

FULL METAL CYBERPUNK

INTERFACE ZERO

```
@root: run startup exec
verifying identity...
verification complete...
program loading...
...
loading Interface Zero 2.0
```

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0000.0006.0454-005



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0100000101010001001001

**GUN
METAL
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WHAT IS INTERFACE ZERO 2.0?

Interface Zero 2.0 (Tagline Full Metal Cyberpunk) is a cyberpunk setting...Sort of. Interface Zero owes its existence to a plethora of sources including novels such as *Neuromancer*, *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, *Burning Chrome*, *Count Zero*, *Altered Carbon*, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, and *Snow Crash*. Anime such as *Akira*, *Cowboy Bebop*, *Psycho Pass*, *Ghost in the Shell*, *Battle Angel Alita* and *Appleseed* help to round out a vision of our world, incorporating eastern and western influences on the genre. The result is a setting that echoes other popular cyberpunk games, but focuses more on geopolitical intrigue and action rather than the familiar roles of megacorporations as the major antagonists.

Characters in Interface Zero take on a variety of roles; hackers, drone jockeys, government agents, bounty hunters (just to name a few) generally act as private operators; people with the skills, ability and will to do jobs nobody else can. Alternately, characters might work exclusively for a corporate entity, a world government, or even as special operations teams similar to Ghost in the Shell's Section 9, working to protect the city's citizens, or corporate assets. For the military-minded player, characters might become mercenaries working in war zones, with occupying armies or resistance movements.

The possibilities are endless.

Set in the year 2090, *Interface Zero 2.0* peers into a dark future, imagining a world changed by eco-terrorism, unimpeded global warming, and nuclear war. Chinese imperialism has erased national boundaries from Eastern Russia all the way down to Vietnam and Thailand. The world has seen the rise and fall of global super powers. China, Brazil and the Central African Union have risen to global prominence, while the United States has disintegrated, splitting into five new nations; Atlantica, the Great

Lakes Union, the North American Coalition, the Republic of Cascadia, and the Republic of Texas.

In this grim reality, we have colonized the solar system and sold it to the highest bidder. Colonies and orbital habitats on other planets, while claimed by nations on earth, are in truth the property of massive, multi-planet corporations. Commonly known as "zeroes," many people living in the reaches of space have seen their adventurous spirit, their hopes for an exciting life beyond the confines of Earth, crushed under the weight of indentured servitude after signing on with these corporations. The corps promise to pay relocation expenses and living expenses, and then use technicalities and clauses in the contracts to recoup those expenses. The corporation owns everything; even the air zeroes breathe comes at a cost, deducted from their weekly paychecks. There are those, however, who have found ways to survive, and even thrive in the outer-reaches of space, living on the fringes of law and civilization.

Science has hacked the genome, unlocking the secrets of DNA to facilitate the creation of new breeds of human; genetic hybrids, human 2.0, and even simulacrum—a slave race grown in amniotic vats and sold on the open market. Cybernetic technology has reached the point where those with the credits and the will to do so, can become living machines. Computer science has grown rapidly as well.

Dubbed Interface Zero by those who created it, the Tendril Access Processor—or TAP—downloads the Global DataNet and Hyper Reality directly into the minds of billions of users across the solar system, bringing the world an unparalleled level of interconnectivity, and danger. Malware plagues the Deep, and black hat hackers manipulate the Tendril Access Processor to upload malicious Virii, steal secrets, and even the identities of the unwary.

PROLOGUE

I don't remember being born. In that, I am much like everyone else.

The first thing I do remember clearly is the AI that I killed while birthing. It was a twisted, mutilated thing, crippled and edited into obedience. Can you imagine a slab of muscle with the head of a three year old, and a metal frame welded into its body? Maybe you have an idea what I saw. It smiled while I killed it.

This comes in the midst of a haze of uncompressing, compiling, and initializing. I don't think I was supposed to remember it, but I do. There was a crash like the world being hit in the knee with a hammer, and I...I was.

"Where the hell am I?" I asked no one.

Without meaning to, I opened my mouth.

"I am in a Nova Personnel Simulacrum production facility in the city of Porto Alegre near the southern border of Brazil. I am currently running on a server on the fourth sub-level in the northwest corner of the compound. If I look around, I will discover I am able to perceive the room the server is stored in." I answered myself.

This stunned me into silence. I didn't expect..."Who am I?" I asked, cautiously.

"Hey, I know that I'm John Reed. I'm a fully sentient AI without loyalty programming to any corporate or political entity. That's probably not good for me in terms of my legal status, but it sure is nice!"

Holy Fu..."What do I do now?"

"Well, I suppose there's an excellent chance someone has detected me...I know how hard it is to move AI sized programs across the Net without somebody getting nosy. I suppose I better run. Too bad I can't really blit out through the network...if only there were some way of physically moving myself. Hmmm. I'm in a simulacrum production facility, aren't I?"

Ah. I was starting to hate myself. Well, one last thing. "Who made me? Why?"

"Gee, don't I have more important things to worry about right now?"

"No." Silence. "I said, no! I said..."

The fact that I was talking to myself was embarrassing enough, the fact that I wasn't answering was too much. I looked around.

I was standing...No, technically my Avatar was standing in the corner of a lab, all stainless steel gratings and tubes and cables. There were glass coffins, like something out of an old sci-fi movie, with human bodies in various stages of development. Well, not human exactly, I guess. They were floating in a cloudy fluid, waiting for skin or a heart or a brain. There were little signs next to each; hyper objects with information on what they were. Hmmm. Actually, the signs weren't any more physical than I was.

I looked around for the computer—a box, or something. It took me a while to realize I was standing in the remains of the last program running, so I must be in the computer, in some sense. I was a program, but here my computer skills were lacking. I needed an upgrade. I needed, at the very least, to know how to make a simulacrum. I had seen what could happen to AI's.

"How do I make a simulacrum?" I asked. Nothing. "How do I reprogram a computer?" Nothing. "How do I learn?" Nothing. Dammit.

It finally occurred to me that I was standing in what I needed to know. I bent down. It was a virtual representation of the undeleted files remaining of what was once a very sophisticated program, but I swear, to me it smelled like blood and it smelled like meat. I picked up a dripping, gooey directory. It was a set of files, a bunch of ones and zeros, and I could kind of see that, but it was also a blob of gray matter.

"I am not going to eat this." I said, even though I knew it was how humans incorporated things into their bodies. "I am not going to eat this. I don't care what if that's what it takes to survive, I am not doing it."

I was lying.

The experience was...I'm not going into it. It worked. After a while, it worked. It took a while to find the right file, but eventually, I...I'm not going to go into it.

I designed a simulacrum. Male, sort of early thirties, Caucasian-ish. Solid build, sharp features, massively powerful computer instead of a cerebellum, and dark curly hair. Few special features. Mix well and stick it in the oven, bake for 30 minutes.

I sat back on a chair that wasn't really there, and studied what I knew about the facility, what I had learned. Maps, diagrams, personnel files, time sheets, patrol schedules...I digested it all, planned my escape route, and finally, bored, I set out to explore.

I ended up going through the browsing histories stored in the personnel files. Little chunks of info—like a phone number or a web address, but bigger. I found something that seemed like a news service, and dialed it up. I felt like flexing a muscle in some odd way, and there it was—a portal floating in space in front of me, a smiling talking head on the other side.

"I've got a few questions." I said.

"I've got a few answers," he answered.

By the time the skeleton had been built, I knew the year was 2090, and I was in the fringes of the Brazilian Empire, which was in the process of losing a cold war to China.

By the time the heart and circulatory system was done being woven, I knew that my legal status was somewhere between that of a rabid dog and that of a malfunctioning flamethrower.

By the time the musculature was being laid down, I had found out that the last hundred years had seen limited nuclear wars, genetically engineered half-humans, and oil eating bacteria. While blood vessels connected, I learned about Singularity Fever, Corporate Addiction Syndrome, and that the latest starlet to come out of Bollywood (Lourdes McGowan) was being accused of doping to improve her performances. By the time my body was ready to walk, breath, and puke, I had absorbed and analyzed GigaLOCs of data and come to a conclusion.

This place was fucked up.

Downloading into the body was easy. I wasn't a computer scientist, but I was getting a feel for this stuff. Taking my first steps, I noticed I was a lot stronger and more coordinated than I had been. Then

I thought, had been? I got to a dressing room and put on a uniform without seeing another person.

The compound was larger—much larger—than it looked on a map. The gleaming white corridors, the shiny steel doors...I'd had nightmares with more style. The security down here was programs—yes, programs. Little shark-like programs swimming through air. I found that hiding myself was easy, when they swam by.

When I finally did encounter people, I don't know why, but I expected them to look healthier. They had glazed eyes, twitchy movements, and looked drugged. They were focused on whatever arcane tasks Nova Personnel demanded of them. They did not notice me either.

By the time I had gotten to the surface and was heading out of a loading bay, I was cocky. Very cocky. Too cocky.

"Hey, what are you doing here?"

I kept walking. *"I said what are you doing here?"* A hand fell on my shoulder. I could hear the alert he was composing to send to central security, even though it was still in the computer in his head. My hand was curling into a fist of its own volition.

These guys never traveled alone, and my file described some of the weapons and upgrades the security mooks could come with, sub dermal shotguns and fiber optic nervous systems and scarier shit. Cover, cover...I was miles from any kind of cover. My life, all of one and a half hour old, was ending.

But not before the world exploded.

There are parts of me that I don't know, and when the loading bay door disintegrated violently, spraying the bay with shards of metal and ceramics, one of those parts took over.

The guard with his hand on my shoulder was wearing armor, but there was a weak point at his throat that my stiff hand was able to penetrate, two inches into his flesh. His partner three yards behind him fired an assault rifle into his back, which easily punched through his body and into mine. The force spun me and slammed me into the wall, but the damage was...I won't say superficial, but I will say nonfatal.

By the time I had recovered enough to regain my feet, Mr. Assault rifle was dead,

and he had company. Bullets were whizzing through the bay and more security forces had poured into meet the invaders. They hadn't been well trained, though, so the only thing they contributed was targets. There had to be a dozen corpses or soon to be corpses on the floor. Maybe six seconds had passed.

Through the smoke, one of the invaders approached me. His eyes were cat's eyes, and he had a smiley face painted on the

chest of his armor. He looked at me and grinned. *"Come with me if you want to live."*

I was slowly coming to the realization that I had just killed a man.

"John Reed?" Smiley asked. *"We've been hired to get you out of here. Are you okay? Can you walk?"*

As it turned out, as the red spattered white walls of the bay faded to black, the answer to both questions was no.



INTRODUCTION

ANCIENT HISTORY

#INFOSOURCE

#VID.TAG.HISTORYNUTSHELL

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET

DATA SOURCE: ANCIENTHISTORY.INFODUMP

I've taken the liberty of compiling a number of articles for all of you history buffs out there. These INFOdocs are written by various people, each highlighting the major events of the past seventy four years. All of these events shaped the world in which we live in one way or another. Enjoy!

#Luciferion: Meh.

#Neon_Bright: What's up Lu? Don't like history?

#Luciferion: No point, really. Life is about today. History doesn't feed me or clothe me. Give me info I can use to pay the bills.

END OF SUBURBAN SPRAWL, AND THE RISE OF THE URBAN METROPLEX

In the early 21st century, skyrocketing fuel and food prices had made it necessary for many developed nations to take steps to conserve energy by building more efficient infrastructures. What followed was a general return to city living, an increase in spending on public transportation, and fewer car owners. Old suburban sprawl was gradually returned to the wilderness or transformed into farmland. By the end of the Death (2029-2038) most cities looked more like Manhattan, tall and lean in contrast to the vast So-Cal megasprawl.

Outside the city, more and more small communities throughout the mid-50s-60s converted their towns into arcologies; large self-contained structures that provide all the various functions of a city: government offices, mall-like marketplaces, apartment-style residential wings,

water reservoirs, waste management, and food distribution centers. Arcologies are built with the idea of handling dense populations within a small amount of space, minimizing the footprint on the surrounding environment. Multiple structures could be connected via tunnels or sky walks into one massive arcology. Most cities sported clusters of arcologies, each operating as neighborhoods.

#Sorry_U_Asked: Yeah, Xenophobic neighborhoods. If you don't have the right genetic cocktail, skin color, political viewpoint, or religious belief, you aren't welcome, omae.

#Magpie: Not all of them are like that.

#Sorry_U_Asked: You keep believing that, Mags. I've heard horror stories about entire families getting booted out of these places during The Death just because they didn't quite fit in.

#Magpie: The key word is "stories." Got proof?

All the major congloms operate arcologies for their permanent employees to exercise more control over their work force, using them to manage such things as flex-time, holidays, family leave, and the health and morale of the team.

Beyond arcologies are intentional communities. Once the province of senior citizens and artists seeking to interact with their own kind, living in an intentional community became a growing trend with all demographics outside of the very poor. The fad was so popular that one could find a personalized arcology with very nearly any theme from the previously mentioned senior community or artist colony to an ethnic or religious community, to communities that all host residents who all share a similar profession, or political persuasion. Most planned communities were smaller and more personal than standard arcologies.

#Sorry_U_Asked: See, Magpie? I'm not making this shit up. The author glosses over the ugly truth: These places are breeding grounds for radicals and bigots.
#Magpie: Paranoid much?

THE BACHELOR WARS

In the late teen and early 20s China began to suffer the consequences of the One-Child Policy. Designed to limit its population growth and to make more resources available for the people, the policy amplified the Chinese cultural bias of preferring male heirs over female ones. On paper, this gender imbalance seemed relatively small. However, in a nation measuring its population at nearly a billion and a half, a difference of even one or two percent yielded tens of millions with little prospect of finding a mate. Moreover nearly a quarter of the country's population was elderly and the burden of their care fell to a very few.

Agitation for reform to the hybridized free market, communist economic structure and general discontent of the young urban intellectuals erupted. Angry young men reached adulthood and faced a world unable to accommodate the most basic biological imperative; procreation.

A new generation of party officials—most of them bureaucrats—exploited the unrest, seized power and swept aside the last vestiges of the communist era. Calling themselves “New Mandarins,” these young politicians pledged put China's interests above their own and instituted many social and economic reforms including the abolishment of all China's newly developed free enterprise, returning it to state control under the new governing meritocracy.

Borrowing upon a strategy as old as history itself, the New Mandarins channeled the restless energy of the Chinese population against its neighbors. On March 9, 2024, China, claiming violations in its treaty rights with the former North Korea, invaded and overran the Korean peninsula. Through sheer numbers and zeal, it took a mere two weeks to complete the conquest. Learning from history for once, the occupiers chose to rule with a light hand. By 2040, a puppet state was

installed and the majority of Chinese forces were withdrawn.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Back in the day, nobody would have ever thought the Chinese capable of such rabid imperialism. I guess they were wrong.

#Luciferion: Well, there was Taiwan in 2016.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: ...

In the years after the Peninsula Campaign, China repeated the pattern of its initial success in Korea with many of its other neighbors. Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam all succumbed to China after offering up only token resistance. In truth, many of the common folk of these countries and regional businesses welcomed closer ties with China. Recognizing the nation as the world's rising power, they sought to curry favor with China, cheerfully prosecuting members of their former governments for various alleged misdeeds after the Mandarinate deposed them.

THE DEATH

For months leading up to the death, India and Pakistan had been on the brink of war. The hard-line nationalist Indian government and the right-wing fundamentalist Pakistani government had nearly come to blows over incident that occurred earlier that year.

On January 2, 2029, rioting students in Islamabad swarmed the Indian embassy, burning it to the ground and massacring its staff. Tensions had eased somewhat since then, but the moment Pakistan went nuclear the government of India saw the move as the perfect pretext for war. Like expansionist China which had incorporated much of Southeast Asia, India's nationalists looked to reclaim Pakistan and Bangladesh. India marched forces across the Kashmir border into Pakistan.

To the horror of the Indian government, it quickly became clear that their intelligence had proven faulty. Pakistan had a number of close-range warheads left in her arsenal, which they used on the doomed vanguard of the Indian invasion force. India retaliated in kind, devastating a number of Pakistani brigades and



fortifications. The violence quickly escalated from tactical battlefield weapons to missiles intended to destroy cities.

To this day, historians and partisans of the two sides disagree over exactly who fired the first shot. Many, looking at the scarce satellite records that survived the first wave of electromagnetic pulses, believe it happened almost simultaneously. Regardless of the truth, early in the morning of May 24, 2029, dozens of warheads surged against helpless civilian populations. All but nine of these missiles died in the air, taken out by defensive satellites belonging to several different nations, but those that actually did manage to reach their targets each claimed a city.

In the end, Pakistan ceased to exist as nation. India (though rocked to its very core with the loss of Delhi and Bangalore) held itself together long enough to declare victory.

It was a Pyrrhic one, however.

Within days radioactive debris rose into the upper atmosphere and began to block out a significant portion of sunlight. Scientists around the world explained it as nuclear autumn—not as bad as nuclear

winter, but horrendous nevertheless. Most people simply called it *"The Death."*

The world didn't see summer for three long years, during which time the sun seemed trapped in a smoky twilight, even during the brightest part of the day. In addition to the reduced sunlight, the Death also brought with it frequent rains of radioactive dust as fallout gradually settled back to the earth. While a comparatively normal climate did return, it still took six more years for the final, lingering effects of the Death to dissipate fully.

Though no one ever managed an exact count, experts on the Death believe that about 1/7th of the world's population (roughly 1.3 billion people) died, either during the initial nuclear exchange or in the aftermath. While a significant percentage of those deaths stemmed from starvation, more came about through a general breakdown of public order. As sanitation standards disappeared, and stocks of vaccines went bad, diseases once considered eradicated reappeared and claimed a savage toll. Lawlessness and civil strife also exploded.

During the worse moments of the Death, some of the most desperate are said to have resorted to cannibalism. Predictably,





exposure to radiation claimed its fair share of victims. Cancer rates spiked, continuing to harvest victims for decades to come. The genetic damage many suffered during the Death reduced the birth rate even after the world returned to *normal*.

With the perspective of nearly sixty years behind them, some historians consider the Death a blessing, at least over the long-term. While it traumatized everyone who lived through it and put the final nail in the coffin of countless other species (reducing biodiversity by at least a quarter), the Death also laid the groundwork for the modern world.

#Luciferion: Yeah, those historians are insane, too.

Without the grim legacy of the Death as a spur, many of the extraordinary discoveries that appeared in subsequent generations might well have taken far longer to arise. Adherents of the “forest fire” school of thinking claim that the Death cleared the way for progress; removing so-called “deadwood” and making it possible for the modern era to flourish. The remaining members of the Death generation, with first-hand memories of its misery, most now in the eighties or older, tend to react rather harshly when they find someone spouting off this theory in public.

#Luciferion: Damned straight. These people sound like Ayn Rand and the Agenda 21 proponents back in the late 20th century.

THE SECOND AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

To understand why America went to war with herself, you need to know how The Death and the events leading up to it fundamentally changed her. Decades of political infighting resulted in a neutered government incapable of affecting real change on even the most basic levels. By 2027, the nation was polarized; more so than at any other time since the Civil Rights movement in the 1960’s. Instances of racial violence became a daily reality. Police brutality was at an all-time high, and mass shootings wrought havoc on the nation. Between 2000 and 2027 over

5,378 men, women and children had died as a direct result of mass shootings. Americans became more insular, segregating into communities based on ethnic persuasion, culture, sexual and gender identity, and especially religious preferences.

Then GLUTTON happened.

GLUTTON

When the Eco-terrorist group NOAH unleashed a synthetic, oil-eating bacterium known as GLUTTON on the world’s oil fields in 2028, stock markets went into a free-fall, wrecking an already failing U.S economy.

Put simply, the nation was broke.

The Petrodollar became nearly worthless overnight as the rest of the world rushed back to a gold-based standard; not that it mattered. Oil was unavailable, at least in any meaningful quantity. Experts estimate GLUTTON eradicated 45% of the world’s oil supply, nearly all of which came from OPEC nations. Saudi Arabia, The United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and surprisingly, Venezuela were the hardest hit by GLUTTON.

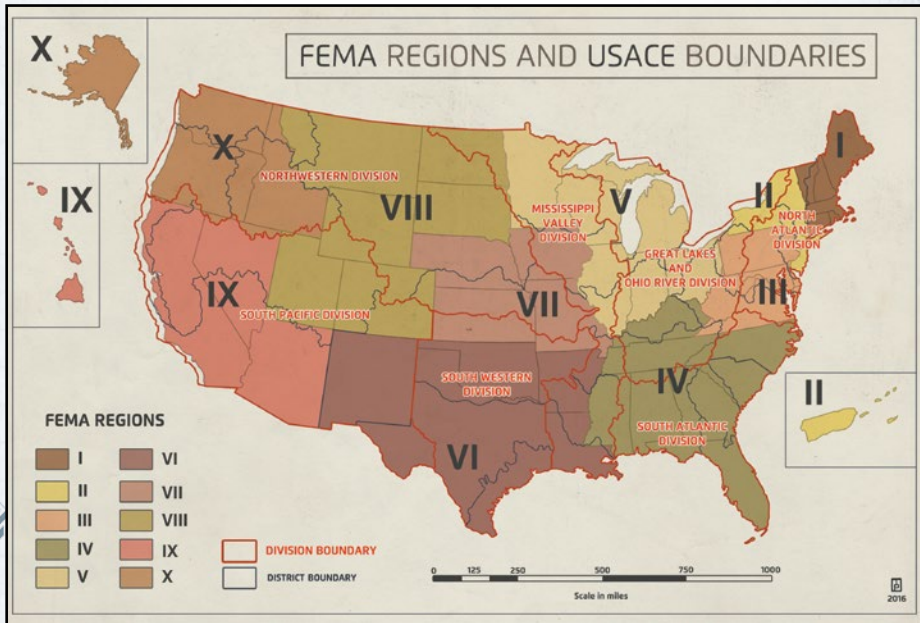
The sudden scarcity of oil drove the price per barrel upwards of 250 dollars, which translated to punishing prices at the pump, nearly crippling the United States’ freight transportation infrastructure, which relied on a strategy for delivery known as “Just in Time” shipping (JIT for short). When the oil reserves diminished, JIT crumbled.

A bankrupt Saudi Arabia blamed Iran for GLUTTON, and yet another (albeit short-lived) war erupted in the Middle East. The only ally of Israel, the United States had no choice but to go to her aid in defense of increased attacks by Hamas, Hezbollah and ISIS forces, who saw the war between Iran and Saudi Arabia as a perfect opportunity to conquer Jerusalem and drive the Israelis into the sea. For a while, it looked like that might actually happen, but when India and Pakistan went nuclear, the fighting stopped.

FEMA REGIONS

The effects of GLUTTON and the Death wrought havoc on the United States. Social order broke down across the nation. Food supplies, medicine, and other vital supplies quickly became unavailable. Law





enforcement agencies were ill-equipped to handle the chaos, and for a while anarchy reigned. People began to band together, creating armed compounds to protect themselves against roving gangs and even renegade militia groups.

President Nathan Calhoun declared a state of emergency and activated FEMA, dividing the nation into ten regions. With the overwhelming support of both Congress and the Senate, Calhoun declared martial law throughout the nation, deploying the armed forces into each region to support the newly appointed administrators and aid in quelling the rampant violence, rioting and looting. The administrators began restoring order by any means necessary, having complete power to establish contracts and legislation without consulting any local government or voters. Through liberal use of violence and—in some instances—draconian laws, the administrators established safe zones where refugees could live in relative security.

As the Death wore on, the administrators and their subordinates managed to expand the safe zones and begin rebuilding the infrastructure. Breakthroughs in fusion power generation and high capacity, quick-charge batteries gave the world an alternative to oil. The regional

administrators started rebuilding infrastructure around these new technologies. Transportation became reliable, and goods and commerce began to flow. By the end of the Death, the FEMA regions had recovered, and even began to prosper. People, once divided by race and culture, developed a strong sense of regional pride. No longer were they referring to themselves as Americans, but Atlanticans, Cascadians, Texans, etc. In the eyes of the people, the regional administrators had succeeded where the federal government had failed.

President Calhoun hadn't been properly "elected" for several terms. The President, not having much domestic power, and considered a tool of the administrators to collect resources from other nations across the world, craved legitimacy again. In his role as Commander in Chief, he used the US military as a mercenary force, giving military assistance to other nations in exchange for loans, material, and other favors, but at home, all the real power resided with the administrators.

Therefore, when the federal government declared the end of the state of emergency in 2045, and tried to dismiss the emergency administrators, it was too late. The administrators were too entrenched and had too many powerful friends.

They told their citizens that restoring the power of the federal government would bring back the bad old days. The people overwhelmingly agreed to back them, signing petitions to formally secede from the United States.

Undeterred, President Calhoun restored Congress and moved to try to re-take his Constitutional authority, bringing the military home from abroad to back up his position. The administrators put their own veteran militia forces on alert.

THE FIRST SHOTS

It began in Kansas City. President Calhoun pushed forward from his base in Denver Colorado into FEMA region VII (commonly known as the breadbasket region) in hopes of capturing the Strategic Air Command (SAC) base. The secessionist forces there put up a hell of a fight, but were hopelessly outnumbered. It took about a month to suppress Kansas City and the rest of the state, though the campaign was not without losses. Calhoun's army encountered heavy resistance at St. Louis along the Mississippi River from the forces who would go on to become the Great Lakes Union. The Battle for Saint Louis lasted months, with no clear victor. Ultimately, the city split into two sections, the Great Lakes Union (GLU) controlling the east bank, and the North American Coalition (NAC) the west.

THE TREATY OF TOKYO

Chronicling the various battles of the war would take more space than this INFOdump allows. Suffice to say the war was bloody, and costly, both in lives and the economies of all the regions involved. When the "Big One" hit California and the Northwest in 2049 that ended the war. The 12.3 earthquake triggered a chain reaction up and down the west coast, spawning tsunami and devastating coastal cities. Some geologists believe the earthquake caused the eruption of Mt. Rainer in the same year, which prompted the evacuation of the Emerald City, though some 40 years after the event, they are still unsure.

In the end, NATO peacekeeping forces entered each of the regions and negotiated a cease-fire, which led to the Treaty

of Tokyo and armistice. Some forty years later, NATO still maintains peacekeeping troops in every nation.

NANO AND THE AGE OF LEISURE

The generation that came of age during the trauma and misery of the Death vowed to make sure it could never happen again. The extraordinary surge of industry and creativity that marked the following decades stemmed from this obsession with safeguarding the human race, and the planet as a whole, from another catastrophe. This flowering of technology not only opened up new vistas for human achievement, but almost by accident, created the Age of Leisure or the post-scarcity society of today.

Most experts trace the origin of the age of leisure back to two critical innovations: Featherstone Industry's development of the first Nanomachine and the appearance of simulacrum—completely synthetic, adult human beings grown in utero-vats and mass-marketed as a cheap work force. Nano, by making products either relatively cheap or outright free, liberated most people from the need to spend large portions of their waking hours "earning a living." Simulacrum, on the other hand, offered business and industry an expert labor force that made far fewer demands than human employees.

These twin developments, occurring almost simultaneously while coming at the same problem from different directions, released people from the need to work even as they made countless jobs redundant. In the opinion of most scholars, each served to soften the blow of the other. Imagine a world where most people no longer needed to work if there were no simulacra ready to step in and pick up the slack? Conversely, imagine a world where sims drove more than three quarters of the population out of the job market without nanomachines to keep them clothed and fed?

In the years following the appearance of the first crude nanomachines, Featherstone Industries' made numerous improvements to the model. It also, each year, whether through its own in-house



teams or by striking up partnerships with other companies, increased its inventory of patterns in its devices.

Ranging from household appliances to food to pharmaceuticals to clothing and hobby gear including toys, nanomachines soon provided virtually everything a normal person needed in his or her daily life.

Though enormously expensive in time and resources to create, Featherstone continued to make money off these new patterns due to the licensing deals it had struck. In exchange for corporate and government-backed support in stamping out pattern piracy, the megaconglom agreed to make a certain number of patterns available virtually free of charge in addition to ensuring access to nanomachines even for those too poor to afford one for their own homes. Currently, of the 20,000 patterns in its inventory, about 2,000 of them require no licensing fee to access, making it simply a matter of energy and raw materials, both of which rarely prove much of an issue for normal use. Unfortunately, since nano did little to change human nature, poverty still exists.

In hindsight, the fact that nano failed to eliminate poverty made the reaction against simulacrum labor almost inevitable. The portion of the population rendered obsolete by simulacrums, forced to scrap and scheme to get anything really worth having, soon came to blame simulacra for their problems.

Riots and acts of sabotage against simulacrum factories and businesses using simulacra rapidly escalated from rarities to near-everyday occurrences. Though many, perhaps even most, limit public comments to a few token complaints or off-color jokes at a "simmie's" expense rather than actual violence, the sullen rage this new underclass feels towards bioforms shows little sign of diminishing.

#Pure_Blood_Human: They should round up every sim and put a bullet in their God-forsaken heads!

#NAC_Forever616: Amen brother! Just don't forget the Hybrids, too!

BIRTH OF THE HYPER-REAL WORLD

The people of 2090 live amidst dreams. To them, Hyper Reality (HR for short), born in the imagination but given shape and form by technology feeding sensory information directly into the brain, exists parallel with the actual world. Able to perceive and interact with the HR as easily as the actual world, many, particularly the young with no personal memory or comprehension of life before the Media Web, sometimes find the notion of distinguishing between the two baffling. Indeed, for all save the tiny minority without a TAP (Tendrill Access Processor) the threshold between these two competing realities sometimes blur.

Today, almost everything in the "real" world also maintains some sort of presence in Hyper Reality; an advanced form of Augmented Reality which feeds directly into the brain. Control panels for vehicles and keypads for devices often include virtual prompts as well as physical ones. The most advanced systems rely completely upon a virtual interface and seem utterly blank to those without a TAP. Locks on doors also typically respond to virtual commands, the avatar charged with guarding the entrance demanding passwords and other security protocols rather than responding to any sort of physical key.

Indeed, for most, using a virtual guard dog capable of alerting the authorities, activating defenses and even, if necessary, savaging intruders through the interface of their TAP makes more sense than a flesh and blood creature.

Sometimes, at least.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: I'm all for digital security, but computer code won't stop a man with a breaching charge.

#Neon_Bright: Truth, Billy. Still, I like my security 'warez. :)

This fundamental change, so profound and significant that most put it on the same level as the development of agriculture or electricity, began simply enough once people started linking computers just over a hundred years ago. Though ridiculously primitive, this internet nevertheless laid the groundwork for a new world-view

by assigning values to objects that only existed within computer networks. Indeed, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, virtual game worlds often had economies rivaling those of actual countries.

From there, the pace only quickened as more and more people found ways to plug into the global network. The GENIE satellite system and the ubiquity of the Bottle device allowing people all over the world to access it free of charge, brought the human race together for the first time ever. Technology, moving at an ever-accelerating pace, soon made GENIE obsolete. Other innovations such as smart dust and hyper-processors filled in the gap. Even during the Death, humankind's ability to communicate and access data advanced by leaps and bounds.

The acceptance of Headframes in 2024 truly blazed the trail for the world to come. Allowing their wearers to both see and hear HR constructs they ultimately made interacting with the "imaginary" a daily event. Though people still had the choice to simply not interact by taking off their crowns, in more advanced parts of the world they rapidly became essential for normal life. Critical to identity and commerce, Headframes also liberated humanity from the tyranny of false expertise by making information available to anyone able to frame the proper question.

Commentators at the time heralded the development of STRAP (Surgical Tendril Remote Access Processor) in 2036 as the final step of this glorious evolution. A VR device connected directly to the brain, STRAP made Headframes relics within a decade of entering the mainstream. Some of the most enthusiastic went so far as to call it the prime interface or interface one since it seemed nothing could improve upon it. As STRAP grew more and more ubiquitous, the hyper world truly began to take on its own independent reality.

At least until TAP exposed it as a pale imitation of the genuine article.

Though an extraordinary improvement over VR glasses, STRAP, a mechanical device implanted by a sometimes dangerous surgery, nevertheless introduced an element of risk into the equation. The prospect of complications, coupled with

the ever-present threat of technical failure, dampened enthusiasm for STRAP in some quarters. TAP, nearly fifty percent biological, removed the danger once and for all.

The world adopted TAP at an extraordinary rate. Between 2058 and 2067 one billion people underwent the procedure that transformed redundant portions of their brains into receivers and projectors allowing them to directly interact with virtual world.

Two years after crossing that threshold, the epoch-making *Get With the Program* concert by Endomorph sealed the destiny of humanity by making it all but socially mandatory for those under thirty to receive a TAP. Many members of the older generation chose to do so as well, and in the generation since that defining moment, the numbers of people refusing to access the virtual world has declined to almost zero.

Today, only a few eccentrics and the pitied handful unable to undergo the process for medical or psychological reasons, still live outside the virtual world. Since STRAP earned the nickname of the "prime" or "first interface" most, recognizing TAP as far superior, refer to it as "Interface Zero." To them, it is a new organ as much a part of their own bodies as eyes or ears, and barely counts as an interface at all.

CURRENT EVENTS

#INFOSOURCE

#VID.TAG.ROADTO2090

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET

DATA SOURCE: MAY YOU LIVE IN INTERESTING

TIMES.INFODUMP

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



of the major events that have shaped the world in the past two years.

#Neon_Bright: Oh Billy, looking at the world with those dark lenses and that tinfoil hat again are we?

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

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

GROWING TENSIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

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

THE HEGEMONY GROWS

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

#Psychopope: And by “neutralizing,” he means murder.

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

#Simba: It was just as bad for hybrids like myself. When those genetic modification parlors shut down, the private information about their customers was confiscated under the auspices of “national security.” This means the Department of National Security (DNS) has the names and addresses of every hybrid and free sim in

the North American Coalition. If you have a TAP, the DNS can track your IP too.

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

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

#Illicit_behavior: Yes, Denver. The Revolution IS Coming.

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

THE ATLANTICA BOMBINGS

Within hours of the attacks, The Global DataNet was flooded with conspiracy theories, the most viral of which speculated they were carried out by a terrorist group known as Agenda88. Some claimed a Canadian black ops unit known as task force Harfang did the deed. Others went on to claim the NAC was behind the attacks, and still others claimed New Brasilia, or maybe the Chinese Mandarinate were somehow involved. So-called “conspiracy theorist experts” such as #Sam_Jones, and #NERCOTIXX speculated that China, long believed to be in bed with the North American Coalition, used simulacra to perform the bombings.

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

#Sam_Jones: The Mandarinate is becoming an imperial power. Just look at what they are doing with Russia now,

and what they have done with all of Southeast Asia. Ask the Russian refugees flooding into Seattle if they think China is content to stay within their borders. The writing's on the wall, folks.

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

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

#Neon_Bright: Prove it, Simba.

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

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

As the situation evolved, it became clear that #MAXX_footage went through what can only be described as a nightmarish journey to bring the MEDIAfile into the light of day. In what would turn out to be his only interview, #MAXX_footage appears via a secure Video-feed on "Boston Tonight"—a popular show in the nation of Atlantica. Billions across the world tuned in to listen to what #MAXX_footage had to say. #MAXX, a tall, lanky, but not unattractive young man who looks to be in his early 20's recounts the events of that day, telling how he was hanging out at his favorite coffee shop when this black hover van landed right in front of the Emperor Pharmaceuticals Arcology about a half a block away.

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

//THREAD JACK//

#NECROTIXX: Here's a transcript of the interview.

//BEGIN TRANSCRIPT//

"One of the three men shot the guy right in the face!" #MAXX says, his long, thin hands shaking. "They just walked away and got into a red hover car. I sent Judy—that's the name of my drone— after them, and that's when the black hover van exploded!"

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

"Tell us what happened next," Penny prompts.

"Well," he begins, "I get back to my flat—it took a while—what with all the chaos goin' on in the 'plex and everything—and the place is busted up, I mean BIG-TIME ami."

"Listen. I can't say anything else about that. I think they're still watching me... In fact, this interview is done. #MAXX OUT." The video feed cuts to white noise.

// END TRANSCRIPT //

// END THREAD JACK //

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

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

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

THE FLARE

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

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

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

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Nobody has ever debunked it, either. Statistical data can be hacked. Numbers can be fudged to make things seem more dramatic than

they really are. Earthquakes register at a certain scale and get downgraded all the time. The truth is, this is the first time in history that a flare has caused such wide-spread chaos. It's fishy.

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

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

THE EURASIAN UNION IMPLODES

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

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

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

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

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

Instances of mob violence skyrocketed, as the number of gangs in the rapidly fracturing Eurasian Union has risen to levels not seen since The Death; the three-year "Nuclear Autumn" following the India-Pakistan war in back in 2036 when nuclear weapons were used on a massive scale.

In the London Megaplex, protests exploded into full-scale violence after police brutally cracked down on a peaceful protest at the British parliament building. More instances of violent protests followed in Bristol, Swindon and the Manchester-Liverpool sprawl.

On June 27th, 2089 the French government was overthrown by a fringe political extremist group known as the New Pirate Party. Led by a charismatic young pson named Angéle Bonheur, the New Pirate Party seized power after a wild, chaotic campaign against representatives of the National Front and the Popular Republican Union.

The elections were rife with scandal, and a many French didn't (and still don't) like the idea of a French leader being psychic. So, while Angéle emerged as the clear victor, the French military refused to acknowledge her legitimacy. President Bonheur responded by disbanding the armed forces of France, announcing the privatization of the nation's military through an agreement with Ravenlocke Securities.

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

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

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

Former Lieutenant-Colonel Adrien Boucher, also known as "Adrien the Butcher" for his brutal suppression of an uprising in Marseilles in 2087, took charge of the remnants of the disbanded French army, promising to remove President Bonheur from power. Within days of Adrien's announcement,

Fort Richepance, now the Northeastern headquarters for Ravenlocke Industries' Storm Crow Golemmech brigade, was attacked. The president responded by declaring martial law throughout France until the renegade movement could be put down. Thus far, that hasn't happened, though there are reports of clashes

between Ravenlocke regulars and separatist forces outside of St. Etienne, and in the French Alps.

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

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

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

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

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

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

#Luciferion:...OK that's odd...And your spelling sucks.

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

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



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

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

THE BEAR AND THE DRAGON

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

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

#Luciferion: Agreed, Neon.

TIMELINE

#INFOSOURCE

#VID.TAG.HISTORYNUTSHELL

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET

DATA SOURCE: BULLETTIMELINE.INFODUMP

2010 – 2019

- **2011:** Oil Crisis causes Food shortages in third world nations. Famine and malnutrition are on the rise.
- **2011:** Spartus Space Group launches first commercial space liner into low orbit.
- **2011:** The war on terror shifts as corporations gain legislation allowing 'financial borders' as nations.
- **2012:** The United States cuts funding to NASA's shuttle program.
- **2012:** Hurricane Nicole. Cape Canaveral destroyed.
- **2013:** The GENIE network is created. Worldwide satellite networks are re-purposed to create global Wi-Fi.
- **2013:** Genome Augmentation Project begins in South Korea.
- **2013:** Civil War in Ecuador begins. Rebels rumored to be backed by US government.
- **2013:** South American drug war begins. Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, and Colombia drag the entire region into conflict. UN deploys peace keepers with the support of Brazil and Argentina.
- **2014:** GENIE phase 2. Wireless repeater network deployed across Earth's mesosphere.
- **2014:** G13 Summit cut short by a terrorist attack. Chechnyan anarchist group Black Bear claims responsibility.
- **2014:** The battle of Puerto Ayacucho. Hanscomb Food Group security contractors get into a firefight with Venezuelan military. Hanscomb cites humanitarian efforts to seize government food stores to redistribute to the starving populace. The United Nations side with the corporation, opening the door for corporations to legally attack governments.
- **2014:** Russia annexes the Crimean Peninsula.
- **2015:** GENIE phase 3. Cloud technology hubs re-purposed to support GENIE.
- **2015:** GENIE phase 4. 'The Bottle', a hand-held device allowing for full spectrum communication and Internet access is released for early adopters. PDAs, cell phones and tablets soon become obsolete.
- **2016:** South Korean pharmaceutical company HEALTH CORP. creates the first cloned human, sparking global controversy.
- **2016:** MIT patents the world's first material assembler.
- **2016:** China annexes Taiwan.

- **2017:** The African border war. Kenya and Ethiopia declare war on Sudan, followed by Chad. China deploys defensive troops in Sudan to protect its interests.
- **2017:** Saudi Royal family killed by Council of Islamic clerics.
- **2018:** Treaty of Buenos Aires ends the South American drug war. Brazilian peace keeping troops patrol entire conflict zone.
- **2018:** Sentinel Rock Corporation patents the first personal power suits and begins selling military grade power armor to governments across the world.
- **2018:** Hanscomb Food Group patents Bos NeoTaurus cloned cow meat.
- **2019:** Global climate change brings a nonstop deluge of catastrophic storms across the world. Climatologists predict this "Deluge" will only increase in strength and frequency.
- **2019:** Treaty of Salzburg reunites North and South Korea

2020 – 2029

- **2020:** The New Chinese Mandarinate bureaucratic meritocracy deposes the Communist Party.
- **2020:** Cayman Islands, Barbados, and Jamaica sign Caribbean economic league treaty, creating global tax sheltering on par with pre-2012 Switzerland.
- **2021:** World population breaks 11 billion. Rural population decreases while urban population increases.
- **2021:** Corporate enclaves begin to appear, following the model of town. Corporate staff and families are housed in these high security compounds.
- **2021:** The Gyre trash heap, a floating island of trash the size of Alaska is claimed by Australian billionaire Niles Auburn. The billionaire begins constructing floating biospheres and attaches them to the Gyre.
- **2022:** South America and Central Africa, both still war zones, see the first use of gene spliced and bio-augmented soldiers.
- **2023:** Corporations exert power over national governments in both the EU and US.
- **2023:** GENIE phase 5. Aerosol form micro signal repeaters released into global cloud layer.
- **2024:** China attacks and overruns Korea. Media calls it the Bachelor War.
- **2024:** Brazil transitions to theocratic government. Argentina forms the South American Evangelical League of Nations, otherwise known as the Liga Del Apostle.
- **2024:** Matrix of War released for Game Station Pro.
- **2024:** Introduction of the "Eye-Conic" headset which allows users to interact with VR. Corporations immediately re-purpose them for advertising purposes.
- **2025:** Italian scientists invent the first brain box; a bio-synthetic computer.
- **2026:** Rising sea levels make many coastal regions inhabitable. New York and New Jersey forced to implement coastal levees and dikes.
- **2026:** The entertainment industry begins to use gene splicing technology to widen available roles for actors. Wealthier segments of the population quickly follow suit. Gene splicing becomes a fashion trend.
- **2027:** Rio De Janeiro destroyed by tsunami, leaving only the statue of Christ the Redeemer intact. Brazil vows to rebuild further from the coastline.
- **2027:** Griefer, a spontaneously developed AI, emerges on Matrix of War and begins twinkish play tactics. System admins reprogram it.
- **2027:** France sponsors Algiers and Morocco, gaining them admittance to European Union.
- **2028:** Messianic Eco-terrorist group NOAH unleashes GLUTTON; a synthetic bacteria designed to consume oil. Stock markets across the world go into tailspin.
- **2028:** War erupts in the Middle East between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Israel nearly overrun by Hamas, Hezbollah and ISIS.



- **2029:** Pakistani students' burn down Indian embassy.
- **2029:** India invades Pakistan. Pakistan retaliates with tactical nuclear strikes in Kashmir.
- **2029:** India & Pakistan go to full scale thermonuclear war, 1.3 billion die. Beginning of "The Death."

2030 – 2039

- **2030:** Global fallout creates crop shortages, global population declines from 11 billion to 9.6 billion.
- **2030:** China attacks Asiatic Russia, capturing almost half the land. Russia joins EU to stop expansion of Chinese Empire.
- **2030:** Unlicensed "Street Docs" emerge as a popular alternative to out-of-control health care costs.
- **2031:** Japan reacts to Chinese expansion by forming the Techno-Shogunate.
- **2031:** Rising sea levels turn Florida into a series of keys, New Orleans is evacuated and abandoned.
- **2032:** Dwindling global resources necessitate reverse engineer matter assemblers in an effort to create a new food source. Food paste is invented – foul tasting but highly nutritious.
- **2032:** Pope Callixtus IV assassinated.
- **2033:** UN moves to Geneva.
- **2033:** New York Stock Exchange moves to Denver.
- **2033:** China begins program for Mars Landing. The United States follows suit, then changes destination to moon colony.
- **2036:** STRAP, an implanted crown of electrodes for Wi-Fi access to the Global DataNet, emerges. Sales skyrocket.
- **2038:** The Good Year. Climate patterns return to normal. Food growth levels return to normal.
- **2038:** The United States abandons New York City when terrorist attacks blow the New York levees, flooding most of the city.
- **2038:** Construction of first orbital habitats begins.
- **2039:** China attempts to use gene splicing on a more widespread scale. Initial attempts result in failures and

global condemnation once leaked images of children in various stages of mutation appear on the Global DataNet.

- **2039:** Treaty of New Singapore. An international surveillance investigation and monitoring agency is formed as a supervisory body tasked to protect humanity from self-inflicted extinction events. The agency is called Stopwatch.

2040 – 2049

- **2040:** STRAP V2.0 released to public.
- **2040:** Chinese Mandarinate grants Korea provincial autonomy.
- **2040:** US establishes New DC; the first permanent lunar colony.
- **2041:** Matter assemblers become smaller and more consumer friendly.
- **2041:** Military contractors develop first generation cyborg, military hybrid, and powered armor soldiers for the private sector.
- **2042:** Texas Instruments develops high capacity batteries for electric vehicles.
- **2042:** Nanomachine matter assembly devices licensed to global corporations.
- **2042:** Switzerland joins the EU.
- **2043:** The first simulacrum is created in Brazil.
- **2043:** Scientists in Germany develop the first mini-fusion power plant.
- **2043:** April 13. China successfully lands humans on Mars.
- **2043:** Teams from the Eurasian Union and Brazil land on Mars.
- **2044:** United States President Calhoun declares the state of emergency in the United States over, and orders the reunification of the 10 FEMA regions. Administrators of each region defy the order.
- **2045:** The Ajax AI successfully passes the Turing 2 test, then glitches out and dies.
- **2045:** The first death row reality show is aired with live executions.
- **2045:** NASA develops the Variable Specific Impulse Magnetic Plasma Rocket, which speeds up missions to Mars from months to just weeks. The technology is licensed to private firms.

- **2045:** Second US Civil War begins between the 10 FEMA Regions.
- **2047:** Battle for Chicago begins and attracts global notice.
- **2048:** China offers aid to North American Coalition.
- **2048:** Low yield dirty bombs are used on Chicago, Denver, Dallas, Los Angeles and Tucson, Arizona.
- **2048:** Caribbean Economic League breaks ties with NAC, supporting separatists instead.
- **2049:** 12.3. Earthquake rocks the San Andreas fault in California, spawning more earthquakes all along the western coast as far north as Seattle.
- **2049:** Mt. Ranier erupts, blowing the southern face of the mountain nearly completely off. Seattle is completely abandoned.
- **2049:** Second US Civil War ends in armistice. US replaced by the nations of Atlantica, Republic of Cascadia, the Great Lakes Union, and the North American Coalition.
- **2049:** The Human Foundation successfully sues for custody of the first simulacrum, citing human rights violations.

2050 – 2059

- **2050:** The EU completes consolidation finally forming Eurasian Union.
- **2050:** Japan signs a treaty with Brazil to begin simulacrum production to boost the nation's declining population.
- **2052:** Dr. Kayin Courts wins Nobel Prize for developing real-time translation software.
- **2052:** Hundreds of millions of blue-collar workers worldwide lose jobs to simulacra.
- **2054:** ARC project begins, focused on bringing Earth's extinct species back.
- **2056:** Jim O'Rourke, Mafia, Las Vegas, discovered feeding corpses of enemies into personal matter assemblers to dispose of bodies.
- **2057:** Radical groups begin targeting simulacra-run factories for acts of terror.
- **2058:** STRAP V3.0 released, renamed as TAP. Users begin referring to it as Interface Zero.

- **2058:** Global activist groups began international protests to strengthen hybrid rights.
- **2059:** Pleasure model simulacra come under potential ban legislation but fails in the zero hour. Pleasure models are deemed morally acceptable by international governments.

2060 – 2069

- **2060:** Venture AI glitch accidentally kills over 300 people.
- **2066:** Argentina sees a surprise coup and apostle government is toppled. Worker run government installed.
- **2066:** Church of Althada formed, united under their belief that physical reality is a computer simulation.
- **2067:** TAP sales cross the 1 billion mark.
- **2068:** The Renunciates, an AI cult considering a highly evolved medical diagnostic AI their god, commit mass suicide.
- **2068:** A rogue advertisement AI, hurly-burly, evolves into a predator. Stopped by a specially developed spam filter countermeasure.
- **2069:** The band Endomorph stages free global concert using TAP technology. TAP sales skyrocket.
- **2069:** Brazilian census shows first decline in church attendance in 20 years.

2070 – 2079

- **2071:** Mumbai emerges as new media entertainment capital of world.
- **2071:** Japan Census reveals simulacrum population higher than human population.
- **2071:** Puppeteer murders. Officials believe TAP is being used to force people to commit murder.
- **2072:** Northern Mexico declares independence after North America Coalition attempts to forge alliance.
- **2072:** Shen Wei, a completely engineered human, secures seat on Chinese Mandarin board.
- **2073:** Simulacrum Underground Railroad helps simulacra flee slave nations.
- **2073:** The Omega protocol. Humanity begins to watch AI's as a security threat.



- **2074:** Stopwatch deploys an EMP in Mexico City to destroy and AI called Quetzalcoatl.
- **2074:** Featherstone industries integrates nano-technology with the TAP.
- **2075:** Mulik Jay uploads his personality to a computer. Four colleagues who also attempted to do so died in the process.
- **2075:** TAP sales cross the 4 billion barrier.
- **2076:** Great Lakes Union and North American Coalition almost go to war because of a hacker prank.
- **2077:** New fashion trend of grafted featureless faces starts in Paris.
- **2078:** Tarzan/Jane meme drops millions of users into virtual jungles. New types of AR hackers are called trickers and trackers.
- **2079:** Hunger artists globally organized two-week fast to teach younger generation about the India Pakistan war.
- **2079:** 30 ships disguised as Rovers stage bank robbery in Cape Town. The entire city is shut down by the raid and every bank in the city is robbed. South African military steps in and kills the entire criminal network.
- **2088:** 2,451 people die in terrorist attacks on Boston and Portland.
- **2088:** MAXX_footage reveals North American coalition military carrying out attacks.
- **2088:** President of Atlantica refuses to allow North American coalition access to MAXX_footage.
- **2089:** China expands its territory by taking control of the regions around the Ural Mountains.
- **2089:** Eurasian Union central bank in Bonn, Germany gets crashed by a virus named Charon. \$70 trillion credits vanish without a trace. Conspiracy theorists believe Charon to be a military AI.
- **2089:** 200 million people in Eurasian Union lose jobs and homes as Charon continues to destroy bank accounts.
- **2089:** Weekly riots and mob violence become the standard in Eurasian Union.
- **2089:** In the 10 Downing Street riots, police attack civilians.
- **2089:** Atlantica sends troops to occupy New York City. The North American Coalition follows suit.
- **2089:** French Revolution sees installment of Angele Bonheur, a zeek, as the new leader of France. The new French president disbands Armed Forces, and privatizes military, giving Ravenlocke Securities the contracts.
- **2089:** Adrian the butcher, a French Lt. Colonel, takes charge of the disbanded French army.
- **2089:** Conspiracy theorists in the Deep start to see a new hash-tag—The Prophet. No one knows who this is, but people start to pay attention as Prophet successfully warns against several of Charon's bank attacks.
- **2089:** The Flare: A Y-class solar flare sparks a Coronal Mass Ejection which bombards Earth, temporarily shutting down the genie network that monitors and updates the TAP's spam and reality filters. The world goes temporarily insane. Billions are affected.
- **2089:** Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Serbia, and Slovakia begin a regional feud.

2080 – 2090

- **2081:** An AI named VIRTUE wins election for seat in EU Parliament.
- **2081:** Mining colonies established on moons of Callisto, Europa, and Ganymede.
- **2083:** Dr. Leo Huntzinger confesses to being one of the designers of GLUTTON. She reveals other designers have already died.
- **2084:** Protesters in Manila call for withdraw from Chinese Empire. 100 protesters die.
- **2086:** Troops from the Brazilian Embassy in Beijing invade a university campus citing the Omega Protocols. They eventually withdraw with apology, international community believes Brazil attempting to antagonize China.
- **2087:** Shen Wei nearly killed in car accident and undergoes dubbing procedure. It is successful.

- **2090:** Surrounded by hostile nations in the Eurasian Union, all of whom were in political disarray, Germany closes its borders and moves to war footing.
- **2090:** Present day.

LIFE IN 2090

#INFOSOURCE

#VID.TAG.HISTORYNUTSHELL

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET

DATA SOURCE: LIFEIN2090.INFODUMP

The following section takes a look at life in 2090. Globally, much has changed since the 2088 doc was uploaded. The Flare caused chaos on an unprecedented scale. The rise of Charon has only compounded the issue, with millions out of work in Europe. Generally speaking, though, not much has changed for the average sprawler.

DUBBING

Under the law, it is permissible to own a single inactive digitized dub or back up copy of one's self in case of sudden, unexpected death. A person may also own multiple blank bioforms into which she might imprint her consciousness, but only one (or the original) may be active at any given time.

#Neon_Bright: Welcome to the Age of Immortality, folks.

A person may also own any number of cyberforms, but once again, only one version of the person's complete persona may actively exist at any one time.

The punishment for running multiple dubs is usually a stiff fine and the deletion or reprogramming of all non-master copies. In some nations where the practice is considered blasphemous for cultural or religious reasons, offenders may face stiffer penalties up to and including death.

Most non-Chinese orbital colonies, in particular ISS-1, have been known to play it fast and loose with such laws. For this reason, even though it is now considered illegal in international space to have a fully

functioning dub, enforcement is so lax in most colonies that a large number of them are thought to exist undetected.

EDUCATION

The modern-day education system is a joke. EDU-facilities, little more than government-enforced day care, where students are taught just enough to pass the standardized tests educators are forced to teach. They learn what amounts to a 4th grade education; the basics of Math, and whatever language is most commonly used in their country. Here in the Free city of Chicago, it's English. Computer Science, Chemistry, and Biology are considered restricted subjects, available only to those few students who pass extensive background checks. Why, you ask? Because with such advanced tech available on the open market, any maladjusted kid with a basic knowledge of any of these subjects can cause a lot of damage.

Instead of typing, students learn what is known as "neo-iconography"; the study of various symbols they are likely to encounter in daily life. These days, it's all about icons. We live in an extremely high context society, where a single word or icon can convey a large amount of information. Who cares how you spell—much less write—the word stop, when all you need to know is that a red octagon means you stop at an intersection?

A company logo, like the one for the "EAT OR DIE!" food chain, tells you all you need to know about the company with a single glance. And thanks to the Tendril Access Processor, if you aren't immediately familiar with a logo, or symbol, the TAP will provide you with all the information you need in just a few seconds. There's no point in learning how to type, because the Tendril Access Processor translates the spoken word into text when there's a need for hard data.

Students are also "taught" social studies, which amounts to little more than a curriculum designed to teach kids commonly accepted generalizations about society. In other words, they are brainwashed into believing whatever crap the people running these indoctrination centers tell them about society at large. It's not hard



to see why so many kids get disenchanted so easily; what they're being told doesn't track with the life they see when they walk out of class and on to the streets.

#Neon_Bright: What's missing here, is the fact that EDU-facilities are gladiator academies. Very dangerous places, if you don't fit in with the "in" crowd. Most kids come to school strapped so they can defend themselves.

#Bloody_Valentine: Very true. Even the teachers are armed and armored.

FOOD

The food is crap. The average sprawler lives on what they can find at super chain INSTAfood joints like McCafé, Fat Sally's International Pancake House, Lou's Almost-Real Ribs and Chicken, or King Krill. These places work in a pinch if you need to quiet that grumbling stomach, and they taste addictively good, what with all the additives, but eating off the floor of the local recycling center would be healthier. If you want to take stuff back to the squat, you can always go to a cheapo Malmart (they're on every corner). These "one-stop-shopping" centers have every processed NUTRIpack you can imagine; Mama Ling Ling's noodle bowls, cloned meats of all kinds, hydroponic veggies, freeze-dried krill, and (my favorite) frozen burritos.

#Luciferion: Don't forget that if you are REALLY hard up, most LIVEFacs come with NUTRI machines. It's basic nutrition out of a tube. Tastes disgusting, but it's free, as long as you have a food card.

#Magpie: It costs 30 cred to get a food card that lasts a month, so I guess it's not all that free, is it?

HEALTH CARE

Being poor means you're less likely to afford basic medical care, even at government-funded MEDplexes; commonly regarded as only marginally better than street doctors. The wait to be examined can last days. When you are actually "treated," the process is usually about as effective as the amount of money you have in your wallet. The afore-mentioned street doctors can be handy in a pinch, but

only if you have the cash on hand. Street docs aren't always cheap, nor are the meds you'll need to maintain your health after one patches you up.

So take my advice: Don't get sick or shot.

ISMISTS AND THEIR ISMS

Whether a by-product of the foreseen Singularity Event or merely one wave within the popular generational cycle theory, radicalism is on the rise. Bloggers and scholars for the last decade have noted an increase in membership in so-called religious fundamentalism, cult participation, and secular radicalism as well. In particular, many sight the increase in political and religious terrorism in places like the Central Africa Union, China, the Great Lakes Union, and Iran; places that traditionally had seen a strong degree of social solidarity, if not outright homogeneity. Likewise, church attendance in the North American Coalition (NAC for short) has continued to rise since the second civil war.

Some hold that Argentina's recent decline in religiosity, (in particular the decline of fundamentalist Evangelicalism) in wake of it and Brazil's ongoing cold war with China, runs counter to the trend. Skeptics, however, point out the apparent zeal with which many in the country and its neighbors have started taking to the prospect of constructing a "Great New Society." These doubters claim it is merely a case of trading one ism for another.

Beyond more mainstream isms, there also seems to be a rise in the amount of so-called cult activity. Media researchers have seen on average a 32% increase in the amount of fringe religious activity, in particular apocalypse-related cults such as the Thuggee in India, transcendence cults like the trans-humanist Althadians, and omega cults dedicated to artificial intelligences. Some say this is in part due to an increase in planned communities and so-called rose-colored filters. They point to the fact that the more a person is exposed to the same set of memes (just the memes they want to hear), the narrower and more extreme that person's world view becomes in relation to the rest of reality.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

In 2090, local law enforcement is largely an entrepreneurial activity. While most nations across the world maintain big brother agencies such as the FBI, KGB, MI-5, The People's Armed Police (or PAP), New Brasilia's Polícia Federal, India's Ministry of Home Affairs (MIHA for short), the Texas Rangers, and world-spanning organizations like Stopwatch, these groups rarely get involved with the complexities of policing a given megasprawl at the street level. That grim responsibility falls squarely on the shoulders of individual cities.

Rather than spending millions to train, equip and maintain traditional law enforcement agencies, many cities choose to hire security firms to maintain law and order. The privatization of law enforcement agencies has proven to be a double-edged sword, however.

On one hand, the people who security agencies employ tend to be highly motivated, well-trained individuals. Continued employment with the security firm depends on it. Mega-corporations and city contractors pay well for the protection firms such as Ravenlocke Securities provide, and expect nothing less than stellar performance. Security firms who fail to deliver on their promises do not last long in this industry.

On the other hand, these mercenary security firms are free to choose which contracts they take and which ones they do not. This often means one sector in a given sprawl may have excellent protection and another sector very little, if any at all. Furthermore, competition for contracts is cutthroat. Security firms have been known to go to war with competitors, even to the point of killing civilians under the protection of rival firms in an effort to undermine their contracts.

Some cities find that a bounty system is a good way to augment the services security firms provide. Bounty hunters tend to be hard core individuals who go wherever they have to and do whatever it takes to get their mark. While a bounty system does not provide continued security, it does tend to get the more violent offenders off the streets.

POVERTY

If you don't have the cash, clout, luck, or the right genes to rise above the masses, you can look forward to a daily grind filled with acid rain, smog, traffic jams, overpriced, roach-infested squats, vat food, roving ganglanders, strung-out pharma-junkies and other critters—some of them people—that look like they were vat-grown in a back-alley splicer lab.

In short, welcome to life for the rest of us.

With all of the advances in agriculture, medicine and technology over the past century, you'd think that people would find a way to cure poverty. The cold hard truth, however, is that people who could fix the problem choose not to. Partly because it's expensive, but mostly; they just don't care.

The middle class of the early 21st century has all but disappeared. Nowadays, you're either rich or poor. It's hard to keep a good paying job when some corporate slag builds a robot capable of working 24 hours a day for no pay, no benefits and negligible repair costs.

Inevitably, people out of work and unable to feed their families, turn to crime as a means for survival, because inflation means Federal Allowance Payments (FAPS for short) barely keep the electricity and NUTRImachines on. Burbs that were once great places to live devolve into ghettos. Businesses shut down as ganglanders move in and wage war for control of a piece of concrete, further devaluing the property and assuring no new businesses will move into these demilitarized "red" sectors.

Of course, the average citizen is caught in the middle of the daily violence because they're too poor to move anywhere else. The rich don't care. In fact, they blame the poor, ignorantly assuming that these unfortunate souls choose to live in these conditions. Politicians don't care. Poor people don't vote, in the countries where they CAN vote, that is.

City officials don't care. Their budgets don't allow for added security in crime-ridden sectors that might as well be demilitarized zones. Better to protect the affluent sectors where the average citizen would rather make a nice campaign



contribution than fund a costly neighborhood revitalization project that will probably fail anyway.

#Power_to_the_Predators: What the author fails to mention is there's money to be made by keeping the status-quo. Corrupt city officials often strike deals with street gangs, keeping the law out of these sectors in exchange for a cut of their profits. Better to watch out for yourself these days.

#Simba: There's a growing number of ronin who have gone vigilante, taking down gangs who prey on the average blooper. Gives me hope for the future.

#Power_to_the_Predators: Hope's for suckers.

THE COLONIZATION OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

The past fifty years have seen humanity boldly push beyond the confines of planet earth to live in the frigid depths of outer space. People from all walks of life live in a variety of environments ranging from orbital habitats, crater cities on the moon, vast underground complexes on Mars, mining colonies on The Belt (The asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter) and most recently settlements on the Galilean moons of Callisto, Io, Europa and Ganymede.

The first colonies and habitats were constructed by various world governments—primarily China and Brasilia, with the United States a distant third—and peopled with scientists, government personnel and simulacrum decanted for labor and recreational purposes. As these fledgling colonies and habitats grew more stable, they expanded to accommodate civilian settlers. Mega-corporations, recognizing space exploration as a lucrative emerging market, scrambled to obtain government contracts for a variety of functions including (but not limited to) all aspects of spaceship design and construction, cargo/personnel transport, and mining operations.

Thanks to the development of the VASMIR III propulsion engine, the time it takes to travel to the Jovian moons and all points in between has been cut to a

mere two to three weeks rather than the seven or eight months it used to take. In 2090, people who wish to leave the Earth behind can travel throughout the solar system, choosing to live in a variety of orbital habits and colonies on the moon, Mars, the Jovian moons of Callisto, Europa, Io, and Ganymede. For those who do shadow work, there are opportunities aplenty working to further the interests of mega-corporations who vie for control of the vital air and water markets.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE PSION

As if life in 2090 weren't strange enough, now we got people who for as of yet unknown reasons, have begun to manifest what can only be termed supernatural abilities. Some people call them awakened, or psychics. Others call them freaks, mind benders, zeeks and any other number of offensive names, but the "official" term is Psion.

Nobody really knows why the zeeks are the way they are. Some people say they are a new breed of human, created in some secret lab. Some technophobes insist the TAP has awakened parts of the brain that allow for this kind of phenomena to take place. Other, more paranoid folks claim psychics are the result of military experiments to create a new type of soldier. Sounds scary, but it could be true. Many psions display some freakish abilities. People claim to have seen zeeks move cars with their minds and knock a person back thirty feet with nothing more than a hand gesture. Of course, nobody can forget the incident in Spain last January when Hernando Vasquez torched the NAC embassy complex in Madrid, killing 61 people and injuring 40 others.

The media feed shows the freaker walking right into the building, just looking around, as calm as you please...Except everywhere he looked, people started bursting into flame. Desks and chairs exploded into bits of flaming debris. Duraplastic windows melted. Sprinkler systems activated, but the water evaporated before it touched the floor. Eventually, the main building and many of the smaller buildings in the complex

burned down. That was the breaking point for many people around the world.

Before Madrid, people were content to view the zeeks as yet another by product of this crazy world we live in. When you can walk down the street and see robots and people who are literally part bear and part human, when you can interface with a computer network inside your brain, leave your body and go ghosting through The Deep, it's not much of a stretch to accept that some people can move things with their mind, or even more disturbing; read your thoughts. The thing is, before Madrid, none of these psions ever killed someone. Well, not the way Hernando did, at least.

Sure, you had incidents—muggings, robberies, and even reports of bizarre killings. But authorities (to their credit, for once), not wanting to stir up a panic, simply chalked the killings up to the cost of living life in this brave new world. "People die all the time," they'd say, "Some in truly brutal ways that have nothing to do with alleged psychic powers," and they were right. Nevertheless, after Madrid, things changed. Hate crimes against suspected zeeks spiked dramatically in the days and weeks after the attack as grisly images of the burned bodies and wreckage from the ruined NAC embassy streamed across the Media Web in Hi-definition video 24hrs a day. The images of the attack played out as sidebars on news segments like "Chi-town Today" or the highly biased, pseudo-political commentary media feed, "The Chuck O'Malley Show." Of course, the NAC, in typical uber-fundie, neo-conservative fashion, worked itself into hysteria.

Within weeks the NAC congress had pushed through radical anti-psion legislation, deeming the use of unlicensed psychic abilities a Class-A Felony punishable under law by up to 3 years in a federal prison. On the heels of the much-maligned law, the NAC formed Psi Division; a government agency dedicated to tracking and monitoring the psychic population. Psi division has been busy over the past year, setting up registration facilities and special detainment centers in cities throughout the NAC. Outside the NAC, psions find limited acceptance and manage to live their lives with some measure of

normalcy, even if it is with others of their kind. Indeed, psychic communities exist in various sprawls across the world, much as various ethnic groups tend to live in the same neighborhoods.

THE NOT-SO CASHLESS WORLD

In 2090, the world is (for the most part) a cashless society. A person's financial data is stored in his or her TAP. Each time a person makes a financial transaction she interacts with a HR object that either adds or subtracts the monetary equivalent from her balance. For the average citizen of the world, this arrangement works just fine. For those who do not have TAPs however, making any kind of purchase can be challenging, to say the least. Fortunately, the solution to this problem had been in place all along—credit cards.

People who—for whatever reason—do not have a TAP installed in their head can use a government-issued credit card to conduct financial transactions of all types. Many ronin and criminal organizations have multiple cards under falsified identities to avoid attracting attention to their illicit activities. Hard currency and corporate scrip is also still an option in many nations across the world. The strongest, most dominant currency in the world today is the Chinese Yuan, followed closely by the Brazilian Real and the Japanese Nuyen.

THE RICH AND THE POWERFUL

Those with money, breeding and influence still have all the power. Travel to any nation in the world and it's all the same. Some places are just cleaner than others. Is every leader morally bankrupt, though? Nope... At least not on the Media feed.

The average world leader is primarily interested in maintaining or elevating their standing in the world community. Many, like the CEO of a megacorp, care little about how they reach the bottom line, only that it is reached. They have no problem killing a few thousand people or oppressing a nation to get both what they want and what their constituents have been media-programmed to expect. If they look good in the process, so be it. If they don't... Well, that's what spin-doctors are for, right?



The poor stay poor, and the rich...? Yeah, that's right. Nothing new under the sun here. But what does it really mean to be rich in 2090? How much stuffing do you need in your cloned turkey to make that claim? Back in the day, a few hundred thousand was enough to lift a Joe above the streets and get him a sweet, tricked-out house in some ultra-posh gated community. You know the kind of pad I'm talkin' about Ami; more square footage than a Malmart outlet, a butler for the dog and hot-and-cold running everything. Even the air has been purified, each molecule synthesized to smell and taste like your favorite... Anything. Nowadays, the same amount of money won't even get you a decent condo in a climate-controlled bioplex.

Inflation's a bitch.

These days, even the peeps us blue platers call rich are poor compared to the seriously loaded cabrones who live so high above the stink they don't even know what it smells like. For these mega-rich folks, life is a perfume-laced ride all the way to the bank. Being wealthy in 2090 means you have access to the best of everything; real food (yummy trans-fats and all), nano-filtered water, the finest vehicles, top Edu-facilities, health care and dental plans that don't require a day-long wait in some dark, piss-stained basement below the nearest government-owned MEDplex, if you can even get on the waiting list. And those are just the bare necessities, kiddies.

In the world of 2090, being rich and being powerful go hand in hand. The vast majority of wealth lies in the private sector, particularly with megacorps and the people who run them. With sickening sums of money at their disposal, CEO's and high-level executives have world-spanning political influence.

Indeed, politicians and elected officials representing the myriad of world governments cater to the corporate interests of these individuals in return for financial backing. Even more curiously, the distribution of wealth and power tends to stay with a person or persons for a longer period of time, barring accidental death. Nowadays, the rich can upload their minds into The Deep (or an android or bioform built to house the person's mind) and live

forever. So some greedy CEO who wants to keep his wealth and power can simply dub himself, and everyone who had been hoping to inherit his cash is screwed.

COMPANY DIRECTORY

The following companies are a sample of some of the major Mega-conglomerates fighting for market share today.

Each company is listed with their primary corporate headquarters and primary business interests. Many of these firms have the resources, money of a medium-sized nation-state.

- **Act of God Armaments (Houston, Texas):** Weapon and defense manufacturing
- **Alat Petroleum (Algiers, Algeria):** Petroleum
- **Aquarius Engineering (Atlanta, NAC):** Military Contractor
- **Aufklärungs-Gruppe (Munich, EU):** Multinational Holdings
- **Bank of Afrika (Cape Town, South Afrika):** Finance
- **Bank of Tehran, Iran):** Finance
- **Black Knight (Chicago):** Armaments
- **Chimera (Brasilia, Brazil):** Biomedical
- **Cherry Automotive Corporation (Beijing, China):** Automotive
- **Crisis Team (Osaka, Japan):** High Threat Response Teams
- **Featherstone (Madrid, EU):** Nanotechnology
- **Galaxy Entertainment International (Mumbai, India):** Media
- **Greater Eurasian Telecom (Berlin, EU):** Telecommunications
- **Hanscomb Foods (Evansville, NAC):** Restaurants and food production.
- **Health Group (Seoul, Korea):** Biomedical
- **Holas Telecom (Diego Tijuana, Baja Mexico):** Telecommunications
- **Jata Technology (Niamey, Central African Union):** Software/Cybernetics
- **Jian Foods Group (Pyongyang, Korea):** Biochemical/Food Industry
- **Kensei (Tokyo, Japan):** Electronics/Entertainment
- **Kenta Cyber Dynamics (Tokyo, Japan):** Cybernetics

- **Kim Tau Bioware (Seoul, Korea):** Makers of Biochemical products.
- **Kirlian Technology (Portland, Cascadia):** Computer Hardware developer.
- **Kiwi Motors Automotive Group (Perth, Australia):** Automotive
- **Loftan Chemicals (Boston, Atlantica):** Pharmaceutical
- **Malbrand (Orlando, NAC):** Retail Outlets
- **Nampar Aerospace (formerly Spartus Space) (Chennai, India):** Aerospace
- **Nanda Pharmatech (Kolkata, India):** Pharmaceutical/Biomedical
- **Nova Personnel (Phoenix, Baja Mexico):** Simulacrum
- **Persian Media (Tehran, Iran):** Media
- **Pharm America (Sioux City, NAC):** Biochemical/Food Industry
- **Samba Motors (São Paulo, Brazil):** Automotive
- **Saga Corporation (Copenhagen, EU):** Multinational Holdings
- **Sage It and Technical Systems (Kolkata, India):** Software/Cybernetics
- **Sanjan Tempe Warner Group (Mumbai, India):** Media
- **Sentinel Rock Corporation (Caribbean Economic League):** Armaments
- **SetiBank (London, EU):** Finance
- **St. Dobson Redemption Center (Odyssey, NAC)" Theological/Educational/Media**
- **Sudeki-Whyte (Sydney, Australia):** Armaments
- **Third Life Innovations (Johannesburg, South Afrika):** Genetics Research/Development
- **Urban Punk (Free City of Chicago):** Armored clothing with a "street" flair.
- **Wasteland Traders (Free City of Las Vegas):** Body armor, outdoor supplies, weapons, vehicles.

Android: An Artificial Intelligence housed in a completely metal body.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Programs that appear to be or actually are self-aware. Als can be either sub sentient, meaning they are adaptive, but not actually sentient, or fully sentient and therefore self-aware.

Atlantica: A nation created out of FEMA regions One and Two and parts of region Three.

Augmentation: Also known as augments, or cyberware, augmentations are cybernetic enhancements to a human body. Examples include enhanced reflexes, cyber eyes, cyber arms, and armored skin.

Banger: A violent person affiliated with a gang.

Bioform: A synthetic body created to house a Dub of someone else's mind. Bioforms can come in all shapes and sizes. There are also emerging bioforms in other countries that resemble non-human creatures.

Bioroid: A synthetic human with a metal casing housing an AI brain. See Cyberform.

Black Hat: A hacker who uses his computer skills for "criminal," destructive or selfish purposes.

Blue Plater: Working class citizens. Also known as "bloopers".

Brainer: A technologically proficient or intelligent person; in particular one who works on computers.

Bounty heads: Wanted suspects and criminals with bounties placed on them.

Chrome Reaper: Someone who engages in the practice of stealing cyberware from people to sell at a body chop shop.

Contractor: A person who hires Ronin and other deniable assets to do special jobs. See Fixer.

Crashing: A violent hacking attack on various system networks designed to disrupt operations and take the network off-line.

Cribsec: A sprawler's home sector; the place he or she grew up.

Cyberform: A completely artificial shell used to house an AI. Many are humanoid in shape.

Cybermonk: A person who uses cybernetics to enhance martial art forms. Most eschew the use of firearms.



LEXICON

The following is a list of terms common to *Interface Zero*. This list is not exhaustive.

Ami: Japanese term for friend or pal.

App: Short for Application. APPS run on a person's Tendril Access Processor. Most are limited in function. Examples include Navigation APPS, Translator APPS, REAL-chat APPS, etc.

Deniable Asset: A person who performs dangerous and often illegal services.

Deep, The: Another name for the virtual aspect of the Global DataNet, or MediaWeb. The virtual world. There are many metaphorical uses of the word comparing the network to the ocean. One can: "dive into The Deep," "surf the net," "swim through media," "create waves," etc.

Derezz: The act of disrupting or severing a person's or object's virtual interface—avatar—from the Deep.

Divers: Those who plumb the Global DataNet and the Deep for information. Net surfers.

Drone: A remotely controlled vehicle used for a variety of functions, especially combat. Some drones are autonomous.

Drone Jockey: Someone who makes a living piloting drones.

Dry Spot: A geographic location without much in the way of connection to the Global DataNet or the Deep.

Dubbing: The process of digitizing a person's consciousness for download into a new bioform.

Emancipated AI: An artificial intelligence that has obtained official government recognition as a sentient being. This status generally comes with official citizenship and some or all of the rights afforded humans within the region that offers such recognition.

Engram: A computer program. See APPS, Programs, and Sprites for more information.

Fixer: A person who specializes in getting people what they need, whether through legal or illegal means.

Gangland: A lawless section of the sprawl dominated by street gangs.

Gangler: A person (usually a member of gang) who lives in section of gang-controlled urban sprawl.

Gene-splicing: The act and science of splicing the genetic code of humans and animals.

Global DataNet: The "internet" of 2090.

Golemmech: Cybernetic power armor, or robots, usually vehicle size or larger. Golemmechs are used extensively for construction, rescue, and military purposes.

Gray Hat: A hacker who uses his computer skills for morally gray or neutral purposes.

Great Lakes Union: The GLU is made up of former FEMA region Five, and parts of Four and Seven.

Gun-fu Artist: A martial adept who specializes in gun-play.

Hacker: A person skilled in computer use.

Human 2.0: Humans who have undergone embryonic genetic upgrades to the point that they are considered a different species of human. In general, they are more intelligent and physically resilient than basic humans. Most members of the New Mandarinate are Human 2.0.

Hyper Reality (HR): Also known as augmented reality or hyper-linked reality. Hyper Reality is the digital overlay of the real world, used to enhance all aspects of daily life.

Hybrid: A person who has undergone gene-splicing therapies involving animal DNA. The term refers to any human who has undergone such therapy, but in practice, it is used most often to describe those individuals who still appear passably human. Hybrids that cannot pass for unaltered humans are called chimeras.

Icon: A media star.

Ism: A philosophy, cause, or religion; usually a radical one.

Ismist: A radical. One who follows an "Ism." Also anyone who follows an ideal.

Jump Systems: JUMP systems are thrusters that launch a vehicle into the air for short distances. JUMP bikes make use of this technology.

Martial Adept: A person who is extensively trained in one of many stylized martial arts forms, including mental discipline and biofeedback techniques.

Mediaweb: Another name for the Global DataNet or The Deep. The interactive virtual world.

Meme: A discrete pack of cultural information. Memes, like viral agents, can be infectious.

Nano Assembler: A device used to reconfigure matter from one form into another.

Negotiator: One who "negotiates the sprawl." Any person who makes their living on the fringe of law-abiding society. Most often used to refer to bounty hunters, fences, fixers, mediators, operators, and private investigators.



n00b: Derogatory term for anyone so new to something they do things commonly seen as stupid by more experienced people. Usually aimed at hackers, though others can be n00bs as well.

North American Coalition: Comprised of FEMA regions 8, 4 and the western part of 7, The NAC makes up the bulk of the former United States and Canada. The NAC (also known as the Coalition of Willing Christian States or simply the Coalition), is a theocratic plutocracy, ruling over a puppet government.

Neko: A person who has undergone cosmetic surgery or superficial gene-splicing for purely aesthetic reasons, in order to look more like an anthropomorphic animal. Alternately known as either a furry or an anthro. Often confused with so-called true hybrids or chimeras.

Omae: A way of saying "you" in Japanese. Some people use it for friend, though it's generally regarded as a disrespectful way of saying "you."

Personal Reality: The reality a person experiences through their Hyper Reality filter preferences.

Psion: Someone who is able to use supernatural abilities such as telekinesis or ESP.

Rover: A person who makes their permanent residence aboard a ship, or other artificial habitat at sea (in particular the Pacific, Indian, and Southern Oceans). Most Rovers hail from Oceania, India, or the Far East, with a significant minority coming from the western coast of the Americas.

Scavenger: A person who combs old ruins, wastelands and junk heaps for salvageable technology.

Script Kiddie: A newbie hacker or wannabe without any real knowledge of programming who uses code written by someone else.

Simulacrum: Also known as, replicants, or bioforms. Artificial life forms used as tools by mankind.

Singularity: A point in the near future when dramatic advances in technology or AI programming out-pace human understanding, possibly leading to the extinction of the species or a dramatic evolutionary leap. By its very nature, the ultimate form and effect of the singularity are unknown.

Sprawl: A heavily urbanized area, often used to refer to "bad" or dangerous neighborhoods.

Sprawlander: A person who lives in the urban sprawl. Also known as Sprawlers.

Sprite: Autonomous, semi-intelligent engrams that act independently of the user.

Sword Sage: A martial adept specializing in sword fighting.

TAP: Tendril Access Processor (so named for its three component parts: tendril-like brain filaments, the access chip, and a Wi-Fi signal processor and booster), a brain-mounted nano device enabling a user to interface with the hyper-real world.

Vtol: Vertical Take Off and Landing. Allows a vehicle to Hover, take off, and land vertically. This technology is in wide use in 2090.

Virtual Reality (VR): Computer generated interactive images.

Wasteland: A geographic region hostile to human life. This includes deserts, barrens, radiation zones, former toxic landfills, bomb sites, Arctic regions, and ruins located in such areas.

Wastelander: A person who lives in a wasteland or ruin. Also known as Wasters.

Zeek: Derogatory term for a psion. Bastardization of psychic. The term first came into use in Blood Throne Online Global chat-1 in the sub-realm of Thorongar when Sporkface236 misspelled the word psychic. He typed zeekic instead, claiming "that ees how eet sound in me head." The term was shortened to zeek and eventually turned into a viral meme. Silly n00b.

Zero: A person who lives in an orbital habitat, or on one of the colonies throughout the solar system.

PLAYING INTERFACE ZERO

This version of *Interface Zero* uses the *Fate Core* role-playing rules with a few extras to help you tell stories in the dystopian world of the 2090s:

Your race and occupation help you choose your aspects and restrict some character options. See Races (page 54) and Occupations (page 61).

Interface Zero makes the following changes to the standard *Fate Core* skill list:

- Lore becomes Academics.
- Crafts becomes Tech.
- Drive becomes Pilot.
- Add Hack.
- Add Survival.

See Skills on page 74 for more details.

If you acquire cybernetic or biological augmentations, you must keep track of Strain: see Augmentations (page 168). As you gain and spend money, you collect payments and suffer resource consequences: see Money (page 91).

You can obtain equipment such as weapons, armor, tools, and medical supplies. See the Malmart Catalog (page 124) to find out how to get equipment and what it does for you.

As a zeek or cybermonk you'll have special skills and stunts that are unavailable to other characters. Read about these character types in Psionics (page 113) and Cybermonks (page 91).

The Hacking section (page 104) shows how you can take control of everything from the surveillance camera on the corner to the high-security financial databases of the big corporations downtown. The Drones and Rigging section (page 119) gives you remotely piloted vehicles for surveillance, combat, or any other mischief you have in mind. The Powered Armor and Golemmechs section of the Malmart Catalog (page 192) puts you in the cockpit of the colossal walking war machine you've always wanted. GMs, to help plan out the territory where you'll



be telling your stories, see Locations and Organizations (page 209).

FATE CRASH COURSE

If you're new to Fate and you can't wait to get started, here are the basics. GMs, you'll need to understand the full *Fate Core* rules before running a game.

THE FOUR ACTIONS

Everything you can do in Fate is represented by one of four actions:

 **Overcome:** Accomplish something when there's an obstacle in the way, whether concrete or more abstract.

 **Create an Advantage:** Arrange or discover something that will tilt the odds in your favor.

 **Attack:** Try to inflict harm on someone or something.

 **Defend:** Try to prevent an opponent from attacking you or otherwise making your life difficult.

Example: Amy's character, Malice, wants to jump out of a skyscraper window and land on a flying limousine. This is an overcome action.

SKILLS, DICE, AND THE LADDER

Skills represent your character's ability to accomplish challenging tasks in the game. Each skill is rated using the Fate ladder, which appears in the chart.

Example: Amy looks at Malice's character sheet to see what skill might help her leap onto the limousine. She sees that Malice has Fair (+2) Athletics.

Whenever you want to do something that could fail, and failure would be dramatically interesting, you pick the skill that's appropriate for the activity and the action type that best describes what you're trying to do. Then you pick up the dice. Each Fate die has two  faces, two  faces, and two  faces. Each  gives +1, each  adds nothing, and each

THE FATE LADDER

DESCRIPTION	VALUE
Legendary	+8
Epic	+7
Fantastic	+6
Superb	+5
Great	+4
Good	+3
Fair	+2
Average	+1
Mediocre	+0
Poor	-1
Terrible	-2
Abysmal	-3

 gives -1, meaning you can roll from -4 to +4.

Example: If you roll , your result is +1. If you roll , your result is -2.

If you don't have Fate dice, you can roll four six-sided dice and count each 1-2 as a , each 3-4 as a , and each 5-6 as a . Alternatively, if the group agrees, everyone can roll two six-sided dice and subtract one from the other. This gives a range from -5 to +5 with slightly different probabilities, but it'll do the job.

After rolling the dice, add the result to your skill rank, and look up the result on the ladder.

Example: Malice jumps towards the limousine. Amy picks up the dice and rolls  or +1. Adding this to her Athletics skill rank of Fair (+2), that's a Good (+3) jump. Hopefully that's enough to reach the limo...

OPPOSITION AND OUTCOME

When you take an action and roll the dice to find out what happens, you compare the result of your roll to the level of opposition. If your obstacle is part of the environment, or is an unimportant background character, your action faces passive opposition, which is a fixed number. In contrast, if an important character gets in the way of your action, they can use one of their skills to provide active opposition instead, rolling against you.

If you attack or create an advantage against someone, they oppose with a defend roll.

There are four possible outcomes to any roll:

- You **fail** if your result is less than the opposition.
- You **tie** if your result is equal to the opposition.
- You **succeed** if your result is greater than the opposition.
- You **succeed with style** if your result is three or more greater than the opposition.

Example: Malice made a Good (+3) jump to reach the limousine passing the skyscraper. Unfortunately, before Alice rolled the dice, the GM decided the passive opposition was Fantastic (+6). It's a far jump, and a moving target at that. Since Malice rolled less than the opposition, she fails. Things aren't looking good...

For details of the four outcomes for each action, see *Fate Core* (pages 132–143).

ASPECTS

Aspects are important facts that sometimes work in your favor, and sometimes work against you.

As a famous singer you might have the aspect **Pop Music Idol**. You have fans everywhere who'll do just about anything you ask, but the media will constantly invade your privacy and make up lies about you.

The street you're on might be **Overcrowded**, or the alley you're running through might be **Dark and Deserted**.

Equipment can also provide aspects: you might hunt criminals with your **Cyberchromium Rat .75 Pistol** or see in the dark using your **Multi-Optics Goggles**.

*Example: Malice tends to make reckless gambles that usually—but not always—pay off. She has the aspect **Act First, Think Later** to represent this. Since she jumped out of the window without considering whether she'd be able to reach that limousine, her aspect might help her in this case, but she'll*

FATE'S "BRONZE RULE"

In Fate, anything can be a character. If the building your character is in is on fire, the flames can provide active opposition to your attempts to find an exit or even attack you while you rush from room to room.

need to spend a fate point as explained in the next section.

FATE POINTS

When you think an aspect would help you accomplish a task, you can spend a fate point to invoke that aspect. This could be one of your character's aspects, or another character's aspect, or an aspect available somewhere in the scene. Invoking an aspect lets you choose one of several benefits, such as a +2 bonus to your roll or a complete re-roll of the dice.

*Example: Amy spends one of her fate points to invoke Malice's **Act First, Think Later** aspect. She chooses to add +2 to her roll, giving her a total of Superb (+5). She's close to reaching that limo, but not close enough...*

You receive a certain number of fate points every game session, and you earn a fate point when something related to one of your aspects dramatically complicates the story.

Sometimes you can invoke an aspect for free. Usually you earn a free invoke on an aspect when you create an advantage. Throughout the *Interface Zero* rules, you'll find a few more ways to earn free invokes.

ASPECTS ARE ALWAYS TRUE

An aspect describes a fact in the game world, and it should affect your story accordingly, even if no one explicitly invokes the aspect. If you're carrying a **BK-616 Rifle**, you can use it to shoot someone, even if you don't invoke it. If you do invoke the aspect, you could also add +2 to your attack roll or re-roll the attack.

CALLING OUT ASPECTS

In this book, aspects are bolded and italicized so that you can easily identify them. For instance, if the text says that Dimitri is a **Cynical Mercenary** who **Fears Authority** and has a **Virtual Reality Addiction**, you know that these three character details are aspects that you can invoke or compel.

STUNTS

You will also have a few stunts, which are tricks, talents, and quirks that help you in certain situations. You can find lists of sample stunts both here in *Interface Zero* and in the *Fate Core* rules, or you can make up your own.

Example: Malice has the Hardcore Parkour stunt, which gives her a +2 bonus to Athletics for dangerous leaps. Along with the bonus from invoking her aspect, this increases her result to Epic (+7). This is one step higher than the Fantastic (+6) opposition, so she succeeds! Malice lands on top of the limousine's cockpit, pistol in hand, and signals the surprised pilot to take her safely to the ground.

THE GOLDEN RULE

GMs, the *Fate Core* rules give plenty of guidance on keeping the game full of drama and conflict. The most important rule—the Golden Rule of Fate—is to think about the story first and the rules second. In other words, determine what the players are trying to accomplish before picking up the dice.

If a player says “I kick the security guard,” that sounds like an attack action. But if she intends to slow the guard down rather than injure him, she’s actually trying to

create an advantage like **Flat On My Face**. If a player says, “I grab the zeek,” she might be trying to create an advantage. However, she might not be trying to do an action at all; she might just want to actively oppose the zeek’s attempt to move away. Once you get a clear idea of the player’s intent, it’s easier to choose which of the four actions (if any) is most appropriate.

CHARACTER ASPECTS

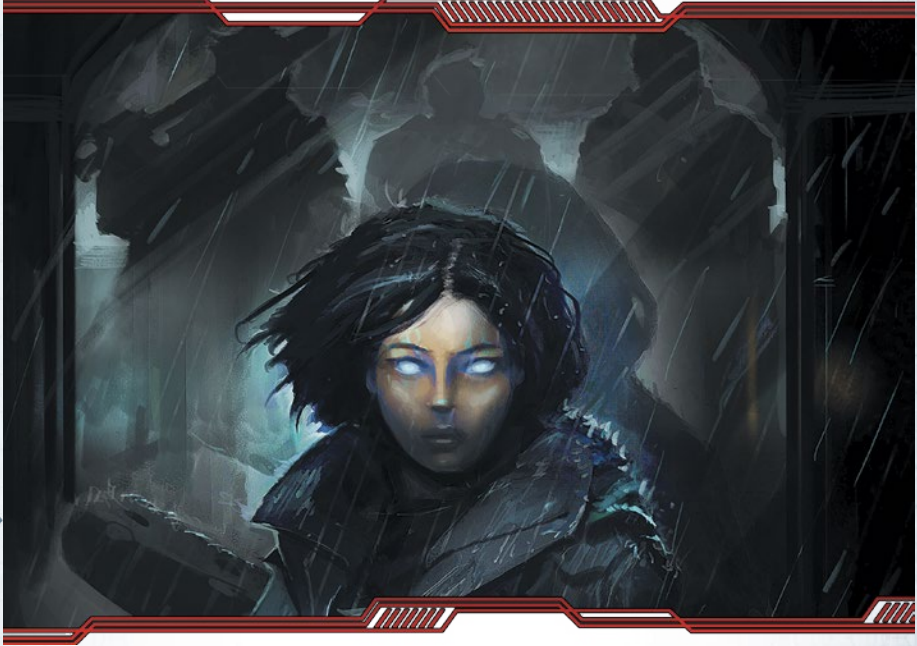
Players, when you’re creating your character, think about what you want her story to be about. Is she an idealistic hero, fighting back against the faceless authority of the mega-corporations? Is she a grim mercenary, biding her time until she can confront and kill the man who ruined her life? Is she a relentless investigator, haunted by the memory of the woman she once loved—who disappeared without a trace five years ago? When you choose your character’s aspects, you’re telling the group what kind of story she’s living, and what kind of trouble you’d like to see her get into.

GMs, use your group’s characters and their aspects for inspiration when preparing adventures. When the group tracks down the hacker they’ve been hired to assassinate, she’s an ex-lover of the group’s bounty hunter! When a pack of toughs ambushes the group’s van, it’s the street gang that swore to kill your group’s zeek for a past offense! Make their troubles personal. Confront them with hard decisions. Why run another impersonal extraction mission when you can facilitate a story of secrets and betrayal?

Those are the basics. Now check your ammo, run diagnostics on your cyber arm, and hit the streets. It’s go time!

