoring devices and trackers that are actively transmitting.

Data Codebreaker: This dedicated computer fits in a briefcase and can break encryption on files, intercepts from dataline taps, or radio communications.

Data Encryption System: Plug your communications device or dataline into this handheld device and it will encrypt your communication. You'll need another one on the other end to decrypt, and that other one won't do anything unless you've shared your passcode.

Dataline Scanner: Using the miracle of modern electronics, this device can be plugged into a dataline and detect whether there are any dataline taps on it, even inactive ones. It can't tell you where on the line it is, though.

Dataline Tap: After you splice this into a dataline, it will transmit a copy of everything sent over that dataline to you, from up to five kilometers away.

Identification Scanner: These scanners can read thumbprints, palm prints, or retinas and compare the data to a library of known people. They are often attached to locks, although sometimes they are used to secure computers or other devices.

Jammer: This device sends electromagnetic noise into the ether (but not the astral), making useful radio transmissions impossible within 100 meters of it.

Laser Microphone: An invisible beam of infrared laser light is fired out of this device and bounced off a rigid surface (like a window). The laser mic can then detect the vibrations of that surface and "hear" any sounds made near either side of it.

Maglock Passkey: Where there's a lock, there's an illegal way to pick it. This electronic device can fool a maglock into opening for you. The maglock is a bit scrambled afterward, which may be noticed by meat-based security forces.

Maglock: This electronic lock needs the proper passcode, keycard, or credstick to unlock and allow you into whatever it was locking. It can also be attached to an identification scanner. Some maglocks have an alarm if it detects tampering.

Micro-Camcorder: A device that is equipped with a datasoft slot and can be set to record only when there's motion. All this fits in a case half the size of a deck of cards. Every five seconds of video takes up 1 Mp of storage space.

Micro-Recorder: This audio device is the size of a matchbox and has a slot for a datasoft chip. You can set it to record only when there's noise in order to save on space. Each minute of audio takes up 1 Mp of storage space.

Micro-Transceiver: A microphone and radio transmitter the size and shape of a coin with a range of five kilometers.

Restraints: Handcuffs, leg cuffs, and four-limb shackles come in metal, plastic, or even densiplast for trolls.

Shotgun Microphone: It's like a radar dish on a pistol grip, except that it collects sound, amplifying distant noises and conversations by up to twenty times.

Signal Locator: This lunchbox-sized device triangulates the location of a radio signal using a set of detachable sensors and displays a location on a map. It can also randomly scan for other tracking signals.

Squealer: This sushi-sized device is usually strapped to your leg when you're visiting a secure area. A gentle recorded voice warns you whenever you're moving toward an area that your minders have decided is off-limits. If you get too far out of bounds, the box calls security. The squealer is a Rating 5 device when fighting through jamming.

Tracking Signal: About the size of a pocket watch, this locator signal has a range of about five



kilometers. Its Concealability modifier is -3 minus its rating, so a Rating 3 tracking signal would have a Concealability modifier of -6.

Voice Identifier: This device can record and match known voice patterns. It also can “de-mask” a masked voice by using its rating in an opposed test against the voice mask’s rating. If it succeeds, it cancels the voice mask’s Perception modifier.

Voice Mask: This small disc is placed on or near your throat. It vibrates, making your voice unrecognizable, providing its rating as a dice pool modifier to people’s attempts to recognize you based on your voice.

White Noise Generator: This tabletop device creates a field of random noise, masking the sounds within a ten-meter radius. This device can defeat normal audio sensors and hearing, as well as laser and shotgun microphones.

TOOLS

So you want to build that perfect weapon. Maybe your Citymaster got fragged up in a firefight and it needs to be fixed, or at least have the bullet holes patched so you don’t get pulled over and questioned by the Star. Maybe you just like to practice scrimshaw. What you need, chummer, is tools.

When you buy tools, you buy a set that is specific to a skill. You can get an Automotive Mechanic set of tools to fix that Citymaster, or Armorer tools for

that weapon, or Artisan tools for the scrimshaw, and so forth. Your gamemaster might think it’s chill to let you use a set of tools with a skill it wasn’t designed for, but you’ll have to ask her first.

Tools come in three sizes. A *kit* is small enough to carry in a briefcase or a duffel bag, although it usually comes in its own carrying case. A *shop* is the kind of thing you’d find in a residential garage or the back of a large van. A *facility* is a large area with all the heavy machinery you might need. Shops and facilities are stocked with spare parts and doo-dads.

TOOLS

ITEM	AVAIL	COST
Kit	5	500¥
Shop	8	5,000¥
Facility	14	100,000¥

CHEMICALS AND DRUGS

Better living through chemistry. We’ve got some chemicals for you, and some for the guys on the business end of your run. When the chemical in question is a toxin, the vector, speed, penetration, power, and effect are listed with the description (p. 254, SR4A).

SURVEILLANCE AND SECURITY DEVICES

DEVICE	AVAIL	COST
Bug Scanner	(Rating)	Rating x 500¥
Data Codebreaker	(Rating)R	Rating x 10,000¥
Data Encryption System	(Rating)R	Rating x 1,000¥
Dataline Scanner	(Rating)	Rating x 100¥
Dataline Tap	(Rating)	Rating x 5,000¥
Identification Scanner		
Palm Print	(Rating + 1)	Rating x 300¥
Retinal	(Rating + 2)	Rating x 1,000¥
Thumbprint	(Rating)	Rating x 200¥
Jammer	(Rating)R	Rating x 1,000¥
Laser Microphone	(Rating)	Rating x 1,500¥
Maglock Passkey	(Rating)F	Rating x 10,000¥
Maglocks	(Rating)	Rating x 100¥
Micro-Camcorder	6	2,500¥
Micro-Recorder	6	1,000¥
Micro-Transceiver	6	2,500¥
Restraints	—	—
Metal	4	50¥
Plastic	4	20¥
Shotgun Microphone	(Rating)	Rating x 1,000¥
Signal Locator	(Rating)	Rating x 1,000¥
Squealer	6	100¥
Tracking Signal	(Rating)	Rating x 200¥
Voice Identifier	(Rating)	Rating x 2,000¥
Voice Mask	(Rating)R	Rating x 3,000¥
White Noise Generator	(Rating)R	Rating x 1,500¥

Atropine: (Vector: injection, Speed: immediate, Penetration: 0, Power: 5, Effect: Physical damage, disorientation, nausea) This chemical, distilled from belladonna (which means “beautiful woman”), is an alkaloid (which means “can seriously mess you up”). The victim must resist the damage again every fifteen minutes until the atropine is neutralized.