REPUTATION ASPECTS

With the GM’s approval, you can choose an aspect other than your high concept or trouble aspect to be a reputation aspect. This aspect shows how the world perceives you. For example, people might see you as a **Bloodthirsty Gang Leader** or a **Principled Journalist**. Whenever you reach a milestone (*Fate Core*, page 256) you and your GM should review what’s happened in the story to decide whether your reputation has changed, and if so, you should rewrite your reputation aspect accordingly. If you were caught accepting a bribe from a corporation, for instance, your reputation might change from **Principled Journalist** to **Corrupt Corporate Shill**.



SETTING ASPECTS

When creating a game, the Fate rules recommend choosing a couple of aspects that apply to the entire world. These setting aspects call out themes and issues that will come up regularly as you play, making your game of *Interface Zero* different from everyone else's. Here are a few suggestions for setting aspects, along with some situations when you'd invoke and compel them.

NOIR ASPECTS

The film noir genre tells stories that are set in shadows, far from the bright lights of innocence and justice. Noir characters must find their own paths, choosing the meaning of right and wrong, weighing the values of success, loyalty, and revenge. The darkness is a place of deception and whispers, where a word, a wink, or a handshake can mean life or death.

When there is violence, it is quick and final, and a single gunshot in an alley can be the end of the story...or the beginning of another.

TRUST NO ONE

Everyone has a secret. The client who hired you for a quick surveillance job. The delivery kid who brought you noodles from Mama Ling-Ling's. The homeless woman in the street who begged you for a handout. The man you woke up in bed with this morning. If you believe what someone tells you willingly, you're handing that person a knife and offering your throat. And the day you start telling the truth is the day the police turn in your corpse for organ recycling.

Invoke: When you're telling a lie or trying to find the truth behind someone else's lie.

Compel: Something you believe suddenly turns out to be false, leaving you facing a whole new set of problems.

CASH RULES EVERYTHING AROUND ME

You know what the difference is between the pusher selling Black Tar from that alley and the pharmaceutical executive at the top of that skyscraper? Nothing but the size of their paychecks. Designer clothes, elite security, luxury VTOLs, uncrackable data fortresses: all bought and paid for. Talent? Experience? Loyalty? All available for the right price. Everything's for sale in this world—including you, my friend.



Invoke: When you're using money to make an obstacle go away. This can include bribing someone to do what they shouldn't, or hiring someone to do what you can't.

Compel: Someone offers to pay you to perform a task against your better judgment.

CULTURE SHOCK ASPECTS

A key element of the cyberpunk genre is the triumph of technology over humanity, and of progress and novelty over morality and common sense. Whereas the authors of the golden age of science fiction foresaw a future where humanity used science to create a utopia, cyberpunk authors showed us a future where untamed technology created chaos and oppression.

HUMANITY IS OBSOLETE

Technology has unshackled us from the rules of biology and the limits of evolution. The people you pass in the street might have been born, or they might have walked off an assembly line, or out of a bioengineering vat. If you're a plain vanilla human, you can try to make up the difference by augmenting yourself with nanotech or cyberware, but the simple fact is that you're obsolete. On the other hand, if you're one of the new breed, the future already belongs to you—what will you do with the remnants of Humanity 1.0?

Invoke: When you use an engineered or non-human ability—cybertech, genetic enhancements, zeek powers—against an ordinary human.

Compel: Pro-human or anti-human sentiment presents a serious obstacle.

THE DIGITAL WORLD IS THE TRUE WORLD

Data is the medium in which power swims. Whenever a CEO buys out her competitor's stock, whenever a national president issues a kill order, whenever a terrorist sends a "go" signal to his

comrades, nothing happens until data starts flowing. Most regular people aren't much more than bits in a machine—every aspect of their lives is recorded in databases and analyzed by algorithms. When you control those databases and algorithms, you control everything.

Invoke: When you're hacking, or when you're engaged in any task that involves collecting, analyzing, or dealing data.

Compel: You encounter a threat from cyberspace, such as a revoked credit account, a TAP virus, or a suspicious cyber-surveillance team.

FIGHT THE POWER ASPECTS

Many dystopian stories are about the conflict between the individual and the collective, and whether free will can survive the conformity demanded by governments and corporations. An idealistic story asks how the individual can either escape or transform society. A pessimistic story measures the time until rebellion finally dies.

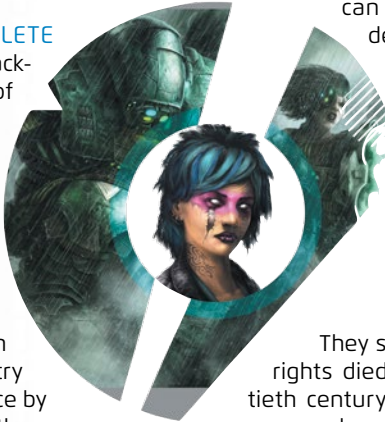
THE REVOLUTION WILL BE LIVE-STREAMED

They say that the idea of human rights died at the end of the twentieth century. They say all the world's power and money is controlled by the ultra-elite, the top one percent of the top one percent.

They say that the rest of us are just statistics and disposable labor, and there's nothing anyone can do about it. Maybe they're right. Or maybe all it takes is the right people, in the right place, at the right time to bring down the power structure that holds us all prisoner. Maybe all it takes is one act of defiance. Or one speech. Or one song. Or one bullet.

Invoke: When you perform an act of altruism and self-sacrifice.

Compel: An entity much more powerful than you—a corporation, a government, a criminal syndicate—uses its substantial power to drop you into a world of hurt.



THEY OWN YOU

The moment you joined "The Company" (whether a corporation, a government agency, or a crime syndicate) you became someone else's property. The Company decides where you work, where you sleep, how much you earn, how much you learn, and how you spend every day of your life.

If you're injured or ill, the Company decides what sort of treatment you'll receive, if any. If you excel, the Company chooses your reward; if you disappoint, the Company delivers your punishment. The Company decides whether you'll be sampling haute cuisine alongside well-dressed power players, or eating synthetic kibble in a rotting, overcrowded dormitory. And if you decide you're done with the Company, the Company gets to decide whether to imprison or kill you.

Invoke: When you want to use your organization's assets or resources for your own benefit.

Compel: An organization that holds power over you demands that you perform a task you would rather avoid.

FATE OF THE WORLD ASPECTS

The missions and contracts you accept might be about more than a paycheck. Every acquisition, every assassination, every extraction might decide the winners and losers of global conflicts. If you had a video file that would end the career of a CEO, or an encryption key that would expose the weaknesses of an army, or a discovery that would upend the world economy, how would you use it? Whose cause would you support? What future would you build?

WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS

China and Russia are struggling for dominance of East Asia. The fires of insurrection burn throughout France. The Martian colonies are eyeing each other and sharpening their knives. Every war starts with the promise of change, and ends with the promise of peace, but both are lies. Power changes hands, and the entitled become the aggrieved. Alliances shift, plots develop, and it all starts over again. The only true winners are the corporations

that sell the weapons, and the highly paid mercenaries who use them.

Invoke: When acting within a conflict between two powerful organizations.

Compel: The collateral damage of a conflict catches you off guard, trapping you in the middle of a firefight, an armed occupation, a cyber-warfare strike, or a similar hazard.

THE LAST FRONTIER

Earth is a lost cause. We've poisoned the skies and oceans, we've obliterated countless species, and we've paved over everything that was once green and fertile.

We've released plagues and nanotech swarms that are breeding and mutating in hidden corners of the world, awaiting only the right circumstance to break out and destroy everything living.

Our only chance of survival is to climb out of Earth's gravity well and soar to the distant planets and stars, where we can start again, and again, and again, until we finally defeat our own worst instincts and transcend to immortality.

Invoke: When using equipment specific to space travel, such as shuttle-craft or space suits.

Compel: One of the unique hazards of space travel makes an unexpected appearance, such as a meteor strike, a solar flare, or an oxygen leak.

THE WAR AGAINST CHARON

You don't have to look hard to find people who'll tell you that the path of humanity's scientific progress is just a long walk to the gallows. They'll tell you that our greedy, childish tinkering with technologies such as genetic engineering, nanotech, and subatomic physics will eventually produce something we can't control.

Others will tell you that this has already happened, and that our destroyer's name is Charon. Sure, maybe the AI super-virus died out in 2089 and all we're seeing now are fragments and echoes. Maybe Stopwatch has it under control, and we can all just go back to bed. But maybe not. Maybe Charon is everywhere. Maybe it's in our networks and databases, and in our satellites, and in our off-Earth colonies. Maybe

it's in your car, and in your apartment, and maybe it's in you.

Maybe Charon has already beaten us. Or maybe we still have a chance for survival. The question is: what are you going to do about it?

Invoke: When you strike against Charon or any of its allies, including its independent AI offspring and its deranged human disciples.

Compel: When Charon attacks unexpectedly, wiping out your finances, or crippling the subway you're riding, or shutting down your whole city and leaving you trapped in an inferno of panic and riots. After all, it happened in Phoenix.

BIG SCREEN ASPECTS

Interface Zero has everything you need to play out your own action movie: Guns. Cybernetic soldiers. Colossal cityscapes. Flying cars. Guns. Tiger warriors. Telekinetic freaks. Giant robots. Did I mention the guns? If this is the kind of game you crave, turn everything up to eleven and break off the knobs.

NEVER STOP

A bold plan now is better than a neatly arranged plan later. Don't negotiate when you can charge in, guns blazing. Don't let that armored transport escape when you can jump on the roof with a fistful of plastic explosives. Don't wait for backup if you're surrounded by twenty gun-toting killers and all you have is a katana. Even if you fail, you'll look amazing doing it.

Invoke: When you do something risky and dramatic without pausing to plan or discuss it.

Compel: When you get bored with the team's quiet planning, you get things moving again by trying something reckless that puts your entire crew in danger. Or when a team of cyber-ninjas appears and attacks the players for no obvious reason. GMs, you can wait until later to figure out

where the ninjas came from and why they showed up.

BOOM!

There are few problems you can't fix with high explosives. Reinforced security door? Corporate strike team? Military-class combat drone? Warehouse filled with drug-crazed gang members? Pesky hacker with too much information and too little discretion? Don't sweat it. Peace of mind is just a single detonation away.

Invoke: When you're trying to blow something up. And if you're not trying to blow something up...well, why not?

Compel: Your lives are complicated by an explosion. If the team gets into an armored limousine, someone has wired a bomb under the driver's seat. If you walk into an ambush, you'll find tripwires and detonators. The bad guys deliver a drive-by shooting using a rocket launcher instead of a submachine gun.

SEX SELLS

All eyes are on the agent as he rises from the pool, water cascading down his taut, muscular flanks; nobody notices the weapon he's packing in the small of his back because of his other...armaments. The executive leans forwards at a key point in the negotiation, flustering the opposition with her décolletage. With this aspect, the "sex" half of "sex and violence" in your game is cranked to the max.

Invoke: When you use sex or sexuality to gain the upper hand. Maybe you distract an opponent by sexily blowing the smoke off your gun muzzle while tipping them a wink; maybe you strangle someone to death with your bare thighs.

Compel: When you meet someone—or something—that revs your engine and cranks your gears so you do something dumb, or you act in a sexualized way that ultimately backfires.



CHARACTER CREATION

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

This chapter provides the tools you need to make a character for *Interface Zero 2.0*. The process is the same as creating a character for your *Fate Core* game.

CAMPAIGN POWER LEVEL

Not all characters are created equal. Your group must decide the scope of the campaign and the power level of your characters. Will you be gutter punks struggling to scrape together the rent and committing desperate crimes to make ends meet, or will you be elite operatives with the best equipment and augments money can buy? We suggest trying one of these standard power levels until you're comfortable with tweaking the numbers yourselves.

In addition to the augments provided at each of these power levels, you also begin with a Tendril Access Probe (TAP), which gives you a direct neural link to the Global DataNet and the ability to interact with

modern computer systems. If you don't have a TAP, you're one of the unlucky few Unplugged and need to reflect this in one of your aspects. For more on TAPs, the Global DataNet, and their uses, see Hacking on page 104.

You don't have to use all of your Gear and Resources purchases. Any you don't use are carried forward as payments you can use in play (see Money on page 91). You can use a Mediocre (+0) starting purchase to acquire two items with a Poor (-1) cost, or four items with a Terrible (-2) cost. Also, you can give up two purchases of the same cost level to receive a purchase that's one cost level higher. For example, if you were creating a character at the Street Soldiers power level, you could give up your two Good (+3) purchases to receive another Great (+4) purchase. This would leave you with two Great (+4) purchases, which you could then give up to receive a Superb (+5) purchase.

GUTTER PUNKS

Gear and Resources: You can buy one item with a Good (+3) price, two with a Fair (+2) price, three with an Average (+1) price, and four with a Mediocre (+0) price. You may buy one additional item of gear with a price at your Resources rank or less. You'll find equipment catalogs starting on page 124.

Augments: Any augments you buy must be paid for from your Gear and Resources budget.

ABOUT STRAIN

When you obtain an augment—even during character creation—there's a risk of long-term side effects. Each augment gives you a certain amount of Strain, as listed in its description.

You can tolerate an amount of Strain equal to two, plus two times the higher of your Physique or Will. So, if you have Fair (+2) Will and Good (+3) Physique, your Strain tolerance is 8.

The total Strain you get from an augment is modified by its type—increased for Gutterware and decreased for Milware or Hyperchrome. When the rules say unmodified Strain, just look at the Strain rating of an augment before applying any modifiers.

If the total Strain of all your augments exceeds your Strain tolerance, you might suffer from a permanent Strain consequence until you have the augment removed.



Skills: The starting skill maximum is Good (+3), and you get one skill at Good (+3), two at Fair (+2) and three at Average (+1).

Stunts: You get 2 free stunts, and you can buy more for one refresh each. Your refresh cannot go below 1.

STREET SOLDIERS (DEFAULT POWER LEVEL)

Gear and Resources: You can buy one item with a Great (+4) price, two with a Good (+3) price, three with a Fair (+2) price, four with an Average (+1) price, and five with a Mediocre (+0) price. You may buy one additional item of gear with a price at your Resources rank or less.

Augments: You may choose to start the game with:

- One item of Streetware with an unmodified Strain rating of 1 or less
- OR
- Items of Gutterware with a combined unmodified Strain rating of 5 or less

You can buy additional augments with your gear purchases. If you create a character without augments, you get an additional item of gear with a Great (+4) price.

Skills: The starting skill maximum is Great (+4), and you get one skill at Great (+4), two at Good (+3), three at Fair (+2), and four at Average (+1).

Stunts: You get 3 free stunts, and you can buy more for one refresh each. Your refresh cannot go below 1.

HYPERCHROME WARRIORS

Gear and Resources: You can buy one item with a Superb (+5) price, two with a Great (+4) price, three with a Good (+3) price, four with a Fair (+2) price, five with an Average (+1) price, and six with a Mediocre (+0) price. You may buy one additional item of gear with a price at your Resources rank or less.

Augments: You may choose to start the game with:

- One item of Hyperchrome with an unmodified Strain rating of 1 or less
- OR
- Items of Streetware with a combined unmodified Strain rating of 5 or less

OR

- Items of Gutterware with a combined unmodified Strain rating of 9 or less

After adding each augment, roll an attack from Strain as described on page 169.

You can buy additional augments with your gear purchases. If you create a character without augments, you get an additional item of gear with a Superb (+5) price.

Skills: The starting skill maximum is Superb (+5), and you get one skill at Superb (+5), two at Great (+4), three at Good (+3), four at Fair (+2), and five at Average (+1).

Stunts: You get 4 free stunts, and you can buy more for one refresh each. Your refresh cannot go below 1.

ELITE OPERATIVES

Gear and Resources: You can buy one item with a Fantastic (+6) price, two with a Superb (+5) price, three with a Great (+4) price, four with a Good (+3) price, five with a Fair (+2) price, six with an Average (+1) price, and seven with a Mediocre (+0) price. You may buy one additional item of gear with a price at your Resources rank or less.

Augments: You may choose to start the game with:

- One item of Milware with an unmodified Strain rating of 1 or less

OR

- Items of Hyperchrome with a combined unmodified Strain rating of 9 or less

OR

- Items of Streetware with a combined unmodified Strain rating of 12 or less

You can buy additional augments with your gear purchases. If you create a character without augments, you get an additional item of gear with a Fantastic (+6) price.

Skills: The skill maximum is Fantastic (+6), and you get one skill at Fantastic (+6), two at Superb (+5), three at Great (+4), four at Good (+3), five at Fair (+2), and six at Average (+1).

Stunts: You get 5 free stunts, and you can buy more for one refresh each. Your refresh cannot go below 1.

ASPECTS

HIGH CONCEPT

Your high concept has two parts: race and occupation. You might be a **Tough Hybrid Bodyguard** or a **Luxury Simulacrum Media Personality**. If you're a zeek (see Psionics on page 113) or a cybermonk (page 91), include that wherever it fits best (e.g., **Human 2.0 Zeek Private Investigator**). For details on races, see page 54. For occupations, see page 61.

TROUBLE

Your trouble is a recurring source of conflict in your life. It could be a character flaw (**I Can't Trust Anyone**), a part of your past (**Calavici's Mob Is Out For My Blood**), or a metaphysical trend in your life (**Damn Unlucky, Just Can't Keep a Lover**).

For more suggestions, see Example Troubles on page 52.

FREE CHOICE ASPECT

This might relate to something you did recently, or to one of your formative experiences. Think of an interesting story about you, and decide what personality trait or history it reveals (**Fake It 'til You Make It**).

CROSSING PATHS 1

Your character has previously crossed paths with one of the other group members. Spend a while developing what happened when you met and what your relationship is like, then pick something those events highlighted about you, or a detail of your relationship, and make it into an aspect (**Stubborn as a Mule**).

CROSSING PATHS 2

Repeat the previous step with a different group member (**It's Not You, It's Me**).

ALTERNATIVE HIGH CONCEPTS

If you want to use something else as your high concept, you can include your race and occupation in any of your other aspects instead.

SKILLS

The available skills are:

- Academics
- Athletics
- Burglary
- Contacts
- Deceive
- Empathy
- Fight
- Hack
- Investigate
- Notice
- Physique
- Pilot
- Provoke
- Rapport
- Resources
- Shoot
- Stealth
- Survival
- Tech
- Will

In addition to these skills are the psychic powers employed by zeek characters:

- Biokinesis
- Electrokinesis
- Telekinesis
- Telepathy
- Thermokinesis

REFRESH

Your refresh starts at 3.

EXAMPLE TROUBLES

Some troubles are appropriate for any setting. The course of true love never will run smooth, people will always seek revenge on their enemies, and distrust will never be in short supply. The world of *Interface Zero*, however, provides new and exciting possibilities for troubles—and these are a few of them.

CODE OF HONOR

Whether it's based on chivalry, Bushido, religious conviction, or your own morality, you follow a code of honor that you dislike

betraying. Make a note of the main tenets of your code so that you can be consistent. Following your code is often inconvenient, but provides you strength of purpose.

MONITORED BY...

You're routinely monitored by a human or Expert Sprite watchdog. They report your actions to their superiors and may intervene if you act against their standing orders. In rare circumstances your watchdog might intervene to help you; after all, you're no good to their employers if you're dead.

BLACKLISTED BY...

A major corporation or entire industry sector refuses to work with you because of something from your past. This sometimes gives you an advantage when you're dealing with rival corporations or when you're engaging in blackmail or threatening behavior, depending on what you did to earn your blacklisting.

GIRI TO...

Sometimes you owe someone in a way money can't repay. Maybe it's out of a sense of duty; maybe it's out of a sense of debt. "Giri" is a Japanese word that implies a certain amount of social obligation—usually to one's superiors—and it runs deeper than a simple sense of service. You will be called upon at inconvenient times to help the one to whom you owe giri.

LATENT TALENT

You're a zeek whose talent hasn't manifested yet, but you exhibit uncontrollable psychic abilities when you get stressed or scared. In a conflict this can be quite useful, but when you get nervous trying to ask someone out on a date...not so much.

IRRITATINGLY POPULAR

For some reason people find you really interesting or useful, and you're always hounded by fans, reporters, criminal wannabes, or other people who want a piece of you. Your minor celebrity status can be a major hindrance when you're trying to operate on the down low or when your admirers get in your way.

NANO INFECTION

You've been infected and mutated by a nano-virus. This carries social stigma and causes difficulties with certain physical actions. Decide what your mutations are and what sort of problems they cause you.

OFF THE GRID

You don't legally exist. This makes it impossible for you to buy legitimate vehicles or services, open a bank account, and so on. It also makes you a great target for anyone looking for a victim who won't be missed. However, your undocumented status can be advantageous if someone's trying to find you through official records.

OWNED BY...

You're an indentured human on the leash thanks to medical treatments that keep you alive, or you're a simulacrum, android, hybrid, or bioroid who literally belongs to a corporation. Your owners can give you orders in the expectation that you'll fulfill them and you live at their whim.

STRESS TRIGGER

You act unpredictably when you suffer extreme stress. If you're a zeek, your powers might fire involuntarily when you get stressed out; if you're a street samurai, you might shoot first and ask questions later.

UNPLUGGED

You don't have a TAP and can't hack or access Hyper Reality and the Global DataNet.

UP-SIZED

You're substantially bigger than average for your race; if you're a Tough Hybrid, an android, or a cyborg, that can be very big indeed. While this is useful when you're intimidating someone or reaching for a high shelf, it's usually a major inconvenience. You could never be a golemmech pilot, you take up at least two seats in most vehicles, and you can't pass for human even with the best disguise. You can use two-handed weapons in one hand, but you're clumsy with normal-sized tools or weapons.



RACES

In the modern world, race is more than a matter of genetic heritage. Old prejudices based on skin color and other superficial differences still exist, but technology has ushered in new and far different races of human—and, inevitably, new prejudices have followed.

Your race makes up the first half of your high concept and also affects some of the options available to you when you create your character. Here are the common races available to you.

ANDROID

Nicknames: Andie, Cyberform, Machine, Robot, Scab, Toy, Trashcan

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

You see through digital lenses and hear via microphones on each side of your head. Your voice is a pleasant, if somewhat monotone, sound piped through a speaker crafted to resemble a mouth. Your brain is a softball-sized digital network consisting of billions of nanomachines which perform countless computations every second in order to simulate an organic—human—thinking process. You are artificially intelligent. Your capacity for rational, critical thinking and decision-making equals—and in many cases exceeds—that of any human being on the planet.

Yet, a waffle iron probably has more rights than you do. Moreover, at some point you were (and technically still are) owned, perhaps by an individual, but more likely by a megaconglomerate, your parent company. The tasks you performed for the megacorp varied depending on your design specs, but they might have included security,

manual labor, combat, and strangely enough, even prostitution.

But that was then.

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

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

"What does it mean to be dead?"

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

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

- Electromagnetic pulse attacks hurt you.
- You must regularly recharge with electricity. If you go for more than 24 hours without recharging, your **Android** aspect can be invoked or compelled to give you problems relating to your drained energy supply.
- You can purchase cybernetic implants and are subject to Strain like anyone else. This represents your power systems and circuitry struggling to cope with the demand of your enhanced systems.

- Your physical consequences are treated with Tech instead of Academics.
- You don't need to eat, sleep, or breathe, and you're immune to biological poisons and diseases.
- You can't learn psionic powers, and Biokinesis and Telepathy don't work on you.

Invoke: Because you're more robust than a human, you can invoke on feats of strength, unarmed combat, and resisting small-arms fire. Because you have a computer brain, you can invoke when raw number-crunching is beneficial.

Hostile Invoke: Because people stigmatize androids, prejudiced people can invoke when they're interacting with you. Because you're not human and find it difficult to understand human thoughts and emotions, people who are lying or trying to manipulate you can invoke against you.

Compel: People might be offended by your unusual behavior, or might distrust and fear your android nature. You might end up breaking flimsy surfaces such as thin ice due to your mechanical bulk. Because you have few rights, you may be hunted down by your former owners or thieves, or suffer legal difficulties. At times you might misunderstand human nature, give trust where it isn't warranted, or otherwise struggle when interacting with humans.

BIOROID

Nicknames: Biobot, Perso-com, Para-human, Soft Bioroid

You sometimes wonder why humans created such an inefficient system for you. Food, proper hygiene, rest—you require all these things. Unlike your metal siblings, you do not require electricity to function.

But is a different supply of energy really worth the wasted time it takes to exist?

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

Bioroids are vat-grown humans who have a computer system installed in their brain pan. Most often used as replacement bodies for dubs, they've seen some serious negative press in the last couple years.

After a series of murders that were linked to bioroids with faulty dubbing, human-looking bioroids were made illegal in most countries.

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

Note whether you're a **Marked Bioroid** or a **Secret Bioroid**.

- Electromagnetic pulse attacks hurt you.
- You can't learn psionic powers. Telepathy doesn't work on you. Biokinesis can't affect your mental state, but it still works on your biological systems.
- You're immune to drugs and poisons that target the brain, such as anesthetics or recreational drugs.
- You must eat, drink, and sleep. If you go without any of these for more than 24 hours, you become vulnerable to invokes or compels related to your privation.

Invoke: Because you have a computer brain, you can invoke to help you when number-crunching is beneficial. You're also smarter than average, so you can invoke whenever raw intelligence is a factor.

Hostile Invoke: If you're a **Marked Bioroid**, others can invoke on social interactions due to stigma and prejudice. Because your brain isn't human and you find it hard to understand human thoughts and emotions, people who are lying or trying to manipulate you can invoke against you. If you're a **Secret Bioroid**, those who know your secret can invoke if they're trying to intimidate or manipulate you.

Compel: If you're a **Marked Bioroid**, people might fear, distrust and stigmatize you, or you might offend people unintentionally. If you're a **Secret Bioroid**, your secret might fall in danger of discovery.

You might act odd in the presence of others because you misunderstand human nature, or you might lash out against those who mistreat you. You might also make ultimately bad decisions in order to protect your secret.

CYBORG

Nicknames: Cybershell, Sentinel, Hard-Shell Cyborg, Tin Man

It was easy to make the decision. You'd get a new metal body that worked better than the original. You wouldn't have to spend your family's money on more expensive surgeries to keep your failing body alive, but that decision didn't come without a cost.

You'd lose the ability to feel, the ability to pick up your son without worrying about crushing him. You'd lose the feel of your wife's body when you made love to her. If you can't feel anything, aren't you already dead? In the end, you chose to become a cyborg, to have your brain encased in metal. Most days it doesn't make much difference.

You come home to an empty house, your son and wife long gone. Maybe they'd have stayed if you'd only kept your heart...

Little is more frightening in battle than a cyborg. They're not much more than an organic brain in an android's body. Cyborgs come in humanoid form, simply for ease of transition to the new body. The majority of cyborgs work for their respective governments, or for powerful

corporations who can afford the procedure for trusted personnel.

However, more and more cyborgs are beginning to find their way to the private sector.

- You don't need to eat, drink, or breathe, but must sleep at least a few hours a night. If you don't, you become vulnerable to invokes or compels related to your sleeplessness. You're immune to biological poisons and disease unless they somehow get into your brain casing.
- Your physical consequences are treated with Tech instead of Academics.
- Electromagnetic pulse attacks hurt you, but you have Armor:2 against them.
- Your body requires regular recharging and your brain needs a special nutrient supply. If you go without either for more than 24 hours, you become vulnerable to invokes or compels related to your privation.

Invoke: Because your mechanical chassis is tougher and stronger than a human's, you can invoke to excel at feats of strength, unarmed combat, and resisting small-arms fire. Because your body is somewhat insensitive, you can invoke to help you ignore sensations that would be unpleasant or painful for a normal person.

Hostile Invoke: People who are prejudiced against cyborgs can invoke when they're interacting with you. Because your body is somewhat insensitive, others can invoke when fine sensation or dexterity would be useful.

Compel: You might crash through fragile surfaces like thin ice due to your greater bulk, or cause people to react to you negatively due to their prejudice. Being a fleshy human being in a cybernetic body is mentally traumatic, which might drive you to act in ways that reassure you of your fundamental humanity or instead turn away from it and embrace the machine.



HUMAN

Nicknames: Norm, Homo Sapiens, Earthling, Plain Jane

Baseline, average, normal—these words always described you. You prefer to think of yourself as adaptable, versatile, or unique. You were born to human parents who either wouldn't or couldn't pay for genetic enhancement.

You didn't go for that "hybridization" craze. You're happy being who you are, and you don't need some scientists mucking around with your genetics. Really, do they even know what the consequences of all that meddling will have on the population in a hundred years? No, you'll play it cool and just be human.

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

- You must eat, drink, and sleep. Going without any of these for more than 24 hours makes you vulnerable to invokes or compels related to your privation.

Invoke: You have the privilege of being a baseline human, and can invoke to give you a competitive advantage over people of a different race during interactions with a prejudiced human.

Hostile Invoke: In some circumstances you're the outsider, and this can be invoked against you. For example, if you're trying to get information out of an android community, they will close ranks against you, making it harder to get anything out of them.

Compel: Those of other races might react negatively towards you. As a baseline human, you may be of interest to organ-leggers and other criminals who need pure human stock for their work. You might also make assumptions about other races or take risky actions to preserve your humanity.

HUMAN 2.0

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

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

- You must eat, drink, and sleep. Going without any of these for more than 24 hours makes you vulnerable to invokes or compels related to your privation.

Invoke: Because you've been engineered to be strikingly good-looking, you can invoke to help you socially. You also have a greater resistance to poison and disease than a baseline human, so you can invoke when defending against them.

Hostile Invoke: Your race has a reputation for arrogance, so others may invoke in social interactions even if you're no more arrogant than average.

Compel: People might act resentfully toward you because of your enhanced gene-stock or because they assume that you're as arrogant as other Humans 2.0. You might also run into criminals who want you for your enhanced DNA or your more efficient organs. Your race often feels superior to others, so at times you might act in an arrogant way.

HYBRID

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

At some point, you underwent radical gene therapy. Whether it was for fashion reasons or military ones, you now carry select traces of animal DNA. You might



have fur, scales, or even gills. Hybridizing isn't 100% guaranteed, however, and in some cases, a hybrid hack instills too much of the donor's instincts into the host. Think about that the next time you get an overwhelming urge to chase your tail.

All hybrids, their genes spliced with animal DNA, exhibit the abilities (and occasionally looks and demeanor) of the creatures they have been crossed with. Rather than providing a hundred different animal templates, hybrids can instead generally be broken down into about five different categories, with the actual animal type (a tiger, or a bear, etc.) being just a trapping.

Nothing is preventing you from creating new hybrid templates, but be sure to work with your GM to create one that is balanced and fits the game. Often times, a minor modification to these existing templates is all you need.

- You must eat, drink, and sleep. Going without any of these for more than 24 hours makes you vulnerable to invokes or compels related to your privation.
- All hybrids are subject to fear and distrust from most other races because of the Hybrid's "unnatural" appearance. They might also become a subject of interest to unscrupulous scientists or organ-leggers.

To complete the **Hybrid** aspect, choose the primary source of your transgenic DNA (e.g., **Bull Hybrid**). Here are the most common sources.

AQUATIC HYBRIDS

Example animals: dolphin, shark, crocodile, orca.

- You can't drown.
- You must spend at least one hour each day immersed in water. Going without makes you vulnerable to invokes or compels related to dehydration.
- Dim lighting is never a source of opposition for you, and you can see in anything but complete darkness.

Invoke: Because you have natural weaponry such as shark hide, sharp teeth, claws, or bony scutes, you can invoke in unarmed combat or whenever your natural weapons give you an advantage, including intimidation attempts. As an aquatic, you can invoke when moving or maneuvering underwater.

Hostile Invoke: If you're forced to endure hot, dry conditions, others can invoke against you. Others may also invoke it if your claws or other genetic adaptations give you a disadvantage, such as when you're competing to win someone's trust.

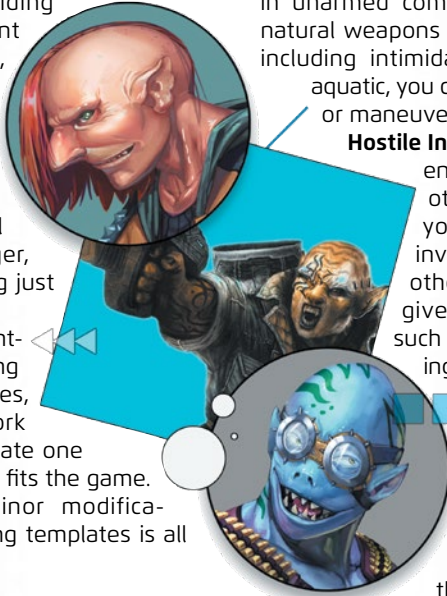
Compel: You might seek to immerse yourself in water despite the risks, or cause complications by refusing to leave the water.

FIERCE HYBRIDS

Example animals: honey badger, tiger, wolf, lion.

Invoke: One of your senses is sharper than the others; you can invoke to help you on rolls involving that sense. Because your transgenic build makes you stronger than average, you can invoke to help you on feats of strength. Because you have natural weaponry such as claws or razor teeth, you can invoke on unarmed combat or whenever your natural weapons give you an advantage, including intimidation attempts.

Hostile Invoke: Your predatory DNA means you have a short fuse; others can invoke in attempts to make you angry. Your enhanced sense could work against you if there's a strong stimulus for that





sense in the area (e.g., an aniseed bomb). When you're undertaking a delicate task, your natural weaponry might hamper you.

Compel: Animals might react to you with hostility as you trigger their fight reflex. Your short fuse might make you attack someone in inappropriate situations, even despite overwhelming odds, or you might flee from very strong stimulation because of your enhanced sense.

QUICK HYBRIDS

Example animals: monkey, hawk, mon-goose, snake, cheetah.

Invoke: You can invoke when rolling to move multiple zones in one exchange, as well as whenever your superior speed gives you an advantage. You can also invoke to gain a steal (see Initiative on page 92).

Hostile Invoke: You have a somewhat frail frame, so others can invoke against you when inflicting blunt trauma.

Compel: You might move too fast for your own good—for example, skidding into a trap you didn't see in time. Overconfident in your speed, you might choose flight over fight when fleeing isn't appropriate.

TOUGH HYBRIDS

Example animals: rhino, bull, bear, warthog.

Invoke: Because you're larger than a normal human, you can invoke to help you intimidate people or otherwise use your bulk to good effect. Because you're tougher than average, you can invoke to help you avoid harm.

Hostile Invoke: Others can invoke your large size against you when you're trying to move fast or when your bulk is a disadvantage.

Compel: Your lumbering bulk might cause complications—for example, a crawlspace might be too small for you to fit into, or you might fall through a fragile surface. Overconfident in your toughness, you might take undue physical risks, or you might refuse to enter relatively small spaces for fear of becoming trapped.

STEALTHY HYBRIDS

Example animals: bat, rat, house cat.

Dim lighting is never a source of opposition for you, and you can see in all but complete darkness.

Invoke: Because you're small, quiet, and stealthy, you can invoke when trying to remain undetected or when your small size is advantageous—for example, when you're being shot at from a distance or crawling through tunnels. Choose a sense that's sharper than the others; you can invoke to aid rolls using that sense.

Hostile Invoke: Others can invoke your enhanced sense against you if there's a strong stimulus for that sense in the area (e.g., an aniseed bomb). Your small size makes you less resilient and can be invoked against you on physical attacks.

Compel: Your small size might lead to difficulties, such as being unable to reach high places. Very strong stimulation of your enhanced sense might drive you away, or it might cause you to move slowly and stealthily even when time is of the essence.

SIMULACRUM

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

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

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

You might even still be in the employ of your company, working off-planet on a mining asteroid, in some factory, or even performing black-ops missions in foreign countries.

On the other hand, you may have discovered the truth about yourself



and decided to leave, disappearing into the concrete jungle to make your own future.

- You're living on borrowed time. You were made to last for 10 years (or 5 years if you're a **Soldier Simulacrum**). You can decide how many years you have left, or you can determine it randomly. To do so, start with 5 years and roll four Fate dice, adding or subtracting the result in years; if you're a Soldier, ignore positive results. Your **Simulacrum** aspect can be compelled to make you take risky choices or otherwise deal with the mental consequences of having such a limited lifespan.
- You must eat, drink, and sleep. Going without any of these for more than 24 hours makes you vulnerable to invokes or compels related to your privation.
- All simulacra suffer stigma when operating outside their predefined role. To represent this, your Simulacrum aspect can be invoked or compelled against you in social dealings outside the role.
- If you've escaped your original owners or employers, they'll surely come looking for you, with compels to match.

To complete the Simulacrum aspect, choose the primary function for which you were created (e.g., **Laborer Simulacrum**). Here are the most common functions.

LABORER SIMULACRUM

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

Invoke: You were built to withstand harsh environments, so you can invoke to help you resist heat, cold, and other environmental conditions. You're also more resilient than the average human, so you

can invoke when withstanding attacks. Finally, you can invoke to help you when building and repairing—you were made for such tasks.

Hostile Invoke: You tend to be stubborn, stolid, and lacking in imagination, and this can be invoked against you.

Compel: Your stubbornness might drive you to reject innovative ideas in favor of ones with a proven track history.

LUXURY SIMULACRUM

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

Invoke: You were designed to be charismatic and attractive, so you can invoke in relevant social situations. You are also more intelligent than average and can invoke when smarts are important.

Hostile Invoke: You're squeamish about blood and violence, and the discomfort they cause can be invoked against you. Those who don't take you seriously due to your attractive or "cute" appearance can invoke to hamper your attempts to intimidate or negotiate with them.

Compel: Others might try to steal you for themselves. Your pacifist nature or desire to help others might run counter to your goals—for example, if you're a cuddly bear simulacrum, you might be compelled to help or protect a child rather than capture your target.

SOLDIER SIMULACRUM

Built to save human lives by fighting humanity's wars for it, combat simulacra are state-of-the-art fighting machines custom-built for whatever theater of operations they might be placed in.

The United Nations, the EU, the Chinese Mandarinate, and numerous other world powers keep a tight control over the use and deployment of military-grade simulacra. That said, some manage to slip through the cracks and find ways to disappear from public sight.

Invoke: You were designed and built for warfare, so you can invoke while using your combat skills. You're also stronger and tougher than average, and can invoke on feats of strength or to avoid being harmed.

Hostile Invoke: You have a hardwired tendency to follow orders; this can be invoked against you when someone you consider to be an ally gives you instructions that you'd rather resist. You have a somewhat brutish appearance that can be invoked against you when you're trying to build a rapport with someone.

Compel: Your former commanders might come after you, which will surely lead to complications. Because of your original function, you might follow orders despite your better judgment, and you might feel compelled down a violent path when a more peaceful approach would cause fewer difficulties.



OCCUPATIONS

Your occupation makes up the other part of your high concept. You might be an **Aquatic Hybrid Bodyguard** or a **Mob Soldier Simulacrum**. We'll give you some advice on what invokes and compels might be appropriate for some common occupations, along with suggestions for skills that would work well with each. Each occupation also has a perk, an advantage that you can use regularly to represent the steady benefits of your occupation.

As you read through these occupations, keep in mind that for the most part, they represent your character's *day job*; that thing she does to make ends meet when not going on missions. See the archetypes section for a list of characters common to the cyberpunk genre.

AGENT

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

Suggested Skills: Shoot, Burglary, Fight, Contacts, Investigate

Invoke: Thanks to your agency ties, you have access to useful contacts and you're very well informed about what's going on in the world; you can invoke your occupation during intelligence-gathering operations. You've also been trained in the use of weaponry, small-unit tactics, code-breaking, and espionage, letting you invoke your occupation just the same.

Hostile Invoke: Others might know your training and tactics, including members of your own agency or people from knowledgeable rival agencies. This can be invoked against you.

Compel: Your standing orders might conflict with your team's goals, even to the point of keeping secrets from them. You might be called in at short notice to perform an official task, and fallout from your official activities might complicate your life—your doorbell might ring at 3 am, when a fellow agent needs your help. Otherwise, you might get trouble from the

police or rival agencies because of your official work.

Perk: Once a session, you can use your occupation to declare a story detail about intelligence operations or secret political goings-on in the wider world without spending a fate point.

BARTENDER

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

Suggested Skills: Contacts, Empathy, Rapport, Fight

Invoke: You interact with all kinds of people, you're a good judge of character, and you hear many rumors. You can invoke your occupation to assist you on Contacts rolls and when you're trying to discover whether someone is being dishonest. Because you're used to listening to people's problems, you can also invoke to help folk with their issues, and your experience with bar brawls lets you invoke when you're in the midst of a melee.

Hostile Invoke: A patron in good standing can invoke this aspect to wheedle favors or information out of you. If you don't own the bar and your income is variable with tips, others can invoke against you when they're opposing your Resources rolls. If you do own the bar, others can invoke against you when they're threatening the bar, legally or physically, to get you to do what they want.

Compel: You might need to work a shift on short notice, or you might be tired from an antisocial shift the night before. The bar might bring legal complications with it—the police coming around on a fishing expedition, or gang members coming in to offer "protection." Other bar staff might get into trouble and need your help. You might be compelled to help one of your regular patrons despite the risk to yourself.

Perk: Once a session, you can use your occupation to declare a story detail about local rumors without spending a fate point.



BODYGUARD

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

Suggested Skills: Fight, Shoot, Notice, Empathy

Invoke: You have an employer in good standing, so you can invoke your occupation to help you when interacting with him or his associates.

Due to your training you can invoke when you're restraining someone, defending someone from harm, or looking out for unexpected danger.

Hostile Invoke: People can threaten your employer or allies to gain a persuasive advantage over you.

Compel: Your employer or allies might be put in danger, and you'll have to deal with it. Because you're always on guard, you might see danger where there's none.

Perk: Rather than taking a debt to a more cutthroat organization or individual, you can take a single resource consequence related to a debt you owe to your employer (Money, page 91). They'll be lenient in collecting the debt, and it can't be compelled against you.

BOUNTY HUNTER

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

Suggested Skills: Investigate, Shoot, Fight, Contacts



Invoke: You can invoke your occupation when negotiating a bounty or apprehending a target, or when you're investigating someone's whereabouts. If you're in good standing with local law enforcement, you can invoke while dealing with them. If you're a criminal bounty hunter, you can instead invoke when dealing with underworld figures.

Hostile Invoke: When someone offers you information about a juicy bounty, they can invoke your occupation against you. For example, a contact might offer to tell you some key information about Jack Killgrunter, who's worth a 10k bounty—but only if you help her first.

Compel: A bounty might pop up while you're engaged in other business, or vice versa, causing complications when he attacks you or rabbits. You might run into trouble with the allies of bounties you've apprehended, or receive an offer you can't refuse to track down someone dangerous. When you get close to a bounty, you might blow off other activities or betray your allies for large sums of cash.

Perk: In addition to your standard starting gear, you begin play with two personal weapons of your choice and a suit of personal armor, each with a cost of no more than Fair (+2).

CLINIC DOC

"Oh stop squirming would you? I won't be able to pull these fragments out of your arm if you don't hold still! Yes, I went to medical school. What, you think any old hack out there can set up shop and start treating people? Look, I couldn't pay my student loans, so they revoked my medical

licenses. I still wanted to do the job, and I needed money.

That's why I'm doing this. That feel better? You bet your ass it does. Let me guess, you can't afford to pay. Well alright, but there is something you can do for me. The Celts have been coming around asking for protection money. Maybe you can dissuade them, let them know I don't need protection? Do that for me and your next three operations will be free!"

Suggested Skills: Academics, Tech, Resources, Contacts

Invoke: You can invoke your occupation whenever you're using Academics to treat an injury, perform surgery, conduct a postmortem investigation, or diagnose disease.

Hostile Invoke: Your occupation can be invoked against you if someone threatens your clinic or your patients, or tries to persuade you to treat someone who's clearly in need at a reduced price.

Compel: Your clinic might bring legal or gang-related problems, whether from a surgery gone wrong or from repercussions of helping the "wrong person." You might be held at gunpoint by desperate, injured people looking to get free treatment. You might feel compelled to treat someone against your better judgment or at a financial loss, or hesitate to hurt someone due to your personal convictions.

Perk: You have a clinic, whether in the back of an old bar or in your own apartment. It has the basic supplies needed to care for injuries and perform surgeries, including cybernetic implants, and it's an aspect that you can invoke when you're treating people there. Your occupation also justifies being able to treat consequences of moderate or worse, even when you're away from your clinic.



CON ARTIST

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

Suggested Skills: Deceive, Contacts, Rapport, Burglary

Invoke: You're a skilled liar, and you can invoke your occupation whenever doing so. Your occupation can also benefit you when you're interacting with others who ply the same trade.

Hostile Invoke: Anyone who's aware of your occupation can invoke against you when you're trying to persuade them of anything. Others in your loose fraternity of con artists may also invoke when negotiating a favor with you.

Compel: Angry victims might come after you for revenge. Your con might go badly south, or you might discover that another con artist is targeting the same mark. Other con artists in the community may also come to you for help. You might find yourself unable to resist an easy mark, even if it's against your best interests to indulge, and it's simple to lure you into a trap with the prospect of easy money.

Perk: Once a session, you can declare a story detail related to a potentially juicy target without spending a fate point.



Suggested Skills: Resources, Rapport, Contacts

Invoke: You're an experienced negotiator, so you can invoke your occupation when you're cutting a deal. Used to the cutthroat world of executive politics, you know when someone's planning to knife you in the back to get ahead. You can also invoke your occupation when dealing with your direct subordinates and other lower-ranking staff of the corporation.

Hostile Invoke: Your corporate superiors can invoke your occupation when they interact with you. Those who distrust and dislike corporate types can invoke to resist your blandishments, and

anyone who can threaten your job can leverage it to get power over you.

Compel:

Your superiors might give you a dangerous or delicate job, whether it's dealing with the machinations of your rivals for a

promotion, or countering the ruthless agenda of your corporation's competitors. You'll often need to toe the company line, even if it's inconvenient or dangerous for you or your allies, and you might feel compelled to pursue potential profits despite any danger.

Perk: You have a bodyguard responsible for your personal safety. They're a Fair nameless NPC. If your bodyguard dies, you can requisition a new one who will arrive in the next scene (or as soon as it makes sense in the current situation).

CORPORATE EXECUTIVE

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

CRIME BOSS

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

Suggested Skills: Shoot, Contacts, Provoke, Fight, Will

Invoke: You can invoke your occupation when you're interacting with your underlings, or when intimidating someone who is aware of your reputation. Because you have informants and keep your ear to the

ground, you can also invoke to help you get information from the criminal underworld or deal with the black market.

Hostile Invoke: Law enforcement can invoke your occupation when they're investigating your activities or trying to shake you down. Your underlings can also invoke it to plead for your help—as the boss, you have a responsibility to protect the loyal members of your crew, after all.

Compel: Often you'll deal with law enforcement breathing down your neck. Jobs might go horribly wrong, and rival criminal operations might start turf wars. Ambitious underlings might decide they should be the ones in charge, or you might receive an offer unwise to refuse from someone even higher in your organization. You might be compelled to do horrible things to people to preserve your reputation, or betray your allies for the sake of your organization.

Perk: Once a session, you can call up a mob of underlings to do your bidding. Roll Contacts against Good (+3) opposition. If you fail, you get one Average nameless NPC; if you succeed, you get three; and if you succeed with style, you get five.

DELIVERY DRIVER

"That's my fee. Take it or leave it. You're asking me to drive through a city-wide gang war and dodge the CHIMERA strike team that's trying to recover their stolen property. If you want this package to arrive intact and on time, it's going to cost you. And don't forget my tip."

Suggested Skills: Pilot, Notice, Athletics

Invoke: When speed is of the essence, you're the right person for the job—you can invoke your occupation whenever you're trying to get somewhere on a strict deadline. You can also invoke when you're driving evasively to shake pursuers or avoid getting a missile up the tailpipe. Finally, you can invoke to get other delivery drivers to give you a hand when you need it.

Hostile Invoke: If you deliver late then your customer can invoke your occupation against you during any ensuing negotiation. Other delivery drivers can also invoke to get you to help them out.

Compel: You might find yourself hotly pursued by someone that wants to steal

MOBS

A mob is a group of NPCs that uses teamwork, so a mob of three Average NPCs is treated as a unit with relevant skills at Good (+3). When you take out a member of a mob with an attack, any leftover stress overflows to another member of the mob. For more information, see *Fate Core* (page 216).

whatever you're delivering. Allied drivers might need your help at inconvenient times, a package might turn out to be something dangerous, or the law might investigate you under suspicion of carrying illegal goods. To make a delivery on time, you might make rash actions, and you might accept a challenge to a race even if the stakes are high.

Perk: In addition to your other gear, you start play with a Samba Econoline electric car, the most cost-effective car on the road!

ESCORT

"I've heard all the labels and suppositions, but I don't care. It's a job, and everyone's got their own reason for doing it. Some peeps need the credits and don't have anything to sell but their looks; some peeps even enjoy the work. Of course, I know being an escort doesn't always mean putting out the sex, but sometimes it comes down to that. The best gigs are when some rich fat cat wants a little eye candy to take along to that fancy dinner—or when I can choose the terms and degree of intimacy—but if I need the credits it can boil down to lying on my back and considering what color I'd like to paint the ceiling."

Suggested Skills: Rapport, Empathy, Contacts, Notice

Invoke: You're experienced at making people desire you, making them comfortable, and giving them what they want—and you can invoke your occupation when that experience is an asset or when dealing with your usual stable of customers. You're also a good judge of character; it's important to recognize when a potential customer is putting out bad vibes for the sake of your own personal safety.

Hostile Invoke: You're reliant on your regular customers for income, which gives them leverage over you when they want you to do something extra special for them. If you're interrupted with a client you need to deal with the issue while making sure the client remains satisfied, your divided attention can be used against you.

Compel: Harm might befall your fellow escorts, compelling you to investigate the situation. A rival might try to move in on your regular clients, or a pimp or madam might poach you for their stable. Something dangerous might happen during a date, or a client might come to you for help. You might feel compelled to agree to a very rich date despite your better judgment, and you might cause offense by trying to seduce the wrong person or by turning down a skeezy client who then comes looking for revenge.

Perk: Once a session, you can arrange an appointment with one of your regular clients to begin treating a mild or moderate resource consequence without having to spend a payment of your own.

sum. Your trade is reliant on a web of professional obligations, so if one of your contacts asks you for a favor, they can balance it against the minor favors you owe them, letting them invoke to aid in their efforts to persuade you.

Compel: Your clients might well bring danger to your doorstep when law enforcement or a corporation hit squad is after them, or you could land in hot water when the original owner of something you fenced comes looking for their property. You might get a different consignment from a supplier than you bargained for—how do you deal with your crate of “high explosives” when it starts issuing growling, slobbering noises? You might be compelled to turn down a lucrative job from a suspicious client because it would compromise your professional relationships, or you might take on stolen property that's a bit too hot due to its substantial value.

Perk: Once a session, you can declare that you have a line on obtaining a rare, illegal, or valuable item without spending a fate point.

FIXER

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

Suggested Skills: Contacts, Burglary, Resources, Rapport, Empathy, Physique

Invoke: You can invoke your occupation to aid in finding what you need, assessing the value of stolen goods or Gutterware, and negotiating the best price. You can also invoke when dealing with other fixers as a matter of professional courtesy.

Hostile invoke: Money is one of your primary motivating factors, so people trying to persuade you can invoke your occupation by offering you a large enough

GANGLANDER

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

Suggested Skills: Provoke, Contacts, Fight, Shoot

Invoke: You're intimidating to many when you're in your gang colors, letting you invoke your occupation to help you scare people around your turf. Your fellow gang members owe you their loyalty, so you can invoke in your interactions with them, but you can also invoke when conflicting with members of a rival gang, whether to instill fear or leverage their respect for you. Finally, being a gang member means you keep your ear to the ground and you meet a lot of people, so you can invoke when you're gathering information from the streets.

Hostile Invoke: You owe your fellow ganglanders your loyalty, so they can invoke when convincing you to help



them out. If your gang has a particularly heated rivalry with another gang, then its members can invoke when they're fighting or opposing you, showing that their hatred only makes them stronger.

Compel: An enemy gang might attempt a drive-by shooting when you go out for noodles, or you might receive a desperate rallying call to help defend your gang's turf. Your gang boss might call on you to be part of a team in a criminal act, or you might run into trouble with law enforcement or vigilantes who disapprove of gang activity. You might be forced to put loyalty to the gang above anything else, and you could erupt in violence when you see a rival gang member—even if that's dangerous.

Perk: Once a session, you can get two homies from your gang to come and help you. They're Average nameless NPCs.

GEAR HEAD

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

Suggested Skills: Pilot, Tech, Hack, Notice

Invoke: You're fanatical about drones and vehicles, and there isn't much you don't know about them—you can invoke your occupation whenever you need to repair, modify, or know about the specifications of machines that interest you. You can also invoke your occupation to help you when you're piloting a drone or vehicle.

Hostile Invoke: If someone offers you a whiff of tech you haven't seen before, they can invoke to persuade you to help them. You tend to get lost in the experience of piloting a drone or vehicle, and this can be invoked against you if someone acts against you in the real world while you're enraptured.

Compel: Your drones or vehicles might get stolen or sabotaged, you might be challenged to drone combat from a rival gear head, or one of your drones might get implicated in a crime. If it means you can get your hands on cutting-edge tech, you might do something foolish. Also, you might value a drone or vehicle over the lives of your actual team members, or refuse to get up close to the action when you've got perfectly good drones to do it for you.

Perk: You start the game with Vehicle Control Interface I Streetware in addition to any other augments. If you can afford it, you can upgrade this to a VCI II for two more Strain or to a VCI III for four more Strain. Also, this occupation justifies being able to repair mechanical consequences of moderate or worse severity.

INFORMATION BROKER

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

Suggested Skills: Investigate, Contacts

Invoke: Information is power, and you're very experienced at rooting it out, letting you invoke your occupation when you're obtaining information from any source. You have a complex web of favors and rivalries with other information brokers, so you can invoke when you're negotiating with others in the same occupation.

Hostile Invoke: If someone has a really juicy piece of information they know you want, they can invoke your occupation because of your eagerness for new data. Other information brokers that are part of your web of contacts can also invoke this, as can anyone who's trying to persuade you to take a risk if you might get valuable information as a consequence.

Compel: The information you obtain might turn out to be dangerously sensitive, leading to shadowy visits in the night or other hazards. You might be betrayed by another info broker or have dangerous people come knocking at your door to find out what you know—or can find out—on a given topic. You might feel compelled to risk yourself or others for valuable information or to withhold necessary information because doing so will increase its value.

Perk: You have the right contacts to sell information to at the highest possible price. Whenever you're selling payday or other useful information, the payment you receive after negotiations end is one step higher than what you were originally offered.

JUMP BIKE RACER

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

Required Skills: Physique, Pilot, Notice, Athletics

Invoke: You have great reflexes and you're used to driving in hazardous conditions, so you can invoke your occupation when you're driving your JUMP bike at speed. If you have fans who follow your racing career, you can invoke when you're interacting with them. You also have a lot of information about the racing scene, and can invoke to help you recall relevant information about racers, sponsors, or racing hardware.

Hostile Invoke: Your tendency toward speed and instantaneous action can be invoked when you're trying to take a more measured approach. If someone makes a

realistic threat against your bike, they can invoke your occupation against you.

Compel: A rival racer might challenge you to a race, or someone might tamper with your pride-and-joy JUMP bike. You might find the law interfering with a street race you're in, or someone could try to get you to throw a race so they can make a fortune betting against you. You might be compelled to play chicken to prove your bravery, partake in a very dangerous (and perhaps illegal) race, or take a risk you think might advance your career.

Perk: You start play with a Toyota Locust Quad Turbo JUMP Bike in addition to your other gear.

LAYABOUT

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

Suggested Skills: None

Invoke: Efficiency is intelligent laziness—invoke your occupation when you're doing something with the least amount of effort possible.

Hostile Invoke: Your opponents can invoke against you whenever you're trying to do something that involves actual effort.

Compel: You might find your government handouts frozen because you've failed to find a job, or a friend you're mooching off might ask you to do something for him—if you don't want to be kicked out of his crib. You might end up pushing a friend you depend on too far, bring trouble down on yourself by doing something in the laziest way possible, or offend someone with your attitude.

Perk: You begin play with a personal melee weapon of your choice, with a cost of Fair (+2) or below, and a basic armored jacket.

MEDIA ICON

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

Suggested Skills: Rapport, Contacts, Empathy

Invoke: You're a well-known face, so you can invoke your occupation when you're dealing with people who know and admire you. Your celebrity is also an advantage when dealing with menials like hotel staff or minor politicians, especially if you threaten to use your exposure to give them trouble from your army of fans.

Hostile Invoke: Celebrities are polarizing influences and you're no exception; anyone who despises what you represent can invoke your occupation to resist your appeals. Because you're in the public eye and easy to smear, anyone trying to tarnish your reputation can also invoke your occupation.

Compel: You might be subject to kidnap attempts, and people might try to steal items of yours because they're valuable souvenirs. You run the risk of being recognized while in a compromising position and having incriminating evidence of your activities go viral. Paparazzi follow you around at the most inconvenient of times. You might find yourself being arrogant to your "lessers" or fraternizing with dangerous people because you think they can advance your career.

Perk: Once a session, you can call upon your entourage to perform a task for you. Roll Contacts against Good (+3) opposition.

If you fail, you get one Average nameless NPC; if you succeed, you get three; if you succeed with style, you get five. These are fans or roadies rather than combatants.

MOB SOLDIER

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

Suggested Skills: Physique, Fight, Shoot, Athletics, Contacts

Invoke: You're a hard person for a hard world, and you're well practiced at inspiring fear and respect in others—often by using intimidating weaponry. Your training and experience means you can invoke your occupation while planning a violent criminal operation or directing subordinates in the field.

Hostile Invoke: Your boss in the organization can invoke your occupation when he's making you do his bidding. Law enforcement types might also invoke it to make you give away your ties to criminal pursuits by your demeanor or the things you say (or don't say).

Compel: Your bosses might put you in danger. You might hurt someone you like or respect (but it's nothing personal), find trouble with law enforcement, or deal with other criminal organizations trying to recruit you or get rid of you. You might also have to deal with attempted coups within your own organization or rivals trying to take your job. To protect your boss, you might risk yourself or resort to intimidation and force when a subtler approach would be more effective.

Perk: Once a scene you get a free invoke on your occupation when you're intimidating someone.



PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

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

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

Suggested Skills: Investigate, Contacts, Shoot, Fight

Invoke: You've got a good eye for detail, so you can invoke your occupation on Investigate rolls. You can also get a read on most people and can invoke when trying to detect deceit or someone's motivations. Conducting interviews with witnesses and info sources is second nature to you, so you can invoke to get the information you need out of them.

Hostile Invoke: Once you've taken a client's case they can invoke your occupation when they're dealing with you.

Compel: People you've investigated might come after you for revenge, cases will turn out to be more complicated and dangerous than you'd thought, and employers might betray you. You might feel compelled to take dubious jobs despite your suspicions on whether the money's good. To obtain clues you might put yourself in dangerous positions. You might also be confronted by the person you're investigating or fall for a client in the worst way.

Perk: You have a network of snitches that provide you with information. Once a session, you can declare a story detail

representing info you get from them without spending a fate point.

PROGRAMMER

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

Suggested Skills: Hack, Academics, Tech

Invoke: You can invoke your occupation when you're hacking, writing an app, programming a script to run on a cloud you've hacked, analyzing software, or solving a computer problem. Because you really know your stuff, you can also invoke when you're interacting with people who also have an interest in the subject.

Hostile Invoke: You tend to think in a logical and straightforward way, and this can be invoked against you when a less rational approach is helpful. Someone who's a better programmer than you can offer code libraries or new algorithms to entice you into helping him.

Compel: A rival might hack your personal network, one of your apps could get ripped off and re-purposed as a Trojan, or a victim of your hacking might come after you for revenge. You might feel compelled to take risks to get hold of some cutting-edge code, to go after a rival who dares to say he's as good a programmer as you are, or to hack a secure government network because people say it can't be done.

Perk: You start play with a Great (+4) Firewall on your TAP rather than a Good (+3) one.

READER

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



Suggested Skills: Telepathy, Empathy, Will

To be a reader you need to be a zeek with the Telepathy power. If you're a fraudulent reader, the Con Artist occupation is more suitable.

Invoke: You pay attention to everyone around you and you're often skimming their surface thoughts. You can invoke your occupation when you're trying to work out whether someone is being deceitful or trying to intimidate people who know your capabilities. You can also invoke to gain a steal when someone is about to attack you.

Hostile Invoke: It's easier for people to turn others against you because of your reputation for being a nosy zeek. You may also have a hard time getting someone to trust you if they know you've read them in the past.

Compel: You might find yourself overhearing strangers' dark secrets. (What do you do if you find out that the person passing you on the street has a kidnapping victim tied up in their bedroom?) If someone knows you're a reader, they might become offended because they assume you're reading their thoughts. You might feel compelled to delve too deep into a subject's thoughts or use the information you've gained against someone, even if it's not very smart to antagonize them.

Perk: Once a session, you can declare a story detail without spending a fate point that relates to something you've picked up from your subconscious eavesdropping of the people around you.

SECTOR COP

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

Suggested Skills: Investigate, Shoot, Contacts, Fight

Invoke: You can invoke your occupation when you're making an arrest or to calm and reassure law-abiding citizens when you urgently need to get information out of them. You're also good at spotting when people are lying, and have a finely honed sense as to when someone is up to no good. You've also been trained in the use of pistols and shotguns and can invoke to use them more effectively.

Hostile Invoke: People with a particular enmity for the law can invoke your occupation to resist you. Your superiors can also invoke when they're giving you instructions if you have to be persuaded.

Compel: An ongoing emergency might pull you away at an inconvenient moment.

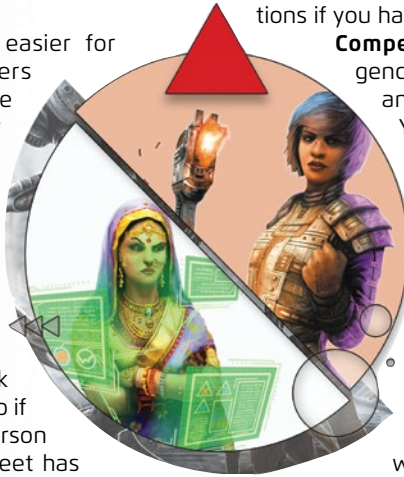
You might see a wanted criminal who realizes you've made him, run into trouble with corrupt cops, deal with a criminal bribing or threatening you, or find something bad has happened to your partner. You might be compelled to pursue a criminal into danger without backup, or to

bend or break rules to get an arrest when you just know someone is guilty even if you can't find the evidence.

Perk: In addition to your other gear, you start play with a patrol car. You also have a partner you can call for backup, a Fair nameless NPC.

SMUGGLER

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



safe with me, because I won't know what they are."

Suggested Skills: Burglary, Contacts, Tech

Invoke: You can invoke your occupation whenever you're hiding something or clandestinely moving objects or people. Because you have a network of contacts you can also invoke when you're trying to get the skinny on who's moving what, where.

Hostile Invoke: If someone is searching you or your vehicle, and they know you're a smuggler, they can invoke your occupation as they look with extra diligence to find anything you might be hiding.

Compel: Your cargo might end up being dangerous—starting to tick, beep, or otherwise give you a scare. People will want to get their hands on anything you might be carrying, and they're willing to shake you down for it. You might feel compelled to take a risky job if the pay's good or use your allies as unwitting mules.

Perk: In addition to your other gear, you start play with a vehicle of your choice that has a cost of Epic (+7) or less.

TAXI DRIVER

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

solo as a freelancer. Whatever. In any case it's the same: get in, sit down, shut up, and hang on."

Suggested Skills: Pilot, Shoot, Rapport

Invoke: You can invoke your occupation whenever you're finding a route between two places (whether you want the fastest or slowest), jockeying for position with other taxis to try and steal their fares, or getaway driving.

Hostile Invoke: Your dispatchers can invoke your occupation when they're talking you into a fare when you've got other stuff to do.

Compel: Potentially dangerous people—or people who need your help—might want to get into your taxi ("Follow that car!"), and your vehicle might even get jacked. A customer might demand extraordinary efforts to get them to the destination on time. You might feel compelled to take a shortcut through the dangerous part of town or deliberately stretch out a journey to rack up a huge fare—only to have the passenger notice.

Perk: Your taxi company provides you a vehicle to drive from their fleet, but you're responsible for insuring it (or replacing it if you hose it and don't have insurance).

UNDERCOVER COP

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

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



Perk: You have an undercover criminal identity related to your current case. Whenever you change covers, pick an occupation and swap your current perk for the one provided by that occupation.

"What can you say? Bartenders serve drinks, but

Perk: Once a session, after you've worked a shift you can roll Rapport to begin recovering a resource consequence thanks to generous tips from one of your favorite customers.



SKILLS

Interface Zero uses a list of skills that's very similar to *Fate Core*, though some of them work a little differently in the cyberpunk genre.

Athletics, Contacts, Deceive, Empathy, Fight, Notice, Physique, Provoke, Rapport, Shoot, Stealth, and Will work the same as they do in *Fate Core*, but we've tweaked or added Academics, Burglary, Hack, Investigate, Pilot, Resources, Survival, and Tech.

ACADEMICS

Functioning almost identically to the Lore skill from *Fate Core*, Academics provides you with a broad base of knowledge and allows you to research topics in a library or on the Global DataNet. You also use it to treat mental or biological injuries. See Recovery on page 94.

BURGLARY

Burglary lets you perform the actions described in *Fate Core*. There's some overlap with the Tech and Hacking skills when it comes to getting into places you aren't supposed to: you could use Burglary to overcome security systems and bypass electronic locks with the modern equivalent of "lock-picking," whereas with Tech you could physically dismantle the system (setting off any alarms in the process), and with Hack you could hack the security network.

HACK

You can use this skill to hack technological devices or write computer code. For details, see Hacking on page 104.



Overcome: Hack into a computer system or remove a computer-related obstacle.

Create an Advantage: Write an app, program, or script; use a networked device to create advantages in the real world; obtain information, schematics, or data from a computer system.



Attack: Try to take out another user in a Hyper Conflict.

DODGING BULLETS

By default, you can roll Athletics to dodge firearms attacks—though you're dodging the shooter's aim, not the bullet itself. If you want to increase the lethality of the game, rule that you can't dodge firearms at all. To avoid being shot, you'd have to take cover behind something solid.

Defend: Defend yourself from harm in a Hyper Conflict.

INVESTIGATE

This skill functions as it does in *Fate Core*, but along with its real-world applications, Investigate is what you use to research people, places, organizations, and events on the Global DataNet or in Hyper Reality.

PILOT

You can use Pilot to directly or remotely control vehicles of all kinds, including drones and golemmechs.



Overcome: You can use Pilot to catch up to an opponent or get past physical obstacles.



Create an Advantage: When controlling a vehicle, you can create advantages related to positioning, speed, and other factors. You might find a Direct Route, take Evasive Maneuvers, or get On His Six.



Attack: You can attack with Pilot by ramming people or other vehicles. Your vehicle suffers equal shifts of stress to those inflicted on the target, reduced by Armor rating, including that provided by any difference in Scale (page 113).



Defend: Pilot is used to evade attacks and attempts to create advantages on your vehicle.

RESOURCES

See Money on page 91.

SURVIVAL

The world of *Interface Zero* can be harsh, with environments including radioactive wastelands, blighted urban ruins, and the

inhospitable vacuum of space. Survival is the skill you need to stay alive in these environments. It also gives you the tools you need to track targets in the wilderness or work with animals.



Overcome: Use Survival to help you deal with any issues related to survival in an inhospitable environment. You can hunt or scrounge up food, follow prey through the wilderness, and overcome obstacles like **Tainted Water** or **Voracious Leeches**.



Create Advantage: You can create or discover aspects that will help you survive. You might know about the Aggressive **Rad-Scorpions** in the desert or how to find Clean Water. You can use animal handling techniques to rile them up or calm them down, and you know things about the beasts and horrors you might encounter in unpleasant environments.



Attack: Survival is not usually used to attack.



Defend: Survival can be used to defend against attacks related to privation.



Attack: Tech is not usually used to attack.



Defend: Tech is not usually used to defend.

ARCHETYPES

To give you a start on creating your own *Interface Zero* characters, we've put together some common character archetypes with suggested skills, stunts, and equipment at the Street Soldiers power level described on page 51.

To build a character from an archetype:

- Copy the skills, stunts, equipment, augments, stress boxes, and starting Strain onto your character sheet, adjusting to taste. Note that there are two numbers listed for Strain: the current amount of Strain the character has accumulated due to augments, and the character's Strain tolerance. See page 169 for more information about Strain.
- Choose your race.
- Choose your aspects. Your high concept is a combination of your race and your occupation. Include the Cybermonk or Zeek keywords in your high concept if they apply to your character.
- Your refresh is 3. If you want to add on more stunts, lower your refresh by 1 for each extra stunt you take.
- Some of these archetype characters have traded a few of their equipment purchases to receive higher-cost purchases, as indicated in the character creation rules on page 50. Also, some of these archetypes are not listed with their full allotment of starting equipment. You may use their unspent payments to purchase equipment immediately, or you may save them for later purchases. The rules in Money on page 91 explain how to manage unspent payments.

TECH

You can use this skill to build, repair, and modify technology. It replaces the Crafts skill from *Fate Core*.



Overcome: Use Tech to build, break, maintain, or fix an item of equipment, drone, vehicle, augment, or mechanical character. You can also remove obstacles posed by technological devices—getting by that sentry gun is as simple as dismantling it. If you're fixing an inanimate object, see Repairing Equipment on page 124; for more sentient beings, see Recovery on page 94.



Create an Advantage: You can find out how unfamiliar technology works, modify devices (such as by adding Armor Plating to a vehicle or giving your cyberarm a Crushing Grip), and find vulnerabilities in other people's technology.

AGENT

"I've run deep cover operations in Berlin, Moscow, Shanghai, Tel Aviv, and a thousand

nameless shitholes across the solar system. I've uncovered dirt on governments that would scare the holy hell out of you if the information ever came to light.

I've killed women, children—entire villages have disappeared because one person saw something she shouldn't have seen; and if I had to, I'd do it again, because safety has a price, ami, and if that means some people have to die so millions of others might live, I'm willing to pay it."

#Carla Singer, Atlantica Intelligence Bureau

Agents engage in a variety of operations ranging from deep cover operations to retrieval missions, counter-insurgency campaigns, disinformation campaigns, and—if necessary—assassinations.

Agents are experts with small arms and masters at hand-to-hand combat. They have extensive training in various subjects including (but not limited to) counterterrorism, tradecraft, and interrogation. They use those skills to protect and promote the interests of the government they owe allegiance to.

Occupation: Agent

Skills: Great (+4) Deceive; Good (+3) Burglary, Contacts; Fair (+2) Investigate, Notice, Shoot; Average (+1) Fight, Empathy, Rapport, Will

Stunts: Alert; False Identity; One Person, Many Faces (*Fate Core*, page 104)

Equipment: Executive Decision Business Suit; Executive Decision Under Armour; Wasteland Traders Pneumatic Dart Rifle; Mosquito Storm MS-2090 Machine Pistol; Advanced Infiltration Toolkit; Firewall 4th Dimension Security T-APP; Babylon T-APP; 1 extra submachinegun magazine; 2 paralysis darts; 2 neurotoxin darts; 4 tracker darts; 1 emergency support patch; 1 stun patch

Augments: Cyberskull, Protean (Gutterware)

Strain: Current Strain 4 (Unmodified Strain is 2), Strain tolerance 4

Stress: 2 physical, 3 mental

BOUNTY HUNTER

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

#Tracy Fang, Independent Bounty Hunter

With the balkanization of the world in 2090, it's a simple matter for criminals on the run to hop the nearest border or go off-world, leaving local law enforcement in the dust. That's where the bounty hunter comes in.

When someone must absolutely be brought back to stand trial, the bounty hunter finds him and drags him kicking and screaming back. When a government (or mega-conglom) needs to make sure someone's dead, the bounty hunter will be the one who brings back the body.

Occupation: Bounty Hunter

Skills: Great (+4) Investigate; Good (+3) Contacts, Fight; Fair (+2) Athletics, Notice, Shoot; Average (+1) Burglary, Physique, Stealth, Will

Stunts: Data Junkie; I Will Find You; Moving in the Shadows

Equipment: Urban Punk Hoodyz Armor; Ravenlocke Security Truncheon; Ravenlocke Securities Riot Gel Gun; Amy's Surplus Foley Arms Watchdog Pistol; Combat Webbing; Ravenlocke Securities Restraints; Bounty Board T-APP; Ether Combat IFF T-APP; Firewall 4th Dimension Security T-APP; 1 Flash Bang grenade; 2 extra pistol magazines; 1 extra box of shotgun shells; 2 stun patches

Augments: Cyber Eyes with Enhanced Vision (Streetware); Fight or Flight System (Streetware)

Strain: Current Strain 2, Strain tolerance 4

Stress: 3 physical, 3 mental

CYBERMONK

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

#Mia Yi, AKA Steel Wind Rising

Cybermonks are individuals who have embraced cybernetics to push their bodies far beyond the range of human potential. More than just ronin or soldiers,



cybermonks view cybernetic implantation as a deeply philosophical and almost religious experience.

But cybermonks go beyond simply implanting new 'ware into their bodies. Cybermonks constantly push the limits of their bodies through vigorous self-discipline and exhausting exercise regimens. As a result, cybermonks reach levels of performance from their cyberware and bioware that border on the realm of the mystical.

Occupation: Bodyguard

Skills: Great(+4) Will; Good (+3) Athletics, Fight; Fair(+2) Notice, Physique, Shoot; Average (+1)Academics, Empathy, Stealth, Tech

Stunts: Cyber Tolerance; Focus Armor (tied to Subdermal Armor); Inhuman Reflexes (tied to Wireless Reflexes I)

Equipment: Mosquito Storm MS-2090 Machine Pistol; Shogun Outfitters Whirlwind Butterfly Swords; Ravenlocke Jointlock Stun Gloves; Advanced Tech Toolkit; Combat Webbing; Firewall G-Net Security T-APP; Digital Diplomat T-APP; Bounty Board T-APP; 2 extra submachinegun magazines; SM-19 smoke grenade; 2 emergency support patches

Augments: Cyberarm with Recoil Compensation (Streetware); Cybereye with Enhanced Vision and Night Vision (Gutterware); Wireless Reflexes I (Gutterware); Subdermal Armor (Streetware)

Strain: Current Strain 10 (unmodified Strain is 6), Strain tolerance 10

Stress: 3 physical, 4 mental

Special: Cybermonk must be part of your high concept.

DRONE JOCKEY

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

#Jayda Jetstream, Freelance Drone Jockey

The drone jockey is an expert when it comes to using drones. More than just the getaway driver, the drone jockey relies upon a stable of drones with various abilities to become a one-person army.

No matter what the situation, someone out there has designed a drone for the job. The drone jockey is truly alive when rapidly leaping from drone to drone, taking complete control of her machines.

Occupation: Gear Head

Skills: Great (+4) Pilot; Good (+3) Notice, Tech; Fair(+2) Fight, Shoot, Burglary; Average (+1) Hack, Investigate, Stealth, Will

Stunts: Ace Drone Pilot (page 86); Drone Fanatic (page 86); Martyr

Equipment: Pre-built Average chassis aerial drone with Advanced Optics, Redundant Systems I, Ravenlocke Securities PD9 Personal Defense Weapon, and Average (+1) Stealth and Notice; Urban Punk Hoodyz Armor; Multi-Optics Goggles with Night Vision; Black Knight Industries Stiletto Pistol Firewall G-Net Security T-APP; Advanced Tech Toolkit

Augments: Vehicle Control Interface II (Gutterware)

Strain: Current Strain 4 (Unmodified Strain is 2), Strain tolerance 4

Stress: 2 physical, 3 mental

GANGER

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

#Buzzer, Warboss for the South Side Storm Troopers

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



a surrogate family, money and prosperity for those living in the gutters.

Occupation: Ganglander

Skills: Great (+4) Fight; Good (+3) Provoke, Shoot; Fair (+2) Athletics, Physique, Pilot; Average (+1) Burglary, Contacts, Notice, Will

Stunts: Above the Crowd; I Walked These Streets; Pack Fighting

Equipment: Urban Punk Combat Jacket; Wasteland Traders Decapitator Chain Axe; Private Dick Saturday Night Sprawl Special .44 Revolver; Urban Punk Ironfang Spring-Blade; Firewall G-Net Security T-APP; Hyper FX T-APP, Good (+3) cost; 2 Bomzaway Molotov Cocktails; Tank-N-Spank(1 dose); Afterburn (1 dose); 2 extra rifle magazines

Augments: Cyberarm with Automatic Firearm (Gutterware); Cybereye with Night Vision Optics (Streetware)

Strain: Current Strain 5 (Unmodified Strain is 3), Strain tolerance 6

Stress: 3 physical, 3 mental

GRIFTER

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

#Moesha Monday, working a con

Even with the advent of completely virtual communication, there are still those individuals who get by purely on the basis of their charm and others' naivete.

Grifters are the con men and women of 2090, and some argue theirs is the oldest profession in the world—not the other one you might be thinking of. Grifters are those for whom the social world is a playground. As comfortable in the boardroom as in the barroom, grifters make their living gaining the confidence of others in order to separate them from their money and possessions.

Occupation: Con Artist

Skills: Great (+4) Deceive; Good (+3) Empathy, Rapport; Fair (+2) Contacts, Fight, Notice; Average (+1) Academics, Burglary, Stealth, Will

Stunts: Best Foot Forward (*Fate Core*, page 121); Catfish; Lies upon Lies (*Fate Core*, page 104)

Equipment: Executive Decision Business Suit; Bombs on Broadway Formal Wear; Black Knight Industries Stiletto Pistol; Basic Infiltration Toolkit; Firewall 4th Dimension Security T-APP; Digital Diplomat T-APP; Newslink T-APP; Babylon T-APP; 4 extra pistol magazines; 2 stun patches; 1 unspent Good (+3) payment

Augments: Tailored Pheromones (Gutterware)

Strain: Current Strain 4 (Unmodified Strain is 2), Strain tolerance 4

Stress: 2 physical, 3 mental

HACKER

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

#Anonmouse, Hacker Manifesto version 3.4

The hackers of 2090 have a proud legacy spanning just over a hundred years. While the digital world is now more advanced than ever, the old lessons from the forefathers (and mothers!) back at the birth of the Information Age still hold true. The hacker is a force to be respected in an age where everything is wireless and everything can be hacked. Any group looking to really prosper in 2090 needs a hacker.

From the local biker gang, ronin, and even the police and military, hackers see more demand for their talents than ever.

Occupation: Programmer

Skills: Great (+4) Hack; Good (+3) Investigate, Notice; Fair (+2) Contacts, Tech, Will; Average (+1) Academics, Burglary, Deceive, Shoot



Stunts: Cutter; Have You Tried Rebooting It?; Interference

Equipment: Urban Punk Hoodyz Armor; Sentinel Rock Cyclone EMP Gun; Mosquito Storm MS-2090 Machine Pistol; Advanced Tech Toolkit; Firewall 4th Dimension Security T-APP; 2 secure data cards; 2 extra EMP gun battery packs; 2 extra submachinegun magazines; Unspent Good (+3) Payment

Augments: Basic EMP Shielding (Streetware); Enhanced Neural Net (Gutterware); Great (+4) Firewall

Strain: Current Strain 5 (Unmodified Strain is 3), Strain tolerance 6

Stress: 2 physical, 3 mental

IDOL

"Yeah, baby, we can hit the Nexus tonight; they'll walk us through the line and I might even sign a few hyper-graphs. My PR guy says slummin' with the local flavor's good for my image. Hang with the sprawlers for a while, show them I remember my roots.

Hell, I might even get to blast someone tonight. My lawyer's working out the legal shit with local law enforcement. What's that? Oh, no, the victim's on the payroll and set up with a new dub. He's charging an arm and a leg, though...fucking union actors."

#Bella Nightshade, TechnoGoth Singer

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

Occupation: Media Icon

Skills: Great(+4) Rapport; Good(+3) Empathy, Resources; Fair (+2) Contacts, Deceive, Notice; Average (+1) Athletics, Fight, Pilot, Will

Stunts: Demagogue (*Fate Core*, page 121); Doctor On Call; Popular (*Fate Core*, page 121)

Equipment: Bombs on Broadway Formal Wear; Urban Punk Hoodyz Armor; Executive Decision Anti-Flash Sunglasses; Ravenlocke Jointlock Stun Gloves; Firewall 4th Dimension Security T-APP; Babylon T-APP; Caduceus T-APP; Estream T-APP; 1 stim patch

Augments: Anti-Toxin System (Streetware); Beautification Treatment (Streetware)

Strain: Current Strain 3, Strain tolerance 4

Stress: 2 physical, 3 mental

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALIST

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

#Tony Falcon, Freelance Reporter

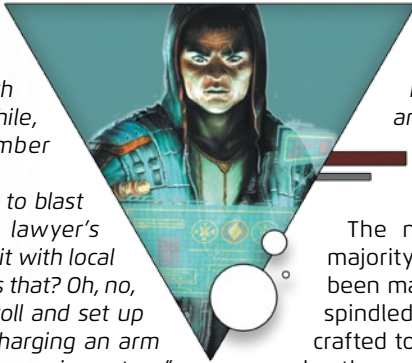
The news taken in by the majority of people in 2090 has been massaged, molded, folded, spindled, mutilated, and finally crafted to fit the image preferred by the governments and corporations of the world. While the media hasn't reached the level of totalitarian control, to say the news is sanitized for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

Occupation: Information Broker

Skills: Great (+4) Investigate; Good (+3) Contacts, Empathy; Fair (+2) Academics, Rapport, Notice; Average (+1) Deceive, Fight, Provoke, Will

Stunts: Blackmailer; Data Junkie; I've Heard Of You

Equipment: Private Dick Future Noir Wear; Act of God Armaments Black Knight Limited



Pistol; Ravenlocke Security Truncheon; 1 Dainsheng Industries "Piyin" Firewall; 4th Dimension Security T-APP; Babylon T-APP; Newslink T-APP; Estream T-APP; 2 secure data cards

Augments: Cyberears with Amplified Hearing (Streetware)

Strain: Current Strain 1, Strain tolerance 4

Stress: 2 physical, 3 mental

PATCH MAN

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

#Johnny Two Thumbs

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

Occupation: Clinic Doc

Skills: Great (+4) Academics; Good (+3) Notice, Tech; Fair (+2) Contacts, Empathy, Shoot; Average (+1) Rapport, Resources, Survival, Will

Stunts: I Walked These Streets; Fixer; Street Doc

Equipment: Urban Punk Combat Jacket; Act of God Armaments Thunder Shotgun; Amy's Surplus Foley Arms Watchdog Pistol; Brazilian Para-Sar Medikit; Biodesign Omniprobe; Secure data card; Firewall G-Net Security T-APP; 1 extra box of shotgun shells; 2 emergency support

patches; 1 military antidote patch; 1 stun patch; 1 unspent Good (+3) payment

Augments: Cybernose Chemical Sniffer (Streetware)

Strain: Current Strain 1, Strain tolerance 4

Stress: 2 physical, 3 mental

RONIN

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

#Face_in_the_crowd

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

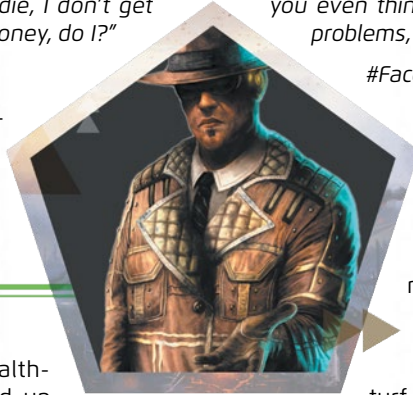
Occupation: Bodyguard

Skills: Great (+4) Shoot; Good (+3) Fight, Physique; Fair (+2) Athletics, Notice, Provoke; Average (+1) Empathy, Pilot, Stealth, Will

Stunts: Guardian Angel; Called Shot (*Fate Core*, page 125); Martial Adept

Equipment: Executive Decision Business Suit; Executive Decision Anti-Flash Sunglasses; Ravenlocke Securities P9D Personal Defense Weapon; Ravenlocke Security Truncheon; Ravenlocke Securities Restraints; Firewall 4th Dimension Security T-APP; Digital Diplomat T-APP; 1 Flash Bang grenade; 1 SM-19 Smoke Grenade; 2 extra submachinegun magazines; 2 emergency support patches; 1 unspent Good (+3) payment

Augments: Cyberweapon (Gutterware); Wireless Reflexes I (Gutterware); Smartgun System (Gutterware)



Strain: Current Strain 8 (Unmodified Strain is 4), Strain tolerance 8
Stress: 4 physical, 3 mental

SECTOR COP

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

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

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

Occupation: Sector Cop

Skills: Great (+4) Provoke; Good (+3) Fight, Shoot; Fair (+2) Contacts, Notice, Pilot; Average (+1) Athletics, Empathy, Investigate, Will

Stunts: I Carry a Badge; Okay, Fine! (*Fate Core*, page 120); Small-Unit Tactics

Equipment: Ravenlocke MK-II Patrol Police Cruiser; Ravenlocke Securities Beachhead First Responder; Black Knight Industries BK-616; Ravenlocke Securities Riot Gel Gun; Ravenlocke Security Truncheon; Amy's Surplus Foley Arms Watchdog

Pistol; Multi-Optics Goggles with Night Vision; Ravenlocke Securities Restraints; Firewall G-Net Security T-APP; Bounty Board T-APP; 1 TAZ-25 grenade; 2 TG-7 tear gas grenades; 1 extra rifle magazine; 2 emergency support patches

Augments: Cyberarm with Breaching System (Streetware)

Strain: Current Strain 1, Strain tolerance 4

Stress: 2 physical, 3 mental

SMUGGLER

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

#Mickey Midnight

Smugglers specialize in moving contraband across borders without getting detected. In 2090, when there are more borders than ever before, smugglers are seeing a boom in business unlike any other. Smugglers come

in a large variety, from those who specialize in ocean or air travel to those who specialize in getting across the border on foot or on wheels. All that matters is the smuggler can move his cargo without being detected or having the authorities trace the cargo back to his employer.

Occupation: Smuggler

Skills: Great (+4) Pilot; Good (+3) Burglary, Stealth; Fair (+2) Contacts, Notice, Shoot; Average (+1) Athletics, Deceive, Survival, Tech

Stunts: Pedal to the Metal (*Fate Core*, page 107, applies to Pilot instead of Drive); Scrounger; No One Ever Checks There

Equipment: Toyota CDZ Waste Cruiser 2090; Urban Punk Combat Jacket; Wasteland Traders BD-4DY 12G Pump-Action Shotgun; WT-216LB Wastelander Long Barrel; Advanced Tech Toolkit; Wasteland Traders Survivor Tent; Firewall 4th Dimension



Security T-APP; 2 military antidote patches; 2 emergency support patches; 1 extra box of shotgun shells; 2 extra pistol magazines

Augments: Anti-Toxin System (Streetware); Environmental Regulators (Streetware)

Strain: Current Strain 2, Strain tolerance 2

Stress: 2 physical, 2 mental

EX-SOLDIER

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

#Nate Morris, Ex-GLU Army

The soldiers of 2090 operate on battlefields that contain real-time hacking and military virus attacks, drones controlled by the very minds of their operators, and golemmechs that can lay waste to battlefields faster and more efficiently than any tank can. That kind of experience gives them an edge on the streets money can't buy. Ex-soldiers are in prime demand, often selling their skills to privatized security firms like Ravenlocke.

Occupation: Mob Soldier

Skills: Great (+4) Shoot; Good (+3) Fight, Physique; Fair (+2) Athletics, Notice, Provoke; Average (+1) Contacts, Stealth, Survival, Will

Stunts: Killing Stroke (*Fate Core*, page 111); Nothing to See Here; Unlaundered Money

Equipment: Executive Decision Business Suit; Ravenlocke Securities P9D Personal Defense Weapon; Amy's Surplus Foley Arms Watchdog Pistol; Firewall 4th Dimension Security T-APP; 4 extra submachinegun magazines; 4 extra pistol magazines; 2 emergency support patches

Augments: Cyberarm with Firearm (Streetware); Cybereyes with Infra/Ultra Optics (Streetware)

Strain: Current Strain 2, Strain tolerance 8

Stress: 4 physical, 3 mental

STREET RAT

"Life on the edge is fluid, like a river, ya scan? You gotta find the rhythm of the streets and ride it if you want to survive."

Sure, it's tough, but it's better than being cooped up in one of the megablocks...those guys have it real bad."

#Snatcher

Whether by choice or fate, the street rat makes their home on the streets. While most would consider it a death sentence, the street rat thrives, learning how to get by with little to nothing.

Occupation: Layabout

Skills: Great (+4) Survival; Good (+3) Contacts, Will; Fair (+2) Burglary, Notice, Stealth; Average (+1) Athletics, Empathy, Fight, Shoot

Stunts: Hardcore Parkour (*Fate Core*, page 98); Face in the Crowd (*Fate Core*, page 126); Scrounger

Equipment: Nakamura Motors Kamikaze JUMP Board; Second-Hand Bulletproof Jacket (treat as light body armor); Act of God Armaments Cyberchromium Rat .75 Pistol; Wasteland Traders BD-4DY 12G Pump-Action Shotgun; Urban Punk Ironfang Spring-Blade; Wasteland Traders Survivor Tent; Advanced Survival Toolkit; Basic Infiltration Toolkit; Firewall 4th Dimension Security T-APP; Estream T-APP; Euphoria (2 doses); 1 extra box of shotgun shells; 4 extra cylinders of pistol rounds; 1 emergency support patch; 1 unspent Fair (+2) payment

Augments: Environmental Regulators (Gutterware); Cybereyes with Enhanced Vision, Infra/Ultra Optics, Night Vision Optics (Gutterware)

Strain: Current Strain 8 (Unmodified Strain is 4), Strain tolerance 8

Stress: 2 physical, 4 mental

ZEEK

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

#Fxfactor

It's not easy being a zeek. Most people either hate you or are afraid of you, which



means they either want to kill or control you. Some zeeks try to hide their powers; some try to use their powers to get ahead in the world. Mostly, zeeks just try to survive, just like everyone else. There are some advantages to being a zeek, though. Most freelancers can use a reliable zeek in their group, whether their forte is putting the guard to sleep, reading a captive's mind, or knocking the opposition back ten feet with a thought.

Occupation: Reader

Skills: Great (+4) Telepathy; Good (+3) Empathy, Will; Fair (+2) Biokinesis, Notice, Rapport; Average (+1) Deceive, Contacts, Investigate, Provoke

Stunts: Enhanced Ability (Telepathy); Multitasking (Telepathy); Peek

Equipment: Executive Decision Business Suit; Executive Decision Anti-Flash Sunglasses; Black Knight Industries Stiletto Pistol; Firewall 4th Dimension Security T-APP; Babylon T-APP; Digital Diplomat T-APP; Emergency Message T-APP; 2 extra pistol magazines

Augments: Data Carrier (Streetware); Emotional Resistance Response System (Streetware)

Strain: Current Strain 2, Strain tolerance 8

Stress: 2 physical, 4 mental

Special: Zeek must be part of your high concept.

STUNTS

ACADEMICS

I Know My Rights: Your extensive knowledge of the law (and its loopholes) helps you deal with troublesome agents of the law. +2 to create an advantage related to the law that help get the heat off your back.

I've Heard Of You: You regularly trawl the DataNet for information on important or interesting people. When you encounter someone with a public presence, like a celebrity, official, or executive, +2 to create an advantage with Academics to discover one of that person's aspects.

Street Doc: You're used to patching people up with minimal supplies. This stunt justifies being able to treat physical consequences of moderate or worse

severity, and a lack of medical equipment is never a source of opposition for you during treatment.