Cyanide: (Vector: ingestion/inhalation/injection, Speed: 1 min (ingested) or immediate, Penetration: 0, Power 8, Effect: Physical damage) This is a fast-acting, almond-flavored poison.

Dikote™: This chemical process deposits a layer of diamond on any solid, rigid surface. You can use it to reinforce the structure of buildings, vehicles, and even worn armor, increasing the Armor rating (Ballistic and Impact) by 3. You can even buff up your melee weapon, giving it an additional +1 to its Damage Value and, if it’s an edged weapon, a -2 AP modifier.

The Dikote™ process is sold by surface area, in lots of 100 cm². For reference, a jacket is about 15,000

cm², a full suit of armor is about 22,500 cm², and a long coat is around 27,500 cm² (multiply by 0.75 for dwarf sizes and by 1.5 for troll sizes). A katana is 500 cm². It’s a good edge to have on the street, at least until the patent expires and everybody has it.

DMSO: Dimethyl sulfoxide soaks through the skin and into the bloodstream, carrying along anything that is dissolved in it. This means you can put another chemical in it and give it the Contact vector (p. 254, SR4A).

Fugu-5: (Vector: ingestion/injection, Speed: immediate, Penetration: 0, Power: 12, Effect: Physical damage) This is the refined version of one of the deadliest natural mundane neurotoxins on the planet. Popular with both Seoulpa Rings and the Yakuza.

Hyper: (Vector: inhalation/injection, Speed: immediate, Penetration: -1, Power: 10, Effect: Stun damage, hyperesthesia). This toxin messes up your senses. After causing the initial Stun damage, its effects last for one hour, minus five minutes for every

hit you get on your toxin resistance test. While it's active, you suffer vertigo and disorientation, causing a -4 dice pool penalty to all tests. The drug magnifies pain, so when you take Physical damage you take a number of additional boxes of Stun damage equal to half (rounded down) of the Physical boxes you took.

Kamikaze: (Duration: 1D6 x 10 minutes, Effect: +1 Body, +1 Agility, +2 Strength, +1 Willpower, +1 Initiative Pass, High Pain Tolerance 3) Kamikaze is the combat drug of choice for security forces and wannabe razorboys. When it wears off, you crash hard, taking a -1 modifier to Reaction and Willpower for 1D6 x 10 minutes and six boxes of Stun damage that you don't get to resist.

Narcoject: (Vector: injection, Speed: immediate, Penetration: 0, Power: 10, Effect: Stun Damage) The marketing says this is the safest sleep drug on the market, but when the riot cops shoot three or four of these into an unarmed protester, they tend to tell the news reporters to leave first.

Neuro-Stun VII: (Vector: contact/inhalation, Speed: 1 Combat Turn, Penetration: 0, Power: 10, Effect: Disorientation, Stun Damage) This gas is used for "safe" riot control. A colored version is used as a smoke grenade with a kick by military squads when they retreat. The disorientation effect of the gas is a -2 dice pool modifier to actions for ten minutes after contact.

CHEMICALS

CHEMICAL (PER DOSE)	AVAIL	COST
Atropine	5F	600¥
Cyanide	3F	360¥
Dikote™	4	1,000¥ per 100 cm ²
DMSO	2R	10¥
Fugu-5	6R	25¥
Hyper	4F	180¥
Kamikaze	5R	50¥
Narcoject	4R	50¥
Neuro-Stun VII	6R	60¥

SURVIVAL GEAR

Here's all the stuff you might need to survive in the sprawl. Or near the sprawl. Or under it.

Chemsuit: A FiberWeave™ plastic jumpsuit, treated for chemical protection, along with mittens and a transparent full-face hood with an air filter. Great for those inevitable sewer missions. For twice

the price, you can get a fashion designer version for hitting the town during those "hard acid" rainy nights.

Respirator: For some people, breathing is a priority. You get a partial facemask that hooks via plastic hose to a fanny-pack oxygen tank. You can even use it underwater.

Survival Kit: Let's face it: if you need this, there's a good chance you're already in the drek up to your neck. But if what you need are flares, a tiny utility knife, chalk-dry compressed soy bars that will keep you alive and unhappy for a couple of days, a plastic thermal blanket, water purifying tablets, or an empty water bottle, then this kit is just the thing for you.

SURVIVAL GEAR

GEAR	AVAIL (Rating)	COST (Rating x 200¥)
Chemsuit	(Rating)	Rating x 200¥
Respirator	4	750¥
Survival Kit	2	100¥
Extra Compressed Soy Bars (10 Days)	2	30¥

BIOTECH

Let's face it: you're squishy. When your hoop gets shot up, where are you going to go? If you guessed this section right here, congrats, chummer. Now read quickly before you bleed out.

DocWagon™ Contract: If you've been living under a rock since before the Awakening, then maybe you don't know that DocWagon™ is the premium health insurance of the Sixth World. If you get geeked in a firefight, they'll send out their High Threat Response (HTR) service, guaranteed to arrive before you expire—or your next of kin gets half your premium back! * When you sign up for a contract through their discreet service, they'll take a tissue sample (stored in a high-security vault and guarded by bonded guards and magical wards) and give you a sealed-band direct-dial wrist phone that serves as a homing beacon whenever you need help. The phone will call automatically if it detects that you're within inches of your life or the band is broken. A Gold service contract comes with one free resuscitation per year and half off HTR charges. A Platinum contract gets you four free resuscitations per year and free HTR service (employee death compensation excluded). Don't leave home without it!

* Pre-expiration guarantee not valid in combat zones. Guarantee void during high-threat response, peak demand, or in extraterritorial or low-security areas. Client is

responsible for all expenses incurred by HTR service including injury damage, property damage, fuel, ammunition, and pharmaceutical expenditures. No coverage for pre-existing conditions. Rebate must be requested in writing within three (3) business days of incident. Guarantee not valid in cases of self-inflicted injury, injury due to thaumaturgy, acts of God, or injury due to environment. No coverage guarantee available to non-metahumans. Surcharge may apply to trolls. Client assumes liability for damage to cybernetic or bio-augmentation system.

Medkit: Every runner knows the three rules of the street, but the fourth one has got to be “carry a medkit.” Aside from the usual medical supplies, this kit comes with an expert system that can diagnose problems and recommend treatments. The medkit gives you a +3 dice pool modifier to First Aid tests. Every five or six uses, the medkit needs to be restocked with supplies.

Stabilization Unit: This handy covered stretcher rolls up to fit conveniently in a backpack. When your chummer is at death’s door, you can unroll the stabilization unit and hook him up to the integrated miniature medical equipment. While he’s in there, your buddy will take one box of Physical damage every (Body) minutes rather than every Combat Turn, or every (Body) hours in the deluxe model. After each use, you need to restock it.