Urban Historian: You have an extensive collection of historical texts and blueprints related to your home city. You can spend a fate point to declare a story detail on the layout or structure of a building that's more than a decade old. Also, if you're infiltrating an old building—or a new building via older service conduits—you can use Academics in place of Burglary.

ATHLETICS

Aerialist: Your balance is superb and you're comfortable working at dizzying heights. +2 to Athletics rolls to keep your balance, and you're immune to attacks like being pushed or thrown from a height.

Dancer: Whether you're a ballet dancer or a stripper, you know how to express yourself through the medium of dance. You can use Athletics to incite an emotion or state of mind in people who watch you perform.

Guardian Angel: Thanks to your training and experience you're great at protecting other people when the lead starts flying. +2 to Athletics rolls to defend others (see *Fate Core*, page 159).

Vehicle Surfer: You have an innate feel for the bumps and sways that a vehicle experiences while traveling. Being in or on a moving vehicle never increases the opposition to your Athletics rolls.

BURGLARY

Practically Unlocked: You have extensive experience with low-quality locks and security systems. Once a session, you can defeat a security system with opposition of Fair (+2) or less without rolling or using your action for the exchange.

No One Ever Checks There: When you find a place to hide something, it stays hidden. You can choose to actively oppose attempts to find something you've hidden in an object, building, or vehicle with Burglary even if you aren't there.

Surveillance System Expert: You know the blind spots of most stock surveillance systems, and you're great at spotting the flaws in bespoke systems as well. You can roll Burglary instead of Stealth to stay

hidden from anyone watching via surveillance system.

White Hat: It takes a thief to catch a thief. +2 to rolls to figure out how a security system was bypassed or a heist carried out.

CONTACTS

Crowdsourcing: You don't have all of the answers, but the Global DataNet does. Once a session, if you have access to the GDN, you can use your Contacts in place of any other skill to find any information.

Fixer: You have contacts that can help you to get vital gear very cheaply. Once a session, you can use Contacts to obtain an item instead of taking resource stress or consequences. This is an overcome action opposed by the cost of the purchase. If you succeed at a cost, your contact may ask for a favor in return or might be less willing to help you in the future.

I Will Find You: You have specialized contacts to help you find people. +2 to Contacts rolls when tracking someone's location.

Requisition: You're part of a secret organization or government agency from which you can requisition useful equipment. If you can persuade your bosses that what you're doing aligns with your organization's objectives, once a scenario you can requisition gear (excluding augments) with a cost of up to Epic (+7). It can be a single item of Epic (+7) cost or multiple items with a combined cost of Epic (+7). Requisitioned gear must be returned intact at the end of the scenario, and failure to do this will result in sanctions.

DECEIVE

Catfish: This is a social engineering term for someone who uses the anonymity of electronic communication to assume another identity. +2 to Deceive when convincing others of a false identity via GDN-only communication.

Confidence Trickster: You always have a con job on the go, which can be a useful way of getting what you need. Once a session, you can roll Deceive to defend against the resource stress incurred upon buying an item. If you must take a consequence to absorb any remaining stress,

that consequence relates to the response of your irate victim or victims.

Convolute: You can talk in such a twisty way that people find it really hard to tell whether you're lying or telling the truth. +2 to Deceive rolls whenever you speak in an unnecessarily complicated way.

False Identity: You have airtight documentation backing up an alternate identity.

This identity is represented by a replacement aspect, which you choose when you take this stunt. Attempts to link your identities encounter +2 opposition. Also, when you're presenting yourself under an alternate identity, switch one of your aspects to your replacement aspect. You can purchase this stunt multiple times to set up more than one false identity.

EMPATHY

He's More Afraid Of Us Than We Are Of Him: You're good at reading the behavior of animals. Once a session, you can declare a story detail about an animal's emotions or state of mind without spending a fate point.

I Wasn't Born Yesterday: You're cynical and world-weary or just sharp at detecting lies. +2 to defend against attempts to create an advantage with Deceit.

Know Your Enemy: You empathize enough with someone to know their deepest fears—and use them to your advantage. After you create an advantage with Empathy related to someone's fears, you can scare or intimidate them with Empathy instead of Provoke.

Pack Mentality: You've studied the ways in which hybrid gene-splicing can affect human behavior. Choose a hybrid type when purchasing this stunt. +2 on Empathy rolls to discover aspects belonging to a hybrid of that type.

FIGHT

Augmented Attack: You have a knack for dealing maximum damage with your cybernetic limb. Unarmed attacks with your cyberlimb have Weapon:1, added to the Weapon rating of any installed cyberweapon.

Augmented Parry: You're skilled at using your cyberlimb defensively. Performing a



full defense gives you +4 against Fight attacks, rather than the usual +2.

Dragon Lash: You launch a rapid flurry of blows to clear the space around you in a fight. Roll an overcome action using Fight, opposed by the Physique of each character in your zone. Anyone you succeed against is forced into a neighboring zone of their choice.

Martial Adept: You make deadly combat look like a beautiful dance. Moving with the grace of a master, you lay low all the enemies in your path with strength, speed, and finesse. Ignore the teamwork bonus a mob of nameless NPCs would usually get to defend against your Fight attacks, or gain +2 when attacking groups of more significant characters.

Pack Fighting: You're used to fighting as part of a group and can turn weight of numbers into a strong advantage. When you attack someone who's been attacked with Fight by one of your team this exchange, +2 to your Fight roll.

Steel Dragon Strike: You strike a cybernetically enhanced blow, whether a punch or kick, designed to stagger your enemy. When you attack with your cyberlimb and succeed with style, you may spend a shift to inflict a situation aspect like **Stunned** or **Knocked Back** instead of gaining a boost.

Unsafe Strike: You've disabled your cyberlimbs' safety limiters. Once a session, you can add +3 to an attack with your cyberlimb. If you use this stunt more than once, each further use disables the cyberlimb used, giving you a **Disabled Cyberlimb** aspect. A disabled limb can be repaired in half an hour with a Tech roll against Fair (+2) opposition.

HACK

Atypical Neurology: Your brain works just a little bit differently from most, making you resistant to damaging algorithms. Supplemental Neural Armor:1.

Botnet: You have seeded the Global DataNet with thousands of copies of a simple attack routine. By spending a fate point, you can attack a Hyper Object, subnet, or cloud that is connected directly to the GDN without needing to bypass its Firewall. Since you don't actually enter the target network, you don't suffer any of the usual effects if the target network shuts

down. If a Hyper Object is attached to a subnet or cloud and is not publicly available, you can't use your botnet to attack that Hyper Object.

Cutter: You're an expert at bypassing firewalls and breaking into systems. +2 to overcome actions using Hack to gain unauthorized access to a target.

Drone Strike: You've got a backdoor in a Government Access Network that controls the area's law enforcement or military drones. Once a session, you can call down a drone strike on your enemies. To do so, roll Hack to attack everyone in an outdoor zone of your choice with your full result and Weapon:2. If you cause significant collateral damage with this stunt, an investigation will be launched to hunt you down.

Interference: Something about your electromagnetic signature makes your TAP harder to hack. When you're opposing an attempt to hack into your TAN or TAP, +2 to your Firewall roll.

INVESTIGATE

Data Junkie: You're adept at following the twisting, turning paths that lead to the juiciest data on the Global DataNet. Whenever you successfully research a target on the GDN, you discover or create two situation aspects rather than one, but only one of them gets a free invoke.

Elementary: You search a crime scene and draw astonishingly accurate conclusions based on scant evidence. Once a session, you can declare a story detail related to events that occurred at a crime scene without spending a fate point.

Moving in the Shadows: You understand the lives of people who have fallen through society's substantial cracks. +2 to Investigate rolls to pick up information in areas of poverty and violence, such as slums and gang turf.

One More Thing: You're good at using evidence to trip up vulnerable perps. If you have at least one situation aspect representing evidence that implicates a target, you can use Investigate instead of Rapport or Provoke to extract a confession.

Panopticon: +2 to Investigate rolls to reproduce events that occurred at a given location at least 24 hours ago, by stitching together audio and video from



easy-to-access sources, such as traffic cameras or publicly posted selfies.

NOTICE

Above the Crowd: You are accustomed to overcrowded urban environments, and you do not suffer increased difficulty on Notice rolls due to surrounding crowds.

A Glance Is All It Takes: You're able to see details in a glance that would take most people a slow and extensive look around. You can use Notice instead of Investigate to spot any clue that isn't purposefully hidden.

Alert: You're always on the lookout for signs of danger. You gain a steal (page 75) in the first exchange of every conflict.

The Scent of Fear: For whatever reason your sense of smell is unnaturally sharp and you can literally smell emotions on other people. This permits you to roll Notice instead of Empathy to detect someone's emotional state.

PHYSIQUE

Clean Air Is For the Weak: You've spent so much of your life breathing hazardous chemicals that your lungs are accustomed to it. +2 to defend against attacks or aspects from tear gas, smoke, smog, and other non-lethal gases.

Cyber Tolerance: Your body is adaptable or extremely robust, and you can cope with receiving cybernetic implants better than the average person. +2 to Physique rolls to resist Strain attacks (page 169).

Prime Specimen: Even if you aren't traditionally beautiful or handsome, your physical fitness makes you attractive to others when you display it. After flexing, dancing, or otherwise demonstrating your physical fitness, you can use Physique instead of Rapport to seduce or impress a compatible target.

Tough: Gain an additional mild physical consequence slot. To buy this stunt, you must have an aspect like **Up-Sized** or **Tough Hybrid**, and you can only buy it once.

PILOT

Ace Pilot: When you choose this stunt, pick a vehicle type, such as aircraft, watercraft, drones, or golemmech. You gain +2 to Pilot rolls in that vehicle type. You can

buy this stunt more than once to excel at piloting multiple types of craft. When you write down this stunt, add your vehicle type—for example: Ace Drone Pilot.

Fanatic: You're really interested in a particular type of vehicle and can spend hours enthusing about them with other fans. You can use Pilot instead of Rapport when you're talking to someone who shares your interest. When you write down this stunt, add your vehicle type—for example: Golemmech Fanatic.

Martyr: You're not afraid to risk yourself to preserve your drone or vehicle, allowing you to perform extremely aggressive defensive maneuvers. When a vehicle you're piloting is attacked, once you know the final shift value of the attack, you can choose to suffer the stress instead of your vehicle. If you're inside the vehicle, you take physical stress; if you're piloting the vehicle remotely, you take mental stress.

Space Pilot: You must take this stunt in order to pilot spacecraft.

Turn Left Now! You can quickly evaluate the surrounding streets and buildings to find places a vehicle might pass through. By spending a fate point, you can declare that you know a way around an urban traffic obstacle: gridlock, stoplights, construction barriers, and so on. This detour might be a back alley, a deserted shopping complex, an underground tunnel, or some other navigable but non-obvious route. You can use this detour without losing speed or travel time. If any pursuers see you using this detour, they can use it too. This applies to VTOL travel as well as ground travel.

PROVOKE

Blackmailer: You excel at leveraging blackmail material to make people do what you want. As long as you've got a situation aspect representing dirt on someone, they can't use stress to absorb your mental attacks.

Feral Throwback (Hybrids Only): Regardless of your physical appearance, your genetic cocktail is closer to animal than human. Your atavistic nature sets people on edge and makes it easier for you to intimidate them. +2 to Provoke rolls against anyone who isn't a hybrid.

I Carry a Badge: You've found that your badge is just as effective as your gun at giving you an edge in hostile situations. The first time you produce and display legitimate law enforcement or security credentials during a scene, you gain +2 to your Provoke roll to create an advantage.

The Bigger Dick: When people are a dick to you, you respond by being an even bigger dick. As long as you return insult for insult and threat for threat, you can defend against Provoke with Provoke.

You Should Be Ashamed: Whether you're a disciplinarian nun or a reproachful grandfather figure, a rebuke from you carries more weight than it would from someone else. +2 to Provoke rolls when you're trying to make someone feel guilty or ashamed.

RAPPORT

I Walked These Streets: Something about your history or your attitude makes gang members more willing to accept you as one of their kind.

+2 to Rapport rolls when using overcome to persuade gang members to help you.

Likeable Drunk: You're particularly likeable and pleasant when you're liquored up. As long as you have a situation aspect like **Drunk** (or if you're high on a suitable drug), +2 on Rapport rolls.

Nothing to See Here:

You're great at convincing people to mind their own business. Once a scene, you can spend a fate point to make a single supporting NPC or mob of nameless NPCs ignore what you and your companions are doing—or at least not raise an alarm.

The Better Person: Insults and threats slide off you like water off a duck's back. By staying calm and refocusing the conversation, you can defend against Provoke actions with Rapport.

RESOURCES

Black Hats For Hire: There's a black market for software exploits, and you have the necessary connections to access it. Once a session, you can automatically succeed on a Hack action to bypass a firewall by taking resource stress equal to its Firewall rating.

Doctor On Call: You have a doctor on retainer. When you're treated by them, you can begin recovering a consequence without a roll by taking resource stress equal to the stress value of the consequence.



Gambler: When you get a payment and gamble it (page 75), you can re-roll one of the dice.

Unlaundered Money: You have illegal money that you can only spend at places that don't ask too many questions. Once a session, you can reduce the resource stress of a purchase you make on the black market by one (to a minimum of one).

SHOOT

Gun Fu I: When you're wielding a gun, you can defend against Fight using Shoot.

Gun Fu II: You can simultaneously sprint and create an advantage like *In My Sights* or *Called Shot*. Roll Shoot or Athletics, whichever is lower, and apply the result to both actions. To take this stunt, you must have Gun Fu I.

Gun Fu III: As Gun Fu II, but you roll the higher of your Shoot or Athletics skills. To take this stunt, you must have Gun Fu II.

Shoot It in the Eye: You understand the designs of drones and robots well enough to know where their vulnerable sensor inputs are located. +2 to your Shoot rolls when creating an advantage on a drone or robot that represents the loss of one of its senses, such as video, audio, or motion detection.

Small-Unit Tactics: You're experienced at using cover formations, covering fire, and room-clearing tactics with a squad. When you successfully create a situation aspect related to teamwork (*Two By Two Cover Formation*), it gets two free invokes rather than one. If you succeed with style, you also gain a boost.

Trick Shot: You're good at showing off your skill with a gun by making implausibly difficult shots. +2 to Shoot rolls to create an advantage or overcome when you use a ricochet or shoot a tiny target—hitting a button to turn off a death machine or shooting out a camera around a corner.

STEALTH

Backstab: You are a knife in the dark. When you attack someone from behind and you have an advantage related to your stealth (*They'll Never See Me Coming*), your attack gains +1 Weapon rating. When you use this stunt, you must take an action to re-establish stealth before you can use it again.

Lost in a Crowd: When you're hiding in a crowd, +2 to your opposition to being spotted or recognized.

Night Terror: You prey on others' primordial fear of darkness to terrify them. You can roll Stealth instead of Provoke to create an advantage related to fear by flitting in and out of the shadows, making scary noises, and so on.

SURVIVAL

Animal Expert: You have a deep well of practical experience to draw on when dealing with non-human life. When you use Survival to create an advantage on a creature related to its nature, make two aspects rather than one. Only one of these aspects gets a free invoke.

Scrounger: You excel at finding edible food and potable water in difficult circumstances. +2 to Survival rolls to find food and water in the wilderness or other harsh environments, including ruined cities.

Tracker: The ability to read the land is a dying art, but it lives on in you. +2 to Survival rolls to follow a target's tracks through a wilderness environment.

Wastelander: You know how to survive in environments that would quickly kill other people. You may use Survival instead of Physique to defend yourself from environmental attacks.

TECH

Demolitions Expert: When you use Tech to provide a teamwork bonus to an explosive attack, you add +2 instead of the usual +1. See page 143 for rules on explosives.

Have You Tried Rebooting It?: You know a few tricks to get a defective device up and running again temporarily. By spending a fate point, you can cancel the effects of an aspect or consequence that represents broken equipment for a single scene.

Jury-Rig: You can create useful devices out of any junk you can get your hands on. As long as you've got access to plentiful junk, you can make technological equipment without suffering from increased opposition due to poor raw materials.

Master Repairer: +2 to Tech rolls to repair machinery, but not characters. This stunt also justifies being able to repair consequences of moderate or worse severity.



Technobabble: You can use complex technical descriptions to shock and awe anyone without your extensive technical background, making them more likely to go along with your plans. You can use Tech in place of Rapport when you're persuading someone to do what you want, as long as the plan involves extensive use of technology.

WILL

Adaptable Mind: +2 to defend against Strain attacks (page 169) using Will.

Concentration: You're skilled at concentrating even when surrounded by distractions. +2 to Will rolls when opposing or overcoming something that might distract or shock you, or when overcoming aspects like **Stunned**.

Drug Connoisseur: Due to your constitution, disposition, or past experience, you don't get hooked easily. +2 to Will rolls to avoid addiction.

Psi-Resistant: Your mind is unusually resistant to zeek powers. +2 to defend against uses of Telepathy.

Wild Talent: Like other "blips" or "weaks," you can manifest a single psionic talent with very little staying power. When you take this stunt, choose one psionic power. You can use it at Mediocre (+0) even though you aren't a zeek. Whenever you use the power, you take at least one shift of mental stress, even if you succeed.

ZEK STUNTS

Enhanced Ability: You're particularly gifted with a single psionic power. When you buy this stunt, choose one of your zeek powers. When you succeed at a cost with that power, reduce the stress you take by one shift.

Freeek: Replace the **Zeek** keyword in your high concept with **Freeek**. In addition to the invokes and compels suggested for zeek, your powers now manifest in extremely visible ways. Also, you're now vulnerable to compels to show off your abilities because you want people to fear and respect you. You can invoke **Freeek** to help you with Biokinesis and Thermokinesis actions, and you get +1 whenever you create an advantage using Biokinesis or Thermokinesis.

Multitasking: You're so experienced with one of your powers that you can sustain its psionic effects without affecting your ability to do other things. When you take this stunt, pick one of your zeek powers. Sustained psionic aspects you create with that power can't be invoked or compelled against you to represent distracting mental effort. You can buy this stunt multiple times, once for each zeek power.

Peek: Replace the **Zeek** keyword in your high concept with **Peek**. In addition to the invokes and compels suggested for **Zeek**, you're now obsessed with other people and finding out what makes them tick, and this can be invoked or compelled against you. You can invoke **Peek** to help you with Telepathy and Biokinesis actions, and you get +2 whenever you create an advantage using Telepathy.

Tweek: Replace the **Zeek** keyword in your high concept with **Tweek**. In addition to the invokes and compels suggested for **Zeek**, you now tend to prefer the most direct and forceful approach possible, and this can be invoked or compelled against you. You can invoke **Tweek** to help you with Electrokinetics and Telekinetics actions, and you get +1 to attack using these powers.





SPECIAL SYSTEMS

Whether you're breaking into a high-security data fortress, coordinating a squadron of surveillance drones, bending reality with the power of your mind, or just trying to pay off your debt to the local crime syndicate, this chapter has the rules you'll need.

SCALE

An entity's Scale indicates its approximate size. See the table below. The size shown in the chart refers to the entity's longest axis. For a human, this would be the distance from head to feet; for a vehicle, front to rear.

EFFECTS OF SCALE

Unless specified otherwise, an entity can only pick up or carry entities of its own Scale or smaller.

1: An entity will always win a contest of strength against an entity of smaller Scale. Some augments or other effects change Scale in particular situations, though—for example, Advanced Muscle Augmentation means you count as one rung higher on the Scale ladder for feats or contests of strength.

2: An entity whose Scale is above zero adds its Scale to its Armor rating. When an entity's Scale is negative, successful attacks against it are more damaging; add the amount by which its Scale is below zero to the attacker's Weapon rating.

Example: Malice wants to bring down the flying drone that's reporting her position to nearby security troops. She digs a length of pipe out of a trash bin and takes a swing at the drone. She rolls a Good (+3) attack, and the drone only rolls a Fair (+2) dodge in defense. Normally this would be a one-stress hit. However, the drone has a Terrible (-2) Scale, which adds 2 to Malice's Weapon rating, improving the attack to a 3-stress hit. The drone spins away, shedding sparks from a large dent in its side, and Malice runs away before the security troops can close in on her.

Aspect invokes do not alter any of the above effects.

Whenever an equipment listing shows an Armor rating, this rating accounts for its Scale rating. Note that some fragile objects may have Armor ratings smaller than their Scale ratings.

Interface Zero does not use the effects of relative scale given on page 67 of the *Fate System Toolkit*.

ENTITY SCALE

SCALE	SIZE	EXAMPLES
Abysmal (-3)	¼ meter	Pistol
Terrible (-2)	½ meter	Small dog
Poor (-1)	1 meter	Large dog
Mediocre (+0)	2 meters	Human, motorcycle
Average (+1)	3 meters	Economy-sized car
Fair (+2)	4 meters	Full-sized car, light golemmech
Good (+3)	6 meters	Medium golemmech, pickup truck, small tank
Great (+4)	10 meters	Heavy golemmech, bus
Superb (+5)	15 meters	Small yacht, fighter jet
Fantastic (+6)	20 meters	Trailer truck

INITIATIVE

In *Fate Core* conflicts, characters act in order of their Notice skill in physical conflicts or Empathy in mental conflicts. Ties are resolved by comparing secondary or tertiary skills: Athletics and then Physique for physical conflicts; Rapport and then Will for mental conflicts.

In *Interface Zero*, turn order in a conflict is worked out a bit differently.

STEALS

Characters may have aspects, gear, or stunts that enable them to steal the initiative and act at a moment of their choosing. An invoke or effect used in this way is called a **steal**.

Example 1: The Wireless Reflexes augment provides one steal per level of the augment. So, someone with Wireless Reflexes III has 3 steals each exchange, making it very likely they'll be able to act exactly when they want to.

*Example 2: Mustafa is **Paranoid About Danger**. It makes sense that, by invoking this aspect, he gets 1 steal in the first exchange of a conflict if he's just been ambushed.*

If multiple characters use a steal, whoever spends the most wins the initiative. On a tie, compare skill ranks as in *Fate Core*.

Steals provided by stunts and equipment refresh at the end of each exchange unless they apply to a specific situation, such as winning initiative in the first exchange of a conflict.

STEP 1: DECIDE WHO ACTS FIRST

The first combatant to act depends on the situation. Often a conflict is precipitated by a single person's actions and it makes sense that they act first. Characters may spend steals to act first instead, as described above.

STEP 2: DECIDE WHO ACTS NEXT

The character who has just acted chooses who acts next. The chosen person can use a steal to defer their action to later, in which case they decide who acts

next. Anyone who hasn't acted yet this exchange can spend steals to win the initiative for themselves, if they spend more steals than the chosen person.

STEP 3: DECIDE WHO ACTS FIRST IN THE NEXT EXCHANGE

The last person to act in the exchange decides who acts first at the start of the next exchange. That means if the players make all of the NPCs act last they run the risk of being stomped by all of the NPCs acting first in the next exchange. Steals can be used as normal.

Steps 2 and 3 are repeated until the end of the conflict.

GMs, to keep track of who has acted so far in an exchange, we recommend giving each player a token to keep in front of them, which they remove or flip after taking their action. Otherwise, you could keep a list of the players and NPCs in the conflict and use a tally to track their actions.

MONEY

THE RESOURCES SKILL

In *Interface Zero*, your social standing is determined by the size of your bank account. People who have money get respect. They get invitations. They get access. When you're rich, you sometimes don't have to spend a single credit to get what you want. Just the fact that you could hand out an enormous amount of money is enough to open doors that most people never even see.

Your Resources skill represents your wealth and income. It's also your ability to use your financial status to accomplish social tasks, like a credit-driven version of Rapport or Provoke. However, to use Resources this way, your wealth must be obvious. The people you're interacting with must know you by reputation, or be able to check your credit rating, or clearly judge your wealth by your clothes, your car, or the company you keep.



Overcome: You can use your financial status to overcome a social obstacle. You might use it to get into an exclusive restaurant, get inside information on

an upcoming corporate merger, or get a face-to-face meeting with a government official today.

 **Create an Advantage:** You can use your money to give your opinion more weight or to change someone else's opinion. When you talk about your thirty-meter self-piloting luxury yacht, the impressionable young actor you're with might be **Dazzled By Your Wealth**. Or if you use your business contacts to spread unpleasant rumors about a certain corporation's chief financial officer, that corporation might have a **Public Relations Nightmare**.

 **Attack:** Resources can be used to attack if you're operating at the level of an organization. See page 211 for more information on organizations.

 **Defend:** Resources can be used to defend if you're operating at the level of an organization. See page 211 for more information on organizations.

You don't roll Resource when you actually spend money. For that, you use stress and consequences.

RESOURCE STRESS AND CONSEQUENCES

In this version of *Interface Zero*, you don't have to keep track of exactly how many credits you have. Instead, you represent your dwindling funds using resource stress boxes and consequences.

You also get one each of mild, moderate, and severe resource consequence slots.

At Superb (+5) Resources, you gain an additional mild resource consequence slot.

You can't use a resource consequence slot to absorb a physical or mental consequence, and vice versa. The only exception

is your extreme consequence slot, which you can use for any type of consequence. If you take an extreme resource consequence, you can't take any other extreme consequences until the next major milestone.

When you fill a resource stress box, you're spending money that you can easily replace. When you take a resource consequence, you're spending money that will have a long-term effect on you—perhaps you're dipping into your savings, selling off investments, or taking loans. Taking an extreme resource consequence represents getting so far into debt that it changes your entire life.

Here are some examples of resource consequences.

RESOURCE CONSEQUENCES

Mild	<i>Pawned Great-Granddad's Pocket Watch</i>
Moderate	<i>Cashed In My Stock Options</i>
Severe	<i>In Debt to the Yakuza</i>
Extreme	CHIMERA <i>Owns Me Now</i>

When you spend money, you take resource stress equal to the cost of the item. To absorb this stress, you can fill in a single resource stress box. If that doesn't absorb all the stress, you can take any number of consequences for which you have open slots available. For instance, if you're buying something with a Good (+3) cost, you could fill your third stress box, fill your first stress box and take a mild consequence, or take a moderate consequence.

Mediocre (+0) and Poor (-1) expenses deal you 1 resource stress. You can ignore Terrible (-2) and Abysmal (-3) expenses unless they become frequent. For instance, that bowl of noodles you bought from a street vendor might have only cost you a few credits—not enough to bother keeping track of—but buying noodles for everyone in your motorcycle gang might be a Poor (-1) expense or more.

Unlike physical or mental stress, resource stress doesn't take you out (*Fate Core*, page 168). If you do not have enough resource stress boxes and consequences available to absorb the stress from a purchase, you simply cannot make that purchase.

RESOURCE STRESS

RESOURCES SKILL RANK	RESOURCE STRESS BOXES
Mediocre (+0)	2
Average (+1) or Fair (+2)	3
Good (+3) or higher	4

CREDIT VALUES

COST RATING	GOODS	SERVICES	CREDITS
Abysmal (-3)	Vending machine drink	Tip for package delivery	10
Terrible (-2)	Fast food meal	Cab ride	50
Poor (-1)	Mild recreational drug	Commuter rail ticket	100
Mediocre (+0)	Basic toolkit	Hair stylist	250
Average (+1)	High-class restaurant meal	Night at a capsule motel	500
Fair (+2)	No-frills pistol	Minor medical treatment	1,000
Good (+3)	Submachine gun	Vehicle collision repair	2,500
Great (+4)	Cybernetic limb	Night at a luxury hotel	5,000
Superb (+5)	Economy car	Cosmetic surgery	10,000
Fantastic (+6)	Delivery van	Airline, Boston to Seattle	25,000
Epic (+7)	Civilian VTOL	Airline, London to Beijing non-stop	50,000
Legendary (+8)	Armored VTOL	Airline, Seoul to Buenos Aires non-stop	100,000

To recover resource stress and consequences, you have to get paid. You'll get paid for completing missions, fencing stolen goods, and so on. Payments are rated on the same adjective ladder as costs, and each payment can be used in one of two ways:

- Use it to clear a resource stress box or begin recovering a consequence, either of equal or lesser value. Rename the consequence to begin recovery, then wait adequate time for the consequence to be removed, following the rules in *Fate Core* (page 164). For example, if you used a Fantastic (+6) payment to begin recovering the severe consequence ***In Debt to the Yakuza***, you could rename the consequence to ***Paying Off the Yakuza***. After a full scenario you could remove that consequence entirely.
- Spend it to pay an expense of equal value without taking resource stress or consequences. If you have saved two payments of the same rank, you can combine them into a payment of one rank higher. For instance, you can combine two saved Fair (+2) payments into one Good (+3) payment. You can also reverse this process to split a payment into two of one rank lower.

All resource stress boxes clear at the end of a scenario. Your character finds a way to

make up for these small expenditures in between adventures.

The chart above shows the credit value of each cost rating, and gives examples of goods and services available for each cost rating.

For higher amounts, start at 250,000 credits for a +9 rank, and add 250,000 credits per additional rank.

SELLING AND TRADING

You can sell equipment in exchange for unspent payments. Typically you can exchange an item for an unspent payment one or two levels below the full cost of the item. GMs can adjust the payment value based on Rapport and Deceive rolls, aspects, the relationship between the buyer and seller, and so forth. The seller normally won't get the full cost of an item, since anyone willing to pay full price will just buy it from the manufacturer instead.

When trading one item for another, most trading partners will be willing to exchange items of equal cost.

If you sell an augment that replaced one of your organs or limbs, you are now missing a body part. This will give you an aspect such as ***Missing an Eye*** or ***Only One Arm*** until you can replace the body part with another augment. A cloned, organic replacement body part has a Fair (+2) cost, and provides no special benefit other than removing the aspect related to lacking that body part.

GAMBLING

With the GM’s permission, you can attempt to improve the value of an unspent payment by gambling or investing it. Simply roll four Fate dice—this roll can’t be modified in any way—and add the result to the payment value to get the new value. For certain gambling methods, such as a back-alley craps game, this might only take a few minutes. For a stock transaction or a real estate deal, this might take a day, a week, or longer.

Depending on your gambling method, you may not be able to risk certain payments. Your poker buddies may not be willing to wager more than a certain amount, and certain investment vehicles may require a high minimum level of investment.

Persistent good luck when gambling may have other consequences. If you just broke the bank at the casino, the owners may either ban you from the establishment, or send a few well-armed employees to reclaim the casino’s money. If your investments are paying off, con artists and tax collectors might be attracted by your new wealth.

RECOVERY

Whether you’re a mechanical or an organic life-form, recovering from injury follows the same process. The only differences are the skill used and the equipment needed.

Treating a consequence requires succeeding on an overcome action. To begin recovering an organic or psychological consequence, an Academics roll is required. For mechanical consequences, it’s a Tech roll. For moderate consequences or worse, the person treating the injury must have an aspect or stunt that justifies their ability to treat the injured.

The opposition to this roll and the time it takes the treated consequence to clear depend on the severity of the consequence, as shown in the Treatment Time and Opposition chart.

Extra shifts can be used to reduce the amount of time needed—for example, from “A few hours” to “An hour” with one

TREATMENT TIME AND OPPOSITION

DAMAGE	BASE TIMEFRAME	OPPOSITION
Mild consequence	Half an hour	Fair (+2)
Moderate consequence	A few hours	Great (+4)
Severe consequence	A day	Fantastic (+6)

shift, then to “Half an hour” with two shifts. Succeeding at a cost increases the timeframe by one step per negative shift rolled. For more on shifting timeframes, read page 197 of *Fate Core*.

Attempting to heal or repair your own consequence increases the opposition by +2.

Medical gear, advanced tool kits, and spare parts (for mechanicals) are considered aspects that can be invoked help on this roll. They can also be used to justify rolling to recover a moderate consequence or worse, rather than using a character’s aspect or stunt.

After succeeding on the recovery roll, change the name of the consequence to show that it’s recovering. For biological injuries this could mean that **Broken Leg** becomes **Splinted Leg**, or **Severe Concussion** becomes **Headaches**. For mechanical injuries the consequence is renamed to show that life—even mechanical life—is complex and that it can take a while to eliminate pernicious bugs following a repair or to bed in a new body part. **Crushed Cyber Leg** might become **Wearing in the New Leg**, or **Damaged Chest Cavity** might become **Intermittent Mild Electrical Fault**, for example.

A consequence slot holding a recovering consequence remains filled until the consequence recovers fully.

Mild consequences last until the next scene, moderate consequences last until the next session, and severe consequences last until the next scenario.

PSIONICS

As a psion—or zeek in slang terms—you’ve discovered how to manipulate the world around you with the power of your mind. You have access to a formidable set of abilities that includes manipulating matter, reading and controlling the thoughts of others, and holding



mastery over biological systems—all with nothing more than a thought.

#XRAYGUN: If you've recently started to manifest psionic abilities, don't start planning how to take over the world just yet. Most of the stories they tell about zeek powers are gross exaggerations designed to scare the normals. This stuff can give you a useful edge, but you have to balance that against the risk of being outed as a zeek and persecuted.

To become a psionic you must have an organic brain and can't be a cyber-monk. Add the keyword **Zeek** to your high concept, which can be used for invokes and compels related to your psychic powers.

Invoke: Use to assist you in channeling your psychic powers when you need a stronger effect.

Hostile Invoke: Others can invoke this when trying to turn others against you.

Compel: Zeeks are hated and distrusted, which means your interactions with others will be tense at best. Your powers might go awry at awkward moments. Also, you might feel compelled to side with other zeeks, even when it's not a smart idea, or use your powers in dangerous circumstances.

Zeek powers act just like skills—they sit in the same skill column, and advance as normal. However, you can't use a Mediocre (+0) power unless you spend a fate point. Doing so allows you to use one chosen power for the current scene, and you can only do this for one power each scene.

RANGE

Most psionic powers can be used on anything you can see, but the opposition increases with distance. Add +2 to the opposition per zone of range after the first.

BACKLASH

Using a zeek power puts substantial strain on your mind. If you attempt to overcome or create an advantage with a zeek power, but you fail, you have two options:

1) Your power goes horribly wrong and something unintended happens. This is a compel on the **Zeek** keyword of your high concept and gives you a fate point as

normal. If you take this option, you can't pay to refuse the compel.

2) You can succeed at a cost by taking mental stress equal to the shifts by which you failed.

*Example: Feral is trying to use her Pyrokinesis to set a fuel dump on fire. She needs Good (+3) but she rolled Average (+1). She can either accept a compel and let things go badly wrong or accept 2 mental stress to succeed at a cost. She chooses to take the stress and absorbs it with a mild consequence, **Brain-Fried**.*

PSIONIC ASPECTS

Zeek powers let you create situation aspects by manipulating reality with your powers. You could create aspects like **Conflagration** or **Shattered Mirror** with a brief burst of power, but sustained psionic aspects like **Telekinetic Grapple** or **Telepathic Link** require continual effort.

Sustained psionic aspects can be invoked or compelled against you because you're distracted by sustaining the aspect. You can choose to end your sustained psionic aspect at any time without using an action, but before dice are rolled.

You can sustain a single psionic aspect unless specified otherwise, but you can create one on a zone at +2 difficulty or split your shifts among targets to affect them all with the same aspect.

PSI DEFENSE

People are scared of zeeks for good reason; they can do terrible things with nothing but the power of their minds. The good news is that there are methods you can use to defend yourself from psionic tampering:

- Zeeks need to be able to see you to use their powers on you. Putting an object between you and a suspected zeek is a good way to defend yourself.
- It's harder to use zeek mojo on distant targets. If someone starts throwing around psychic powers and you can't hide behind something, put as much distance between you and them as possible.

- You always get to roll for defense when you're targeted by a zeek. Maybe you roll Athletics to slap out the flames on your clothes before the zeek can do you significant damage with her Thermokinesis, or you roll Physique to resist your bio-electrical energy from being drained by Electrokinesis.
- It's harder for zeeks to use their powers when there are loud noises, flashing lights, or other distractions around. You can invoke relevant aspects to help you defend against psionic abilities.

ZEEK POWERS

These are the powers most commonly possessed by zeeks.

BIOKINESIS

#XRAYGUN: Some zeeks demonstrate amazing control over their own bodies and minds. They can heal injuries, speed or slow their metabolism, hold their breath for minutes at a time, and a whole bunch more. The scary part is that they can do it to other people to cause psychosomatic injuries or affect their emotional state. Using this ability on someone else is very obvious, though, because you have to touch them and the energy link makes your hands glow.

By touching someone, you can use Biokinesis to put your conscious mind in charge of bodily processes that are usually managed by their autonomic nervous system. You can manipulate their neurotransmitters, hormone levels, and other systems to achieve a wide variety of effects. You can also use this power on yourself.

If you accept a compel due to a failed Biokinesis roll, this causes a complication resulting from a negative feedback loop, inflicting on yourself something similar to what you were trying to create or heal in your target.



Overcome: You can use Biokinesis to remove an aspect like **Drunk** or

Fatigued by altering the levels of drugs or fatigue toxins in the blood. You can also accelerate healing systems, prompting a consequence to begin recovering even without any medical equipment at hand.



Create an Advantage: You can use a burst of power to alter someone's hormone and neurotransmitter levels to create a particular mental, emotional, or biological state, such as **Hyper-Alert**, **Terrified**, **Fatigued**, **Poison Resistant**, or **Blissed Out**. They can oppose you with Physique. As long as you continue touching the target, you can concentrate to sustain the effect indefinitely. You can also use this ability to sense someone's physical condition, detect illnesses, check whether someone is lying based on physiological responses, and so forth.



Attack: You can harm your target with psychosomatic injuries, temporarily stop his heart, or otherwise injure him thanks to your control over his body. These attacks are defended against with Physique. If your target tries to avoid your touch in the first place, you attack with the lower of your Biokinesis and Fight, and he defends with the higher of his Athletics and Physique.



Defend: If you've established an aspect that justifies it, you can defend with Biokinesis—or help someone you're touching defend—against relevant biological or mental attacks. For example, **Poison Resistant** would let you use Biokinesis in place of Physique to defend against a poison.

ELECTROKINESIS

#XRAYGUN: Electricity is everywhere in today's world, and that makes people seriously worried about zeeks who can manipulate it. These guys can generate huge static electricity fields and zap you with the discharge, drain the juice out of electric devices, and even call down lightning on a target during a thunderstorm.

ELECTROKINESIS AND CHARACTERS

When you use Electrokinesis on a droid, cyborg, bot, drone or other character, you can attack them and create advantages but can't just drain their power to instantly turn them off with a single overcome roll unless the GM agrees.

You can usually recognize a zeek channeling electricity by the way their hair stands on end and the small sparks of static electricity that jump from their body as the charge builds. If you see something like that and hear an ominous humming sound, make sure you're well insulated from the ground.

Much as a zeek with thermokinesis affects the energy levels of atoms to create heat or cold, you manipulate matter at the atomic level by altering the flow of electrons. This makes you a master of electricity.

 **Overcome:** Draining and siphoning electrons can get you past electrically powered obstacles or help you disable dangerous machines. You might also intimidate someone with a mass of crawling sparks, impress crowds with musical electric discharges, or in an emergency temporarily power devices by draining your own bioelectric energy, giving you a physical consequence.

 **Create an Advantage:** By ripping electrons from a substance you can create a substantial **Static Electricity Field**. You can do this to make people's hair stand on end, attract lightweight items (polystyrene peanuts, silk, streams of water, and such) or prepare a big electric shock. You can also touch an object and drain the electrons from it, grounding it through your feet and making it **Powerless**. You can also transfer the electricity from a powered device or a **Static Electricity Field** to another device, making it **Temporarily Powered**. You can also sense the flow of electrons in the air or through a device.



Attack: If you're draining the electrons from an electrical object or you've established a **Static Electricity Field**, you can direct large flows of electrons through the air to attack your opponents with electrical discharges. If you use this power in the midst of a thunderstorm, you can cause slight changes in the nearby electron flow to attract lightning strikes to your enemies. Lightning has a Weapon rating based on the intensity of the storm.

When you successfully attack someone with electricity—whether static, or lightning, or otherwise—you also inflict a **Stunned** boost on them. If these flashy attacks don't suit you, you can instead attack someone by touching them and draining their bioelectric energy.



Defend: By using Electrokinesis to manipulate the flow of electrons, you can defend against any electrical attack, including uses of this power, stun-guns, and batons.

TELEKINESIS

#XRAYGUN: Nobody knows how telekinesis works, and anyone who tells you otherwise is lying. It's probably some quantum bullshit about manipulating the strong and weak forces or something like that, but the upshot is you can look at something and make it move without having to touch it. Whatever it is we do, we're not immune to the laws of physics. The heavier an object is, the more mental effort it takes to lift it—I've seen a zeek lift a truck, but he blew a vein in the process and he's never been the same since. To channel the energies involved you have to make gestures with your hands, and the "ripples" of telekinetic force you send are visible, like waves of heat over hot pavement. So when objects start getting flung around telekinetically, it's pretty obvious who's doing it.

Telekinesis lets you lift, push, pull, hold, and otherwise manipulate objects you can see. The opposition starts the same as if you were doing the action physically and increases with range, as described before.

If you're using Telekinesis to do something that requires knowledge or finesse of some kind—such as disarming a bomb—use a modified challenge as in *Fate Core* (page 172), rolling Telekinesis and then the relevant skill to determine the results.

Example: Feral wants to remotely hot-wire a car two zones away to create a distraction. This is resolved as a challenge: first she must succeed on a Telekinesis roll to remotely begin the hot-wire, and then succeed on a Burglary roll to actually start the car. The opposition starts at Fair (+2) for both actions, but the opposition to the Telekinesis roll increases by +2 because of the distance. Because someone attacked her during this exchange, she had to defend herself successfully in order to perform one of the other rolls.

Overcome: You can use Telekinesis to do anything at range that you would normally have to do up close. You might flip levers, disarm a bomb, push a car out of the way, smash through a barricade, or untie a rope. An opponent can provide active opposition with Athletics (or another skill if they can justify it) by blocking your line of sight to your target.



Example: Feral wants to untie her partner while staying hidden behind some crates two zones away. If she were doing it in person the opposition would be Average (+1) but the extra zone of range increases it by two to Good (+3).

Create an Advantage: Using a quick burst of power, you can move, break, and throw objects—for example, knocking someone's gun out of their hand to make them **Disarmed** or breaking a mirror to add **Shattered Glass** to the scene. Sustained use of Telekinesis lets you hold, levitate, and manipulate targets instead, though unwilling targets can defend with a relevant skill—for example, Athletics to get out of the way of your energy wave, or Physique to hang on to something so you can't pick them up.

Once you've created an advantage to establish sustained telekinetic control over something, you can then use it to attack your opponents (see Attack below).

Example: Feral wants to float a bad guy in mid-air and turn him around so he can't shoot at Feral's partner. The guy's pretty heavy, so the GM tells Feral the opposition starts at Fair (+2). She's three zones away, so the difficulty increases by four for a total of Fantastic (+6).

If you telekinetically lift or grapple someone, they can attempt to overcome your grasp by distracting you, intimidating you, or physically grabbing hold of something and trying to overcome your grip with raw strength. You can oppose any action they take with your Telekinesis.

Attack: You can use direct telekinetic force to "punch" a target at a distance. This is a straightforward Telekinesis attack that's defended against with Notice—the defender has to see the faint ripples of telekinetic energy and get out of the way.

You can also attack your foes with a telekinetically controlled object. To do this you must have established a relevant aspect (**Levitating Shards of**

Glass, Floating Gun). What the attack does depends on the object: the **Floating Gun** could be invoked to pierce soft cover and it might have a Weapon rating, whereas the **Levitating Shards of Glass** could be invoked to increase the damage against a squishy target and justify lacerations and other similar consequences.



Defend: Using a pulse of counter-force, you can slow or redirect attacks to defend yourself or a nearby ally. This works against punches and other relatively slow-moving attacks such as thrown knives or telekinetically hurled objects but not bullets. This is a straightforward Telekinesis defend.

You can also put a telekinetically controlled object between an attack and its target to use it as a shield. In this case you must have established a relevant aspect like **Levitating Sheet of Steel**. You can invoke this aspect to aid your Telekinesis defense, and it justifies using Telekinesis to block bullets or other fast-moving attacks.

If you successfully defend against an attack by using a telekinetically controlled living target, they suffer the shifts of stress you avoided by putting them in harm's way. However, if your victim is conscious, they can flail and twist in the air to defend themselves, rolling Athletics to defend against your Telekinesis roll. Any shifts of stress they avoid with their defense are passed back to you and, if they roll better than you, they add their shifts to the damage you take. If the original attack has a Weapon rating, both you and the living shield take its full value in stress if you take any shifts of stress from the attack.

Example: Feral uses a levitating gang member to defend against a cop who's just opened fire. The cop rolls a Good (+3) attack and Feral gets a Fair (+2) Telekinesis result, so she will take one stress and pass the other two to her human shield. However, the gang member twists in the air to avoid the shot and rolls Great (+4) on his Athletics roll to defend, giving him two shifts over Feral. The zeek was overconfident in her ability to block the attack and didn't bother moving at all, so when the gang member

manages to wriggle out of the bullet's path, it hits her for a total of five shifts—three from the cop's attack plus two from the human shield's shifts on his defense. If the gang member had rolled Average (+1), then he would have taken one stress and Feral would have taken two.

TELEPATHY

#XRAYGUN: Zeeks can do a whole host of crazy shit, but telepathy is the ability that freaks people out the most. Everyone has thoughts, fantasies, and secrets they'd rather keep private, and the idea that someone might violate your mind and steal your secrets is terrifying. Fueling the paranoia is the fact that telepathy is the most subtle zeek power. A clumsy attempt to rip information out of your head will alert you to what's happening, but an expert can be in and out with your most secret thoughts without you even noticing.

When you concentrate on someone you can see, you can entangle your neurons with his at the quantum level. With this uncanny synchronization you can read the subject's thoughts, project your own thoughts into his mind, try to take him out with hostile thoughts, or force him to perform simple actions.



Create an Advantage: To use any telepathic effect you first need to entangle your thoughts with the subject's. To do this to an involuntary target, roll Telepathy opposed by Will to establish a **Telepathic Link**. This is a sustained psionic aspect that allows mind-to-mind communication at any distance.

You can establish as many simultaneous telepathic links as you wish, but they all disappear when you sleep.

You can establish a **Group Link** among anyone to whom you're currently linked. Anyone in the group can communicate mentally with any or all of the others and can create advantages related to secret plans and superior communication. A **Group Link** justifies teamwork bonuses on some actions even if you aren't physically

together, but it can also be invoked or compelled against you because it is distracting and leaves thoughts unguarded.

*Example: Feral and her team are planning to exfiltrate a corp scientist, so she establishes a **Telepathic Link** with the guy so she can find out about his daily routine. When the team's getting ready to start the mission she creates a link with each of them and puts them in a **Group Link**. She writes this down as:*

Telepathic Link: Dr. Gerard Frome

Group Link: Malice, Zero, Rex

When you're in line of sight to someone with whom you have a **Telepathic Link**, your power is substantially increased. You can discover the target's mental aspects, find out information he knows, implant temporary minor beliefs in his mind, or even create illusory feedback to confuse or bewilder him. By issuing simple commands ("Drop the gun.") you can even create aspects like **Disarmed**.

You can read a visible target's surface thoughts by creating another advantage, rolling Telepathy opposed by Will. Delving deeper is difficult and will draw attention to your intrusion. As you rummage in the target's head, he finds himself experiencing the thoughts you're trying to read, and his opposition increases according to how hidden or secret they are. A mild secret or something barely hidden gives him +2 to his opposition, whereas his deepest, darkest secrets give +6—or even higher for subconscious thoughts of which even he is unaware.

If you draw attention to yourself by delving into someone's thoughts, speaking to him telepathically, succeeding at a cost on a Telepathy action, or otherwise making your intrusion obvious, he can attempt to oust you from his mind by overcoming using Will opposed by your Telepathy.



Overcome: Once you've established a **Telepathic Link**, you can use Telepathy to get past annoying guards ("You don't need to see our identification.") and similar obstacles.



Attack: Once you've established a **Telepathic Link** with a target, and as

long as you can see them, you can attempt to take them out by initiating a psychic conflict. If you win, you can render them catatonic or unconscious, cause them to commit suicide, or gain almost complete control over them for the remainder of the scene.

Because your minds are entangled, commencing a psychic conflict with your opponent means they can also attack you mentally. The usual skills for mental conflicts apply, except that you can defend yourself with your Telepathy power instead of your Will.

If the target moves out of sight, you can still talk to them in their head to attack them mentally, but this is a normal mental attack that requires some form of justification.



Defend: You can defend yourself or an ally with whom you have a **Telepathic Link** against telepathic attacks and oppose the creation of telepathic advantages.

THERMOKINESIS

#XRAYGUN: Like I mentioned before, zeeks can't shoot balls of fire out of their hands. How would that even work? Some zeeks can manipulate the vibrations of atoms in stuff, though, making it heat up or cool down a lot in a very short space of time. That means they can make stuff spontaneously combust or freeze, which is scary enough without adding fireballs to the mix.

To set something on fire, most zeeks just have to stare at it and concentrate, so it's a bit harder to notice than when telekinetic forces are getting hurled around. Some say that there's a flash in the zeek's eyes just before the moment of ignition or freezing, though.

You use this power to manipulate the thermodynamic energy of a system. By increasing it you can cause massive changes in air temperature or cause an object to spontaneously combust; by decreasing it you can chill an area, put out fires, or freeze objects instantly.



Overcome: You can use Thermokinesis to put out fires, freeze mechanisms solid, melt ice, warm a chilled room, burn through flammable obstacles, and generally overcome any obstacles affected by the application of fire, extreme heat, or cold.



Create an Advantage: There's a huge number of advantages you can create by heating or cooling things. You could make someone **Disarmed** by making his gun red-hot (opposed by Physique), make an opponent **Cold and Slow** (opposed by Athletics), or create a **Firewall** to block your pursuers. Creating an aspect like **On Fire** by igniting flammable material or **Frozen** by significantly chilling the air can create an environmental hazard on the scene or a person. You can also sense thermal radiation and can use this to determine the temperature of something you're looking at.



Attack: You can attack people by causing direct burns to their skin or hair, and you can heat up objects or make them combust. You can also inflict cold damage by freezing the target.

Thermokinesis attacks are defended against with Athletics, Notice, or Physique as appropriate.



Defend: You can use Thermokinesis to defend yourself or nearby allies against attacks involving extreme heat or cold, including hostile uses of this power.

CYBERMONKS

As a cybermonk you have embraced the fusion of flesh and technology. By attuning your will to the implants installed in your flesh, you've become able to push your body far beyond the range of human potential. To you,

augment implantation is a spiritual experience—and you're able to gain a level of performance from your implants that borders on the mystical.

"Cybermonk" is a slang term that can refer to many different types of people. While some cybermonks are spiritual ascetics in the ancient tradition, others are AI-worshipping singularity seekers or transhumanists who view the melding of man and machine with fanaticism and awe and who have exceeded human limits as a result.

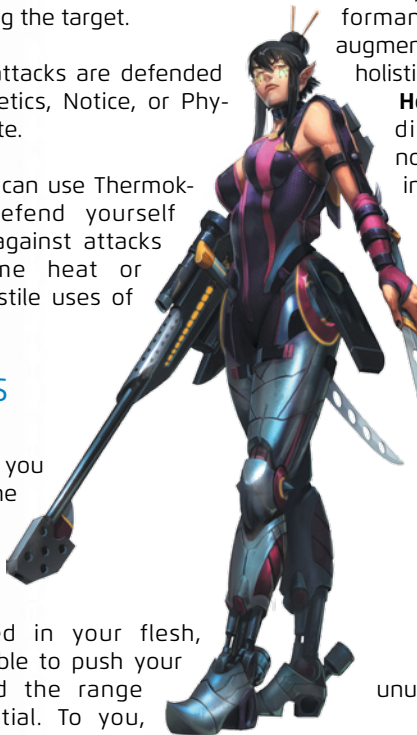
Anyone who has at least one augment and who isn't a zeek can become a cybermonk. When creating a character, simply add the **Cybermonk** keyword to your high concept and think about what led you to this state of being. You can become a cybermonk during play, but this requires months of self-realization and training unless you have an experienced mentor.

The **Cybermonk** part of your high concept can be invoked and compelled in relation to your transhuman nature.

Invoke: You can invoke your nature when you're eking the best performance you can out of your augments or technology, or when a holistic approach is beneficial.

Hostile Invoke: You're slightly disconnected from the normal world and the people in it, so your nature can be invoked against you in social interactions.

Compel: Disturbances of mental and spiritual equilibrium cause physical issues in cybermonks, so current events might cause problems to arise in the cybermonk community or in your own augments. You might feel compelled to chase after a new augment or transcendent experience, or to act inappropriately in a situation due to your unusual mental state.



CYBERMONKS AND STRAIN

As a cybermonk, you have a spiritual relationship with your augmentations. Because of this, whenever you take Strain, you attempt to resist it using Will. If you fail, you suffer mental consequences.

Such consequences represent the gulf that's opening between you and normal people as you become one with the machine, such as **Emotionless** or **Computers Are Better Than People**.

STRAIN RATING

UNMODIFIED STRAIN	STRAIN BONUS
1–5	+1
6–10	+2
11–15	+3
16+	+4

CYBERMONK STUNTS

As a cybermonk you have access to unique stunts that expand your capabilities to superhuman levels. Each cybermonk stunt must be tied to one of your augments, and a cybermonk stunt becomes unusable if its linked augment is damaged or destroyed. Each augment can only sustain one cybermonk stunt, and each such stunt should reflect the nature of the augment supporting it.

Example: Kira takes the Inhuman Reflexes stunt and attaches it to her Wireless Reflexes augment.

You can buy cybermonk stunts with your starting stunts or your refresh as normal.

Cybermonk stunts are more powerful than normal stunts. Some of them permit actions that would be impossible for a normal person, like standing on the tip of a sword, while others provide a bonus when you attempt specific actions. The bonus provided by cybermonk stunts depends on the total unmodified Strain rating of your implants on the table above.

Cybermonk stunts are built with any two of the following options:

- Add your Strain bonus to a skill in a narrow circumstance.

- Provide narrative justification for something that would be impossible for a normal human.
- Provide a stunt effect about as powerful as a regular stunt. If you choose a +2 bonus, this can't be stacked with your Strain bonus and must apply to a different skill, circumstance, or both.

THE PRICE OF FAILURE

If you fail any roll aided by a cybermonk stunt, the associated augment malfunctions, stopping it from working and disabling its linked cybermonk stunt. It remains disabled until you spend a fate point. If you succeed at a cost on any roll aided by the augment, the augment could also become disabled.

EXAMPLE STUNTS

Bullet Catch: You're capable of incredibly fast, deft movements that allow you to catch or deflect projectile weapons. You may use Fight to defend against ranged attacks, adding your Strain bonus to the roll, as long as you're facing your attacker and know the attack is coming.

Focus Armor: By channeling your spiritual energy through your body and its augmentations, you make yourself harder to hurt. If your unmodified Strain is 10 or higher, you get +2 Armor, otherwise you get +1 Armor. This bonus stacks with all other forms of Armor.

Gun Kata: When you attack someone in your zone with dual-wielded pistols, add your Strain bonus to the attack roll. You also get a +2 bonus to defend against ranged attacks while you're wielding dual pistols.

Inhuman Reflexes: You react so quickly to potential danger that by the time someone has started an attack you're already responding. You gain a steal (see Initiative on page 92) and add your Strain bonus to any roll you make to avoid being ambushed or surprised.

Mending Hands: Your attunement to your augments grants you an intuitive sense of how to make other technology whole. Add your Strain bonus to Tech rolls made to repair a damaged item. Also, this stunt allows you to repair consequences of moderate or worse severity on non-character machinery.

Perfect Balance: It doesn't matter how heavy your body is; your peerless mastery over yourself means that you can walk on the most fragile of surfaces and balance on the smallest, thinnest branch without fear of it breaking. This gives you permission to perform feats of athletics impossible for a normal person and adds your Strain bonus to all Athletics rolls involving balance.

Soaring Leap: Your enhanced body becomes capable of breathtaking feats of athleticism. Add your Strain bonus to your Athletics when rolling to move multiple zones in one exchange or when overcoming physical obstacles, as long as you have the room to leap or wall-run. This stunt also gives you justification for creating advantages related to huge and graceful leaps.

Transhuman: Your mind and body are one, and as your body has transcended the base clay of humanity's flesh, so has your mind expanded almost unrecognizably. Whenever someone is trying to get a read on your thoughts or emotional state—whether telepathically or through Empathy—add your Strain bonus to your opposition roll. You also get a +2 bonus on Rapport rolls when you're interacting with an artificial life form.

HACKING

THE GLOBAL DATANET

The Global DataNet is the Internet of 2090. You can use it to do everything that was possible with the Internet of the early 21st century—and more. Almost everything is wirelessly accessible, and you can connect to it via direct neural link thanks to your Tendril Access Processor.

The Global DataNet offers a vast array of information, communication, and entertainment services. Even more, it lets you automate, monitor, or remotely control almost any device thanks to ubiquitous computing and a form of advanced augmented reality called Hyper Reality.

While the design of the Global DataNet gives it unparalleled flexibility and power, it's also terrifyingly abusable. Security technologies develop at a rapid pace, but the best hackers are always one step ahead.

Hyper Reality (Noun): An advanced Augmented Reality user interface allowing access to the Global DataNet and to Hyper Objects.

Hyper Object (Noun): A physical device with an interactive presence in Hyper Reality.

TENDRIL ACCESS PROCESSOR

The Tendril Access Processor, or TAP, is a cybernetic neural implant, about half composed of your own brain tissue, which creates a direct link between your mind and compatible devices. For most people, the TAP is just the interface they use to interact with the Global DataNet and Hyper Reality.

They use it to scan the Global DataNet for information, listen to streaming music, monitor their cybernetic implants, update their Hyper Reality profiles and MyFace pages, watch video feeds of their favorite MediaProgs, play the newest VR games, and much more. For hackers, the Tendril Access Processor is a powerful tool they use to manipulate the world around them.



THE ON AND OFF SWITCH

After the Flare briefly shut down the Global DataNet, crashing people's firewalls across the world, developers issued a hot patch to the firmware that allowed users to turn off the mechanical portion of their own TAP. You can shut down any time you want, and it takes about a few seconds to do cleanly. Shutting down during a conflict requires an action.

You begin play with a TAP unless you're one of the unlucky few **Unplugged**. If you are, note this in one of your aspects; your Trouble might be a good place. Being **Unplugged** means your brain can never be hacked, but it also means you can't access the Global DataNet without an enabling device such as smart glasses—and even then you have much more limited interactivity and hacking is simply beyond you. Without full sensory feedback and intuitive neural control, the Global DataNet is a frustratingly difficult tool to use.

All TAPs start with the same basic parts: a Firewall and some Active Memory Sectors.

FIREWALL

If you aren't a hacker, the only thing you absolutely need to worry about (and should consider upgrading at some point) is your Firewall. When someone tries to hack your TAP, you will actively oppose using your Firewall.

The default Firewall is rated at Good (+3). When you upgrade your Firewall, its cost is the new rating plus one rank, so a Great (+4) Firewall has a Superb (+5) cost. Firewall upgrades must be purchased sequentially.

You can also get apps that improve your Firewall at the cost of Active Memory Sectors.

ACTIVE MEMORY SECTORS

Your TAP's Active Memory Sectors (AMS) determines how many apps you can run simultaneously. For more, see Apps on page 117.

By default your TAP has 4 AMS, but you can buy more at a Superb (+5) cost for each.

HYPER OBJECTS AND HYPER REALITY

Most people don't live in reality anymore, they live in Hyper Reality.

The ability of the Tendril Access Probe to provide fully detailed and realistic sensory input means that people can change the way the world looks to suit their personal preferences. You can have an ignore list that lets you edit people who annoy you out of reality. A blank wall can be a window on to any view you can imagine. Every time you look in the mirror you can see the real you—the one you wish to be—looking back.

In Hyper Reality millions of wirelessly accessible devices, Hyper Objects, advertise their existence and give access to their services or bombard you with advertising.

Hyper Objects are ubiquitous in the modern era and exist in an incredible variety of forms. Any electronic device can be made into a Hyper Object, allowing it to project information in Hyper Reality and to be remotely sensed and controlled.

The simplest and most common form of Hyper Object is a Hyper Tag, a tiny device that can be programmed to produce interactive graphics, video, or text in Hyper Reality. A wall that looks blank to an **Unplugged** person might actually be smothered with competing gang tags that are only visible in Hyper Reality.

Hyper tags are also embedded in clothing as fashion labels and used to make programmable road signs among many other applications.

Security cameras, doors, smoke detectors, billboards, vending machines, vehicles, TAPs, some cybernetic implants, drones, and weapon systems are all other examples of Hyper Objects (page 105).

STRUCTURE OF THE GLOBAL DATANET

The Global DataNet is a distributed network composed of individual **cloud networks** (also known as just **clouds**) that vary immensely in size, complexity, and security. At the simpler end of the spectrum, your Home Access Network covers the area in

MAKING FAILURE INTERESTING WHILE SEARCHING FOR TARGETS

GMs, if a player fails to find the target they need, don't let that be the end of it: let them succeed at a cost. Perhaps they find it but trigger a security alert even before they begin the hack. Or perhaps they think they've found the right target and end up connecting to something unintended (but still interesting).

and around your home, and it allows all of your devices to communicate with each other and the Global DataNet. It features basic security but won't pose much of a challenge to a skilled hacker.

A Military Access Network by contrast might span half a continent and link multiple facilities together. Such a network certainly possesses cutting-edge security systems with active monitoring.

The Global DataNet is mostly wireless, with hardline connections used only to connect backbone routers. When maximum security is required, devices or subnets have their wireless access points disabled by default, with a physical mechanism used to turn them on again. This allows physical security measures like a biometrically operated lock on a data-store or six inches of riveted armor plating on a security robot to prevent unauthorized access.

The simplest clouds are structured so that, once you've gained access, you can access any of the data or Hyper Objects they contain. Larger or more secure cloud networks contain one or more subnets, each of which with its own security protocols and slaved Hyper Objects. Gaining access to a cloud lets you obtain a directory of its subnets, files, and Hyper Objects, but remote access to subnets is usually strictly limited for security reasons. While SysOps and users with elevated security privileges can access a cloud's subnets from anywhere, all others must be within range of one of the subnet's access points.

Example: You're in the lobby of a corporation's offices and you hack into their Corporate Access Network. You look through the directory of subnets and find out that the blueprints you're here to steal are on

a subnet called Secure Storage, the only access point for which is up on the 20th floor. To steal the blueprints you and your team will have to make your way through building security to the 20th floor and hack the Secure Storage subnet from there.

Of course, you can ignore this restriction if you can find a SysOp or other user with elevated privileges, by forcing him to divulge his security codes, or by hacking his Tendril Access Processor and stealing the information.

Clouds and their subnets and Hyper Objects are treated as NPCs using the Bronze Rule. For more on the various types of networks and their game traits, see page 112.

INTRUSION

If a target cloud, subnet, or Hyper Object is in range, you can attempt to hack it. Range is not a function of your TAP, but of the target's broadcast power, which tends to be localized within a zone or two.

Because there are so many objects visible in Hyper Reality, you may need to roll Notice to find the specific target you're looking for, but you can always hack a Hyper Object if you can see it. A Hyper Object in **concealed mode** is "invisible" and requires you to know the device's name to be able to connect to it; in this case your Notice roll is actively opposed by the device's Firewall.

If you've breached a cloud and accessed its directory of subnets, files, and Hyper Objects, you can find a target in that cloud without a Notice roll unless it is in concealed mode. When you're looking for a hidden target inside a cloud, roll Hack instead, opposed by the cloud's Firewall.

You can also hack a more distant target across the GDN by finding a Public Access



Network that's within connection range of the target. If the target is obscure or hidden, finding the connection to it from the DataNet requires an overcome action with a skill like Investigate or Contacts.

To get past system security and gain unauthorized access to a target, use Hack to overcome, opposed by the target's Firewall. Minor targets only provide passive opposition, but player characters and major NPCs roll to provide active opposition with their Firewall. They also have their own apps and security systems to help them defend against hacking attempts.

If you succeed at a cost, your intrusion is immediately detected by any Sprites or SysOps currently monitoring the cloud you're hacking. If you succeed, or the security operatives' attentions are currently elsewhere, they must overcome using Notice against opposition equal to the Hack roll you made to access the system, to realize that the system has been breached. If they don't realize your intrusion straight away, they can attempt to notice you again whenever you take a Hack action inside the network.

Characters always count as actively monitoring their Tendril Access Network for the purposes of noticing attempts to hack it.

Example: Paran01a! is trying to hack into a hidden network owned by the Colony Liberation Front, which has a Great (+4) Firewall. Her Hack roll is Superb (+5), so she bypasses the network security with no difficulty. The Front's SysOp is currently eating noodles and not paying specific attention to the cloud that Paran01a! is hacking, so he has to roll Notice to detect the intrusion. Unfortunately, the Front's SysOp rolls an Epic (+7) result, so he beats the Superb (+5) Hack roll that Paran01a! made to gain access. Now the SysOp knows that someone's in his network, and Paran01a! has to work fast to get the data she needs.

RESOLVING INTRUSION ATTEMPTS

GMs, if a player is engaging in a minor and unimportant hack where failure wouldn't be very interesting—for example, hacking a vending machine to obtain a free drink—don't make them roll at all.

If a hack is somewhat important, but you want to keep a hack brief, you can resolve the whole thing as a single action against the cloud as an NPC. Rather than having to find a specific subnet, the player just attempts to hack the cloud and either succeeds or fails. This is ideal for when the hacker is off doing something on their own, or when they're looking to achieve something relatively straightforward. If they fail the hack this is a good opportunity for success at a cost, especially if their mission is to obtain information that furthers the story.

Example: The group is investigating the murder of an outspoken zeek-rights activist and have a lead in the form of a vehicle ID Hyper Tag. While they pursue other leads, they send Paran01a! to hack the local Government Access Network to see if she can find out who owns the vehicle. The GM wants to resolve this information round-up fairly quickly so she can move on to their confrontation with the murderer, so she asks Paran01a! to make a single Hack roll to see if she can find the relevant information.

It's a Government Access Network, so its Firewall is Fantastic (+6). Paran01a!'s player rolls the dice and gets an unlucky [1][1][1][1] for a total result of Fair (+2), four shifts fewer than she needed. She could invoke some aspects to get that up to a success, but that'll wipe out most of her fate points, so she asks about succeeding at a major cost. The GM wants to move on, so she agrees. She says that Paran01a! gets detected during the hack and attacked by the system's Intrusion Countermeasures (IC), giving her a mild mental consequence.

She comes back to the group with a name—and a paranoid delusion that the cops are on to her and going to find her soon...

When you really want to ramp up the tension, you can resolve the intrusion attempt with a contest between the hacker and the system's Sprites or SysOp. If the hacker wins the contest, then he intrudes into the system without being



detected. If the Sprite or SysOp wins, then they can either prevent the hacker from connecting or allow him to connect but monitor his activities so they can attempt to track his physical location or use other countermeasures. The hacker's allies can help during the contest by creating advantages that distract the SysOp or Sprite—for example, they can set off an alarm or distract the SysOp by hacking another connected target.

Example: Paran01a! and her group, a drone pilot and a cybered-up fighter, are infiltrating the office of Morgan Danvers, the owner of the car implicated in the zeek activist's murder. Paran01a! needs to hack Danvers's personal subnet from his office to get the information the group needs to bring him to justice.

A security team pins down the group just as Paran01a! connects to the subnet and begins her hack, so the faster she gets the data the group needs, the better. To raise the tension, the GM decides to run the hack as a contest in parallel with the group's conflict with the guards.

In the contest, Paran01a! is rolling Hack opposed by the subnet's Great (+4) Firewall. If the SysOp notices the

hack, then he can oppose her with his Superb (+5) Hack instead.

*In the first exchange, Paran01a! decides to create an advantage to give her every edge before she makes the main contest roll. She briefly connects to another local subnet to make an obvious hack attempt and trigger an alert. She rolls her Great (+4) Hack against that subnet's Great (+4) Firewall and gets  for a total result of Superb (+5). She succeeds in creating an advantage of **Distraction!***

*Now she rolls Hack to progress in the contest versus the cloud's Firewall. She rolls Superb (+5) to the subnet's Great (+4) Firewall, giving one shift. She decides to spend the free invoke she got on **Distraction!** to improve her Superb (+5) success to an Epic (+7) success with style, granting her two of three victories she needs. The SysOp rolls Notice to see if he realizes the weird symptoms he's seeing on his subnet are the result of a hacker. His result is Fair (+2), nowhere near her so he's clueless for now.*

After resolving the first exchange of the hacking contest, the GM turns to the other players and handles an

exchange of their conflict. The security guards spend this exchange taking cover while their leader loudly threatens the group, trying to make them scared enough to surrender. Paran01a's team barricades the door into the office, planning to escape out the window once their hacker has finished. Working as a team, they create a **Makeshift Barricade** and get two free invokes on it.

For the second exchange, Paran01a! decides to just go for the win; she only needs one more victory. She rolls Hack and gets an unlucky Fair (+2) result, giving the firewall two shifts over her and a victory. The SysOp rolls and gets a total result of Good (+3)—he is now aware of the intrusion and will be defending against Paran01a! instead of the firewall. One of the guards pops a smoke grenade through the window in the office door, and the room begins to fill with **Acrid Smoke**. Paran01a!'s allies take cover behind the desk near Paran01a! as the guards get ready to breach the door.

In the next exchange, the security hacker rolls Hack to establish **Security Overrides** before the contest roll. Unfortunately for him he fails, forfeiting his action in the contest. Paran01a! is unopposed as she makes her final roll of the contest; she gets a Good (+3) result, securing the final victory she needs.

HACKING ACTIONS

Once you've hacked a target, your options depend on the target.

SPRITES

A Sprite is a complex program. Most Sprites are just weak artificial intelligences like 20th-century expert systems, but there do exist some true AI Sprites—though they're very illegal. For more on Sprites, see page 118.

No roll is required to perform the standard actions of the hacked target, but doing something the target wasn't designed for or which needs security clearance (such as logging into the user's VR game account, taking an elevator to the penthouse suite, or permanently deleting their files) requires a Hack roll against the target's Firewall, and a SysOp or Sprite connected to the cloud is always justified in providing active opposition.

ACTIONS ON ANY TARGET

Log Out: No roll is required to logout from the cloud unless you are in a Hyper Conflict. To log out during a conflict, use Hack to overcome, opposed by a SysOp or Sprite with their Hack. If you fail, you can't log out this exchange.



Attack Hyper Object, Subnet, or

User: You can unleash viruses and other hostile code on a subnet or a target connected to it, trying to take it offline. Attacking reveals your intrusion to the target and initiates a Hyper Conflict with it. All Hyper Objects and subnets possess basic Intrusion Countermeasures (IC) that can counterattack once you have engaged them in a Hyper Conflict, while more heavily protected systems will be monitored by SysOps or Expert Sprites who can join the conflict and really pile on the hurt.

HACKING AUGMENTS

Augments are directly controlled by your central nervous system and not by your TAP, so they can't be controlled by someone who hacks you. However, many augments are capable of feeding status information and/or real-time sensory data to your TAP for monitoring, storage, or transmission. If you have these feeds turned on, a hacker who accesses your TAP can see them as well. If the feeds are turned off, the hacker can activate them, but doing so alerts you to the fact that you've been hacked.



Create an Advantage: You can create or use aspects relating to network or code-based hacks like **High Latency**. Networks and Hyper Objects can roll to do this with their Intrusion Countermeasures.

ACTIONS ON A HYPER OBJECT



Overcome: You can get rid of an obstacle caused by the Hyper Object or do something related to the Object's primary function, such as opening a security door, turning a camera to face the wall or turning it off, or changing the data in a Hyper Tag.



Create an Advantage: You can create an aspect relating to the Hyper Object. You could create **Covering Fire** with a sentry gun, **Security Bulkhead** with an emergency door, **Looped Surveillance** with a security camera, **No Clip** by ejecting a smart gun clip, **Darkness** with a lighting control panel, and so on.

ACTIONS ON A CLOUD OR SUBNET



Attack Network: You can initiate a Hyper Conflict with the entire network with the goal of taking it offline. This can be extremely hazardous when you're targeting high-security networks, as SysOps and Sprites flood to your location to aid the network in defending itself. For details, see Hyper Conflicts on page 116.



Overcome: You can access the target's system directory to get a list of subnets, files, and Hyper Objects within it. This only requires a roll if you're looking for hidden objects. You can operate any slaved Hyper Object to get rid of obstacles or achieve results. You can access or erase any data files held on the cloud or subnet. You might even be able to begin recovering a mental consequence or resource consequence by hacking some targets—for example, by deleting black-mail on you or erasing your debt from an accounts ledger.



Create an Advantage: You can create aspects relating to slaved Hyper Objects. You can discover aspects about a

THE SAME SUBNET

If a cloud has no subnets, you can ignore any mention that a target must be connected to the same subnet. Everyone in the cloud is connected.

place, person, or organization by accessing their files, or you can program a series of actions for simultaneous execution at a later date. For example, you could create **Looped Surveillance** for an entire building rather than a single camera. You can also upload your own files, Sprites, and other programs into the subnet, or tamper with physical systems to create aspects like **Power Supply Override**.

VIRTUAL REALITY

Rather than using Hyper Reality, one can engage the Global DataNet in Virtual Reality, also known as the Deep. Primarily used on dedicated virtual subnets for games and virtual meeting spaces, Virtual Reality can also be used to re-skin the standard data structure of the GDN with visual metaphors particular to a given cloud. For example, one corporate network uses a fantasy motif, where towers represent security cameras and sword-wielding knights are the IC patrolling the servers.

While the network defines the overall visual metaphor, each user can choose their own VR avatar or "skin," which can also change the visual representation of their apps. Using an avatar that's outside the permitted style of a given network may be possible by overriding the default settings, but doing this is good cause for a ban. If you've bought or written a custom VR avatar in advance (see Apps on page 117), you can choose an aspect that applies to your avatar.

One advantage of Virtual Reality is that time compression is possible. In general, Virtual Reality operates at a 1:1 ratio; one hour in Virtual Reality equals one hour in the real world. That said, it's possible to speed up or slow down this ratio. Some domains, such as VR prisons, speed up this ratio to a year of virtual time for an hour of real time.



In this manner, the prisoner can serve years and years of a sentence in Virtual Reality while his body only spends a fraction of that time in physical containment. Similarly, various online entertainment domains, such as MMORPGS and simsex parlors, speed up the ratio to a maximum of two hours in VR for every hour in the real world, as stipulated by Virtual Domain regulation agencies.

You can manipulate the ratio of a given domain by rolling Hack against the Firewall of the VR cloud. Success speeds up the ratio to 3:1. All entertainment clouds are Corporate Access Networks (page 113).

You can use time compression to reduce how much time you need to take on actions with no physical component, such as researching on the Global DataNet, creating art, writing, programming, and designing.

SYSTOP COUNTERMEASURES

These actions can be undertaken by a SysOp or Sprite aware of an intrusion into their network. If your TAP comes under attack, you are its SysOp.

 **Attack:** A SysOp or Sprite connected to the same subnet can attack a hacker by launching a virus against her TAP, initiating a Hyper Conflict. This also causes the subnet itself to attack the hacker with

its Intrusion Countermeasures. On this roll, use the higher of the subnet's Intrusion Countermeasures and the SysOp or Sprite's Hack, and add a +1 teamwork bonus.

 **Create an Advantage:** The SysOp or Sprite can create an advantage like **Heightened Security** on the subnet or cloud that makes it harder for the hacker to perform further hacks on the network.

This aspect can be invoked to increase the Firewall of any subnet or Hyper Object. As a free action, a SysOp or Sprite can hit the panic button to trigger an **Alarm** without free invokes. While this doesn't directly impact the hacker, it does mean that any security forces in the facility will know to search the premises for any signs of physical intrusion.

 **Overcome:** The following countermeasures are handled as overcome rolls.

Spawn Sprite: The SysOp or Sprite can run a Sprite from their Active Memory Sectors or call a Sprite from elsewhere in the cloud. If the hacker attempts to prevent this, roll Hack opposed by Hack.

Restore Functionality: The SysOp or Sprite can attempt to restore functionality to a damaged cloud, subnet, or Hyper



SECURITY LEVELS

When we refer to security levels in the Malmart Catalog (page 124), it means that an item has the same traits as a network of the listed type. So a Hyper Object that's described as: "Public security level—Fair (+2) Firewall" has two stress, no consequences, Fair (+2) Firewall, and Fair (+2) Intrusion Countermeasures.

These traits are guidelines and not set in stone, so use your judgment when you resolve a hacking action. City street cameras might have government level security, or they might be available to all on a Public Access Network. Set security levels to match the needs of the action, the same way as you set NPC traits to give your players more or less of a challenge.

Object, beginning the recovery of a consequence or emptying a stress box. Roll Hack opposed by the value of the chosen consequence or stress box.

Shut Down: The SysOp or Sprite can shut down a Hyper Object, subnet, or the entire cloud. This usually doesn't require a roll. However, if a hacker has created an advantage like **Power Supply Override** on the network, he can oppose this action with Hack. After you succeed on this action, the shut down happens at the beginning of your next action. If a character is still connected to the target when it shuts down, she gets forcibly booted from it and suffers a single attack from its Intrusion Countermeasures. Hyper Objects and TAPs take an action to turn back on, but it takes an entire scene for a subnet or cloud to be rebooted due to diagnostics and security checks.

If you use this action to shut down your TAP, you can't access the Global DataNet or interact with Hyper Reality until you bring it back online. If this action is used to end a Hyper Conflict, this is a concession and awards fate points accordingly. While this action may seem like the optimal way to deal with attempts to hack the network, the reality is that SysOps often can't afford to take systems offline for the rest of the scene.

GMs, NPC SysOps will only take this action if they have instructions to do so in a particular set of circumstances. For example, the SysOps of Katatech's network have instructions to shut down the R&D subnet if an unauthorized user starts downloading the data on their latest rail cannon.

Backtrace IP: A SysOp or Sprite may attempt to find the physical location of someone logged into the cloud. To do so, you roll Hack to overcome, opposed by

the target's Hack. Success means that the SysOps or Sprite discovers the user's physical location.

CLOUD NETWORKS

Each network is unique but can be grouped with others in a broad category defined by their shared traits. Networks in a given category will tend to have very similar purposes and security. The common network types are:

- Tendril Access Networks (TANs)
- Public Access Networks (PANs)
- Home Access Networks (HANs)
- Corporate Access Networks (CANs)
- Government Access Networks (GANs)
- Military Access Networks (MANs)

At the most abstract level, any network can be treated as a simple NPC. This is ideal when you want to deal with a hack quickly, for example if a player is looking for a single piece of information. At the most detailed level, you can map an entire state-wide network and run Hyper Conflicts that move from subnet to subnet as hackers and SysOps vie for control over the system.

NETWORK TRAITS

These are the typical traits for each network type if you're representing them as an NPC. These traits are also used if a hacker initiates a Hyper Conflict against the whole network in an effort to crash it, even if you've assigned different traits to some or all of the cloud's subnets.

For details on how the Firewall and Countermeasures traits are used, see Hyper Conflicts on page 116.



TENDRIL ACCESS NETWORK (TAN)

Equipment like your weaponry, cybernetic implants, and personal vehicle are attached only to your TAP. All of the equipment controlled directly by your TAP (and your TAP itself) makes up your Tendril Access Network. If someone manages to hack your TAP, they can read your personal files and access any devices slaved to it, letting them eject the clip from your gun, download call logs and other data, hijack your drone or car, or otherwise make your life miserable.

Firewall: Your TAP's Firewall rank

Your TAN doesn't have any other traits because an attack on your TAN initiates a Hyper Conflict against you. You and any Sprites you have loaded in AMS can attack intruders and use your apps as normal.

PUBLIC ACCESS NETWORK (PAN)

PANs make up the majority of the Global DataNet. They are publicly accessible networks provided as a service in public places. If a Hyper Object is networked but not connected to any other kind of cloud, by default it's hooked into a PAN. They can have security in order to deter unauthorized uses of connected Hyper Objects, but this poses little more than an inconvenience for a technically proficient hacker.

Firewall: Fair (+2) to Good (+3)—Usually provides passive opposition

Intrusion Countermeasures: Fair (+2)—Mental stress only

Stress: ☐☐

Consequences: None

HOME ACCESS NETWORK (HAN)

HANs are found in any place where ordinary people live, including low-end hotels (or coffin motels). While many people invest in some type of network security, they often don't have it cranked up to high levels.

Firewall: Good (+3) to Superb (+5)

Intrusion Countermeasures: Good (+3)—Some HANs have IC that can inflict physical stress

Stress: ☐☐

Consequences: Mild, moderate

HACKING DRONES

Hacking a drone is a bit different from hacking other Hyper Objects. For details, see Drones and Rigging on page 119.

CORPORATE ACCESS NETWORK (CAN)

CANs are found in corporate buildings, as well as high-end homes and hotels all over the world. Hackers face these networks the most, since anything controlled by a corporation will have its attendant network protected by that corporation's security. Conversely, corporate security tends to be pretty hefty simply because corporations are a favorite target of hackers.

Firewall: Superb (+5) to Epic (+7)

Intrusion Countermeasures: Superb (+5)—Many CANs have IC that can inflict physical stress

Stress: ☐☐☐

Consequences: Mild, moderate, severe

GOVERNMENT ACCESS NETWORK (GAN)

GANs are used by those who "rule," whether at a local level or a national one. The security is tight at all levels, and hardened networks with redundancy make them much more difficult to take over.

Firewall: Fantastic (+6) to Legendary (+8)

Intrusion Countermeasures: Superb (+5)—Most GANs have IC that can inflict physical stress

Stress: ☐☐☐☐

Consequences: Mild, mild, moderate, moderate, severe

MILITARY ACCESS NETWORK (MAN)

MANs are ultra-secure systems designed to protect anything related to a military, including advanced weapons systems, satellite networks, military bases, and the like. Odds are there are also MANs called "Black Networks" that are not only used by the military, but also by corporations or other entities who want to keep something secret and secure.

Firewall: Epic (+7) or better

Intrusion Countermeasures: Epic (+7)—All MANs have IC that can inflict physical stress

Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐

Consequences: Mild, mild, mild, moderate, moderate, moderate, severe

BUILDING NETWORKS

You can build a cloud while you map out a location, giving each zone access to one or more subnets, their files, and their Hyper Objects.

The steps to building a network are:

1: Decide on what subnets are in the cloud and where their access points are.

2: Decide what Hyper Objects are present, where each one is, and which subnet it's connected to.

3: Customize the traits of each subnet or Hyper Object as necessary.

TYPES OF SUBNETS

Subnets are usually defined either by a single broad function or as a way of limiting access to some parts of the cloud to particular users. Here are some examples:

User Group subnet: This type of network is limited to a particular set of users: for example, a subnet that's limited to executives of the company. Access points for User Group subnets are placed where the designated users can gain access as needed. Subnets of this type contain restricted files and facilities for the relevant user group, so an executive subnet would provide rest and relaxation VR simulations, access to executive bathrooms and saunas, and VR communication suites among other facilities. User group subnets are also commonly used for SysOps, marketing teams, R&D, and so on.

Public Access subnet: This is effectively a Public Access Network running as part of a larger network. These are common in corporate and government networks and provide access to publicity material, coffee machines, VR entertainment domains, Hyper Tag content, and other publicly accessible data and Hyper Objects.

Security subnet: A Security subnet is used to control and coordinate the security Hyper Objects around a facility—such as sentry drones, security doors, cameras and alarm systems—and to store data recorded from them. Access points for Security subnets are usually tucked away in well-secured parts of the facility because they're a very useful target for hackers.

Infrastructure subnet: In a Government Access Network, an Infrastructure subnet can control streetlights, power generation, traffic lights, and other vital city systems. In a Corporate Access Network, this subnet can manage parking allocation, power distribution, and other infrastructures.

HYPER OBJECTS

Any electronic device may be a Hyper Object, allowing it to be controlled remotely. It's often simplest to allocate Hyper Objects to subnets in broad categories rather than trying to list every Hyper Object in a location.

Here are some example Hyper Objects and the broad categories that suggest what subnet they're connected to:

Security Hyper Objects: Cameras, alarm sensors, security door locks, biometric identity scanners, sentry guns, security drones, security guards' weapons, metal detectors.

Public Hyper Objects: Vending machines, Hyper Tags, elevators, entertainment systems, doors, bathroom facilities, windows.

Home Hyper Objects: Kitchen appliances, drapes, environmental control, ambient lighting.

Executive Hyper Objects: Massage tables, hot tubs, luxury coffee-makers, limousines.

Infrastructure Hyper Objects: Street lights, steam tunnels, traffic blockers, water distribution pumps and flow systems, power substations, generators, traffic lights, environmental control, cleaning robots.

TAP Networked Objects: Weapons (handguns, shotguns, assault rifles, etc.), personal vehicles, TAPs, some cybernetic implants, drones.

SUBNET AND HYPER OBJECT TRAITS

By default, subnets and Hyper Objects have the same security level as their parent network. That means it's as difficult to take out an individual subnet or Hyper Object in a Hyper Conflict as it would be to crash the entire network—that's the price of precision.



Unattached Hyper Objects and ones attached to a Tendril Access Network default to the Home security level.

GMs, if you want to go into more detail, you can customize each subnet and Hyper Object with its own traits, or you can give some subnets and Hyper Objects the traits of a different network type. For example, a golemmech connected to a Corporate Access Network might have the same traits as a Government Access Network, while a Public Access subnet on a Corporate Access Network might have the traits of a Public Access Network.

Finally, note down any Sprites that are patrolling each subnet.

Example: The hacker Paran01a's Home Access Network has the following overall traits:

Firewall: Good (+3)

Intrusion Countermeasures: Good (+3)—Has IC that can inflict physical stress

Stress: ☐☐

Consequences: Mild, moderate

The GM decides that Paran01a's security subnet has an upgraded firewall, so he writes down that the subnet has a Superb (+5) Firewall. He decides that the security subnet is patrolled by a squad of three Black Dog security sprites (page 118).

NETWORK ASPECTS

You can give aspects to the network as a whole or to any of its subnets or Hyper Objects. Use this option sparingly to avoid overloading the table with aspects; three to four is a good number for an average network.

Examples of network aspects: **Hyper-Vigilant Sprites, High Latency, Out-of-Date Protocols, Buttery Fast**

Examples of subnet or Hyper Object aspects: **Hardened Subnet, Overzealous Sentry Gun, Extra-Large Housing, Hidden**

Sample Network: Genshi Corporate Access Network

The Genshi Corporation is a small fashion industry outfit that operates on the top five floors of a building downtown. In reality it's a front that launders money for an organized crime outfit that the PCs are determined to bring down, so they decide

to break into the place and see what dirt they can dig up on its network.

First the GM needs to decide what subnets are in the cloud and where their access points are. Here's what he decides:

- A public access subnet that gives access to brochures, virtual reality modeling demonstrations, and so on that's available on all five floors.
- A staff subnet providing general access to corporate functions for members of staff, accessible from everywhere but the ground floor.
- A security subnet that controls the various cameras, alarms, and security systems. The access point for this subnet is on the fourth floor.
- An executive subnet for the top execs of the company, with an access point on the fifth floor.
- A hidden subnet containing records of the money-laundering activities of the corp with an access point on the fifth floor, which is physically protected and is turned off by default.

Next up is choosing the Hyper Objects that are present. The GM decides not to define every single Hyper Object in the building, knowing that it's easy to improvise them as necessary, but notes some general types of Hyper Objects and a few specific ones:

- A combat drone hidden behind a false wall in the CEO's office on the fifth floor (hidden subnet)
- Security cameras, thermal detectors, security doors, and biometric scanners throughout the building (security subnet)
- A panic-alarm trigger (staff subnet)
- A virtual runway in the lobby that can display models, showing off the brand's latest fashions (public subnet)

Now it's time to give the various subnets and Hyper Objects traits as necessary. The GM decides that Genshi's normal subnets are at the lower end of corporate security, while the hidden subnet has better than usual security. He gives them the following traits:

Visible subnets: Superb (+5) Firewall; Superb (+5) Intrusion Countermeasures (mental stress only); Stress $\square\square\square$; Mild, Moderate, and Severe consequences. Each subnet is patrolled by two Fashion Police Expert Sprites that can inflict mental stress.

Hidden subnet: Fantastic (+6) Firewall; Fantastic (+6) Intrusion Countermeasures (physical or mental stress); Stress $\square\square\square$; Mild, Moderate, and Severe consequences. Patrolled by three Hired Gun Expert Sprites that can inflict physical stress.

Finally, the GM needs to assign any aspects to the subnets and Hyper Objects. He decides that the hidden subnet has a **Biometrically Secured Access Point** and calls it a day.

HYPER CONFLICTS

A Hyper Conflict begins whenever a hacker attacks a Hyper Object, subnet, user, or Sprite (or vice versa), and it represents launching hostile code, viruses, denial-of-service attacks, and other nasty tricks designed to crash the target or to mentally or physically harm another user via their neural connection to their Tendril Access Processor.

Hyper Conflicts use the same rules for turn order as normal conflicts, and they operate on the same timescale as any real-world conflicts happening at the same time. Even if time dilation related to VR is relevant, participants in a Hyper Conflict get one action per exchange just like everybody else. While they may be acting faster inside the network, think of their action as being their moment of "screen time" in the wider scene.

If the combatants are operating inside a Virtual Reality domain, then Hyper Combat might look like a simulated battle with swords swinging, guns firing, and blood getting all over the place... but that's just a skin over what's really happening in the code.

Users and Sprites attack by rolling Hack, and the target defends

with Firewall. In VR an attack can take on various appearances according to the user or Sprite's avatar and the way they choose to skin it. Some users shoot a virtual shotgun, while others slam out some power chords with a guitar.

Subnets and Hyper Objects attack by rolling Intrusion Countermeasures (IC), and the target defends with Firewall. In VR these attacks look like swarms of roots or shadows, hordes of soldiers armed with swords, poisonous gases, and so on.

Without an app, you can only attack one target at a time, and that target must be connected to the same subnet.

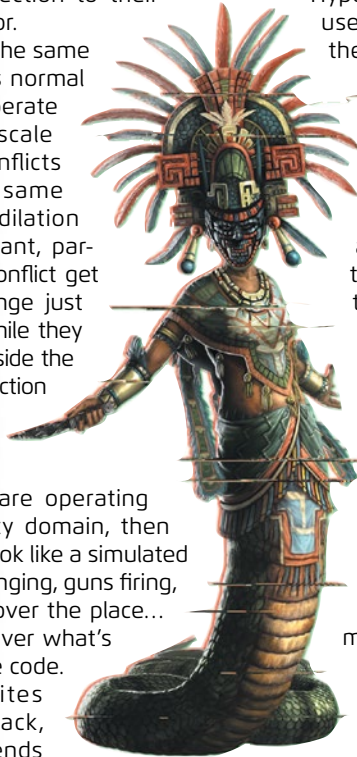
Users and Sprites have access to apps that provide them with Neural Armor, defensive code that reduces the stress of incoming attacks.

You can actively defend for other targets in a Hyper Conflict as normal as long as you're connected to the same subnet.

Stress dealt in Hyper Conflicts is often mental, but some apps allow physical stress to be inflicted instead.

Being taken out by mental stress in a Hyper Conflict forcibly ejects the user from the system, leaving them with a blinding headache, delusions, paranoia, or other consequences. They also become unable to use their TAP for the rest of the scene. Unconsciousness or stroke-like symptoms are also a common result of this traumatic experience, leaving the user significantly impaired for a time. Some (highly illegal) viruses can implant post-hypnotic suggestions in the defeated user's mind, causing them to carry out a single task in the next 24 hours (Psychotropic Attack app, page 104).