Slap Patches

Slap patches are synthcloth patches slightly smaller than a human palm and soaked on one side with DMSO and a drug of some sort. They are applied directly to the skin with a Simple Action (or a successful melee touch attack if your “patient” is squirming).

Antidote Patch: Slap one of these on when you’ve been poisoned, and it will add its rating to your Toxin Resistance Test dice pool. Keep one handy in the Ork Underground or when Mr. Johnson is pouring the drinks.

Empty Patch: This patch comes pre-soaked with DMSO but nothing else, so you can add whatever you like. That “whatever you like” is sold separately, of course.

Stimulant Patch: The stim patch is a wake-up call for your body, complete with weird metallic aftertaste. It lasts for ten minutes times its rating, and as long as it does you get High Pain Tolerance equal to the patch’s rating (or you receive more High Pain Tolerance if you already have it). When it wears off, you take a box of Stun damage (no resistance test allowed).

Tranq Patch: Sleepy time! Your target ... er ... patient takes Stun damage with a Damage Value of (Rating)S.

Trauma Patch: When your patient is dying, slap this on him and make a Stabilization Test, except that

you roll the patient’s Body + your Logic to make the test and ignore any dice pool modifiers for not having a relevant skill.

BIOTECH

ITEM	AVAIL	COST
DocWagon™ Contract		
Basic	—	5,000¥
Gold	—	25,000¥
Platinum	—	50,000¥
HTR Service	—	5,000¥
Employee Death Compensation	—	20,000¥
Resuscitation Service	—	8,000¥
Medkit	2	200¥
Medkit Supplies	2	50¥
Stabilization Unit, Std.	12	10,000¥
Stabilization Unit, Deluxe	16	20,000¥
Stabilization Unit Supplies	6	100¥
Antidote Patch (Rating 1-6)	6	Rating x 50¥
Empty Patch	3	20¥
Stimulant Patch (Rating 1-6)	2	Rating x 25¥
Tranq Patch (Rating 1-10)	4	Rating x 20¥
Trauma Patch	4	400¥

CYBERWARE

For some runners, “elective” surgery is misnamed, because it isn’t really optional if you want to compete on the streets. Cyberware augmentations cost Essence (p. 70, SR4A). If you have more Essence cost worth of bioware than cyberware, then the Essence cost of your cyberware is reduced by half, and vice versa.

Headware

This is miniaturized hardware that replaces bits of your skull (or brain). Headware and critical gitches mix poorly.

Chipjack: This bit of headware is usually implanted behind the ear and has a number of slots for skillsofts and datasofts equal to its rating. It also includes a datasoft link, which allows you to mentally access chips you’ve slotted. If you want to use an



HEADWARE

ITEM	ESSENCE	AVAILABILITY	COST
Chipjack (Rating 1-4)	Rating x 0.1	3	Rating x 2,000¥
Cortex Bomb	—	20F	500,000¥
Data Lock	0.2	6	1,000¥
Datajack	0.2	—	1,000¥
Memory	0.1 per 20 Mp	2	Mp x 500¥
Radio	0.75	2	4,000¥
Telephone	0.5	3	3,700¥



SKILLSOFTS AND DATASOFTS

ITEM	MEMORY SIZE	AVAILABILITY	COST
ActiveSoft (Rating 1-4)	(Rating x 10) Mp	6	Rating x 1,000¥
DataSoft	Up to 200 Mp	Varies	Varies
KnowSoft (Rating 1-4)	(Rating x 5) Mp	5	Rating x 1,500¥
LinguaSoft (Rating 1-4)	(Rating x 3) Mp	5	Rating x 500¥



ActiveSoft as something other than a knowledge skill, you'll need a skillwire system installed, too.

Cortex Bomb: The surgery for this explosive “augmentation” is rarely elective, at least by the poor slot carrying the item around in his head. The bomb itself can be set to trigger on a timer, a radio signal, or when the victim perceives something specific or performs a certain action. Cortex bombs can also be set to explode if they are tampered with in any way. They can be defused with a Simple Cybertechnology + Logic (3) Test during removal surgery. When it goes off, the cortex bomb kills the bearer and harms those around him (DV: 10P, AP: 0, Blast: -2/m).

Data Lock: This security device looks like a data jack, but it stores incoming information in headware memory while blocking the user from accessing it. It's very popular among confidential couriers and spies.

Datajack: The datajack is the basic tool of the cybernetically minded. It is used to connect to devices, most commonly to a computer or a cyberdeck; other examples include connecting to a smartgun without a palm induction link, reading credsticks (or transacting with them if you've got a cranial computer), and connecting to a chummer jack-to-jack for a private conversation.

Memory: This is basically a cranial hard drive, allowing you to store programs, video, data, skillsofts, and just anything else that can be digitally

stored. You can also review items mentally, and you have the ability to copy or delete items. You might want to look at a datajack so you can put stuff in and get stuff out without major surgery.

Radio: Basic two-way transmitter. You have to actually speak when you're using it, but you can speak sub-vocally and it will still pick you up. It will fit into cyberears, taking up 1 Capacity.

Telephone: As long as you're in town (any town), this implanted mobile phone will work like a charm. You can speak normally or sub-vocally, if you like. It also fits into cyberears, taking Capacity instead of Essence.

Skillsofts and Datasofts

In 2050, skillsofts and datasofts are small cylinders the size of a cigarette filter or flat squares the size of a postage stamp. Either form factor fits into a chipjack slot.

ActiveSoft: An ActiveSoft is an active skill recorded on a chip. Each ActiveSoft is a separate active skill of a specific rating. If you have a skillwire system installed, you can use the skill as if it was your own. The ActiveSoft overrides your own learning, so you can't use Edge on any Tests that involve the ActiveSoft skill. If you don't have skillwires, an ActiveSoft acts like a KnowSoft instead.