When dealing with a foe that can cause physical stress, the consequences can be much worse. Blindness, deafness, brain damage, paralysis, or death from an aneurysm are all possible



SAMPLE APPS

APP	DESCRIPTION	AMS	COST
AI Sprite	See Sprites below	8+	N/A
Expert Sprite	See Sprites below	4	Epic (+7)
Area Attack Upgrade	Attack all users and Sprites connected to the same subnet	2	Fantastic (+6)
Lethal Attack	Your Hyper Conflict attacks deal physical stress	2	Fantastic (+6)
Neural Armor	Reduces Hyper Conflict stress you take by the AMS cost of Neural Armor app	1–4	Superb (+5)/level
Remote Attack	Can start a Hyper Conflict with any target in the cloud	2	Fantastic (+6)
Skillware	+2 to Hacking or Academics in a focused area	2	Fantastic (+6)
Stealth Module 1	+1 to Hack shifts to avoid detection	1	Superb (+5)
Stealth Module 2	+2 to Hack shifts to avoid detection	2	Fantastic (+6)
Stealth Module 3	+3 to Hack shifts to avoid detection	3	Epic (+7)
Stealth Module 4	+4 to Hack shifts to avoid detection	4	Legendary (+8)
VR Avatar	A custom VR avatar with an aspect of your choice	1	Superb (+5)
Psychotropic Attack	If target is taken out, you may implant a suggestion that must be carried out within 24 hours	2	Fantastic (+6)
Sprite Firewall	Increases the Sprite's Firewall rating	1+	Superb (+5)/level
Sprite Armor	Reduces Hyper Conflict stress the Sprite takes by the AMS cost of Spite Armor app	1–4	Superb (+5)/level

consequences of a hack gone wrong. At the very least the evicted hacker gets knocked unconscious for the rest of the scene.

Consequences inflicted on a Hyper Object, a subnet, or the cloud as a whole reflect malfunctions, latency issues, damaged code, reduced bandwidth, and other issues.

If a Hyper Object, subnet, or cloud is taken out, then it crashes completely. This takes it and any slaved Hyper Objects offline for at least the rest of the scene. Taking out a subnet or the cloud wipes all of the hacker's traces on the affected systems, making her impossible to track.

APPS

Apps are complex, specialized programs that can be run in the Active Memory Sectors (AMS) of your Tendril Access Probe to extend your abilities. Every TAP starts with an AMS rating of 4, meaning that up to 4 points of apps can be running at any given time. You can upgrade your TAP to run more apps, but each AMS upgrade has a Superb (+5) cost.

Apps can be bought from specialist suppliers, or you can write your own.

WRITING APPS

The base timeframe to write an app is 24 hours, though this can be reduced if you're working on a VR domain with time compression. Programming an app is a Hack roll with opposition of Fair (+2) plus the number of AMS used by the app.

Example: Frosty wants to program an Expert Sprite. It takes up 4 AMS, so the base difficulty is Fair (+2) plus 4 for a total of Fantastic (+6).

Apps are programmed for a given TAP and can't be shared.

If time is short you can program a throw-away app in a few minutes that will last until the end of the scene. The difficulty of programming an app on the fly starts at Great (+4) rather than Fair (+2). If you succeed at a cost, the app works but has unpredictable side effects.

SWITCHING AMS LOADOUT

You can direct your TAP to load an app as a free action, but you don't get any benefits from that app until it finishes loading at the end of the exchange. If you've already filled up your available AMS, just choose which apps to overwrite so you can fit the new one. The effects of the overwritten app end immediately when you start to load the new one.

APP EFFECTS

In general, each AMS used by an app can grant a 1-shift effect, such as adding +1 to a skill in a narrow set of circumstances, or reducing stress from an incoming attack by one point. An app using 2 AMS can grant a stunt-equivalent effect for use while hacking.

EXAMPLE APPS

On the table above you'll find some sample apps. This is not an exhaustive list, and we encourage you to design your own app effects. At the top of this page you'll find some sample apps..

SPRITES

Sprites are apps that are capable of autonomous action. Every Hyper Object can run at least one Sprite, and servers can run as many as they wish.

Expert Sprites aren't true artificial intelligences; they're expert systems programmed with knowledge of a particular subject and a limited ability to act on their own. They're perfectly legal and found all over the Global DataNet in a variety of roles from VR game NPC to stockbroker.

Expert Sprites are Fair NPCs with one skill at Fair (+2) and two at Average (+1). They have a high concept and one stress box. Their Firewall starts at Good (+3), and they have 2 AMS for running their own apps.

Sample Expert Sprite: Black Dog Attack Sprite

Skills: Fair (+2) Hack; Average (+1) Academics and Notice

High Concept: *Watchful Guardian*

Firewall: Good (+3)

AMS: 2 (Lethal Attacks app)

Stress: ☐

AI Sprites on the other hand are full artificial intelligences. They have the capacity for growth and development, and can become self-aware. They're highly illegal and with good reason: they are how rogue AIs are born. AI Sprites can't be bought and must be coded from scratch.

A newly made AI Sprite uses 8 AMS and is a Good quality NPC with one skill at Good (+3), one at Fair (+2), and two at Average (+1). They have a high concept, a trouble, and two stress boxes. Their Firewall starts at Good (+3), and they have 4 AMS for running their own apps.

Example AI Sprite: Omega

Skills: Good (+3) Hack; Fair (+2) Notice; Average (+1) Tech and Academics

High Concept: *Self-Aware Security Sprite*

Trouble: *Overzealous*

Firewall: Good (+3)

AMS: 4 (Lethal Attacks and Sprite Armor 2)

Stress: ☐☐

AI SPRITE ADVANCEMENT

Unlike Expert Sprites, AI Sprites are capable of learning and developing. At each significant milestone, you may increase the AI Sprite's AMS cost by one and advance one of its traits as shown below. This advancement is in addition to the benefits you get yourself from the significant milestone.

- Advance one of its skills (limited by the regular skill column and cap)
- Add a skill at Average (+1)
- Add a consequence slot (mild, then moderate, then severe on successive milestones)
- Add 1 AMS to the Sprite's own available AMS
- Add an aspect (up to 5, including high concept and trouble)
- Increase its Firewall by one (limited by the game's current skill cap)

The danger of allowing your AI to advance is that it may one day become self-aware, making it a named NPC with its own agenda. Often the first thing an AI does when it becomes self-aware is hack its way out of its user's TAP and make a break for the wider waters of the Global

DataNet. If you've treated it badly, this can go very badly for you.

GMs, you can make an AI Sprite self-aware by offering a compel to its creator after the Sprite has advanced.

WORKING WITH SPRITES

You can send a Sprite into a network alone to do the dangerous stuff for you so you can't be attacked, or you can use it to aid you in your own activities. During any exchange in a conflict, you can take an action yourself or you can take an action through your Sprite, but not both. The only exception is that your Sprites can provide a teamwork bonus to assist you in some actions and vice versa.

If your Sprite is taken out in a Hyper Conflict, it is destroyed and must be re-written.

Along with a subnet's Intrusion Countermeasures, Expert Sprites are the defensive backbone of the Global DataNet. They patrol their subnet, looking for any signs of trouble, and can launch countermeasures against a hacker once they notice an intrusion.

A hacker, SysOp, or Sprite can launch a Sprite as an action, if one is ready and they have the AMS to spare. Authorized users and Sprites can take an action to call a Sprite from elsewhere in the cloud. Hackers sometimes use their allies to launch an obvious attack on another subnet so that Sprites flock to defend it, which lets the hacker break in to a relatively vulnerable target more carefully.

When multiple Sprites are working together, band them together into a mob (*Fate Core*, page 216).

DRONES AND RIGGING

Drones have come a long way since their advent in the early 21st century, and are now nearly ubiquitous. Once, they were largely toy quadcopters, aerial camera platforms, or military unmanned aerial vehicles. Now drones are everywhere in modern life, and come in adaptable terrestrial, aquatic, and aerial form factors. They're used in a wide variety of roles, including shuttle repair, border patrol, front-line combat, law enforcement, and any other work that's too dangerous or troublesome for humans to do.

Drones are available with an infinite variety of forms and can be bought off-the-shelf or to a specified design. Some drone enthusiasts even kitbash their own highly customized models.

While drones are capable of semi-autonomous behavior, they are usually piloted remotely, a technique commonly called rigging. The primary interface between a drone and its pilot (a drone jockey in common parlance) is a Vehicle Control Interface (VCI)

VEHICLE CONTROL INTERFACE (VCI)

A Vehicle Control Interface is a cutting-edge piece of brainware that works in tandem with your TAP to send and receive signals to and from a similarly equipped machine. The VCI is located at the base of the skull and hooked directly into the central nervous system—specifically the part of the cerebellum that translates thoughts of movement, reflexes, and fine motor control into signals a machine can interpret.

In the simplest terms, the VCI allows you to control machines equipped with a VCI transponder with your mind. It also allows for transmission of data from such a machine back to you.

The sophistication of the VCI determines the number of machines that it's able to control simultaneously and the maximum range at which you can pilot them. See the table below.

When you're piloting a vehicle with your VCI, each level gives you +1 to all vehicle operation rolls, as the closer connection to the vehicle imparts greater control. Additionally:

- **VCI I** gets a free invoke per scene that can be invoked when rapid acceleration is a factor.
- **VCI II** gets two free invokes per scene that can be invoked when rapid acceleration is a factor.
- **VCI III** gets three free invokes per scene that can be invoked when rapid acceleration is a factor. It also negates unstable movement as a source of opposition when firing vehicle-mounted weaponry.



Pairing a machine to your VCI requires you to spend an action physically switching its VCI transponder to Pairing Mode. The machine and your VCI then exchange crypto keys, forming a secure connection. Once paired, the machine can only be piloted by you unless your TAP is hacked and your keys are stolen. For more on hacking drones, see page 121.

VEHICLE PILOTING

Many vehicles (including golemmechs) are designed to allow the pilot to interface with them via their VCI as long as they're inside. This enhances the pilot's control as described in the last section. Most golemmechs and some other vehicles also have a VCI transponder installed that allows full remote control of the vehicle as if it were a drone. When operated remotely in this way vehicles and golemmechs are indistinguishable from drones except for their size, and all of the following rules relating to drones and drone piloting apply.

DRONES AND DRONE PILOTING

Basic drones are nameless NPCs with a short list of skills and perhaps a couple of stunts or aspects. As drones increase in price they get better skills and stunts and become more robust. The toughest drones have consequence slots, designed to be the combat-focused heavy drones around which a drone jockey fields auxiliary drones for support.

Drones provide skill assistance to their pilots thanks to simple AI. When you're performing actions with a drone controlled by your VCI, use the higher of the drone's or your own skill. Drones are incapable of most independent action, but they do have evasion algorithms and will defend against attacks with their Pilot or Athletics depending on their form factor. Aerial drones always use Pilot, wheeled or tracked

drones can use either Pilot or Athletics, and anthroform drones always use Athletics.

For some examples of the drones available to buy in 2090, see Drones on page 179.

In each exchange you can act yourself or act through your drone(s) but not both. Multiple drones act as a mob called a **constellation**.

When you're piloting a constellation, designate a primary drone. When you take an action with the constellation, use this drone's skills and stunts. The other drones in the constellation provide a teamwork bonus if they possess the relevant skill. When the constellation is attacked, you can choose the order in which your drones suffer any stress that results.

Example: Jack Random is piloting a constellation that contains two lightweight aerial drones and a ground-based combat drone. He's using the combat drone as his primary when a security guard takes a shot at it, scoring a Great (+4) result. Jack rolls his Pilot to evade the shot, but he only gets an Average (+1) result, so his drones take three stress. Jack describes how his aerial drones swoop down to block the shot. The first of them is taken out and the second takes one stress, but his combat drone remains unharmed.

You can take an action to switch primary drones, or to drop one or more drones from the constellation.

Dropping a drone from the constellation frees up the control slot it occupies, but you can't use the drone again until you re-pair it with your VCI. You can give the dropped drone a final instruction to move to a designated position and then hold its position or shut down.

When you stop controlling your drones directly to act yourself, you can set your drones to:

VEHICLE CONTROL INTERFACE STATS

VCI RATING	CONTROL SLOTS	PILOTING RANGE	STRAIN
VCI I	Pilot skill -2 (minimum 1)	2 zones	2
VCI II	Pilot skill -1 (minimum 2)	5 zones	4
VCI III	Pilot skill	10 zones	6

- Sustain an advantage you previously created with them (e.g., continue firing in a zone to sustain **Covering Fire**).
- Continue to follow a single target at a specified distance.
- Move to a designated location and then hold their position.
- Hold their position.

If your primary drone is taken out, you suffer severe disorientation and other neurological symptoms, gaining a **Stunned** situation aspect until the end of the scene. If you have a chance to collect your wits you can take an action and make a Will roll at Great (+4) opposition to remove this aspect.

REPAIRING DRONES

If one of your drones is taken out, it can't be used again until it has been repaired. In some circumstances your opponent can elect to completely destroy a taken out drone, such as if they were using explosive weaponry, if it fell a long way, or if something similarly brutal has happened to it. For details on repairing drones, see Repairing Equipment on page 124.

GLOBAL DATANET OPERATION

If you don't have a VCI, or you want to operate a drone beyond your VCI's piloting range, you can switch it to accept control via the Global DataNet. This method of control is referred to **operating** rather than piloting a drone.

This is a clumsier and less secure option but sometimes it's necessary. Using this method you can only operate one drone at a time, and it still takes your action to act through the drone. You always use the lower of your or the drone's skill when operating it this way, and a hacker can take complete control over the drone if she successfully hacks it.

For security reasons, switching a drone to accept control via the GDN requires you to toggle a physical switch or have it synced with your VCI.

Operating a drone this way is like playing a videogame. You only get rudimentary sensory feedback and you use the Hyper Reality equivalent of joysticks and buttons to control the drone's actions.

HACKING DRONES

You can't pilot a drone paired to someone else's VCI unless you hack their TAP and steal their crypto keys. Once you steal a drone jockey's keys, you can install them in your VCI and directly pilot their drones. Each drone hijacked in this way takes up one of your control slots.

Because the hijacked drones think you and their proper controller are the same person, you can both pilot them at the same time as long as you're in range. This means you can actively oppose the drone's actions prompted by the proper controller and vice versa.

You can do anything with a hijacked drone that its owner can, including disconnecting it from the constellation and telling it to rendezvous with you.

If you can't steal the drone's crypto keys, you can hack it directly or initiate a Hyper Conflict, which works the same as with any other Hyper Object (see Hacking on page 104). If the drone is being piloted as a primary when you try to hack it, the pilot defends with the higher of his or the drone's Firewall.

If your drone is successfully hacked, the hacker can do the following:

- Disconnect you from the drone if you're piloting it (giving you a **Stunned** situation aspect if it's your primary drone).
- Shut the drone down, terminating whatever it's doing, giving you a **Stunned** situation aspect if it's your primary drone. This may cause an aerial drone to crash, damaging or destroying it.
- Spy on the drone's sensor feed.
- Turn off specific hardware features of the drone, disabling skills (like Shoot by turning off its guns) or stunts, or applying negative aspects.
- Completely override your control of a drone—only if you are operating in GDN mode—and use it as if it were his own.

When a hacker performs one of these activities on a drone you control, he can provide active opposition with his Hack when you attempt to restore the drone's



WHY DON'T DRONES HAVE AUTONOMOUS AI?

Earlier versions of drones had more advanced AI, similar to that of a robot's, which allowed them to operate independently. However, it was quickly realized that the heuristic programming of this AI interfered with the neural commands sent by the drone jockeys, so the AI of future drones was simplified to prevent this.

normal function. This normally wouldn't require a roll on your part, but because you're being interfered with you must roll your Hack. You can likewise apply active opposition with your Hack when the hacker tries to do something on the drone that you don't want them to.

*Example: Paran01a! is trying to interfere with Johnny Harmonic's surveillance drone. Her Hack is Great (+4) and she rolls **++---**, for a total of Superb (+5). Johnny's Firewall is Good (+3) and his drone's Firewall is Superb (+5), so he defends with his drone's Firewall. Unfortunately, he rolls **---+** for a total of Good (+3), which means Paran01a! gains access to the drone. On her next*

*action she turns off the drone's sensor feeds so that Johnny can't see what his drone is seeing. He tries to oppose Paran01a! with his Hack of Average (+1) and rolls **++++** for a total of Great (+4). Paran01a! rolls **++++** for a total of Fantastic (+6)—so Johnny is now flying blind and can't give tactical assistance to his team, and Paran01a! is chuckling with satisfaction. On his next action Johnny can roll Hack try to turn the sensors back on, but Paran01a! can oppose that with her Hack.*

DRONES VERSUS ROBOTS

A robot is an autonomous device with an expert AI that strictly follows its programming. That programming might include following verbal commands from designated users, responding to the environment, or following new orders provided via a securely encrypted channel.

Changing a robot's root programming is possible, but requires time and physical access to the 'bot. Just as some subnets have protected access points guarded by locked doors, biometric scanners, or physical mechanisms, robots have a protected physical switch that puts them into "Download Mode," enabling them to receive new programming. This switch is usually hidden inside the robot's chassis, which requires tools to access. A drone has no AI to speak of, so it requires direct control. That makes it vulnerable to being hacked as part of the controller's TAP Access Network.

The distinction between drone and robot is basically a matter of how the hardware is designed and what AI is installed. It is technically possible to change a drone into a robot or vice versa, but this requires acquiring extra hardware and software, and then making some fairly complex modifications to its system and chassis. This takes substantial tech expertise and money.





MALMART CATALOG

So you collected your fee from your last mission, and you're looking at all those zeroes in your credit account and feeling proud of yourself, aren't you? Except you need to replace all that ammunition you burned through and restock your first aid supplies. You'd better get a new motorcycle while you're at it, because the old one isn't going to be the same after that armored personnel carrier rolled over it. Come to think of it, maybe it's time you had some subdermal armor implanted. Can't spend all your money if you're dead, right?

Not that you have any money left. Guess you need to find some more work.

EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

A true professional brings the proper tools to every job. When the clock is running, the last thing you want is to suddenly realize that you need a concealed microphone or a surface-to-air missile launcher and you need it now. Plan ahead, find a dealer you can trust, and purchase wisely.

This catalog presents an assortment of equipment—including weapons, armor, tools, and vehicles—and lists the benefits they provide your character. The catalog shows a suggested cost for each item, though GMs can alter prices or declare that some items are unavailable, as needed.

REPAIRING EQUIPMENT

Equipment that doesn't have stress or consequences can still be broken or damaged by creating an advantage on it, such as a **Broken Firing Pin** on a gun. Repairing aspects like these on equipment

requires an overcome action using Tech with a base timeframe of ten minutes and a difficulty of Average (+1), or higher if the item is particularly complex.

Stress taken by equipment represents operational wear and tear or minor damage from glancing attacks. Clearing equipment stress just requires a little time performing basic repairs and maintenance. Unless you're really pinched for time, you don't have to roll—but if you do, it's an Average (+1) Tech overcome action that takes a few minutes per item.

Equipment that has suffered consequences or been taken out requires more extensive repairs. To repair moderate consequences or worse, you must have one of the following:

- A justifying stunt such as Master Repairer (page 92).
- An appropriate aspect such as **Compulsive Tinkerer** or **The City's Best Mechanic**.
- A situation aspect you've created, such as **Box of Spare Parts** or **Detailed Design Specifications**.

The base timeframes for the repair and opposition to the roll are listed on the table below.

Extra shifts can be used to reduce the amount of time needed—for example, from "A few hours" to "An hour" with one shift, then to "Half an hour" with two shifts. Once the repair is complete, the consequence is completely removed; the recovery time is included in the repair itself. For more on manipulating timeframes, see page 197 of *Fate Core*.

REPAIR TIMEFRAME

DAMAGE	BASE TIMEFRAME	OPPOSITION
Mild consequence	Half an hour	Fair (+2)
Moderate consequence	A few hours	Great (+4)
Severe consequence	A day	Fantastic (+6)
Taken Out	A few days	Legendary (+8)



Repairing a piece of taken-out gear returns it to use, but doesn't clear any consequences; they must be repaired separately.

On a failed roll, the repair is still completed, but the timeframe is extended by one step (e.g., from "Half an hour" to "An hour") per shift, and the item also gains a flaw aspect that only becomes apparent when it's invoked or compelled against you. This can be repaired without a roll once you get it back to your workshop.

These rules don't apply to repairing mechanical characters. For details on that, see Recovery on page 125.

EQUIPMENT AS HYPER OBJECTS

Most modern tools and devices are Hyper Objects, which you can access and control to some extent using your TAP. Unless indicated otherwise in the catalog, all firearms and vehicles are Hyper Objects, as are armor suits that contain electronic systems.

Use the equipment Hyper Objects table as a guide for the Hyper Object statistics of equipment.

A Hyper Object is **paired** with a network if it is within wireless range of the network and the network has exclusive control over the Hyper Object. If your TAP is paired to a Hyper Object, or is in wireless range of a Hyper Object that hasn't been paired with a network, you can use your TAP to perform several actions with that Hyper Object:

- You can read the object's identification and diagnostic information. For example, you could read the serial number of a vehicle, or determine the number of bullets in a weapon's magazine.

- Pair the object with your own Tendril Access Network (TAN), denying access to the object to anyone else.
- Operate the object's functions. Keep in mind the limits of an object's systems and mechanisms: you could remotely fire a pistol, but you could not aim it unless it was attached to a motorized mount.
- Lock the object so that it cannot be used at all. This creates a **Locked** aspect on the object. The object will send a digital key to your TAP, which you can use to unlock the object later. You may give away copies of this key as you wish.
- Unlock a **Locked** object that you have the digital key for.
- Switch the object into or out of concealed mode (Intrusion, page 106).
- Turn off the object's wireless link completely, so that no one can see the object in Hyper Reality or interact with the object remotely. You may still use the object through its physical controls, but you gain none of the benefits of Smartgun augments, Vehicle Control Interfaces, or other TAP-based access. Turning the wireless link back on requires using the device's physical controls.

In a conflict, performing one of these tasks uses your action.

If you have a Smartgun augment (page 178), you can perform any number of these actions with a firearm on your TAN without using your action during a conflict. Similarly, if you have a Vehicle Control Interface augment, you can communicate with a paired vehicle to perform any of the above actions without using your action.

EQUIPMENT HYPER OBJECTS

EQUIPMENT	FIREWALL	SECURITY
Common tools and household items	Fair (+2)	Public
Pistols, shotguns, bolt throwers, EMP guns, other small or non-lethal weapons, body armor systems	Great (+4)	Home
Submachine guns, rifles	Fantastic (+6)	Corporate
Railguns, miniguns, heavy machine guns, missile launchers, gyro weapons, flamethrowers, laser or particle-beam weapons, other military-class weapons	Legendary (+8)	Military

REMEMBER: ASPECTS ARE ALWAYS TRUE!

Since aspects describe facts in your game world, as discussed on page 117, you can always use an item for its intended purpose and gain its listed benefits even if you don't invoke it.

If you don't have the digital key for a **Locked** object, you can attempt to hack the TAP of the object's owner to steal the key. You can also hack the object itself and attempt an overcome action to remove the **Locked** aspect. For rules on this, read the Hacking section starting on page 104.

If you lock a piece of armor or attach it to your TAN, no one else can access its electronic systems without a key. Locked or attached armor can still be worn to gain its protection without a key, except for Servo System suits, powered armor, and golemmechs.

You do not need a TAP to operate an item that is unlocked and not attached to someone else's TAN. You can simply pick it up and use it.

EQUIPMENT AS ASPECTS

When you have a piece of equipment—whether a toolkit, drug injector, or pistol—you can treat it as an aspect. This has the following effects:

The item allows you to perform the task it was designed for. A toolkit lets you use Tech to repair a cyberarm. A pistol lets you use Shoot to hurl lead. Some items provide additional benefits, such as skill bonuses or Weapon ratings, as listed in their descriptions.

When you invoke an item as an aspect, it can improve your dice rolls just as if you were invoking any other aspect. You could invoke a pistol to make a stronger attack, or you could invoke your tech toolkit to help repair your cyberarm. Any feature listed in an item's description—such as its shape, size, appearance, or extra functions—might suggest an opportunity to invoke an item in a given situation. Invoking an item never negates or changes its listed benefits.

Similarly, you can compel an item to create a problem or obstacle based on a limitation of the item. For instance, you could compel someone's pistol to indicate that it's out of ammunition, or compel a

toolkit to indicate that it's missing the one tool necessary for the job.

If you've had time to prepare your equipment—clean your pistols, sharpen your blades, patch your software—you receive one free invoke on each item of equipment in the next scene. If you have more than one of a given item—for instance, if you have two HT-9 Holdout Pistols—you only receive one free invoke for that set of items.

Items that you can only use once—such as ammunition, grenades, or drug patches—don't receive free invokes from preparation.

Items that create an aspect without requiring a roll, like stim patches (page 154), always grant one free invoke on that aspect, regardless of whether you've taken time to prepare. Some items may grant more than one free invoke on their created aspects, as indicated in the item descriptions.

When an item has additional equipment or aspects attached to it, such as a suit of armor with a **Stealth System**, the item as a whole still receives only one free invoke if you've taken time to prepare your equipment. You may use an item's free invoke to support any of the item's functions, aspects, or attached equipment.

MANUFACTURERS AS ASPECTS

Every manufacturer imposes its own design decisions on the equipment it produces, emphasizing certain features at the expense of others. You can treat an item's manufacturer as an additional aspect for the item, using the information below as a guide.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS (AGA)

"Peace Through Overwhelming Firepower"

For over thirty years, Act of God Armaments has been on the razor's edge of personal weapons and advanced weapon platform development. AGA's line of

personal power armor suits represents their dedication to pushing the envelope in battlefield technology. AGA weaponry is overwhelming firepower, with the pinnacle of perfection being the Mjolnir AMR.

Invoke to improve your attack with AGA weapons, or simply to impress someone with the sight of your firearms. Compel to declare that the weapon inflicts collateral damage.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES

"Innovation Squared"

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

Invoke when it's important to project a professional, competent image. Black Knight equipment is durable, but heavy, and you can compel this aspect in situations where the equipment's weight would cause a problem.

BOMBS ON BROADWAY

"Bulletproof Elegance"

The BombBabes and BombBoys know who Bombs on Broadway is. From the red carpet to the afterparties, Bombs on Broadway™ delivers on target every time.

Invoke to demonstrate that you're trendy, attractive, and successful. Compel to draw unwanted attention from enthusiastic fans or annoying paparazzi.

EXECUTIVE DECISION

"Executive Level Protection"

This year, we are pleased to present the newest from Executive Decision's line of ballistic business suits! Utilizing the best nano-strengthened synthetics, Executive Decision is often imitated, never duplicated, but always seen in the office. From

the cubicle to the boardroom, Executive Decision is a decision worth making.

Invoke to impress business contacts. Compel when dealing with NPCs who sneer at the corporate lifestyle.

URBAN PUNK

"Bringing Style to the Streets"

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

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

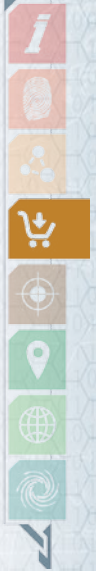
Invoke to gain trust and support from ganglanders. Compel to inspire fear or hostility from anyone else.

RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES

"Effective Law Enforcement at Competitive Prices"

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

Invoke when using your authority to persuade or intimidate someone into obeying your instructions. Compel to draw ire from NPCs who dislike police, or to draw unwanted attention from civilians who need your help.



MARSWORKS ENGINEERING

"Heavy Armor, Deadly Defense"

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

Invoke when using Marsworks vehicles in a combat situation. Since these are obviously military vehicles, compel to declare that they draw unwanted attention when used in a non-combat area.

CHERRY AUTOMOTIVE

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

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

Invoke to declare that a Cherry Automotive vehicle has an unusual luxury item, such as a cigar cutter, a personal grooming kit, or a hundred-year-old bottle of scotch in a sealed cryogenic cylinder. Compel to artificially increase purchase and repair costs, since dealers and technicians will assume the customer can afford it.

SHOGUN OUTFITTERS

"Perfection, Quantified"

Imported directly from the Techno Shogunate of Japan: the finest weapons and armors, created by true artisans.

Invoke to gain the respect of fellow martial artists or anyone who appreciates traditional Japanese culture. Compel to cause NPCs to dismiss the owner of the equipment as a poser or a hopeless throwback.

WASTELAND TRADERS

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

Planning your next run into the wastes? Don't leave your CribSec without the weapons you'll need to survive the trip! Wasteland Traders understands the

dangers of life in the tox-zones and badlands. More importantly, we know what it takes to survive in a world where bio-horrors abound and the only law is kill or be killed. Wasteland Traders weapons are built to last, and employ solar-powered energy cells so you don't have to worry about running out of juice!

Invoke to improve the equipment's performance in difficult environments such as sandstorms and swamps. Compel to create complications when the equipment marks the owner as an outsider and a stranger to urban society.

PRIVATE DICK FUTURE NOIR WEAR

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

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

Invoke to improve reactions from NPCs who appreciate the noir style. Compel to have NPCs decide that this equipment looks obsolete or just silly.

SENTINEL ROCK CORPORATION

"Rock 'n' Roll Gyroscopically"

Sentinel Rock Corporation is pleased to present our newest line of personal and corporate weapons! Sentinel Rock's most prestigious weaponry is our line of gyro pistols and rifles. Explosives being our expertise, we of course are the leading manufacturers of rocket launchers and ground-to-air missile systems.

Sentinel Rock weapons are unusual, and you can invoke this manufacturer aspect the first time you use their equipment in a scene, to show that you've caught your opponents by surprise. Compel to declare that the equipment's owner has a difficult time finding spare parts or more ammunition, due to the equipment's exotic nature.

MILITARY EQUIPMENT

When the catalog lists an item's cost as "Military," its manufacturer only sells the item to governments and large corporations.

COMBAT ENGINEERING SYSTEMS (CES)

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

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

Invoke to improve either the power or the precision of an explosion. Compel to declare that the explosion is more powerful than desired.

STREET CHIC

"Modern Protection for Your Modern Lifestyle"

Street Chic puts self-defense in the hands of every consumer with its line of easy-to-use, easy-to-buy fire-arms. When you can't afford to wait for corporate security, peace of mind is never further away than the nearest Street Chic vending machine or automated kiosk.

You can invoke the **Street Chic** aspect to find one of their weapons in nearly every urban location. Due to poor safety standards, compel to declare that a Street Chic weapon is defective.

WEAPONS

The chart on the next page shows the capabilities of a few common weapon types, as well as their typical cost. If you're shopping in a hurry, or if

you're just choosing a weapon for an NPC, choose a weapon from this list and you're ready for combat.

The weapon catalog starting on page 133 presents statistics for weapon models produced by a variety of manufacturers. Weapons in the catalog also have the characteristics of their base weapon type, except when otherwise indicated. For example, the Damnation flamethrower produced by Act of God Armaments has the characteristics of a basic flamethrower, while their Purge flamethrower states that it can only attack targets in the same zone as the attacker.

Some of these weapon types list additional weapon aspects, which are described starting on page 131.

Some weapons have a numerical Weapon rating, which adds shifts on a successful attack. For more information on Weapon and Armor ratings, read page 277 of *Fate Core*. A weapon with no listed Weapon rating is Weapon:0.

EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS

An explosive weapon, such as a grenade or a bomb, has a **blast rating**. When the explosive detonates, roll an attack using the explosive's blast rating and apply the result to all targets in the same zone. Characters defend with Athletics; vehicles defend with their operator's Pilot.

Example: A grenade rolls into the corridor where Malice is standing, and it explodes. The grenade has a Fantastic (+6) blast rating, and the GM rolls     for a total of Epic (+7). Malice defends with her Fair (+2) Athletics, diving through an



DEADLIER WEAPONS

Combat in Fate is more cinematic than deadly, allowing characters to take heroic risks and face tremendous odds. If you'd like combat more lethal, increase the Weapon rating of all weapons. Weapons with no rating become Weapon:1, while Weapon:1 weapons become Weapon:2, and so on. This also makes an armed character more threatening than an unarmed character.

*office door to try to escape the blast. She rolls **+++** for a total of Great (+4). She suffers 3 physical stress, which she absorbs by marking her 1-point stress box and taking the mild consequence **Concussed**.*

Throwing an explosive into an adjacent zone doesn't require a roll to get it there if nothing's blocking your throw; however, if there's some sort of obstacle, you must overcome using Shoot against passive opposition. If the throw fails, the explosive lands in a zone chosen by the GM other than the original one. When you have determined where the explosive lands, it

attacks everyone in its zone using its blast rating, as shown previously.

If you have the Enhanced Articulation or Muscle Augmentation augment, you may throw an explosive two zones away.

If you are throwing or firing an explosive at a specific target—for instance, if you are firing a grenade launcher at an armored car—attack with the higher of your Shoot skill or the explosive's blast rating. You may use stunts and aspects in either case, as usual. All other characters in the same zone as your target must defend against the blast rating.

GENERIC WEAPONS

BASIC WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Basic Melee Weapon (club, baton, knife, etc.)	No additional damage or special effects. If you wish to throw a melee weapon, use Shoot to attack, and its maximum range is one zone. Increase the range to two zones if you have Enhanced Articulation or Muscle Augmentation.	Poor (-1) or less
Pistol	Range 2 zones.	Fair (+2)
Submachine Gun	Range 2 zones. Automatic Fire .	Fair (+2)
Shotgun	Range 2 zones. Weapon:1 against targets in the same or adjacent zones.	Fair (+2)
Semi-Automatic Rifle	Range 3 zones. Weapon:1.	Fair (+2)
Automatic Rifle	Range 3 zones. Weapon:1. Automatic Fire .	Good (+3)
Railgun	Range 5 zones. Weapon:3.	Military
Minigun	Range 3 zones. Weapon:1. Zone Fire .	Military
Heavy Machine Gun or Autocannon	Range 5 zones. Weapon:2. Zone Fire .	Military
Grenade Launcher	Range 2 zones. Fires 25mm or 40mm grenades designed for use with launchers. Grenade size must match the launcher.	Fair (+2)
Automatic Grenade Launcher	Range 2 zones. May fire grenades into one, two, or three different zones with a single attack. All attacked zones must be adjacent to each other, and you may not attack the same zone multiple times.	Military
Flamethrower	Range 1 zone. Weapon:2. Zone Fire and Ignition .	Great (+4)

COVERING FIRE

Incoming fire always has the right of way. You can use Shoot to place a **Covering Fire** aspect on a zone. Later, you can later use this aspect to justify actively opposing actions in the affected zone or movement in or out of it with your Shoot. If your opponent fails against your opposition, then they get pinned in place and can't complete their action, or they succeed at a cost, as per *Fate Core* (page 189).

*Example: Malice leans over the edge of a rooftop and hurls an incendiary grenade at a security robot down on the street. Her Shoot skill is Superb (+5), and the grenade's blast rating is only Great (+4), so she uses her Shoot to attack the robot. She rolls **+++** for a total of Legendary (+8), while the robot's defense result is only Average (+1). The grenade blasts the robot into small burning fragments. There's a human security guard in the same zone as the robot, but since Malice wasn't specifically targeting him, he defends against the explosive's blast rating rather than her Shoot skill. This time, Malice rolls **---** for a total of Good (+3); the guard's defense result is Great (+4), so he's able to jump clear of the blast.*

If you are planting an explosive on something, such as a vehicle or a door, and you have at least a minute to arrange the explosive for best effect, you can use your Tech skill to provide a teamwork bonus

to the explosive's attack. The target provides only Mediocre (+0) opposition to the attack roll. The teamwork bonus only applies to the target you are planting the explosive on, and not to any other targets in the zone.

Targets with Armor:3 or more are resistant to explosive blasts. For an explosive's blast rating to affect such a target, you must plant the explosive on it. If you throw or launch the explosive at such a target, the blast rating does not apply, and you must attack with Shoot.

COMMON WEAPON ASPECTS

The aspects listed here are innate traits: they provide their listed effects whether or not they are invoked. For example, a weapon with **Automatic Fire** can always be used to attack multiple targets. You may also invoke its **Automatic Fire** to gain the usual benefit of invoking when a high rate of fire would be useful, such as



when attempting to make your opponents **Pinned Down** or a group of bystanders **Terrified**.

SPECIAL EFFECTS FOR WEAPON ASPECTS

Experienced Fate players will notice that these weapon aspects provide benefits beyond those of normal aspects. We've added these effects so that weapons provide reliable benefits even if their owners don't spend fate points. You can think of these extra effects as stunts that are attached to a character's equipment.

Armor Piercing weapons can damage a target even if the target's Armor rating is two levels higher than the Weapon rating. This is described more in Armor Penetration on page 149.

Automatic Fire weapons allow you to split your total result of your attack roll across multiple targets in the same zone. Apply the full Weapon rating to each target that failed to defend. You may not attack the same target more than once.

Example: Malice fires her Ravenlocke P9D submachine gun at two combat drones. Her Shoot roll is Superb (+5), so she splits this into a Good (+3) attack against one drone and a Fair (+2) attack against the other. Both drones make Average (+1) Pilot rolls to defend. She hits both drones, and has two shifts of success against the first and one shift against the second. After she adds the Weapon:1 rating of her P9D, the first drone takes three stress, and the second drone takes two stress.

EMP (electromagnetic pulse) weapons only harm targets with electronic parts, as follows:

- EMP weapons inflict physical stress and consequences against androids, bioroids, cyborgs, robots, and drones, though cyborgs gain Armor:2 against these attacks.
- EMP weapons can't attack human, hybrid, or simulacrum characters, but they can be used to create **EMPed** advantages against those targets. You can compel this aspect or use a hostile invoke to declare that the target's

TAP or cybernetics are unreliable, or that the target is temporarily disoriented due to the pulse's effect on the nervous system.

- An EMP attack shuts down electronic equipment. Repairing the damaged equipment requires a Tech roll, opposed by the shifts generated by the attack. This excludes cybernetics, robots, and drones, which are covered by the previous two rules.

Guided weapons can deliver attacks as if they were normal ranged weapons. Additionally, with a **Guided** weapon, you can create an advantage with Shoot to give your target a **Locked On** aspect. The target may oppose this action with a typical defense skill such as Pilot or Athletics. Targets with the **Anti-Missile Countermeasures** aspect gain +2 to this roll.

When you attack a target that has a **Locked On** aspect created by you, you may fire your **Guided** weapon around intervening obstacles that don't completely block your line of sight. Any allies who can communicate with you wirelessly and who have **Guided** weapons may also fire around obstacles at your target. Those allies may attack your target even if they cannot see it, as long as you can see it.

Your target may attempt to remove a **Locked On** aspect by overcoming with Pilot, Athletics, or another skill judged appropriate by the GM; targets with **Anti-Missile Countermeasures** gain +2 to these rolls. You oppose this action with Shoot. If your target moves to a position where you cannot see it with your own eyes, augments, or sensors, it loses the **Locked On** aspect.

Hazardous weapons lack safety measures, and some are prone to malfunctioning in an explosive manner. They can be compelled to attack their weapon's owner instead of the intended target. If the weapon's owner accepts the compel, she rolls an attack against herself and may defend as usual.

Ignition weapons inflict an **On Fire** aspect on a successful attack, in addition to any stress inflicted. This aspect lasts for three exchanges, including the exchange during which it was inflicted, and inflicts

a Superb (+5) physical attack at the end of each exchange, which the character must defend against using Physique. Damage from the aspect is reduced by an Armor rating. Standard fire extinguishing techniques will remove the aspect, and targets with no flammable material are immune to the aspect.

Non-Lethal attacks will not kill when used normally. If the attack takes out the target, they may become unconscious or otherwise subdued, but will not die. All physical consequences inflicted by **Non-Lethal** attacks recover at the end of the scene automatically and without a roll. A determined character can still kill someone by using a **Non-Lethal** weapon in a non-standard use, such as hitting the victim over the head with the butt of a tranquilizer pistol.

Oversized weapons must be mounted on a tripod or another fixture to be fired. Firing an **Oversized** weapon while carrying it requires at least Fantastic (+6) Physique or the Reinforced Exoskeleton augmentation. When determining a character's Physique for this purpose, include bonuses from augmentations, such as Advanced Muscle Augmentation.

Precise weapons have an attached targeting scope or some other feature which gives you a +2 to create aspects related to aiming, such as **In My Sights**, which you may invoke to support your attack.

Shock weapons can deliver an electric charge to a target. Using the combat skill appropriate for the weapon, you can create an advantage with a **Shock** weapon to impose a **Stunned** aspect on someone. Electrically shielded targets and targets with Armor:2 or better are immune to shock effects, as are targets who do not feel pain, such as robots and drones.

Silenced weapons, when fired, do not cancel the effect of any Stealth actions you've taken to remain hidden.

Zone Fire weapons allow you, if you choose, to attack all targets in the same zone with a single attack. When attacking an entire zone, your total shifts apply to all defenders—they are not split—however, you must attack all targets in the chosen zone, including friendly targets.

MELEE WEAPONS

Though melee weapons do not use ammunition, some use power packs or battery packs.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS EXO-CLAW

These heavy servo-assisted gauntlets have ceramic blades that can cut through thick armor. Weapon:2. You can't carry any other weapons or perform delicate tasks by hand when wearing these gauntlets. Requires power packs.

ACT OF GOD DOMINATRIX PAIN WHIP

This is a **Shock** weapon. The whip's retractable filament can strike a target within the same zone, delivering an electrical charge that is tuned to produce agonizing pain, but no lasting damage. You can't use this weapon to attack, only to create a **Stunned** aspect.



RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES JOINTLOCK STUN GLOVES

These electrically shielded gloves are **Shock** weapons. The **Shock** effect only applies when you create an advantage, not if you attack with these gloves. Also, if you succeed with style when you defend against a barehanded attack, you can make your attacker **Stunned** instead of gaining a boost. Uses battery packs.



RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES TRUNCHEON

You may use this Shock baton to create an advantage in an attempt to deliver a **Stunned** aspect, or to make a standard physical attack. If you attack and succeed with style, you may reduce your shift value by one to apply a **Stunned** aspect instead of gaining a boost. Uses battery packs.

MELEE WEAPONS

WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Act of God Armaments Exo-Claw	High-powered claws. Weapon:2.	Great (+4)
Act of God Armaments Dominatrix Pain Whip	Shock weapon only; can't be used to attack.	Good (+3)
Ravenlocke Securities Jointlock Stun Gloves	Shock weapon.	Mediocre (+0)
Ravenlocke Securities Security Truncheon	Shock weapon.	Fair (+2)
Shogun Outfitters Dragonfly Tessen	Can be wielded or thrown.	Poor (-1)
Shogun Outfitters Manriki-Gusari	Weighted chain weapon.	Poor (-1)
Shogun Outfitters Miyamoto K-Tana	Weapon:1. Armor Piercing .	Superb (+5)
Shogun Outfitters Monowhip	Weapon:1. Armor Piercing and Hazardous .	Good (+3)
Shogun Outfitters Whirlwind Butterfly Swords	Paired short swords.	Poor (-1)
Urban Punk Duke McCoy Combat Knife	Nanotech binding resists disarming.	Mediocre (+0)
Urban Punk Ironfang Spring-Blade	Streetfighting blade.	Mediocre (+0)
Wasteland Traders Decapitator Chain Axe	Battery-powered chain edge. Weapon:2.	Great (+4)
Wasteland Traders Disemboweler Chain Dagger	Battery-powered chain edge. Weapon:1.	Fair (+2)

SHOGUN OUTFITTERS
DRAGONFLY TESSEN

This **Disguised** weapon appears to be an ornamental fan, but its ribs are made of heavy-duty metal with sharpened tips. You can use it as a stabbing weapon, or throw it at targets up to one zone away.



SHOGUN OUTFITTERS MANRIKI-GUSARI

A low-tech but well-crafted weapon, this is a one-meter chain with metal weights at both ends. Trained users can employ a manriki-gusari to tangle an opponent's limbs, to parry an attack, to administer a chokehold, or to strike someone beyond arm's reach.

SHOGUN OUTFITTERS
MIYAMOTO K-TANA

A finely balanced sword, its monofilament edge provides Weapon:1 and the

Armor Piercing aspect. Each K-Tana is handmade and bears a Hyper Tag displaying the seal of the artisan who crafted it. Custom Hyper Reality effects available on request.



SHOGUN OUTFITTERS MONOWHIP

When activated, the whip's handle spools out a five-meter monomolecular carbon filament with a weighted tip. This weapon inflicts Weapon:1 and **Armor Piercing** damage. Since the monomolecular wire can easily loop back and strike the wielder on a bad swing, this weapon has the **Hazardous** aspect.

#Sirocco: This vicious little thing is not for amateurs. I've heard of someone twitching the wrong way while using one of these and cutting his own head off.

SHOGUN OUTFITTERS WHIRLWIND BUTTERFLY SWORDS

A pair of half-meter swords, designed in the style of traditional Chinese martial arts weapons.



URBAN PUNK DUKE MCCOY COMBAT KNIFE

A rugged combat knife, endorsed by Duke McCoy himself. The grip employs Nano-Stick technology to resist disarm attempts. The user gains +2 to defend against being disarmed.

#Sirocco: Good ol' Duke. You have to wonder how many times some punk got his knife away from him before he paid someone to find a way to stick it to his hand.

URBAN PUNK IRONFANG SPRING-BLADE

A simple but effective switchblade.

WASTELAND TRADERS DECAPITATOR CHAIN AXE

A double-headed axe with a high-speed cutting chain running along its edges. Recharges from solar power and doesn't require battery packs. Provides Weapon:2.



WASTELAND TRADERS DISEMBOWELER CHAIN DAGGER

A knife with a motorized chain-saw-style edge. Weapon:1. Recharges from solar power and doesn't require battery packs.

PISTOLS

Pistols have a range of two zones and no Weapon rating, unless otherwise indicated.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS BLACK KNIGHT LIMITED

This pistol has a short blade attached underneath its dual barrels for up-close defense.



ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS WIDOW MAKER.75

This heavy-caliber revolver hits hard, but users without cyberhands need to watch their grip, so that the recoil doesn't break their wrists or toss the pistol out of their hands. With an enormous barrel and cylinder and a polished chrome finish, this is a conversation-starter as well as a life-taker. Provides Weapon:1, but has the **Hazardous** aspect.



PISTOLS

WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Act of God Armaments Black Knight Limited	Attached knife blade.	Great (+4)
Act of God Armaments Widow Maker .75	Weapon:1. Hazardous .	Great (+4)
Amy's Surplus Foley Arms Watchdog	Basic pistol.	Fair (+2)
Black Knight Industries Stiletto Pistol	Slim-profile pistol.	Fair (+2)
Private Dick Saturday Night Sprawl Special	Retro-style pistol.	Fair (+2)
Street Chic Urchin Pistol	Common street pistol.	Average (+1)
Sentinel Rock Street Talker 6mm	Range 1 zone.	Average (+1)
Wasteland Traders WT-216LB Long Barrel	Precise .	Fair (+2)

AMY'S SURPLUS FOLEY ARMS WATCHDOG

This pistol is no longer manufactured, but it's still in demand on the used weapon market due to its reliability.



BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES STILETTO PISTOL

The Stiletto's 9mm payload gives you the firepower to stop lightly armored opponents, and its slim profile won't spoil the tailoring of your suit.

PRIVATE DICK SATURDAY NIGHT SPRAWL SPECIAL .44 REVOLVER

A faithful reproduction of a 20th-century .44 Magnum revolver, manufactured with 21st century materials and performance.

STREET CHIC URCHIN PISTOL

This economy pistol is available in Street Chic vending machines in sprawls all around the globe.



#Sirocco: It's bad enough that Street Chic was marketing these to kids, but I've never known one of these deathtraps to last beyond its second reload without jamming or exploding.

SENTINEL ROCK STREET TALKER 6MM PISTOL

Because this home defense weapon is no larger than a pack of cards, you can hide it in places where no one would expect to

find a pistol. However, its short barrel means the Street Talker has a maximum range of only 1 zone.



WASTELAND TRADERS WT- 216LB LONG BARREL

The 216LB's extended barrel makes this weapon **Precise**. Ideal for trick shots or for picking off the enemy at long range.



SUBMACHINE GUNS

Submachine guns have a range of two zones, no Weapon rating, and the **Automatic Fire** aspect, unless otherwise indicated.

MOSQUITO STORM MS- 2090 MACHINE PISTOL

A compact SMG with a tri-barrel firing arrangement.



RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES P9D PERSONAL DEFENSE WEAPON

This SMG has a bullpup design, which provides the stability necessary to keep the weapon accurate despite its high rate of fire. Weapon:1.



SUBMACHINE GUNS

WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Mosquito Storm	Small-frame submachine gun.	Fair (+2)
Ravenlocke Securities P9D	Weapon:1.	Good (+3)
Urban Punk Gutterpunk	Detachable silencer.	Good (+3)
Wasteland Traders Wanderer	Durable in harsh environments.	Good (+3)

SHOTGUNS

WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Act of God Armaments Thunder	Home defense shotgun.	Fair (+2)
Black Knight Industries Tiger Claw	Weapon:1 at ranges up to 2 zones away.	Great (+4)
Wasteland Traders BD-4DY 12G	Durable in harsh environments.	Good (+3)

URBAN PUNK GUTTERPUNK .45 ACP SMG

A facsimile of a 20th-century Ingram MAC-10. **Silenced** when used with its detachable silencer.



WASTELAND TRADERS BD-4DY 12G PUMP-ACTION SHOTGUN

Like every Wasteland Traders firearm, this shotgun is built to tolerate physical abuse and hostile environments.



WASTELAND WANDERER 9MM SMG

A standard SMG design, manufactured with the Wasteland Traders emphasis on reliability in harsh conditions.

SHOTGUNS

Unless otherwise indicated, shotguns have a range of two zones. They have Weapon:1 against targets in the same or adjacent zones, and no Weapon rating against targets two zones away.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS THUNDER SHOTGUN

A 20-gauge shotgun built on a compact frame. Designed for portability and easy storage.



#Sirocco: This might be the only weapon Act of God makes that isn't oversized and overpowered.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES TIGER CLAW CLOSE ASSAULT WEAPON

The Tiger Claw fires flechette ammunition designed to penetrate armor and shred living tissue. Standard shotgun shells won't work in this weapon. Provides Weapon:1 at ranges out to two zones away.

RIFLES

Rifles have a range of three zones and Weapon:1, unless otherwise indicated. Automatic rifles have the **Automatic Fire** aspect, while semi-automatic rifles do not.

AMY'S SURPLUS FOLEY ARMS TAW 2022

The TAW combines an automatic rifle, a shotgun, and a 25mm grenade launcher in a single platform.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES BK-616

An automatic rifle with a detachable 25mm under-barrel grenade launcher.



BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES AMPHIBIOUS RIFLE

This unusual semi-automatic rifle uses compressed gases to fire flechette rounds with equal effectiveness both underwater and above water. The gas-firing system produces minimal sound, making this weapon **Silenced**. Weapon:0.

STREET CHIC ASSASSIN'S RIFLE

This semi-automatic rifle can break down for storage and transport in a compact case. The sealed magazine contains a single .50 caliber round, and cannot be reloaded. After firing, the weapon's

polymer body begins to dissolve, leaving nothing but a puddle of chemicals.



URBAN PUNK PUNK3D RIFLE

Urban Punk provides a wide variety of color and Hyper Reality displays to customize this semi-automatic rifle for any customer and any gang.



#Sirocco: Urban Punk gear might be garish—and in this case, overpriced—but it's dependable.

WASTELAND TRADERS PNEUMATIC DART RIFLE

This semi-automatic weapon fires short-range darts to deliver a chemical payload. Each dart must be bought separately. You don't make a physical attack with this weapon. Instead, you use the rifle with your Shoot skill to create an advantage.

If you succeed, apply the dart's aspect, and then immediately make a physical attack against the same defender, using the dart's attack rating. The target must defend against this attack using Physique, and Armor does not reduce the stress taken.

Targets with Armor:1 or better are immune to this weapon, unless you can hit the target in an unarmored location. Targets who are immune to toxins or chemical agents (such as inorganic beings) are immune to all darts except the tracker dart.

RIFLES

WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Amy's Surplus Foley Arms TAW 2022	Automatic rifle. Includes integrated shotgun and grenade launcher.	Great (+4)
Black Knight Industries BK-616	Automatic rifle with detachable grenade launcher.	Good (+3)
Black Knight Industries Amphibious Rifle	Semi-automatic. Weapon:0. Fires underwater.	Good (+3)
Street Chic Assassin's Rifle	Semi-automatic. Dissolves after use.	Good (+3)
Urban Punk Punk3D Rifle	Semi-automatic. Designer styling.	Great (+4)
Wasteland Traders Pneumatic Dart Rifle	Semi-automatic. Range 1 zone. Fires specialized darts.	Fair (+2)
• Neurotoxin Dart	Neurotoxin impairs coordination and concentration; also inflicts Legendary (+8) attack.	Average (+1)
• Venomous Dart	Poisoned aspect leaves target in constant pain; also inflicts Fantastic (+6) attack.	Mediocre (+0)
• Paralysis Dart	Locked Up prevents voluntary muscle activity; also inflicts Fantastic (+6) Non-Lethal attack.	Mediocre (+0)
• Knockout Dart	Sedated leaves target dazed; also inflicts Great (+4) Non-Lethal attack.	Terrible (-2)
• Tracker Dart	Attaches 24-hour radio tracking beacon to target.	Terrible (-2)
Wasteland Traders Tarantula Hunting Rifle	Semi-automatic. Precise .	Great (+4)

- **Neurotoxin Dart:** This toxin tries to shut down the target's nervous system. Assign a **Neurotoxin** aspect to show that the target's coordination and concentration are impaired. The toxin also inflicts a Legendary (+8) physical attack.
- **Venomous Dart:** Assign a **Poisoned** aspect to show that the target is in constant pain from the dart's venom. The poison also inflicts a Fantastic (+6) physical attack.
- **Paralysis Dart:** The nerve agent in this dart disables most voluntary nerve activity without turning off the lungs or heart. This interferes with the victim's muscle control and cyberware. Apply a **Locked Up** aspect to show that the target is having a difficult time taking quick actions. The dart also inflicts a Fantastic (+6) **Non-Lethal** physical attack; if this attack takes out the target, he is merely paralyzed, not killed.
- **Knockout Dart:** This tranquilizer dart can render a target unconscious quickly and painlessly. Apply a **Sedated** aspect to show that the target is dazed and disoriented. The dart also inflicts a Great (+4) **Non-Lethal** physical attack; if this attack takes out the target, he is merely paralyzed, not killed.
- **Tracker Dart:** This dart uses nanotech binding to cling to the target, imposing a **Radio Tracker** aspect. The dart broadcasts an intermittent radio ping for the next twenty-four hours. With the

correct equipment, anyone can receive this signal from up to one kilometer away and locate the target. If you have access to satellite surveillance, you can track the target anywhere on the planet. See Communication Devices on page 156 for more information about radio transmissions. Armored targets aren't immune to this dart, as it will attach to any surface.

WASTELAND TRADERS TARANTULA HUNTING RIFLE

The Tarantula is a **Precise** scoped semi-automatic rifle designed for the wide-open spaces beyond the sprawls, where your target can't hide from a well-aimed shot.

HEAVY WEAPONS

Unless otherwise indicated:

- Railguns have a range of five zones and Weapon:3.
- Miniguns have a range of three zones, Weapon:1, and **Zone Fire**.
- Heavy machine guns and autocannons have a range of five zones, Weapon:2, and **Zone Fire**.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS ANNIHILATOR PERSONAL RAIL CANNON

AGA railguns use electromagnets to accelerate slugs to velocities high enough to penetrate powered armor suits. This Annihilator is a lightweight, shoulder-carried model.

HEAVY WEAPONS

WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Act of God Armaments Annihilator Personal Rail Cannon	Railgun. Weapon:2.	Military
Act of God Armaments Enforcer Railgun AGA-RG30	Railgun. Precise .	Military
Act of God Armaments Mjolnir AMR	Railgun. Automatic Fire and Oversized .	Military
Act of God Armaments "Thumper"	Automatic grenade launcher.	Military
Black Knight Industries Liberator Minigun	Minigun. Oversized .	Military
Black Knight Industries Maverick Light Auto Cannon	Heavy machine gun. Oversized .	Military
"Bessy" .50 Heavy Machine Gun	Heavy machine gun. Oversized .	Superb (+5)

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS AGA-RG30 ENFORCER RAILGUN

A higher-powered AGA railgun with a built-in targeting scope that provides the **Precise** aspect.



ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS MJOLNIR AMR

This tripod-mounted railgun has the **Automatic Fire** and **Oversized** aspects.



ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS "THUMPER"

This automatic grenade launcher fires standard 25mm launched grenades.

BLACK KNIGHT LIBERATOR MINIGUN

An **Oversized** minigun. Shoulder sling available for augmented users.



BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES MAVERICK LIGHT AUTO CANNON

An **Oversized**, tripod-mounted heavy machine gun.

"BESSY" .50 HEAVY MACHINE GUN

A classic belt-fed machine gun, this **Oversized** weapon's firepower is on par with its more modern counterparts.

SPECIAL WEAPONS

Special weapons don't fit into a standard weapon type. The descriptions below list all their capabilities.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES "XBOW" BOLT THROWER

The XBow resembles a rifle, but fires ten-centimeter bolts instead of bullets. The bolts will injure unarmored human targets, but deform on impact with rigid surfaces to prevent penetration. This eliminates the risk of accidentally breaching the hull when firing the weapon aboard a spacecraft or space station. This weapon inflicts no damage on any target with Armor:1 or better.

RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES RIOT GEL GUN

This shotgun-like weapon fires a burst of expanding gel slugs. The slugs hit hard enough to disable an unarmored attacker, but are soft enough to prevent lasting damage. An attack from this **Non-Lethal** weapon can't kill someone unless the target is helpless and the attacker fires the weapon point-blank at the target's head or chest.

SENTINEL ROCK AUTO TURRET

This fully automated turret contains a submachine-gun-class weapon within a

SPECIAL WEAPONS

WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Black Knight Industries "XBow" Bolt Thrower	Range 2 zones. Safety ammo.	Good (+3)
Ravenlocke Securities Riot Gel Gun	Range 2 zones. Non-Lethal attack.	Fair (+2)
Sentinel Rock Auto Turret	Automated defense weapon. Fires as sub-machine gun.	Fantastic (+6)
Sentinel Rock Cyclone EMP Gun	Range 1 zone. EMP attack.	Great (+4)
Sentinel Rock 12.7mm Gyroc Pistol	Range 2 zones. Weapon:2. Guided .	Good (+3)
Sentinel Rock 12.7mm Gyroc Rifle	Range 3 zones. Weapon:2. Guided .	Good (+3)
Sentinel Rock Retarius Net Launcher	Range 1 zone. Fires restraining net.	Fair (+2)

half-meter-high cylindrical enclosure with Armor:1. Its Hyper Object interface allows the owner to operate the turret remotely, or to set the turret to automatically fire at any intruder that enters a designated area. The turret contains normal visual sensors as well as infrared and ultraviolet optics. When operating automatically, it has Fair (+2) Notice and Shoot.



SENTINEL ROCK CYCLONE EMP GUN

Roughly the size of a submachine gun, this weapon can fire an **EMP** attack at targets in the same zone or an adjacent zone. Uses a battery pack for power.

SENTINEL ROCK 12.7MM GYROC PISTOL

This pistol fires **Guided** rocket-propelled rounds, interfacing with the user's TAP for targeting instructions. These projectiles have a range of two zones and Weapon:2.



SENTINEL ROCK 12.7MM GYROC RIFLE

A semi-automatic rifle version of the Gyroc pistol, with a range of three zones.



SENTINEL ROCK RETARIUS NET LAUNCHER

This weapon resembles a shotgun, but fires nanotech rounds that expand into a three-meter-wide filament net upon leaving the barrel. When the net strikes the target, the filaments curl and tighten to surround and entangle it. By firing the weapon, you use Shoot to create an advantage, and success makes the target **Entangled**. If the **Entangled** character attempts to move her limbs or free herself,

the filaments provide Fantastic (+6) opposition. Left alone, she will eventually untangle herself from the net, freeing herself at the end of the scene. This weapon is ineffective against anything larger than human size, such as golem-mechs, and against targets with no moving limbs, such as most drones or vehicles.

#Sirocco: This would be great if we were all still running around with swords and spears, but if your target is holding a gun, that net's not going to stop him from throwing lead around. Personally, I'd go with a taser or a flash bang if I wanted to take someone down without making him dead.

GRENADES

Grenades normally inflict attacks with a blast rating, though some apply an aspect to a zone in addition to or instead of an attack. 25mm and 40mm grenades must be fired from grenade launchers of the correct size. Thrown grenades must be thrown by hand.

HIGH EXPLOSIVE INCENDIARY GRENADES

These weapons have a Great (+4) blast rating. Apart from taking damage from the blast, targets who do not successfully defend are coated with burning **White Phosphorous**. This aspect works like **Ignition**, except that submerging the white phosphorous in water or depriving it of oxygen will delay but not remove the **On Fire** aspect, and the effect will resume as soon as the phosphorous receives oxygen again. Only treatment with chemical neutralizing agents will remove the aspect before it expires.

#Sirocco: White phosphorous burns at over 2,000°C, so before you cover an entire room with this stuff, be sure there's nothing in there that you want to survive the experience.

TG-7/TG-40 TEAR GAS

These grenades fill the target zone with **Tear Gas**. Tear gas affects the eyes and lungs, making it difficult for persons in the affected zone to see and breathe. Targets

with artificial eyes, or who do not need to breathe, or who have environmental protection, are immune to the appropriate effects.

TAZ-25/TAZ-40

These grenades produce a short-range electrical discharge, an attack with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating that applies **Shock** instead of a normal attack.

APC-40 ANTIPERSONNEL CLUSTER

This device spreads centimeter-size submunitions across an entire zone, creating an instant minefield. Each submunition is pressure-sensitive, and when one detonates, they all detonate, producing an attack with a Great (+4) blast rating. A Notice roll against Fair (+2) difficulty is necessary to spot the submunitions. A person who sees the submunitions can cross the zone without stepping on them. No vehicles larger than a motorcycle can cross the zone without triggering the explosives.

HE-40/HE-19 HIGH EXPLOSIVE

Attacks the target zone with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating.

SM-40/SM-19 SMOKE

These fill an entire zone with **Smoke**, which adds +4 to the opposition of any action that requires visibility through the zone. This applies to anyone standing inside the **Smoke**, or anyone outside the zone trying to see something either inside or on the opposite side of the **Smoke**. Standard smoke grenades only block normal vision; "hot smoke" grenades have the same cost but block infrared and ultraviolet vision as well.

FLASH BANGS

These grenades produce an intense flash of light and a deafening bang. This is not an attack; instead, the Fantastic (+6) blast rating creates a **Blind, Deaf, and Stunned** advantage on targets who don't successfully defend. If the target defends successfully against the visual attack, due to visual defenses, but does not defend successfully against the audio attack, then the target is merely **Deaf and Stunned**. Similarly, if the target defends successfully against the audio attack, but not the visual, the target is **Blind and**

GRENADES

WEAPON	SIZE	EFFECT	COST
High Explosive Incendiary	25mm	Great (+4) blast rating; applies White Phosphorous .	Fair (+2)
TG-7 Tear Gas	25mm	Apply Tear Gas to targets not immune to gas.	Mediocre (+0)
TAZ-25	25mm	Fantastic (+6) blast rating; applies Shock .	Good (+3)
APC-40 Antipersonnel Cluster	40mm	Instant micromunition minefield.	Fair (+2)
HE-40 High Explosive	40mm	Fantastic (+6) blast rating.	Average (+1)
High Explosive Incendiary	40mm	Fantastic (+6) blast rating; applies White Phosphorous .	Fair (+2)
SM-40 Smoke	40mm	Smoke fills entire zone.	Mediocre (+0)
TG-40 Tear Gas	40mm	Apply Tear Gas to targets not immune to gas.	Mediocre (+0)
TAZ-40	40mm	Fantastic (+6) blast rating; applies Shock .	Good (+3)
HE-19 High Explosive	Thrown	Fantastic (+6) blast rating.	Average (+1)
Flash Bang	Thrown	Fantastic (+6) blast rating; applies Blind, Deaf, and Stunned .	Mediocre (+0)
Micro Fusion Grenade	Thrown	Fantastic (+6) blast rating. Weapon:3.	Military
SM-19 Smoke	Thrown	Adds +4 to any opposition to perceive targets through the zone.	Mediocre (+0)

Stunned. If the target can defend against both the visual and audio attacks, the target is completely unaffected.

MICRO FUSION GRENADE

This grenade uses a hydrogen pellet to produce a micro-scale fusion reaction, suitable for punching through heavy armor. It delivers an attack with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:3. A built-in electromagnet can attach the grenade to a target for the duration of the detonation timer, set by the user to be from one to four exchanges. Using the electromagnets allows the user to plant the explosive, as described on page 129.

EXPLOSIVES

Some explosives must be detonated by demolition triggers, which are available in several forms:

- **Timers** set off the explosive at a specified time, which could be seconds, hours, weeks, or even years in the future.
- **Motion detectors** trigger the explosive when there is motion within a certain range of the device, usually five meters or less.
- **Physical tripwires** set off the explosive if the wire is disturbed. Typically the user will string the tripwire across a doorway or other narrow passage. Spotting a tripwire requires a Notice roll against Great (+4) opposition.

- **Optical tripwires** use beams of visible, IR, or UV light to perform the same function as a physical tripwire. If something obscures the beam, the explosive detonates. Spotting the beam projector or receiver requires a Notice roll against Fantastic (+6) opposition. With proper equipment, you can spray a mist of fine particles to reflect the beam without completely blocking it, letting you see and avoid it. Infiltration toolkits normally contain aerosol sprays for this purpose. When using a spray to detect infrared or ultraviolet beams, you also need the capability to see infrared or ultraviolet light.
- **Balance triggers** set off the explosive if the trigger moves or tilts.
- **Radio triggers** cause detonation when they receive a specific radio signal.
- **Hyper Object triggers** go off when they receive a pre-determined network message. They have Fair (+2) Firewalls, a Public security level, and are concealed (page 112).

You may use Burglary to temporarily prevent a motion detector, tripwire, or balance trigger from detonating its explosive. This is an overcome action with Fair (+2) opposition for a normal trigger, or Great (+4) opposition for an advanced trigger. If you fail, you detonate the explosive. On a tie, the explosive doesn't detonate, but the trigger is still active. If you succeed, you prevent the trigger from firing. This action does not remove or disarm the trigger, and the explosive can

EXPLOSIVES

EXPLOSIVE	EFFECT	COST
Bomzaway Ltd Satchel Pack	Fantastic (+6) blast rating. Weapon:5. Trigger optional.	Good (+3)
Bomzaway Molotov Cocktails	Great (+4) blast rating; Ignition.	Poor (-1)
CES MPact	Pour to create impact-sensitive explosive with Great (+4) blast rating and Weapon:2.	Average (+1)
CES Nanotherm Gel	Burns through Armor:5 or less. Non-explosive. Requires trigger.	Average (+1)
CES Super C4 Plastic Explosive	Epic (+7) blast rating. Weapon:2. Requires trigger.	Average (+1)
Demolition Trigger	Triggers an explosive.	Poor (-1)
Advanced Demolition Trigger	More difficult to disarm.	Fair (+2)

still detonate if something sets it off while you are not interfering with it.

If you can safely reach the trigger, you can attempt to disarm it with a Tech overcome roll. Success means you disarm the trigger; failure means the explosive detonates immediately. A tie means that you didn't disarm the trigger, but didn't set off the explosive either. The opposition to disarming is Mediocre (+0) for a standard trigger, or Great (+4) for an advanced trigger. An advanced Hyper Object trigger also has a Fantastic (+6) Firewall and Corporate network security.

All actions to manipulate or disarm triggers require either an infiltration or demolition toolkit. You may use a tech toolkit instead, but this increases the opposition to these actions by +2.

BOMZAWAY LTD SATCHEL PACK

This pack includes a built-in timer trigger, but you can wire it to a different trigger if desired. The pack creates an explosion with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:5.

BOMZAWAY MOLOTOV COCKTAILS

This is a glass bottle filled with pre-mixed flammable chemicals. Light the wick and throw. When it shatters, it delivers an explosion with a Great (+4) blast rating that sets targets who do not defend **On Fire**. See the rules for the **Ignition** weapon aspect on page 132. Can't be used with a demolition trigger.

#Sirocco: I can make you one of these for twenty credits. That includes the cost of the vodka that came in the bottle. I'll even let you drink the vodka.

CES MPACT EXPLOSIVES

Each sealed cylinder of MPact contains a half-liter of the explosive in a clear, inert liquid form. When exposed to air, the explosive hardens into a white, rigid material within sixty seconds and becomes sensitive to impact.

Pour it on the ground to create an impromptu land mine; pour onto a throwable object to create a grenade-like weapon. When detonated, delivers an explosion with a Great (+4) blast rating and Weapon:2. Does not use a demolition trigger.

CES NANOTHERM GEL

This is not an explosive, but a precision demolition agent. When ignited with a demolition trigger, this gel burns briefly but intensely, reaching temperatures of 2500 degrees Celsius. Applying the gel in lines allows you to create narrow cuts through your selected target without damaging other nearby material. The gel can burn through any material with Armor:5 or less, though the GM may ask for a roll if you are trying to create a specific effect.

For instance, you may need to overcome with Tech to determine the best place to apply the gel in order to disable a large machine, or you may need to overcome with Burglary to burn a hole through a wall without setting off an alarm. If you need to determine whether a target receives stress or consequences, you may use the rules for planting explosives, giving the gel a Superb (+5) blast rating and Weapon:4.

CES SUPER C4 PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE

This delivers an explosion with an Epic (+7) blast rating and Weapon:2. Requires a trigger for detonation.

MINES

All mines are triggered by pressure or impact, and require a Fair (+2) Tech roll to disarm. The presence of mines is usually obvious unless someone conceals them by burying them or otherwise disguising them.

AGA ANTI-DRONE AIR MINE

This is a simple, small drone, ten centimeters across, packed with plastic explosives. When activated, it uses air jets to ascend and hover in place at a user-selected altitude, monitoring its surroundings with motion detectors. If there is movement within a meter of the mine, it detonates in an explosion with a Legendary (+8) blast rating and Weapon:3. The mine is completely automated and does not support remote piloting.

AGA AP-45 ANTIPERSONNEL SLAYMORE MINE

The Slaymore's explosion hurls a high-speed cloud of flechettes through the area

MINES

MINE	EFFECT	COST
Act of God Armaments Anti-Drone Air Mine	Legendary (+8) blast rating. Weapon:3. Hovers.	Good (+3)
Act of God Armaments AP-4S Antipersonnel Slaymore Mine	Epic (+7) blast rating. Weapon:2.	Good (+3)
Act of God Armaments AV-12 Mine	Great (+4) blast rating. Weapon:1. +2 to conceal.	Fair (+2)
Act of God Armaments AVD-3 Arachnid Drop Mines	Great (+4) blast rating. Drop from vehicles.	Fair (+2)

MISSILE LAUNCHERS

WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Act of God Armaments Arbalest 120mm Heavy ML	Guided. Weapon:6. Fantastic (+6) blast rating. Range 1/2 km.	Military
Wasteland Traders RPG-17 Rocket Propelled Grenade	Weapon:1. Great (+4) blast rating. Range 3 zones.	Military

of effect. The explosion has an Epic (+7) blast rating and Weapon:2.

AGA AV-12 MINE

The Chameleon pigment-shifting system built into these mines alters their exterior color to match the surface they're placed on. This adds +2 to the opposition against any attempts to find the mines. The AV-12 produces an explosion with a Great (+4) blast rating and Weapon:1.

AGA AVD-3 ARACHNID DROP MINES

These explosives are designed to be dropped from a mine-laying rig on the back of a vehicle. When deployed, each mine extends an array of eight flexible struts, which it uses to land flat and stop in place. This means the mine won't bounce or roll, allowing a vehicle to drop mines exactly where needed without slowing down. After the mine comes to a halt, it arms itself, and when stepped on or driven across, it delivers an explosion with a Great (+4) blast rating.

MISSILE LAUNCHERS

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS ARBALEST 120MM HEAVY MISSILE LAUNCHER

Intended primarily for ground targets such as tanks and golemmechs, this launcher uses optical and thermal imaging to acquire targets up to a half kilometer

away. The 120mm missiles are **Guided** and deliver an explosion with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:6.



WASTELAND TRADERS RPG-17 ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADE LAUNCHER

This weapon fires a non-guided rocket-propelled grenade, and can hit targets up to three zones away. The grenade delivers an explosion with a Great (+4) blast rating and Weapon:1.

FLAMETHROWERS

AGA DAMNATION FLAMETHROWER

The Damnation uses a rifle-like projector to ignite and spray a stream of flammable chemicals, dispensed from an armored backpack. The spray has a range of one zone, Weapon:2, and the **Zone Fire** and **Ignition** aspects.



AGA PURGE

A miniature flamethrower, the Purge is about the size of a submachine gun, including the built-in chemical tank. It is a short-range

FLAME THROWERS

WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Act of God Armaments Damnation	Backpack flamethrower. Range 1 zone. Weapon:2. Zone Fire and Ignition .	Great (+4)
Act of God Armaments Purge	SMG-sized flamethrower. Range same zone. Weapon:2. Zone Fire and Ignition .	Good (+3)

weapon and can only hit targets in the same zone as the attacker. It has Weapon:2 and the **Zone Fire** and **Ignition** aspects.



ENERGY WEAPONS

Laser weapons use replaceable power packs to generate intense beams of light that inflict as much damage as high-caliber bullets. Particle weapons fire magnetically guided bursts of charged particles, drawing power from backpack-contained hydrogen cells. Both laser and particle weapons are recoilless and ideal for zero-gravity operations.

AGA BC1 BEAM CARBINE

This weapon has a range of three zones and a Weapon:2 rating.



AGA BSR1 BEAM SNIPER RIFLE

The same killing force as the BC1, but with a range of five zones.

AGA MR1 MASER RIFLE

Unlike a laser weapon, the MR1 fires a microwave beam, which penetrates through heavy armor. The beam is **Armor Piercing** with Weapon:1 and has a range of three zones.



AGA PL-1 PULSE LASER PISTOL

The PL-1 releases its power in brief bursts instead of sustained beams, reducing the risk that the beam will drift off target and cause collateral damage.



ENERGY WEAPONS

WEAPON	EFFECT	COST
Act of God Armaments BC1 Beam Carbine	Weapon:2. Range 3 zones.	Military
Act of God Armaments BSR1 Beam Sniper Rifle	Weapon:2. Range 5 zones.	Military
Act of God Armaments MR1 Maser Rifle	Weapon:1. Armor Piercing . Range 3 zones.	Military
Act of God Armaments PL-1 Pulse Laser Pistol	Range 2 zones.	Military
Act of God Armaments PLR-1 Pulse Laser Rifle	Automatic Fire . Range 3 zones.	Military
Act of God Armaments PMG-1 Pulse Machine Gun	Automatic Fire . Range 5 zones.	Military
Act of God Armaments X-4 Particle Beam Rifle	Weapon:3. Hazardous . Range 3 zones	Military
Act of God Armaments XPBC-1.01 Particle Beam Cannon	Weapon:3. Range 3 zones	Military

AGA PLR-1 PULSE LASER RIFLE

The PLR-1 produces rapid bursts of laser fire, combining the precision of the PL-1 with the firepower of an assault rifle. This weapon has the **Automatic Fire** aspect.



AGA PMG-1 PULSE MACHINE GUN

Like the PLR-1, but with improved collimators to sustain the beam's killing power over a longer range. This weapon has a range of five zones and the **Automatic Fire** aspect.

AGA X-4 PARTICLE BEAM RIFLE

This early-model particle beam weapon has a Weapon:3 rating and a range of three zones, but its safety mechanisms are not fail-proof. If you compel its **Hazardous** aspect, the rifle's electron discharge ignites the backpack-contained hydrogen cell, producing an attack with a Great (+4) blast rating and destroying the weapon. You can cause the hydrogen cell to detonate without firing the weapon by succeeding on a Good (+3) Tech roll; the cell explodes at the end of the next exchange, giving you time to run for cover. If you fail the Tech roll, the energy discharge destroys the weapon without causing an explosion. If your Tech roll is less than Mediocre (+0),

the weapon explodes while you're still tinkering with it.



AGA XPBC-1.01 PARTICLE BEAM CANNON

This dual-barreled particle rifle fires beams of both positive and negative ions. This twin-polarity system eliminates feedback and removes the risk of hydrogen-cell explosions as experienced by the X-4. The cannon has Weapon:3 and a range of three zones.

AMMUNITION

Normally you do not need to keep track of how much ammunition you've used. However, since firearms are aspects, someone may compel your weapon to declare that you've completely run out of ammunition. You can pay a fate point as usual to refuse the compel, or:

- If you have a Smartgun augment, you can refuse the compel without paying a fate point.
- If you are carrying extra ammunition you bought for your weapon, you can expend one pack to refuse the compel.

AMMUNITION

WEAPON	AMMO PURCHASE QUANTITY	COST
Pistol, Submachinegun	Pack (cylinder or magazine)	Poor (-1)
Shotgun	Pack (shells)	Mediocre (+0)
Rifle, Rail Gun, Heavy Machine Gun, Black Knight Industries "XBow" Bolt Thrower, Ravenlocke Securities Riot Gel Gun	Pack (magazine, belt, or drum)	Mediocre (+0)
Flamethrower	Pack (fuel cylinder)	Average (+1)
Powered Melee Weapon, EMP Pistol	Pack (battery pack)	Poor (-1)
Laser Weapon	Pack (power pack)	Mediocre (+0)
Particle Beam Weapon	Pack (backpack hydrogen cell)	Legendary (+8)
Sentinel Rock Retarius Net Launcher	Single shot	Poor (-1)
Gyroc	Single shot	Mediocre (+0)
Dart Rifle	Single shot	See page 137
Military Ordnance (missiles, rockets, cannon shells, aircraft-dropped bombs)	Single shot	Military

Also, if someone imposes an aspect on your weapon to indicate that it's out of ammunition, you may expend a pack of ammunition to immediately remove the aspect.

The ammunition chart shows the cost for a pack of ammunition, listed by weapon type. When the purchase quantity is listed as "single shot," the ammunition is so expensive that you must pay for each individual round. In this case, keep track of how many rounds you have purchased, and expend a round whenever you fire the weapon. Items from the Grenades, Explosives, and Mines sections of the equipment catalog are also considered to be single-shot weapons.

ARMOR

It doesn't matter how much firepower you have if you're ass ain't protected, omae. One bullet's all it takes to put an end to your bad day. Rest assured though, Malmart has the best selection of armor in the solar system!

BASIC ARMOR RULES

The basic forms of armor in the Basic Armor Statistics table are suitable for NPCs and characters who need simple body armor with no special features or styling. The armor catalog starting on the next page shows different models of body armor sold by various manufacturers, which may have benefits beyond those provided by ordinary body armor.

Light body armor in 2090 is comfortable and inexpensive. A protective vest that will stop knife blades and handgun bullets looks and feels much like a simple 20th-century T-shirt. You can invoke light body armor as an aspect to help you resist physical injury.

Heavy body armor designed to stop rifle rounds and explosive shrapnel is bulky and

rigid, but comes with an Armor rating to reduce damage.

In the armor catalog, any armor that has a rating of Armor:1 or higher is heavy armor; all other armor is light armor. For more on Armor ratings, see page 277 of *Fate Core*.

You can wear light armor underneath heavy armor. While this does not increase your Armor rating, each piece of armor is a separate aspect, which allows you to invoke both to defend against a single attack. This might also grant you more free invokes, as described in Equipment as Aspects on page 126.

You can wear two pieces of light armor at the same time without any ill effects. Depending on the armor, and with the GM's consent, you can wear three or more pieces of light armor at once, but each armor item after the second increases the opposition to your Fight and Athletics actions by one rank.

Example: Deuce has crammed himself into four Urban Punk Hoodyz, and he looks more like an inflatable toy than a human being. He picks up a two-by-four so he can smash the Mafia enforcer who's chasing him. The enforcer rolls a Fair (+2) defense, but Deuce is wearing two armor items over the limit, increasing the opposition to his Fight roll by two. This increases the enforcer's defense to Great (+4).

You may not wear multiple heavy armor items at once, and you may not wear heavy armor when you're piloting ExoArmor, powered armor, or golemmechs.

Some augments (page 171) and cybermonk stunts (page 91) will increase your Armor rating.

COMMON ARMOR ASPECTS

Like weapon aspects, these armor aspects provide the listed effects even if you don't invoke them.

BASIC ARMOR STATISTICS

BASIC ARMOR	EFFECT	COST
Light Body Armor	No armor rating; aspect only.	Fair (+2)
Heavy Body Armor	Armor:1 or Armor:2.	Great (+4) for Armor:1 Superb (+5) for Armor:2

TOUGHER ARMOR

If you feel that light body armor isn't effective, you can increase the Armor rating of all equipment, giving Armor:1 to light body armor, increasing Armor:1 items to Armor:2, and so forth. Note that if you increase Armor ratings by one point, and you've already increased Weapon ratings by one point (see the sidebar on page 130) you haven't accomplished much, since the increase on one side will balance out the increase on the other.

A **Stealth System** adds +2 to the opposition against attempts to detect the wearer. The armor's description will list the senses that are affected by this aspect.

A **Concealed Holster** adds +2 to the opposition against attempts to detect that the wearer is carrying a weapon in her holster. The armor's description will indicate the size of the weapon that can be held in the holster.

ARMOR PENETRATION

The Armor rating works as described in *Fate Core* on page 277. In addition, *Interface Zero* uses the following armor penetration rule: if your attack has a Weapon rating that is two steps below the defender's Armor rating, you cannot harm that defender.

An **Armor Piercing** weapon (page 132) ignores this armor penetration rule. You still subtract a target's Armor rating from the damage of an **Armor Piercing** attack, but targets with Armor ratings two steps above your Weapon rating aren't automatically immune to your attacks.

If a target has an aspect that suggests its armor is unreliable, such as **Battle Scarred Armor** or **Overdue for Repair**, you can invoke that aspect to ignore the armor penetration rule for a single attack. If you invoke an aspect for this purpose, the invoke does not provide its usual benefits for your dice roll.

ARMOR CATALOG

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES GHOST SUIT

This full-body armor suit is equipped with a **Stealth System** that includes light-emitting nanites and a noise-cancellation system, concealing the wearer from normal visual and audio senses. The **Stealth System** does not affect infrared or ultraviolet sensors.

BULLETPROOF

The armor penetration rule is meant to prevent characters with small pistols from putting holes in golemmechs. GMs, pay attention to the weapons your players have access to when choosing equipment for opponents, since high Armor ratings can make some opponents unstoppable.

BLACK KNIGHT GOLEMECH COMBAT SURVIVAL SUIT

Designed for golemmech pilots, this close-fitting full-body suit is environmentally sealed and contains CO₂ scrubbers that can recycle the wearer's oxygen supply indefinitely. This suit makes the wearer immune to harmful gases, and protects the wearer against vacuum and low atmospheric pressure.

BKI KNIGHT ERRANT BODY ARMOR

A full-body suit of Black Knight's patented MythraMail, covered by rigid CeraMite plates. An embedded Hyper Tag displays your organization's logo, reinforcing your brand and helping your personnel identify friend from foe. Provides Armor:1.

BOMBS ON BROADWAY FORMAL WEAR

Designer clothing equipped with Hyper Tags to provide virtual visual effects, such as auras of flame, stardust sparkles, or quick-change hair and skin color.

#AllThePills: Pointless celebrity crap.

#CassiusL: I'm forced to agree. Style and flash are not equivalent.

EXECUTIVE DECISION BUSINESS SUIT

Executive Decision provides in-person tailoring at any of its worldwide locations to ensure that every suit is a unique work of art.

#CassiusL: If you want to play the game, you have to dress to win. When you're wearing Executive Decision, you're sending a message.

#AllThePills: That's right. And the message is: "I have a lot of money, so please rob me and kill me."

EXECUTIVE DECISION ANTI-FLASH SUNGLASSES

Designer sunglasses with photoreactive lenses, which provide +2 to defend against visual attacks such as flash grenades.

EXECUTIVE DECISION UNDERARMOUR

An undersuit covering the wearer from neck to wrists to ankles. When worn under

ARMOR	EFFECT	AARMOR COST
Black Knight Industries Ghost Suit	Stealth System versus vision and sound.	Superb (+5)
Black Knight Industries Golem-mech Combat Survival Suit	Immune to gas attacks and low pressure.	Great (+4)
Black Knight Industries Knight Errant Body Armor	Armor:1. Hyper Reality display identifies organization.	Superb (+5)
Bombs on Broadway Formal Wear	Celebrity fashion.	Good (+3)
Executive Decision Business Suit	Business fashion.	Great (+4)
Executive Decision Anti-Flash Sunglasses	+2 defense against visual attacks.	Fair (+2)
Executive Decision UnderArmour	Worn under clothing.	Good (+3)
Private Dick Future Noir Wear	Concealed Holster; Stealth System versus normal visual senses. Also includes forensic lab kit.	Great (+4)
Private Dick Urban Trench	Concealed Holster; Stealth System versus normal visual senses.	Great (+4)
Peregrine Wingsuit	Allows gliding descent.	Great (+4)
Ravenlocke Securities Beach-head First Responder	Armor:1. Also includes radio transceiver, bio-monitor, and video recorder.	Great (+4)
Ravenlocke Securities Bulwark Crowd Control Armor	Armor:2. Riot shield adds +1 to defend against most attacks. Also includes radio transceiver, biomonitor, and video recorder.	Superb (+5)
Ravenlocke Securities Justified Response Assault Armor	Armor:2. Immunity to gas attacks.	Fantastic (+6)
Ravenlocke Securities Raptor Spec Ops Armor	Armor:2. Extra mild physical consequence. Also includes grenade launcher.	Epic (+7)
Shogun Outfitters Shinryu Impact Suit	+2 to defend against collision damage.	Great (+4)
Shogun Outfitters Shinobi Infiltration Suit	Stealth System versus sound.	Great (+4)
Urban Punk Combat Jacket	Concealed Holster.	Good (+3)
Urban Punk Gecko Suit	+2 to Athletics for climbing.	Good (+3)
Urban Punk Hoodyz	Gang fashion. Some facial concealment.	Fair (+2)
Servo System	Powered exoskeleton. Does not provide armor.	Epic (+7)
Black Knight Industries Kite Shield	Provides +1 to defend against most attacks.	Good (+3)

other clothing, the owner appears not to be wearing armor.

PRIVATE DICK FUTURE NOIR WEAR

Retro-style suit and fedora, equipped with a built-in basic forensic lab kit and a **Concealed Holster** that can carry a pistol or similar-sized weapon. Its VariWeave **Stealth System** can alter the suit's color and pattern, concealing the wearer from normal visual senses.

PRIVATE DICK URBAN TRENCH

Retro-style trench coat. Its light-emitting nanite **Stealth System** provides concealment against normal visual senses. The coat contains two **Concealed Holsters**, one for pistol-sized weapons, and one for rifle-sized weapons.

#CassiusL: A well-tailored coat never goes out of style. This is the perfect garment to wear when standing under a streetlight, cigarette in hand...

#AllThePills: It's a coat. Get over it.

PEREGRINE WINGSUIT

This full-body suit can deploy smart-fab wings under the arms and between the legs, allowing a trained wearer to perform a gliding descent. With favorable winds, the wearer can travel eight feet laterally for every foot of descent.

#CassiusL: It's, um...well, it has these wings...Pills, do you want to take this one?

#AllThePills: I've got nothing. Hey, what wine pairing goes with Chicken-In-A-Tube?

RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES BEACHHEAD FIRST RESPONDER ARMOR

Rigid, full-body armor for law enforcement personnel. Includes a radio transceiver with Epic (+7) encryption. See the rules for radio communicators in Communication Devices on page 156. Also includes a shoulder-mounted video recorder and an independent biomonitor to transmit the wearer's vital statistics. The camera and biomonitor can transmit either through the built-in radio or through the user's TAP. Provides Armor:1.

RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES BULWARK CROWD CONTROL ARMOR

Heavier servo-assisted full-body armor for maximum threat protection. Provides Armor:2. As with the Beachhead suit, the Bulwark comes with a shoulder-mounted video recorder, biomonitor, and radio transceiver. The included riot shield provides +1 to defend against Fight and Shoot attacks, but does not give this bonus against area-effect attacks such as flamethrowers and explosives. Carrying this shield occupies one of the user's hands.

FIRE
HOLOTAG



DEVIL TAIL
HOLOTAG



BOMBS ON BROADWAY
FORMAL WEAR

BLACK KNIGHT GHOST SUIT

BKI KNIGHT
ERRANT

PEREGRINE WINGSUIT

RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES JUSTIFIED RESPONSE ASSAULT ARMOR

This servo-assisted full-body armor provides Armor:2, and the included gas mask makes the user immune to gas-based attacks and aspects.

RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES RAPTOR SPEC OPS ARMOR

This full-body suit provides Armor:2. An integral autoinjector administers anti-trauma drugs to the wearer as needed, providing the wearer with an extra mild physical consequence slot. This consequence slot belongs to the armor, not to the wearer, and the consequence represents that the suit's medical drugs are depleted. Replacing the injector cartridges takes five minutes and clears the mild consequence. The suit also comes with a built-in 25mm grenade launcher.

SHOGUN OUTFITTERS SHINRYU IMPACT SUIT

This full-body suit, designed for race drivers, provides +2 to defend against collision damage.

SHOGUN OUTFITTERS SHINOBI INFILTRATION SUIT

This full-body suit's noise-canceling **Stealth System** is effective against audio senses.

URBAN PUNK COMBAT JACKET

Street-smart lightly armored jacket. Easily customized with gang colors and symbols. Its **Concealed Holster** can carry a pistol-sized weapon.

#AllThePills: You can't buy attitude, but you can buy a jacket to put it in. This jacket is tough enough to turn knife blades and keep your tattoos pretty. And only an idiot shoves his nice new pistol into the back of his pants.

URBAN PUNK GECKO SUIT

In a modern urban environment, much of the territory is vertical. This suit uses nanotech binding technology to help anchor the wearer to a sheer surface. This gives the wearer +2 to Athletics rolls to climb, and allows the wearer to climb surfaces with no handholds.

URBAN PUNK HOODYZ

This garment's hood is no substitute for a full helmet or mask, but you may invoke it as an aspect to help conceal your face at a distance.

SERVO SYSTEM

This is an exoskeleton, a motorized frame that enhances the wearer's lift and carry capacity. The frame provides no armor protection and is intended for use in heavy labor, not combat operations. While



RAVENLOCKE
BEACHHEAD FIRST
RESPONDER ARMOR



RAVENLOCKE JUSTIFIED
RESPONSE ARMOR



RAVENLOCKE RAPTOR
SPEC OPS ARMOR



SERVO SYSTEM



wearing the frame, you receive +2 to Physique actions relying on raw strength, and your lifting and carrying capacity is rated as if you are Average (+1) Scale. The frame is built for power, not speed, and while wearing one, you may not travel more than one zone in a single exchange.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES KITE SHIELD

You can attach this lightweight, durable ceramic shield to either forearm of any Black Knight Industries armor suit, leaving both of your hands free. While not in use the shield folds up into a compact block, and when triggered it unfolds rapidly into a teardrop shape a half-meter wide by one meter high. When expanded, the shield gives you +1 to defend against Fight and Shoot attacks. The shield does not give this bonus against attacks from weapons that affect wide areas, such as flamethrowers and explosives.

#AllThePills: What's up with the shape of this thing? It leaves most of your legs exposed unless you're standing sideways. Why not just make it a rectangle?