EARWEAR

ITEM	ESSENCE	CAPACITY	AVAILABILITY	COST
Cyberears	0.2	4	—	5,000¥
Cosmetic Modifications	—	—	2	1,000¥
Damper	0.1	[1]	4	3,500¥
Expanded Frequency	0.2	[1]	4	6,000¥
Hearing Amplification	0.2	[1]	4	3,500¥
Radio	0.75	[1]	2	4,000¥
Sound Recorder	0.3	[1]	8R	7,000¥
Telephone	0.5	[1]	3	3,700¥

##N05JUN##000##

EYEWEAR

ITEM	ESSENCE	CAPACITY	AVAILABILITY	COST
Cybereyes	0.2	4	2	5,000¥
Camera	0.1	[1]	6	5,000¥
Cosmetic Modifications	—	—	2	1,000¥
Display Link	0.1	[1]	4	1,000¥
Flare Compensation	0.1	[1]	5	2,000¥
Low-Light	0.2	[1]	4	3,000¥
Retinal Duplication	0.1	[1]	12F	50,000¥
Thermographic	0.2	[1]	4	3,000¥
Vision Magnification	0.2	[2]	5	8,500¥

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DataSoft: A DataSoft is a chip that holds data. You can access any or all of the data mentally with a chipjack. Most good DataSofts have an index so you can find what you're looking for quickly. Your gamemaster will determine the size, Availability, and cost of any particular DataSoft, based on the obscurity and value of the data (and random whim, of course). Typically Availability for these chips ranges from 4 to 8. A single chip can hold up to 200 Mp of data.

KnowSoft: A KnowSoft gives you a knowledge skill for as long as it's in your chipjack. You don't need skillwires to use it, otherwise it acts just like an ActiveSoft.

LinguaSoft: This is basically a KnowSoft that lets you speak, understand, read, and write a specific language at the rating of the LinguaSoft for as long as it's slotted.

Cyberears

Cybernetic replacement ears are obvious to the viewer. They provide perfect normal hearing and can

take up to 4 points of Capacity worth of ear augmentations without those augmentations costing any additional Essence.

Cosmetic Modification: Your ears look like pretty much whatever you want them to look like. You can even make cybernetic replacements look natural. Elf ears are popular. So is making fun of people with cosmetic elf ears.

Damper: This mod protects from hearing loss due to loud noises, high frequencies, and explosive overpressure.

Expanded Frequency: You can hear sounds that are outside the frequency of normal metahuman hearing.

Hearing Amplification: The hearing amp lets you hear soft, far-off, or subtle sounds more easily, amplifying sounds up to ten times.

Sound Recorder: You can record anything you hear and play it back to yourself. Every minute of audio takes up 1 Mp of storage; the sound recorder has 10 Mp onboard, or you can store audio in internal headware memory.

Cybereyes

Replacement eyes give you 20/20 vision, but they are obvious to anyone standing close enough to get a good view of them. They come in all iris shapes and sizes, even completely chrome for that more-than-metahuman look. Like cyberears, cybereyes can stuff up to 4 points of Capacity worth of eye augmentations without those augs costing Essence.

Camera: You can store still pictures and video (and trideo if you keep both eyes open) of anything you see. The video doesn't come with sound unless you've got some way of recording it, like an implanted sound recorder. You can export pics and vid through a datajack, or through a port in a cyber-eye. Five ultra-rez pictures, five seconds of video, or three seconds of trideo take up 1 Mp of memory; the camera has 10 Mp of on-board storage, or you can record directly to headware memory or an external device via datajack.

Cosmetic Modification: Rather than go for the whole replacement thing, you can just get a cosmetic modification to make them look like pretty much anything cybereyes can look like. Choose between iris colors, iris and pupil shapes, and even a sclera pigmentation. You can also use this to make cybereyes look like normal eyes.

Display Link: This allows you to have data displayed on your retina or in your cyber-eye.

Flare Compensation: This protects you from glare vision modifiers and sudden blinding flashes of light.

Low-Light: This lets you see in the near-dark, but not total darkness.

Retinal Duplication: This changes your retinal pattern to another, either a specific one or an invented one. It's mostly used to help change your identity, which is why it is ridiculously illegal in all corporate jurisdictions and in most civilized countries. Retinal duplication is permanent, but if you've got it in a cyber-eye, you can change your retinal pattern by loading the new one via datajack. The rating of this augmentation is used in Opposed Tests against retina scanners.

Thermographic: This lets you see heat patterns, letting you roll like a troll.

Vision Magnification: Your eyes can zoom in up to fifty times, giving you the vision magnification enhancement.

Bodyware

Bodyware replaces or augments the non-head parts of your body. If an augmentation has a Capacity rating, it can be installed in a cyberlimb at the cost of that limb's Capacity instead of your precious Essence.

Boosted Reflexes: They're a cheap substitute for wired reflexes, sure, but they still make you faster. For every level of boosted reflexes you have, you receive +1 to your Initiative attribute. You also get +1 Initiative Pass for every two full levels you get implanted. The maximum level of Boosted Reflexes that can be taken is 3. Boosted reflexes are not compatible with any other augmentation that affects Initiative Passes.

Cyberlimbs: Cyberlimbs come in two types: obvious and natural-looking synthetic. Limbs start with Body, Strength, and Agility ratings of 3, but you can customize the limb by adding 1 to the Availability and 2,000¥ to the cost for every point you add to each rating, up to the max rating for your metatype for each attribute. You can add to the limb's Body, Strength, Agility, or Armor (which adds to your overall armor ratings) with further augmentations. When you use your cyberlimb, use its attributes rather than your own; if your cyberlimb is coordinating with other parts of your body (as with climbing, for example), use the lowest rating. Each cyberlimb adds one box to your Condition Monitor.

Cosmetic Modification: Just about anything you can imagine can be yours with the right body mods. Forget about tattoos and piercings—how would you like sabertooth tusks? An extra set of joints? How about wings? They won't let you fly, but they'll look awesome. Your gamemaster will decide on the price and Availability of the mod you've always wanted.

Dermal Plating: Semi-rigid plating is implanted in your skin, making it somewhat lumpy and inflexible. It adds its rating to both your Ballistic and Impact armor ratings, but doesn't count toward stacked armor.

Filtration Systems: There are three types of filtration systems available: the blood filtration system, the air filter, and the cybergill. Blood filters add their rating to your Resistance Test against contact and injection toxins and chemicals, while air filters do the same for you against inhalation vector toxins and chemicals. The artificial gill lets you breathe underwater.

Fingertip Compartment: Why keep your distal phalanges when you can store something in there instead? It's great for hiding a few data chips, a light snack, or the business end of a monofilament whip.

Hand Razors: These blades replace your fingernails and are anchored to a system that makes your fingers weapon-grade rigid. The retractable variety slide out of sight under fake fingernails (-6 modifier to Concealability) at your mental command.

Muscle Replacement: Your muscles are replaced with faster, stronger synth-muscle. This increases both your Strength and your Agility by its rating, but these increases can't be combined with bioware boosts.



Olfactory Booster: Join the bloodhound gang and add the rating of this cyberware to Perception tests involving smell. It also lets you catalog and store smells, filter out certain scents, and even turn your sense of smell off completely.

Skillwires: Skillwires run from a chipjack throughout your body, attaching to your nervous system and controlling your motions when you use ActiveSofts. Your skillwire rating limits the total rating of all active ActiveSofts you can use at a time; that limit is the skillwire rating x 2. The system comes with a dedicated skillchip slot and can interface with a chipjack or headware memory to let you use more than one ActiveSoft.

Smartlink: This system includes a tactical computer, haptic feedback ... in short, it moves your arm and lets you shoot things precisely in the face. There's also a subdermal induction pad for your palm so you can access a weapon's smartgun system, which is the other thing you need. If you've got a smartgun, you get a +2 dice pool bonus when using it.

Spur: A spur lets you slice and dice with an implanted blade. The weapon might be a half-meter blade attached to the top or bottom of your forearm, or come in the form of two or three smaller blades extending from the back of your hand, depending on

your taste. There's a retractable version that gives a -6 Concealability modifier when the spur is pulled in.

Vehicle Control Rig: This is a series of neuromuscular enhancers and muscular signal transference technology that reroutes signals from your motor cortex and premotor cortex through a rigging processor to a jack that's usually placed at the base of the skull. That's right, chummer, it's not wireless. You think you're in some kind of wild science fiction trid? Rigger, please. Plug that cable into your skulljack and quit squirming. When you jack in, your body goes limp and the vehicle becomes your "body." The vehicle control rig gives you a +2 dice pool modifier to all Vehicle Actions and increases Reaction and number of Initiative Passes equal to its rating as long as you're jacked into a vehicle. When you're jacked in, you're rigging with hot-sim VR (p. 245, SR4A).

Voice Modulator: You get a built-in loudspeaker and a pitch-perfect tone shifter when you implant this cyberware into your throat. You can also get a playback feature that lets you perfectly reproduce recorded sound (usually accessed from a datajack or headware memory), or a second vocal pattern that lets you make new speech that sounds like someone specific.

Wired Reflexes: Chrome makes the man, or so they say on the street. This chrome all but replaces

CYBERWEAPONS

ITEM	ESSENCE	CAPACITY	AVAILABILITY	COST
Hold-out Pistol	0.15	[2]	8R	250¥
Light Pistol	0.35	[4]	8F	650¥
Machine Pistol	0.4	[4]	8F	900¥
Heavy Pistol	0.6	[6]	8R	800¥
Submachine Gun	1	[10]	8R	1,800¥
Shotgun	1.1	[11]	8R	1,200¥

ITEM	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	RC	AMMO
Hold-out Pistol	4P	—	SS	—	2 (m)/6 (c)
Light Pistol	4P	—	SA	—	12 (m)/12 (c)
Machine Pistol	4P	—	SA/BF	1	12 (m)/35 (c)
Heavy Pistol	5P	-1	SA	—	10 (m)/24 (c)
Submachine Gun	5P	—	SA/BF	2	12 (m)/24 (c)
Shotgun	9P(f)	+5	SA	—	10 (m)/10 (c)

your nervous system, letting you kick out a little closer to the speed of thought. Each level adds 1 to your Reaction (and therefore Initiative) and provides +1 Initiative Pass. Wired reflexes are not compatible with any other augmentation that affects Initiative Passes, except for the vehicle control rig.

CYBER MELEE WEAPONS

ITEM	REACH	DAMAGE	AP
Hand Razors	—	(STR/2 + 1)P	—
Spurs	—	(STR/2 + 3)P	—

Cyberweapons

Cyberweapons are built into your arm. Usually, it's a cyberarm, but some people like to fit guns into their flesh-and-blood. The gun fires through a port in the palm, either with a pop-up barrel or by folding the whole hand back out of the way. All of these firearms have an internal magazine that holds ammo, but also have a port to fit an external clip. If people wonder why you've got a clip sticking out of your forearm, they'll probably figure it out pretty quick. All cyberweapons have a Concealability modifier of -6 (when you're not opening up with it).

BIOWARE

Bioware is the newest thing on the block. Bioware augmentations cost Essence (p. 70, SR4A). If you have more Essence cost worth of cyberware than bioware, then the Essence cost of your bioware is reduced by half, and vice versa.

Adrenaline Pump: When this activates, you get a surge of adrenaline for Rating x 1D6 Combat Turns (rolled secretly by your gamemaster if she's evil). During this time, you can ignore modifiers due to Stun damage, and you don't fall unconscious if your Stun Condition Monitor is filled. You also get the pump's rating added to your Strength, Agility, Reaction, and Willpower (up to your augmented max) for the duration. At the end of that time, you crash, lose all the benefits, take one box of Stun damage for every Combat Turn the surge lasted, and you can't use it again for at least ten minutes while it recharges. It's possible that the adrenaline pump could go off by itself if you become angry, afraid, or stressed. Your gamemaster might want a Composure Test from you to avoid triggering it.

Cerebral Booster: After getting some work done on your brain, your Logic is augmented by this bioware's rating.

Damage Compensators: These are modifications to your sensory system. You can ignore a number of boxes of damage on each of your Condition Monitors equal to the rating of the damage compensators before you start counting boxes for wound penalties. This does not, however, increase the total number of boxes.



BIOWARE

ITEM	ESSENCE	AVAILABILITY	COST
Adrenaline Pump (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.75	10F	Rating x 50,000¥
Cerebral Booster (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.2	6	Rating x 55,000¥
Damage Compensators (Rating 1-12)	Rating x 0.1	10F	Rating x 50,000¥
Enhanced Articulation	0.3	5	40,000¥
Mnemonic Enhancer (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.1	6	Rating x 15,000¥
Muscle Augmentation (Rating 1-4)	Rating x 0.2	(Rating x 5)R	Rating x 20,000¥
Muscle Toner (Rating 1-4)	Rating x 0.2	(Rating x 5)R	Rating x 25,000¥
Nephritic Screen (Rating 1-6)	Rating x 0.2	4	Rating x 24,000¥
Orthoskin (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.25	8R	Rating x 30,000¥
Pain Editor	0.3	6F	60,000¥
Pathogenic Defense (Rating 1-6)	Rating x 0.1	8	Rating x 10,000¥
Platelet Factories	0.2	5	30,000¥
Reflex Recorder			
Skill Group	0.2	8	25,000¥
Skill	0.1	5	10,000¥
Suprathyroid Gland	0.7	8F	50,000¥
Symbiotes (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.2	5	Rating x 20,000¥
Synaptic Accelerator (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.5	6R	Rating x 100,000¥
Synthacardium (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.1	4	Rating x 10,000¥
Tailored Pheromones (Rating 1-3)	Rating x 0.2	12	Rating x 22,000¥
Tracheal Filter (Rating 1-6)	Rating x 0.2	4	Rating x 30,000¥



Enhanced Articulation: All of your joints have been enhanced or replaced. You get a +1 dice pool modifier to all tests involving a Physical skill and a Physical attribute.