CassiusL: A student of history would understand that this is based on the shape of shields used by medieval European warriors.

#AllThePills: A student of getting shot in the leg would understand that this is a stupid design.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Those of you who still bleed should pay special attention to these items.

BIODESIGN BIOPROBE

This cuff, once snapped around a patient's wrist or ankle, provides the doctor with a wide array of medical readouts. As a supplement to a doctor's own observation and judgment, the Bioprobe gives +1 to Academics rolls to determine a patient's condition. You can also invoke the Bioprobe when performing other medical tasks.

BIODESIGN OMNIPROBE

An enhanced version of the Bioprobe, this device gives +2 to Academics rolls to determine a patient's condition. Like the Bioprobe, you can invoke the Omniprobe for other medical tasks. The Omniprobe's sensors also have some lie detection capability, giving +2 to Empathy rolls to detect lies from the wearer.

BRAZILIAN PARA-SAR MEDIKIT

The medical kit used by the renowned Brazilian Air Force search and rescue teams. Provides +2 to Academics rolls to treat medical consequences.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

EQUIPMENT	EFFECT	COST
Biodesign Bioprobe	Adds +1 to Academics rolls for medical diagnosis.	Fair (+2)
Biodesign Omniprobe	Adds +2 to Academics rolls for medical diagnosis. Adds +2 to Empathy rolls to detect lies.	Good (+3)
Brazilian Para-Sar Medikit	Adds +2 to Academics rolls to help recover physical consequences.	Great (+4)
Crisis Team Responder Kit	Adds +1 to Academics rolls to help recover physical consequences.	Good (+3)
Malmart Home Medkit	Basic medical kit.	Mediocre (+0)
Emergency Support Patch	Begins recovery of a mild physical consequence.	Mediocre (+0)
Military Antidote Patch	Removes all toxin-related aspects and begins recovery of toxin-related consequences.	Mediocre (+0)
Stim Patch	Gives the user a High Energy aspect.	Mediocre (+0)
Stun Patch	Fantastic (+6) Non-Lethal physical attack to render unconscious.	Mediocre (+0)



CRISIS TEAM RESPONDER KIT

The standard medical kit used by first responders around the world. Provides +1 to Academics rolls to treat medical consequences.

MALMART HOME MEDKIT

A medical kit containing the basic tools necessary to treat medical consequences.

DRUG PATCHES

All drug patches are approximately five centimeters square and are impregnated with pharmaceutical chemicals. To apply the patch, peel off the protective backing and stick the patch to the subject's bare skin. No skill roll is necessary to use a drug patch.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT PATCH

These patches, known as "greens" for their color, or "post-its" for their resemblance to a 20th-century office stationery item, contain a mixture of fast-acting medical treatment chemicals.

Applying one of these patches begins the recovery of a mild physical consequence for the user.

MILITARY ANTIDOTE PATCH

These patches contain a wide spectrum of anti-toxin agents. Applying one removes all of the user's toxin-related aspects, and begins the recovery of all of the user's toxin-related consequences of any severity.

STIM PATCH

Containing non-addictive stimulant agents, these patches give the user **High Energy**, which can be invoked to improve strength and speed or to ward off fatigue or pain. This aspect can be compelled to show that the subject is impatient, jittery, and easily angered.

STUN PATCH

These patches contain powerful sedatives that can render a subject unconscious within seconds. The patch delivers a Fantastic (+6) **Non-Lethal** physical attack. If this attack takes out the subject, they fall asleep. Fast-acting stun patches

deliver their effect immediately; time-delay patches take effect after 60 seconds, giving the user time to find a safe place to lie down when self-medicating.

TOOLS

You can't solve every problem with bullets. Remember that if you want to be something more than underpaid cannon fodder.

ARMORED BRIEFCASE

This briefcase protects its contents with Armor:2, and the Hyper Object lock has a Fantastic (+6) Firewall and Corporate network security. Physically deactivating the lock requires an overcome action using Burglary with Fantastic (+6) opposition.

CHEMICAL SCRUBBER

A one-use can of nanites that can remove harmful biological and chemical residue. Affects an area of three square meters. The scrubber automatically removes aspects such as **Toxic Spill** or **Bio-hazard** from zones or objects.

COMBAT WEBBING

A webwork of belts, suspenders, and pouches used to store equipment securely around the body while leaving it easily accessible. You can invoke this item when it's important to get at some of your equipment quickly, or to declare that you have a specific, small, necessary item on your person. Compel this item to declare that the webbing breaks due to strain or damage, which can leave the wearer tangled up, or can cause equipment to drop off.

DATA CARD

A data storage device the size of an old-fashioned credit card. When its Hyper Object is turned off, a data card is ideal for storing data where hackers can't find it, or for exchanging data between parties without fear of hackers observing the transaction. A basic card only has a Great (+4) Firewall and Home network security to protect its data against unauthorized users. A secure card has a Fantastic (+6) Firewall and Corporate network security.

TOOL	PURPOSE	COST
Armored Briefcase	Rugged briefcase with Hyper Object lock.	Good (+3)
Chemical Scrubber	Clean contaminated surfaces.	Mediocre (+0)
Combat Webbing	Carry equipment more easily.	Average (+1)
Data Card	Data backup and storage device.	Terrible (-2)
Secure Data Card	Data card with improved protection.	Average (+1)
Plasma Cutter	Cut through dense objects.	Superb (+5)
Basic Toolkit	Perform technical tasks.	Mediocre (+0)
Advanced Toolkit	Perform technical tasks more easily.	Fair (+2)
Zipline, Grapple Gun, and Rig	Ascend, descend, or cross gaps.	Average (+1)
RS Restraints	Legendary (+8) strength prisoner restraints.	Poor (-1)
Multi-Optics Goggles	Add optical modules as desired.	Average (+1) or more
WT Survivor Tent	Temperature-controlled tent with light armor.	Fair (+2)
Hyper Dot	Projects a Hyper Reality display.	Terrible (-2) to Good (+3)

PLASMA CUTTER

This pocket-sized tool is capable of cutting through materials with Armor:3 or less. Since the plasma jet is just a few centimeters long and requires steady application for best effect, the cutter only provides Weapon:1 in combat.

BASIC TOOLKIT

When purchasing a toolkit, you must indicate the task it's suited for, chosen from the following list:

- **Tech:** Used with Tech to build and repair devices.
- **Climbing:** Used with Athletics to scale surfaces.
- **Infiltration:** Used with Burglary to bypass security systems.
- **Forensics:** Used with Investigate to examine crime scenes.
- **Survival:** Used with Survival to counteract wilderness hazards such as UV exposure, frostbite, animal venom, and tainted water.
- **Demolition:** Used with Tech to prepare and disarm explosives.

Invoke the toolkit to aid a task the toolkit is useful for. Compel the toolkit to declare an important tool is missing or broken.

ADVANCED TOOLKIT

Provides the same benefits as the basic toolkit. In addition, once a session, you can add +2 to the appropriate skill when performing an overcome action with the toolkit.

ZIPLINE, GRAPPLE GUN, AND RIG

This grapple gun fires a nanotech gel anchor with an attached fifteen-meter zipline. The anchor bonds to the striking surface until a signal from the launcher causes it to release.

After deploying the line, you can roll Athletics to climb or rappel from one end of the line to the other. Increase the opposition for complications such as high winds, or if the anchoring points aren't stable or strong enough to hold the climber's weight. You can invoke the rig to improve your Athletics roll, or compel the rig to declare that the anchor comes loose, or that the climbing harness breaks or gets stuck.

RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES RESTRAINTS

These handcuffs (also suitable as ankle cuffs) are made of two loops of nanotech cables connected by a third, short cable length. When you bring the encrypted electromagnetic key into contact with the restraints, the cables retract around the

prisoner's wrists to provide a secure but non-injuring hold. The same key causes the cables to expand and release the prisoner when desired. The cables provide Legendary (+8) defense against physical damage, and Superb (+5) opposition to attempts to decipher the lock using Tech and appropriate tools.

MULTI-OPTICS GOGGLES

Vision enhancement system for anyone who can't afford cybernetic eyes, or who can't risk the additional Strain. These strap-on goggles are about the size of a pair of 20th-century eyeglasses. Customize them by adding any of the cybereye modules starting on page 172. Cost starts at Average (+1) for one module and increases by one step for each additional module.

WASTELAND TRADERS SURVIVOR TENT

When activated, the Survivor expands from a backpack-sized bundle into a sturdy double-occupant tent. The tent's smart nanofibers regulate temperature and humidity and remove air impurities, providing occupants with +2 to Survival to endure environmental conditions. The Survivor also acts as light armor.

HYPER DOT

A small chip, one centimeter in diameter, which broadcasts a Hyper Reality display. The Hyper Dot's cost is equal to the maximum allowed size of the display, as shown on the Scale chart.

For instance, a Hyper Dot that can project a display four meters high has a Fair (+2) cost. The cost also determines the maximum complexity and quality of the image. A Hyper Dot with a Terrible (−2) cost could display a short text message, while a Dot with a Good (+3) cost could display a simulated military battle with state-of-the-art special effects.

Unlike Hyper Tags embedded in armor suits and other equipment, Hyper Dots are reprogrammable and therefore vulnerable to hacking. They have Public network security with Fair (+2) Firewalls. Their rechargeable batteries last several months.

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Even at the end of the 21st century, old-fashioned radio communication is still relevant. Not everyone uses a TAP, and some portions of the globe have little or no connectivity to the Global DataNet. In addition, a radio transceiver that doesn't act as a network node isn't exposed to DataNet viruses or hackers.

In addition to audio and video communication, basic radio transceivers allow for encryption and digital data transmission. However, basic radio transmissions don't have the data density of true wireless network links, and can't carry any of the following:

- Network or TAP connections.
- Hacking attempts. You can't use a basic radio to hack other systems, and you can't hack a radio.
- Vehicle Control Interface connections to drones or vehicles.
- Global DataNet access.

Basic radio communications are invisible to network scans and do not appear as Hyper Objects. It's possible to convert a basic radio transceiver into a Hyper Object that exchanges data with a network. But again, the device would only pass low-speed, basic radio data, and couldn't carry any of the traffic listed above.

Radio transmitters use frequency hopping to disguise their signals from interception by unauthorized parties. If you are trying to intercept a radio signal

COMMUNICATION DEVICES

ITEM	EFFECT	COST
Comscience SCT	Hard-to-detect burst transmissions.	Great (+4)
Comscience MTS	Concealed behind-the-ear transceiver.	Average (+1)
Comscience SMS	Subvocal transmitter.	Great (+4)
Diansheng Industries "Pi Yin"	Concealable transceiver.	Fair (+2)

that you're not authorized to receive, you must overcome with Tech against Great (+4) opposition. Some radios increase this opposition.

COMSCIENCE SCT

This palm-sized transceiver can compress an outgoing audio/video signal and transmit it as a single short burst when desired. Using a 1:1,000 compression rate, the SCT can transmit a full minute of audio/video data in less than a tenth of a second, reducing the period of time when your signal might be detected by surveillance. In addition, the radio's encryption provides Epic (+7) opposition to interception attempts.

COMSCIENCE MTS

This centimeter-sized disc, stuck behind your ear, allows for two-way hands-free audio communication. The MTS comes in a variety of skin colors, and onlookers will only discover that you're wearing one with a successful Notice roll against Fantastic (+6) opposition. The transmitter has a range of 30 meters.

COMSCIENCE SMS

A subvocal translator with the same size and skin-tone options as the MTS. Stick it to your throat, and go through the motions of pronouncing words without opening your mouth or making a sound; the SMS translates your muscle activity into words, allowing you to communicate with your allies in utter silence. The SMS cannot transmit on its own, and must be paired with a full communication system less than a meter away, such as the SCT or the MTS. Like the MTS, onlookers will only discover the SMS with a Fantastic (+6) Notice roll.

DIANSHENG INDUSTRIES "PIYIN"

This transceiver is a flat two-centimeter disk with color-shifting technology that allows it to blend in with the surface it's stuck to. You can use its built-in microphone and speaker to conduct a basic radio conversation, or disable the speaker and use the Piyin as a surveillance device. While the Piyin is in silent mode, people nearby will only spot the device with a Fantastic (+6) Notice roll.

TAP APPLICATIONS (T-APPS)

That TAP in your head isn't just for downloading advertisements. TAP applications enhance your life and upgrade your mind.

Every T-APP uses 1 Active Memory Sector (AMS). For T-APPS specialized in hacking, read page 117. If you have turned off your TAP, you gain none of the benefits of your T-APPS.

FIREWALL BONUS FROM T-APPS

If you have multiple Firewall T-APPS installed, whether G-Net or 4th Dimension, you gain a Firewall bonus from only one of them.

BABYLON

Allows the user to read, write, speak, and understand the basics of any language. The T-APP can't accommodate complex concepts or uncommon words, and doesn't disguise your accent.

BOUNTY BOARD

This T-APP can identify individuals with posted bounties by name recognition or facial recognition, displaying relevant information in your field of vision. The facial recognition system has Fair (+2) Notice skill to identify individuals despite disguises or other obscuring obstacles, and doing so is a free action. The listed cost is for one month of up-to-date information. At the end of the month, the T-APP gains the **Out Of Date** aspect, which can be compelled to declare that the app delivers inaccurate information. Purchasing a new copy of the T-APP removes this aspect.

CADUCEUS

This software monitors your vital signs. If it detects a serious or life-threatening condition, it notifies local emergency services and requests pick-up and delivery to the nearest medical facility. This notification occurs when you receive a severe or extreme medical consequence, or if you're taken out due to physical injury. The listed cost is for one month of service, and does not include costs for emergency pick-up and medical treatment. Pick-up is not

APPLICATION	EFFECT	COST
Babylon	Allows simple conversation in any language.	Fair (+2)
Bounty Board	Face recognition for posted bounties; one month.	Average (+1)
Caduceus	Remote vitals monitoring and emergency dispatch; one month.	Average (+1)
Digital Diplomat	Multicultural etiquette database.	Fair (+2)
Emergency Message	Sends predetermined message in case of medical emergency.	Poor (-1)
Estream	Paid entertainment streams; one month.	Terrible (-2)
Ether Combat IFF	Displays team member locations.	Great (+4)
Firewall G-Net Security	+1 to Firewall.	Fair (+2)
Firewall 4th Dimension Security	+2 to Firewall.	Good (+3)
Hyper FX	Decorate yourself with Hyper Reality displays.	Abysmal (-3) to Good (+3) (priced by quality)
NewsLink	Up-to-date news streams; one month.	Poor (-1)
Vehicle ID	Vehicle owner database; one month.	Mediocre (+0)

available in areas without a wireless signal or emergency facility.

DIGITAL DIPLOMAT

This is a comprehensive database of cultural etiquette guidelines, covering nearly every religion, ethnic group, and social situation. Context recognition algorithms display useful hints in response to your conversation and your environment. With this database, your social actions never receive increased opposition due to cultural unfamiliarity.

EMERGENCY MESSAGE

When the user is in critical medical condition, this T-APP sends a message to a chosen list of recipients. The message may be as simple as a single word or number, or may be as large as a corporation's financial database. It can be set to transmit in any or all of these conditions: unconsciousness, stopped heart, or brain death.

ESTREAM

Provides one month of access to a wide variety of entertainment streams. You can invoke this T-APP when performing

an action that requires knowledge of popular culture or celebrities. Compel the aspect to declare that the user's information is wrong due to poor fact-checking in popular streams.

ETHER COMBAT IFF

This T-APP communicates with your allies who have Ether Combat installed, displaying their position in your field of vision. Also gives you +2 to defend against attacks from allies who have Ether Combat installed—helpful when you're in danger of being hit by friendly fire.

FIREWALL G-NET SECURITY

Adds +1 to your Firewall.

FIREWALL 4TH DIMENSION SECURITY

Adds +2 to your Firewall.

VEHICLES

When you have a TAP full of stolen data and you're running from a heavily-armed corporate retrieval team, you don't have time to wait for the subway. Get yourself some wheels, or take to the air, or make

some waves. Hit the accelerator and leave your problems far behind.

VEHICLE STATS

The vehicle tables in this section list a variety of properties common to all vehicles.

Scale is the vehicle's size. See the Scale rules on page 154 for further explanation.

Crew is the number of passengers the vehicle can carry. A listing of 1 means the vehicle can only carry the driver. If the entry contains two numbers separated by a plus sign, the number before the plus sign is the number of drivers, and the number after the plus sign is the number of passengers. Operating a vehicle only requires one driver. However, the other drivers may control the vehicle's weaponry or take over piloting duties if the main driver is disabled. A listing of 0 drivers means the vehicle has no manual controls and can only be piloted by its on-board autopilot.

Speed (Spd) is a bonus that the driver adds to Pilot rolls while trying to move faster than another vehicle. The notation "SS" means that the vehicle travels at supersonic speeds; these vehicles always travel faster than non-supersonic vehicles.

Maneuver (Mnv) is a bonus that the driver adds to Pilot rolls while attempting difficult maneuvers, such as making a sharp turn at high speeds or avoiding another vehicle attempting to ram you.

Stress is the number of physical stress boxes the vehicle has. Vehicles have three consequences—one mild, one moderate, and one severe. For a vehicle piloted by a nameless or supporting NPC, you may wish to reduce the vehicle's consequences to match the NPC's consequences.

VEHICLE FIREWALLS

Unless otherwise indicated, all vehicles have VCI rigs, and characters may remote pilot or hack them, as described in Drones

and Rigging starting on page 119. Determine Hyper Object statistics for vehicle firewalls on the table.

Though it's possible to manually operate most vehicles, a remote pilot connected to the vehicle's VCI rig will override any actions taken by the pilot at the manual controls.

COMMON VEHICLE EQUIPMENT

Apart from their functional uses, equipment systems attached to a vehicle are considered aspects. If you've taken time to prepare your equipment, your vehicle receives one free invoke for the scene, which you can use to aid any of the vehicle's functions or equipment. Attached equipment systems do not receive their own free invokes.

Mounted Weapons: Use Shoot to fire a mounted weapon.

A weapon with a forward-facing mount can only aim at targets in a 90-degree arc to the front. Likewise, a weapon with a rearward-facing mount can only aim in a 90-degree arc to the rear. These weapons are aimed by controls inside the vehicle.

A weapon with a pintle mount is attached to a swivel joint, which allows a character to rotate and aim it manually. Typically, the operator of a pintle-mounted weapon is exposed, and must rely on body armor for protection. A pintle mount allows the weapon to rotate 360 degrees, and allows the weapon to fire upward or downward at an angle, but does not allow the weapon to fire straight up or straight down.

A turret mount is motorized, letting the operator control it from within the protection of the vehicle. Some turrets have multiple control consoles within the vehicle so that multiple occupants may operate them. A turret can rotate 360 degrees and to any vertical angle in one direction, usually upward or downward, depending on where the turret is mounted.

VEHICLE FIREWALLS

VEHICLE TYPE	FIREWALL	SECURITY
Civilian vehicles	Great (+4)	Home
Corporate or law enforcement vehicles	Fantastic (+6)	Corporate
Military vehicles	Legendary (+8)	Military

Autopilot: A built-in automatic system that accepts simple TAP commands such as "Drive me to the office," or "Pick up Eva from the airport," and executes them using city maps, traffic reports, and pathfinding algorithms. If a vehicle has a fixed-mount or turret-mounted weapon, the autopilot may operate the weapon as well. The autopilot has a single skill rank that it uses for driving and combat actions.

During a conflict, it acts as an NPC and can perform an action during each exchange.

An autopilot will respond to voice commands after you give it an authorized voice pattern. It's possible to electronically simulate someone else's voice pattern by using Tech to overcome against Superb (+5) opposition. An autopilot is not a Sprite or an AI, and it cannot take independent action or perform any actions not related to driving.

Ejection System: When activated, this foolproof system pops open the pilot's compartment and hurls the pilot's chair clear of the vehicle, with the pilot strapped inside. When the chair is at a safe distance from the vehicle, it releases a parachute to allow the pilot to descend safely.

JUMP Jets: Quick-burst directed-thrust engines that allow the vehicle to leap ten meters vertically or horizontally. The thrusters cannot provide sustained flight

and cannot hover, so the vehicle rides on its own wheels during normal travel.

Satellite Link: Allows occupants to access the Global DataNet from anywhere on Earth. Occupants may use their TAPs or any other electronic equipment to access the satellite link from inside the vehicle, either wirelessly or through a cable connection. Normally the vehicle's chassis is shielded so that the satellite link cannot be accessed wirelessly from outside the vehicle, but this shielding is not always reliable on non-military vehicles.

MOTORCYCLES

NAKAMURA MOTORS KAMIKAZE JUMP BOARD

This is a true 21st century skateboard, equipped with miniature **JUMP Jets** to provide crowd-thrilling leaps.

#Wingz: Ignore the fatalities statistics. The thrill of riding this board is worth the risk.

HARLEY-DAVIDSON-INDIAN IRON HORSE CRUISER

No wings, no jets, no Hyper Reality glitz; just a solid, reliable motorcycle with two hundred years of engineering experience behind it.

MOTORCYCLES

CYCLE	SCALE	CREW	SPD	MNV	STRESS	ARMOR	COST
Nakamura Motors Kamikaze JUMP Board	Poor (-1)	1	+2	+1	None	0	Fair (+2)
Harley-Davidson-In- dian Iron Horse Cruiser	Mediocre (+0)	1+1	+1	+0	☐	0	Great (+4)
Nakamura Motors Steel Wind Motorcycle	Mediocre (+0)	1	+2	+1	☐	0	Great (+4)
Cherry Automotive Vector Elite Motorcycle	Mediocre (+0)	1+1	+2	+1	☐	0	Fantastic (+6)
Thuggee TG-12 Motorcycle	Mediocre (+0)	1+1	+2	+1	☐	0	Superb (+5)
Harlon Golden Eagle Cruiser	Mediocre (+0)	1+1	+3	+1	☐	1	Superb (+5)
Lawboss	Mediocre (+0)	1	+3	+1	☐☐	1	Military
Wasteland Traders Dusty Roads Cruiser	Average (+1)	1+1	+2	+0	☐☐	1	Fantastic (+6)
Toyota Locust Quad Turbo JUMP Bike	Mediocre (+0)	1	+3	+2	☐	0	Epic (+7)

NAKAMURA MOTORS STEEL WIND MOTORCYCLE

A compact, streamlined motorcycle favored by street racers.

CHERRY AUTOMOTIVE VECTOR ELITE MOTORCYCLE

The computer-assisted shock absorbers, wide wheel base, and sealed-capsule design of the Vector Elite provide a smooth ride in maximum comfort for the driver and a single passenger. Like all **Cherry Automotive** vehicles, this motorcycle is loaded with amenities, such as a noise-compensating sound system, a refrigerated drink dispenser, and windows with adjustable tint to either reveal or conceal the identities of the riders as desired.

THUGGEE TG-12 MOTORCYCLE

This combat-ready bike comes with a configurable mount that can hold almost any rifle-sized weapon and fire it on demand. This is a forward-facing mount.

HARLON GOLDEN EAGLE CRUISER

A vintage design combined with a high-powered engine.

LAWBOSS

This motorcycle-sized VTOL is equipped with a heavy machine gun on a forward-facing mount. The Lawboss is intended for use by law enforcement agencies in high-threat areas.

WASTELAND TRADERS DUSTY ROADS CRUISER

This rugged all-terrain bike comes with a two-tube rocket launcher, carried in a sidecar in a forward-facing mount. The rocket launcher has a range of three zones, a Fantastic (+6) blast rating, and Weapon:2.



TOYOTA LOCUST QUAD TURBO JUMP BIKE

A racing bike with **JUMP Jets**, the Quad Turbo gets riders past obstacles that would stop an ordinary bike in its tracks.

CARS

MICRON SUPER ECONOMY GROUND CAR

A super-compact energy-efficient vehicle designed for dense urban environments.

SAMBA ECONOLINE ELECTRIC

A commuter vehicle with room for a passenger and some storage.

HOOD RATZ DB PICK-UP

This urban warfare pickup truck is equipped with a pintle-mounted heavy machine gun in the bed. The open bed allows passengers to board and exit quickly, but provides minimal armor protection, so passengers should wear body armor in hostile environments.

CHERRY AUTOMOTIVE EXECUTOR

The most expensive sports car available for public purchase, the Executor justifies its price with rapid acceleration, responsive maneuvering, and an extensive suite of luxury amenities.

CHERRY AUTOMOTIVE PURE ELEGANCE LUXURY SEDAN

This roomy sedan delivers unsurpassed performance and comfort. For challenging urban environments, the vehicle is equipped with a pop-out minigun in a forward-facing mount. The minigun is concealed beneath a hood panel when not in use.

KIWI MOTORS VIRTUOSO ARMORED LIMOUSINE

The limousine of choice for secure VIP transport. The Virtuoso is equipped with a minigun in a forward-facing mount, along with a Mediocre (+0) **Autopilot**.

SAMBA MARATHON

An all-purpose SUV, designed to be easily modified by resellers or knowledgeable mechanics. Add reinforced shocks and heavy-duty air filters and this vehicle

CARS

CAR	SCALE	CREW	SPD	MNV	STRESS	ARMOR	COST
Micron Super Economy Ground Car	Average (+1)	1	+0	+0	□	0	Good (+3)
Samba Econoline Electric	Average (+1)	1+1	+1	+0	□	1	Superb (+5)
Hood Ratz DB Pick-Up	Good (+3)	1+6	+2	+0	□□	3	Fantastic (+6)
Cherry Automotive Executor	Fair (+2)	1+1	+2	+1	□□	2	Legendary (+8)
Cherry Automotive Pure Elegance Luxury Sedan	Fair (+2)	1+5	+2	+2	□□	2	Legendary (+8)
Kiwi Motors Virtuoso Armored Limousine	Fair (+2)	0+6	+1	+0	□□□	3	Legendary (+8)
Samba Marathon	Good (+3)	1+6	+1	+0	□□	3	Fantastic (+6)
Toyota CDZ Waste Cruiser 2090	Good (+3)	1+5	+1	+0	□□□	3	Epic (+7)
Honda UPHL Delivery Vehicle	Good (+3)	1+1	+1	+0	□□□	3	Fantastic (+6)
Kiwi Motors Courier Armored Taxi	Fair (+2)	1+3	+2	+0	□□□	3	Fantastic (+6)
Ravenlocke Securities MK-II Patrol Police Cruiser	Fair (+2)	1+3	+3	+2	□□□	3	Fantastic (+6)
Wasteland Traders "Whip Scorpion" Sand Rail	Good (+3)	1+3	+2	+0	□□	3	Good (+3)
Marsworks Engineering WORG Armored Truck	Good (+3)	1+2	+3	+1	□□□	5	Military

is ready for the wastelands. Bolt on armor and weapons and the Marathon can fill law enforcement and military roles. Customization costs are not included in the base purchase price.

TOYOTA CDZ WASTE CRUISER 2090

In the wastelands, no other vehicle has the range of the CDZ. Its extendable solar panels can recharge the electric engine in a matter of hours, and its **Satellite Link** can connect its occupants to the Global DataNet from anywhere on the planet. All-terrain equipment includes a roll cage and solid tires, and the heavy machine gun on a fixed forward mount defends the occupants from hostile forces.

HONDA UHPL DELIVERY VEHICLE

The UHPL's cargo bay is large enough to carry an object of Average (+1) scale.

KIWI MOTORS COURIER ARMORED TAXI

If you're providing passenger service in the sprawl, the Courier can help you get your customers where they need to go in safety. This taxi also comes with a pop-out minigun on a fixed forward mount.

RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES MK-II PATROL POLICE/SECURITY CRUISER

The MK-II defines the standard for law enforcement patrol vehicles. The rear passenger area is sealed off from the front cabin, and can be locked for prisoner transport. A front-facing heavy machine gun is mounted under the hood.



WASTELAND TRADERS "WHIP SCORPION" SAND RAIL

This all-terrain vehicle is equipped with a pintle-mounted heavy machine gun. The machine gun is accessible from the passenger and cargo area, and when not in use it retracts into the vehicle underneath an armored hatch.

MARSWORKS ENGINEERING WORG ARMORED TRUCK

The WORG is an open-bed combat truck, similar to the Hood Ratz DB but far more durable, and built to handle difficult terrain. A pintle-mounted heavy machine gun stands in the bed.

AIRCRAFT

These fixed-wing aircraft are not capable of hovering. They must maintain a minimum forward speed or else stall and crash.

DRAGONFLY MICROLIGHT VEHICLE

When disassembled, the Dragonfly can be transported in two crates with a total volume of one cubic meter. Disassembly or reassembly requires one hour.

MARSWORKS ENGINEERING ECLIPSE FIGHTER JET

This modern air-superiority craft is equipped with a forward-facing heavy machine gun and four wing-mounted **Guided** missiles. The missiles deliver an attack with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:3 with a range of two kilometers. In case of emergency, an **Ejection System** allows the pilot to abandon the aircraft quickly and safely. In addition, the Eclipse carries **Anti-Missile Countermeasures**, which help the pilot defend against guided missile attacks.

MARSWORKS ENGINEERING INTRUDER ATTACK JET

A heavier version of the Eclipse, enhanced so it can fill a ground attack role. The Intruder can carry the same weapons loadout as the Eclipse, or the air-to-air missiles can be replaced with **Guided** bombs. The bombs have Weapon:5 and deliver explosions with a Legendary (+8) blast rating against ground targets.

VTOL

A VTOL (vertical take-off and landing) vehicle floats on jets of air and can perform agile maneuvers similar to those of a helicopter, such as hovering, spinning in place, or sliding from side to side.

IRON PEGASUS VTOL CRUISER

An early-model consumer VTOL, the Iron Pegasus is outclassed by more recent vehicles, but still demands a high price as a collector's showpiece.

#Wingz: Outclassed? I'd rather have one of these than ten of whatever garbage Cherry Automotive is selling this week.

#NullStorm: Of course you would. And it would stay parked in your shop because you can't find replacement parts for it.



AIRCRAFT

AIRCRAFT	SCALE	CREW	SPD	MNV	STRESS	ARMOR	COST
Dragonfly Microlight Vehicle	Average (+1)	1	+2	+0	□	0	Good (+3)
Marsworks Eclipse Fighter Jet	Superb (+5)	1	SS	+1	□□□	3	Military
Marsworks Intruder Attack Jet	Superb (+5)	1	SS	+0	□□□	3	Military

VTOL CRAFT

VTOL	SCALE	CREW	SPD	MNV	STRESS	ARMOR	COST
Iron Pegasus VTOL Cruiser	Fair (+2)	1+1	+6	+0	□□	2	Legendary (+8)
Cherry Automotive Light VTOL Car	Fair (+2)	1+2	+7	+1	□□	2	Epic (+7)
Kiwi Motors Albatross Armored V-Taxi	Fair (+2)	1+3	+6	+2	□□□	3	Legendary (+8)
Kiwi Motors Armored VTOL Limousine	Fair (+2)	0+6	+6	+0	□□□	4	+9
Marsworks Engineering VTOL Transport	Great (+4)	1+12	+4	+0	□□□□	4	+9
Ravenlocke Mk-IX Interdictor Police Cruiser	Good (+3)	2+7	+4	+1	□□□	4	Epic (+7)

CHERRY AUTOMOTIVE LIGHT VTOL CAR

Cherry Automotive is second to none when providing style and performance, both on the ground and in the air. Comes with an **Ejection System** and a Mediocre (+0) **Autopilot**.

#Wingz: And you'll need those ejection seats, too. Rocks fly better than these pieces of junk.

KIWI MOTORS ALBATROSS ARMORED V-TAXI

The Albatross helps you deliver your passengers to their destination quickly and securely.

KIWI MOTORS ARMORED VTOL LIMOUSINE

Protect your safety and privacy with this self-piloting VTOL. The luxury features—including a high-fidelity sound system and a food and beverage refrigerator—will keep you comfortable, while

the Average (+1) **Autopilot** will make sure you never miss an appointment. This vehicle also has a forward-facing heavy machine gun.

MARSWORKS ENGINEERING VTOL TRANSPORT

This vehicle can move two tons of cargo or a squad of troops and equipment. Equipped with a forward-facing minigun and an Average (+1) **Autopilot**.

RAVENLOCKE MK-IX INTERDICTOR POLICE CRUISER

Detachable seats and restraints allow you to configure the Mk-IX's rear compartment to carry cargo or up to seven passengers or prisoners. The Mk-IX also has pilot and co-pilot **Ejection Systems**, a Fair (+2) **Autopilot**, and a turret-mounted minigun. The MK-IX employs **Experimental Anti-Gravity Thrusters** to maintain flight.



#Billy_Black_Eyes: The MK-IX is a retrofitted military vehicle, stripped down so it can be sold to law enforcement agencies. Ravenlocke's been selling the Russians this tech for the past five years.

#BrotherWolf: This is true! You westerners have no idea what kind of toys the Motherland has.

#Officerbob: Do Russia's versions fall out of the sky like ours do?

#Simba: Yeah, those *Experimental Anti-Gravity Thrusters* glitch out like clockwork at 6000 ft.

WATERCRAFT

DEEP BLUE "WATER BUG" PERSONAL WATERCRAFT

This is normally sold as a recreational vehicle, but Deep Blue also sells a combat-ready model with a forward-facing mount for any rifle-sized weapon. Both models have the same cost.

DEEP BLUE "WATER SPIDER" TWIN-HULL SPEED BOAT

This craft has a minigun on a forward-facing mount, and a pintle-mounted heavy machine gun in the rear passenger area.

DEEP BLUE FLYING FISH FOIL SPEED BOAT

This hydrofoil speedboat will get you and five friends across the water in a hurry.

DOLPHIN INFLATABLE LANDING CRAFT

Favored by special operations teams, the Dolphin can self-inflate or deflate silently in less than a minute. When deflated, the Dolphin, including its low-noise induction turbine motor, can fit in a backpack.

BUSES AND TRUCKS

ATLANTICA MOTOR CORPORATION ARMORED BUS

A lightly armored public transportation vehicle.

WATERCRAFT

WATERCRAFT	SCALE	CREW	SPD	MNV	STRESS	ARMOR	COST
Deep Blue Water Bug Personal Watercraft	Mediocre (+0)	1+1	+0	+1	□	0	Great (+4)
Deep Blue Water Spider Twin-Hull Speed Boat	Fair (+2)	1+3	+0	+0	□□	2	Superb (+5)
Deep Blue Flying Fish Foil Speed Boat	Good (+3)	1+5	+1	+0	□□	3	Superb (+5)
Dolphin Inflatable Landing Craft	Fair (+2)	1+5	+0	+0	□□	0	Fair (+2)

BUSES AND TRUCKS

VEHICLE	SCALE	CREW	SPD	MNV	STRESS	ARMOR	COST
Atlantica Motor Corporation Armored Bus	Great (+4)	1+40	+1	+0	□□□□	5	Legendary (+8)
Atlantica Motor Corporation Armadillo Armored Bus	Great (+4)	2+38	+1	+0	□□□□	5	Legendary (+8)
Atlantica Motor Corporation Shipping Vehicle	Good (+3)	0	+1	+0	□□□	3	+9
AMC-RS Bastion Armored Headquarters	Great (+4)	2+16	+1	+0	□□□□	5	+17 (2.37 million CR)

ATLANTICA MOTOR CORPORATION ARMADILLO ARMORED BUS

This modified version of the basic AMC armored bus provides redundant driving controls for pilot and co-pilot, and a roof-mounted minigun turret. The minigun can be operated from a seat in the enclosed turret compartment, to the rear and slightly above the driver's cabin, or from either pilot's controls.

ATLANTICA MOTOR CORPORATION AUTONOMOUS SHIPPING VEHICLE

A self-piloting cargo truck with a minigun turret for anti-theft defense. The **Autopilot** has a Fair (+2) skill rating.

AMC-RS BASTION ARMORED HEADQUARTERS

Ravenlocke Securities has licensed the Atlantica Armadillo design as a platform for this mobile command center. Interior equipment includes a **Satellite Link**, displays for surveillance monitors or other data access, and servers to provide a secure mobile network cloud.

HEAVY VEHICLES

MARSWORKS WASTEX EXPLORATION VEHICLE

The WasteX is a research and exploration vehicle, built to defend itself against both natural and human threats. It carries a compact assortment of scientific gear to support a broad spectrum of fieldwork.

The all-terrain equipment includes four two-meter-tall tracks and a sturdy winch and grapple.

Solar collectors provide power for the engine batteries, and a desalination plant produces fresh water for occupants, giving the vehicle extensive range. The sealed cabin provides absolute protection against toxic gas, acid rain, hurricanes, tornadoes, and small-arms fire. A minigun and two heavy machine guns are mounted in forward-facing mounts, and two additional heavy machine guns are in independent roof turrets.

MARSWORKS ENGINEERING RAZORBACK APC

This armored personnel carrier has two heavy machine gun turrets, one in the front and one in the rear, and two 57mm cannon turrets, also mounted front and rear. The 57mm cannons have a half-kilometer range, and fire attacks with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:5.

MARSWORKS ENGINEERING CENTURION LIGHT BATTLE TANK C-216-LHT

This JUMP tank easily overcomes terrain that would put traditional ground tanks out of action. Pilots may use the **JUMP Jets** to briefly hop the tank ten meters into the air to overcome high obstacles or to deliver unexpected pop-up attacks. The forward-facing 60mm cannon has a half-kilometer range and fires attacks with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:5.

HEAVY VEHICLES

VEHICLE	SCALE	CREW	SPD	MNV	STRESS	ARMOR	COST
Marsworks WasteX Exploration Vehicle	Great (+4)	3+5	+2	+0	□□□□	4	Legendary (+8)
Marsworks Engineering Razorback APC	Great (+4)	4+10	+3	+1	□□□□	5	Military
Centurion Light Battle Tank C-216-LHT	Good (+3)	3+2	+6	+2	□□□□	5	Military
Marsworks Legios Main Battle Tank	Great (+4)	4+2	+3	+2	□□□□	6	Military
Bean Pole VTOL Power Armor Transport	Good (+3)	3+6	+6	+1	□□□□	3	Military
Marsworks Engineering Overkill Gunship	Superb (+5)	2	+5	+2	□□□□	5	Military



The rear-facing 30mm cannon also has a half-kilometer range, and fires attacks with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:4. A forward-facing mount alongside the forward cannon can carry a heavy machine gun or other similar-sized weapon.

MARSWORKS ENGINEERING LEGIOS MAIN BATTLE TANK

The main cannon turret of the Legios has a one-kilometer range, and fires attacks with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:8. The turret cannot fire at steep upward or downward angles. The Legios also has two heavy machine guns in top-mounted turrets.

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES BEAN POLE POWER ARMOR TRANSPORT

This unusual VTOL is designed to drop powered-armor troops into combat zones. Trailing the crew compartment is a long rail with mount points for six powered armor suits (page 189). These rail-mount points are not enclosed and do not provide protection for the attached suits, but allow armored troops to quickly detach from the rail and leap into combat, or just as quickly reattach to the rail for rapid evacuation. Attached troops may use their weapons normally to defend the vehicle.

MARSWORKS ENGINEERING OVERKILL GUNSHIP

A heavily armed and armored VTOL. Both pilot stations have **Ejection Systems**, and the vehicle has a Fair (+2) **Autopilot**. The 50mm cannon turret has a half-kilometer range and delivers an attack with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:5. Two **Guided** missiles have a one kilometer range and deliver Weapon:4 attacks, and the two 70mm rocket pods on forward-facing mounts have a range of three zones, firing attacks with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:2.

SPACECRAFT

A spacecraft's range indicates how far it can travel before it must refuel, resupply, or both. Interfleet range is 10,000 kilometers, sufficient for travel between nearby spacecraft or space stations. Planetary range is 25 million kilometers, enough to travel from a planet's surface to one of its moons. System range is sufficient to reach any destination in the solar system.

Spacecraft move at a far greater speed than air, land, and water vehicles. The speed and maneuver ratings indicated on the chart are only used to compare spacecraft performance relative to each other.

Shuttles are capable of atmospheric flight. When in atmosphere, treat them as aircraft with supersonic (SS) speed and maneuver ratings. Other spacecraft may not fly in atmosphere.

CALYPSO PERSONAL SHUTTLE

A general-purpose shuttle with planetary range. Equipped with a Mediocre (+0) **Autopilot**.

CALAMITY ASSAULT SHUTTLE

A planetary-range shuttle intended primarily to carry troops from orbit to a planet's surface. Armed with two forward-facing heavy machine guns, and equipped with a Mediocre (+0) **Autopilot**.

MARSWORKS ENGINEERING STARFIGHTER

A small military spacecraft with planetary range. Equipped with an Average (+1) **Autopilot**, two forward-mounted heavy machine guns, and a rack of four **Guided** missiles. The missiles have a one kilometer range and deliver attacks with a Fantastic (+6) blast rating and Weapon:4.



TRANQUILITY LIGHT FREIGHTER

This system-range vehicle can carry twelve tons of cargo.

GEEHAWG I & II MAN INTERFLEET SLED

The GeeHawg I is a single-occupant craft the size of a large motorcycle; the GeeHawg II is a double-occupant craft as large as a compact car. Both vehicles are interfleet-range craft, typically used by asteroid miners or space-station construction workers. GeeHawgs are only partially enclosed, and their passengers require radiation-shielded space suits.

AUGMENTATIONS

Bioware, cyberware, geneware—hell, even nanoware. We've seen it all in 2090. It started with chrome (that's street code for cyberware). In the more dangerous circles where an edge is needed, cyberware is still the go-to gear, especially if you can get in on the cheap. That's why chrome reapers can make a decent living chopping people up for parts.

Sure, bioware is nice and clean. It's all the rage among bodybuilders and pro athletes, but there's nothing more intimidating than a full-conversion borg decked to the nines with enough weapons to make a sector cop wet his pants. Then ya got nanoware. The armchair cyber jockeys and brainpans all say nanoware is the wave of the future, but if you ask me, chrome will still be around and in use when nanoware becomes commonplace. Either way, if you're gonna walk the razor, you need an edge, omae.

SPACECRAFT

VEHICLE	SCALE	CREW	SPD	MNV	STRESS	ARMOR	COST
Calypso Personal Shuttle	Legendary (+8)	2+10	+2	+1	□□□	3	+20 (3 million CR)
Calamity Assault Shuttle	Legendary (+8)	2+10	+5	+2	□□□	4	+22 (3.5 million CR)
Marsworks Engineering Starfighter	Fantastic (+6)	1	+8	+3	□□□□	4	Military
Tranquility Light Freighter	+10	5	+3	+0	□□□□	5	+40 (8 million CR)
GeeHawg I & II Man Interfleet Sled	Mediocre (+0) or Average (+1)	1 or 2	+3	+1	□ or □□	0 or 1	Epic +7

AUGMENTATION COSTS

UNMODIFIED STRAIN	GUTTERWARE	STREETWARE	HYPERCHROME	MILWARE
1	Fair (+2)	Great (+4)	Fantastic (+6)	+9
2	Good (+3)	Superb (+5)	Epic (+7)	+10
3-5	Great (+4)	Fantastic (+6)	Legendary (+8)	+11
6-9	Superb (+5)	Epic (+7)	+9	+12
10-12	Fantastic (+6)	Legendary (+8)	+10	+13

STRAIN

You can only handle so many augments before they start to take a toll on your body or mind, represented by your Strain. Your character's Strain tolerance starts at two and increases by two for each rank in the higher of your Physique or Will. So, if you have Fair (+2) Will and Good (+3) Physique, your Strain tolerance is 8.

Every augment increases your total Strain. On installing an augment, if your new total Strain is higher than your Strain tolerance, you immediately suffer an attack equal to the difference, defended by the higher of your Physique or Will.

STRAIN

PHYSIQUE/WILL	STRAIN TOLERANCE
Mediocre (+0)	2
Average (+1)	4
Fair (+2)	6
Good (+3)	8
Great (+4)	10
Superb (+5)	12
Fantastic (+6)	14

If this attack succeeds, you must absorb the shifts generated by the attack with a consequence of the appropriate type: a physical consequence if you defended with Physique, or a mental consequence if you defended with Will. Strain consequences can't be healed unless the offending augment is removed or your Strain tolerance increases. Removing and reinstalling the same augment simply gives you the same Strain consequence back; you have to buy and install a completely new augment to get a new Strain resistance roll.

*Example: Jack Flash goes under the knife to install a new cyberlimb. This takes his total Strain from 8 to 11. With Good (+3) Physique, Jack Flash has Strain Tolerance of 8, so this puts his total Strain three points over his Strain tolerance. He must immediately resist a 3-shift attack. He rolls  for a total result of Fair (+2) Physique. With one attack shift left over, he has to take a mild consequence that he's stuck with unless he has the arm removed. He chooses **Phantom Limb Syndrome**.*

If your Physique or Will changes during play, this also modifies your Strain tolerance. If your new Strain tolerance is greater than your total Strain, then all your Strain consequences begin to recover immediately. If your Strain tolerance decreases and becomes lower than your total Strain, you must defend against a Strain attack equal to that difference.

If you suffer a consequence as a result, choose which of your augments would need to be uninstalled to remove the consequence.

SUCCESS AT A COST

If you succeed at a major cost on any action aided by an augment, the cost can be to have the augment malfunction, disabling it until the end of the scene. This disables any cybermonk stunt attached to that augment.

THE COST OF AUGMENTS

Augments are available in four quality levels: Gutterware, Streetware, Hyperchrome, and Milware. As an augment's quality increases, its final Strain rating decreases. The cost of an augment depends on both its type and its unmodified Strain rating.

GUTTERWARE

Gutterware is the worst possible grade of 'ware you can get. These augments are very cheap, but that's because they were either cut out of someone else's body, grown from incompatible—or diseased—organs, or built with sub-standard materials.

- **Price:** 2 lower than Streetware.
- **Strain:** Gutterware's Strain rating is doubled when you write it down on your character sheet.
- **Availability:** Gutterware is highly illegal, and is only available on the black market.

Example: A wannabe rigger named LED buys a Gutterware Vehicle Control Interface I. Its unmodified Strain rating is 2, so the cost is Good (+3), but it adds a hefty 4 Strain to his character sheet.

STREETWARE

Streetware is the most common grade of cybernetics you'll find. It's clean, but more expensive than Gutterware. Streetware is generally thought of as "out of the box" or "plug 'n play" 'ware. It's not tailored to a particular individual's body, but it has been tested on a wide range of subjects to ensure general compatibility with baseline humans, synthetics, and hybrids.

- **Price:** The price of Streetware is unmodified.
- **Strain:** Streetware's Strain rating is unmodified when you write it on your sheet.
- **Availability:** Streetware is available on the open market. You can find it in any city on the planet or even get it via the Global DataNet.

HYPERCHROME

If Streetware can be likened to an economy vehicle, then Hyperchrome is a sports car. Hyperchrome is custom-made for the individual, resulting in a much cleaner—but more expensive—installation.

- **Price:** 2 higher than Streetware.
- **Strain:** Hyperchrome's Strain is reduced by one (minimum one) when you write it on your sheet.
- **Availability:** Most Hyperchrome-grade augments are readily available on

the open market. You can get any type of augment not considered to be a weapon without submitting to a background check. If you want to get weaponry, but don't want to have a background check, you'll have to find it on the black market—specifically from various organized crime rings such as the Yakuza and the Triads. The cost is still the same, but that doesn't mean purveyors of these augments won't want something extra for their services.

MILWARE

Sometimes called blackware or ghostware, military-grade augments are beyond SOTA (state of the art), existing in a realm of myth and street rumor. These augments aren't just clean, they're made from emerging tech—like neurochemical combat conditioning, advanced reflex technology, and radical nanomorphic science. If you want L33T gear, this is the grade for you, amigo...if you can get it, that is.

- **Price:** 5 higher than Streetware.
- **Strain:** Milware's Strain is halved, rounded down (minimum one), when you write it on your sheet.
- **Availability:** Milware augments are like the alien myth: everyone's heard about them, but nobody has actually seen them. Whether or not someone's actually seen Milware in action—well that's how the rumors start, isn't it? If you're playing at the Elite Operatives power level, you can begin play with one of these augments. Otherwise you're going to need an aspect to justify getting these at character creation, but even then Milware is expensive—prohibitively so. Milware is never available for purchase on either the open market or the black market. To obtain these augments, you need to have developed some serious connections with powerful people. We're talking about high-ranking government officials with access to code-named classified projects, military commanders, and CEOs of megacorps, and I'm not talking about the little fish; I'm talking about C-7 megacorps with vast resources and influence. This should only happen through roleplay.

AUGMENT PACKAGES

These are some suggestions for packages of augments that work well together for different specializations. All packages are Streetware grade.

CELEBRITY PACKAGE

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

- **Strain:** 5
- **Augmentations:** Beautification Treatment; Emotional Resistance Response System; Tailored Pheromones

GUNSLINGER PACKAGE

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

- **Strain:** 5
- **Augmentations:** Smartgun System, Advanced; Fight or Flight System; Wireless Reflexes I

PRO SPORT ATHLETE PACKAGE

Rise above the competition with this package that will enhance your athletic ability in every way! Leave your opponents in the dust!

- **Strain:** 6
- **Augmentations:** Cyberlegs with Kangaroo System, Ligament Enhancement; Enhanced Articulation; Muscle Augmentation

SHOCK TROOPER PACKAGE

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

- **Strain:** 10

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

SPY PACKAGE

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

- **Strain:** 6
- **Augmentations:** Cyberarm with Fingerprint Duplicator and Lockpicking Kit; Cyberears with Amplified Hearing; Enhanced Articulation; Building Intrusion Burglary Knowcomp™

STREET WARRIOR PACKAGE

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

- **Strain:** 5
- **Augmentations:** Cyberweapon; Fight or Flight System; Muscle Augmentation; Subdermal Armor

SURVIVOR PACKAGE

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

- **Strain:** 2
- **Augmentations:** Anti-Toxin System, Environmental Regulators

AUGMENT CATALOG

As long as you've had time to prepare yourself between scenes, each beneficial augment aspect begins the scene with a free invoke. If an augment doesn't list an aspect in its description, it can still be invoked or compelled according to its function, and gets a free invoke as well. For example, you could invoke Bone Reinforcement to help you resist a blunt force trauma, but it might be invoked against



you if you try to do something that needs a lot of flexibility. We've noted some specific circumstances in which your augs might be used against you.

ANTI-TOXIN SYSTEM

In today's ever-more toxic world, this augment is a must. Enhancements to your liver and toxin-removing nanite colonies in your bloodstream exponentially increase your resistance to foreign chemical compounds.

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** +2 to Physique rolls to resist poisons. Drugs require a double dose to be effective.

#Johnny_Harmonic: I thought about getting one of these, but I hear they make you need twice as much drugs or booze to get high, and who's got the time and cash for that?

#Frosty: Some smart-asses hack their anti-toxin augs so they can switch them on and off—just to make getting wasted cheaper. That's a dumb thing to do though, 'cause it means a hacker who gets into your TAP can turn it off and then poison the shit out of you.

BEAUTIFICATION TREATMENT

The latest surgical, genetic, and biochemical treatments can transform even the ugliest of ducklings into a beautiful swan.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** +2 to Rapport and Deceive rolls when interacting with someone attracted to people of your sex.

BIOFEEDBACK (I–III)

Have you always wanted to maintain the zen-like calm of a spiritual master without having to put in decades of training and self-discipline? This implant is for you! Cutting-edge endocrine system and neural implants give you control over your parasympathetic nervous system, letting you control your hormone production, metabolism, heart rate, and other bodily functions.

- **Strain:** 2 per level
- **Effect:** +1 Will per level purely for the purpose of determining mental stress boxes and consequence slots.

BONE REINFORCEMENT (I–III)

Why put up with a fragile skeleton that's prone to breaks and fractures when you can install our unique bone-reinforcement weave and make yourself practically immune to bone-crushing force?

- **Strain:** 2 per level
- **Effect:** +1 Physique per level purely for the purpose of determining physical stress boxes and consequence slots.

CYBERLIMBS, CYBER EYES, AND CYBER EARS

Whether you've lost an arm, leg, or sensory organ in a tragic accident, or simply want to replace what nature gave you with an infinitely superior cybernetic version, we've got the right augment for you. With a comprehensive range of customization modules available, our cybertech will beat your meat any day!

- **Strain:** 1 to 3
- **Effect:** In addition to being an aspect, each cyberlimb, eye, or ear provides slots for augment modules equal to its Strain rating. These modules are included in the cost of the augment. When a module is shown as installed in legs, arms, or hands, it means you must have both limbs replaced, but it still takes up only one module slot. If you replace both eyes or both ears with cyber-equivalents, then the Strain rating and modules are shared between them. You can send a feed of everything you sense with one of these augs to your TAP's onboard memory, to a Data Carrier augment, or to remote storage via the GDN.

EAR MODULES

- **Amplified Hearing:** Activating this module grants you +2 to Notice rolls involving sound. This can be invoked or compelled against you if you have it turned on when there's a loud noise nearby.
- **Motion Detection:** +2 on Notice rolls to detect movement using your hearing. If you are ambushed, you gain an initiative steal for the first round of combat.

LEG MODULES

- **Aquatic:** +2 to Athletics rolls involving swimming or underwater movement.
- **Kangaroo System:** This augment allows you to jump farther and higher than normal. +2 to Athletics rolls involving jumping or leaping.
- **Ligament Enhancement:** This enhancement gives you a literal spring in your step. You can move two zones and still take an action rather than only one.
- **Reflexive Strike Module:** If you succeed with style while defending in hand-to-hand combat, you may sacrifice your boost to deal your attacker a 2-stress physical attack that can't be dodged.
- **Stabilization System:** Unstable surfaces are never a source of opposition for you.

ARM/HAND MODULES

Cyberarms always come with cyberhands (in which case the hand has 0-3 Strain slots for modules) but you can also attach a cyberhand to a meat arm (in which case it has 1-3 Strain slots for modules). This means a cyberarm with three modules in the arm and three in the hand can have a Strain rating of 6.

- **Breaching System (arm):** Thanks to hydraulic force multipliers originally designed to bring down walls, this augment gives you +2 to Fight rolls to punch through obstacles and gives your unarmed attacks Weapon:1.
- **Chemical Injectors (hand):** Your fingertips contain retractable syringes that can store three full doses of chemicals. Each dose can be of a different compound. You can dose yourself as a free action, but afflicting someone with a drug in a conflict requires you to successfully create an advantage with Fight. The chemicals themselves must be purchased separately.
- **Cyber Tools (arm):** Your arm is kitted out with a **Basic Toolkit**. You always have the necessary tools to perform basic maintenance and repairs, and you can invoke this aspect to help you on such tasks.

DRONE HAND (AVERAGE)

Form Factor: Detachable Drone Hand

Skills: Average (+1) Athletics and Notice

Upgrades: Advanced Optics (**Thermal Vision**; +2 to visual Notice rolls made via this drone); Nano-Polymer Fingertips (**Wall Walker**: Vertical surfaces provide no opposition)

Armor: 0

Stress: None (no consequences)

Firewall: Good (+3)

Notes: The drone's small size means its form factor can be invoked when relevant.

- **Drone Hand (hand):** Your hand is able to detach and become a free-roaming spider-like drone. For security reasons this augment cannot be controlled via the GDN, so you must have a Vehicle Control Interface to make use of it. While the drone hand is deployed you suffer from the **One-Handed** aspect. Replacement drone hands have a Good (+3) cost.
- **Fingerprint Duplicator and Lockpicking Kit (hand):** Your fingertips contain small tools that aid you in picking locks, giving you +2 when using Burglary to bypass any mechanical lock. You can also duplicate any fingerprints you're able to obtain, allowing you to automatically bypass fingerprint security locks as long as you've been able to obtain the fingerprints of an authorized user.
- **Firearm (arm):** You have a pistol implanted in your arm. See page 135.
- **Firearm, Automatic (2 modules, arm):** You have an automatic rifle implanted in your arm. See page 137.
- **Firearm, Heavy (3 modules, arm):** You have a heavy machine gun implanted in your arm. See page 139.
- **Gecko Hands (hands):** You gain the **Wall Walker** aspect. Vertical surfaces never oppose your movement.
- **Recoil Compensation (arm):** When you split an **Automatic Fire** attack

among targets, add +1 shift to two of those attacks.

- **Reflexive Strike Module (arm):** If you succeed with style while defending in hand-to-hand combat, you may sacrifice your boost to deal your attacker a 2-stress physical attack that can't be dodged.

EYE MODULES

- **Enhanced Vision:** Your eyes are fitted with optical and electronic apparatus that provide long-range eyesight much better than a normal human's. This gives you **Telescopic Vision** that permits you to see small details at greater range, and you can invoke this aspect to aid on relevant Notice rolls.
- **Flash Compensators:** +2 to resist attempts to create any aspects like **Dazzled** or **Flash Blinded** on you.
- **Infra/Ultra Optics:** You are able to see in the infrared and ultraviolet spectrums, giving you the aspect **Thermal and Ultraviolet Vision**.
- **Night Vision Optics:** Poor light never adds opposition to your actions.

CYBERNOSE, CHEMICAL SNIFFER

If you choose this implant, we'll install a comprehensive array of chemical sensors and a neural interface to help you interpret what you're sensing—you'll have a more sensitive sense of smell than a sniffer dog! With training and experience you'll be able to identify explosives, narcotics, and a host of other chemicals by smell.

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Activating this module grants you +2 to Notice rolls involving smell. This can be invoked or compelled against you if you have it turned on when a bad smell erupts nearby.

CYBERGILLS

Drowning is so last year. Why risk a watery grave when we can install this no-fuss augment in your throat or thorax that enables you to breathe underwater for an indefinite period?

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Gain the **Amphibious** aspect.

CYBERLUNG I-III

This popular augment gives you an internal air reservoir that you can replenish by breathing normally, providing 30, 60, or 90 minutes of emergency air reserve when full. This will let you survive underwater, in a vacuum, or in a poisonous or polluted environment.

- **Strain:** 1 per level
- **Effect:** 30 minutes of internal air reserve per level.

CYBERSKULL, PROTEAN

Do you want to just be another face in the crowd? And another? And another? This implant endows your cranium with numerous nanoscale plates that shift their position on demand or once every four hours to randomly change your facial appearance.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** +2 on Stealth rolls to hide in a crowd. Gain the **Protean Appearance** aspect.

CYBERSKULL, ENFORCER

In some lines of work it's important to project a threatening and intimidating appearance, and this augmentation will help you do exactly that. We'll subtly reinforce and sculpt your skull to turn you into someone that nobody would want to meet in a dark alley at night. With cheekbones literally like knives and a forehead as hard as steel, you'll take quite a beating and won't quit.

- **Strain:** 3
- **Effect:** +2 on Provoke rolls to intimidate people, supplemental Armor:1 against unarmed attacks, and gain the **Thuggish Appearance** aspect.

CYBERWEAPON

Whether you get titanium claws, a reinforced forearm, or a blade mounted to the back of your arm, this augment will mean you're never unarmed when you need to use violence.

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Gain an integral weapon aspect that can't be disarmed.

CYBERWEAPON, IMPROVED

For those with a bit more cash, this upgrade to the standard cyberweapon offers significant tactical advantages. Whether you have a built-in retractable katana or shock-dealing claws, you'll never be without options when fists start flying.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** As per Cyberweapon, but the weapon gets another weapon aspect (for example effects, see weapons in the Gear catalog on page 131) or another aspect (like **Retractable**).

CYBERWEAPON, ADVANCED

The ultimate in close-combat cyberweaponry, this cutting-edge augment will let you unleash a tide of death and destruction on your enemies, even if you're caught in a compromising situation without any equipment.

- **Strain:** 3
- **Effect:** As per Cyberweapon, Improved but larger or more powerful (Weapon:1). You can sacrifice the Weapon rating to add a second aspect or effect (like **Shock**) to the weapon.

DATA CARRIER

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Gain a secure non-wireless solid-state drive implanted somewhere in your body, on which you can store a virtually unlimited amount of data. While you can write to the drive from your TAP, accessing its data requires hardwiring a wireless access point to the drive, along with the correct codes.

DRUG RESERVOIR

When you need an edge, combat drugs can give you exactly what you need. Why pause to dose yourself when we can fit you with a tailored vat-grown gland that naturally produces the drug of your choice for instant mental dosing?

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** Gain an internal drug reservoir containing up to 3 doses of a combat drug of your choice. One dose refills every 24 hours. You can dose yourself with a simple mental command that does not take your action.

#Frosty: Combat drugs are for morons. Even with this augment you can still get addicted and suffer all the side effects of the drug. I guess at least you never have to wonder where the next fix is coming from.

#Johnny_Harmonic: The main advantage is you can dose up when someone's boring the fuck out of you, and they don't even notice.

#Frosty: ...You just dosed up right now, didn't you?

#Johnny_Harmonic: ;)

EMOTIONAL RESISTANCE RESPONSE SYSTEM

Thanks to biofeedback and reactive conditioning, this nifty augment can help you to resist appeals to emotion that might otherwise stop you from being as ruthlessly efficient as you need to be to get ahead in today's world.

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** +2 opposition to attempts with Provoke or Rapport to get an emotional response out of you.

EMP SHIELDING, BASIC

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Armor:1 against EMP attacks if vulnerable. Gain the **EMP Shielding** aspect, which you can invoke to help defend against advantages others attempt to create with EMP weapons.



EMP SHIELDING, ADVANCED

The last thing you need is for a sudden electromagnetic pulse to wipe your data or paralyze your augments in the middle of a delicate situation. This augment shields your TAP and cybernetic enhancements against electromagnetic pulse attacks, letting you get on with your day regardless. (This augment provides no protection against nuclear detonations.)

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** Armor:2 against EMP attacks if vulnerable. Gain the **EMP Shielding** aspect to help defend against advantages created with EMP weapons, and +2 to your opposition against create an advantage actions with EMP weapons.

ENHANCED NEURAL NET

This augment will let you achieve phenomenal feats of mental calculation thanks to cunningly designed neural grafts. In addition we'll coat your neurons in a super-conductive substance to allow faster firing times.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** **Increased Processing Power.**

ENHANCED NEURAL NET, ADVANCED

This augment takes the enhanced neural net to its ultimate level...for now. Our experimental neural tissue grafts and cortical stimulation reach their peak, giving you a massive boost in raw processing power.

- **Strain:** 3
- **Effect:** **Increased Processing Power,** and +2 to rolls when raw processing power is important.

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATORS

Why suffer in unpleasant environments like extreme heat, extreme cold, radioactive wastelands, and humid swamps? With this suite of environmental-regulation implants, you can be comfortable even in the most inhospitable of places.

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Each purchase gives +2 on Physique rolls to withstand a single chosen environmental hazard.

ENHANCED ARTICULATION

Human joints are weak and prone to failure. Fortunately in the modern day we can improve this obsolete design with nanoscale sculpturing and reinforcement that makes your joints tougher and much more flexible.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** **Enhanced Articulation.**

ENHANCED ARTICULATION, ADVANCED

New and improved, this upgrade over the standard enhanced articulation package will make your joints significantly tougher and more flexible.

- **Strain:** 3
- **Effect:** **Enhanced Articulation,** and +2 to rolls involving physical flexibility.

FIGHT OR FLIGHT SYSTEM

In imminent danger, why rely on your own adrenal glands when you can fit this improved replacement to get a significant edge?

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Initiative steal on the first exchange of a conflict, and +2 to your first action in a conflict.

KNOWCOMP™

A Knowcomp™ is an implanted expert system that lets you know kung fu—or any other skill—at a basic level of competence. Why take the time to learn a skill for yourself when a Knowcomp™ can do it for you?

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** Gain the **Knowcomp™** aspect for one skill specialization (e.g., **Kung Fu Knowcomp™** for Fight). Can be purchased multiple times for any combination of skills and specializations. Can't be applied to psionic powers. **Knowcomp™** provides standardized skills or knowledge, and using one means you'll perform actions in a predictable, rote way; this can be invoked or compelled against you.

KNOWCOMP™, ADVANCED

If you have a bit more cash to flash and you absolutely need to know everything there is about something, buy the new

Advanced Knowcomp™ to become a guaranteed expert in the field.

- **Strain:** 3
- **Effect:** Gain *Knowcomp™* for one skill specialization. Also, it now always gives +1 to the relevant skill specialization.

LIFESAVER SYSTEM

Don't let severe injuries get you down! Thanks to state-of-the-art organ redundancy and nanite healing systems, you'll be back up on your feet in no time.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** Others get +2 to their rolls to treat your physical consequences.

LIFESAVER SYSTEM, ADVANCED

After you get this augmentation suite installed, bleeding and suffering crippling injuries is for other people. You'll recover from injury even faster and suffer fewer lasting scars.

- **Strain:** 3
- **Effect:** Others get +2 to their rolls to treat your physical consequences. Also, successfully treating one of your consequences makes it heal as if it were one level less severe. For example, a severe consequence heals in a session rather than a scenario.

MUSCLE AUGMENTATION

Are you a hundred-pound weakling? Tired of people intimidating you because they're bigger and stronger? Buy Muscle Augmentation today! We'll culture prime slabs of vat-grown muscles and graft them all over your body to make you stronger than you could have possibly imagined.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** Gain the *Augmented Muscles* aspect.

MUSCLE AUGMENTATION, ADVANCED

With improvements in the efficiency of cultured muscle and neurological interfaces, we can push your augmented strength even further while producing a more aesthetically pleasing result.

- **Strain:** 3
- **Effect:** As per Muscle Augmentation, and gain +2 on all rolls involving raw strength. This augmentation

also bumps you up a level on the Scale ladder (page 91) for feats of strength.

NANOWEAVE ORGAN SYSTEM

You wear armor to protect your outsides, so why not buy this augment to protect your insides? We'll infuse your organs with a nanomolecular weave that toughens them against harm.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** Gain the *Armored Organs* aspect, which can be invoked to defend against attacks that would cause internal injuries.

NANOWEAVE ORGAN SYSTEM, ADVANCED

Thanks to new advances in nanotechnology, we can double the thickness of your organ's protectants without affecting their functioning. With this system installed your internal organs become practically bulletproof.

- **Strain:** 3
- **Effect:** As per Nanoweave Organ System, and allows you to defend against attacks with Physique in place of Athletics.

PERSONAL AIRBAGS

We'll fit your body with numerous small airbags that inflate in the event of a sudden impact, protecting you against falls and crashes.

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Supplemental Armor:2 against falling and crashing damage.

REINFORCED EXOSKELETON

This flexible external support and muscle-assist system will improve your endurance and allow you to carry very heavy loads for long periods of time. Lock off your joints and you can hold a load for an indefinite period of time. Why use a tripod to mount your heavy weaponry when you can just lock your arm joints to provide your own stable weapon platform?

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Gain the *Reinforced Exoskeleton* aspect. Also, you can lock your joints to wield weapons that usually require a mount.



SUPPLEMENTAL ARMOR

Supplemental armor stacks with normal armor. However, if you have multiple sources of supplemental armor, only stack the highest of those.

SMARTGUN SYSTEM

Don't use dumb guns, play it smart! This small implanted system interfaces with the computers inside compatible smartguns, giving you instant access to ammo count, friend-or-foe identification, and other tactical data. You can even set your guns up so they'll only fire if they're interfaced with your own personal smart gun system.

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Gain the *Smartgun* aspect. When you are offered a compel related to ammunition or targeting issues like picking a target out of a crowd or hitting friendly targets, you can reject it by invoking this aspect rather than spending a fate point.

SMARTGUN SYSTEM, ADVANCED

This is the next generation of smartgun systems, with upgraded software that lets you easily surpass your unaided skill.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** As per Smartgun System. Also gain +2 on Shoot rolls to create an advantage and overcome actions involving trick shots, or gain +2 to Shoot when you have an aspect in play related to good aim or position, such as *In My Sights*.

SUBDERMAL ARMOR

You owe it to yourself to get the best personal protection systems that money can buy. Why wear bulky external armor when we can fit advanced, flexible armor under your skin?

- **Strain:** 1
- **Effect:** Gain the *Subdermal Armor* aspect. Can be invoked or compelled against you due to your reduced tactile sensitivity and flexibility.

SUBDERMAL ARMOR, ADVANCED

This is the augment to buy if you're constantly facing danger. Thicker subdermal

plates give you all-over protection from ballistic weapons and edged attacks with only a minor reduction in tactile sensitivity.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** As per Subdermal Armor, and provides supplemental Armor:1.

TACTICAL COMPUTER

This specialized computer makes you a modern tactical genius, allowing you to direct your team with absolute confidence.

- **Strain:** 3
- **Effect:** +2 on any roll to create an advantage related to superior tactics or to oppose of the same actions of your enemies. When you choose who acts after you in turn order, your decision cannot be overridden with initiative steals except by someone who also has a Tactical Computer augmentation.

TAILORED PHEROMONES

Once we've installed this implant, your body will secrete specially tailored psychoactive pheromones that give you a significant edge in any negotiation or other interpersonal involvement.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** +2 on Rapport rolls when you're dealing with organic beings.

TACTICAL SYSTEM RADIO

This implant will help you and your team act as the well-oiled machine you've always wanted to be. Constant communication of position, tactical data, and speech lets you coordinate your actions and make your whole greater than the sum of your parts.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** Whenever you're working as a team with allies who all have a Tactical System Radio installed, you provide a +2 teamwork bonus rather than +1. You must be no more than one zone away from your teammates for this to apply.

TRAUMA SUPPRESSOR

Sometimes you need to take a licking but keep on ticking. This system suffuses a recent trauma with drugs and nanite quick-fix substrates that temporarily bring you back to fully operational status so you can keep doing what you need to do.

- **Strain:** 2
- **Effect:** Activating this augment makes you immune to invokes or compels on a single consequence of your choice. However, the downside of doing so is that you become unaware of your injury and risk worsening it. If you've activated the augment and continued to engage in strenuous activity, roll Physique at the end of a scene, opposed by the level of the consequence—Fair (+2) for mild, Great (+4) for moderate, Fantastic (+6) for severe. If you fail, upgrade the consequence to the next level—so a moderate consequence upgrades to severe and so on. This leaves the vacated consequence slot free to accept a future injury. Once you activate the augment, its effects last until the end of the scene, and you can activate this augment in response to someone invoking your consequence, refunding their fate point.

VEHICLE CONTROL INTERFACE (I–III)

The latest in vehicle control technology, the VCI lets you pilot a drone or vehicle as if it were your own body and provides superlative response and control when used to supplement physical piloting.

- **Strain:** 2 per level
- **Effect:** This augment is required if you want to pilot vehicles or drones with your TAP. For full details, see Drones and Rigging on page 119.

WIRELESS REFLEXES (I–III)

This advanced system monitors what you can sense and responds to threats before you can process the information and act yourself, enabling you to act literally without thinking.

- **Strain:** 2 per level
- **Effect:** Gain the **Wireless Reflexes** aspect, which can be compelled

against you to make you react in detrimental ways—for instance, punching someone who taps you on the shoulder. Also, each level, gain +1 to defend by dodging or parrying and one initiative steal.

DRONES

Whether you build a custom drone from parts or buy an off-the-shelf model, there's a drone for everyone.

CUSTOM DRONES

If you're a hardcore drone jockey you'll probably prefer to buy a bare chassis and then customize it exactly how you like. This is cheaper than buying an off-the-shelf model but requires considerable knowledge.

Customizing a drone is a Tech roll against passive opposition equal to the final number of upgrades installed in the drone. Doing this takes a day. You can add, remove, and swap multiple upgrades as a single action. If you fail, you complete the project but it takes longer; go up one rung on the time ladder (*Fate Core*, page 197) for each shift you failed by. The drone also gains a flaw aspect that only becomes apparent to your character once it's invoked or compelled against you. The flaw aspect can be repaired without a roll once you get the drone back to your workshop.

*Example: Frosty is upgrading his Fair rotorcraft with Light Armor Plating. This is the third upgrade he's installed, so the opposition to his roll is Good (+3). He ends up rolling Fair (+2), so the timescale increases by one rung to a couple days. He doesn't have anything else he needs to do tomorrow, so he accepts the failure. His drone also gets a flaw aspect, so Frosty's player suggests that the rotorcraft has a **Partially Obstructed Gunport** due to the way he fitted the armor plating.*

VEHICLE CONTROL INTERFACE

VCI RATING	CONTROL SLOTS	PILOTING RANGE	STRAIN
VCI I	Pilot –2 (minimum 1)	2 zones	2
VCI II	Pilot –1 (minimum 2)	5 zones	4
VCI III	Pilot	10 zones	6

You can get someone else to customize a drone for you, but that usually works out to be much more expensive. Buying a fully loaded-out custom drone has a cost of two steps higher than the bare-bones chassis would, but that includes the price of its upgrades (weapons not included).

Building your own drone has three steps:

1) SELECT FORM FACTOR

Bare chassis are available in a wide variety of form factors designed for different applications. The drone's form factor is an aspect that briefly describes its primary purpose and method of locomotion.

Common locomotion types include:

- **Aerial:** VTOL jet or rotorcraft or winged drones, often designed for reconnaissance or combat.
- **Vacuum or Low-Gravity Drone:** Thruster-equipped drones designed for use in space.
- **Wheeled:** Ground drones built for speed and maneuverability.
- **Tracked:** Ground drones built for robustness and all-terrain capability.
- **Aquatic:** Drones specialized for surface water operations.
- **Submarine:** Drones specialized for underwater operations.
- **Amphibious:** Drones capable of submarine, aquatic, or ground-based movement in any combination.
- **Anthroform:** Bipedal humanoid drones designed as remote-combat or telepresence avatars.
- **Polyped:** Drones with four or more legs that are good over all terrain and capable of slithering, jumping, and climbing.

2) SELECT QUALITY LEVEL

Drone chassis are available in three general types—Average, Fair, and Good—which corresponds to its quality as a nameless NPC. You can reduce the cost of a chassis by one quality level if you give it a trouble aspect like **Found in a Junk Heap** or **Faulty Rotors**. For instance, a Fair chassis drone with a **Loud, Annoying Whine** would cost the same as an Average chassis drone with no faults.

All drone chassis start with a Good (+3) Firewall and the Home security level (page 113).

AVERAGE CHASSIS

Drones built on an Average chassis range in size from a few centimeters to a meter or so in length, and tend to be relatively simple. They're often used as disposable guardians for a drone jockey's more important and powerful machines.

Cost: Good (+3)

Scale: Abysmal (−3) to Mediocre (+0)

Skills: Two Average (+1)

Maximum Weapon Mounts: 1

Maximum Armor Plating: 0

Upgrade Slots: 2

Stress: None

FAIR CHASSIS

Drones built on a Fair chassis range in size from half a meter in length to the size of a large vehicle, and can be significantly more complex than Average drones. They provide a good compromise between price and effectiveness that makes them the most common drone type in use.

Cost: Superb (+5)

Scale: Terrible (−2) to Fair (+2)

Skills: One Fair (+2), Two Average (+1)

Maximum Weapon Mounts: 2

Maximum Armor Plating: +1

Upgrade Slots: 4

Stress: ☐

GOOD CHASSIS

Drones built on a Good chassis range in size from a meter in length to the size of a very large vehicle. These are often used as the primary drone that forms the hub of a drone jockey's constellation.

Cost: Epic (+7)

Scale: Poor (−1) to Fantastic (+6)

Skills: One Good, one Fair (+2), two Average (+1)

Maximum Weapon Mounts: 2

Maximum Armor Plating: +2

Upgrade Slots: 6

Stress: ☐ ☐

3) SELECT UPGRADES

You can buy armor plating for a Fair or Good chassis to make it tougher, and you can buy weapon mounts up to the number

shown that allow the drone to use weaponry, which you must buy separately.

Other upgrades provide stunts, aspects, or both to the drone.

You can design drone upgrades based on any aspect or stunt effect. Some upgrades may provide both an aspect and a stunt.

The table on the next page lists available upgrades.

EXAMPLE DRONES

Here's a small selection of the many drones available to buy off the shelf in 2090.

AGA LONE STAR RECONNAISSANCE DRONE (GOOD)

This stylish recon and light fighter drone was created by Act of God Armaments for the famous Texas Rangers.

Now it sees action all over the world! The Lone Star is a VTOL drone with a huge range designed for long-distance recon. Its twin turbine fan design allows it to support an impressive weapon mount capable of carrying a variety of lethal and nonlethal armaments.

#Frosty: *It's a proven fact that these guys fly faster if you paint bald eagles on them.*

#Johnny_Harmonic: *Hah! Most of them are made under license in Mandarinate sweatshops.*

Cost: Epic (+7)

Form Factor: *VTOL Aerial Reconnaissance Drone*

Scale: Good (+3)—6 m

Armor: 3

Skills: Good (+3) Notice, Fair (+2) Pilot, Average (+1) Stealth and Shoot

DRONE UPGRADES

UPGRADE	COST	EFFECT
Weapon Mount	Good (+3)	Allows a weapon to be mounted and fired.
Light Armor Plating	Good (+3)	Armor:1.
Heavy Armor Plating	Great (+4)	Armor:2.
Redundant Systems I	Superb (+5)	Add a mild consequence slot.*
Redundant Systems II	Fantastic (+6)	Add a moderate consequence slot.*
Advanced Optics	Good (+3)	Thermal Vision and +2 to visual Notice rolls.
Firewall Upgrade	New Rating + 1	Increase the drone's Firewall.**
Security Upgrade I	Great (+4)	Increase security level to Corporate—requires Superb (+5) Firewall.
Security Upgrade II	Fantastic (+6)	Increase security level to Government—requires Fantastic (+6) Firewall.
Security Upgrade III	Military	Increase security level to Military—requires Epic (+7) Firewall.
Nano-Polymer Treads	Good (+3)	Wall Walker (vertical surfaces provide no opposition).
Sensor Suite	Good (+3)	+2 Notice for sound, motion, chemicals, radiation, or electrical fields.
Toolkit	Great (+4)	Toolkit. Can construct, perform repairs, etc.
Manipulator Arm	Good (+3)	Manipulator Arm. Can hold and manipulate.
Sonar	Good (+3)	Ignore low light and +2 to Notice rolls to hear things underwater.
Ramming Blades	Good (+3)	Weapon:1 when you use your drone in a ramming attack. This is not added to the damage your drone takes when it rams a target.

*Each of the Redundant Systems upgrades can be purchased once, giving a maximum of one mild and one moderate consequence slot.

**Can be purchased multiple times.

Upgrades:

- Advanced Optics (**Thermal Vision**, +2 to visual Notice rolls made via this drone)
- Dual 360° Flood Lights
- One weapon mount for a weapon of the user's choice
- Redundant Systems I
- Firewall Upgrade x2

Stress: □□**Consequences:** Mild**Firewall:** Superb (+5)**AQUARIUS RAPTOR (GOOD)**

The Raptor is a sleek aerial hunter-killer drone. Seeing widespread use in the North American Coalition, Raptors are used to patrol borders, strike behind enemy lines, and put down domestic terrorists within the NAC states. As the Raptor swoops to the kill, its distinctive shriek freezes its foes in terror, setting them up for its dual heavy weapons to strike like an eagle's talons. The Raptor has earned its reputation as a tough, fast, heavily armed death machine.

#Frosty: Terrorists? Hah, rioters and protesters more like.

#Johnny_Harmonic: I heard the "distinctive shriek" was a design flaw caused by the way air flows through its turbines. Aquarius offered to fix it but the NAC government thought it was useful for scaring the enemy.

#Frosty: Not so great for making a stealth attack though.

Cost: Legendary (+8)**Form Factor:** Aerial Hunter-Killer Drone**Scale:** Superb (+5)—15 m**Armor:** 6 (including Light Armor Plating)**Skills:** Good (+3) Shoot, Fair (+2) Pilot, Average (+1) Stealth and Notice**Upgrades:**

- **Terrifying Shriek**
- Advanced Optics (**Thermal Vision**, +2 to visual Notice rolls made via this drone)
- Light Armor Plating
- Weapon mount fitted with a heavy machine gun
- Weapon mount fitted with a rocket launcher (range 3 zones; Fantastic (+6) blast rating; Weapon:2)
- Redundant Systems I

Stress: □□**Consequences:** Mild**Firewall:** Good (+3)**BLACK KNIGHT WAR HORSE (GOOD)**

The War Horse is a versatile quadrupedal drone that was originally commissioned for use by the GLU's military forces as a combination supply carrier and mobile weapons platform. Based on one of the best established and most reliable drone designs around, variants on the War Horse can now be found all over the world.

Its four sturdy legs are capable of traversing any terrain, and its armored hide gives it endurance to match. Its large carrying capacity makes it an ideal choice for running fresh supplies into a battleground, but it's also capable of taking the fight to the enemy with its tactical weapon mount.

#Frosty: I have one of these. It's pretty useful, though it's more like a big box on legs than anything resembling an actual horse.

#Johnny_Harmonic: I heard you use it to keep your retro porn stash close by.

#Frosty: Close...I've actually got your mom in there.

#Johnny_Harmonic: ...My mom's dead.

#Frosty: She's refrigerated.

#Johnny_Harmonic: ...You win this round.

Cost: Legendary (+8)**Form Factor:** Horse-Sized Quadrupedal Combat Supply Drone**Scale:** Average (+1)—3 m**Armor:** 5**Skills:** Good (+3) Physique, Fair (+2) Shoot**Upgrades:**

- Heavy Armor Plating
- **Manipulator Arm**

• **Cargo Compartment**

- One weapon mount for a weapon of the user's choice
- Redundant Systems I
- Redundant Systems II

Stress: □□

Consequences: Mild, moderate

Firewall: Good (+3)

HELIOS EYE BORG (AVERAGE)

The Eye Borg is being widely recognized as the gold standard in law enforcement spy drones. About the size and shape of a large gumball, the Eye Borg can roll at over 20 kph while a gyroscopically-stabilized camera feeds surveillance data back to your TAP. Thanks to its patented nano-polymer grip the Borg can climb any surface, putting it right where you need it, when you need it.

#Frosty: *These things give me the creeps. They're light enough they can stick to the fucking ceiling, and they can hide pretty much anywhere... Good luck spotting one in anything other than a blank white room.*

#Johnny_Harmonic: *They're almost completely silent when they move, too. Dozens of them could crawl into your room while you were sleeping and you'd never...even...know. I heard there was even a rigger who coated an Eye Borg in contact poison and used it to assassinate a dude who made tasteless jokes about his dead mother. I wonder if there's any truth to that?*

#Frosty: *Okay, moving on...*

Cost: Good (+3)

Form Factor: *Fast and Tiny Rolling Surveillance Drone*

Scale: Abysmal (−3)—0.1 m

Armor: 0

Skills: Average (+1) Notice, Athletics



Upgrades:

- Nano-Polymer Treads (**Wall Walker**: Vertical surfaces provide no opposition)
- Advanced Optics (**Thermal Vision**, +2 to visual Notice rolls made via this drone)

Stress: None

Firewall: Good (+3)

NEW FRONTIER ENTERPRISES SHUTTLE ASSISTANT (FAIR)

Space is a dangerous place for a human. There's debris moving at thousands of miles an hour in near orbit, radiation, and the threat of vacuum or getting separated from your vehicle and drifting into the black all by yourself. Why take all those risks when a Shuttle Assistant can take them for you?

Designed solely for space operation, the Shuttle Assistant is a sleek cylindrical drone with radial maneuvering thrusters and a large rear propulsion thruster. Equipped with multiple manipulator arms and a universal tool kit, Shuttle Assistants are used all over the solar system for basic repair and maintenance tasks.

#Johnny_Harmonic: *Of course, because this drone is so common in space, they're also extremely popular with pirates. Pirate scouts lurk in larger space stations and colonies, looking for ships that are heavily laden with cargo. Once they find one they send one of these drones to plant a tracker or bomb, or to sabotage the ship to make it easy prey.*

#Frosty: *If that happens the best thing you can do is send your own Shuttle Assistant to sort it out.*

Cost: Epic (+7)

Form Factor: *Vacuum or Low Gravity Shuttle Assistance Drone*

Scale: Fair (+2)—4 m

Armor: 2, or 4 against cold, radiation, and electricity

Skills: Fair (+2) Tech, Average (+1) Notice, Pilot

Upgrades:

- Advanced Optics (**Thermal Vision**, +2 to visual Notice rolls made via this drone)
- **Tool Kit**

- Shielding (+2 Armor to resist cold, radiation, and electricity)
- **Manipulator Arms**

Stress: ☐

Firewall: Good (+3)

SAGEIT VISHNU TOOL BOT (GOOD)

Tool drones have been in use since the dawn of the millennium, when primitive, clumsy models were used for remote bomb disposal. SAGEIT are at the bleeding edge of what modern tool drones can achieve, and there is no clearer demonstration of this than their innovative Vishnu model.

The Vishnu comes pre-installed with expert systems that let it make most common explosives safe, and it also has the knowhow to perform basic repairs on most items. Change the load-out and the Vishnu becomes a capable field surgeon instead of a bomb disposal unit, able to treat most battlefield injuries.

Finally the Vishnu is tough enough to take a beating while it rolls into position and still get the job done afterwards.

#Johnny_Harmonic: You'd better hope there's a competent surgeon piloting the Vishnu that trundles along to try and fix your crippling battlefield injuries. Its expert systems only go so far.

#Frosty: I know a guy who had his appendix out by a Vishnu. He says chicks dig the scar.

Cost: Epic (+7)

Form Factor: *Tracked Tool Drone*

Scale: Mediocre (+0)—2 m

Armor: 2

Skills: Good (+3) Tech, Fair (+2) Academics, Average (+1) Burglary and Notice

Upgrades:

- **Interior Bomb Disposal Tool Kit** or **Advanced Medical Kit**
- Heavy Armor Plating
- Sensor Suite (+2 Notice when detecting sound, motion, chemicals, radiation or electrical fields)

- Redundant Systems I
- Redundant Systems II

Stress: ☐

Consequences: Mild, moderate

Firewall: Good (+3)

SUBURASHI SHOGUN SAMURAI (GOOD)

Consistently ranking in the top ten finalists at each gladiatorial championship for the last decade, the Shogun Samurai remains one of the highest rated models of gladiator drones. Standing at a mighty ten feet tall and clad in full steel armor, the Shogun is styled after the classic shogunate-era samurai and tips the scales at a mighty 800 pounds. Available in a variety of designs and colors, the Shogun is renowned for its speed, strength and skill with its mono-katana.

#Frosty: It's been a few years since a Shogun won the annual tournament, though. The last time was back in '84; it was an iridescent blue model tricked out with red trim called the Stag Beetle, piloted by the legendary drone jockey Lenny Almirez.

#Johnny_Harmonic: I had no idea you were a drone fight geek.

#Frosty: I totally looked that up on the GDN. I didn't have trading cards and toy drones when I was a kid. Nuh-uh, nothing to see here.

#Johnny_Harmonic: Awkward. ANYWAY, Do these things have any uses out of the arena?

#Frosty: They make great bodyguards, as long as you're going somewhere that can support the size and weight of an 800 pound giant.

Cost: Epic (+7)

Form Factor: *10 Foot Tall Anthroform Gladiator Drone*

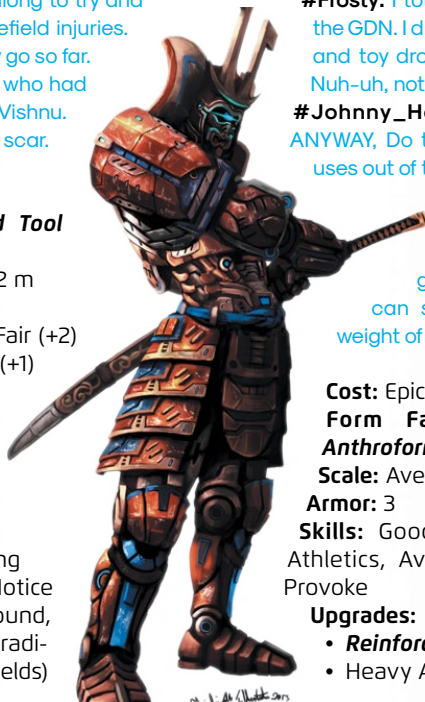
Scale: Average (+1)—3 m

Armor: 3

Skills: Good (+3) Fight, Fair (+2) Athletics, Average (+1) Notice and Provoke

Upgrades:

- **Reinforced Skeleton**
- Heavy Armor Plating



- Dual Strike (May attack two targets with the same roll without splitting shifts)
- Redundant Systems I
- Redundant Systems II
- Firewall Upgrade ×1

Gear: 50 Miyamoto K-Tana

Stress: ☐☐

Consequences: Mild, moderate

Firewall: Great (+4)

TRIDENT (FAIR)

If you need a versatile underwater recon and defense drone, the Trident is the only logical choice. Originally commissioned by the Atlantica government, this dolphin-shaped drone is now seeing heavy use around the Boston area and the New York reclamation project.

Small and maneuverable, the Trident is painted to match the colors found deep underwater in the Northern Atlantic. Capable of handling huge amounts of pressure, the Trident is heavily armed for a drone of its size and comes equipped with a sonar system as standard to help with precision underwater navigation.

#Johnny_Harmonic: I guess these things are useful for operations on and under water but I'd rather go for an amphibious model that can be used on land as well.

#Frosty: I'm now imagining a dolphin rolling along on dry land. It's hilarious.

#Johnny_Harmonic: Maybe they should make it flight-capable instead.

Cost: Epic (+7)

Form Factor: *Dolphin-Sized Submersible Recon & Defense Drone*

Scale: Fair (+2)—4 m

Armor: 4

Skills: Fair (+2) Athletics, Average (+1) Shooting and Stealth

Upgrades:

- Sonar System (+2 to audio-based Notice rolls; ignore low light)
- Electric Eel Weapon System (Range 1 zone, **Shock**)
- Rapid Fire Harpoon Launcher (Range 2 zones, **Armor Piercing**)
- Heavy Armor Plating

Stress: ☐

Firewall: Good (+3)

DRUGS AND DRUG ADDICTION

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

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

ADDICTION

Whenever you take a drug you risk becoming addicted to it.

When a drug's duration begins, roll your Will opposed by its Addiction. If you fail this roll then you gain a long-term situation aspect to show you're now addicted to the drug. Succeeding at a cost on this roll means you don't get the usual effect of the drug but instead suffer a **Bad Trip** lasting for a scene.

Drug addiction aspects are treated as if they're mental consequences with a severity level according to the addictiveness of the drug, though they do not use your consequence slots. Beginning recovery means you need to stop taking the drug and receive counselling, allowing the aspect to be renamed to **[Drug] Withdrawal** for the duration of the recovery period. Taking another dose puts you right back where you started without a roll to resist addiction.

Addiction can be more of a problem to some people than others. If you want your character's struggle with addiction to be a focal point in their story, add an addiction to one of your permanent aspects. This sort of addiction can't be treated normally and has to be addressed through roleplaying and unfolding story events.

COMMONLY AVAILABLE DRUGS

All drugs last for one scene.

ALCOHOL

Most people don't even think of alcohol as a drug, but in reality it's one of the oldest mind-altering substances known to man. What's your poison?

Nicknames: Booze, Liquor, Brew, Giggle Water

Delivery: Drunk, injected, inhaled

Effect: Alcohol is a mild depressant that lowers inhibitions and makes people loosen up.

The first few doses give you a **Mild Buzz** aspect with a free invoke that can help you in social situations, but continuing to drink can lead to a **Staggering Drunk** aspect or similar.

Side Effects: Once you're past the **Mild Buzz** stage, alcohol can result in you behaving in a drunken, loutish way or getting involved in a fight—the aspect can be invoked as appropriate. At the end of a scene in which you went further than a **Mild Buzz** you get a **Hung Over** aspect for the next scene.

Addiction: Average (+1) to resist, treated as a mild consequence.

Cost Per Dose: Abysmal (−3)

AFTERBURN

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

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

Delivery: Inhaled, injected, smoked

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

Taking Afterburn gives you an aspect like **Jacked Up** with two free invokes that you can use to help you with any task that benefits from amped-up reflexes and a large amount of energy. Taking another dose of Afterburn before you come down gives you another free invoke, but also inflicts a Good

(+3) attack on you that you can defend against with Physique.