Mnemonic Enhancer: The docs have dug in and added a lot of gray matter to your noggin. This gives you the enhancer's rating as a dice pool bonus to Knowledge, Language, and memory-related tests, as well as a +1 dice pool bonus to the Instruction test of anybody trying to teach you something.

Muscle Augmentation: Patented materials are grafted into your muscles and grow there along with your natural ones. This augments your Strength by the rating of this bioware.

Muscle Toner: Your muscles are modified for elasticity, augmenting your Agility by the rating of this bioware.

Nephritic Screen: An organic screen in your kidneys works with modifications to your liver, and you get a dice pool bonus equal to the screen's rating to resist the effects of all toxins.

Orthoskin: Your skin is made tougher and thicker, like rhino hide. Add your orthoskin rating to both your Ballistic and Impact armor ratings. This does not count toward stacked armor; it's a straight bonus.

Pain Editor: Your spinal column has some additional nerve clusters that shut out pain. The pain editor activates whenever you take any boxes of damage and stays active until you are completely healed. You can ignore all wound modifiers due to Stun damage, and you don't fall unconscious when your Stun Condition Monitor is filled. You also have no idea how badly you might be wounded. While active, you get a +1 augmentation to your Willpower (up to your augmented max) and a -1 reduction to your Intuition (to a minimum of 1), and you take a -4 dice pool modifier to all Perception tests involving your sense of touch.

Pathogenic Defense: Your enhanced spleen kicks out badass white blood cells. Add the rating of this bioware to your resistance tests against biological (not chemical) toxins and diseases.

Platelet Factories: These organs pump extra platelets into your bloodstream, especially when needed. Reduce any incoming injury that hits you for two or more boxes by one box.

Reflex Recorder: Your spinal cord is modified to “remember” the moves for a specific Combat or Physical skill or skill group that you specify when you take this bioware. It gives you a +1 dice pool modifier when using the skill or skill group you chose. You can have more than one reflex recorder, one for each skill or skill group you want, but no more than one recorder for each skill or skill group; reflex recorder bonuses don’t stack with each other.

Suprathyroid Gland: This extra gland increases your metabolism. Your Body, Agility, Reaction, and Strength are all augmented by 1, your Lifestyle costs go up by ten percent, and you get a reputation for being a bit hyper.

Symbiotes: Little bacteria-sized creatures live inside you, healing the parts that are broken. Add twenty percent to your Lifestyle costs (you need to eat more to keep them healthy), and add the rating of your symbiotes to all of your healing tests.

Synaptic Accelerator: The nerves in your spinal cord are extended and enhanced, speeding up your reflexes. Add the rating of this bioware to your Reaction and the number of Initiative Passes you have. This augmentation is not compatible with any other augmentation that affects your Initiative Passes.

Synthacardium: This bioware gives you stronger heart muscles. Add your synthacardium’s rating as a dice pool bonus to all tests involving the Athletics skill group or any skill in that skill group.

Tailored Pheromones: You have glands that are designed to emit pleasing pheromones. Add the rating of this bioware to all of your Social skill tests. Someone should outlaw this sneaky bioware someday.

Tracheal Filter: These absorbing membranes help filter the air headed to your lungs. Add their rating to all resistance tests against toxins with an inhalation vector.

MAGICAL EQUIPMENT

All of this magical equipment is the sort of thing you magicians will be using, or at least drooling over. Not much changes in two decades. *Plus ça change, ne?*

Foci: These are your basic foci that you know and love (and love a lot). The spell lock is a sustaining focus (p. 199, SR4A) with a chill name. Remember the Karma cost of bonding foci that accompanies the nuyen cost (p. 199, SR4A).

Magical Supplies: These are your materials for making medicine lodges, summoning elementals, and working feng shui magic.

Fetishes: Magical trinkets are perfect for the wizzer on the go.

Spell Formulae and Personal Instruction: Nothing in this world for free, chummer. Especially when it comes to learning new spells.

VEHICLES

If you don’t want to take the bus, or a robo-cab, and you just don’t trust Mr. Johnson enough to let him provide transportation, you’re two things: smart and in need of a vehicle.

Cars

Mitsubishi Runabout: The choice of the discerning wage slave who is ambitious enough to own his own car. Well, it’s sort of a car; it’s really more like an enclosed trike. The Runabout is unstable at high speed, which is how it earned its nickname, the Rollabout.

Chrysler-Nissan Jackrabbit: A small electric two-seater that is probably the most common car on the market. The acceleration is great for the price, but the speed drops off when it’s weighted down. Trolls should buy two: one for each foot.

Ford Americar: This midsized sedan says “I’m a mid-level supervisor and I can flaunt it.”

Eurocar Westwind 2000: A German-built supercar that’s great for getting away from (or chasing down) Lone Star patrol vehicles.

Toyota Elite: The Elite is *the* first and last word in luxury sedans. This is how to get noticed on the streets of the sprawl.

Mitsubishi Nightsky: Or maybe *this* is the car you want if you want to get noticed in the sprawl. You’ll know you’ve made it as a shadowrunner when Mr. Johnson sends one of these to pick you up for a meet. When that happens, remember that the concealed mini-bar is on the left of the rear-facing seats.

Bulldog Step-Van: This car is really more of a heavy truck. You’ll see it in all sorts of roles, like ambulance, delivery truck, and shadowrunner combat vehicle.

Bikes

Dodge Scoot: This isn’t a bike so much as a scooter. It’s got pretty good range, but when you’re loaded down with weapons perched on the seat of a scooter, you look more like a vat job than a samurai.

Yamaha Rapier: If you’re a go-ganger and an elf and you don’t have one of these crotch rockets, there’s something wrong with you.



MAGICAL EQUIPMENT

FOCI	AVAIL	COST
Spellcasting Focus	5R	Force x 45,000¥
Counterspelling Focus	4R	Force x 40,000¥
Spell Lock	2R	Force x 10,000¥
Summoning Focus	4R	Force x 60,000¥
Banishing Focus	4R	Force x 50,000¥
Binding Focus	4R	Force x 60,000¥
Weapon Focus	8R	Force x 90,000¥
Power Focus	6R	Force x 105,000¥



MAGICAL SUPPLIES

ITEM	AVAIL	COST
Elemental Binding Materials	(Force)	Force x 500¥
Feng Shui Compass	(Force)	Force x 300¥
Feng Shui Forms	(Force)	Force x 250¥
Medicine Lodge Materials	(Force)	Force x 500¥



FETISHES

ITEM	AVAIL	COST
Combat	3R	200¥
Detection	3	50¥
Health	3	500¥
Illusion	3	100¥
Manipulation	3R	300¥



SPELL CATEGORY

CATEGORY	FORMULA COST	PERSONAL INSTRUCTION COST	AVAIL
Combat	2,000¥	Instruction Skill x 1,500¥	8F
Detection	500¥	Instruction Skill x 250¥	4R
Health	500¥	Instruction Skill x 250¥	4R
Illusion	1,000¥	Instruction Skill x 500¥	8R
Manipulation	1,500¥	Instruction Skill x 1,000¥	8R



VEHICLES

GROUND VEHICLES	HANDL	ACCEL	SPEED	PILOT	BODY	ARM	SENS	AVAIL	COST
Mitsubishi Runabout	-1	10/20	80	1	8	6	1	—	10,000¥
Chrysler-Nissan Jackrabbit	0	15/35	120	1	8	2	1	—	15,000¥
Ford Americar	0	15/30	110	2	10	6	1	—	20,000¥
Eurocar Westwind 2000	+3	20/60	240	3	10	6	1	—	100,000¥
Toyota Elite	+2	20/45	160	1	10	5	1	—	125,000¥
Mitsubishi Nightsky	-2	15/25	100	3	12	10	1	—	250,000¥
Bulldog Step-Van	0	5/10	90	2	16	8	1	—	35,000¥
Dodge Scoot	+1	10/15	60	1	4	2	1	—	2,000¥
Yamaha Rapier	+2	20/50	200	1	6	4	1	—	10,000¥
Harley-Davidson Scorpion	+2	15/30	120	2	8	4	1	—	15,000¥

BOATS	HANDL	ACCEL	SPEED	PILOT	BODY	ARM	SENS	AVAIL	COST
Samuvani-Criscraft Otter	+1	5/10	45	1	12	6	1	—	20,000¥
Aztech Nightrunner	+2	10/30	80	1	12	6	1	4R	30,000¥
Sendanko Marlin	-2	20/30	30	—	14	4	1	—	15,000¥

Harley Scorpion: The choice of riggers who like close combat, this classic road hog is perfect for weapon mounts.

Hovercraft

Chrysler-Nissan G12a: This big hovercraft is great for places with a lot of water, like Hong Kong or Seattle. It's available in a thirty-passenger model or as a six-ton cargo hauler.

Boats

There's nothing like a boat to expand your area of operation, especially when you're running in a port city.

Samuvani-Criscraft Otter: This mid-sized motorboat is popular for fishing or just spending some time on the water, but it is also used as a surveillance boat or a light cargo hauler.

Aztech Nightrunner: This small, two-seat craft is equipped with laser- and radar-absorbing paint. It is also equipped with electric motors for silent running, making it the choice of smugglers all up and down the coast. When running in silent mode, cut the Nightrunner's top speed in half and change its Signature rating to -3.

Sendanko Marlin: This sailboat was originally intended to be a small pleasure yacht, but if you need a boat with a low Signature rating that can run with almost no noise, then this is the craft for you.

Aircraft

Why stay on the ground when you can literally add another dimension to your run? In the words of the wise old rigger, don't fly higher than you're willing to fall.

Cessna C750: This dual-propeller, fixed-wing plane can carry six passengers. You can spot them with corp logos all over the civilized world, usually looking for border patrols.

Lear-Cessna Platinum I: This jet airplane is a flying limousine. You see a lot of corp logos on this one, too, and not often without a military-grade escort.

Federated Boeing Commuter: A small tilt-wing VTOL plane, usually used as a shuttle from place to place in a sprawl.

Hughes WK-2 Stallion: This helicopter is the most common in the world, often seen outside the sprawl bristling with military hardware. It's no gunship, but it can pretend real good.

Ares Dragon: This huge double-rotor helicopter is the heavy-lifter in military and civilian life. It can carry 36 passengers, or 24 troops with equipment, or 15 tons of cargo.

Hughes Airstar: A quick and nimble luxury helicopter designed for VIPs and rich suits.



Military and Restricted Vehicles

This is the wiz tech that will make you the top of the plex.

Ares Citymaster: The Citymaster is the classic urban tank. It's supposed to be for riot control with a bonus of command-center duty, but it often sees service with Lone Star SWAT teams and DocWagon™ HTR service vehicles. The turret on the roof mounts an LMG and a water cannon. The Star insists that they'd never put anything other than gel rounds into the machine gun.

Chrysler-Nissan Patrol-1: The standard patrol car for police, security, and corp-sec forces. It's decked out with slide-up armor plates with firing ports, and lock-down wheel armor.

GMC Beachcraft Patroller: This armed hovercraft is used in corporate naval screens and coast guard forces world wide. It comes equipped with two reinforced weapon mounts.

GMC Riverine: Speed boats are fast, but hydrofoils are faster. Armed hydrofoils are just dangerous. This hydrofoil comes with four reinforced weapon mounts.

Northrup PRC-42B Wasp: This one-man autogyro looks like a helicopter but uses its rotor to glide, relying on its "pusher" propeller to move it forward. The Wasp can reach altitudes of nearly 4,000 meters and then

make a stealthy approach by stopping the propeller and gliding down on the autorotation of the rotor.

Northrup PRC-44B Yellowjacket: This one-man mini-gunship is a Northrup Wasp with teeth, in the form of two reinforced weapon mounts.

EFA Variant: This fighter jet can be found all over the world. The standard version comes with an assault cannon and four reinforced weapon mounts—just the thing if you need to geek a wizworm. Well, *try* to geek one.

Federated Boeing Eagle: This vectored thrust jet plane can hover and take off vertically. It is the most popular air-superiority fighter in the world, mostly because it doesn't require a lot of space to take off and land. It comes with some nice toys right out of the factory, including an advanced sensor suite, two assault cannons, and six reinforced weapon mounts.