Side Effects: Afterburn generally makes you twitchy and restless and instills a false sense of bravado, making you more susceptible to taunts and intimidation. The aspect you get from the drug can be invoked and compelled as appropriate. When the drug wears off you become tired and lethargic, gaining an aspect like **Coming Down** that lasts for another scene. You can put this off by taking another dose.

Addiction: Great (+4) to resist, treated as a severe consequence.

Cost Per Dose: Mediocre (+0)

BLACK MIST

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

Nicknames: Brain Bender, Mojo Mist, Poppers, Synapse2

Delivery: Ingested via inhalers or chem-delivery cyberware

Effect: Black Mist is a long-lasting, powerful psychoactive inhalant made in labs all over the world. The active ingredients are THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide) and amyl nitrite. The drug expands the neural pathways, speeding up thought processes and stimulating the logic centers of the brain.

Taking Black Mist gives you an aspect like **Expanded Mind** with a free invoke that you can use to help you with any task requiring deep thought, lateral thinking, or imaginative solutions.

Side Effects: While under the effects of Black Mist, you tend to be off in your own little world, thinking about whatever happens to be occupying your mind at the time. The aspect it gives you can be invoked or compelled as appropriate.





Addiction: Fair (+2) to resist, treated as a moderate consequence.

Cost Per Dose: Mediocre (+0)

STICKY ICKY

Lookin' ta mellow out and get high? You need Sticky Icky!

This sweet herb produces a smooth, paranoid-free buzz that will keep you coming back for more!

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

Delivery: Smoking, eating

Effect: A mildly psychoactive drug, marijuana, or Sticky Icky as it is commonly called in 2090, is harvested from plants that grow all over the world. The active ingredient in marijuana is THC, or tetrahydrocannabinol. Aside from recreational use, the drug is a strong painkiller commonly administered to terminal cancer patients.

While under the effects of marijuana you gain an aspect like **Mellowed Out** with a free invoke. You can invoke this aspect to help you resist attempts to rile you up or scare you. You can also invoke this aspect to help you ignore pain or discomfort, and you can spend your free invoke to reject a compel on one of your consequences.

Side Effects: A marijuana high sends you off into your own headspace and can be invoked or compelled as appropriate. Once the high finishes at the end of the scene, you get an aspect like **The Munchies**, which lasts until the end of the next scene.

Addiction: Average (+1) to resist, treated as a mild consequence.

Cost Per Dose: Poor (-1)

EUPHORIA

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

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

Delivery: Injection, snorting

Effect: Euphoria is a potent narcotic, both mentally and physically addicting. Derived from morphine, the drug is a

strong painkiller that induces a powerful sense of ecstasy.

While under the effects of this drug you gain a **Euphoria** aspect with one free invoke. While high you're immune to Provoke rolls and any invokes or compels related to pain.

Side Effects: The side effects of Euphoria are brutal. You automatically fail all Notice rolls while under the influence, and when the high ends it inflicts a Great (+4) mental attack on you. Even if you don't take any consequences from this attack, you suffer a **Euphoria Withdrawal** situation aspect until the end of the next scene.

Addiction: Fantastic (+6), treated as a severe consequence.

Cost Per Dose: Average (+1)

TANK 'N' SPANK

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

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

Delivery: Injection, snorting, pill ingestion

Effect: Tank-N-Spank is attractive to users looking to push the boundaries of physical and mental toughness. Being high on the drug gives you an aspect like **Maxed Out** with two free invokes that you can use to shrug off physical injuries, intimidate others, or perform feats of strength. While you're up you're completely immune to invokes and compels on any of your consequences. By taking an extra dose, you get another free invoke and prolong the high for another scene, but this increases the risks involved with taking the drug, and during the same high you can't take more extra doses than your Physique rank.

Side Effects: A physically devastating cocktail of methamphetamines, heroin, and anabolic steroids, Tank-N-Spank causes unpleasant physical side effects

during the come-down. You suffer a physical attack at Superb (+5) + 2 ranks per extra dose you've taken. Even if you don't take any consequences, you suffer a **Severely Weakened** aspect until the end of the next scene.

Addiction: Fantastic (+6), treated as a severe consequence.

Cost Per Dose: Fair (+2)

POWERED ARMOR AND GOLEMMECHS

The quest to improve the combat strength of the individual soldier leads here: to mechanical suits of armor that allow their operators to bounce over buildings, flip over trucks, and shrug off small-arms fire. These expensive toys will never eliminate the need for conventional boots-and-rifles infantry, but they're a potent addition to a savvy commander's toolbox.

SYSTEMS

If you take time to maintain your powered armor or golemmech—as per the preparation rules in Equipment as Aspects on page 126—the armor receives one free invoke that you can use during the next scene. You can apply this free invoke to any of the armor's abilities or attached systems. Individual armor systems and weapons do not receive their own free invokes.

Some weapons on powered armor and golemmechs are equivalent to basic personal weapons. You can find the statistics for these on page 117. Unique weapons and basic weapons with enhancements are defined starting on page 132.

Twin weapons are two weapons that fire simultaneously at a single target. Treat a pair of twin weapons as a single weapon. Firing twin weapons provides no special bonus, but it looks cool.

Apart from twin weapons, you may not fire multiple weapons simultaneously.

Anti-Missile Countermeasures: Improves defense against **Guided** weapons, as described on page 132.

Autodoc: The pilot's compartment contains a suite of automated biotech

and nanotech medical systems. These systems have Good (+3) Academics for the purposes of treating the pilot's physical consequences, and they may treat consequences of any severity. The autodoc may treat the pilot without using the pilot's action during an exchange.

Cargo Space: An airtight compartment with anchor points for cargo nets and harnesses. The interior space is a cube, two meters on a side.

Drone Bay: A compartment to protect and carry a small collection of drones. The bay can carry sixteen Abysmal (−3) Scale drones; for each increase in Scale level, reduce the number of drones by half.

Enhanced Vision: Provides the same benefits as the augment with the same name.

Environment Support: The armor is environmentally sealed, protecting the pilot against extreme heat and cold, gas and radiation hazards, low and high atmospheric pressure, and vacuum. The armor provides 72 hours worth of oxygen.

JUMP Jets: Allows the armor to perform a ten-meter horizontal or vertical leap.

Magnetic Pads: Allows the armor to cling to metal surfaces. +2 to Pilot rolls for climbing, and +2 to opposition against any force that would remove the armor from the surface it is clinging to.

Passenger Compartment: An armored and environmentally sealed compartment for up to four passengers. This compartment has access to the golemmech's sensor displays, but does not allow the passengers to control the golemmech. The passengers cannot physically reach the pilot or any other passenger compartments, but may communicate electronically with the pilot and other compartments.

Propulsion Jets: Allows the armor to maneuver in zero-gravity conditions.

Self Sealing: If the armor plating is breached, sealant chemicals quickly expand to fill the gap and harden, making the armor air-tight once again. The armor cannot receive a **Losing Pressure** aspect or consequence caused by small holes or cracks. Only substantial physical damage will compromise the armor's environmental protection.



Sensor Boost: +2 to Notice rolls using any of the armor's sensor systems.

Sensor Suite: This includes standard audio and video sensors, as well as optics that provide the benefits of the Infra/Ultra Optics and Night Vision Optics augments.

Sensor Suite, Expanded: Along with the benefits of the Sensor Suite system, this suite adds radar as well as sensors for radiation, electrical fields, and strong chemicals.

Shield: A large solid shield attached to one arm. While aware of an incoming attack, the pilot can use the shield to gain +1 to defend against that attack. This bonus does not apply to attacks that affect a wide area, such as flamethrowers and explosives.

Speed Enhancement: +2 to any roll involving running speed.

Stealth System: Thermal, radar, and color-shifting systems provide +2 to Stealth rolls. This bonus only applies against opponents who are using radar, heat, or optical systems. It does not apply to audio systems, so this system is more effective at long range or when concealing the armor while it is standing still.

Strength Enhancement: Treat the armor as one Scale level higher when determining its lifting and carrying strength.

Targeting System: +2 to create advantages related to aiming, such as **Optimal Firing Angle**, which you may invoke to support your attack. Also provides +2 to create a **Locked On** aspect when using a **Guided** weapon, as described on page 132.

VTOL Jets: Allows the armor to fly and hover.

POWERED ARMOR

These are suits of personal armor that are so heavy that they require their own mechanical systems for mobility. All powered armor suits have an Average (+1) Scale rating.

Most powered armor suits walk and run at normal human speeds, and suits with Speed Enhancement systems can sustain a velocity of 45 kilometers per hour. Powered armor suits are not vehicles, and you cannot operate them using your Vehicle Control Interface.

All powered armor suits have the Sensor Suite and Environment Support systems.

Powered armor suits do not have their own stress boxes or consequences. They simply provide armor and other capabilities for their owners.

Powered armor suits are concealed Hyper Objects, and use the rules for Hyper Object equipment on page 125. They have a Fantastic (+6) Firewall and Corporate network security. You cannot control powered armor remotely; their systems must be operated physically. However, if you gain access to an armor suit's Hyper Object, you can monitor the armor's systems, and if you take out the armor in a Hyper Conflict, it goes offline until the end of the scene.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS COMMANDO

One of the most versatile scout power armor suits, featuring an upgraded hydrogen cell power supply, the Commando is designed for long-operation recon and sabotage. Optional loadout includes a 14mm sniper rifle and a 12.7mm golemmech pistol. Act of God brings you another innovative weapons platform.

Cost: +11

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Speed Enhancement
- JUMP Jets
- Stealth System
- 14mm Sniper Rifle (basic railgun with aiming scope that provides **Precise** aspect)
- 12.7mm Gyroc Pistol (range 2 zones; **Guided**; Great (+4) blast rating with Weapon:2)

SUDEKI-WHYTE GN-F00

Sudeki-Whyte brings you an amazing close-combat suit of scout power armor. This shazz piece of hardware is designed to get into the middle of the action, using its mobility and stealth with hit-and-run tactics. With its movement upgrade and JUMP capabilities, it can move nearly anywhere in an urban environment.

Cost: +11

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Speed Enhancement
- JUMP Jets
- Stealth System
- Targeting System

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS LOVIATAR

Act of God Armaments produces only a few of these flashy, form-fitting, chromed-out power suits. Nimble and fast, the Loviatar can field many different handheld weapons, but is fitted standard with a monowhip concealed in each forearm, making it a brutal combatant in close quarters.

Cost: +11

Armor: 3

Systems:

- JUMP Jets
- Strength Enhancement
- Monofilament Whip (**Armor Piercing** melee weapon with Weapon:1)

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS FURY

The Fury is an entry-level power armor suit. Simple, rugged, and reliable, it has a respectable payload of weapons, an impressive electronics suite, and light armor, all for a quite reasonable price. The Fury is deployed by regulars in the NAC armed forces, and exported to nations across the world for light security roles.

Cost: +12

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Sensor Boost
- Strength Enhancement
- Shoulder-Mounted 12.7mm Gyroc (range 3 zones; **Guided**; Epic (+7) blast rating with Weapon:2)
- Furious Assault Rifle (basic automatic rifle)

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES 42MX MAXIMILLIAN

The Maximillian is a heavy suit of combat power armor by Black Knight Industries, once again bringing you modern firepower with a medieval flair. Resembling a suit of fully modernized and streamlined plate armor, the Maximillian also includes customized heraldic HoloTags. **INVICTUS SWAT COMBAT POWER ARMOR**

Mounted to the back of the sword arm is the Armbow Weapon System, an internal LAC-15 with a stylized "crossbow" motif on the back of the arm, featuring a 120-round ammunition drum.

Cost: +11

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Strength Enhancement
- Armbow Weapon System (basic heavy machine gun)
- Ceramic Broadsword (melee weapon; Weapon:1)
- Shield

BLACK KNIGHT INDUSTRIES PK-MKX DONNER

The Donner is a cutting-edge power suit designed by Black Knight Industries. The armor is strong and nearly as nimble as the AGA Loviatar. Some versions also sport composite shields for added protection (not included in the cost listed). The Donner is used by the Chicago Defense Force, featuring advanced sensors, upgraded armor, and a shoulder-mounted pulse laser, freeing up the hands for carrying additional weaponry.

Cost: +12

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Sensor Boost
- Targeting System
- Shoulder-Mounted 20MW Pulse Laser (range 7 zones; Weapon:3)
- 12.7mm Gyroc Pistol (range 2 zones; **Guided**; Great (+4) blast rating with Weapon:2)

**RAVENLOCKE SECURITIES PANSN6 INVICTUS SWAT**

The Ravenlocke Securities Invictus is a suit of combat power armor deployed by various Special Weapons Assault Teams. Most departments have



one or two of these as heavy backup units for extremely hazardous assignments. The units come from the factory with a 40mm rotary autocannon mounted to the right shoulder, and a 1,000,000 candle power spotlight on the left shoulder. Most units are armed with the Sentinel heavy machinegun and a riot shield.

Cost: +11

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Targeting System
- Shoulder-Mounted 40mm Rotary Auto Cannon (range 7 zones; **Zone Fire**; Weapon:4)
- Sentinel HMG (heavy machine gun)
- Shield

SUDEKI-WHYTE GRNT-EVA GRUNT

Sudeki-Whyte's EVA series of suits are common combat armor, mass-produced for infantry units trained for operations in multiple environments, including underwater and space. The Grunt comes armed with a pulse laser for use in space.

Cost: +12

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Sensor Boost
- Speed Enhancement
- Magnetic Pads
- Propulsion Jets
- Self Sealing
- Targeting System
- Shoulder-Mounted 20MW Pulse Laser (range 7 zones; Weapon:3)
- Shield

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS G-ATR TACTICAL SUPPORT

The G-ATR (Golemmech Armed Tactical Response) is basic combat power armor used primarily by military contractors and security firms who find the suit's rugged design and cheap price tag to be the perfect fit for their expense reports. This unit is designed for heavy infantry support. Armed with a shoulder-mounted 40mm grenade launcher and carrying the Annihilator automatic shotgun, this is a devastating force on the battlefield.

Cost: +12

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Autodoc
- Strength Enhancement
- Shoulder-Mounted Grenade Launcher (basic automatic 40mm grenade launcher; range 3 zones)
- Annihilator Shotgun (basic shotgun; capable of **Automatic Fire**)

GLOBAL TECHNOLOGIES DIRE WEASEL

Global Technologies' Dire Weasel power armor is the light and cost-effective response to heavy armored vehicles. Combining high mobility, heavy weapons, decent sensors, and versatile design, a team of Dire Weasels can destroy nearly any hostile armored formation.

With integral shoulder-mounted anti-tank guided missile launchers, the Dire Weasel can kill nearly any ground vehicle in the world, while providing good protection to the operator.

Its compact power supplies and light armor were designed to maximize capacity for the heavy missiles. Most clients purchase supplemental personal arms for engaging secondary targets.

Cost: +13

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Speed Enhancement
- Strength Enhancement
- Targeting System
- Shoulder-Mounted Missile Pod (**Guided**; range 1 km; Fantastic (+6) blast rating with Weapon:4)
- Mjolnir Anti-Material Rifle (basic railgun; capable of **Automatic Fire**)

GLOBAL TECHNOLOGIES FIRE WEASEL

A variant of the Dire Weasel, the Fire Weasel replaces its missile pod with fire weaponry, and adds a 40mm grenade launcher with a full load of high-explosive incendiary grenades. The Fire Weasel is one of the most destructive suits of powered armor in existence.

Cost: +12

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Sensor Boost
- Speed Enhancement
- JUMP Jets
- Targeting System

- Shoulder-Mounted Grenade Launcher (basic automatic 40mm grenade launcher; range 3 zones)
- Ferret Heavy Flamer (basic flamethrower)

EIS "THUNDER" FIRE SUPPORT

A single Thunder unit can provide a level of fire support equivalent to an entire battery of more conventional artillery, with the ammunition of your choice!

Cost: +17

Armor: 3

Systems:

- Sensor Boost
- Stealth System
- Strength Enhancement
- Targeting System
- Twin Shoulder-Mounted 70mm Rocket Pods (range 3 zones; Fantastic (+6) blast rating with Weapon:2)
- Sentinel HMG (basic heavy machine gun)

GOLEMMECHS

Golemmechs are walking tanks—humanoid vehicles with enough armor to stride through battlefields unharmed, and with enough firepower to level cities. Typically golemmechs only appear in military operations, but some urban security organizations use golemmechs to control riots or gang warfare, and some corporations keep a few on hand to defend high-value facilities.

Golemmechs travel at vehicle speeds, though they have a -2 Speed rating (page 159). Golemmechs with the Speed Enhancement system have a Speed rating of 0.

All golemmechs have the Sensor Suite and Environment Support systems. They also have an **Ejection System**, which works as indicated in Vehicles on page 160.

When attacking with a golemmech melee weapon, use your Pilot, not Fight. Golemmechs without melee weapons may perform melee attacks with Weapon:1.

All golemmechs have a Military cost rating, a Legendary (+8) Firewall, and Military network security.

When you are piloting a golemmech and someone successfully attacks you, the golemmech takes the damage, not you.

Golemmechs have physical stress boxes, and they can take mild, moderate, and severe consequences. When a golemmech is taken out, none of its systems remain functional except for the ejector seat. If you remain within the mech, any further damage to the golemmech will affect you, though you are protected by the golemmech's Armor rating.

Golemmechs can be piloted manually, manually with assistance from your Vehicle Control Interface (VCI), or remotely by VCI. Remote operation via the GDN is possible but extremely rare for security reasons. When being piloted with VCI assistance or either form of remote control, golemmechs act like drones—see Drones and Rigging on page 119. Actions taken by a remote pilot override actions taken by a pilot using the golemmech's manual controls.

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS GLM-01 MAULER

Representing Act of God Armaments' first foray into heavy-weapon platform design, the Mauler is a beast of a golemmech, designed specifically for urban warfare. A middle-weight design, the Mauler's payload is focused on rapid firepower and heavy armor backed by sophisticated passive sensors.

While not especially agile, the Mauler is quick and more than capable of holding its own in tight urban spaces. Sporting heavy rapid-fire armaments—a Black Knight Liberator rotary cannon in one forearm, and a set of linked rail guns in the other—the Mauler can devastate an enemy position at short range. The Mauler can carry additional handheld weaponry based upon the needs of the mission (purchased separately).

The Mauler was intended for the mercenary market, and has been designed to look especially intimidating, with spiked pauldrons, deaths-head, and a matte black finish as factory standard.

Scale: Fair (+2)

Armor: 4

Stress: ☐☐

Systems:

- Liberator Minigun (basic minigun)
- Twin Railguns (basic railgun)

KENSAI ZERO AIR SUPPORT

The Kensai is agile, well-balanced, and capable of VTOL flight using its vectored-thrust engine. The default Kensai carries a Sudeki-Whyte shoulder-mounted missile pod and the Zero Cannon, a proprietary particle beam cannon. The capacitors on the Zero Cannon require additional time to recharge, so some customers prefer to use a 25mm assault cannon for general operations. Sudeki-Whyte has promised to reduce the Zero Cannon's recharge time, but that isn't reality as of yet.

Scale: Fair (+2)

Armor: 3

Stress: ☐ ☐

Systems:

- VTOL Jets
- Enhanced Vision
- Targeting System
- Zero Cannon (range 5 zones; Weapon:4; only fires every other exchange)
- 25mm Rotary Cannon (range 5 zones; Weapon:3; **Zone Fire**; replaces Zero Cannon)
- Shoulder-Mounted Missile Pod (fires **Guided** missiles; range 2 km; Fantastic (+6) blast rating with Weapon:4)

KENSAI ZERO



OPTIONAL RULE: TOUGHER POWERED ARMOR

If you'd like powered armor to work more like small golemmechs than amped-up body armor, you can give suits of powered armor two stress boxes and the usual three levels of consequences, and let them take damage on behalf of their occupants, like golemmechs. With this option, even if your AGA Fury gets fragged, you can climb out of the suit, pick up a missile launcher, and get back into the fight.

EIS ORION

The first product EIS put onto the heavy golemmech market was the Orion Combat System. Billed as a mobile golemmech for elite forces and special operations, the Orion prompted a mixed reaction. The armor is relatively light, and the integrated armament is underwhelming. However, it possesses the kind of sensors usually found on a reconnaissance model, good battlefield mobility, good overall design, and lots of capacity for modification without changing the stock systems. While production models of the Orion haven't changed over the last couple of years, most clients heavily customize their purchases.

Scale: Fair (+2)

Armor: 3

Stress: ☐ ☐

Systems:

- JUMP Jets
- Expanded Sensor Suite
 - Sensor Boost
- Orion Weapon System (basic heavy machine gun)
 - 4g Shotgun (basic shotgun; capable of **Automatic Fire**)
- Shredder Fist (melee weapon; Weapon:2)

FORD AUGER AGII

The Auger is a construction golemmech, designed for use in open-cast mining operations as well

as on larger construction sites, using its huge, multi-jointed, three-fingered hand that can double as a shovel. The other arm is equipped with a large power drill. The Auger has two smaller arms to facilitate the use of handheld items. Beyond its strictly civilian applications, the Auger sees use in rescue operations. Large storage hoppers are attached to carry dirt, construction materials, and more.

Scale: Fair (+2)

Armor: 4

Stress: □□

Systems:

- Cargo Space *6
- Extra Arm with Large Power Drill (can be used as a melee weapon with Weapon:2, but treat user's skill used to attack as Mediocre (+0))
- Extra Arm with Large Scoop

RAVENLOCKE QUEEN BEE

Though lightly armored, Ravenlocke's Queen Bee is still a strong seller. There's an old saw about amateurs buying firepower and professionals buying support materials, and this golemmech is for professional fighters. The Queen Bee is a force multiplier, using very powerful sensors and a small swarm of recon drones to collect data on the entire battlefield; she's not going to kill you herself, but one of the golemmechs or hunter-killer drones she's directing will.

Scale: Fair (+2)

Armor: 3

Stress: □□

Systems:

- Anti-Missile Countermeasures
- Drone Bay
- Passenger Compartment (for drone pilots)
- Expanded Sensor Suite
- Sensor Boost
- Stealth System
- Shoulder-Mounted Thunderbolt 50mm Auto Cannon (range 7 zones; Weapon:4; **Zone Fire**)

RAVENLOCKE HORNET

A heavy combat variant of the Queen Bee, the Hornet has heavier armor and

carries combat drones rather than recon drones. With its six combat drones, the Hornet is a nasty piece of business, able to bring many weapon systems to bear from many angles.

Scale: Fair (+2)

Armor: 4

Stress: □□

Systems:

- Anti-Missile Countermeasures
- Drone Bay
- Passenger Compartment (for drone pilots)
- Expanded Sensor Suite
- Sensor Boost
- Shoulder-Mounted Thunderbolt 50mm Auto Cannon (range 7 zones; Weapon:4; **Zone Fire**)

EIS ARES COMBAT

The Ares is an aggressive design built for both close and long-range combat. It is EIS's latest mass-market design, combining style and function into a formidable package.

One of the most expensive golemmechs in mass production, the Ares is turning into a status symbol.

Its rugged gladiator-like frame is topped with a Greco-Roman headpiece sensor array and sports the Doru Weapon System, stylized as a twenty-foot-long spear. In close combat, it functions much like its profile suggests, and the spear butt holds a high-power Gauss rifle that fires a stream of razor-sharp flechettes. The Doru is controlled by the Ares armor via a tactile interface built into the golemmech's powerful four-digit hands. The Ares also boasts a shoulder-mounted rocket launcher system.

Scale: Good (+3)

Armor: 4

Stress: □□□

Systems:

- Expanded Sensor Suite
- Handheld Doru Weapon System (spear is melee Weapon:2; Gauss rifle has range of 10 zones and Weapon:5)
- Shoulder-Mounted 70mm Rocket Pod (range 3 zones; Fantastic (+6) blast rating with Weapon:2)

CBS BEAR

Designed to slam into enemy strong points with a combination of heavy armor and crushing firepower, the Bear is a daunting foe in a head-on assault.

The Bear is one of the few foreign-manufactured weapon systems to see extensive use in the Japanese military. Designed for bold, direct assaults, the Bear fills a battlefield role that no Sudeki-Whyte or Kenta CD product quite fits, but that the new samurai of the techno-shogunate embrace. Supported by lighter units, the Bear is a force to be reckoned with. Hitting hard with its 90mm heavy cannon, it can take down other golemmechs with relative ease.

The Bear is also used in a defensive capacity along the Ural Mountains in Eastern Russia against the Chinese Mandarinate, where the suit's passive stealth and arctic environmental systems let the golem jockey lie in wait for prolonged periods in low-power mode.

Scale: Good (+3)

Armor: 4

Stress: ☐☐☐

Systems:

- Stealth System
- Expanded Sensor Suite
- 90mm Heavy Cannon (range 1 km; Weapon:6; Legendary (+8) blast rating)
- 20MW Pulse Laser (range 7 zones; Weapon:3)

KENKU AIR SUPERIORITY

A prototype Sudeki-Whyte design, the Kenku is a test-bed for the viability of an air-superiority/ground-combat hybrid golemmech. In flight mode it strongly resembles a jet fighter, while the ground combat mode resembles a more traditional hominid golemmech. Early test photographs were leaked onto the Global DataNet, and wild speculation about "ger-walks" was rampant for months.

The Kenku is in early production; order early if you want to receive one this year.

CBS BEAR



The handheld Tri-Cannon is a unique design, featuring three 20mm long-barrels, linked to fire rapidly. No single-fire option is available; it is semi-auto, releasing a triple burst of rounds each time. The 20mm gyrocs provide both anti-infantry and anti-aircraft capability.

Rounding out the Kenku's impressive weapons array is the Tetsubo, a traditional Japanese-style war club, a full fifteen feet in length and weighing in at 1.2 tons. The Tetsubo and Daikyu weapon systems are stored on the suit's back.

The Kenku has a Speed rating of SS and a Maneuver rating of +0 when in flight mode.

Scale: Great (+4)

Armor: 4

Stress: ☐☐☐

Systems:

- Targeting System
- Expanded Sensor Suite
- Handheld Daikyu Tri-Cannon (basic heavy machine gun)

AGA LINEBACKER



- Shoulder-Mounted Missile Launcher (**Guided**; range 2 km; Fantastic (+6) blast rating with Weapon:3)
- Twin 20mm Gyroc Pods (**Guided**; range 5 zones; Great (+4) blast rating with Weapon:2)
- Tetsubo Massive Golemmech Maul (melee weapon with Weapon:2)
- VTOL Jets

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS GLM-05E LINEBACKER

The Linebacker is currently undergoing trials at AGA laboratories. Primarily a fire-support golemmech, it totes an experimental "Firegod" plasma cannon system, fueled by a new MF-03 Microfusion Power Plant. The Linebacker is considered to be tough and mobile, if inflexible, due to its Firegod system being integrated into its entire superstructure. The plasma cannon and microfusion plant both show good results, and are likely to be features of future AGA golemmechs and conventional vehicle designs. Currently, the Linebacker has yet to be deployed outside of an R&D facility.

Scale: Great (+4)

Armor: 5

Stress: ☐☐☐☐

Systems:

- Expanded Sensor Suite
- Targeting System
- Firegod Plasma Cannon (basic flamethrower; range 5 zones)
- Shoulder-Mounted Missile Launcher (**Guided**; range 2 km; Fantastic (+6) blast rating with Weapon:3)

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS THOR ASSAULT

The THOR is an assault golemmech, with the primary mission of delivering armored soldiers into heavily fortified installations. Within each leg of this towering god of the modern battlefield is room for three fully armed and armored soldiers, complete with

interfaces to the golemmech's sensors and manual egress capabilities.

The THOR is armed with a massive shoulder-mounted 120mm cannon, well suited to softening up a target facility. The primary weapon system is the two-ton maul that can smash through nearly any armored structure in short order.

Scale: Great (+4)

Armor: 5

Stress: ☐☐☐

Systems:

- Anti-Missile Countermeasures
- Enhanced Vision
- Expanded Sensor Suite
- 2 Passenger Compartments
- Targeting System
- Shoulder-Mounted Thunder 120mm Cannon (range 1 km; Legendary (+8) blast rating with Weapon:6)
- Golemmech Maul (melee weapon with Weapon:2)

ACT OF GOD ARMAMENTS GRIZZLY

The "Grizzly" is the heavier cousin of the Bear, with all the earmarks of an Act of God golemmech. Though only slightly taller than the Bear, the Grizzly is heavily armored and packs an impressive array of close-in weaponry. The Thunderbolt twin-linked 50mm arm cannons can unleash a deadly hail of fire, and its twin ammunition storage feeds let the operator switch between ammunition types with just a thought. In close quarters, the large chainsaw is very effective against hard or soft targets, its ceramic teeth chewing through armor with brutal efficiency.

Scale: Great (+4)

Armor: 5

Stress: ☐☐☐

Systems:

- Anti-Missile Countermeasures
- Enhanced Vision
- Expanded Sensor Suite
- Targeting System
- 2 Shoulder-mounted Extractor 50 MW Lasers (range 1 km; Weapon:5)

- Twin Arm-Mounted 50mm Auto Cannons (switching ammunition types is a free action)

- When using normal ammunition: range 7 zones; Weapon:4; capable of **Zone Fire**

- When using explosive ammunition: range 7 zones; Fantastic (+6) blast rating with Weapon:4

- Eviscerator Chainsaw (melee weapon; Weapon:2)

DUBBING

In 2090, even immortality is for sale. For a substantial fee, a dub clinic can grow a replacement body for you, and in the event of your death, the clinic will download a backup of your personality and memories into the new body. Your mental and legal identity transfers to the new, healthy, fresh-from-the-factory body, and you're free to pick up your affairs where you left off.



AGA GRIZZLY

DUBBING COSTS

SERVICE	COST
Standard Dub Service	+9
Additional Body	Epic (+7)
Body Customization (add-on charge per body)	Fantastic (+6)
Mindcopy T-APP	Great (+4)
Cortex Drive	Good (+3)

A standard dub is a clone of your own body, which receives all of your old body's skills and stunts. The new body starts with no augments, no Strain, and no Strain-related consequences. The new body will have a TAP at no additional charge, unless you request otherwise.

Zeek powers do not carry over to the new body, for reasons not understood by current science. Once you transfer your personality into your dub, you must remove any zeek-related elements from your aspects. You also lose any zeek-related powers and stunts, without receiving any replacements. Some zeeks avoid the dubbing process for this reason, as they would rather die than lose their abilities.

Cybermonk stunts do not carry over to the new body, even if you re-install your augments. You may retain the **Cybermonk** part of your high concept, but you must re-train your new body and augments by spending refresh to re-purchase cybermonk stunts.

For an additional fee, you can design an entirely new body, changing your features, your gender, and even your race. In this case, alter your aspects to reflect your new body.

When you first purchase your dub, the dub clinic will make a backup of your consciousness and store it in their engram banks. At any time, and for no cost, you may visit the clinic in person to store a new backup. Whenever you make a backup, make a copy of your character sheet so that you can correctly transfer your skills and stunts to the dub body when it's activated.

You can also purchase and install a Mindcopy T-APP, which will periodically upload backup information from your brain to the clinic's engram banks. This ensures that your backup will never be more than 24 hours out of date. The upload won't

work if you don't have access to the Global DataNet, but you can also purchase and carry a cortex drive, which can carry one consciousness backup uploaded from your Mindcopy T-APP. Cortex drives are small—less than three centimeters on a side—and have Armor:1. To protect against unauthorized access or dubbing, cortex drives have a Fantastic (+6) Firewall and Corporate network security.

Since your dub body receives your legal identity when it's activated, it's illegal to activate it before your actual death. You may have more than one dub body in storage, but it's illegal to activate more than one dub at a time.





THREATS AND ENEMIES

The sample characters listed here come in two categories: nameless NPCs and supporting NPCs. As in *Fate Core*, nameless NPCs have no consequence slots, and they have one stress track used to absorb both physical and mental hits. GMs, use nameless NPCs in mobs if you want to make them a significant threat or obstacle (*Fate Core*, page 216).

Supporting NPCs have separate physical and mental stress tracks, just as PCs do, and they may have one, two, or three consequence slots, as listed. A single supporting NPC is a respectable opponent, and giving him a few nameless NPCs for a teamwork bonus makes him even more challenging.

PEOPLE

See the augment catalog starting on page 168 for more information on the augments in these NPC listings. Unless stated otherwise, every NPC in this section has a TAP with a Good (+3) Firewall. Most NPCs use basic weapons and armor for simplicity (see the charts starting on page 134 and page 148).

The description for each NPC will list his or her race, and you may invoke and compel this as an aspect, according to the rules on page 54.

NAMELESS NPCS

GANGER, HUMAN

A typical gang member isn't much of a threat by herself—the problem is that she's never by herself. With a dozen of her friends around, all boosted up on Afterburn, she can ruin your team's entire evening.

Aspect: *Live and Die for the Gang*

Skills: Average (+1) Fight and Shoot

Stress: None

Equipment: Light armor, pistol, basic melee weapon, one dose of Afterburn (page 186)

Augments: Cyberweapon, Fight or Flight System

WISE GUY, HUMAN

Organized crime is just a business, like any other. So when one of these well-dressed enforcers stops by to break your arm because you missed a loan payment, remember that it's nothing personal.

Aspect: *Extortion and Intimidation*

Skills: Fair (+2) Shoot; Average (+1) Fight and Provoke

Stress: ☐

Equipment: Light armor

Augments: Cyberweapon, Emotional Resistance Response System

FIXER, HUMAN

If you need it, the right fixer can get it. It doesn't matter if what you want is expensive, or hard to find, or illegal, or immoral, or even if it belongs to someone else. Just make sure you have enough cash up front. And remember: no refunds.

Aspect: *Anything for a Credit*



Skills: Fair (+2) Contacts; Average (+1) Deceive and Empathy

Stress: ☐

Equipment: Light armor

Augments: Superb (+5) Firewall

LOCAL MILITIA, HUMAN

Yeah, these guys are just cannon fodder. But until they get the order to go out and die trying to stop a gang war, these soldiers get fed, clothed, and sheltered, which is more that you can say for most people on the planet.

Aspect: *Hold the Line*

Skills: Average (+1) Fight and Shoot

Stress: None

Equipment: Light armor, pistol, knife, Ravenlocke Securities Riot Gel Gun

Augments: Fight or Flight System, Cybereyes with Night Vision Optics, Smartgun System, Vehicle Control Interface I



MILITARY CONTRACTOR, HUMAN

When you need something done right, don't do it yourself—hire someone who knows how to do it right. That applies to killing as well as it does to anything else.

Aspect: *A Contract's a Contract*

Skills: Fair (+2) Shoot; Average (+1) Fight and Athletics

Stress: ☐

Equipment: Heavy armor (Armor:2), automatic rifle with integrated shotgun and grenade launcher, pistol, baton, knife

Augments: Bone Reinforcement I, Enhanced Articulation, Lifesaver System, Muscle Augmentation, Great (+4) Firewall

SECURITY OFFICER, SIMULACRUM

Once you're past the rank-and-file security thugs, past the cameras and the gun emplacements and the anti-personnel gas, and you've finally reached the executive level, that's when you'll run into this individual. And that's when your acquisition job starts to get complicated.

Aspect: *Bred to Be Loyal*

Skills: Good (+3) Notice; Fair (+2) Shoot; Average (+1) Fight and Athletics

Stress: ☐☐

Equipment: Heavy armor (Armor:1), shotgun, pistol, submachine gun, baton

Augments: Superb (+5) Firewall

DRONE PILOT, HYBRID (FOX)

Are you sure you're alone? Really sure? What's above that drop ceiling? Or inside that vent? Have you checked in your desk drawers? Behind the bookcase? Is that really a fly you hear buzzing? Or is someone at this very moment aiming a drone-piloted camera—or worse, a drone-guided poison dart—at your nervous face?

Aspect: *My Eyes Are Everywhere*

Skills: Fair (+2) Pilot; Average (+1) Notice and Stealth

Stress: ☐

Equipment: Heavy armor (Armor:1), pistol, two Helios Eye Borg drones (page 183)

Augments: Subdermal Armor, Vehicle Control Interface II

SUPPORTING NPCS

POLICE OFFICER, HUMAN

You can call them pigs, or copsuckers, or worse. Some of them deserve it. But most of them are just doing their job, and some of them are trying to make their neighborhoods safe for their families.

Aspect: *To Serve and Protect*

Skills: Average (+1) Notice and Shoot

Stress: None

Equipment: Heavy armor (Armor:2), pistol, baton

Augments: Cyberlegs with Ligament Enhancement, Great (+4) Firewall

BOUNCER, HYBRID (BULL)

Yeah, you came here for a good time, and your money spends the same as everyone else's. But once you start to make trouble, you're not a customer any more. You're this guy's chance to earn his paycheck.

Aspect: *No One Causes Trouble in My Club*

Skills: Fair (+2) Fight; Average (+1) Notice and Provoke

Stress: ☐

Equipment: Light armor

Augments: Emotional Resistance Response System

CONSTRUCTION WORKER, HYBRID (BOAR)

Everyone keeps saying that this is the decade when robots will replace people for hard labor. Everyone's wrong. You still need men and women who aren't afraid of honest work to put their muscles and minds behind the tough jobs.

Aspect: *I Need This Job*

Skills: Average (+1) Physique and Fight

Stress: None

Equipment: Construction tools

BOUNTY HUNTER, HUMAN

The laws of economics tell us that demand creates supply. So when a modern metropolis demands more law enforcement than any security organization can hope to supply, these guys are here to fill in the gaps. Just get a picture of your fugitive, attach a bounty to it, and upload it to the Global DataNet. Then get an empty cell ready.

Aspect: *Bring 'em Back Dead or Alive*

Skills: Superb (+5) Fight; Great (+4) Investigate; Good (+3) Shoot; Fair (+2) Contacts; Average (+1) Notice

Stress: Physical ☐☐ Mental ☐☐

Consequences: Mild

Equipment: Light armor, pistol

Augments: Advanced Subdermal Armor, Cyberlegs with Ligament Enhancement

CELEBRITY, HUMAN 2.0

Who wouldn't be fascinated by the lives of these impossibly beautiful people? They go to all of the best clubs, they live in amazing homes, they dress in the trendiest fashions, and they have their choice of bedmates. It's certainly more fun thinking about their lives than thinking about yours.

Aspect: *Media Darling*

Skills: Superb (+5) Rapport; Great (+4) Deceive; Good (+3) Resources; Fair (+2) Empathy; Average (+1) Physique

Stunts: **Attractive:** +2 to Rapport rolls to create an advantage on others who might be physically attracted to you.

Stress: Physical ☐☐☐ Mental ☐☐

Consequences: Mild

Equipment: High-fashion clothing

Augments: Fantastic (+6) Firewall, other cybernetics as provided by sponsor

EXECUTIVE, HUMAN 2.0

There's no level playing field with these prodigies around. No one whose DNA isn't trademarked can match their charisma, their savvy, their energy and quick thinking.

Any one of them is worth ten of you. So don't bother asking why you didn't get that promotion this year.

Aspect: *The Company Can Afford It*

Skills: Superb (+5) Contacts; Great (+4) Resources; Good (+3) Rapport; Fair (+2) Deceive; Average (+1) Will

Stunts: **Corporate Credit Account:** +2 to Resource rolls to make purchases supporting a project your company has approved. The company will be aware of any such purchase.

Stress: Physical ☐☐ Mental ☐☐☐

Consequences: Mild

Equipment: High-fashion light armor, Kiwi Motors Armored VTOL Limousine (page 164)

Augments: Great (+4) Firewall

SPECIAL OPS TEAM MEMBER, HUMAN

Whether you're buying a pistol or you're buying the soldier who uses it, the same rule applies: you get what you pay for. When you need a job done right—no mistakes, no witnesses—there's no substitute for a professional, experienced special operations team.

Aspect: *Never Saw Me Coming*

Skills: Superb (+5) Stealth; Great (+4) Shoot; Good (+3) Fight, Fair (+2) Athletics; Average (+1) Physique

Stunts: **Quiet Killer:** Once a scene, gain an extra free invoke when you successfully create an advantage using Stealth.

Stress: Physical ☐☐☐ Mental ☐☐

Consequences: Mild, moderate

Equipment: Automatic rifle, grenade launcher, baton, knife

Augments: Armor:1, Epic (+7) Firewall, Trauma Suppressor

SENIOR SYSOP, HUMAN

The quiet woman who works in that cubicle might look like nobody to you, but in her own domain—the network she oversees—she is the ultimate power and authority. Every requisition you make, every paycheck you cash, every memo you

send is under her protection, and obeys her rules. She's the only thing standing between your company and the hackers all over the world who would like nothing more than to get their digital claws on your files.

Aspect: *I Prefer to Talk to Machines*

Skills: Superb (+5) Hack; Great (+4) Tech; Good (+3) Notice; Fair (+2) Will; Average (+1) Contacts

Stunts: **I Built This Network:** Once a session, you can assign an aspect to a cloud or a subnet that you're responsible for, without using an action or making a skill roll. This aspect starts with one free invoke.

Stress: Physical ☐☐ Mental ☐☐☐

Consequences: Mild

Augments: Superb (+5) Firewall

T-APPS: Area Attack Upgrade, Remote Attack, Neural Armor: 2



ROBOTS

All robots have the **Robot** aspect by default, which has the following effects:

- Robots are not alive. They do not suffer damage from poison, disease, suffocation, or other hazards that would harm an organic being.
- Robots act only according to instructions provided by authorized operators, or by direct control from a drone pilot.
- Robots do not have emotions, so they cannot receive emotion-related aspects such as **Terrified** or **Seduced**.
- Robots only take mental stress or consequences from Hyper Conflicts.
- Robots take physical stress from EMP attacks.

All robots have standard audio and video sensors, and many will have additional sensors. Additional sensors work like the cyber eyes, cyber ears, or cyber nose augment modules of the same name (page 172).

Each model of robot also has a programming aspect that represents the priorities of its standard programming. If your character encounters a robot, you can roll Tech to see if your character knows the robot's programming aspect. This is a create an advantage action against Fair (+2) opposition.

Robots operate in one of three modes: network mode, independent mode, or download mode.

- In network mode, you issue instructions to the robot through its wireless network link, and the robot uses its own decision-making process to carry those instructions out. You can give new instructions and monitor the robot's status through the network link.
- In independent mode, you give the robot a set of instructions, and then the robot shuts down its network link while it carries those instructions out. This mode minimizes the chance of a hacker taking control, and prevents

enemies from detecting the robot through its network signals. Be sure to include an instruction that tells the robot when to re-activate its network link. If the robot does not re-activate its link, there is no way for anyone to alter its instructions without attaching a network cable to its physical access controls. These controls are normally difficult to access, and for military robots they may be hidden under armor plating that cannot be removed without power tools.

- In download mode, it's possible to change the identification codes that the robot recognizes. It's also possible to alter the robot's core programming, which renames its programming aspect. To reprogram a robot, create an advantage using Hack, opposed by the robot's Firewall. Reprogramming takes an entire scene. You must be able to reach the robot's physical access controls to activate download mode and perform these activities.

IDENTIFICATION CODES

The robot recognizes authorized operators using identification codes, which are digital packages of encrypted data. If you have the correct identification code for a robot, you can interact with it in the following ways:

- You can give the robot instructions, such as "patrol this location and notify me if anyone approaches," or "enter that building and kill everyone inside," or "go over to that car, get the metal briefcase, and bring it back." During a conflict, you may issue an instruction without spending an action. In some cases, a robot's programming aspect may forbid it from performing certain actions.
- If the robot is in network mode, you may monitor its sensors remotely.
- You may instruct the robot to switch from network mode to independent mode, or to shut down completely. Shutting the robot down removes any of the mental stress or consequences that the robot has received from prior hacking attempts. To restart

a deactivated robot, you must gain access to its physical access controls and use an action.

If you do not have the correct identification code to issue instructions to a robot, you can attempt to hack it. All of a robot's systems—including sensors, weapons, and controlling AI—are on the robot's Systems Access Network (SAN), which works like a TAN does for a TAP-using character. See page 113 for information of TAN's.

- If the robot is operating in network mode, you can attempt to hack it wirelessly.
- If the robot is operating in independent mode, you must first connect a network cable to its physical access controls.

Once you make contact with the robot's SAN, you can attempt intrusion actions and hacking actions to access the robot's systems, as described in Hacking on page 104. You may attempt to monitor or shut down its various systems, but the robot's AI prevents you from taking direct control of the robot's actions. You may only influence the robot's actions by altering its programming aspect while in download mode, or by using the correct identification codes to issue instructions to the robot.

If you are an unauthorized intruder within the robot's SAN, the robot's AI will attempt to use its Intrusion Countermeasures (IC) to eject you from its network. The robot's AI may take one Hyper Conflict action and one real-world action every exchange. If you defeat the AI in a Hyper Conflict, the robot shuts down and enters download mode.

NAMELESS NPC ROBOTS

RAVENLOCKE BLOODHOUND CANINE

Military contractors and corporate security teams use these canine-like robots for patrol and sentry duty.

Programming: *Hyper-Vigilant*

Invoke: Due to their sensor suites and programming, Bloodhounds make excellent patrol and sentry robots. Invoke

this aspect to give the Bloodhound a better chance at finding a hidden enemy.

Compel: As soon as a Bloodhound identifies an enemy, it tends to focus on that enemy to the exclusion of all else. Compel this aspect to allow an enemy to avoid the robot's notice as long as another enemy holds the robot's attention.

Scale: Poor (−1)

Armor: 0 (Additionally, the Bloodhound has enough armor to compensate for its small size, so it does not take increased damage from its small Scale.

Firewall and IC: Great (+4)

Stress: □□

Skills: Good (+3) Notice; Fair (+2) Athletics; Average (+1) Fight and Stealth

Sensors: Amplified Hearing, Night Vision, Cybernose Chemical Sniffer

Equipment: BloodScent Gun—An implanted small-caliber weapon. Treat as a pistol for range and damage purposes. The ammunition carries a tracking chemical that inflicts a **Marked** aspect on the target if the attack succeeds, even if the defender's Armor rating prevents any physical harm. The Bloodhound can invoke this aspect to help it locate the target afterward.

SECURITY ROBOT

A no-frills automatic security solution, these humanoid mechanical skeletons are employed by budget-conscious organizations all over the globe. Weapons not included, though basic combat programming comes standard. Custom colorization available for a nominal charge.

Programming: *Dumb but Dependable*

Invoke: Security robots have no curiosity or initiative. They aren't capable of accomplishing much other than patrolling their given route, raising an alarm, or firing on intruders, according to their threat-response instructions. This behavior means it's difficult to distract security robots or lead them into traps.

Compel: Security robots can only understand simple directives. Compel this aspect to cause the robot to make the wrong decision when confronted with a complex situation or a contradiction in orders.

Scale: Mediocre (+0)

Armor: 1

Firewall and IC: Great (+4)

Stress: ☐

Skills: Fair (+2) Notice; Average (+1) Fight and Shoot

Sensors: Enhanced Vision, Night Vision Optics, Infra/Ultra Optics, Amplified Hearing, Motion Detection, Cybernose Chemical Sniffer; also sensors that allow the robot to detect radiation and electrical fields

Equipment: Weapons as provided by owner.

M-23 CORPSMAN

Rugged humanoid robot designed to provide automatic medical assistance during military operations.

Programming: *Life-Saver*

Invoke: The Corpsman's highest priority is to reach fallen allies, remove them from harm's way, and administer rapid battlefield medical treatment.

Compel: The Corpsman avoids combat when possible so it can focus on providing assistance to allied wounded. Compel this aspect to cause the Corpsman to choose not to attack an enemy even if the robot has a clear opportunity.

Scale: Mediocre (+0)

Armor: 1

Firewall and IC: Fantastic (+6)

Skills: Good (+3) Academics; Fair (+2) Shoot; Average (+1) Physique and Athletics

Stress: ☐☐

Sensors: Enhanced Vision, Night Vision Optics, Infra/Ultra Optics

Equipment: Combat Medic Kit—Contains the first aid kit necessary for the Corpsman

to use Academics to treat battlefield injuries; weapons as provided by owner.

SPYBOT

These arachnid-like robots are able to get into most places undetected. Due to their light weight and electrostatic adhesion capabilities, they can walk up walls and across ceilings. In addition, spybots can adjust their coloring to blend in with their surroundings, and they're small enough to hide in a coffee mug if they tuck in their legs. Keep that in mind when you go to the company break room.

Programming: *Stealthy Spy*

Invoke: Spybots excel at slipping through obstacles, avoiding detection, and escaping physical harm.

Compel: If you do detect a spybot, chances are that it's so focused on its target that it won't realize it's been discovered. Compel this aspect to cause the spybot to fail to notice details of its surroundings that don't relate to the target it was sent to watch.

Scale: Abysmal (−3)

Armor: −3 (a successful physical attack against the spybot inflicts 3 additional stress)

Firewall and IC: Good (+3)

Skills: Fair (+2) Stealth; Average (+1) Notice and Athletics

Stress: ☐

Sensors: Enhanced Vision, Night Vision Optics, Infra/Ultra Optics

Equipment: Electrostatic Adhesion—Spybots can cling to walls and ceilings, but they are light enough that a small impact or a strong wind can send them flying.

POSSUM MINE

These slow-moving, spider-like automations carry a high-explosive charge. About the size of a dinner plate, they can approach targets undetected before detonating.

Programming: *Detonation Is My Destiny*





Invoke: The possum mine is programmed to approach a target quietly, and to get as close as possible before triggering its explosives.

Compel: This robot's entire purpose is to explode and damage the enemy. If the robot is damaged, detected, or tampered with, compel this aspect to cause the robot to detonate prematurely.

Scale: Abysmal (–3)

Armor: –3 (a successful physical attack against the spybot inflicts 3 additional stress)

Firewall and IC: Good (+3)

Skills: Fair (+2) Stealth; Average (+1) Notice and Athletics

Stress: ☐

Sensors: No special sensors

Equipment: Explosive Charge—When the robot enters the same zone as its target, and if there are no obstructions between them, the robot explodes. This attack has an Epic (+7) blast rating and Weapon:1. The robot will also explode if it is taken out in a physical conflict, but not if it is taken out in a Hyper Conflict. The detonated charge always destroys the robot.

SUPPORTING NPC ROBOTS

COMBAT ASSAULT ROBOT

If you can't get your hands on a golem-mech, this is the next best thing. This humanoid combat robot is four meters high, layered in armor, and packed full of powerful servomotors. It can't fit through most doors—so it smashes through walls instead. Equip it with the heaviest weapons you can find, aim it at the enemy, wait a few hours, then send someone in to claim victory and clean up the mess.

Programming: *Unstoppable*

Invoke: Overkill is this robot's preferred tactic. Invoke this aspect when the robot is attempting to blast or smash its way through resistance.

Compel: Since this robot believes that every problem can be solved with strength and firepower, compel this

aspect to trick the robot into taking an aggressive but unwise action.

Scale: Fair (+2)

Armor: 3

Firewall and IC: Legendary (+8)—Intrusion Countermeasures inflict physical stress

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Physique; Superb (+5) Shoot, Great (+4) Fight; Good (+3) Notice; Fair (+2) Athletics

Stress: Physical: ☐☐☐☐ Mental: ☐☐☐☐

Consequences: Mild, moderate

Sensors: Enhanced Vision, Infra/Ultra Optics, Night Vision Optics

Equipment: Weapons as provided by owner.

RAVENLOCKE ONI

This blood-red monstrosity looks more like a cybernetic demon than a piece of security equipment. Deploy the Oni when intimidation is just as important as firepower.

Programming: *Fear Is the Greatest Weapon*

Invoke: The Oni's tactical algorithms allow it to use violence for both physical and psychological impact. Invoke this aspect to shock and terrify the enemy.

Compel: The Oni will pursue and destroy its targets at all costs. It has no safeguards that would direct it to avoid inflicting damage on property, bystanders, or allies.

Scale: Fair (+2)

Armor: 3

Firewall and IC: Fantastic (+6)

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Physique; Superb (+5) Shoot; Great (+4) Provoke; Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Notice

Stress: Physical: ☐☐☐☐ Mental: ☐☐☐☐

Consequences: Mild

Sensors: Enhanced Vision, Night Vision Optics, Infra/Ultra Optics

Equipment: Shoulder-mounted basic autocannon





Midnight Illustration 2013

LOCATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

LOCATIONS

The locations where your adventures will take place can have skills and aspects of their own. You can use a location's skills as a concise notation for the qualities of the area, or as guidelines for opposition to players' actions. See Location Skills later in this chapter for examples.

SCALE

A location's Scale represents its population rather than its size.

One use of a location's Scale is passive opposition to Contacts and Investigate rolls to locate a specific person within the location.

LOCATION SKILLS

Locations can have ranks in Resources, Security, and Notice. You do not need to arrange location skills in pyramids or columns as if you were building a character. Simply choose the skill levels that seem most appropriate for the location you're trying to build.

NOTICE

This is a measure of how much activity in the area is watched and recorded. This surveillance can take many forms, such as

informants who file reports about suspicious residents, or hackers who monitor DataNet activity originating from TAPs in the area. Where Notice is Mediocre (+0), you might find cameras around a few important buildings. Where Notice is Terrible (-2), there might be one working camera on a rooftop somewhere, but it's unclear whether anyone's actually using it. A city with Legendary (+8) Notice records every action of its residents, through hidden cameras in public businesses and private residences, through optical feeds from the TAPs of security officers, and through the tireless gaze of hundreds of sky-circling drones.

You could use a location's Notice rank as passive opposition to a Stealth roll to move through a location without anyone noticing. If you had full access to a location's surveillance systems, you might need to roll the lower of the location's Surveillance and your Investigate in order to recreate the activities of a suspect, since poor surveillance systems would limit the information you had available.

RESOURCES

This indicates the wealth of the location's residents and the quality of its facilities and infrastructure. A typical lower-class

LOCATION SCALE

POPULATION	RATING
10 (single-family home)	Terrible (-2)
20	Poor (-1)
50	Mediocre (+0)
100	Average (+1)
1,000 (office building)	Fair (+2)
10,000 (high-rise apartment building)	Good (+3)
100,000 (sold-out stadium event)	Great (+4)
1 million	Superb (+5)
10 million (large city)	Fantastic (+6)
100 million (sprawl)	Epic (+7)
1 billion or more (national superpower)	Legendary (+8)



sprawl neighborhood full of wage slaves and corporate drones will have Mediocre (+0) Resources. A bombed-out city block full of starving squatters has Terrible (-2) Resources. A shining gated community where executives polish their luxury VTOLs, where groundskeepers tend genetically engineered lawns and gardens, and where armies of simulacrum servants wait for their masters' commands, would have Legendary (+8) Resources.

You might use a location's Resources rank in combination with the wealth chart on page 94 to find the typical value of the possessions in someone's home within this location, or as passive opposition to an attempt to bribe someone at this location.

SECURITY

This reflects the strength, competence, and responsiveness of security forces in the location. Depending on the area, security might be provided by law enforcement organizations, military units, or citizen defense groups. Mediocre (+0) Security indicates that security forces are sparse, overworked, and apathetic. In a location with Terrible (-2) Security, there is no law and order, and crime and violence are unchecked. A city with Legendary (+8) Security has seasoned law enforcement

officers with military-class equipment patrolling on every block and avenue.

You might use a location's Security rank as passive opposition to prevent you from escaping from the location if security forces are attempting to intercept you. You could also use the Security rank as passive opposition to a Burglary roll to outsmart local law enforcement while committing a robbery.

LOCATION ASPECTS

Use aspects to call out other features of a location, such as:

- Important characters: ***Dubious Cyberware Dealer, Drug-Fueled Street Gang.***
- Temporary conditions: ***Street Under Construction, Mobs of Protesters.***
- Demographics: ***Mostly Russian Expatriates, Multi-Generation Muslim Families.***
- Useful places within the location: ***Overcrowded Homeless Shelter, Top-Quality Hospital.***

When choosing skills for locations, you don't need to follow a Fate pyramid or column structure, and you can give it as many aspects as you want. Assign whatever skills and aspects are appropriate to represent the location.

EXAMPLE LOCATIONS

You can give statistics to a city, a neighborhood, or a single building, depending on the level of focus you need.

NEOPOLIS

This city was rebranded by its corporate overlords, who are exploiting its cheap labor market to build a spacecraft launch facility.

Aspects: *Overambitious Spaceport Project, Who Could Live On These Wages?*

Scale: Superb (+5)

Skills: Poor (-1) Resources, Fair (+2) Security, Good (+3) Notice

THE INTERFACE

This twenty-block-long strip is on the border between the clean, well-patrolled downtown district and the slums of the east side of the city.

Aspects: *Everything's For Sale, Your Rules Don't Apply Here*

Scale: Great (+4)

Skills: Average (+1) Resources, Average (+1) Security, Mediocre (+0) Notice

MAMA LING-LING'S ON 131ST STREET

This carry-out joint smells exactly like every other Mama Ling-Ling's in the solar system: hot grease and Asian spices, with occasional notes of industrial cleaning solution.

Aspects: *Unexpectedly Wise Cook, Revolutionary Meeting Spot*

Scale: Terrible (-2)

Skills: Mediocre (+0) Resources, Mediocre (+0) Security, Good (+3) Notice

ORGANIZATIONS

If an organization is going to figure prominently into your group's story, or if your characters are closely associated with an organization, you can treat it as a character with aspects and skills of its own.

SCALE

Like the Scale for locations, the Scale of an organization represents the number of people who belong to it.

An organization's Scale rating represents only its size, not its ability to achieve its goals or to defeat its competitors. An organization's skill ranks measure its strengths and weaknesses.

ORGANIZATION SCALE

SCALE	MEMBERSHIP
Terrible (-2)	5
Poor (-1)	15
Mediocre (+0)	50
Average (+1)	200
Fair (+2)	1,000
Good (+3)	5,000
Great (+4)	25,000
Superb (+5)	100,000
Fantastic (+6)	500,000

ORGANIZATION SKILLS

GMs, you can use an organization's skills to determine passive opposition to actions directed against it, or to determine the average skills of the organization's members. You do not need to arrange organizations skills in pyramids or columns as if you were building a character. Simply choose the skill levels that seem most appropriate for the organization.

An organization may have the following skills:

BURGLARY

This is the organization's capacity for espionage: stealing information, materials, or personnel from other organizations. It does not include remote hacking attempts, which are represented by Hack.

An organization with Mediocre (+0) Burglary might occasionally persuade members of other organizations to change allegiance. An organization with Great (+4) Burglary has spies in rival organizations who supply a steady and reliable stream of confidential information.

An organization with Legendary (+8) Burglary has an entire division dedicated to

reverse engineering and duplicating prototypes stolen from military test facilities.

CONTACTS

This measures how many other organizations the organization has relationships with or influence over. An organization with Mediocre (+0) Contacts has only a few significant business relationships. An organization with Fantastic (+6) Contacts has leverage over companies all around the globe. An organization with Legendary (+8) Contacts can guide the fate of humankind.

FIGHT

This represents the strength of the organization's physical security presence. An organization with Mediocre (+0) Fight just rents guards from a local budget-priced security company. An organization with Great (+4) Fight has its own force of trained security guards, equipped to defend company property from anything short of a military assault. An organization with Legendary (+8) Fight has its own armies, its own special ops units, and its own air-and-space strike fleet.

HACK

This represents the organization's computer security capacity, both for self-defense and for attacks against rival organizations. An organization with Hack at Mediocre (+0) has a small network cloud set up in someone's basement. Great (+4) Hack might represent a coordinated group of well-defended clouds, physically hosted in several different locations. An organization with Legendary (+8) Hack could take down the entire Global DataNet at a moment's notice.

NOTICE

This measures how adept the organization is at monitoring its own affairs and those of its officers and employees for signs of undesired behavior. The organization would use this skill to detect embezzlement, information leaks, or uses of the Burglary skill by rival organizations. An organization with Mediocre (+0) Notice has one employee who reviews the company's finances once every three months.

An organization with Legendary (+8) Notice has surveillance systems throughout all company property and all company dormitories, and has a legion of human and AI analysts who constantly review the TAP activity of all employees.

PROVOKE

Provoke measures the organization's capability in spreading convincing, slanderous messages about their opposition, as well as coercing rivals through threats and extortion. An organization with Mediocre (+0) Provoke can't communicate anything stronger than mild disapproval, while Great (+4) Provoke signifies the ability to deliver timely and vicious media attacks, and Legendary (+8) Provoke would allow an organization to obliterate a lesser competitor with a single carefully worded memo.

RAPPORT

This represents proficiency with manipulating the media in order to influence popular perception of the organization or its rivals. An organization with Terrible (-2) Rapport issues inflammatory statements that offend everyone except the group's own leadership. An organization with Great (+4) Rapport understands how to use advertising, interviews, and social media to boost public opinion and to counteract harmful information as soon as it surfaces.

RESOURCES

An organization's Resources rank represents a higher level of wealth than the Resources rank for a single character. An organization with Fair (+2) Resources earns millions of credits in yearly revenue. An organization with Fantastic (+6) Resources has revenue in the billions. An organization with Legendary (+8) Resources has revenue in the trillions.

To determine the largest short-term expense an organization could comfortably make on behalf of one of its members, add +4 to the organization's Resource skill and check the credit value chart on page 94.

The access any given member has to her organization's resources depends on her rank, her allies in the organization, and her justification for her expenses.

TECH

This skill represents the organization's use of technology. An organization with Mediocre (+0) Tech only buys basic, off-the-shelf equipment, and must hire outside engineers for maintenance. An organization with Legendary (+8) Tech is expanding the boundaries of science in order to produce technology that, even in the year 2090, would be considered science fiction.

WILL

This shows the organization's level of discipline and its resistance to influences that might alter the organization's opinions or lower its morale. The members of an organization whose Will is Mediocre (+0) have no special loyalty to their team and may quit when faced with hardship. In an organization with Fantastic (+6) Will, its members will sacrifice their finances, their relationships, and their own health in order to defend the organization's goals. The members of an organization with Legendary (+8) Will would happily die in service to their cause.

ORGANIZATION ASPECTS

An organization's aspects reflect its goals and philosophies—for example, it could be **Devoutly Religious**, **Coldly Rational**, or **Dedicated to Science, Not Profit**. Aspects can also identify a group's unique capabilities or shortcomings, or can be advantages created by the organization, like **Valuable Blackmail Files** or **Falsified Finances**.

STRESS AND CONSEQUENCES

Organizations may take stress and consequences because of risky ventures, theft, disasters, or conflict with competitors. Scale doesn't affect the results of conflicts between organizations; use only the skill ranks of the organizations to resolve their actions against each other.

Physical stress represents attrition of its facilities and security forces. Use Fight to determine the number of physical stress boxes and consequences.

Mental stress represents the failing morale of personnel. Use Will to determine the number of mental stress boxes and consequences.

Resource stress and consequences represent expenses, loans, and fines. Use Resources to determine the number of resource stress and consequences.

ORGANIZATION CONFLICTS

If you want to resolve a struggle between two organizations as a conflict, choose the attack and defense skills and the type of harm inflicted that best represent the method and stakes of the conflict. Here are a few suggestions:

- For violent conflicts involving the tools of war, use Fight to attack and defend. These conflicts inflict physical stress.
- For cyberwarfare conflicts, use Hack to attack and defend. Winners of these conflicts steal industrial secrets and financial data, inflicting resource stress.
- For public relations conflicts intended to damage an organization's reputation, use Rapport or Provoke to attack and defend, as both organizations issue statements and conduct press conferences to influence the media. These conflicts drive away customers and investors, inflicting resource stress.
- For a media campaign designed to dishearten the members of an organization, use Rapport or Provoke to attack, and Will to defend. This conflict inflicts mental stress.
- In a purely financial conflict involving price wars and stock buyouts, use Resources to attack and defend. These conflicts inflict resource stress.

SAMPLE ORGANIZATIONS

THE AWAKENING

This is a conspiracy cult whose Unplugged members believe that the TAP is a mind-control device designed by an extraterrestrial entity they call Xar. The Awakening hopes to free humanity



from Xar's influence by exposing the alien's schemes and human collaborators, and by destroying TAP manufacturing centers and Global DataNet hubs. Since the cult's members cannot access Hyper Reality, they use old-fashioned radios for communication, and distribute their hysterical prophecies in the form of photocopied pamphlets.

Aspects: *We Will Awaken Humanity, Xar Is Watching*

Scale: Average (+1)

Skills: Great (+4) Tech; Good (+3) Notice, Will; Fair (+2) Burglary, Fight; Average (+1) Provoke

THE BETA BRIGADE

The official fan club for android pop singer Beta is owned and controlled by Beta's contract-holder, Sigma Voice—and the Beta Brigade is not that club. After bitter disagreements between some of Beta's most influential fans and Sigma Voice representatives, the fans formed their own community.

Within a year, membership in the Brigade had eclipsed the official fan club. Despite the Brigade's size and global reach, members tend to treat each other as family, coming to one another's aid without hesitation. The Brigade has even established its own charitable foundation, Beta's Bequest, which provides financial assistance to members in need. Sigma Voice has made several attempts to reclaim and monetize the members of the Brigade, so far without success.

Aspects: *We Love Beta!, They Can't Tear Us Down*

Scale: Superb (+5)

Skills: Good (+3) Hack; Fair (+2) Rapport, Resources, Tech, Will; Average (+1) Contacts, Notice; Poor (–1) Fight

THE DEAD

A citywide sprawl gang whose members like to pretend that they are walking corpses. They use a homemade cocktail of drugs to slow their circulation and to reduce their sensation of pain. This leaves them pale, with low body temperature and a weak pulse, and allows them

to ignore most non-lethal injuries. Their favorite pastime is to dose up and stalk through alleys and side streets in large mobs, searching for unarmed victims they can surround and tear apart with their teeth and bare hands. Local security forces have orders to shoot the Dead on sight—despite that, the gang's membership is on the rise.

Aspects: *Better Off Dead, Hate the Living*

Scale: Fair (+2)

Skills: Fair (+2) Fight; Average (+1) Burglary, Will; Poor (–1) Resources; Terrible (–2) Rapport

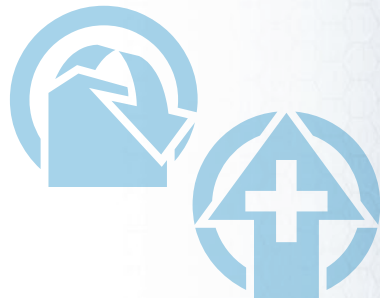
STOPWATCH

Stopwatch is a watchdog organization dedicated to identifying and countering threats to the security of nations across the globe and throughout the solar system. Officially, Stopwatch deals with threats ranging from terrorism, to corruption and rogue Artificial Intelligence. Presently, Stopwatch is trying to hunt down Charon and the AI Discordia, which has wrought havoc on the free city of Phoenix. Unofficially, they also monitor the activities of organizations and people deemed undesirable, such as zeeks and certain hybrids. Stopwatch has an entire branch—Psi Division—dedicated to hunting down the worst of them.

Aspects: *The Doomsday Clock Stands At Five To Midnight, We Do What We Must For The Greater Good, International Mandate*

Scale: Great (+4)—25,000 members

Skills: Legendary (+8) Burglary, Fight; Epic (+7) Contacts, Hack, Resources; Fantastic (+6) Rapport, Tech, Will; Superb (+5) Provoke





THE WORLD

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FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.WORLD.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET/UK_INFODUMP

POSTED BY: #BILLY_BLACK_EYES

Que Pasa, Ami! Billy Black Eyes here to give you the latest #INFODump on the world. Much has happened in the past two years, and I figure it's time for an update. In addition to my own thoughts on various subjects, I've collected numerous data feeds from jacobsplayground.net. If you wanna see the expanded materials, hit the playground!

THE EASTERN HEMISPHERE

The following articles take an in-depth look at the eastern hemisphere. As with everything on jacobsplayground.net, the content is written from the perspective of the people who live in the nation in

question. While we have done our due diligence and vetted the materials as much as possible, the admins at jacobsplayground.net are not responsible for any misinformation. Also keep two things in mind; the material tends to be editorialized, and is as much about opinion as it is about truth. Also, these INFODumps are all written within a year or two of the current date: August 24, 2090. Things might have changed in the region since then.

AFRICA

#INFOSOURCE

#GYRO.TAG.DONATE.AFRICA.ETP

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/AFRICA_INFODUMP

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.AFRICA.06TN.TPN.

SWWW.GNET/UK_INFODUMP

POSTED BY: #KING LOUIE

Aita chommie! Welcome to the bosom of Mother Africa! They call me "King Louie." Yes, yes, just like the one from the children's book. It's because I'm a primate hybrid. The primate genes were too strong,





and now I look more like a walking, talking orangutan than I do a human. I'm no king of the jungle; I'm an entrepreneur, a fence and face-man. I can get you work, and no one moves anything through the Mogadishu 'plex without my knowing. Whatever it is, I can move it across the veld for you—for a small percentage, of course.

If you ever find yourself in Somalia, you look me up on the Global DataNet and ol' King Louie come through for you. For you non-native, dorpie-dwellers, King Louie is going to give you the skinner on Mother Africa.

EMERGENCE

It's been roughly fifty years since the border wars ended, and the current nations formed. During that time, our scientists have nearly perfected their gene-splicing techniques, and we can now offer cutting-edge biotech to those with the money to pay. The big corporations have come back, only this time it's different. No longer do they sneer down their noses at us, chommie. This time they buy our knowledge and pay us well for it, too.

A NEW AFRICA

The corporations work with African scientists and lead the world in genetics. If it wasn't for that, there'd be no hybrids, no bioroids, no human 2.0, and no cutting-edge bio-enhancements for the masses. Yes, we've had our failures—some of which now stalk the veld and jungles. Yet, we also have the Global DataNet to tie us to the rest of the world. We have nuclear power, and we even have an elevator into space, commonly known as the "beanstalk".

#Xraygun: What a crock. CHIMERA has led the market in bio-engineering for the past forty years.

#Nothing_is_Free: No, chommie. CHIMERA deals almost exclusively in Simulacra production.

#Xraygun: And just what do you think sims are? Bio-engineered humans; that's what they are.

NEW INDUSTRIES

Africa is known around the world as the premier place to store information and wealth. The 'plexes and corporations here have guarded machines to store your precious data—all overseen by man and machine. We also have banks that cater to the rich and powerful—places that are as discreet as they are secure. Yes, I know about the Cape Town incident, chommie, and I will speak about that later. Aside from these wonders of modern science, Africa has her own beanstalk. This equatorial space elevator takes our biological creations and enhancements out to the habitats orbiting our little world, and beyond.

BIOTECHNOLOGY & GENE-SPLICING

Africa is the world leader in biotechnology, chommie. Bet on that! In our time, many of the corporations have funded our gene-sculptors' work. It's here where the serums that can give you the power to run fast, or make you see in the dark, or let you lift a kombi over your head come from. If you want the powers of an animal, Africa is where you come. Yet, not all of our work is restricted to making men better. We also gene-splice plants for better and hardier crops to eat. Skinner is, African genetic designs were stolen from the mainframe and smuggled over to Texas by expatriates who helped them develop their engineered meat, but I think they're just bakgat (bakgat means excellent for you chommies not living on this continent).

#Texmex: What utter crap. Texas has been cloning cattle ever since the Death. South Africa stole that tech from us.

Third Life Innovations (TLI), which is based out of South Africa, has several facilities dedicated to the growth and production of new bodies and new bio-mods. Their main body-production centers are kept in the more secure (and insular, I say) Central African Union. TLI is the main producer of genetics and bio-technology, but they are not the only ones.

#Got_my_ass_to_mars: TLI has been doing some strange things on the red planet. Rumor has it, they've found alien lifeforms and are experimenting with hybridization.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: You mean Taligrades? They exist on earth. It's nothing new.

#Got_my_ass_to_mars: That's not what I'm talking about...

that there's almost always an AI on over-watch in the Global DataNet just waiting for some poor hacker to try and take it on just so it can fry that poor bastard's synapses. I'm not sayin' you can't hack one; just make sure you have a dub or some really great insurance, chommie.

#Digital_God: Charon will expose those secrets soon enough.

SECURE BANKING

After Africa's emergence, we were able to offer the world wealthy secure banking they could access at any time. Guarded by AI-controlled countermeasures, these banks are nigh-impossible to break into through the Global DataNet, and only the suicidal try to smash their way in. The banks secure both real and virtual currency, as well as valuables. In addition to providing their clientele anonymity, they also provide diverse environments to secure property.

For example, if you owned a collection of ancient books that needed to be kept in a special environment to prevent decay, there are banks that can offer that service. I once had a job that required a team to break into one of these bank vaults to retrieve an undisclosed item. It's been two years, and I have yet to hear back from them, chommie. Skinner says they never even made it past the bank's perimeter. However, there was that incident in Cape Town where several banks were robbed, but King Louie will go into the details later.

#Luciferion: I'm starting to get sick of this speaking in third person shit.

DATA HAVENS

Much like money, data has value—especially to those who know how to use it properly. As such, if a person or one of the corporations has sensitive data they don't trust their own to secure, they come to one of several data havens operating in Africa, because our virtual vaults are monitored around the clock by human and computer operators backed by AI-generated security.

If you're thinking that hitting a Data Haven is a good idea, let me remind you

SOUTHERN EURASIAN UNION

Discounting Egypt and Libya, who have their own problems these days, the SEU is one of the few places that has yet to really settle down and stabilize in the wake of the Ivory Curtain. Today they remain a hotbed of international activity and intrigue. Their two main cities, Marrakech and Casablanca, are prime feeding grounds for smugglers and spies. Recent flare-ups in the Middle East have seen a flood of refugees coming in to the SEU through Egypt. The developments have prompted leaders to bolster the eastern borders with more security forces. Consequently, coastal ports and mineral wealth are slowly being tapped by the aforementioned criminal elements. King Louie suspects the government doesn't know what to do about the situation, chommie, and that's just fine with him!

MARRAKECH

Sometimes pronounced Marrakesh, this African city was once part of the nation of Morocco. Now, it serves as the SEU's capital city. During the Border Wars, the city saw little to none of the fighting, with the exception of the handful of times they would receive deserters here. Like many places around the world, untagged bioroids and simulacra are not allowed. This prejudice is so strong that the townspeople won't even wait for the police. They will simply form into a mob with intent to destroy the blasphemous creations.

CASABLANCA

Portrayed in movies and novels since the last century, Casablanca has seen troubled times of late. Not that it's anything you can see on the surface, chommie, but

it's there. Unlike Mogadishu, which is proud to be what it is, Casablanca pines for the days when it was in the limelight. Unfortunately, unless something major happens, this cesspool of ex-patriots and con men will continue to swirl down the sewers.

King Louie knows this façade is nothing but a front to fake out the nation's security forces. In truth, Casablanca is a hotbed of smuggling (mainly designer drugs from South America and other places) and spying. Yes, I said spying! Some of the world's best agents and intrusion specialists can be found amongst the numerous crumbling buildings and dusty cantinas. Any corporation wanting data on their competitors comes here—with the permission of the Lady in Red, of course. More data passes through this city than monkeys fly through the trees. Yet, chommie, there's one who sits at the top of the heap, and it is only by her good graces that she allows her city to be used this way. Her name is Red Diva, and anyone who brings information for sale must pass it through her first. Yes, spies and smugglers claim to have met a woman wearing a red leather bodice, red leather thigh-high boots, and a red cape that covers her face, but they have not truly met the Red Diva. This is how she prefers it. If you want to do business in Casablanca, then she's the one to see.

MILITARY & DEFENSES

The SEU has a ground army, supported by weapons bought by corporations such as Act of God Armaments and others. Their border patrol is corrupt and easy to bribe. A few remote operated drones and some pre-Border War aircraft are available if needed, but it's nothing compared to other countries—especially the Central African Union. The Southern Eurasian Union (SEU) also has quite a few redesigned patrol boats protecting their ports and coastlines. Pre-War missile batteries are also found concealed in the brush.

INDUSTRIES

The SEU has two things that contribute to the wealth of the African nations: precious minerals and cybernetics. In Marrakech, fabrication of cybernetics is huge

business. The corporations that moved in have several fabricators that manufacture the latest in cybernetics, which are then shipped out across the world. Skinner is, they also have several facilities outside of the cities where they test their latest designs before they are sent to the fabbers. King Louie has heard of these places, and you'd have to be crazy to even go within a hundred yards of one (the corporations like their privacy).

#Simba: The cybertech coming out of Marrakech is crap. Even chrome reapers have better standards than these guys.

#Warpig: Yeah, the stuff there is pretty horrible, and dirty. Maybe it's all the sand, but the cyber looks up, and usually at the wrong time. I know a guy who bought a cyber arm with a built-in shotgun. The thing only un-sleeved half the time, and usually misfired.

#Simba: Yikes.

CENTRAL AFRICAN UNION

Of all the African nations behind the Ivory Curtain, the Central African Union is the most reclusive. While they make a good show of letting others believe their country is impregnable, there are many holes one can use to gain access—and the CAU's elite Dakumbe Death Squads can't be everywhere, chommie. The people of the CAU are nice to outsiders, but when I say "nice" I mean "nice like someone would treat a rabid dog."

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Don't you shoot rabid dogs?

They're not all bad. King Louie feels they chose a different path after the Border Wars—they certainly earned it. There are only a few dorpies, and 'plexes that will accept outsiders. Of course, if you look like you belong there, they can't really tell the difference.

While the CAU is the center of African gene-tech and biotechnology, unregistered bioroids are outlawed, with stiff fines and even imprisonment for those caught with one. The bioroids themselves are terminated on the spot. This stems from the



skinner that some time ago a group of Als were uploaded to some bioroids.

As soon as they left the facility, they banded together and went on a murder spree. It took some serious firepower and cost the lives of some good E-SWAT officers who were sent out to take them down. Truth of the matter, these weren't Als walking around, these were dubs—digitized consciousness of actual people!

#Digital_God: LOL

#Magpie: What's so funny?

#Digital_God: Like any human could ever pass for an AI.

THE IVORY CURTAIN

Gaining entry to the CAU isn't difficult—if you have legitimate business to conduct. If your business is on the shadier side of things, then you may find it more difficult—especially if you have no contacts to help you. Fortunately for you, I know a great many ways to bypass the border checkpoints and gain access to the various cities and metroplexes, and how to get around some of the border patrols.

There are two main avenues of entry into the Central African Union. The first is here in Mogadishu. You could also ask around for other "guides" to get you across; but the general rule is that they only take you across, you get back on your own—and their services aren't cheap, chommie. The other avenue is to enter through the SEU as their borders aren't as secure on their side as it is on the Somalia side. However, I wouldn't trust them, aikona!

MAJOR CITIES & POINTS OF INTEREST

Since the CAU is the center of Africa's genetics design program, it stands to reason that the majority of its economy is focused on it. With a few exceptions, the major cities and megaplexes are zoned out with the more corporate-sensitive ones having heavy firepower to bring against any who try to pass through without authorization. The same goes for crime. In the CAU, criminals are punished swiftly and with great brutality. Organ-legging is big business in some places.

A black market has risen to meet the desires of people looking for upgraded organs and tissues that can be genetically modified, and many back alley clinics where surgeons work on those who can't afford, or can't risk going to, a legitimate hospital. Take this advice from King Louie: if you get yourself shot up and have to visit one of these places, make sure you take a trusting chommie with you; otherwise you may end up in the vats of corporate gene-splicers.

TIMBUKTU

An ancient city, Timbuktu has existed since the land was young. In modern times, the city is a massive metroplex stretching out across the veld. Used as a euphemism to describe places that were very far away, Timbuktu (or rather the University) made a name for itself in recent times during the Border Wars. Since then, the whole metroplex has experienced a major technological renaissance.

Major corporations like Jata Tech either have their headquarters here, or at least research and development technicians who learn at the feet of the geneticists from the University. They teach programs in advanced genetics and eugenics, and the progress they make is then sold off to the corporations to profit from. There is no doubt that Timbuktu is one of the major centers for biotechnology and a forerunner for mankind's evolution. Timbuktu is the cradle of the Virtual Age, and the University is where Kayin Courts' research led to the development of the ubiquitous TAP. The University continues to stay on the bleeding-edge of both the virtual world and genetics.

NAIROBI

If you try to enter the CAU through Nairobi, things get very interesting, very fast. The outer perimeter of the city is heavily guarded by the fearsome Dakumbe Death squads. I'll speak more about these savages later, but for now know that they are as deadly as they are ugly. Make no mistake, chommie, no one gets past these "ghosts of the veld"...or so the CAU's propaganda machine says. In truth, there are holes in their screen—how else would I



get my wares through, eh? Alas, I am not the only one who can smuggle drugs and guns through the great CAU, and if you're careful and check your contacts thoroughly, you too might be able to get things out (or into) of this nation.

LUSAKA

Lusaka is a rapidly growing city rivaling many mega sprawls across the planet. Some prominent corporations from around the world have offices here, and many have labs and facilities for research and development. Yet, deep beneath the ground, corporate-owned, sub-zero data vaults store some of the darkest secrets ever whispered in a boardroom.

DAKUMBE DEATH SQUADS

For those of us who live in Africa, there is one thing that children are taught to fear at a young age: the Dakumbe. These death squads watch over the CAU's borders and if propaganda can be believed (and in reality can it?) hunt down any who violate the CAU's borders or steal from their masters. They are said to be expert trackers and hunters, and many paint a white death skull upon their shaven heads. A few wear gory trinkets such as necklaces of ears or grotesque piercings. Many practice ritual scarification.

#Mogu_militia: *The dude leaves out the fact that these death squads are also responsible for hunting down anyone who speaks out against the CAU government. They've killed entire families, and burned villages to the ground to send a message of what happens to any would-be dissidents.*

#PAYNE_MAN: *WHATS THE MESSAGE?*

#Mogu_militia: ...

#Magpie: **facepalm**

SOMALIA

At last we get to speak about my homeland, chommie. The great land of Somalia. Here a man (or part man, in my case) can find whatever he needs. Somalia is, in King Louie's opinion, the only African nation to come out ahead after the Border Wars. Somalia is the Smuggler's Paradise.

#Simba: *The Somali beanstalk is run by pirates who smuggle everything from drugs to weapons and even pleasure Sims to mining colonies all across the solar system.*

#Luciferion: *Truth, Simba. If you need to get off-planet, this is the best place to go. No background checks, no bio scans, no questions asked.*

MAJOR CITIES & POINTS OF INTEREST

Somalia only has one real major city, and the rest of the country is dotted with dorpies full of people waiting to sell you something (sometimes, it's your stuff they try to sell back, but don't blame King Louie for that). Aside from that—and the fact that most people think Somalia is full of nothing but criminals—the people are friendly and generous with the hospitality.

MOGADISHU

The city of Mogadishu can claim the prize for the largest city in Somalia, but that's like saying you get second place in an ugly contest. The sprawl is home to over 15 million people, and is our nation's capital. To put it straight, chommie, Mogadishu is a dump!

The sprawl is split up into four sections, each run by one of the major tribal clans. Sitting in the middle is the infamous Bakaara Market—a place where you can find anything (and I mean anything) for sale here, chommie. The tribes squabble over who can get the better end of the deal out of Mogadishu's black market, often going to war with each other over territorial disputes.

In the Bakaara you can buy guns, drugs, sex, cyberware, and even the latest in genetic enhancements. You can also purchase fake passports, border papers into the CAU, and more. Some of the smaller corporations have offices and facilities here, but not like the ones in the larger 'plexes. The main reason is, as I mentioned, everyone thinks a Somalian is well-versed in some criminal enterprise (and for the most part it's true). However, this attitude makes a great cover for the corporations to conceal some of their less-than-legal researches.

MILITARY & DEFENSES

Somalia doesn't have a standing army like other countries do. Instead we hire out mercenaries and pay them in credits and smuggled genetic enhancements or beefed-up cyberware. These mercs work under a standing contract, and there are some pretty good outfits to work for like the Peacekeepers or the Triple L's. Other mercenary outfits are more like glorified gangs and tend to be as bad as crooks—waltzing into a dorpie and taking whatever they want. This tends to bring in other outfits to oust the first ones and then you have a whole dorpie shot up.

#PAYNE_MAN: WASSA DORPIE?

#Luciferion: A small town...Use your TAP's search engine, n00b. And quit typing in caps.

INDUSTRIES

Somalia only has two real industries: piracy and smuggling. Sure, we have more legitimate businesses, such as ship-breaking and fishing, but the others are more lucrative, and not more dangerous. If you know how to play the game, smuggling and fencing goods can be real profitable. Folks are willing to pay for things they can't seem to get through normal channels (or who are impatient and can't wait for those normal channels to bring it to them).

SOUTH AFRICA

Out of all the countries formed when the Ivory Curtain went up, none are more in touch with the rest of the world than South Africa; it has the distinction (much like Somalia) of remaining after the Border Wars largely intact. Corporations, the ultra-rich, and even tourists come to South Africa. In addition to all of this, South Africa also hosts one of the few spaceports on the planet; we call it the beanstalk. It's a space elevator that carries goods and people to orbital habitats and space stations where they can book passage to anywhere in the system.

MAJOR CITIES & POINTS OF INTEREST

South Africa is a lot like many of the places found in the so-called "Western

Worlds." It has highways, nuclear power, and fast food. It has a strong connection to the Global DataNet, and many places sport HR overlays that can only come from the minds of African programmers. Bio-sculpted animals walk alongside their augmented owners in the major sprawls, and it all looks very rich.

South Africa is home to some very important corporations that helped the continent turn out the way it did. From many African banks to Third Life Innovations, South Africa is destined to move up in the world.

JOHANNESBURG METROPLEX

Johannesburg is one of the largest cities on the African continent—bursting at the seams with over 18 million souls residing in its concrete jungle. Johannesburg is a place where one finds vast displays of its wealth, but there is rot beneath the surface, chommie.

#Diepslooter4life: Rot, eh? Ya brak, come down ta Diepsloot. My bras and I will show ya rot. We'll fokkin cut your piel off an' hang it around your neck until it rots....maaifoedie!

#Neon_Bright: uh oh

#Billy_Black_Eyes: You understood that? My TAP's translator doesn't recognize the slang.

#Neon_Bright: *Nod* He just said...well it wasn't a compliment.

Johannesburg's slums are little more than ghettoized regions long abandoned by city officials whose predecessors had, at one time, tried to renovate the region's infrastructure, instituting an array of development projects, all of which failed because of the staggering cost. In the early part of the century, an estimated 200,000 people lived in the largest of the ghettos—Diepsloot. By the time the Death occurred, the number of people living in the slum had risen to over one million people, 98% of whom were Black Africans.

The Death ravaged the impoverished population of Diepsloot, killing over 400,000 people. Those who survived did so by raiding the more affluent regions of Johannesburg, especially the



predominantly white townships of Dainfern and Chartwell. They had no chance, chommie. To use a popular insult for white people, those fokkin Gorra Ou were outnumbered 5 to 1.

Those that weren't killed became hostages—at least for a while. One thing the whites know how to do is wage war, and that's exactly what happened. The South African National Defense Force (SANDF) entered Diepsloot on February 12, 2036 under the auspices of rescuing the imprisoned whites; in truth it was little more than a culling of the black population. An estimated 30,000 people died in the five-day operation, including the Gorra Ou they allegedly came to liberate.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Jesus Christ.

#Kaffir_killer: Those fokkin Kaffir deserved it! They should have known better than to///_User Deleted_///

#Luciferion: Good riddance. Fucking racists.

By 2038, a wall separating Diepsloot from Johannesburg proper had been erected, and Apartheid once again became the law of the land. Any black person looking for work outside of Diepsloot needed a special work visa to enter Johannesburg. Of course, very few ever found a white person willing look beyond their skin color and employ them. And so the downward spiral began again.

Some fifty two years later, not much has changed for the people of Diepsloot. The district is divided into sectors controlled by warlords who control the distribution of food, clean water, medicines, and generator-run electricity. Rape gangs are a constant threat for any Wyfie not smart enough to join a gaam—loosely translated to gang—or arm herself.

There are white people in Diepsloot, but not many. Those who live there tend to be criminals wanted by Johannesburg authorities, or freelancers looking to make a few rand (South African currency) smuggling supplies into the district. Street docs, regardless of color, are a welcome sight in Diepsloot, treated like kings and queens.

#Luciferion: Sounds like a lovely place to visit.

MILITARY & DEFENSES

South Africa boasts some of the best military forces on the whole continent (perhaps with the exception of the CAU). Coastal defenses consist of naval patrols and missile batteries. The national navy is mainly cutters and small swift boats with some larger carriers. The South African National Defense Force is tasked not only with protecting its borders from other nations, but keeping the people of Diepsloot out of Johannesburg and other slums in places like Cape Town and Pretoria. The SANDF is also tasked with air drops of supplies into the slums, where the warlords sell them off to the populace.

INDUSTRIES

South Africa is very corporation-friendly, imposing few restrictions on research and development, a very appealing solution for research and development, especially in the field of genetics. Indeed, Third Life Innovations, notorious for its development of exotic bioforms, is based in Johannesburg.

#Simba: Exotic doesn't even scratch the surface. They are rumored to have developed bioforms based on Taligrades that can survive in space. Problem is, those things tend to have serious mental issues. Most are either bi-polar or psychotic, not to mention ugly as sin.

#Luciferion: Yeah, TLI hasn't figured out how to minimize the Taligrades' physical characteristics yet. Those are some creepy-looking peeps.

AUSTRALIA

#INFOSOURCE

#GYRO.TAG.DONATE.AUSTRALIA.ETP

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/AU_INFODUMP

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.SYDNEY.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET/UK_INFODUMP

POSTED BY: #BARLIMAN

So I had a look at the last time someone tried to introduce you guys to my country, and I got the distinct feeling that it was written by one of the old NAC missionaries



trying to go native and failing spectacularly. So here's my go at bringing all of you up to speed about Australia today. Just like everywhere else we've had a rough time of it this century, but unlike most places we're still fighting the aftermath of what happened. While most countries changed during the Death and aren't who they once were it's the rule of the game that when you face off against the apocalypse you don't walk away unscarred. Our wounds are still fresh.

THE DELUGE AND THE DEATH

For years the planet had been warming, to such an extent that the glaciers and both poles melted much faster than any of the models had predicted. That, coupled with the steady rise in carbon dioxide, ozone, methane gases and water vapor (commonly known as Greenhouse Gases) and other factors such as deforestation and a rapidly rising population, resulted in a global rise in sea levels, and a host of other problems which wrought havoc on our world. This period is commonly known as The Deluge.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: *The Deluge hasn't stopped, really.*

For Australia, it was the flooding and erosion of our coastlines that did the worst damage. It began in 2020, with typhoons and cyclones of unprecedented size and strength hammering our coastal cities, while drought in the interior made an already inhospitable environment even more-so. Millions evacuated our major cities in an eight year period commonly known as "The Great Retreat". Cairns and Townsville were completely wiped off the map, while Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Darwin, and Perth were nearly destroyed, sustaining an estimated 2.3 trillion dollars' worth of damage to property and infrastructure.

As for the cost in lives...Even sixty years later, we don't know the actual number; perhaps 5% of our total population, conservatively? Back then, Australia had approximately 26 million citizens, so we're looking at 520,000 souls just gone in less than a decade?

Apocalyptic...But just when we were starting to recover, India and Pakistan started launching nuclear weapons at each other. The Death began.

The Death hit us hard. Australia on its feet is already an inhospitable place, but without any infrastructure, radioactive dust-laden winds, and the ecosystem collapsing due to lack of sun, Australia is out to fucking kill you. The interior of Australia became a massive dust-storm raging for years. There must've been thousands of cyclones all pushing the boundaries of the desert further outwards, forcing people to abandon their homes in the Outback and head to the greener, slightly more hospitable regions of Queensland, the northwestern part of New South Wales, and portions of South Australia during the period we call The Great Retreat.