GMC Banshee: This is a low-altitude vehicle, which is abbreviated LAV but pronounced "thunderbird." This particular t-bird is a light version, but loaded to the teeth with target-fragging armaments. The factory version has two assault cannons, two heavy machine guns, an autocannon in a turret, four additional reinforced weapon mounts, and a drone bay for two medium drones. If you have one, you win. If the other guys have one, buzz. If you want one, don't go to the mall or anything. These aren't

VEHICLES

AIRCRAFT	HANDL	ACCEL	SPEED	PILOT	BODY	ARM	SENS	AVAIL	COST
Cessna C750	-1	20/90	340	2	18	4	—	4	200,000¥
Lear-Cessna Platinum I	+1	40/150	800	3	14	10	3	8	500,000¥
Federated Boeing Commuter	-2	10/30	120	3	16	8	—	8R	625,000¥
Hughes WK-2 Stallion	-1	15/50	190	3	14	8	—	6	300,000¥
Ares Dragon	-1	10/40	260	3	22	8	—	6	600,000¥
Hughes Airstar	-1	15/50	300	2	18	6	2	7	900,000¥

MILITARY	HANDL	ACCEL	SPEED	PILOT	BODY	ARM	SENS	AVAIL	COST
EFA Variant	+1	70/280	1,600	3	18	16	2	13F	5,00,000¥
GMC Banshee	+1	50/250	1,000	2	20	18	—	Nope	Not a chance
Ares Citymaster	-1	5/30	120	3	16	20	3	20R	500,000¥
Chrysler-Nissan Patrol-1	+3	10/45	180	3	10	10	1	12R	100,000¥
GMC Beachcraft Patroller	+2	10/40	160	2	12	16	2	16R	750,000¥
GMC Riverine	+1	10/20	290	2	12	16	2	16R	125,000¥
Northrup PRC-42B Wasp	0	15/30	130	—	10	6	—	12R	220,000¥
Northrup PRC-44B Yellowjacket	0	15/30	130	—	10	8	2	12F	280,000¥
Federated Boeing Eagle	+2	60/240	1,200	3	20	12	3	26F	No way, chummer

just sitting around for sale. You're best off lifting one from someone else.

DRONES

Drones are shiny and new, and major manufacturers have yet to really ramp up production. These drones can pilot themselves with commands sent via radio, or controlled with a remote control deck. They're not real bright, though, so try to keep a short leash on them. All drones come equipped with rigger adaptation and remote adaptation. These drones are all Medium drones except as mentioned.

Surveillance Drone: This is a flying rotor drone about the size of a garbage can that carries sensors. Police and security like to use them when they can't handle coverage through manpower.

Spotter Drone: This is the fixed-wing stealth version of a surveillance drone. Its Signature rating is -6. It needs a long landing strip, so if you're in tight quarters be ready with a net (or a repair kit).

Hunter: This rotorcraft carries two standard weapon mounts. Riggers love 'em, especially in tight quarters.

Patrol Vehicle: This Large drone is a tracked mini-tank. It comes equipped with two standard weapon mounts.

VEHICLE WEAPONS

If you're reading this book front to back, you may have noticed that we've been talking about water cannons and autocannons without actually telling you what they are. Good news, chummer, they're all here.

Autocannon: This light tank cannon has a built-in autoloader, so you don't need a crew to fire it. Point the big round open end at the bad guys. This weapon uses assault cannon ranges.

Launcher: You can use this to fire missiles or rockets, whatever your preference may be.

Water Cannon: This fires high-pressure water, and only in long bursts. Halve the target's Strength for purposes of Knockdown. If you've got a water source handy, you can draw from it instead of the onboard tanks. Use SMG ranges when you hose some poor slots down.



VEHICLES

DRONES	HANDL	ACCEL	SPEED	PILOT	BODY	ARM	SENS	AVAIL	COST
Surveillance Drone	0	10/25	100	3	3	2	3	6	10,000¥
Spotter Drone	+1	30/150	300	3	3	0	2	4	15,000¥
Hunter Drone	0	5/20	90	3	3	6	3	6R	20,000¥
Patrol Vehicle	0	10/25	75	3	3	6	3	6R	10,000¥



VEHICLE WEAPONS

WEAPON	DAMAGE	AP	MODE	BLAST	AMMO	AVAIL	COST
Autocannon	13P	-6	SS	—	10 (c)	12F	12,000¥
Launcher	As rocket/missile	As rocket/missile	SS	As rocket/missile	6 (b)	15F	15,000¥
Water Cannon	8S	-half	FA	—	200 (tank)	15R	20,000¥



RIGGER GEAR

All right, riggers, we've saved the best for last.

Remote Adaptation: You can hook up remote gear on any vehicle and pilot it from afar with a remote control deck (sold separately).

Rigger Adaptation: Any vehicle can be adapted for rigger control, which lets you jump into the vehicle using your vehicle control rig. This is the sort of thing riggers find useful. If you want be able to jump into the vehicle remotely, you'll need both rigger and remote adaptations.

Remote Control Deck: The remote control deck (RCD) is the size of a computer keyboard and lets you use your VCR to control multiple vehicles and drones. The rating of the RCD is the number of slave ports the deck has, and for each slave port you can control one drone or vehicle remotely. For all intents and purposes, you're jumped into all of the slaved vehicles and drones. This means you can take your actions from any of your mechanical minions, but you also risk biofeedback damage from all of them. You can selectively decide which vehicles and drones you jump into, and jump in and out on the fly, giving commands to the vehicles and drones that are not directly controlled and letting their dog-brain autopilots try to take over for you.

RIGGER GEAR

GEAR	AVAIL	COST
Remote Adaptation	4	Body x 1,000¥
Rigger Adaptation	4	2,800¥
Remote Control Deck (Rating 1-6)	Rating x 2	Rating x 5,000¥





REWIND & RELOAD!

Chrome eyes. Computers called “decks.” Big hair, big cyberlimbs, and bigger guns. It’s *Shadowrun* in the year it all started. Take a step back to *Shadowrun*’s roots with **SHADOWRUN 2050**, a book that combines Fourth Edition rules—the smoothest, most accessible rule set *Shadowrun* has ever had—with the setting that first made the Sixth World a legend.

Shadowrun 2050 has everything players and gamemasters need to dive into the grimy beauty that kicked off one of the greatest roleplaying settings of all time. With information on how to adapt Fourth Edition Matrix, gear, and magic rules for the 2050 setting, as well as in-universe information about the powers of the world, what shadowrunners will be up to, and who they’ll be running into, **Shadowrun 2050** puts a new twist on the classic setting.

Captain Chaos. Maria Mercurial. The Laughing Man. Sally Tsung. JetBlack. Hatchetman. Nightfire. And the Shadowland poster who just called himself The Big “D.” These people and many others are waiting for you in the year that started it all, a setting brought back to life with new, full-color artwork showing the chrome, dirt, neon, and darkness that was in the heart of *Shadowrun* when it started and remains at its core today.

Shadowrun 2050 is for use with *Shadowrun, Twentieth Anniversary Edition*.



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