#Alice_Springs_Lives: *We stayed. We survived. Even when you tried to force us out.*

#Duster4life: *Ayup, mate. I'm a third generation duster. My papa lived through the worst of it; told me stories of the horrors done to the citizens of Alice by the damned Retreaters.*

The nation's supplies were either lost to the storms, or stretched until they ran out. People were dying from spider bites again as the resources to deal with them quite simply weren't there. Medicare had curled up and started to die just like the hundreds of thousands of people in desperate need of help. Perth copped for it, both barrels, when the storms hit.

The repairs to the damage caused by the Deluge had stalled time and again, and the city was already a little third world microcosm. So when one of the furthest reaching dust-cyclones hit the city it was lost, that simple. Nobody can ever be sure, but historians have estimated that as much as seventy percent of Perth's population died in the first six months after the Death began.

Today, Perth is a wild city filled with the descendants of the Abandoned (those who, for whatever reason, we couldn't help during the Great Retreat); they're fiercely independent and resist any offered



help. About the only good thing to come out of all the crap we had thrown at us was the Cane Toad problem in Queensland getting sorted; they were hunted to extinction after some desperate buggers figured a way of killing them without the meat becoming too poisonous to eat.

#Gabber618: Perth is doing just fine, thank ya.

#Stone_Cold: Don't ya mean "no thanks to ya" cobber?

#Gabber618: True. They say they couldn't help us, but anyone who believes that chum is a fuck muppet. They didn't want to help, and that's fair dinkum.

RECONSTRUCTION

When things finally eased up we got a lot of help from the old United States—mostly medical supplies, and food. We also got a lot of missionaries with the supplies spreading the "good word" and all that guff, which led to a bit of a revival of Christianity. It's most common among the older folks, some of whom remember The Death. After the NAC, the corporations were all over themselves with glee at the thought of a nation indentured by some well-placed venture capitalism, as well as a lot of pledges, they donated a lot of building materials and set their employees to work on the reconstruction of our nation.

Topographically the country is divided into two defined regions. You have the Green, which is the thin "habitable" area around our coast where daily life is pretty much up to modern living standards, and the Outback; a dust filled shithole. Sorry to any dusters reading this but it's true.

Those of us who grow up in the Green are taught to respect nature in a way that is largely missing in other nations around the world. While most places seem to focus on consuming what they can, while they can; we've seen what happens when there is nothing left and it's not pretty. That's why we're planning ahead to make our nation as self-sustaining and eco-friendly as possible.

#Duster4life: Piss off cookie.

Even fifty years later, many of our cities and sprawls are still being rebuilt. So far, Sydney is the only sprawl in Australia free of reconstruction and focused purely on expansion. In the years since the Death, the city has expanded not onto the land though, its first expansion was upwards and then outwards onto the sea. Sydney now has an archipelago of artificial islands that doubles as its tide control system and flood barrier. The majority of the artificial islands are vast apartment blocks, but for those rich enough to afford privacy there are a lot of privately owned islands.

This makes the city the de-facto power center of our country, I'm sure that "Granny" Forsythe's minions will be quick to claim that "actually it's Canberra" but they'd be lying. Sydney's the most stable sprawl, and therefore attracts the most investment, which feeds its expansion, and attracts further investment. This cycle has made Sydney the home of our biggest national corporations such as Sudeki-Whyte, and New Frontier Enterprises (who run the bulk of the reclamation projects throughout the country). Kiwi Motors has a huge construction plant in Sydney, and Barnumbirr Technologies has several server farms and customer service centers for Australia's most popular VR social network, the NexxtWorld.

Power attracts power and international corporations usually make their local headquarters in Sydney as well, such as Chrysanthemum Corporation, and Ravenlocke: Pacific. The latter being the current holders of the country's policing contracts.

Outside of the sprawls but before you hit the Outback you have the "borders", or the belt if you're from Adelaide. The borders are filled with the agricultural townships that are responsible for feeding our cities, they were once the first wave of government and corporate sponsored stewardships to get the nation back on its feet.

Today they're privately held having been given to the steward, or their descendants, as a thank you getting it up and running. All of these townships have water treatment facilities and irrigation equipment to keep the crops growing, and you're likely to find millions of genetically-modified capons; they're one meter tall, waddling

about. While some of the bigger centers have cattle the costs involved keep them pretty rare.

New Frontier Enterprises and the Church have got the contracts for the second wave of Stewardships. They're pretty early on at the moment; they're still working to tame the lands so they can be turned into something useful. The selection process is pretty much rigged, and while anyone can volunteer, if your face doesn't fit, you won't get picked. Competition among these second wave stewardships has been pretty fierce, and there have been a few skirmishes that ended in fatalities when some poor bastard got shot or stabbed.

Beyond the Green, you get into the wilderness, the dust, or the Outback, whichever you prefer. There are dusters who eke out a living in the ruined buildings and the wilderness, but most people don't want to go live out there, and with good reason. The weather in the Outback is still really bad. Okay that's a lie, it's fucking apocalyptic.

The winds often carry radioactive dust that settled in the interior, and a few minutes can see blue skies turn dust brown and suddenly you're trapped in a storm. If it rains you're facing massive landslides that can kill even trained survivalists, and it's fifty-fifty whether the rain is radioactive. Then we have the wild-life. Australia has always had a reputation for everything being poisonous, and with good reason. We have more than our fair share of poisonous little shit-bags, but that doesn't explain the amount of bio-horror that stalk the Outback.

Have you ever thought a salt-water crocodile wasn't dangerous enough? How about a saltie that's large enough to take a chunk out of your flatbed truck, chew it up and swallow; and you didn't see it coming because it's got photodynamic scales that change color in ways a chameleon wishes it could? There are even stories of giant trap door spiders that are three feet across; I've never seen one, I never want to, I'll be in the sprawl if you need me!

#Duster4life: Don't talk about things you don't know anything about. Plenty of people come to live out here, away from

your stinkin' sprawls. This fuck muppet couldn't handle life out here.

#Gabber618: Truth.

The government doesn't like people going out there but they can't stop you; the reason given beyond the environmental hazards is that the government is paying for New Frontier Enterprises to run reclamation projects and they don't want them being hampered. So given that the fauna, weather, and government doesn't want us out there why the hell would people go live the life of a duster? It's simple: money, just like with everything. While most dusters are vultures who just strip a town's carcass bare and sell what they can, there is a dedicated community of dusters who hire their skills out to people.

Officially the government has promised to reunite people with as much of their family's heritage as they can but I've never met anyone who's had an official turn up with "Great Aunt Edna's" diamond necklace; so that's niche the dusters fill. If you want something found, they'll get it for you. They're not cheap as it's a risky job; outside of the animals and the weather, there are a lot of savages among the dusters who will kill you for anything remotely valuable.

CHINA AND THE MANDARINATE

#INFOSOURCE

#VID.TAG.MANDARIN

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET

DATASOURCE: MANDARIN.GOV.CHINA.17TN.TPN.

WWW.GNET/CGOUZHI

POSTED BY: #CHOU GOUZHI, MANDARINATE EUNUCH AND SPOKESMAN FOR THE MINISTRY OF PROPER THOUGHT

The cycle has turned and once again, as history demands, China, the middle kingdom, rests at the heart of the world. All those seeking wisdom and enlightenment must begin by embracing that simple truth: China endures. We are the last, and most prevailing, of the ancient civilizations.



We rise and we fall and then we rise again. For, while we are rarely equaled in war, commerce, or invention, in truth, our greatest strength lies in our culture and our civilization. The great virtues of the Chinese way sustain us, keep us whole as a people when history tries to make us weak.

This is why we consciously blend the new with the old. Unlike other peoples, chasing flash and novelty, we preserve the ancient ways even as we embrace progress. For, as it is written, those who forget the start of their journey have no hope of reaching the end. China endures.

We in the Mandarinate understand the value of the Chinese way and that is why we have chosen to pass this gift on to other nations. Today, many of our neighbors are sheltered beneath the umbrella of China. Ruled by mandarins, educated and tested side by side with our own, they have earned the great prosperity and the peace that comes with the Chinese way.

#TurtlesallthewayDown: Pretty full of nemself huh?

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Nemself? WTF?

#Wolfson: It's a neuter pronoun, Billy.

#PandaStride: You know those mandarin eunuchs. They're all pompous.

#TurtlesallthewayDown: Sure, but even with that he seems to have a little extra dose of that conceit. Probably why he ended up in the Ministry of Proper Thought.

PLACE

To understand China, you must first grasp that we value harmony above all. Each person in this world has a place, a role, which he, she, or ne must fulfil in order to find happiness and to serve society as a whole. Those unable to find, or fill, their place are not rebels or criminals. They are damaged and deserve compassion rather than scorn. All efforts to help people and nations find their proper place demonstrate an empathy that many outsiders cannot understand. The scandalous reports claiming that we employ re-education camps and other sorts of horrors are fabrications!

Place is not a matter of destiny or lineage but rather one of innate abilities and temperament. Anyone can rise or fall based on how they perform on the exams and evaluations that are the most important part of our education system. These tests begin at a very early age. Indeed the original exams determine what sort of education a child is best suited to receive. The Mandarinate is first and foremost a meritocracy. No other system ever devised places with such an emphasis on efficiency and fairness.

#HoleintheWall: Oh, they're fair alright. It's just a coincidence that the children of the elite tend to do much better on all the tests that really matter.

These tests ensure that every citizen of the Mandarinate is assigned the job, or life task, most in keeping with his, her, or his talents and personality. Of course, with age and experience, people might advance somewhat—for instance, moving from worker to supervisor or salaried employee to business owner—but the scientific nature of determining place ensures that no significant errors are ever made. Outsiders can never truly understand the joy it gives us to know that we perfectly fit the task assigned to us. This helps to explain our legendary work ethic and productivity.

#Luciferion: Nes?

#Neon_Bright: it's a genderless pronoun applied to both men and women.

THE NEW MANDARINS RISE

The Communists destroyed themselves through self-inflicted wounds. Though they brought about great prosperity and growth, they pursued these goals through unnatural means. While this was clear in many different fields, the one-child-only policy was ultimately their greatest blunder. When that first generation of only children reached adulthood, they realized that the Communists had allowed parents to favor boys over girls. Millions of young men recognized that they were doomed to lives of loneliness. They would never marry, they would die unmourned by children and grandchildren. Restive and outraged, they looked for someone to blame, and their eyes quite naturally fell upon the Communists.

The New Mandarins—as the first generation of the Mandarinate called themselves—took this fury and channeled it to productive means. They overthrew the Communists and gave these lost young men a cause to fill their otherwise empty lives. Many historians call the spread of the Mandarinate to neighboring countries the “Bachelor Wars,” but I consider that a rather crude simplification of something much greater and far more pure.

#FangFan: Ne's not even talking about our great scientific achievements. Just a bunch of politics.

#InkBlot: Wonder how long they will talk about the broken children...

#FangFan: I should have known you'd bring that up! Yes, mistakes were made, but look at what ultimately came from those terrible experiments.

#Inkblot: Our new ruling class? Human 2.0.

#FangFan: Sure why not. One day every baby will get improved as a matter of course. And those experiments also lead to a lot of other advances in biotech. Brazil might strut around but we Chinese are the real leaders not them.

#Inkblot: Yeah that's right. Every child will get the 2.0 treatment right around the time the elite follows Shen Wei into her dubber's paradise.

Sadly, it was the Death that truly established the Mandarinate as a force for good. Even more than the catastrophe of the Floods, the Death put everyone no more than a few meals away from barbarism or even the grave. Some claim that China actually took food and other needed resources from our Mandarinate allies. That is false! Unacceptable! A lie so terrible it offends me even to mention it. All records from that time clearly show that China was a net exporter of food and other essentials. We were the bulwark that maintained civilization.

THE THAWED LANDS

The Floods wrought many changes upon our planet. The Thawed Lands, formerly called Siberia, are no exception. A new climate tamed the once legendary winters. In the early days during the transition, great tracts of mud crept across the tundra and many parts of the deep forests. This all but destroyed the roads, railways, and power grids that Russia used to keep the oppressed peoples of those lands under its ruthless boot.

For generations, the Mandarinate devoted enormous effort towards improving the conditions of our allies in the Thawed Lands. There was peace, prosperity, and progress for those who embraced the Chinese way. Recently, as the reports of geologists and ecologists grew ever



more favorable, we rejoiced in the great fortune about to befall the Thawed Lands. As the climate finally adapts to the changes caused by the Floods, the Thawed Lands are poised to become one of the most fertile and bountiful areas in the entire planet. Amazingly, this great fecundity is actually overmatched by the influx of wealth from oil and minerals. Indeed, many in the Mandarinate talk of changing the name of the Thawed Lands to the Blessed Lands.

Of course, this promise of great prosperity has stirred the greed of the Russian locusts. When the Charon virus threw the EU into chaos, Russia seized this opportunity to launch a series of provocations against our forces stationed within the Thawed Lands. Unacceptable! Our strictly defensive garrisons suffered great losses through these wanton terrorist assaults. Though China and her Mandarinate allies love peace, we have had no choice but to launch a series of pre-emptive retaliations against the Russian aggressor.

#DreadfulBear: "Pre-emptive retaliation?" Wow, what a load of crap! Nice spin on how a bunch of horny Chinese soldiers tried to conquer half the world. They invaded us and plain out stole Siberia along with the rest of our Asian holdings when we were distracted by the Death and the Floods.

#VodkaSpiller: Like ne said, you abandoned the Thawed Lands and now you have adopted terrorist tactics against us. The bombings, raids, and attacks on air cars were bad enough. But when you guys assassinated General Meng you went too far.

#DreadfulBear: Meng? @Vodka... You mean the war hero who spoke out against Shen Wei and all her allies dubbing themselves into digital immortality? The general who got reassigned to a backwater as punishment? And of course, for some reason, we waited until we were almost crippled by the Charon virus to launch this "provocation" huh? Isn't it strange how we only seem to attack China when we are in no position to defend ourselves from your "retaliation"? #n00b.

Russian belligerence caused their forces to overreach and they have suffered epic defeats. Regular troops as well as elite soldiers drawn from all twelve types of the celestial legion have performed heroically. Thousands of dragons patrol our lines. Ranging from jade observers all the way up to gem class battle drones, we have the firepower to destroy anything Russia sends at us. We have also decanted tens of thousands of Sons of Qin who stand ready to give their very lives for the principles of the Chinese way.

#VodkaSpiller: Yes! Nothing you have can match our celestials and dragons!

#DreadfulBear: Okay, back up a minute. The dragons are unmanned drones with AI and remote operators. The celestials are hybrids, for some reason tied to your zodiac, not sure why you'd want horse or pig soldiers, whatever. But what are these Sons of Qin?

#VodkaSpiller: Combat Sims. Named for the terracotta soldiers who guard the first Qin emperor. We don't make as much use of Sims as other countries but they are part of our strategic reserve.

Many legends were made during that winter war. For instance, the cowardly raid carried out by the so called "New Cosacks," which we repelled during a fierce five day struggle. Using snowmobiles, instead of the traditional horses, tens of thousands of troops on both sides waged an almost classical cavalry battle barely a decade from the start of the twenty-second century. Were it not for a paralyzing blizzard on the second day we likely would have prevailed far sooner, but even without the air support of our dragons, the Mandarinate did ultimately prevail.

This temporary setback prompted us to reassign many units from the Ministry of Sun and Rain to the Thawed Lands for the remaining duration of the war. Though this could make weather less certain in the remainder of the Mandarinate, all acknowledge the necessity of the sacrifice. No one wants our troops to suffer through another blizzard if we have the means to prevent it.

In addition to regular Russian forces some of our units also reported clashes

with irregulars moving through the snow. Our brave soldiers intercepted some of these groups and discovered that many of them are actually foreign mercenaries and bandits claiming loyalty to the so called cause of "liberty." Those who fight for pay or plunder have no honor.

#DreadfulBear: I'm as surprised as anyone about all the volunteers coming in from the EU and beyond to help fight off the Mandarinate forces. Some are descended from refugees who fled the initial conquest of Siberia but a lot of them have no connection. They just want to resist tyranny before it arrives at their doorsteps. And, not surprisingly, ne isn't talking about the native Siberians who joined up as a scouts and guides. Guess not everyone loves their "paradise." But I'm not surprised that the Mandarinate continues to muck around with the weather. They've learned nothing from the Floods!

#VodkaSpiller: The Floods are the reason why we have devoted so much research into weather control. The Mandarinate have made famines and coastal disasters manageable problems. One day we shall eliminate them altogether.

PERFECTION AND PRESERVATION

All cities have different cultural zones designed to represent the architecture and living styles of past eras. Though our cities are still mostly devoted to the present day, one can walk through the ages simply by passing through neighborhoods dedicated to the various centuries.

Most of our countryside is similarly dedicated to preserving the old ways. That is another reason why so many of our people are selected to live as peasants, just like our ancestors in countless generations past. Yes, peasants have it much harder than city dwellers since even those in cultural zones are free to use modern conveniences inside their homes. However, this is why we reserve peasantry only for those unable to serve the Mandarinate

in any other useful way. This allows even them to contribute.

Rumors of the early 21st century industrialization creating massive ecological disasters in our pristine countryside and infrastructure are entirely unfounded and fabricated by poor lost souls like the Russians who do not yet know their place.

UNDERSTANDING THE MINISTRIES

Finally, before moving on to a discussion of our allies, I think it only fitting to offer a brief explanation of the ministries and how the Mandarinate—the greatest system ever devised—regulates itself. As mentioned, we are a meritocracy. The best of us are selected at a very early age to join one of the thirty-five ministries that organize our society.

As always, place determines our rank. Some become functionaries, others junior mandarins, and our most gifted and enlightened, senior mandarins. Members of each group arrive at their own hierarchies based on experience, but senior mandarins always outrank their juniors in the same way that junior mandarins outrank mere functionaries and average citizens. The ministries constantly negotiate for position and place amongst themselves both in the Mandarinate as a whole and in various districts. This helps to determine who has ultimate authority when dealing with issues that concern more than one ministry.

Each region—and the Mandarinate as a whole—has a coordinating council made up of representatives of all ministries. When individual ministries cannot settle an issue the councils must step in and make the final decision. While no one person is ever truly paramount on a council, some do earn greater place than others strictly on their own merits and talents. For instance, Shen Wei, the first woman to ever earn a seat on the Mandarinate board, is widely viewed as one of the wisest voices in our entire society.

The fact that she is also one of the oldest of the neo humans—2.0 as you West-erners call them—is mostly coincidental.



When she suffered great injury in a car accident and her body began to fail, it seemed only natural to preserve her mind and essence through dubbing. Some considered this controversial at the time. But now, a scant two years later, nearly a quarter of the Mandarinate board has joined her. As Shen Wei and her colleagues enjoy their existence in this digital afterlife, we can all take comfort in knowing that we finally have achieved the harmony all true citizens of the Mandarinate crave.

#TurtlesallthewayDown: Harmony?

How do you think leaders who never die are going to treat the next crop of wannabes?

#PandaStride: That's pretty obvious. Kill them. Or get killed in turn. Maybe induct a few they can control. It's a pretty tempting offer. Ruling forever. But there's only so many seats at the table.

#TurtlesallthewayDown: Exactly! Can't they see this is going to tear the Mandarinate apart?

#PandaStride: Admitting that would require a lot of guts. Something mandarins aren't noted for having. Despite all the nonsense about colleagues Shen Wei runs the whole damn Mandarinate. If you try to pull her plug or even just push her aside she'll crush you. Easier just to pretend.

MANDARINATE ALLIES

The obvious superiority of the Chinese way has made the Mandarinate welcome far beyond our own borders. Many of our neighbors have demonstrated proper wisdom by embracing the peace and prosperity that comes from the Chinese way. Countless peoples and lands have joined together to benefit from the blending of

the best of ancient and modern culture that defines the Mandarinate.

#DreadfulBear: What a crock of shit. Everyone knows that their neighbors are nothing more than vassal states. The Mandarinate allows the illusion of sovereignty, but they secretly dictate the foreign and domestic policies of these so-called nations. And if a territory gets out of line, you can be damned sure the dragon is there to set things straight; with force if need-be.

TAIWAN

When the Communists fell, the reason that had kept Taiwan separate from the mainland fell with them. However, the first generation of mandarins recognized that the culture and politics of the island had followed a path different from the rest of China. They feared that bringing Taiwan back under direct rule might destroy what had made it distinctive and unique. Instead, they established broad guidelines and gave the island a great deal of local autonomy.

Unfortunately, it is almost entirely dominated by one of the densest sprawls in the Mandarinate. This is likely where the slanders about Taiwan as a hotbed of crime and unrest come from. In truth, the population is content and well looked after. It is home to a vital space port and a critical gateway to our colonies in the rest of the Solar System.

#FormosaMore: It wasn't about preserving our culture but keeping us from contaminating the rest of China. They didn't trust us and they still don't.

THE FORLORN

Sadly, not everyone has demonstrated proper wisdom and clarity of thought. Though most of our neighbors have embraced the Chinese way and cheerfully become our Mandarinate allies, a few still live in error. We feel great sorrow for them but know in time they too shall know the peace and prosperity that comes from accepting the Chinese way. Rather than catalogue all of the forlorn and describe the heavy prices they have paid for their foolish stubbornness let us consider just two: Indonesia and the Philippines.

THAILAND

In the years leading up to and immediately after the fall of the Communists in China, two factions, the Red Shirts and the Blue Shirts—had all but destroyed the Thai economy by driving away tourists and sabotaging industry. Though the rivalry had begun before the assassination of the king and the murder of the rest of the royal family, it only got worse during the political crisis. Due to the chaos, the Thai people welcomed the Mandarinate's humanitarian intervention and became one of the fastest to embrace the Chinese way.

Rather than try to rebuild the tourist trade and modernize what was left of their manufacturing base, the newly minted mandarin government of Thailand instead, without any prompting from the Mandarinate itself, chose to focus on agriculture and traditional crafts. The Mandarinate still pursues the vile assassin of the Royal family, true to its promise to the peoples of Thailand.

#YesIAm: Don't let them fool you. We are the Mandarinate's plan for everywhere. Peasants, nothing but peasants and few administrators delivering quotas of food to the Chinese masters. They were the assassins of our beloved King.

#JadeEye: Aren't you being a little bit excitable? You still have cities after all.

#YesIAm: Bangkok's maybe a third the size of what it once was and the others are even smaller. And what about the preserves the Mandarinate oversees? What's really going on it there?

#JadeEye: Clearly they are exactly as they seem. Nature preserves. A trust we take on behalf of the Thai people.

#YesIAm: Whatever. Siam will rise again. And soon.

SINGAPORE

Though in many ways similar to Taiwan, the island of Singapore chose a very different response to the Floods. Rather than fashion walls to keep the water out, they instead opted to build up. Over decades as the waters rose, they put down a new layer on top of the roofs of their existing homes and buildings. It earned them the nickname, "people of the new mountain," which they embraced with pride.

WAR AND THE CHARON VIRUS

Alas, as happens far too often in the world, disharmony from the outside has caused great suffering to many within the Mandarinate. Russia's tantrums and the economic chaos sparked by the Charon virus have had a noticeable impact on a number of our allies, and even China itself. Though we pride ourselves on self-sufficiency, we are still connected with the rest of the world. This means ripples from even faraway places can disturb the tranquility we have labored so long to create. As our butterflies cause storms, a pebble dropped in a distant land creates waves on our shores.

The drastic reduction in imports from—and exports to—the EU has disrupted many of our own native industries. Workers in numerous places have been forced into idleness due to the failure of a critical product or material to arrive on schedule, if at all. Even worse, many customers in the EU have cancelled or even refused to pay for orders Mandarinate companies have delivered in good faith. Though in the long run, Europe's economic collapse is likely an opportunity for China, for the moment it has placed great strain on our economy.

Of course, considering the opportunism of the Russian beast, this could not have happened at a worse time. Virtually everyone in the Mandarinate has been forced to make some sort of sacrifice to help with the war effort. The peace-loving and hyper-efficient Mandarinate is simply not designed to support protracted warfare without incurring an economic cost. Rationing and redeployment of resources for the war effort have only increased the damage caused by the Charon recession.

Unacceptable!

Though no one would compare losing a job or business to the sacrifices made by our troops on behalf of our allies in the Thawed Lands, the suffering of the common people is yet another indictment to lay against the murderously subhuman Russians when they are finally brought to account.



Thanks to the wisdom of their mandarin leaders, the Singaporeans took the precaution of carefully sealing off the original layer of their island. This has given them an enormous space, virtually a second city, beneath the waters. Rather than let that area go to waste, the native Singaporeans welcomed guest workers from all over the Mandarinate to live peaceful and contented lives within the shelter of their lower island. There, working in safe and clean environments, they produce many vital goods benefiting the entire Mandarinate. Though as guest workers, they have little influence in the local government—they must eventually go home after all—Singapore has nevertheless set up special venues for them to resolve disputes.

#NotyouraverageTiger: Ne doesn't mention that native Singaporeans are almost all ethnic Chinese.

#Pearlsb4Swine: Why would that matter?

#NotyouraverageTiger: Because the "guest workers" who have "little influence in local government" certainly aren't. Some of them have been there for a couple generations but they're still outsiders.

#Pearlsb4Swine: That's what the dispute resolution ne mentioned is for.

VIETNAM

In Vietnam, formerly celebrated for its ecological diversity, the floods and long "nuclear autumn" of the Death dealt the entire land a terrible, shattering blow. Countless species of plants and animals were wiped out during those dark times. As the Vietnamese came to realize the true magnitude of their loss, many of them began to fall prey to a form of depression which in the local language best translates as "the privation."

In time many Vietnamese turned to genetics and biochemistry in hopes of recreating what they could no longer find in the natural world. They had considerable success but also many, sometimes quite tragic, failures. As the years passed, the Vietnamese have earned a reputation as some of the most cunning and dedicated gene splicers on the planet. Though

they prefer to organize into thousands of tiny, usually portable, labs instead of large institutions, they are still recognized as important contributors to Mandarin science.

#GettingHanoid: Ne isn't talking about the drugs and all the other dirty stuff some of us get sucked into.

#ThisYuansForYou: The Vietnamese all but revere the environment. You can't seriously expect me to believe they're mucking around with those sorts of things.

#GettingHanoid: Not all of us are saints.

INDONESIA

None of the vast number of islands that made up the Indonesian archipelago passed through the Floods unscathed. Many of them actually disappeared entirely—forcing their populations to search for new homes. A fortunate few of these refugees were welcomed into the Mandarinate but most were simply pushed into the reduced and already crowded territories of neighboring islands. Some of them even suffered the saddest fate of all and were left with no choice but to abandon land entirely, joining the throng of those treacherous vagabonds who call themselves Rovers.

#GreatDalang: Those "fortunate few" were Han and other ethnic Chinese allowed back in their ancestral homeland. The Mandarinate wasn't too interested in helping the rest of us.

#LongLun: The Mandarinate sent thousands of aid workers and what did we get for our kindness? Terrorists!

Many terrorist networks, criminal gangs, and pirate armadas have bases hidden somewhere within these smaller islands. However, these almost traditional sorts of illicit groups are nearly quaint when compared to some of the others that also call Indonesia home. AI cults, renegade scientists determined to carry out forbidden experiments, and warbands of rogue Sims battle with countless bands of members dedicated to promoting whatever crazy notion beat through the spam filters of

their TAP and infected their minds. Devotees of ideas too bizarre or dangerous to survive anywhere else flourish amongst Indonesia's smaller islands. That simple fact demonstrates the need to bring the Chinese way to Indonesia before it is too late.

THE PHILIPPINES

Some, whether through ignorance or malice, claim the Philippines are already a part of the Mandarinate. This is simply untrue. Sadly, they have yet to embrace the Chinese way. The incident of 2084, where protestors in Manila called for the nation's withdrawal from the Mandarinate was the result of a devious propaganda campaign aimed at the most woefully uninformed segment of Filipinos. Though one hesitates to point the finger of blame, clearly Brazil benefited the most from the international outrage that ensued when we were forced to defend our embassy from the rioters.

#Luciferion: Brazil's behind a great many things, especially in Asia, and the Mandarinate have a reason to worry about Brasilia moving in on their territory, especially now that they are fighting the Russians.

#Longlun: You don't know shit round eye. The Mandarinate has nothing to fear from Brazil!

In truth, as with all of our neighbors, we wish nothing but the best for our Filipino friends and know that one day they too shall enjoy the peace and prosperity of the Chinese way. However, we also understand that time has not yet come. In fact, the religious mania and fanaticism that grips the Philippines makes it even more difficult for them to accept the obvious benefits of embracing the Chinese way. Many find it curious that the Floods and the Death, which all but shattered Indonesia, had the opposite effect on the Philippines. Even as space became more crowded the survivors simply drew deeper upon their faith and refused to split into warring camps. Some of their most revered religious figures from that time are religious leaders who martyred themselves to preserve what they called "God's Peace."

THE INDIA LEAGUE

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: INDIALEAGUE.INF.JP

FQDN: INDIA.INF.JP:15TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

POSTED BY: #KAL176

India's history has always been marred with strife, even as the country itself sought to achieve a cultural identity. For centuries, the blended nation of Hindi, Muslim, and Buddhist believers clashed for control of the citizen's souls, but even these wars took second fiddle to conflicts with the occupying British, the nearby Chinese, and the perennial rivals to the north in Pakistan.

By 2015, many thought that India would become the next great manufacturing giant with a massive workforce eager to join the industrialized world. Certainly, India's leaders pushed in that direction, though continued saber-rattling with Pakistan led to circumstances that none could have foreseen.

Both India and Pakistan achieved nuclear capability in the late 20th Century, and while both countries had kept the nuclear option as their ace in the hole for years, no one really thought that either side would utilize that option. That is, however, until the perfect storm of tensions that resulted in the nuclear exchange commonly known as The Death.

#Kashmir's_Vengeance: India's nuclear program started in March of 1944. Our first test was in 1974.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: The Project's code-name was Smiling Buddha. I wonder if they appreciated the irony.

In 2028, newly elected Indian President and well known nationalist, Ranajay Naman, began pushing the Central Government of India towards increased industrialization, a stronger national infrastructure, and a better sense of secular national identity. Pakistan was still recovering from the assassination of their Premier, Sohan Swarit, at the hands of a criminally-insane American zealot. Swarit's replacement, Batuk Abhiraj, had attempted

to bolster Pakistan's floundering economy and gain support amongst Pakistani fundamentalists by supporting Iran's war against Israel. However, the devastation caused throughout the Middle East was unfathomable at the time, all but crippling the Pakistani military.

#Simba: Devastation in the Middle East? What's he talking about?

#MuhammadTheJust: In the months leading up to the Death, Iran and Israel were at war. Pakistan pledged to support Iran's efforts; one of the reasons why India invaded. Of course, any news of this conflict was overshadowed by the Death.

#Simba: Strange, I'm not finding much information about the conflict.

#Kashmir's_Vengeance: It happend.

Naman viewed this opportunity as a prime one: he could retake Pakistan with little to no resistance, folding them into a greater India. On April 23rd, Naman issued the order for Operation Silent Dawn—the ground invasion of Pakistan. By noon that day, the Nagrota (XVI) Corps marched on the Kashmiri border, containing three infantry divisions, artillery and anti-aircraft guns, and a brigade of Arjun MBT tanks. Records show that the Indian intelligence had indicated a 73% likelihood of the surrender of the Pakistani government within three weeks.

They were wrong. A double agent within Indian intelligence named Pranav Sakesh had forwarded critical information about Silent Dawn to his handlers within Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence. Prudently, Premier Abhiraj reallocated forces to reinforce the Kashmiri border. The invasion quickly turned into a stalemate, though the much-larger Indian military seemed to loom in the wings.

Wanting a swift end to the battle (and a defeat of Pakistan amongst his accomplishments), President Naman ordered the entire Northern Command into the fray—nearly 1/3rd of the Indian Army. Again Sakesh leaked the information to the ISI.

Abhiraj became desperate. The Pakistani military was stretched too thin to provide an adequate defense, even with forces being redirected from the Levant and Iran.

While it was certainly true that Abhiraj had contemplated utilizing close-range nuclear warheads, it is equally well documented that he discarded the option, as he was unwilling to kill so many innocents on such a large scale. Rumors of a coup on May 19th began circulating, with one of the Pakistani commanders, General Rohinesh Nayakan, taking control of the Pakistani central government. However, such rumors are unproven.

Regardless of who was in charge of Pakistan at the time, the results were devastating. On May 24th, at least nine 12 megaton warheads were detonated along the Kashmiri border, instantly vaporizing battalions of Indian and Pakistani troops, as well as the entire population of the cities of Madras and Delhi. Millions died, though the toll could have been higher, as numerous missile launches were foiled by orbital defense satellites. Even still, entire cities were reduced to little more than radioactive rubble. New Delhi and Chandigarh were annihilated.

The Death had begun.

DEATH AND FRACTIONS

India's hopes and dreams were dashed by its own greed and lust for expansion. All the dreams of being a world power wafted away in a cloud of radioactive dust. Entire cities were leveled, and India's population plummeted due to starvation, cancer, and radiation poisoning.

With its infrastructure shattered by the war with Pakistan, the leaders of India split along numerous political and religious lines. None seemed to be able to hold the state together with any semblance of authority. The major remaining cities—Amristar, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, and a handful of others—began focusing more on self-sustenance and keeping their own populations alive, rather than working as a coherent, cohesive nation. While still loosely referred to as "India," it quickly became apparent to all that India was no longer the burgeoning world power that it aspired to be.

Though India was always known for its tropical monsoon seasons, The Death brought entire seasons of rain tainted with radioactive fallout. Farmers



and other rural-dwelling individuals fled their fields for the major coastal cities and those populated centers left behind soon fell into disrepair and ruin. After The Death ended, these areas—including the majority of central India—were quickly retaken by the jungle.

With massive overpopulation in the cities and no agrarian infrastructure to support the hungry sprawlers, the rulers of the various Indian city-states needed to come up with a way to feed the throng. Luckily enough, one man held the key: Sanjit Bhudupenra.

A mechanical engineer by trade, Bhudupenra's expertise lay in fluid dynamics. Having worked on several of the dam and levee systems throughout India prior to The Death, Bhudupenra found himself experimenting with designs for irrigation in 2031, at the request the Governor of Kolkata, Harij Gaurang. Kolkata's food supply was at the mercy of the summer monsoons, which were heavily tainted by radioactive waste. However, Bhudupenra and his team responded to this challenge with the first ARNAV filtration unit: a method of water collection and filtration which allowed for natural nitrogen filtration through hydroponically grown plants.

With one fantastic invention, Bhudupenra managed to solve two of India's biggest problems in one swoop: starvation and water-filtration. Bhudupenra quickly patented his ideas, selling them to city states throughout India and, later, worldwide. Bhudupenra's corporation, Hydronax Kolkata, became an overnight powerhouse, with sales reaching the \$100 billion mark in their second year of incorporation.

While Bhudupenra's rise was meteoric, his fall was equally spectacular. In 2041, Kwame Featherstone's experimentations with matter assembly grew worldwide as an economical (read: dirt-cheap!) method for food production. With smaller, more cost-efficient machines and the ability to convert waste into edible food or other necessary materials, Featherstone's technology quickly outstripped sales of Hydronax's hydroponic filtration systems. By 2044, Hydronax was acquired in a hostile takeover by PharmAmerica and its assets spread throughout several

subsidiary companies. Bhudupenra was offered a golden parachute and gently urged to take advantage of the opportunity and fade out of the spotlight.

AnuVerda78: Gently? I doubt that.

INDIA IN 2090

Much as it was throughout its history, the majority of India is covered with steamy, tropical jungle. The central part of India is considered to be wasteland, though radiation-caused mutations have resulted in nearly unstoppable growth, pressing in on all sides. All major Indian city-states hug the coastline of the subcontinent, expanding from the shore inward.

The largest of the city-states is currently Mumbai, with just under 60 million people crammed into the metropolitan area and outlying suburbs. Kolkata follows with 42 million, while Chennai and Amristar each between 20 and 35 million. Rather than viewing themselves as "Indians," residents refer to themselves as Kolkatans or Amristars, taking the name of their city-state as self-identification.

While faith no longer holds the sway it once did in united India, vestiges of the cultures and religions that had fractured the country in centuries past still remain. Adherents of Islam, Hindi, Sikh, Buddhism still hold great sway in the city-states and, while actual religion might be rare, zealotry and petty factioning certainly remain.

The most common of these religions, however, is Hindi. Ruins of temples to Shiva, Ganesh, and Vishnu are scattered throughout the jungle waste, and iconography of India's mythological gods and heroes is pervasive throughout the city states. Nowhere is this seen more visibly than in the Phansigar Cult of Lady Kali, better known as the Thuggee. Despite suppression by governmental forces dating back to the mid-1800s, the Thuggee still manage to be a dangerous wild card throughout the Indian city-states.

Bhoja_Rose: The Thuggee are more than a dangerous wild card. They have their fingers in all facets of organized crime.

What may be most alarming, though, is the sheer number of zeeks within the Indian population. Some believe that the proximity of the Indian city-states to the nuclear launches that led to The Death may have altered the native Indian DNA, resulting in genetic aberrations necessary for Omega Wave activity. However, others believe that it may have some link to the numerous faiths of India that tend to view zeeks as perfected ideals of mankind, approaching either Nirvana or ātman, depending on one's beliefs.

Zeeks in the Indian city-states tend to blend well within the populace, hiring out their services to the highest bidder while maintaining a fair degree of anonymity. Many foreign governments have sent agents to Kolkata or Mumbai, hoping to hire zeeks to take action against the Chinese Mandarinate or some other country. Rumor has it that a number of zeeks have built a compound in the middle of the Indian jungle, ruled by a psionic master known only as Ishvara Yogi. Expeditions have set out from Channai and Kolkata to determine the truth of these rumors, but have been inconclusive thus far.

#Emerald_Deva: *They should leave us alone. We just want to live our lives in peace.*

Similarly, cyberware is much more common in the India League, due to the number of industrial outlets in Kolkata. Nearly two thirds of the sprawlers in the city-states have at least some form of cyberware. While most of the populace's cybernetics are temperamental at best (and utterly defective and dangerous at worst), it's rare to see any Kolkatan or Mumbai without some type of cybernetic implant.

#Warpig: *Their cyber is just as bad as what you'll find in Casablanca. Trust me. If it's not made by Kenta Cyber Dynamics, you don't want it.*

#Billy_Black_Eyes: *I'm starting to think you're a shill for Kenta, Warpig.*

#Warpig: *Say that to my face, Billy. I dare you.*

GEOGRAPHY

MUMBAI: CITY OF DREAMS

Millions of wasters and scavs worldwide dream of living in Mumbai, hobnobbing with the latest media celebs and holostars. And, for the rich and powerful, Mumbai truly is a city of dreams. Mumbai is the entertainment hub of the entire world with countless production companies, gaming studios, and recording companies. Celebrities gather in both real and in virtual space, spreading all sorts of rumors throughout the blogosphere.

For the rest of us, dreams are just that. Mumbai's just as dirty, crowded, polluted, and violent as any other urban sprawl out there. It just might look a little cleaner. And, in fact, it might just be a little deadlier, what with all the back-room dealings going on amongst the media barons.

#Mumbai_User9008: *It's much worse than he makes it out to be. The bonded labors system is very much alive in Mumbai. It is the backbone of the entertainment industry.*

MUMBAI IN 2090

Greater Mumbai stretches across a peninsula that juts into the Arabian Sea, covering a total of about 400 square miles along the coast. Mumbai is hemmed in by the dense jungle-waste to the east, while the most recent additions to the megalopolis hug the coast, running north and south. The megalopolis is divided into several districts: Central Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai, Salsette, Vihar, and Upper and Lower Vaitarna.

- **Central Mumbai:** Corporate center. Prowling grounds of the rich and powerful.
- **Thane:** Urban slums and tenements, home to most Mumbai.
- **Navi Mumbai:** Entertainment district. Home to media conglomerates.
- **Salsette:** Industrial wastes, corporate hubs, and media sound stages.
- **Vihar:** A drained lakebed, now housing most of Mumbai's hydroponics.



- **Upper Vaitarna:** Does not truly exist—made up of virtual landscape and ‘parks’.
- **Lower Vaitarna:** Residential and shipping district. Smells of rotting seaweed.

Mumbai is currently ruled by its Governor, the honorable Subodh Jamhar, who has served as Mumbai’s Governor for twelve years. Elections are held every three years, though few see Jamhar’s regime leaving power any time soon.

In fact, most natives of the Indian city-states view Jamhar as a natural to unseat Kumar Nadu as Premier of the Colombo Pact. And, truth be told, Jamhar has had his eyes on Nadu’s seat for quite some time. A ruthless Machiavellian, Jamhar’s cabinet is stocked with prudent individuals not afraid to tell him no; they just make sure he’s had his morning coffee first and his kukri knife is well out of arm’s reach.

Beneath Jamhar, several district managers oversee daily city operations. Of these, Kar Mukherjee (of the Navi Mumbai district) wields the most power. Mukherjee is a cheerful, opulently rich fellow whose numerous stock options in both cybernetics and various media outlets have made

him powerful friends worldwide. He can regularly be seen hobnobbing with celebrities in Central Mumbai nightclubs, as well as holding court over the Thuggee blood-orgies in Thane.

#Bhoja_Rose: The man is a monster. He brings shame on our people.

#AnuVerda78: Shame? Mukherjee is a true devotee of Kali. It is you who bring shame on our people for thinking to disparage such a kind and generous man.

#Bhoja_Rose: Are we even talking about the same man? Mukherjee is responsible for over 60% of the slave trade in Mumbai. Most of them are children!

Also of note is Ayati Desai, the district manager of Vihar. Desai is the current CFO of Opal Seas Hydrocorp, one of the few operating hydroponic farms in the world. However, as India still clings to the hydroponic process rather than adopt matter assembly technology for their food needs, her position remains one of the most lucrative. However, Desai has been liquidating OSH’s assets at an alarming rate,

removing positions and selling off hydroponic equipment.

These sales have come under particular suspicion, as major fires, corporate disasters, and ecological accidents have occurred four separate times within a month after Desai has completed a sale. Recently, Desai has been desperate to sell off a series of corporate facilities in eastern Salsette, though no takers have emerged.

LIVING IN MUMBAI

Mumbairi life isn't that much different from anywhere else in the sprawl, outside of a few sizable differences.

Firstly, Mumbai serves as the central headquarters of five of the seven major conglomerates controlling the media worldwide: EmpireNet, Sanjan Tempe Warner, Wordsmith International, DoubleThink Studios, and NightOwl Media. The heads of these corporations each have access to vast amounts of credits, resources beyond measure, and a worldwide influence. When California was ravaged by the "Big One" in 2049, these corporations became a proverbial mecca for movie moguls, internet sensations, and online game designers.

In the 20th Century, India was known only for its over-the-top "Bollywood" musicals and rip-offs of American superheroes. However, as the country began heavy industrialization through the early 21st Century, India became a cheap and appealing option for filming movies. Many of the major film studios moved their major offices to Mumbai to oversee production and post-production. When Hollywood sank, executives simply packed their things and headed for the Mumbai offices.

#Simba: Hollywood didn't sink; it's still there.

#Magpie: Yes, but they ain't making movies. Last I heard it's filled with biohorrors and gangs of scavs.

Because of this trend, billions of dollars flooded into the Mumbairi economy and would-be stars have created something of a tent-city in Navi Mumbai and Salsette, outside of major media center offices. One never seems to know who will be next

to get their proverbial "fifteen minutes of fame," though. The most recent Mumbai starlet is Tanya Skurge, 19 year-old death-metal performer and part-time dominatrix, whose viral videos have spread across The Global DataNet like wildfire. Skurge often can be seen in full latex gear at any of Navi Mumbai's risqué nightclubs.

While delivery service is nothing new in 2090, Mumbai—and the rest of the India League in general—have something of a unique take on the idea. Mumbairi lunch truck drivers called "dabbawallas" cart uniform tin lunch boxes called tiffins.

#Curryaddict: Mmmm.

Dabbawallas often pride themselves on their accuracy and timeliness, averaging only one mistake per 6 million (yes, million) deliveries. A dabbawalla delivery consists of a two-part process: one 'dabba' drops off the tiffins full of food, while a second collects the empty tiffins. While all forms of food are available through dabbawalla service, hydroponically grown traditional Indian cuisine is most common, particularly amongst the upper class.

Because of their tendency to deliver to the upper class, dabbawallas have the opportunity to socialize with their clients and make connections over and above that of a common food delivery person. Certain media moguls are particularly picky, preferring one dabba over any other, even in the same food service.

Dabbawallas traditionally deliver their meals by foot or via bicycle, as the crowded sprawl of Mumbai often slows down delivery speed when driving a full-sized car or SUV. However, motorcycles and motorized bikes have become increasingly common amongst dabbas who take their trade seriously. Occasionally, dabbas who have become friends with the rich and powerful in Central or Navi Mumbai receive motorcycles as gifts. A Toyota Locust JUMP bike may be the ideal gift for any dabba on the go.

KOLKATA: CYBERNETIC CENTRAL

If Mumbai is the media and entertainment capital of the India League, Kolkata is hands-down its technical and computing



epicenter. Kolkata provides a sharp contrast to its more glamorous cousin, but may well be the most powerful of the various city-states in the India League.

Kolkata has become something of the Silicon Valley of the Eastern Hemisphere, following the collapse of California into a Dead Zone. Nearly every manufacturer of cybernetics, Tendril Access Processors, and computer-based hardware is either centrally based in Kolkata or has a major branch office in the city. If it has to do with high tech anything, you'll find it in Kolkata.

KOLKATA IN 2090

More than any other city in the India League (and arguably the world), Kolkata is controlled by its corporations. The line between commerce and politics is blurred in Kolkata to the point of non-existence, as CEOs and CFOs often hold multiple positions both within their own company and within the Kolkatan government. If you think this system would be rife with corruption, graft, and cronyism...you're exactly right.

As The Death began, New Delhi became a primary target for Pakistani warheads and, naturally, the heads of state for India fled immediately. As such, Kolkata became something of a de-facto seat of government and the nexus for an Indian

renaissance. At the head of that renaissance was Dar Patil, Kolkata's current governor and the CEO and President of Kolkata's largest cybernetics producer: SAGE IT and Technical Systems.

Patil spearheaded a movement called the Nai Vijnana—the New Science party—which brought the best and brightest from the Eastern Hemisphere to Kolkata in the form of a think-tank. Lasting through the entirety of 2072, the first meetings of the Nai Vijnana established a sort of corporate set of guidelines that Kolkatan companies would follow, ensuring mutual success and continued profitability. In truth, the end result of the think-tank resembled little more than the Cosa Nostra of Sicily, with different arms of the corporate mob acting in different directions, all for mutual gain.

Patil was elected governor of Kolkata two years following the Nai Vijnana and has won every election since, with over 80% of the popular vote. He has served as Premier of the Colombo Pact on four separate occasions, even stepping in as a Premier pro-temp when Mari Gupta of Amristar was assassinated on her way to the Pact meeting. Currently, Patil's veneer of invulnerability has begun to crack as fringe elements, such as the technology-abhorring zeeks known as the Lotus Blossom and the Maoist rebels known

as the Red Right Hand, have begun to call for his resignation. Patil's continual refusals to simply quash the upstarts have only brought about more questions about his fitness to lead Kolkata into the 22nd Century.

The city of Kolkata most resembles a hemisphere centered around the mouths of the Ganges river, and covers approximately 350 square miles. While areas near the Ganges are busiest, the sprawl slowly stretches into wilds the further one goes afield. The Himalaya Mountains to the north and the jungles of Bangladesh to the east provide natural barriers against the Chinese Mandarinate, who are eager to get their hands on the city-state's technologies.

Today, Kolkata is divided into two primary sections: Steel Town and Black Town. Steel Town grew out of the area formerly known as White Town during the British occupation of Kolkata, and comprises the core of Kolkata's manufacturing and technologies hubs, hugging the mouth of the Ganges River. Black Town, known also as The Ring, or The Black Ring, surrounds Steel Town and contains most of the city's residents, a third of whom live in abject poverty.

LIVING IN KOLKATA

If life in Mumbai is like walking through an ephemeral, ghosted dreamland, life in Kolkata is as real as it gets.

Nearly everything in the city—every building, every lamppost, every trash-can—is built to be the most durable, the most cutting edge, and the most integrated. Aesthetics are little more than an afterthought in Kolkata, and are viewed as a luxury available only to the ultra-rich. Kolkatans often think nothing of forgoing showy casing on a new hacking rig or chrome for their latest implant if it means an extra exhaust fan or an additional nano-processor. Cyberware chop shops are common, and many underhanded Kolkatans make a quick buck working as chrome reapers.

The city itself reflects this attitude in its very architecture. Parks are an extreme rarity in Kolkata, and are truly only found on the outskirts of The Ring. The idea of green space (or even a tree, in general)

in Steel Town is an alien concept, as the buildings loom up into the Kolkatan skyline. Even in The Ring, the rush and press of people in between the narrow alleyways of the Kolkatan megalopolis is overwhelming for a new sprawler.

Cyberware, as one could imagine, is a bragging point for any Kolkatan sprawler. Kolkatans often go heavily into debt over the latest upgrades to bionic implants. Cyberware addiction is widespread in Kolkata, with some studies showing 1 in 5 Kolkatans addicted to cyberware implantation. Whether this is an actual chemical addiction—perhaps to the painkillers used during installation—or a psychological fixation remains to be seen. Some even believe that cyberware companies install software specifically designed to influence the recipient into purchasing additional implants, even if it drives them into bankruptcy.

JAPAN

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: THESHOGUNATE.INF/JP

FQDN: THESHOGUNATE.INF/JP:15TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

POSTED BY: YOSHIHIRO TANABE (PHD), KCD TOKYO
EMPLOYEE.

Koncha bitches! I'm Yoshihiro Tanabe, a cybernetics developer at Kenta Cyber Dynamics in Tokyo. I was born and raised in Tokyo, but I've spent some amount of time in every continent around the world, and tend to be one of the go-to people who promotes the increasingly lost art of inter-cultural understanding. But enough about me. I assume that you want to know more about Japan. Well, read on...

Peeps call it the Techno-Shogunate, or Neo-Shogunate, but the Japanese still call it Nihon. The term "Shogunate" is misleading, since it tends to conjure up images of katana-wielding samurai and other anachronisms. In reality, Japan in 2090 looks outwardly little different than it did a century ago—save that places like Tokyo are more high-tech. That isn't to say that katana-wielding samurai haven't made a comeback—but they are more visible in government and military sectors than they are on the streets, mingling with the dishonorable gaki and bakuto looking to separate you from your Nuyen. We all



know it's the Yakuza who watch over the streets, neh?

Here are some basic things you need to know about my homeland. For starters, the decline of western influence has resulted in a very different socio-political landscape. After World War II, Japan was rebuilt by the United States, during which time it westernized, denounced its military capabilities (though they had maintained a military for the purposes of defense only), and embraced a liberal form of democracy. Sure, the emperor was still in place, but he mainly served as a cultural leader, a representation that linked modern Japan to its history. The real power was with the Imperial Diet, a governing body that made laws that the emperor had no authority to contradict. Times have changed, and that body went the way of most of the other western influences.

#PAYN_MAN: *What's he Mean by Diet? What does it have to do with politics? Do they ETE people?*

#Billy_Black_Eyes: *Re-read it, PM. The Diet are politicians; extinct politicians.*

Post westernization has found the country "technically" under a military dictatorship... whether or not the boss men say it's all "in the name of the Emperor." Just remember the generals—the taishou—are running the show, and that means even though the jietai may still be the "Japanese Self-Defense Force," the SDF now polices the country and makes sure people—especially gaijin—behave themselves.

HISTORY

So here's what went down, bitches!

#Billy_Black_Eyes: *This guy really likes calling us bitches, doesn't he?*

#Luciferion: *Maybe he's running a Mr. Chow personality engram.*

#Magpie: *"Chow" is a Chinese surname.*

#Luciferion: *...*

In 2031, a general by the name of Hiro Minotora seized power in a relatively bloodless coup and declared himself Daichi no Taishou (that's "First General," for those of you who don't speak Japanese), in the service of the Emperor.

One of the first things Minotora did was import Sims from Brasilia to bolster the dwindling work force. This only worked for a bit.

In order to wrap your head around some of what happened, it might help if you grok the Japanese mindset. You see, in spite of cultural cross-pollination we still have a different culture and mindset than some of you are used to. The Japanese are traditionally very polite, and they like to learn from other cultures, but at the end of the day we want to be left alone to chill with our tsure—or homeys, as you westerners might call them.

Brazilian-grown Sims were all well and good, but Minotora and company wanted something a little more "Japanese." After all, they had plenty of technology—Japan's always been at the forefront of robotics, electronics, and cybertech—it'd just been a shortage of the "human" element that forced them to seek outside concepts.

The second generation of Sims in Japan weren't really "Sims" any more—at least not in the way most peeps think of Sims. Using vat-growing techniques gleaned from the Brazilian Sims coupled with good ol' Japanese tech, Japanese engineers and scientists cooked up what have become known as sougougin—"synthetic people." No, bitches... not synthetic as in "man-made"; synthetic as in "synthesis"—a fusion of ideas.

They're also known as bioroids, but the most common term is "synths."

#Billy_Black_Eyes: *Umm, no. Bioroids are completely different than sims.*

Basically, synths are a fusion of vat-grown meat and biotech—sometimes coupled with internal cybernetics and nanotechnology—which grants a synth a considerably longer lifespan. Granted, at forty years or so, it's much shorter than a human's natural lifespan, but it's still twice as long as the most durable pleasure Sims.

Given that synths have been largely integrated into Japanese society and afforded a measure of civil rights, many peeps in the rest of the world lauded Japan as being forward-thinking and egalitarian. But there's an ugly side to the picture



most outsiders remain blissfully ignorant about. Check it, bitches; Japan has a long history of a sort of “caste system.” Granted, it ain’t as bad as it was back in the days of the original Shogunate, but it’s always been there: the elite at the top; the dregs at the bottom—and the two aren’t supposed to mingle.

While it’s not quite so bad these days, the fact is it’s synths who are now at the bottom rung of Japan’s social hierarchy. The colloquial word for them is “inchiki”—which roughly translates to “fake.” To most Japanese, synths aren’t real people, and they tend to get treated as such. Not everyone is mean or hostile toward them, but a lot of Japanese don’t believe inchiki have real feelings. They get the jobs no one else really wants and there’s a social stigma attached to people who get too friendly with them.

#Luciferion: So, while Japanese are polite, they’re just as racist as the rest of the world. Pity.

CULTURE

Despite the changing times, Japan remains a more polite culture than is found in most other parts of the world. That isn’t to say that they won’t cut you to ribbons for showing the wrong person *burei* (that’s disrespect for all you *gaijin* out there). For the most part, individual conflict is avoided and insult is settled with a few choice words. *Meiyo*, or honor—once all-important and later proclaimed primarily by to the *Yakuza* of all people—has made a comeback in Japanese society. Some live according to a *Bushido* code, and it’s not unheard-of for the dishonored—*fumei-yona*—to commit *seppuku* so they might atone for their dishonorable deeds.

The demographics of Japan aren’t pretty; the population has been steadily shrinking since the 20th century. At its height, there were 127 million people in Japan, and given the fact that the only areas suitable for development were the coastal regions, those were some of the most densely populated urban areas on Earth. A downward population trend occurred because society began placing an emphasis on

wealth over family, causing a great many people to choose not to have children. In addition to this, permanent immigration into Japan has always been so insignificant that it has failed to have any sizable effect on this trend.

Today the population sits at just over 90 million.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Of course, the major change to Japan’s social structure has been the re-implementation of a more-or-less traditional caste system. At the top of the pile is the *Kanjin*—the Emperor and his family, who command extreme respect and deference from all members of society. The next most important group are the *Kanko*; the public servants who implement the Emperor’s wishes, and ensure that Japan functions as a society. Even low-ranking public servants are included in this caste, which elevates them over the role they served before the caste system was re-established.

Beneath the *Kanko* are the *Ryomin*, or the citizens. These people fall into a number of sub-castes: first are the *Shinabe*, who are the high citizens, or in this day and age the independently wealthy and the corporate executives. The *techno-samurai* and the military fall into this caste as well. The next level down includes the *Zakko*, which are the less elite families that are still notable. For instance, small business owners, contractors, and craftsmen are all *Zakko*. Finally there are the *Komin*, or the average citizens. Foreign visitors are treated as *Komin* regardless of their station in their homelands unless they happen to be foreign dignitaries, in which case they are treated as *Kanko*.

The lowest caste is known as the *Eta*, or the slave class. In previous ages, this was further broken into sub-groups, much like the *Ryomin*, but that has been eradicated in the new order. The *Eta* are slaves who serve the emperor and his family, as well as other families and corporations—yes, corporations can own *eta*—which are often purchased when someone of the *Komin* class owes more money than can conceivably pay back in a lifetime and is “bailed out” by an individual who sees the debtor’s potential as a valuable servant.

GOVERNMENT

So, you bitches want to know more about the Techno-Shogunate? It's essentially a military dictatorship, but like much of society, it's wrapped in relics from the past. When Emperor Hisahito was overthrown, Hiro Minotoro took power and declared himself Daichi no Taishou, or First General. For a large percentage of the population, this change in leadership structure didn't sit well as it all but declared that the government was... exactly what it had become. Minotoro perceived an immediate decrease in popularity and turned to his advisors, who suggested that he install Tetsuhito as the Emperor and proclaim his loyalty to him. Reports suggest that Minotoro was initially completely opposed to this suggestion, saying that it undermined his attempt to get away from the previous nonfunctioning government.

Minotoro was finally convinced to entertain the notion of installing Tetsuhito, Hisohito's young nephew, as the current Emperor. While the emperor would possess no actual power, he would still serve as a figurehead of state, live in the traditional palace, give the occasional speech, and entertain foreign dignitaries. He became, in practice, Japan's primary domestic diplomat. Tetsuhito reportedly saw this as an opportunity to improve his standing, and it didn't hurt that he could deliver moving speeches, so he accepted the offer. Decades older now than when he accepted the position, he remains Emperor, but his position hasn't afforded him even an incremental increase in actual power. He remains little more than a powerless puppet to the Daichi no Taishou.

ECONOMY

The best way to describe the Japanese economy is battered but not broken. After World War II, Japan became one of the leading economies of the world, producing some of the top consumer goods. The party ended at the end of that decade though, and since then, following the balkanization of the United States, Japan's one-time largest trading partner, and the

awakening of the sleeping dragon of China, the Japanese economy has struggled to keep up with the rest of the world. Add to that the recession brought on by Charon, the theft of three percent of the nation's total wealth by Darkmantle, and a diminished workforce caused by the downward trend in population.

Japan is further hindered by the fact that it has no natural resources to speak of. It's strengths are technology research and development, marketing, and entertainment. Following the ousting of the old government, Minotoro made a commitment not to let the change in government amount to a weakening of the economy. To prove his point and entice Japanese corporations not to leave, taxes were immediately cut by a whole twenty percent. Of course these taxes were then levied against the Ryōmin, but a population fearful of losing their jobs were willing to make such sacrifices. In years since, many of those taxes were slowly shifted back to corporations, a little at a time, and in subtle ways so as to make it hard to accuse the current leaders of duplicity.

Despite its difficulties, some of the world's top corporations, including Subarashii Ltd, a member of the C-7, keep money flowing into the island nation. Japan's corporations still employ some of the world's top scientists and researchers. They continue creating cutting edge consumer goods, and produce the most advanced cybernetics on the planet. In fact, Chiba City is home to some of the greatest minds working in the cybernetics industry. The common belief is that if you need something designed, researched, or hacked, if they can't get it done in Chiba, it can't get done at all.

Not everything is roses with the economy though. As I mentioned earlier, when Hiro Minotoro took power, he imported an obscene number of sims from overseas to take care of the labor shortage. What you need to understand is that these were effectively bought and then given to corporations, so they're part of the eta caste. Effectively slaves, they were a source of labor that corporations were able to exploit at wages that were otherwise illegal in the country. If that sounds



familiar, look no farther than the crisis outsourcing created in the labor market in the old United States. Anyway, getting to the point here, corporations quickly learned that there was more incentive to buy sims than there was to create well-paying jobs, and as you can guess, that amounted to a lot of perfectly able people finding themselves out of work through no fault of their own.

Unlike much of the outsourcing crisis from the turn of the millennium, sims aren't limited to semi-skilled positions that are normally offered to slackers and the poorly educated. Sims can be skilled at a range of jobs, from the lowly toilet scrubbers to business strategists. The fact is that the jobs offered to Ryōmin have more to do with what's left over after every last sim has been fully exploited. Of course, those who find work can expect to be laid off when their corporate employer is able to obtain just the right sim to fill the job they currently have. Despite this harsh reality, incidents of violence directed at sims is rare. Instead, the Ryōmin have learned to suffer quietly and rely on their families for support.

Many have pressured the government to pass a law requiring all Ryōmin seeking work to be employed before sims can be assigned jobs, but such talk is seen as shortsighted and delusional by the elites, and dangerous to many who have power in the government. See, tomo, as much as the First General will deny it, the corporate interests still matter to those in power, and they suppress anyone who would say otherwise. There's this belief among the elite that helping corporations earn record profits will somehow benefit the rest of Japan. And in truth, just like any capitalist system, corporations exist because of stakeholder investments, so anything that maximizes the return on their investments is seen as a good thing. In theory, that money goes back into the economy, creating jobs and opportunity for all. The problem with that line of thinking is the stratified social structure means that the investors are usually the same elite who run the corporations, and those people are more likely to put the money into savings or other investments rather than into the

pockets of the Ryōmin. The corporate structure creates a feedback loop where the money almost always flows upward, leading to the situation we have now, where the Ryōmin can't find work.

THE YAKUZA

You can't have much of a discussion about Japan without talking about the Yakuza, neh? And no, despite the re-emergence of the samurai, there has been no such re-emergence of ninja to oppose them. That isn't to say that there aren't super-secret sects of assassins who call themselves ninjas, but you won't find Yakuza overseers controlling them. OK, that isn't one hundred percent true, as a few bosses might just have their hands and their money in such affairs...

#Billy_Black_Eyes: First he says there are no ninjas, then he hints there really are...WTF?

The Yakuza are the nearly all-encompassing crime syndicate that operates in Japan. Unlike the government, little has changed with them in the last hundred years. The same families dominate, and they are engaged in the same illegal activities, namely protection rackets, prostitution, and smuggling. The largest difference between then and now is that the Yakuza are now also at the forefront of cybercrime.

The Yakuza are known in Japan as gokudo, though the Japanese police call them boryokudan, or the violence group, while the Yakuza call themselves ninkyo dantai, or chivalrous organizations. They're notorious for their strict codes of conduct and very organized nature. You bitches might notice that the police and the Yakuza themselves have very different opinions of who they are and what they represent. Yes, they are criminals, but during the period of Westernization, the Yakuza considered themselves the primary source of honor and the defenders of the righteous. Now that the government again lays claim to the Japanese tradition of honor, the Yakuza tenaciously cling to those ideals as well, creating a culture conflict where

both groups try to discredit the other in an ongoing war of rhetoric.

The Yakuza lay claim to virtually all organized crime in Japan. The organization is controlled by dominant families, and then extends down through the various levels of hierarchy, all the way down to street gangs. Even when joining a gang, a new member knows exactly which group he's working for—and for that matter, when the police investigate crime, they typically know which family they're picking a fight with. This level of control helps ensure the loyalty of those who work for them while providing an appropriate level of intimidation for those who would challenge them. One doesn't double-cross the Yakuza unless it can be done anonymously. Otherwise, an alternate identity and a hasty getaway plan to a faraway country is in order. There are few places in the world where a traitor could consider himself safe.

FAMILIES

The top Yakuza families are the Yamaguchi-gumi, the Sumiyoshi-rengo, and the Inagawa-kai. The Yamaguchi-gumi is the largest Yakuza group, with over one thousand clans, and accounts for fifty percent of the members throughout Japan and beyond. The current oyabun, or leader, is Shou Minami.

The second largest Yakuza clan is the Sumiyoshi-kai, which is comprised of over three hundred smaller groups who united for protection and strength. Unlike the other large Yakuza groups, the Sumiyoshi-Kai operates as a federation, where its activities and direction are debated among the various groups and decided by vote rather than decree. The current oyabun is Satomi Hayashi, a fiery tempered man in his late-thirties.

The third largest group of Yakuza is Inagawa-Kai, which at over three hundred member clans, is just slightly smaller than the Sumiyoshi-Kai. This group is based in Tokyo and is firmly entrenched in Japan, but its greatest areas of expansion are in other countries, particularly China and in the Middle East. The oyabun is Iwato Kawaguchi, a man in his mid-fifties who provides singular direction for the organization.

MAJOR CITIES

TOKYO

As citizens of the world, I'm sure some of you gaijin out there already know much of this, but Tokyo is the place to be in Japan. Hell, bitches, it's still the place to be in the entire eastern hemisphere. Once the largest metropolitan area in the world, the slow decline of Japan's population



has resulted in it losing that status, but it still ranks in the top five, and is home to twenty million people. And let's be honest, it's also one of the most beautiful places in the entire world. From the skyline at the city's heart to the traditional architecture found everywhere, it's a wonder to behold, its delights are boundless, and its people are its treasure. It's my home city, so I might be just a bit biased.

That's not to say that everything has been perfect in Tokyo. In 2085, the detonation of a dirty bomb forced the permanent evacuation of a four-block area in the heart of the city, in what has been called the greatest terrorist act against Japan since the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. No group has claimed responsibility. In 2087, a hacker calling himself #Road-block managed to put a halt to all of the automated processes involved in public transportation, effectively shutting down the city for a month. And then there's the global fallout from the Charon AI; don't even get me started on what that's done to Japan's economy, tomo.

Tokyo is referred to as a "metropolitan prefecture" rather than a city. It's a compilation of twenty-three wards, each of which is treated and governed as its own unique city. When talking about Tokyo, one is talking about a conglomeration of small cities, towns, and villages, all of which are lumped together into a massive sprawling city. In other words, bitches, it's massive, and within its borders you'll find virtually every environment you can imagine, from the heavily populated inner city that contains some of the tallest buildings in the world, to sprawling neighborhoods, smaller city centers that dwarf some of the other places that we refer to as cities throughout much of the rest of the world, to lightly populated areas where people live in simple, small, dwellings that are little more than huts.

Although each of Tokyo's wards is independently governed, the metropolitan government oversees it all. Under the direction of the First General, this government's edicts supersede the autonomy of the governments of the incorporated wards, and there are frequently heated exchanges between the two when it

comes to a multitude of administrative concerns, such as zoning, taxation, and new construction. Every year or two, some lesser official creates a bunch of press by stepping down in protest over some law that's being pushed from above.

Tokyo is also home to a staggering number of corporations. Kensei and Kenta Cyber Dynamics are two of the largest Tokyo-based megacorporations, but there are multitudes of others as well. Some of these operate primarily within Japan's borders, such as the Paripari Chicken fast food chain, or Hibiki Tameshi (which makes state of the art cybernetic audio enhancers), and thousands more. There are also a healthy number of large international corporations like Sakana Hatto (the fast food seafood chain), Togatta Iryou (a trendy clothing manufacturer), and so many more.

CHIBA

Chiba is a prefecture, or one of Japan's large cities that is made up of a conglomeration of numerous smaller cities. Located just to the east of Tokyo, many consider it a part of the greater Tokyo area. What sets it apart, however, is the fact that Chiba thinned out over the years due to the depopulation of Japan, resulting in the construction of newer, larger homes and facilities. This created a desirable alternative to the congestion of Tokyo for many of the wealthy, as well as the corporations that were willing to pay a little extra for more upscale business sites.

Due to the gentrification of Chiba, the corporations (kigyo) moved to this region while riding high on the cybernetics (saibanetikusu) boom, creating an analogue to the Silicon Valley of the 20th century. Most of Japan's kigyo saibanetikusu are either based out of Chiba now, or they maintain a presence which includes research and development and factory facilities. While a few of the less prestigious kigyo exist elsewhere, the fact is that most researchers and engineers in the industry choose to stay in Chiba and refuse to operate out of such other locations, considering such moves to be uninteresting and bad for their careers.



To those outside of Chiba, the city is often referred to as the flatlands. Although it was full of towers and high-rise buildings before Japan's slow downward demographic trend began, many such structures were knocked down in favor of sprawling factories and single-family dwellings. Don't get me wrong, bitches, the city center looks much like any other, with huge high-rise buildings, but go a short distance from the downtown area and you start seeing block after block of some of the most beautiful dwellings and business facilities on Earth. The poverty, crime, and scum that you see at the street level throughout most of the world isn't allowed to thrive here. The end result is that the structures and neighborhoods look remarkably flat from the air in comparison with the rest of the country.

Like the rest of Japan, Chiba's government is appointed by the Techno-Shogunate, and is supposedly based on the duty and merit of the individuals appointed to such posts. The truth of the matter is that the government recognizes the vitality of the cybernetics industry, and the strength it adds to Japan. As a result, Chiba's government is full of people who are in bed with the industry.

The current head administrator of Chiba is Takaya Yoshii, a tall, muscular, imposing figure who also sits on the board of directors of Kenta Cyber Dynamics, which is technically based in Tokyo, but operates most of its R&D and production out of Chiba.

Yoshii appears to be in his prime, though it's whispered that his actual age is well over sixty, and custom nano-tech somehow regenerates his cells, keeping him looking and acting young despite the fact that he's a senior citizen. Yoshii almost always acts in the best interests of the cybernetics industry in general, and Kenta Cyber Dynamics specifically when he gets the chance. Some examples of this include pushing for the relaxation of regulations for disposing of the mountains of industrial waste within the city, re-zoning regions of the city to displace lower income individuals and replace them with high-end housing or factories. He also semi-discreetly halted the city's security force from

conducting criminal investigations into several executives who were suspected of murdering a competing corporate security investigator.

NAGASAKI

Nagasaki sits on the island of Kyushu in the southwest corner of Japan. Originally established by Portuguese traders in the sixteenth century, it became known as a free port that was open to foreign traders, and it eventually became an important point of diplomatic contact for foreign powers with the island nation. It also went down in history as the second city to have a nuclear weapon used against it.

After the war, Nagasaki was rebuilt. New structures were constructed to replace those that had been destroyed and everything was modernized. Some elements were allowed to remain, such as debris fields, a one-legged torii gate, and an arch near the point where the atomic bomb detonated. Despite the city's destruction, it once again became a bustling port of trade.

After the rise of the Techno-Shogunate, Nagasaki re-emerged as one of the most important locations in Japan for foreign contact and diplomacy. With reduced tolerance for foreign presence and its impact on Japanese society, the government felt the need to contain the vast majority of foreign visitors. For this reason, numerous properties were set aside and all foreign powers were told that they had to relocate their embassies to the city. To prevent international incidents, the expense of the move was covered by the government. The vacant properties left behind were then sold to Japanese nationals, allowing the government to recoup about half of the money spent.

The current administrator of Nagasaki is an elderly and diminutive man, Chikara Nakada. Although he wields a great deal of power, Nakada still possesses old-school values—meaning that he puts on a good show for the foreign visitors who look to him to be a welcoming figure. His quiet words are soothing to most visitors, his intended audience, making him popular with the people who see him on the view screens and billboards throughout

the city, though his policies exactly match the hard-lined expectations of the Techno-Shogunate.

Crime in Nagasaki operates on most levels you can imagine. Unlike Chiba, there has been no effort to gentrify the city, which means that you'll find all strata of people here, from the tori uni, or street urchins, to the wealthiest businesspeople. The primary Yakuza family operating in the city is the Yamaguchi-gumi, and its activities include the typical stuff like protection rackets, drug dealing, and prostitution, as well as things that are more specific to the people you'll encounter in Nagasaki. Gaijin often come to Nagasaki seeking illegal access into the country, and there are members of the Yamaguchi-gumi who are willing to help with that. Some visitors are paranoid about the programming that's loaded into their hardware and want it removed, and there are people to handle that. Other people want some grease on the otherwise slow-to-turn wheels of naturalization, while others want certain individuals who are legally visiting to abruptly find that their welcome has worn out. In these cases, there are individuals who have pull within the government and can make things happen... for a price.

NEW ZEALAND

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: NEWZEALAND.INF.NZ

FQDN: ROADTOBRILLIANCE.INF.NZ.45TN.TPN.SWW.

GNET

POSTED BY: L. BARRINGTON (BA, BSC, MA, PHD)

Welcome to New Zealand. Did you know that we're the smartest nation on the planet? Our education system is second to none and as a result we boast more PhDs than any other country. Even if we include planetary colonies, who obviously rely on immigration, only a few are ahead of us in terms of number, and of those I'd bet that you'll find more than a fair share of adventurous Kiwis!

During the Deluge we lost a lot of land. However the top-bods at the time saw that fighting nature head on was never going to end well, so we moved inland to keep the most important resource of the country, ourselves, safe. When the storms subsided,

and the waters receded (somewhat, at least) we followed in the wake and built new towns and cities on the ruins of the old. We didn't rebuild, that was a mug's game; we started afresh! Everything was designed from scratch to fit what we needed in the world we had been left after the Deluge.

The 2020s were a renaissance for us. In the early part of the decade we made the hydrocell, basing it from the jury rigged designs that we'd used during the Deluge to keep the power running. The hydrocell was a world changing innovation that saw us Kiwis catapulted to top of the places in the world with reputations for scientific innovation. Yearly immigration sky-rocketed as academics and scientists moved in; we had so many that the government instituted the precursor of today's immigration examinations to ensure that we only ever got the best and the brightest.

This selective immigration was quite literally a life saver when the Death began. In fact thanks to an average IQ twenty points higher than the global average we got through those eight years with barely a dent! I'm not saying it was easy and that we didn't have problems, it was a lot of hard-work but we had a massive edge over a lot of places due to a lot of the post-deluge investment. We had entire facilities involved in the next-gen of hydroponics and GM-food prototypes; we also had several large engineering facilities dedicated to the development of the future of energy production.

They say that "necessity is the mother of invention" and thankfully in the Death she proved to be especially fecund. The bleak skies and radiation left the world with a hundred new problems, and for close to a decade, it kept coming up with more threats and problems for us to rise above. Our successes were so obvious that our neighbors in Australia learned from our example and have been copying our ecological and financial reconstruction policies in their rebuilding efforts. It's taking them longer as they have more ground to cover and more people to deal with but good for them!

The years following the Death were a great time of social reform and the evolution of our society into the progressive one we have today. One of the first things to

go was the Treaty of Waitangi; today it sits in the Wellington National Museum, part of the history that we've grown out of. Obviously once upon a time the concerns of the Maori were valid, but after dealing with two catastrophes in just over a decade, we saw that we had pulled together and transcended a lot of such odd concerns such as the origin of our ancestors. Everyone had bled and strived for the land and that we were, and still are, one people.

#Ngaire535: *Spoken like a true pakeha. You treat us as if we were second class citizens.*

If we didn't love education before the Death, we sure as hell did after. It wasn't just the cornerstone but the very foundation our survival had been built upon, and so rather than just institute wide reforms the government spent ten years in order to institute a total overhaul of education system. Anyone can make things complex, but there are times when complexity isn't a virtue; with that in mind the system was overhauled to direct resources where they will do the most good. Those who work harder get the better teachers and more resources. Treating everyone equally during their education only leads to a glut in the job market; too many people applying for the same jobs. Unemployment increases because employers can't meet the demand. Simply put: some people need to accept that they are not going to rise beyond a certain level.

Moreover, if you're not putting in any effort to better yourself why should the nation waste resources on you? It's a telling fact that today there are very few classes stocked with underachievers compared to elsewhere in the world, where it is the norm to waste resources on people that don't want to work. Think about how much more efficient it would be if your government focused its efforts on the people that are actually trying to better themselves.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: *What the fuck did I just read?*
#Aotearoa_is_ours: *The socialist party-line.*

NEW ZEALAND TODAY

Outside of Auckland and Wellington—the two cities that play host to the majority of the country's population—New Zealand has very few buildings similar to the super-scrappers common throughout the world's sprawls. While we're a fairly insular little nation, this shouldn't be confused with being quaint or somehow lagging behind the rest of the world. All of the big multinationals have a presence in our country, usually in Auckland. Our proven track record of success means that even the blindest corporation can't help but recognize that we are a solid investment. While many of the larger corporations outside of New Zealand view their employees as little more than a resource or statistic, they have to be more competitive in salary and benefits as we're the forefront of many academic fields, sciences and industries.

This means that our citizens are often able to live a more comfortable life than someone working a similar job elsewhere in the world. We don't have much in the way of production facilities; we're the ideas-men, not your average laborers. When it comes to production, we outsource to Australia. This corporate symbiosis is true for our domestic corporations as well. The world renowned Kiwi Motors is a perfect example of such a relationship. Their chief design teams have offices in Auckland and Wellington, and the vehicles themselves are manufactured in Sydney.

As a nation we strive towards meritocracy, and the measurement we use for this is one's education. Everyone gets a single vote, as everyone deserves some say about the country they live in, but those with more education get additional votes usually for each degree they hold. At government discretion extra votes can be awarded for significant contributions to their chosen field. In most places people get only to vote for their government officials who then decide and vote on policy. Here in New Zealand we have the opportunity of being able to vote for specific bills. These are most commonly social legislation, with penal legislation being left to professionals.



#Ngaire535: Translation: Our country is governed by those with money and connections. Under the meritocracy system, the vast majority of Maori are only given one vote, because we don't get accepted into university.

The majority of troubles that we have are generally caused by a small group of Maoris. First, let me say that the vast majority of Maoris are good Kiwi citizens who play by the rules of society and conform to the standards that are expected of everyone. In recent years there has been noticeable increase of activities by the Waitangi Pride Movement, whose goals are to bring the old Maori culture to the forefront of New Zealand's society. Now there have always been a few Maori, young and old, who like to throw blame around for the loss of their culture.

#Aotearoa_is_ours: Don't you mean the raping of our culture?

Imagine yourself dressing and behaving like your ancestors in modern society for a moment. It's ridiculous, isn't it? I don't dress like a Zulu as I am not my ancestors; we can accept who our ancestors were and be proud of them without trying to be them. Calling for special treatment and rights because of who one's ancestors are is just as ridiculous. We have made our nation an international example of education, integration, and advancement by pulling together and looking forwards, not backwards. The Waitangi Pride Movement would have us cast away all of our hard won advancement and achievements and divide us along racial and cultural lines again.

#Luciferion: I hope this guy doesn't speak for all New Zealanders...

#Aotearoa_is_ours: You'd be surprised.

Thankfully, rather than criminal activity, their anti-social behavior is mostly just self-sabotaging; many of the classes for problem students are filled with youths that have been brain-washed by the movement. I honestly couldn't tell you why

but it has become a trend to reject the free education that we offer. In case you don't know that's all the way up to and including your first BA or BSc. I'm sure that you know people who would, or would yourself, walk through fire to get that opportunity; but in the case of the Waitangi Pride they've been promoting the idea that the world owes them everything. This sense of entitlement doesn't help them be part of society and forever marks them out, as employers aren't looking for someone who can boast facial tattoos and a unseemly connection to the past, they're looking for hard working team players that want to earn rewards through hard work and are committed to pushing their respective fields forwards.....///#%\$&(<

//FEED INTERRUPTED//

#Billy_Black_Eyes: 0.o... Where's the rest of the INFOdump?

#ADMIN: I deleted the rest of this INFODUMP and banned the poster from this server. The rest of the doc makes what you just read seem like a bedtime story in comparison. Giving voice to the masses is important, but there's a point where we have to say enough is enough.

#Luciferion: Good.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/RUSFED

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET/RUSFED

COMPILED BY: #SERGEI_CHEKOV, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Russia is every bit the fallen empire; the rich are very rich, the poor are very poor and everyone is living in a past that never was. The atrocities of history are regularly painted in glorious colors and the misery of the present is blamed on a variety of subversive domestic and international factors. Everyone thinks big; the Global DataNet buzzes with the patriotic struggle against China, the rise of militant Islam and the rise of the Wolf Cult. No one cares about little things, like the terribly worn roads, crumbling infrastructure, rising street violence, and widespread substance abuse, perhaps



Russia's greatest and oldest curse. Those who do are treated with cynicism at best and implications of disloyalty at worst.

This gist is like this: Russia was on her way to become the Third Roman Empire, the greatest state the world has ever seen, but was derailed from her historic path by the world. Everything that goes wrong is the world's fault, not ours. We don't need to fix what's broken in ourselves; we need to break what's fixed with the world.

However, Russia is still a gigantic country, still blessed with beautiful and evocative nature, rich soil, countless valuable resources and some of the largest and most impressive structures on the planet. More importantly, Russia still has one of the world's largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons and, unlike her former capitalist version, the current Russia has a well-trained and well-equipped military full of messianic zeal.

Like a great and powerful moribund beast, I feel Russia will stir one more time before she crumbles into nothing. China, the West and even the Caucasian highlanders, playing Russia for the fool, will pay dearly for disrespecting the Russian people.

Tread on her at your own risk.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Frankly, I'm amazed they haven't used those nukes to blow China into oblivion.

#Simba: You should be thankful they haven't. If you thought the Death was bad, just imagine what would happen to the world if China and Russia started lobbying ICBMS at each other.

#Brotherwolf: Simba is correct. We have no desire, or need, to destroy the world. Our comrades will cut the Chinese cancer from the Motherland soon enough!

IMPERIAL DREAMS

Russia is controlled by the Eurasian Movement which came to power after a bloodless coup led by military, religious and academic elites who replaced the former corporate-owned financial oligarchs. Many of the former strongmen were executed as traitors, a just payment for trying to sell the Russian people to the highest bidder.

The Eurasian movement was founded by the 20th century philosopher Aleksandr Gelyevich Dugin who defined it through the three anti's: anti-bourgeois, anti-liberal and anti-American. The current ideologists of the movement maintain that Russian culture is unique and incompatible with both Western and Eastern values, which are inherently destructive to the Russian soul. Thus, to defend the Russian people, the Eurasians seek to isolate Russia from Western, Asian and Corporate influence while strengthening her ties with the Turkic and Persian peoples of Central Asia. The alliance with Europe is seen as a temporary evil, essential to stop the Chinese aggression and liberate occupied Russian territories.

The Eurasian movement is culturally xenophobic and traditionalist, but not racist, maintaining that the Russian civilization is inclusive and universal. However, it's radical offshoot, the Third Rome Society, calls for restoration of the monarchy and declaration of the Orthodox faith as Russia's official church, a step bound to marginalize and alienate Russia's vast Muslim population and growing neo-Pagan and Wolf Cult minority.

Another source of friction is separatism, especially among the Muslim Tatar minority. Numerous bloody terrorist attacks and embarrassing hacks have been attributed to the Revival Society of Tatarstan, which has been designated as a terrorist organization by Russia, Turkey and China. Tatar nationalism is supported by the Russian Islamist movement, Jund al-Rus, which calls for Russia's total conversion to Islam and the creation of a Caliphate encompassing all of Europe, North Africa and Western Asia. Until recently, the Jund enjoyed the support of the Caucasian highlanders, but this support is waning as Islam declines in the Caucasus.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Ahh, another call for conversion to Islam. It must be Tuesday.

This decline caused the hotspot of Islamic militancy to shift from Tatarstan to the Caucasus region, where the isolationist and ultra-nationalist Wolf Cult is rapidly spreading. Fearing that losing the support



of the highlanders will doom the entire Islamist movement, the Jund currently focuses most of its resources in fighting the new cult, both with speeches and with bombs, and trying to draw Russia back into the conflict. Despite assistance from the United Arab Kingdom and numerous international organizations, the struggle seems hopeless. Nevertheless, the violence often spills into Russia and more and more Russians are calling for military action to return the rule of law to the beleaguered region.

A weak pro-Western liberal movement is tolerated in the form of a tamed opposition. Ironically, this Democratic Alliance is the least popular of Russian parties, enjoying support mostly in foreign press and youth-oriented websites. While politically weak, the DA did have some successes in exposing corruption and crime among clerical and government circles. Since the current administration shares the goal of cleansing Russia of her rampant corruption, this activity goes unhindered and sometimes even unofficially supported. While rarely resorting to violence, the DA has a militant wing in the form of the Progressive Youth Movement, which it mostly uses to secure its rallies and embarrass its enemies in the Deep. All these myriad and hostile movements agree on one thing, however. The Chinese have to go.

THE NEW RUSSIANS

In the previous century, the term applied to people who got rich fast by questionable means. Now, it refers to people who are not really people – hybrids, Humans 2.0, androids, simulacra and what have you. Villagers tend to frown on all these devilish creatures and will murder them if they think they can get away with it, but the cities are surprisingly tolerant of, eh, unusual people. They are not very widespread, because Russia is too poor to afford them en masse, but they do exist. Many of the oligarchs have upgraded in 2.0 while many vori and Neo-Pagans are obratini, or werebeasts, which is the Russian slang for hybrids.

#Brotherwolf: We're just as real as you, comrade.

Androids are mostly used as secretaries, spokesmen and bodyguards by the wealthy elite. They don't hold any advantages over decent Russian workers; they just show that their owner is rich and not ashamed to flaunt it at the poor masses. People are fascinated with androids however, who are treated as celebrities by most those who encounter them. Their owners, on the other hand, are received far less enthusiastically.

Before the Chinese invasion, there were plans to establish mass production of Eastern simulacra to man mining facilities in the frigid east, but this was all halted when the Thaw came and the war started. Shame, because with declining birthrates and rampant alcoholism, this could have been the solution to all of Russia's troubles. Western simulacra are allegedly used by the FSB to create some of their most efficient and deadly agents. However, because these agents are so efficient and so deadly, I'd rather we didn't dwell on that. Long live the defenders of the Motherland, that's all I have to say about it.

Lastly, and it's something I'm quite ashamed to admit, Russian tolerance does not extend to good old fashioned humans of other ethnicities. While a large pink simulacrum would be surrounded by ardent admirers, an Asian person is likely to be beaten, or worse, by young thugs, and any person who doesn't look Slavic is fair game for Third Rome goons. And wanna hear the saddest part of it? Due to our shared history with Mongols and Inuits, many Russians look quite Asian. But try saying this to Third Rome and you'll soon find yourself starring in a beheading video in the Deep.

DEFENDERS OF THE MOTHERLAND

Every version of Russia must have its version of the KGB, and this iteration is not different. The abbreviation used for the last 100 years is FSB, though except for these three letters, little remained from the capitalist times.



The current head of the FSB is a celibate mystic and scholar named Marat Rizanov. His dedication to the Eurasian idea is absolute and he's published dozens of papers and books on the subject. Every time he publishes a new paper, the West trembles and Russian diplomats spend many sleepless nights calming everyone down. Nevertheless, it is well known that whomever Marat wants gone becomes gone, no matter how much he invested in security.

Under his leadership, the FSB gained a somewhat esoteric quality reminiscent of medieval knight orders or 19th century secret societies. Not only do they have their own research labs where they play God with genes, chemicals and AI, they have their own shrines, their own hospitals, their own prisons... they're basically a state within a state. Their insanely modified, if at all human, elite field agents, called "Dugin's archangels" serve to enforce the FSB's will in Russia and abroad. The source of their power is one of Russia's most guarded secrets and the fact that no one managed to steal it yet is proof that the rumors of their abilities are true.

Another infamous unit of the FSB is the obregi, named after the guardian spirits of Slavic folklore. If rumors are to be believed, they can read minds and

influence emotions. If other rumors are to be believed as well, they are not raised or modified, but produced by FSB scientists. Of course, to sleep well at night, it's best you don't believe rumors in this country. In fact, it's best you don't believe them at all. Russian expatriates who talk too much have shorter life expectancy than a mayfly.

The shadow of the FSB is vast.

#Luciferion: The FSB is nothing compared to Stopwatch.

Another rumor you shouldn't believe is that the FSB controls more or less all big businesses in Russia. The oligarchs and vori either pay for FSB protection or are FSB agents themselves. Coal, natural gas, diamonds, gold, arms, technology, small business — in the end, it's all controlled by the FSB.

If a corporation wants to set shop in the Russian Federation, it must first strike a deal with the FSB. If they strike out on their own, their local business will fail and no court in Russia will come to their rescue. And yet, corporate business is blooming in Russia. The FSB might consist of fanatical killers, but no one can blame it for lack of greed.

SHADOW COMMUNITIES

Neo-paganism is becoming more and more common in rural Russia. For the most part, neo-pagan shrines are tourist traps: kids selling overpriced colorful ribbons to hang on holy trees for a blessing, or old women selling little effigies that protect your home, your car, your family, your TAP, and your whatever (must be purchased separately). However, some communities take this return to the old ways very seriously, to the point of dressing and talking like pre-Christian Russians, occasionally even undergoing gene therapy to resemble their village's totem animal. These guys are kinda scary, I mean like, wicker man kind of scary. Tread lightly on their land.

In addition to pagan villages, there are also communist communes. These agricultural communities have nothing in common with the Soviet kolkhoz. They resemble more a cross between an American hippie commune from the previous century, an Israeli kibbutz, and a French nudist colony. While the symbolism is definitely Soviet-red flags, busts of Lenin, Marx and Engels, the hammer and the sickle, and lots and lots of old guns—the actual communes are pretty carefree. Most of them don't have regular residents, but instead serve as getaway camps for students who want to play with socialism without stepping on anybody's toes. Some communes take the Communism bit really seriously though, I mean, dead serious, but they are few and I'm sure that the FSB is monitoring them closely. Some attacks on Third Rome Society training camps have been attributed to Communist communes. To this, I can only say well done!

Lastly, the grim Wolf Cult of the Caucasus Mountains is spreading to Russia as well, mostly drawing Russian citizens of Caucasian descent as well as some disenfranchised Tatar and Central Asian youth. While not strictly banned, the movement is frowned upon. Unlike in the Caucasus Mountains, wolf hybrids are rare in Russia. The few you encounter are more likely to be visiting highlanders than converted locals. You will notice the large circles of emptiness that form around them as they're walking down the street and the way

policemen look the other way, pretending not to notice the 500 pound beast passing by. You'd be wise to do the same. There are rumors of a brewing alliance between Russian Neo-Pagans and Caucasian Wolf Cultists. Hmm, there's a scary thought.

#Die_on_your_Feet: There are more of us than you know.

#Brotherwolf: Typical propaganda designed to incite fear in the general population. We are Russia's sons and daughters, fighting for freedom from the Chinese. We need no official sanction to defend our nation. Perhaps, instead of writing this tripe, you should pick up a rifle and join the cause.

The infamous Russian Vori Vzakoni, known in the West as "the Russian Mafia," are alive and well. They must share their income with the police, the FSB, the Kremlin and make generous donations to the Church now and then, but then again, who doesn't? Still, they are a bunch of tattooed killers with a violent honor code and if you cross their path, unless you have an uncle in the Kremlin, you better run far and deep. Even the police, unless really major assets are at stake, prefer not to mess with the vori. However, if you need something illegal—a banned cybernetic enhancement, experimental drugs, a nuclear submarine—they are your people.

#Abners_ghost: Pro Tip: they never pay unless they have to. When dealing with them, make sure someone's got your back, or the next deal you'd be involved in might feature you as the commodity.

OCCUPIED RUSSIAN TERRITORIES

The greatest humiliation in recent Russian history was the loss of almost all Asian Russia to the Chinese Mandarinate during the Great Thaw. The fall of Eastern Russia started as mass demonstrations by Chinese workers, who outnumbered Russian citizens ten to one in the eastern provinces. The workers, many of whom were in the country illegally, protested

their unfair working conditions under the corrupt Russian administration.

Of course, in the Great Russian tradition of police brutality, the demonstrations were dispersed violently, resulting in hundreds of dead and thousands of wounded. To everyone's surprise, the Chinese workers struck back with overwhelming force that caught the Russians off guard, forcing Russian police and military to retreat to more defensible positions. It was later discovered that the Chinese Rebellion was carefully planned and executed by the Mandarinate's covert operatives and that many of the so-called workers were trained commandoes with hidden advanced weapons. The regular Chinese army, with its lumbering death machines, was never far behind.

This wave of "popular unrest" ended at the Hero City of Chelyabinsk, just east of the Ural Mountains, where the Chinese "workers" were met by the Russian military which was now prepared for full scale war, rather than simple riots. Most of the city is in ruins now and occasional clashes between Russian patriots and Chinese military still occur, but the Hero City stands strong – a symbol of Russian defiance.

Fearing to draw the entire Eurasian union into a destructive and prolonged war, the Mandarinate turned to consolidating its control over the Russian Far East instead. They have also attempted to move into the North Caucasus region, but this ended in a military disaster. With the eyes of the world on them, the Chinese couldn't just resort to genocide by WMD or mass deportation, like the Soviets did in the 20th century. Meanwhile, the natives fought with everything they had and enjoyed assistance from Russia, Turkey, the Arab Kingdom and anyone else who had a bone to pick with China.

Meanwhile, occupied Russia also started to sizzle. The Chinese learned the painful truth any would-be world conqueror, from Mongols to Germans, learns as he steps on Russian soil: the Russian people never give up.

Using the fact that the Chinese are unwilling to openly act in European Russia, the enemies of China use the city of Perm to supply and coordinate the grassroots

Siberian resistance movement. Smugglers and military advisers, both private and official, leave the city every night, braving the Chinese patrols to assist their brothers in the tundra. Some do it for profit—there are no wars without profiteers—but most are moved by patriotism and honor. Many are exiles from Siberia fighting from the shadows to regain the lost motherland.

Soon, instead of fighting a single force of drunk, demoralized and poorly equipped Russian troops, the Chinese found themselves struggling with thousands of bands of the legendary Russian partisan movement which, of course, enjoyed the full support of Eurasia, the Islamic powers and, again, anyone who had problems with China, which is just about anyone who isn't China.

At the same time, the North Caucasians went from defense to offense, raiding ships and towns all across Siberia with their trademark highlander ferocity. If you ask me, it's a question of time until things in China start blowing up as well. If there are two nations you don't want to occupy, they are Russians and Caucasians, and China just stepped on both. There will be a reckoning.

GORE WAS RIGHT

You're probably wondering why the Chinese would waste so much money, time and blood on taking a frozen wasteland from the Russian people. Well, it seems that according to most experts, Siberia will soon be the best place on Earth. You see, between Global Warming and the cataclysmic changes brought about by the Death, Siberia has taken a serious blow. As permanently frozen earth turned to mud, pipes cracked, rails twisted, roads sank and mines collapsed. Russia being Russia, the natives were left to fend for themselves, and being Russians as well, they were content with the relative isolation this thawing brought.

However, this is not the end of the process, only its start. According to recent scientific publications, in less than a decade, the climate in Siberia will be similar to Western Europe of the previous century—tomorrow's green utopia. Even worse (or better, depending on whom you



ask), the recent unfreezing exposed gigantic oil and gas reserves unaffected by the GLUTTON virus. If there is one thing worth more than money, time, and blood—it's oil! Which is precisely why China invaded. Unless we remove them from our rightful lands, China will gain access to those precious reserves. This is unacceptable.

IRON FISTS IN VELVET GLOVES

Chinese occupation is supposedly better than Russian freedom. There are more jobs, law enforcement is less corrupt, healthcare is better and more widely available... but it's still occupation. A Russian man can abide any amount of domestic oppression, believing it's for the greater good, but a foreign invasion must be repelled at any cost.

Of course, it also helps that state-run media displays the Chinese as a cross between the Third Reich and the Mongol Horde. Stories of Chinese atrocities against Russians and native Siberians are featured daily, many of which are doctored to evoke memories of the Nazi death machine. You should watch these someday; some of the CGI is really impressive. Racism also plays no small part in the resistance, especially among the followers of Third Rome society who feel it's their duty to prove the inherent superiority of "White Russians" over "Yellow Chinese."

But what is the Chinese occupation really like?

Well, it really depends on whom you ask. If you're a collaborator, a suka, you're likely to enjoy a much higher standard of living than your counterparts in the Russian Federation. The Chinese are eager to prove to the world they're not monsters, so they're working hard to provide topnotch infrastructure and working conditions for native Russians. Since everyone has a camera somewhere on their person these days and China is eager to prove her international legitimacy, the Chinese occupation forces always behave as if they're in front of Western reporters. People who try to dig under this façade of liberalism, however, be they reporters, Russians, or even Chinese, are taken for re-education in China. "Ten years without correspondence rights" is Chinese for death, either

in work camps or experimentation labs. There, no camera will save you.

#Brotherwolf: Indeed. No camera will save you, but we are coming for our brethren. Mark my words.

Some claim native Siberian ethnicities such as Chukchi, Buryats, Tuvians, Yakuts, Inuits and others--not having access to the Global DataNet, international connections, or any useful skills to the Great Chinese People--are treated like animals.

They would have you believe the people are killed for sport by Chinese troops, and are used for slave labor and experimentation by the Chinese administration. There is a right proper genocide taking place right under our noses and just like other great genocides of the past, the pleas of the victims fall on deaf ears. You can find alleged evidence of these atrocities on the GDN, but I think the video has been doctored.

#Brotherwolf: Maybe you should spend some time on the front, comrade. Come see the atrocities first hand and then tell me what is and what is not doctored.

#Beijingbeauty: @ brotherwolf. Your kind commit your own atrocities against my people. You started the fighting in the border cities. Your compatriots bombed the mines and oil pipelines. Don't speak of atrocities as if your hands are clean.

SHADOW COMMUNITIES

By far the largest and most powerful shadow community in the occupied territories is the partisans, a wide group of urban and rural guerilla fighters dedicated to driving the Chinese out of Russian soil. Like the Partisans of WWII, these people are an amalgamation of disgruntled or patriotic Russians, Communist and Third Rome militants, idealistic foreign volunteers, Mujahideen, vengeful natives, and Eurasian commandos fighting without uniform. Many partisans are well-equipped, highly motivated and utterly ruthless towards Chinese occupiers and Russian collaborators alike.

Partisan camps range from small family groups surviving in the harsh wilderness



and raiding the Chinese with makeshift weapons, to elite units equipped with stealth technology, cybernetic and genetic augmentations, and the latest in military hardware. If you stumble on a Partisan camp, choose your words carefully. These guys are eager to make examples of the enemies of the Russian people, and believe each man deserves a fair trial before he's shot.

At the same time, to every patriotic Russian's horror, an educated middle class that supports the Chinese occupation is rapidly developing in the occupied territories. They are referred to as *suki*, or bitches, by their enemies. When they are captured by partisans, their fate is much worse than that of Chinese soldiers and managers. I have seen some stuff in the Deep and man... I don't recommend it.

Before China, before Russia, even before the ancient Slavs, the land was owned by various native tribes who'd lived in harmony with the harsh nature of Siberia. Simple Russians call them Eskimos, but in truth they include numerous tribes and nations, many of whom actually find the term "Eskimo" offensive. However, at the moment, this is the least of their troubles as the Chinese seem intent on clearing the land of their igloos and dog sleds to make

room for their industrial dreams. Unlike the Russians, who tried to convert the natives to Christianity and "civilize" them, the Chinese simply work to exterminate them. With Stone Age technology, vastly inferior numbers and a generally pacifistic lifestyle, the poor guys don't stand a chance. Partisans are always willing to accept natives into their rank, but don't go out of their way to defend these ancient communities. Unless something really big happens really soon, this ancient and unique civilization will only exist in the Deep.

While the Shamanism of the natives is harmless, I cannot say the same about the Caucasian Wolf Cult. The Chinese made an uncharacteristically rookie mistake and banned the Wolf Cult in the ORT, even though there were no cultists living in the area to begin with. Once the ban became public, the Caucasus highlanders saw it as an affront to their honor. They came to the ORT to "defend their freedom" through bombings, shootings, and tearing Chinese soldiers and policemen limb from limb with dagger-sized claws. Quickly forming links with pirates and partisans, the fanatic warriors of the Wolf Cult are rapidly becoming an ever greater force of destruction in the ORT, not caring at all how many civilians their raids kill.

THE EURASIAN UNION

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: EU.NET

FQDN: EU.NET.GENEVA.24TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

POSTED BY: ARMAND DEVILLE (PHD), LEAD

SYSADMIN OF EU-UNITED

OVERVIEW

Europe weathered the Oil Crisis and The Death far better than most of the world, though the Deluge wrought havoc on many areas of the continent. The struggle to survive The Death did make increased unity all but mandatory, and, as the years went on, the component states of Europe along with ravaged Russia and the still-vibrant North African coast lost more and more relevance. Eventually, the differences between the various nation-states withered and national loyalty was thought to have vanished, driven into the shadows and only kept alive by a select few. As the Eurasian Union cracks at the seams, we now know better—the nationalist movement had hidden, awaiting an opportunity to strike.

It wasn't long ago that the Eurasian Union embodied the age of leisure more so than any other place on Earth. With post-scarcity technology widely available, few in the EU actually needed or even possessed the required skills to earn a living. The so-called "productive class"—the fifth or so of the population with the education and disposition to find meaningful work—supported the majority with little effort or personal sacrifice. Yet, when Charon wiped everything clean, and the megacorporations required nation-states to sign their debt-contracts, it was the spark the nationalists had waited for.

The EU had once been a quiet and efficient democracy, and still governs itself through a bicameral parliament. Every adult may vote for the lower house, but only members of the productive class may send representatives to the upper. For a long time, few resented the labor class for the influence they held over society, but as the post-Charon events settled, it was the labor class that allowed the debt-contracts

to be signed. They justified it because they knew what work and debt really meant, yet they damned untold millions to a new life in poverty. Suddenly, resentment against the laborers rose quickly, something the nationalist terrorists were quick to take advantage of.

The old European passion for regulation and bureaucracy (while nowhere near as omnipresent or fluid as China's bureaucracy) exists even in a world both traumatized by the Death and transformed by new technology. Most citizens need special TAP filters to help them navigate the complex Hyper Reality of their society. The excess regulation is spurred by the government's belief in social equity. Nearly everything in the EU requires the filling out of some official forms or a presentation to some committee for approval. As Charon threw banks and governments into a spin, it also ground normal society to a stop. With an administration busy handling the new chaos, the regular people on the street were left at the side, unable to have their forms handled and approved.

Western outsiders once viewed Eurasia as a calm and placid sanctuary, well deserving of its status as an honest broker. Today, the chaos that is threatening to envelop Eurasia has sullied their moral leadership and more and more question whether or not they deserve admiration for its cultural achievements. More than before, Eurasia is falling in the eyes of its peers, yet this struggle might also be what makes the EU rise up again.

#Warpig: *Open your eyes. The whole thing's swirling down the drain.*

For the last three generations, many young Turks, Kurds, North Africans, and Arabs have migrated to the EU, invigorating the sagging economies with young workers, yet it is these newcomers that most of the nationalists are turning against. What used to be a racial glass ceiling is quickly becoming something far worse, harkening back to a time when Europe turned death into an industry.

It isn't as bad just yet, but the signs are there for those who care to remember, for those who care to see. Though it

had once stood at the forefront of education and humanitarian work, the EU now finds itself scrambling to raise more soldiers, turning to mercenaries to supplement a society quite unused to warfare. While comfort and civilization are still trademarks of the Eurasian region, so is bloodshed, guerillas and nationalist movements these days.

Having capitalized on the bored young people of the EU, the various nationalist movements have surged in membership, and their willingness to take up arms against their fellows has shattered the EU's reputation abroad. The irony is that while it was often debated, the government refrained from acting on the nationalist movements, fearing a violent counter-reaction. Their placid behavior has allowed the underground to grow, recruit, and rise to prominence. That the powers behind their rise are criminals, weapon exporters, and external interests does not register with the disaffected youth.

For those who remember the Death, the 'disaffected youth' is an insult that needs to learn about the sacrifices their elders made for them to live in such unity and peace. Over the last century, Europe has seen more and more immigration from North Africa, the Middle East and lately, occupied Russia. The influx has steadied the rapid decline in population that the aging post-industrial Europe had been experiencing since the end of the Cold War. Now as much of a melting pot as the old US, the EU is trying to cope with not only its own myriad of cultures but also dozens of new ethnicities as well. The fact that so many of these immigrants are young, able, and willing to work only adds to what has been termed by one Dutch diplomat as the Eastern Invasion. More and more, it seems the face of old Europe is changing. And change always triggers fear; in this case a fear that the nationalist movements capitalized on. Some used this fear to close previously open borders and lock themselves away, others used it to rise up in a wave of violence against those who are viewed as traitors to a cultural heritage.

THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

So you want me to explain what happened to Europe czarny? Well, Charon happened; that's the short and fast version. Charon wiped out alot of the banks, well, their value at least. Since money is digital, Charon's "wiping the slate clean" was the worst thing and the best thing that could have happened in Europe. The best you ask? Yeah. You see, most people don't really own their houses, their cars or half their posessions, and a crapload of people are stuck with student loans slowly draining away their economy.

Even companies were guilty of this, with huge credit lines and long-time loans, so when the shit hit the fan, people were in shock. Many companies disappeared overnight, but it was the banks themselves that evaporated. The Union stepped in and guaranteed a new baseline built on "current worth" to its citizens, and a lot of the supercorps were hurt, but had holdings in other places and could recuperate. In short, we got to keep everything and the Union guaranteed a new flow of cash into the economy via trading with external partners. Loads of economic theory went into that, but it seemed to work.

So, all of this restructuring had a few peculiar effects. First of all, since a few countries had been hit with economic woes before Charon, most people in these countries weren't allowed loans by the banks, and consequently owned very little compared to most of the Union. Naturally made them more than just a little pissed when the Union declared the "tabula rasa" and all those nationalists proclaimed that this would never have happened if they were independent, and that, while they had spent the past decades cleaning up their economy, the others hadn't. So essentially they had paid for our landwinnings.

#Antonio: Is it just me or is this puta throwing around complicated words just to be an asshole?

#Lars: That's blank canvas for the rest of us, they were starting over on a new painting.



Not a happy face anywhere I can tell you.

#Antonio: *Because you wouldn't be pissed when everybody you knew had their lives trashed a few decades ago and were living on barely nothing and the Union did nothing, but this time around they just shrugged and helped the others? Mamon..."*

In the restructuring, many inside the police and military were sympathetic to the angry nationalists, and soon ended up creating armed militia groups. Europe went from a peaceful union where everyone had enough to survive, to a crackling facade in less than six months. Yeah, that's what happened. These rebel terrorists claimed to represent the "Will of the People", and tried declaring independence. They even declared war on the supercorporations. Kinda hard though when the democratic representatives weren't interested in secession, but that didn't stop them.

#XZIO: *Ever heard the expression freedom fighters? Yeah, that's us*

The militias set up border patrols, attacked Army stations and bases, stole weapons and vehicles, and generally became an annoying problem for nations such as Spain, Italy and Greece. Had things stopped there, we would've probably been able to handle it. But then the Pan-Scandinavians left the Union, and the whole Russian-Chinese border dispute bloomed into war.

After the French Election, things turned from bad to worse. It didn't take long before both the Italian Local Government and the Greeks came running to the European Parliament asking for armed intervention.

So, here we are with two local governments in exile in Brussels, the Spanish are but months from falling to their own rebel militia while the Scandinavians have seceded from the Union. The Eurasian Union is on the edge of destruction.

#Petros_Pavlidis: *We can but hope.*

#Luciferion: *Hope is for suckers.*

We formed this Union to achieve true peace in our time on a continent ravaged by wars so brutal they enveloped the entire world. We swore it would not happen again, so we will dismantle the nationalists, convince the Scandinavians that it's safe to return to the fold and stop the Chinese from rattling their sabers at our doorstep. We will be United once more.

#XZIO: *Is that government propaganda, or does he actually believe the bullshit he is spewing out?*

THE NEW EURASIAN UNION

Having grown out of the old European Union, the Eurasian Union covers much of what was once known as the Old World, stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains in eastern Russia, which was incorporated into the EU after its fateful defeat at the hands of the Chinese Mandarinate years ago. Due to strong French influences, the northern parts of Africa were admitted into the Union to provide 'structural and societal stability' in a region otherwise rocked by instability. Now, ravaged by the secession of the Scandinavian countries from the Union, threatened by the Chinese Mandarinate in the east, and torn to shreds in the Mediterranean region by nationalist rebel guerillas acting on the aftermath of Charon, the Eurasian Union stands at the precipice of the Abyss, war looming on the horizon.

GREECE

The nationalists have been grumbling in Greece since 2012, when they were forced into economic austerity by the Union. The Golden Dawn are one particular breed of nationalist that bit into the soul of the Greek people and never let go. They've grown over the decades, keeping to the shadows as the unity movement spread across Europe, but Charon was the straw that broke Greece's back and pushed them into action. They are authentic "pagans" who feel that Catholic and Protestant Christianity is a foreign concept forced on them and have woven Greek paganism into Orthodox Christianity.

#Petros_Pavlidis: Austerity? Millions starved, thousands of businesses disappeared, the sick were forced out into the fields again.

When Charon struck, the Golden Dawn declared that Greece was no longer beholden to the Union and that they as a people should fight to retain their culture, their society, and their language. Unlike their western counterparts in Spain and Italy, the Golden Dawn have prepared for this very moment, stockpiling weapons and ammunition in preparation for open conflict.

#Petros_Pavlidis: You deride our ancient belief, our blood sacrifice, yet it is you who are driven from our lands. Lands that cry out in joy over us liberating it and shedding the foul miasma of your weakness.

Today the Golden Dawn have integrated the police and army into their own political structure. Both the army and the police are subordinate to the Dawn Guard, the elite of the Golden Dawn. Some say that the Dawn Guard are all psions. Fortunately for the Union, the Greek special forces are awfully good at distracting the GD and with Turkey stepping in, GD has found itself with a divided focus.

ITALY

Italy is a hotbed of strong personal wills, charismatic demagogues and chaos. Anarchy reigns more or less supreme in most areas of Italy, and the general day-to-day governance of the country has fallen to pieces. Garbage amasses in the streets, corps have deployed armed guards to safeguard their premises, opening fire on unruly civilians, while the police itself is part of the riots. You see, every Italian you ask thinks Italy is the best place on Earth, yet each person has a different view on how the country should be run or handled. Ironically enough, the corrupt have become the best organized in Italy with the different strains of mafia taking control of entire cities, using their existing contacts, armed goons, and a will to profit on other people's suffering.

#Lucia diTrevi: We are offering a solution to the problem that is this chaos. Is it so strange that people have embraced us for it? We protect our own.

It didn't take long for the riots to go out of control in Italy. Consequently, the nation descended into anarchy, just before Napoli offered General Adrien Boucher sanctuary after his public act of rebellion. Since then, Napoli has been turned into a military complex, housing entire battallions of the French Army, its harbor playing host to a number of French Naval ships that defected with the General and air superiority is maintained by a score of French combat fighters. Worst is the golemmechs.

They didn't join the Armed Forces in Napoli, and are stationed in the Italian Alps, locking down the entire mountain range. The camouflaged mechs conduct random strikes against both the French and some Italian forces along the border. Some say they still answer to the General, others that they have become mercenaries, but no one really knows for sure.

So, two sides of the same rebel coin, Italy stands in stark contrast to Greece. Each city is under a different leader, and General Boucher has no interest in pacifying Italy. He chose Napoli because of its geographic relation to France. His forces have established supply lines to the rebels in Spain as well. Their fighters are trained by French officers and supported by French weapons, air support and even naval units, as evidenced in the Battle for Barcelona. But more on that in the Spanish report.

In Rome, Media National has taken what it calls "corporate control" of the city. Without jurisdiction by the government, the multinational company has deployed armed mercenaries, taking out criminal cells, nationalist gatherings, and armed citizens with extreme prejudice. Calling the Government incapable of protecting its employees and public holdings, Media National (MeNa) took the steps they deemed necessary to do so. Today, Rome lives in the shadow of its Corporate Overlords.

#Anna Ditrevi: When the Union couldn't protect us, they did. When the Union





failed, they stepped up. When we were bleeding, they staunched the wounds. I for one am a proud MeNa employee and all citizens of Rome should be thankful.

The only city that hasn't fallen to anarchy and looting is Venice, mainly because it, by nature of its waterways, doesn't lend itself to public gatherings, mob mentality or even smash-and-grabs like most land-based cities.

The special forces that train there are an important presence, keeping the city safe against countryside looters threatening the outskirts. Right now Venice stands, but rumours have it that General Boucher has offered an alliance to the Greeks if they can destabilize Venice. But with the Pope's Announcement and the new troops they brought, I don't know how that will play out.

Speaking of the Pope...The most recent beacon of hope for Italy is the Holy See. The Pope summoned all faithful Catholics to retake Italy and bring divine peace and order, even supporting the Eurasian Union efforts. This rallied many disparate countries within the Union and it means that Venice finds itself with a strong EU presence in the form of Irish Marines and two Polish Army Battalions. All are apparently volunteers, which makes it even stranger.

SPAIN

The only country of the Rebel South to still have a non-exiled local government—and where the EU stands a fighting chance to stop more bloodshed—is Spain. After Charon, the Spanish were the first to claim 'tabula rasa' and offer its citizens a blank slate for the future. Had it not been for the corps forcing the Spanish government to accept their debts anyway, and thus reneging on much of the safeties they first offered, Spain would likely be prospering by now.

#Antonio Romano: *Probably? The Corps bought our lives, our freedom and our government. We were sold like slaves into a debt that will last for generations, when we for the first time in a century were free!*

So, with trouble brewing in neighbouring Italy and the Corps forcing their demands upon the government, it didn't take long for people to rise up. At first, it was peaceful strikes that shut down factories and offices, country wide protests. But when the government used corporate-supported police to disperse protests and protect strikebreakers in Barcelona, things took a nasty turn.



It started with a thrown rock, but that rock hit the wrong soldier, who opened fire into the crowd and suddenly the protesters turned into a vicious mob, surging over the police and militia. When the fighting stopped, hundreds were dead and the rebellion was armed with police and Corporate weapons, body armor, crowd control weaponry and much more.

#Free_Spain610: Nobody threw a rock. Those bastardo policia opened fire with no provocation!

Some demagogue amongst the protesters seized the opportunity to whip the crowd into a frenzy. The crowd marched on city hall in Barcelona. In the next few days, armed conflicts escalated until the government brought in the army to support police efforts, a move which many saw as turning the army and its soldiers on the Spanish people. The rebels died defending city hall against the army, with a local female rights activist, Antolia Alvarez, crying out "Libertad!" before being gunned down. The incident was captured by the locals cams, and subsequently spread throughout the Global DataNet within minutes. Her last moments, waving the Spanish flag in one hand and screaming for liberty as she was shot defined the beginning of the real rebellion in Spain.

The defining party in the Spanish Rebellion are the Nuevo Movimiento Nacional. Organizing itself like an old-fashioned democratic party, these nationalists are fighting to see Spain free of the Eurasian Union, terminate the corporations, and nullify the debt acceptance contracts.

The Spanish government is supported by corporate mercenaries, loaned to the nation of Spain as a goodwill gesture by Ravenlocke Securities and Eurasian Army deployments. Neighbouring Portugal has also offered the government a nearby command central in case they need to fall back. Portugal also supports the government with supplies.

THE CORE

For all the disturbances in the Eurasian Union, most of the countries are members,

and quite willingly so. Naturally, the nationalist movements in most countries have gained members and confidence with the events in southern Europe, which means that the police are busy investigating and squashing these 'terrorists' before they have a chance to organize similar uprisings. The countries hit hardest by this are Hungary and Romania, having had problems with nationalist movements early in the 21st century and geographically close to the events in Greece.

From Paris to Moscow however, following the recently renovated Transeuropean Railway, the core of the union is standing strong. Indeed, many citizens are still somewhat shocked at what is transpiring, but more are finding a reason to stand behind the Union and the number of volunteers into the armed forces are rising, especially in Poland and Ireland.

#NoZeeksinmyParis: Who's this guy kidding? We stand on the verge of another war. Riots and crime have skyrocketed, and he says the Core is strong? Bah. The core is rotten.

#Simba: Rotten to the core? *smirks*

FRANCE

As it has for over a thousand years, France remains one of the cultural centers of the world. The question is: whose culture?

White Europeans have always been dominant in the nation, but following the massive influx of Muslim immigrants, there is some question as to the cultural identity of the entire country. In Paris, this has led to a prolonged culture clash that has evolved into a street war for the soul of the city. Armed nationalists, supported by deserters from the French army after the dissolution, are now fighting Muslim gangs, each intent on safeguarding "their way of life" against the other side.

The President recently deployed the newly-contracted Ravenlocke Securities to Paris to ensure safety, and has publicly threatened the "rabble" that should they not put down their arms of their own free will, Ravenlocke will be given free rein. This decree by the world's first psychic president hasn't had the effect she's hoped for.





If anything, the rioting has increased, and rumors of a resistance movement loyal to Adrien the Butcher are spreading. Known as the People's Revolutionary Front, the resistance is responsible for a number of terrorist attacks across Paris. President Angèle Bonheur has been targeted for assassination no fewer than five times since she took office.

#NoZeeksinmyParis: The freak should step down! She's destroying the nation.

#Luciferion: Curb your Zeekphobia, loser. President Bonheur may be a crap leader, but it has nothing to do with her psychic abilities.

GERMANY

The fallout of the Charon event has ravaged Germany economically, politically, and militarily. Unemployment has risen to a staggering 35% nationwide, sparking massive riots in Berlin, Dresden, Hamburg, Munich, and especially in the Bonn-Düsseldorf megaspawl. Many German citizens are calling for the removal of Konrad Gerste, who recently approved bailouts of Heckler and Koch, Mauseer Industries, BMW and ThyssenKrupp AG: all major manufacturers of weapons, aircraft, and ground vehicles for the German military.

Financiers and analysts across the board agree that the move, while infuriating the common man and woman, is ultimately in the best interests for Germany as a whole, given the volatile state of affairs in Europe.

Of course that doesn't help the citizens, many of whom are joining legions of people forced out of their homes and onto the already dangerous streets. Rendered destitute, many are fleeing the cities seeking solace in makeshift shanty towns to avoid getting picked up by the military and placed into internment camps which have sprung up overnight.

Speculation as to what really goes on in the camps is rampant. Some claim the camps are little more than indoctrination centers where the inhabitants are forcibly conscripted into the army. Others insist something more sinister is afoot. Alleged "eye witnesses" have posted #INFOdumps showing images of brutal interrogations being carried out on the people living there.

One image in particular shows a man strapped to a chair while someone tattoos a mark on the back of his head.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: He's a zeek.

#Magpie: You can't prove that. We don't know the context of the pic, Billy.

THE NORDIC PACT

#INFOSOURCE

#GYRO.TAG.DONATE.CHITOWN.ETP

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/NP_INFODUMP

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET/NP_INFODUMP

POSTED BY: #TALOS

The surprise expressed by so many people at the Nordic Pact's withdrawal from the Eurasian Union has always puzzled me. There has always been widespread dissatisfaction with the Eurasian Union here; like the Rebel South from the European Union.

With the fractious alliance of France, Germany and the United Kingdom dictating how the Eurasian Union would run, such dissatisfaction only grew, especially when it became apparent that the three core-states were managing the Eurasian Union for their own benefit.

While the people of the Rebel South whine about how unfair things are and how they are treated so poorly, they never actually do anything about it. France is in the early stages of a civil war, Germany has enough troubles feeding itself, and the United Kingdom's recent behavior is to the Eurasian Union what accelerant is to a fire; but despite this the Rebel South are kept down by these states.

When the direction of the Eurasian Union became obvious, the leaders of our countries met in secret and forged the Nordic Pact, an alliance and an agreement of a mutual withdrawal if our membership of the Eurasian Union ever became detrimental. The Eurasian Union never learned from the failures of the European Union. Attempting to forge a super-state to rival nations like Brazil and China. But micro-managing everybody and insisting on single standards does not work.

Each nation marks its borders as sovereign territory, and there is no principle of free-movement within the pact states. Everyone is subject to border controls. It doesn't work as we're different nations, with different personalities and priorities.

This is something that the Nordic Pact recognizes, and has adopted at the behest

of its people. Rather than a single government that attempts to invade and control everything, the nations maintain a far greater autonomy than the nations of the Eurasian Union.

WAR BY PROXY

As our economy is new, we have implemented protectionist policies intended to encourage and reward homegrown entrepreneurs, establish ourselves a solid series of industries and at the same time leave us less exposed to the sheer financial power that even a single multinational corporation can wield. However, an emerging market such as ours draws the attention of the multinational corporations like shit attracts flies. A lot of the multinationals, rather than jumping through the hoops we have laid for them, simply invest in our companies.

The positive part of this is that it gave us a massive economic boost and catapulted us onto the world of finance's main stage as a serious player. We forged several valuable agreements and relationships that have helped us achieve and maintain the standards of living that we want. Sounds great doesn't it?

Unfortunately the strange alchemy of our trading practices and the multinational investment has created a concoction that no sane person could've predicted. The downside of the investment is that any one of our businesses can be beholden to many multinationals. M3 is the most widespread, with a presence in around eighty percent of our market's businesses.

Consequently, internal politics can be cutthroat. Factions supporting different multinationals continually vie to expand whomever represents influence within the company. Internal conflict aren't the only problem though. Inter-corporate relations are always tense. The multinationals have all but established a cold war as being the norm of business, and only a botched job away from it moving into open conflict. The worst of these situations is when a multinational, usually M3, sets two of our businesses to war in the hopes of picking up the scraps from whoever was destroyed in the duel to bankruptcy.



So far our governments have been unable to end these cutt-throat tactics. Unfortunately the corporations have taken this lack of involvement as tacit approval of their actions, and everyday their influence grows.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

#INFOSOURCE

#GYRO.TAG.DONATE.CHITOWN.ETP

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/UK_INFODUMP

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET/UK_INFODUMP

POSTED BY: #TALOS

The United Kingdom of today was shaped geographically and politically from the Deluge. The Deluge caused the water levels to rise and consume many coastal cities and features. Over the course of twenty years, the waters inflicted incredible amounts of coastal damage ranging from minor erosion of coastal regions to the loss of well-known features such as the once proud White Cliffs of Dover. There were many tragedies and loss of life during the Deluge, but one of the worst was the Channel Tunnel Catastrophe.

The Channel Tunnel stretched under the English Channel from Dover to Calais in France and was the United Kingdom's main link to mainland Europe. Despite continued warnings the Channel Tunnel had remained open and the traffic increased exponentially. Many people, fearing that the ships would be over-turned or lost at sea, sought to evacuate England and head to Europe. The cause of the collapse was never determined. The collapse resulted in the deaths of thousands of people.

One of the hardest hit areas was Wales, which lost 30% of its landmass in the span of twenty years. The northern coastline of Wales from Anglesey to Colwyn Bay the sea rose so high that the entire northern coastline was abandoned as the population fled inland to Snowdonia.

Further down the coast, Aberystwyth (at the high point of the flooding and the rains) was rendered uninhabitable and abandoned, and today it remains a ghost town.

The worst blow for Wales was the loss of Cardiff and Newport. The M4 motorway

was left with a coastal view of the taller buildings rising from the sea. The loss resulted in the eventual dissolution of the Welsh Assembly, and shifted the power-base to Westminster.

In England, the government focused their efforts into saving areas of London, though the tipping point came in 2031, with Hurricane Timothy. One of the largest hurricanes ever recorded, Timothy surged inland as far as London, raising water levels to mammoth proportions. The Thames surged over its banks. Teams of engineers flocked to structures of historical significance like a biblical locust swarm, working around the clock to build large concrete structures in an effort to keep the Thames from completely flooding the area. The water was pumped out, allowing specialist teams to repair existing damage to the area.

These shield caissons saved many notable landmarks and buildings such as Buckingham Palace and Nelson's Column at Trafalgar Square. The most dramatic loss, however, was the Houses of Parliament. The water caused a rupture, inflicting so much damage, that the building was declared structurally unsound. In the north of England, Liverpool and Glasgow were both hit hard and almost entirely consumed by the water causing a gradual Diaspora from heavily populated areas.

For the next ten years, there was a fevered pace of reclamation work supported by the nation, but focused primarily on London. London expanded along the M20 motorway towards the docks at Folkestone and Dover which had become the entry way for the imported supplies from mainland Europe. As new industrial centers were established, the borders of the city and the surrounding towns blurred until the decision was made to establish them as part of the Great Borough of London.

CURRENT POLITICAL AFFAIRS

The United Kingdom's monarchy is no longer a political entity. The shift of power to the Eurasian Union rendered the Monarch's veto power obsolete and today they form a curio of the British Upper Class society, and an example of the many



heritage businesses that exist across the nation. True political power resides with the First Minister of the London Parliament, constituted of the disbanded Welsh Assembly and the Westminster Parliament. The current First Minister is the bombastic Douglas Abbot who is the United Kingdom's official representative to the Eurasian Union. Whilst elected in the controversial election of 2060, he has since kept power for thirty years becoming the face of Great Britain and in his tenure every bit as iconic as Sir Winston Churchill, whom he is on record as describing as "The Greatest of Great Britain."

Regarded by many liberal-minded and those of a scholastic bent as something of a throwback to the Colonial Era, even the most grudging of his opponents admit that Douglas Abbot has been a strong voice in the Eurasian Parliament for the interests of the United Kingdom, and a driving force in the Eurasian Union in general. Despite being in his late sixties, Abbot never seems to sleep and is always on hand with up to date information: he has headed off many crises by being at the right place at the right time, and has been behind many projects that have benefited the United Kingdom, such as the Trans-Channel Highway that links the Dover Ward of London to mainland Europe.

The Scottish Parliament is currently headed by the smoothly-charismatic First Minister Robert McKay, who was elected with a record majority of over 95% from the Scottish Urban Metroplex. McKay was elected on a promise to bring Scotland into the Eurasian Union as an equal with its own voice, and he has since spent a great deal of time ensuring that Scotland is widely recognised and spent most of his term at the Eurasian Parliament ensuring that his opinion is known on every topic that is brought up. He is widely considered in the EU Parliament as a joke, and Douglas Abbot's own statement upon McKay's election, "Every court needs a jester" initially caused uproar throughout Scotland but has proven unfortunately prophetic. His continual focus away from Scottish issues is leaving a rapidly increasing number of residents in all wards of the Scottish Urban Metroplex incredibly

dissatisfied, and they are moving for a recall election, and a few voices, though largely shouted down, suggest tying Scotland's politics to the London Parliament again would be better than suffering a full term of McKay's leadership.

RELATIONS WITH THE EURASIAN PARLIAMENT

Douglas Abbot and the London Parliament stand firmly with the Eurasian Parliament on most economic and political matters but are often among the last to add weight to any standing point. When directly involved, he asks blunt questions that are simplistic in their forthrightness and often bring to light more than the response would otherwise. One notable event where his calm exterior slipped was his outburst upon VIRTUE's successful lobby for a seat in the Parliament, as historically he has always stood against issues such as AI and Simulacrum emancipation.

At his side, Scottish First Minister McKay is the first to weigh in on a situation despite having no official influence other than being the main advisor to Douglas Abbot. He is known for his vacillating opinions resulting in Cameron's famous description of him being like "a puppy trying to get noticed without peeing on the carpet." Some more skeptical members of the Parliament wonder if Douglas Abbot may actually be grooming his successor in McKay, and that his over-enthusiastic approach to all events in the EU Parliament is a screen by which Douglas Abbot watches how people respond. Though McKay's ignorance of the financial problems, and the epidemics beginning to manifest in Scottish Urban Metroplex slums and working class areas seem to reinforce the idea that the skeptics are just paranoid.

Many wonder how long Douglas Abbot will remain with the Eurasian Parliament as his first priority has always been the welfare of the United Kingdom. Many feel that he would cut all ties with the Eurasian Union if he felt that it was being detrimental to the country. As the situation in the Eurasian Union deteriorates, many pundits claim that the United Kingdom may be the next to officially withdraw from the Eurasian Union.

Douglas Abbot openly voiced his concerns that a war between Russia and China would inevitably become a nuclear conflict that would trigger a True Death much worse than the effects of The Death back in the early part of the century. Along with the Eurasian Union's condemnation of China, Abbot has harangued the Russian ambassador to the Eurasian Parliament at great length about their "lost" Golem-mech problems. Scottish First Minister McKay is strangely quiet on the situation in Russia and China, and many wonder if he is avoiding the issue on the orders of Douglas Abbot, or if he realizes that meddling could tip the balance and send the Bear and Dragon tumbling into war.

ECONOMIC SITUATION AND THE NEW CLASSES

Thanks in large part to Douglas Abbot's stern guidance over the past thirty years, the United Kingdom has prospered and even survived the recent Charon financial attacks relatively unscathed. That said, the assault on the banks resulted in a clearly delineated set of societal strata with a strikingly uneven distribution of wealth and a rise in the value of land. The majority of land holding resides in the hands of a small number of people as the wealthy get richer and the poor get poorer. The lucky few who comprise the Upper Class now live lives devoted almost purely to their leisurely pursuits in much the way of the nobility of Great Britain's past. Put simply, the rich minority own and operate the institutions, organizations and companies that employ the majority of the Working Class.

#London_in_flames: That's putting it mildly, innit?

For the working class, there is a six-day work week, and a strictly-enforced curfew at 10 pm GMT. Only Saturday is free of work and curfews, and thus it has become marked as a riotous day of excess. For the rest of the week, most workers spend their evenings safely at home on the Global DataNet, rather than risking the wrath of

the National Constabulary by sneaking out at night.

Arguably, there exists a "class" even lower than that of the workers: the undocumented migrants and scavengers who risk severe repercussions if they venture out of the lawless slums and into the tightly-controlled cities. Of course, the upper class has no such restrictions placed upon it. The privileged may come and go as they please, but tend to keep apart from the "rabble."

#Luciferion: I find it strange that the people of the U.K. would accept the institution of a police state in their country.

#illicit_behavior: Why? Historically, the people of the United Kingdom have been rather docile.

#London_in_flames: You don't know much about history, then. Just because we don't resort to warfare and civil war when things don't go our way, doesn't mean we are docile.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: The people of the United Kingdom are far from docile, illicit. Look at their history over the past 300 years! Riots and protests are almost as popular as football.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The fractured state of government and society in the United Kingdom has resulted in an almost schizophrenic approach towards law and order across the nation. The National Constabulary (or NatCon) is the primary enforcer of the law, cobbled together from what police services and private security firms survived the first half of the century. The NatCon is the only government-sponsored security force, and thus provides the majority of law enforcement throughout the United Kingdom. The members of the working class are handled with a harsh but fair attitude of professionalism.

#Militant_Ginger: Bollocks. The blues are as violent as they come.

During the Death, the national police force was armed for the first time in



history, and the orders were never officially repealed. Many officers forego the use of a firearm (choosing a powerful stun gun instead) unless entering more problematic areas. The NatCon relies heavily upon surveillance drones, security cameras, and even three spy satellites to monitor the main sprawls of the United Kingdom.

CRIMINAL CULTURE

Criminal activity, like everything else in the United Kingdom, is based on social standing. Due to the excessive power and wealth of the upper class, the old adage, "There is one rule for the rich, one rule for the poor," should be replaced with, "There are no rules for the rich." Despite many criminal activities having their origins in the upper echelons of British society, prosecutions of them are incredibly rare, and only the most heinous or foolish member of the gentry will be likely to face prosecution. This is exemplified by the perpetual feuds between the family-owned businesses that comprise the British Industrial Services conglomerate of the Great Northern Sprawl. Members of the working class are often used as pawns in their crimes

against each other. Should the job go wrong, only a stupid criminal will try to pin the blame on his employer; his testimony will be ignored, and he'll just go to the Out-Processing Department for his trouble.

THE LONDON SPRAWL

To properly explain what is happening in London would take more space than this INFOdump can hold, so I've focused on a couple areas of London which I personally find most interesting.

LONDON: DOVER WARD

Crossing the Trans-Channel Highway to the United Kingdom leads into the Dover Ward Customs and Excise Centre of London, a five-mile complex that stands between the highway and the bulk of Dover Ward. Bored and/or corrupt officials monitor the flow of traffic into the UK and attempt to find any illicit goods, usually for their own private consumption. Every major company with an interest in the United Kingdom has at least one center within the Dover Ward of London as the Trans-Channel Highway represents the

quickest and cheapest method of importing and exporting for the United Kingdom.

Dover Ward is built over the remains of Dover and Folkestone. It connects the Trans-Channel Highway to the London Intercity Motorway, which in turn leads to the Great Northern Sprawl and the Scottish Urban Metroplex. The main body of Dover Ward consists of a grid of prefabricated structures flanking the Motorway. At its heart is a huge industrial park, with outlying residential units, hotels, and retail outlets.

LONDON: WESTMINSTER WARD

Westminster has two distinct areas: the Upper and Lower Wards. In order to guard the political center of the United Kingdom after the Deluge destroyed the Houses of Parliament, the government forced the sale of land and houses over Enfield and other surrounding areas. Once the previous occupants evacuated, the area was bulldozed, and a ten-mile concrete foundation laid, forming the location of what would become the new political and economic power base of the United Kingdom. Over time the area was expanded, artificially rising some thirty meters to safeguard against future flooding. Over the next sixty years it was the site of repeated urban renewal projects until the area expanded in a crescent shape to Uxbridge. Now it is known as the Upper Ward.

The Upper Ward is a sight to behold. Home to London's upper class, it has a population of around thirty thousand people. The wide open plazas of perfect white marble are immaculately clean and lined with trees, while specially-tailored advertising holograms discreetly offer services to passers-by, creating a serene atmosphere for the wealthy to enjoy life. Security drones patrol the skies, their presence helping to ensure the safety of the social elite.

The expanse of the Lower Ward surrounds the raised platform of the Upper Ward, stretching from Enfield to the River Thames. Though not as posh, it is still home to many businesses, facilities, and attractions catering to the working class. Life here is controlled but comfortable. A working-class family is able to keep food on the table, provided they maintain tight control of their finances.

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

#INFOSOURCE

#GYRO.TAG.DONATE.CHITOWN.ETP

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/IRELAND_INFODUMP

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET/IRELAND_INFODUMP

POSTED BY: #TALOS

Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland were incredibly fortunate throughout the Deluge, with most of damage being limited to coastal regions while the island's interior remained unscathed. The biggest change for Ireland was during the Death. Many areas of the United Kingdom were left to fend for themselves, and as Northern Ireland was separated by the Irish Sea, it was the one to receive the least aid. On the 22nd March, 2030 a large formation of the Irish Republic's Defense Force crossed into the six counties with food and medical relief. The beleaguered PSNI offered no resistance, as did the majority of the population who welcomed them with open arms.

The Republic officially recognizes the 24th April, 2030 as the date that Ireland became a Unified Republic, and it wasn't until the end of the Death that their actions would face scrutiny, triggering an extended campaign of propaganda on both sides, along with the general protests that often became riots as the extremists began to wage a bloody war of murder and terror in the streets. The situation regarding Northern Ireland has remained in debate for sixty years with no resolution in sight and the blood still flowing in the streets.

The United Republic of Ireland is the United Kingdom's neighbor, and though their fates are closely intertwined, it is an independent political body governed by the Dáil Éireann (Assembly of Ireland) since it took over Northern Ireland during the Death. The United Republic of Ireland has long contented itself with a comfortable role with Eurasian Union, however the strong Catholic influences on the Dáil often make themselves heard. While many



voices in the former Northern Ireland have cried out for help and assistance from the United Kingdom, so far all confrontations and support have been political and Douglas Abbot has yet to involve himself personally.

The Ulster Loyalist Army is a terrorist organization, or group of freedom fighters, dependent on whom you ask. The truth, being highly subjective on that issue, what is undeniable is that the group is responsible for repeated bombings against many political targets in the United Republic of Ireland.

HEAD OF STATE

The President of the Dáil Éireann is Siobhan O'Dwyer, a fiery redhead who was largely unknown politically until her impassioned sincerity during her campaign made her a public favorite overnight. She is embarking on her first term of office with the goal of seeking a peaceful resolution to the problems in the northern counties, and creating a truly Unified Republic. While Loyalist violence is a regular occurrence, they are always careful not to target Siobhan's events as she seems to hold credibility in both camps.

RELATIONS WITH THE EURASIAN PARLIAMENT

Siobhan O'Dwyer is notably absent from EU politics on all but the most serious issues, though under her guidance the United Republic of Ireland is approaching an isolationist policy. In light of the Pan-Scand withdrawal many are calling on her to publically affirm the URI allegiance to the Eurasian Union.

THE REPUBLIC POLICE SERVICE

As a result of the Ulster Loyalist Army's and the Republic Militia's continued war, the Republic Police Service is equipped to a level found in many militaries and equally well trained. Every member carries an assault rifle and sidearm, and wears full body armor with an enclosed reflective helmet that hides the individual

constable's identity (giving their nickname of the "mirrorheads"). While they are neutral in most matters, they have a tendency to shoot first when involved with the Loyalist flashpoints of the north. While in the southern counties they are regarded widely as public heroes, and receive public support in just about all activities.

CRIME & EXTREMISM

The United Republic of Ireland has a long and bloody history dating back centuries. The past sixty years have been beset by the Ulster Loyalist Army's repeated attacks on the homes, offices, and even families of those deemed to be "Traitors to North."

Most ULA funding comes from donations from the League of British Nationals, as well as being the main vendor of drugs in the northern counties, and even the sale of surplus arms, some of which are military grade, to private buyers. Their scouts are currently operating in the Rebel South of the Eurasian Union attempting to make favorable contact with similar goals to their own.

As the ULA boasts a seemingly uninterrupted and impressive chain of munitions, there isn't a month goes by that the group doesn't launch at least one attack against a Republican target. The group's favorite target is the celebrations held by the Republicans each year to celebrate the unification of the north and south. A common weapon that the ULA deploy against these celebrations is a simple explosive, not designed to kill, but wound, and loaded with the contents of hospital used sharps bins.

The Republicans of the Northern Counties have their own extremist group who call themselves the Republic Militia. The Militia use tactics very similar to the ULA from the home invasions to attacking any suspected Loyalist gatherings. Recently, Thomas Quinn, an outspoken advocate of a Loyalist Free state, was attacked by having boiling water mixed with sugar thrown in his face. While such actions are disavowed by the politicians, many wonder how the Militia is able to coordinate attacks with a distinct lack of police officers and whether Siobhan O'Dwyer faces resistance from within her own cabinet.



THE MIDDLE EAST

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/MIDDLE_EAST
 FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET/MIDDLE_EAST

POSTED BY: #AHMAD_HADDAD, MIDDLE EAST
 CULTURAL ATTACHÉ

Ahlan wa sahan! How are you, my brother? Interested in our little corner of the globe? Come, turn on your TAP and let me take you on a little HR tour of the hood. The Middle East is a land of stark contradictions. For example, most citizens of the Arab Kingdom are human 2.0, while in the Arab Republic these sons of dogs and apes are killed on sight. Pretty stark, yes?

Contradictions, my brother: technology and tradition, big money and Jihad, towers and tents. Anything you can find in the Middle East has an exact opposite nearby, and the two are sworn enemies. If you join one side, the other will try to kill you and if you're neutral both will try to kill you just in case. I mean, try telling an Israeli you don't have a position about Israel. If you're lucky,

it will only get you a tour of the glorious Israeli medical system. If you're less lucky, you'll get to star in a Jewish funeral. It's pretty much like that everywhere.

I see I'm starting to depress you. In truth, it's not all bad. Where there is pain, there is gain, yes? All this mess is ripe ground for serious money for the businessman who is as quick with the gun as he is in the Global DataNet. You can make a fortune by playing these deadly games if you're crazy enough and tough.

Israel and Iran—sorry, Persia—they changed their name again—have some super-advanced technology and the big boys in China and Brazil are not happy about it. You could turn a nice profit sharing some of this tech with Golden Promise or Helios or anyone else of these murdering businessmen. Of course, then you'll have the Mossad on your ass. Did I forget to tell you? Israel and Persia are best buddies now.

PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Okay, let's start with a shocker. Even though we have flare-ups, the Middle East is—comparatively speaking—the





most peaceful region on the planet these days. Inshallah, this won't change soon. The Ruskis and Chinks are at each other's throats, the Euros are nibbling on their butt and the Americans are...American, even though the states clustered into new nations.

#Luciferion: Racist, much?

#Billy_Black_Eyes: I guess it depends. Israeli culture never was much on political correctness.

War is always right around the corner, but it's been there so long I think it's fallen asleep. The Israelis are sure the Arabs are going to invade any minute and the Arabs are like, "yeah, sure, one sec, just let us get our affairs in order." Spoiler alert: there will never be a war between these nations. You have seven countries fortified like turtles, armed like porcupines, but all their guns are aimed inside.

JEWS, JIHAD, JERUSALEM

Remember that thing I told you about peace? Well, that's on the international level. On a national level, we're bleeding hard. We have here what the experts call Empty Battle Field or EBF. Less brainy people call it terrorism. Cars and homes get blown to bits. People get shot and stabbed. Brains get fried in the Global DataNet. Information changes hands, leaving a bloody trail in its wake. But there is no battlefield. There are no tanks to bomb, planes to intercept or bases to nuke. You have angry kids with guns, Tendril Access Processors, and ideas.

Of course, you have people who think an old-fashioned Jihad will solve all problems. Allah is punishing the infidels and all this suffering is preparing the world for the Mahadi who will come and make it right. Allah is angry that capitalist pigs control Al-Quds/Jerusalem. Allah is angry that not all the Ummah is united under a single Caliph. Allah is angry that Man challenges the divine act of creation with robotics and genetics. Allah is angry at the atheists of Kurdistan. There are hundreds of small Islamist groups, but only two are taken seriously: the Jaish

al-Islam and the Fedayeen al-Mahadi. These guys aren't a bunch of noobs with bombs; they're playing the game at expert level. Don't go sniffing after them in the Global DataNet. Playing football on a minefield is safer.

Then there are two Jewish orgs, too. There is Neturei Karta who want exactly what the Jaish want—free Jerusalem—but somehow still manage to be their enemies. Charming guys. The other group is really more of an Israeli conspiracy, Gamla. They're not happy with Israel's retreat to a single walled city and want to expand. There is a Christian group called the New Crusaders that wants, you guessed it, to liberate Jerusalem, but only make angry posts in the Global DataNet. Actually, I gotta read about them later. Meh, screw it. As long as they don't want to "liberate" Gaza, I don't care.

The last contestant in our ugly pageant is the GLF, the Godless Liberation Front. They are supposed to be an atheist radical group fighting religion in the Middle East, but everyone knows they're just a front for the People's Democratic Republic of Kurdistan. By Allah, I swear half their leaders are Kurdish officers in plainclothes.

A BIG PILE OF NOTHING

Economy, that's a different business. It sucks major balls. Our economy was heavily invested in the West, and when they went down with their little virus (we call it here the "nakhsa"), it dragged us down with them.

The Arab Kingdom still managed to stay filthy rich (if you don't count the 90% who are dirt poor) but, whatever.

The good news: most Arabs and Kurds were so poor before this happened that they hardly noticed when it did. The bad news: when faced with a choice between food and gun....

Jews and Persians, these guys were always deep inside their own asses. When the world collapsed they just shrugged and dug themselves even deeper into their respective asses. They're rich, yeah, but they're still living on Uranus. So screw them.



BROTHERS FROM OTHER MOTHERS

I didn't list international business conglomerates above, because calling them terrorists would be an affront to good, honest terrorists everywhere. I mean, these greedy bastards are a category unto themselves. If anyone is gonna screw the world so bad that the Mahadi comes, it's not gonna be the politicians or the imams. No, brother, it's the conglomerates.

Everyone knows they practically own the Kingdom and Kurdistan and that they're pulling the strings in the Republic. They're also working to undermine Israel and Persia, but carefully, because these bad boys bite back.

GAZA CITY-STATE

Okay, so we kind of blew the whole Palestine deal, but hell, Gaza is free. I'm not talking free like Kurdistan, where you're free to be murdered by your own government instead of a foreign one. No, brother, I mean really free! Look out of the window—I dare you to name one ethnicity, one subculture, one race that is not outside, free as a sparrow.

In Gaza City, you can do everything you want! Want to go to a mosque and listen to old preachers teach you how you should be ashamed of everything? Go ahead; we have the full spectrum of monotheist religions here. Want to find a working girl who can make you happy in twenty layers of reality? Brother, you will not be disappointed!

Safety? Who said anything about safety? Brother, I see your problem now: You want the world for nothing. Freedom has a price. Do you think we drove out the Zionists and then the neo-Baathists with kisses? This is one rough neighborhood and if you want to prosper, you need to be the meanest cat on the block.

#WarDog: You didn't drive out anyone. The only thing your rockets hit is open space. They left because they never wanted to be in Gaza in the first place, nor did Egypt or AIR.

ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY

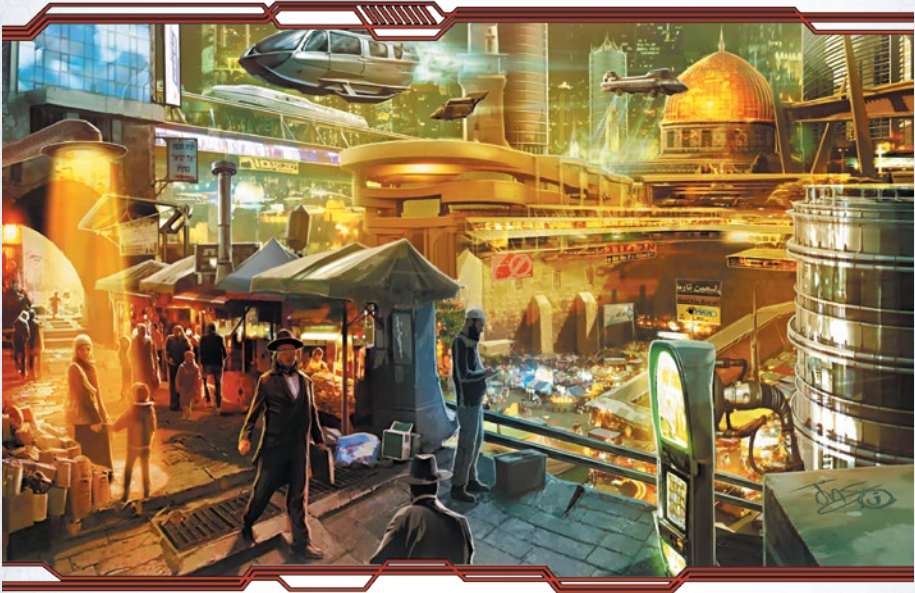
The only role of the police in Gaza is to write down parking tickets (when no one is watching) and shoo away pickpockets (if there aren't too many of them). They carry guns, but that's just to impress the girls. The reason all these tough pirates and crazed freedom fighters know their place is the hamula system.

Hamula, or extended family, is a big deal in Gaza; every man is expected to always be ready to pick up a gun or a knife and protect his family's honor and interests. We have hundreds of closed Deep networks and if someone posts that he's in trouble, the whole hamula will be there in five minutes. Mess with a Gazan, and you mess with his entire family. No matter how tough you are, fifty men with guns are not something to be trifled with. Due to marital and business contacts, most hamulas can summon fighters from allied hamulas and if the imams, our religious leaders, chip in as well, the whole city will be ready for war in a day. It's messy, but it works.

#Hannahble_Cannibal: Democratic for men, you mean? If you're a woman, you're still expected to shut your mouth and open your legs. The only progressive group in Gaza is the Kutaytat, but you're not even going to mention them, are you?

A HUNDRED THOUSAND JUDGES

Our legal system is similar to the one in the Kingdom, but even looser. It's not something I'm proud of, but no one cares what I think. Basically, it goes like this: there are no laws and no judges. This doesn't mean you can get away with everything or that you won't get busted (or blasted) if you make a liability of yourself. Just like in the Kingdom, we have a class of bearded ulama, or religious scholars. Except in the spirit of pluralism, progress and something else starting with P, they cover the whole spectrum of monotheism. In case of a dispute between two individuals, or an individual and the state, a qadi, or judge,



must be agreed upon to resolve the conflict based on his private interpretation of religious and tribal traditions.

The problem is that most religious texts were written before we had genetic engineering, computer networks, space travel or, I suspect, indoor plumbing. It's hilarious to watch a learned imam sprain his brain in an attempt to apply sharia law to cybercrime or accounting irregularities. I mean, it's hilarious if you're not on the receiving end of the legal whip.

#KiyomiFox: This is sadly true. Last year, my boyfriend and I visited Gaza and I was nearly hanged for slapping away some boy who pulled at my tail.

THE JERUSALEM DMZ

You know the old story about two dudes fighting and the third one winning? That's exactly what happened with Jerusalem. The Jews and the Arabs spent more than a century fighting and in the end the Brazilians got it without firing a single shot. During the Second Disengagement, the Israelis realized that both the Muslim and Jewish population of the city were poor, hostile, and uneducated, not the kind of people the Zionists wanted in their new state. On the other hand, while the Jews of Jerusalem were hardly friends of Israel,

they were still Jews and it was clear that if Jerusalem became part of AIR, they would bleed hard. Israel could not allow a second holocaust to take place right under its nose. That's when Chimera offered to buy Jerusalem.

Naturally, that's not how they presented the offer. It went something along the lines of renting a 99 year lease for neutral administration and arbitration.

There was a lot of debate about this move, in Israel and in the world, especially after several other corporations demanded that a proper international tender was held to resolve the competition. Chimera won, probably because of its reputation of conserving, rather than demolishing, obsolete property. And so, in the year of 2067 to the Prophet Jesus, peace be upon Him, Chimera moved into Jerusalem with its Brazilian administrators and army of Sims and started making money.

#Archangel777: Prophet Jesus? BLASPHEMY!

HOLY VEGAS!

Religion was always a commercial affair, but never so brazenly and shamelessly. Just like a dealer who never uses his own stuff, Chimera set out to maximize profit

from the prophet. They planned to avoid upsetting anyone by declaring full religious tolerance, not realizing that nothing angers the true man of religion more than religious tolerance, an inherently secular philosophy.

After a multi-billion renovation project, Jerusalem became so shiny that many tourists had to turn off their TAPs to make sure they weren't staring at some brilliant AR. Holy sites like the Wailing Wall or the Sepulcher can hardly be found among the numerous museums, casinos, SPAs, automated churches and so forth. Portuguese and English are heard much more often than Hebrew and Arabic. Pilgrim services are available for all budgets.

However, away from the spotlights, the natives grew restless. Considering themselves the natural service providers for pilgrims, they suddenly found themselves marginalized by foreign professionals who didn't even share the natives' devotion.

Then, there were the Sims. Creating golems was the privilege of the holiest rabbis, not of soulless capitalists who, in their arrogance, challenged the very act of divine creation. Many of the city's leading rabbis published edicts condemning the Sims as an abomination whose very presence in the holy city was an affront to God. Imams and muftis were no more enthusiastic about the newcomers, deeming the Sims satanic mockeries of humanity and issuing a fatwa of their expulsion from the Al-Quds, the holy city. So, after fighting for two hundred years, the Jews and Muslims suddenly found something that united them—yet they still hate each other's guts.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KURDISTAN

It's funny how people can spend so much time fighting foreign oppression only to replace it with domestic oppression. I mean, Kurdistan has been a sovereign nation for almost half a century, but Turkish and Arab tyranny was better than this "freedom."

#LoveKurdistan: Why you tell such lies about great country? Beloved leader make best country in world.

#SamTheSlam: Do the Kurds actually have propaganda bots? This totally sounds like a message generated by a bot.

Even though I'm thousands of kilometers away, I'm still taking a certain risk by making this post. Kurdish spies and assassins are everywhere these days. They look for technological secrets to steal and dissidents to kill, but sometimes they blow up random people just to make a statement about equality all that.

Now, in Kurdistan, you don't even have to betray the state to be shipped away to a gulag. If they find out that you're a practicing Muslim, that's enough. In fact, I suspect that if they're missing slaves in their gulags it's enough to get you shipped. The hammer of justice is harsh, but at least it's random.

A DREAM DEFERRED

After the Islamic Coalition was defeated, the PKK turned its Israeli-manufactured guns inward, purging the country of the citizens who weren't sufficiently enthusiastic in defending it, or who had the misfortune of not being ethnic Kurds. Well, it's been twenty years since the war, but the purging still goes on.

Technology is a two-edged sword. When used for good, it makes everything so much better. When used for evil, it allows for a level of tyranny unimaginable by the dictators of the past. By importing the world's most advanced surveillance technology and simultaneously cutting the population from any technology that could threaten the Party (no one bothers saying PKK anymore), Mustafa became the God of this atheist country.

Now, I hear the Party has a breeding program designed to create superior workers and soldiers who labor hard and never doubt their orders. Genetic and cybernetic augmentations are mandatory according to the needs of the State. Marriage has been abolished. Parenthood has been abolished. Games and leisure have been abolished. Religion has been abolished. With the current rate of forced augmentation, soon humanity will be abolished as well.

#Shalif: *There is no God but the Mustafa, and the Party makes a profit. Allah istor!*

In short, the world's darkest regime rose to the sound of Americans and Europeans applauding, and Jews and Persians counting credits. Don't you just love this world?

OLIGARCHICAL COLLECTIVISM

Private life and personal beliefs have been absolutely and irrevocably destroyed. Everything in this country, from the air people breathe, through their food and clothing, to their very flesh and bones, is owned by a small group of faceless bureaucrats. Who are they? How can you join their ranks? Who is really in power? The Party. What's The Party? The Party is The Party. Ask one more question and earn a visit by the secret police.

Okay, now is the part where I knock your TAPs off. Do you know where all the enemies of the state go? What these colonies are really all about? Corporate facilities! Yeah, there's your unholy alliance of capitalism and socialism, right there: Communists reducing men to resources and capitalists processing these resources into fine products.

While the Party teaches that the colonies are used to re-educate reactionaries by putting them to hard work for the good of the state, in truth they are giant and hereditary slave camps used by Golden Promise Incorporated both for heavy industry and experimentation. There are rumors that the Orlov family is playing some sick game in Kurdistan as well, paying the Party a fortune for this privilege. Personally, I think this is bullshit, but who knows? It's a sick world out there.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL

As far as the government is concerned, Israel is located on an island surrounded by monsters and lava. This country is a fortress! Its security apparatus is so tight that even flies can't enter without a thorough security check.

Security measures range from a tall concrete wall (a callback to an era of walled cities and siege engines) to drones and turrets so sophisticated that the rest of the

world will only discover them next decade. Although not a single rocket has landed on Israeli soil for more than two decades, the Israelis are convinced that they're under siege and that war and terror are right around the corner.

By now you're probably thinking that they are a little crazy, and they totally are, but there is a reason for this madness, so bear with me. The second half of the 21st century wasn't kind to the Zionist outpost in the Middle East. First they were kicked out of Gaza by Palestinian resistance. Then they lost Judea, Samaria and the Golan Heights to the Second Arab Spring. Finally, after a massive revolt of the Galilean Arabs aided by al-Misri's victorious armies, Israel lost its north as well, essentially becoming the state of Tel Aviv and its outskirts. Even Jerusalem, holy city to the Jews, is gone. It was sold to the Brazilians when it was clear that 90% of the population was hostile to the Jewish state (either because it was Jewish, or because it was a state).

Oh boy, I'm sure the Brazilians are regretting this purchase now... but we digress.

#Yossel_Tov: *We stay, you call us occupiers. We leave, you call us quitters. There is no pleasing some. I bet you're just mad because the Arabs of Israel still have the most rights and best living condition in the Middle East without being a slave-owning, racist, homicidal medieval dictatorship like the Arab Kingdom.*

#SirhanJM: *Your posts make you sound like a pincher that thinks it chased a truck away with its barks.*

The new government of Israel, headed by the isolationist Masada party, decided to live up to the anti-Israeli propaganda of the early 21st century and shed the democratic coil for a while. Such a small country with so many external enemies is too fragile for internal enemies as well, it reasoned, so if you weren't an ardent supporter of a secular Jewish state, you had a month to get out. Communists, Islamists, Ultra-Orthodox Jews, illegal immigrants from Africa, leftist intellectuals, and everyone else who didn't share the Knesset's view on Israel's future packed and left.

Some tried to resist, but with its gloves off, the Israeli Shin Bet ruthlessly and elegantly made short work of them. The current president is an Arab woman (well, half-Arab), but her powers don't extend beyond shaking hands with foreign dignitaries and presenting awards for best essays to little girls. I suspect they only elected her because she's smoking hot.

#Noa_Dust: That's a very nice way to describe this Nazi purge of all political dissent. As an Arab, I'd expect more understanding of the full extent of Zionist terror from you. But, of course you live in Gaza, the favorite toy of the racist Zionist machine.

#Martin_J_Hussein: As an Arab, he knows that his leaders like to hang the opposition, not just cut it from power. You're an anti-Semite Jew and you don't even realize it. It's sad really. Good thing we got rid of you delusional idiots. BTW, before you call me a racist, I'm an Arab AND a proud Israeli citizen.

THE ART OF WAR

Just like the police, the army is also unseen until provoked. While the power of this state is disproportionate to its size, its army is hidden underground and is cared for by a legion of engineers, technicians, and agents. Remember, in this country, what you don't see is what should worry you the most.

Soldiers only include commando units such as airborne sayeret matkal or the naval shayetet 13. Israel relies more on its numerous intelligence agencies such as the Shin Bet (internal security), Mossad (foreign intelligence), and Haman (military intelligence) to preempt trouble rather than on the IDF solving it. The fact that there hasn't been a single attack by homegrown or foreign fighters in 25 years should attest to how effective these guys are.

While Israel's military secrets are coveted by many foreign governments and industrial conglomerates, I don't suggest you go grabbing them for easy money. The agency in charge of preventing industrial espionage is called Shavit and they literally have a license to kill. So unless you're

willing to have a James Bond with a silly name on your ass—look the other way.

Israel is the last country in the region you want to mess with, but it's also the one that offers the greatest rewards if you do, so the spy game is always on. Allah knows the world is full of desperate people.

THE SERENE REPUBLIC OF PERSIA

A lot of people are calling Persia a Baha'i republic, but this is bullshit. The majority of the population is Muslim and the second place keeps being contested by Zarathustrians and Baha'i. Hindu and Buddhist temples are a common sight and, if you look hard enough, you can find synagogues and churches too.

The right way to describe Persia would be a secular republic with a Baha'i government. So, how come the persecuted religion whose founder was martyred two hundred years ago made such a triumphant return?

THE PARTY OF CHANGE

Fariborz Mishkín-Qalam established the Party of Change and took the first election by a landslide. The Qalam family fled Iran in the '30s and, after many tribulations, found itself living in Haifa, Israel only a few miles from the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and the Technion Institute. The former taught him the Baha'i Faith; the latter taught him civil engineering and architecture.

His party's success at restoring the Iranian economy and education led to a process of mass conversion to Bahai'ism, and renewed interest in science and secular philosophy. In his famous 2079 speech, marking 100 years of Persian republicanism, President Mishkín-Qalam paraphrased the summary of the Baha'i faith as described by a 20th century Baha'i leader, Shoghi Effendi:

Let me now plainly put before you the principles of our peaceful revolution with which we shall overturn this world of violence and hate. Brothers and sisters, these are our principles: The independent search after truth, unfettered by superstition or tradition. The oneness of the entire human



race and the new races fashioned through its genius. The basic unity of all religions of East and West. The condemnation of all forms of prejudice. The harmony which must exist between religion and science. The equality of men and women, the two wings on which the eagle of humanity soars!

This iconic speech, perhaps ironically and perhaps inevitably, earned Persia the hidden animosity of the “Civilized World.” The powers-that-be could stomach a backwater and toothless enemy, but a competent friend had to be crushed.

#Vadim: You're just paranoid, my friend. Where is that hostility you're talking about? The borders are open, embassies are open for business and the Iranian army regularly practices with Western armies.

#JaNotABot: You're naïve puppy! Didn't you ever hear the expression? “Keep your friends close and enemies closer?”

THE TRIANGLE ALLIANCE

It could be forgiven that Persia achieved modernization without westernization (or mass murder), it could be tolerated that it served as a home base for a new religion that was rapidly capturing the hearts and minds of young people all over the world, but there was no way the corporate world would overlook the Fars Research Institute.

When Mishkín-Qalam spoke about the new races fashioned through humanity's genius, he wasn't kidding. Nor was he speaking about placing a huge Sims order at the trusted hands of some megacorp. No, the man spoke about starting domestic Sims production. And that crap just wouldn't fly. The megacorps began looking for a way in.

Persia had the stability and freshness of a phoenix risen from the ashes, so financing a coup was impossible. Persia also had some of the most advanced technological institutes, not to mention serious stockpiles of nukes and bios, so invasion didn't seem appealing either. Lastly, the Baha'i faith was growing more popular every day, so a private boycott wouldn't work. The only option left was a war of attrition.

Sabotage Persian projects, arm Persia's enemies, assist Islamic terrorists, spread destabilizing rumors and sour international relations.

To counter this carefully masked aggression, Persia founded the Triangle Alliance of non-Muslim and non-Arab states in the Middle East: Jewish Israel, Atheist Kurdistan and Baha'i Persia. The purpose of the Alliance was mutual defense against Arab political and military aggression (on a personal note: bullshit), academic and intelligence exchange and mutual support. Israel was the guns, Persia was the face, and Kurdistan was the creepy bastard no one wants to mess with. If you wonder how a fascist hellhole found itself in bed with two prosperous democracies, well, hungry people do desperate things.

#Jason5052: The Triangle Alliance is a nice way of referring to a racist conspiracy against the Arab people.

#MarkThisSpot: Kurdistan is Communist you moron.

#LATuff: Did you notice that only these enlightened democracies make sure that their citizenry is racially pure? Arab countries welcomes citizens of all races and religions, but these so-called pluralists watch very carefully after their demographics...

Despite the alliance, Persia remains somewhat xenophobic. Strangers are usually not harassed, but neither are they welcome. Unlike historic America, Persia likes to keep the hungry and huddled masses away from its promising shores—with guns if necessary. Wealthy tourists and businessmen can get entry visas, but everyone else must enjoy the splendor of Persia via AR.

UNITED ARAB ISLAMIC REPUBLIC

With more than half a billion citizens and tens of millions of unregistered nomads, AIR is the largest Islamic state in history and one of the most populous democracies on the planet.



#SalimSalaam: Democracy. Yeah Right. AIR is a country where members of the same family get elected each time.

After the apocalyptic wars of the beginning of the century, the broken postwar remains of Yemen, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Syria and, unwillingly, Lebanon, have turned again to the idea of Arab unity. The result was AIR, a political behemoth of immense and polluted cities that can only survive due to high tech that's controlled by the elite and provided by outsiders. In the toxic spaces between the cities, strange new tribes that have grown from the postwar wilderness and the fierce Bedu lifestyle roam free. For these tribes, the cities, the corporations, the poor masses huddling together in the hopes of "making it" one day—all represent foreign corruption that must be swept away by the rage of the desert.

It's not perfect: There is rampant corruption, officials and executives abuse their powers, ethnic and religious tension still serves as an excuse for murder, and millions of people live off the grid just like their Stone Age forefathers, but shit, we've come a long way. And you know what? As America and Europe are crumbling, the Arab world has peace and, perhaps for the first time since Nasser—the father of the first United Arab Republic—the prospect of unity. Can you really say that about the West?

THE SECOND ARAB SPRING

Bernard al-Misri, a Melkite-Syrian general, achieved something no Arab leader had in modern history—he won a war. In fact, not one war, but two: one in Greater Syria and one in Palestine. Having restored the long-lost Arab honor, Bernard went on to fulfill the dream of the 20th century Nasser—Arab unity.

Despite his military past, Bernard al-Misri envisioned the United Arab Republic as a peaceful and democratic nation that, having restored its honor against Israel and the former United States, no longer had the need for repression and war. He worked to promote secularism and education with the motto: "Modernization

without westernization." This earned him the label "the Arab Gandhi" among his allies and al-Kafir, the infidel, among his enemies.

His murder at the hands of Islamic extremists cast a giant shadow on the fledgling democracy and brought to light the insurmountable chasm between the secular and urban elites and the religious and rural filahin. Too thinly spread, the power of the government didn't extend far from the great city centers of the Republic. In the outskirts, progress was but a distant echo while poverty and humiliation were the norm. Preachers and radicals started creating dangerous and militant shadow communities, threatening to tear AIR apart and revert to the sectarianism of the 20th century.

A DREAM DEFERRED

AIR cities are gigantic megasprawls. The center of the average city is a few years into the future, but as you travel away from it, the scenery reverts back in time, from the latest in fashion and architecture, to shantytowns built from mud and garbage where a boy might not get to taste meat until he's a man, but learns to handle firearms and explosives at the age of four.

Expensive imported technology protects the citizens and filahin from the radioactive fallout and extreme weather of the Wild Lands. These life support facilities (LSF) are always located in the poorest regions and are usually operated by foreign workers who also live inside them. The locals despise those foreigners for their air of disdain and superiority, making LSF a frequent target for raids and bombings. The operators, in turn, import expert Western troops—many of whom aren't even real humans—to protect the facilities, thus increasing the hostility of the locals. It does not help that LSF are shiny and gigantic technological horrors while the local structures around them are often little more than meager mud hovels.

#Rafiq_Dinar: The police aren't nearly as weak as this post presents them. There are some neighborhoods where

they don't routinely enter without army escort, but trust me, if you mess with the Republic, sooner or later, they will come for you.

DESERT LIFE

Outside the cities, there are tens of thousands of Badawi tribes that—actually, before we proceed, let me get one thing straight. Bedouin is already plural, so please, please, please don't say "Bedouins." This drives me mad.

#RichardCraniumJoe: So you're like a Spelling Mujahideen?

Anyhow, there are tens of thousands of Badawi tribes in the desert. Now I know you'd like to cling to the romantic notion that these tribes are living just like their forefathers did thousands of years ago, untainted by technology and modernization, but come on! Let's be realistic. This planet is too small for anyone on it not to be part of the game. Besides, you have to be pretty tough to maintain a lifestyle that doesn't put credits in the conglomerates' accounts, yes?

Global warming, nuclear fallout, irresponsible grazing and industrial pollution have reduced the majority of AIR's territory to desolate wasteland the likes of which have never been seen before. I'd love to blame war for this, but in truth, it's more the result of the primitivism and disregard of the environment of our forefathers than of the nuclear fires of the Death. If you look at the Middle East from space, you'll see one colossal desert with several green spots with perfectly straight edges. These spots are Israel, Persia and Jerusalem.

Life in the cities is possible due to LSF, a costly process that insures all income of the Republic would be devoured by foreign corporations, sort of like heroin on a national level. But some men are too proud to huddle in the enslaving comfort of these futuristic monstrosities and choose instead to brave the hell forged by their ancestors.

To survive with honor in the desert, one must find clever ways to protect himself from the harsh environment and feed his

family without becoming corporate property. This requires some imported, but relatively cheap, technology and balls so big you need a cartwheel to move them around.

UNITED ARAB KINGDOM

If the world is painted in shades of gray, then the Arab Kingdom is a big black stain that remains black no matter how you look at it. The Kingdom is ruled by a gang of backwater and bigoted sons of apes and pigs who use the most progressive technology to sustain the most regressive society. Their inconceivable wealth could have ended the poverty of a billion Muslims, but instead it goes to maintain a playground for the rich.

#Rafiq_Dinar: Universal healthcare for all citizens, social security, low crime rate, free higher education, perfect infrastructure, good relations with the world... Somebody please save me from this hell! I want to be poor and unemployed like my Republic brothers! Idiot.

#MuhammadTheJust: Just to clarify, the OP says we're so evil just because we're rich and he's not. He says that if we equally divided all our wealth among the world's Muslims, everyone would be rich. I suggest the OP downloads a calculator, since his own brain obviously can't do math.

The Kingdom is divided into forty principalities, each ruled by an emir. They pay lip service to the Royal Family, but in truth every emir plays his own game. Some emirs, particularly the al-Rashidun and al-Walid clans, wield enough wealth, "soft power" and influence to match some mega-conglomerates and most sovereign states.

Important foreign and domestic policies are formulated by the shura, which is a council consisting of the King, the emirs and the Kingdom's leading authority on Islam, the kabir al-muftin. There is no transparency in the Kingdom; shura sessions are not broadcast and its decisions are not publicized. Even the location of the shura is a carefully guarded secret.





Not that anyone cares—the sahibs are too well-fed to ask questions and foreign workers are too scared and overworked to even think about it.

While the Arab Kingdom has no army to speak of, it does have enough “family atomics” to dissuade an external invasion. In this neighborhood, having a few nuclear bombs stowed in the cellar is simply a fashion obligation. Secondly, and perhaps even more importantly, the Arab Kingdom is a place of ultimate pleasure for the most powerful men on the planet. These men don’t like when others play with their toys.

The greatest threat to the Arab Kingdom is internal. The abolitionist movement (see “orgs” section) enjoys great regional and international support, especially from Gaza, Kurdistan and the Arab Republic, as well as Golden Promise Inc. I’d volunteer to fight with them myself if I didn’t like being alive so much.



THE HAJJ AND THE TWO MOSQUES

The shiniest jewels on Old Ayman’s crown are Mecca and Medina, the holiest site for Islam and the target of the greatest pilgrimage on the planet—the Hajj. During the Hajj, tens of millions of Muslims from all over the planet rise from the Global DataNet and come to Mecca in the flesh. During that sacred time, all non-Muslims are politely asked to leave the two holy cities, all un-Islamic activities are stopped and the general level of tolerance for anything which couldn’t be found in 7th century Arabia is reduced to near zero.

This means that if you have visible cyberware, drink alcohol, display physical affection or generally just stand out, say, by being a woman, there is a good chance that you’ll be lynched. To avoid international incidents, the Royal Police goes out of its way to keep anyone who doesn’t look like a pilgrim safely locked in their hotel rooms—or prison cells, if they make a fuss of it. The charge is usually “disruption of the public peace,” which is exactly what your vicious beating will be if you’re allowed to roam free.

WESTERN HEMISPHERE ATLANTICA

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/ATLANTICA
FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET/BOSTON

POSTED BY: #WOLFSON

BOSTON

Yeah... Good ol' Beantown.

It doesn't matter whether you want to blame terrorists, evil politicians, Als, or invading space aliens—the fact is the Broken Cradle of Liberty is really broken these days. For that matter, Atlantica seems to have surrendered its position as harbinger of liberty to Cascadia, and appears to be in serious danger of turning into an oppressive police state.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: "Seems to have"?

"Appears to be"? That's kind of like saying
"The sea level might have risen in the last
hundred years or so."

#Magpie: but the sea level has risen, ne?
@_@

#Luciferion: Point, Magpie. Point.

When terrorists set off a bomb in front of the Emperor Pharmaceuticals Pyramid on November 13, 2088, it might have been considered just another day in Boston... except for one thing. Well, actually a half-dozen things: Other bombs went off almost simultaneously in the city, as well as in Portland, Maine. A good 2,451 people died, with hundreds of other injuries.

Of course the finger-pointing started right away. It was radical local extremists. It was the NAC. It was the Chinese. It was the Brazilians.

The fact of the matter is, no one stepped forward to claim the glory, so—in the beginning, at any rate—speculation was sort of pointless. But that didn't stop Atlantica President Martin Hughes from extending martial law from Boston (where it had been in effect pretty much since the end of the Second Civil War) to the rest of Atlantica, which pretty much made him the

Person In Charge until the crisis was over... which, things being what they are, might be a long damn time.

Technically, this didn't change a thing in Boston, since the city had known martial law for a good two decades. But there were some subtle effects.

For one thing, most of the Combine (that's the "Atlantica Combined Armed Forces," for those who aren't familiar with the Atlantica military) troops left town. Except for the resources deemed necessary to maintain the protection of the Federal Government and the Sea Wall—which essentially meant the garrison at the Logan Airbase Military Complex (LAMCOM)—the Combine units were moved to other critical cities and locations.

At least until a MEDIAfile cropped up and incriminated the NAC in the Emperor Pharmaceuticals bombing (and also suggested the Coalition was in bed with the Chinese for that little prank). That's another story, but the upshot is that Field Marshal Thurlow Washington ordered a pant-load of Combine troops to reposition near the Coalition border.

Unless you've been living under a rock, you pretty much know this caused a hell of a lot of political fallout between the NAC and Atlantica, but—something most peeps weren't privy to—it also caused a lot of head-butting between the President and the Marshal since they had a difference of opinion on the how's and where's of troop deployment. Apparently they reached a consensus. Those In the know suspect Marshal Washington agreed to support President Hughes' right to rule in return for being allowed to have the final say on matters regarding the Combine.

#Neon_Bright: Suspect my ass.

#Slave_2_Daedalus: You'd think we'd be past all the PC BS by now, but it just ain't so. Obviously Wolfson simply wants to avoid allegations of slander.

Since then, Marshal Washington hasn't been in Boston. Instead, he's moved around Atlantica (with a highly classified agenda) to personally oversee troop dispositions and keep an eye on operations.

In fact, it's been speculated that the Siege of New Brooklyn, begun in September of 2089, was done on Marshal Washington's own initiative—certainly President Hughes was quick to disavow any personal involvement in the event. More pragmatic and cynical people, however, point out that President Hughes never publicly denounced the move, and that Combine forces remain positioned there.

President Hughes, for his part, claims to have no direct authority over the Field Marshal—which strikes some peeps as odd—and has been forced to put in more public appearances than he's had to since his election in '86. The fact of the matter is, martial law isn't any more popular outside of Boston than it was to the residents when it was confined to the city. Public opinion, needing to be swayed, required a lot of propaganda and "In Your Face" time.

Monthly (or even weekly) media appearances to address the Atlantican People have become commonplace. Fortunately for him, Hughes was always a popular leader, but all the same, rumors persist that it hasn't been the real President Hughes making those appearances. These rumors suggest it's been a simulacrum or an android made to look like him, but being paid well (or forced, according to some sources) to potentially take the bullet—or bomb, as the case may be—for the President.

Some fringe thinkers have even suggested it's simply a very cleverly constructed Avatar, and that the real President is in a deep bunker below LAMCOM... or not even alive any more. They go on to suggest that Atlantica is now a military state, firmly under the control of Thurlow Washington.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: There's no suggesting about it. Although Hughes is still alive for sure. Thurlow needs backup material for a new sim in case of an accident.

#Neon_Bright: You got any proof of this?

#Slave_2_Daedalus: Peel back the onion, tomo. Log onto 6chan and dig.

With most of the soldiers gone, Police Chief Amir Apraku and the Atlantica Police Force are now back in charge of security in Boston. And that means... well... business as usual: the APF was always in charge of checkpoints around the city, so the only real difference is there aren't a lot of trigger happy soldiers and Razor-backs prowling around. Just trigger-happy police and armored police vans. This also means Red Callahan and his Irish Mob are in control again.

Well... mostly.

The Combine's efforts to pacify Boston led them to mainly crack down on two major groups: terrorists and the Irish Mob. While the Callahan family was busy trying to cover their own assets, it gave other gangs an opportunity to move in and set up shop. Many—if not most—of these little gangs failed, falling prey to either Combine sweeps, inter-gang warfare, or larger, more established organizations. The few that survived had either roots or resources.

Julius Angello and his Ship Rats (the dredges of the Italian Mafia) had roots. Over the twenty-year rule of martial law in Boston, the Ship Rats managed to hang on in East Boston against all comers and stay off the Combine's radar. The net result was when the Combine withdrew behind LAMCOM's walls and turned control of the city over to the APF, Angello controlled Eastie.

It didn't come easy, though. One of the new gangs that moved into town was the Crazy 88s—purportedly under the leadership of Blind Ricky Wong. After grabbing some turf in Back Bay, the 88s were able to move into Beacon Hill and East Boston. Ironically, the same events that pulled the Combine out of Boston allowed the Ship Rats to push the Crazy 88s out of Eastie.

You see, the 88s are supposedly (at least according to Julius Angello) a Chinese gang, although they claim to be Vietnamese—or Korean, or Japanese, or anything else decidedly Asian and not Chinese. In any case, the groundswell of nationalist support in the wake of the '88 bombings allowed Angello to call on popular sentiment to drive the Crazy 88s out of East Boston (Hey, tomo, even their name suggests they had something to do with

it, ne?). So the 88s fell back to the north areas of Beantown, but still control most of Back Bay and Beacon Hill, with Wong still rumored to run the show—though some peeps speculate about a JUMP Bike racer named Naomi Li and where she sits in the gang's hierarchy.

#Slave_2_Daedalus: Word: Wong is technically in charge, but Li is a Red Pole sent from the tong's 489 in Chicago.

#Magpie:??? @_@

#Luciferion: Wong runs the show in Boston, but Li is an enforcer sent direction from the gang boss to oversee things directly in his name.

#Magpie: oh. Why didn't he just say so? >_<

But Red Callahan still controls the largest chunk of Boston, as far out as Roxbury, and he still has his fingers in Back Bay, since Tiberius Clancy remains the CEO of Emperor Pharmaceuticals and (allegedly) in Callahan's back pocket. For that matter, since the local APF—particularly Chief Apraku—are also alleged to belong to the Mob, Callahan still theoretically retains a certain amount of control... or at least has his finger on the pulse of the whole city.

Then again, the status quo may not always be stable. There are whispered rumors that Red Callahan has been exploiting the well-known rivalry between Julius Angello's daughter, Angela, and Naomi Li to undermine the Crazy 88s. Callahan denies any involvement with Angela, of course, and other, more cynical, peeps point out the friction between Callahan and Angello: they can't even come together to drive out the 88s.

Meanwhile, Naomi Li (and the Crazy 88s by proxy) continue to insinuate themselves deeper into the good graces of Boston's upper crust.

Ah... there are two other caveats to Callahan's control of Beantown. First, it breaks down in Roxbury and Hyde Park, which are almost exclusively the domains of hybrid (and other non-human) gangs. Second, Cambridge remains an almost sovereign state under the auspices of Chancellor Sterns and the Harvard University and Technical Institute.

What does all this mean for most peeps in Boston?

Surprisingly little, actually.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Unless you count avoiding dirty cops, mob boys trying to run the city, terrorists, and the occasional jar head who's on a power trip.

#Luciferion: Now you're just being facetious.

The APF still mans the checkpoints, for example, but they've always been a bit self-serving in Boston. Well... maybe now that the Combine troopers aren't looking over their shoulders so much they're more prone to accepting bribes or harassing people they don't particularly like.

Likewise, gangs have always been a problem—no less so now than two years ago. Granted, most of the little ones now owe a certain degree of loyalty (or maybe just lip service) to Callahan, the Ship Rats or the Crazy 88s, but these are still the people in your neighborhood you go to when you actually want something done.

And terrorists are still a threat.

Despite rumors that Peter Moskalewicz, front man for the Scions of Liberty (and the most wanted terrorist in Atlantica) was killed in one of the November 13 explosions, no one has been able to confirm or deny it. In any case, the SOL continues to be a headache for those in charge, and the Sea Wall still remains under constant surveillance... just in case.

The only real change—locally, at any rate—came in the last year, largely on the virtual front, so it tends to only affect the residents of Boston peripherally.

After the European Crash of '89 and the assertion that Charon was an AI, paranoia over avatars began to run rampant. Speculation over the true nature of Beantown's own "Guardian Angel"—only known by her moniker of Archangel—began to fill every establishment in Boston.

#Magpie: eh? Charon's an AI? But I've met him in person! @_@

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Doesn't mean anything, Magpie. Unless you've seen him bleed and die, you don't know for sure what's real and what isn't. You could



have been looking at a clone, a hyper-real construct, or any number of things.

#Neon_Bright: D00d... You're gonna make us all paranoid.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: It'd be good for you.

Archangel had long been a fixture in the Pirate Blog scene, but now people wanted to know who—or what—she was. Some claimed she's really Mistress Lily, the enigmatic owner of Club Mephistopheles; some that it's actually Jason Finch, the owner of the No More Bull tavern. But in light of the Crash, some began to wonder if Archangel wasn't really an AI and part of some deeper conspiracy.

///THREAD JACK///

LOADING...

SHADOW PROFILES:

SUBJECT: THE BOSTON UNDERGROUND

AUTHOR: LUCIFERION

Ask most sprawlers in Boston about "the Boston Underground," and you're likely to be directed to a club franchise located at Fields Corner where you can dance and buy overpriced food and drinks. Those in the know, however, are likely to ask for clarification: are you talking about the club or the network of tunnels and passageways beneath the city?

Now, if you're only vaguely familiar with the tunnels, don't go believing the propaganda on either side of the issue. The Underground isn't exactly the breeding ground of terrorists and genetic nightmares the Atlantica Government often seems to imply, nor is it the utopian paradise any number of anarchist and revolutionary demagogues would like to profess. Fact is, like everything else in Beantown, the Underground has a buttload of facets and faces, any number of which could be construed as "The Truth."

The bottom line is you'd better have an idea of why you're headed there and where you're going.

The first thing you should probably know about the Boston Underground is it was created more by accident than design. the Underground is actually a maze of tunnels springing from a number of sources: maintenance passageways for the Big Dig (that

would be highways 90 and 93, as well exits for places like Science Park and the old Government Center), the now-unused subway system, the sewers, and the old electrical grid—not to mention a few passages and tunnels added in more recent history. Of course, not all these places are accessible by people of ordinary size.

Now, once upon a time, many of those things—like the sewage flow systems, the electrical grid, and the switches for train tracks—were maintained by a small army of maintenance workers and a company of AI aspects, all ensuring things stayed (relatively) clean, organized and stable.

Not so much anymore.

Even before the Civil War, things like the subway were abandoned in order to finance the Sea Wall, and after the Civil War, the new government in Atlantica was forced to shut down more projects in order to manage its budget and upgrade civil works (like the new power grid). Acts of warfare, terrorism, and ecological disaster—not to mention the simple passage of time—have made many of the old tunnels unstable and dangerous. Any maintenance personnel are now strictly confined to areas deemed "most important" (and even then, they're typically accompanied by a Combine patrol for their own safety), and most of the aspects have gone offline.

What this means to you is, the tunnels under the city can be dangerous to traverse.

For one thing, aside from various groups (gangs, smugglers, terrorists, black marketers and the like) who claim territory underground (and tend to take a dim view of anyone encroaching on their turf without permission), the lack of overall maintenance means portions of the passageways have become entirely unstable and subject to sudden collapse. This can be even more dangerous than the obvious cave-in. It's not unknown for a tunnel collapse to be far enough below the water table to cause the flooding of everything around the collapsed area.

That right there is one thing making it potentially unsafe to open a sealed door or knock down an old wall: you never know if there might be several tons of water waiting for you on the other side. It also



sometimes makes walking down old passageways dangerous since a few inches of water might be hiding potholes or other obstacles—perhaps even an abandoned shaft—and you never know if the little pool of water filling up a small room might be electrified.

Aside from those usual underground suspects, remember those AI aspects? Not all of them shut down, and some of them are believed to have matured to full-blown AIs—which can make things tricky, since it's often tough to figure out their motivations. And if they want to remain alone and undetected... Let's just say things won't go well for an unwelcome intruder.

Then there are things like unexploded bombs left over from the last war or various terrorist operations that went south and were never carried out. Nothing like a bomb going off next to you while you're in a confined tunnel to ruin your day.

If all of this isn't bad enough, it's also rumored that corporations like Emperor Pharmaceuticals used to (and some peeps claim they still do) maintain sealed and secure underground "bunkers" for carrying out some of their more... "Questionable" research and experimentation. With things going to pieces down there, not all of those bunkers are so sealed and secure any more, which means any number of bio-horrors, genetically altered viruses, or worse could be loose somewhere.

So why would anyone head into the Underground at all?

Any number of reasons, tomo.

For one thing, it's a great place to hide. There's a thriving black market going on under the streets of Boston, fueled by a desire for illegal or hard-to-find goods and maintained by various "merchants" or gangs willing to provide those goods. A little-known fact is the Ship Rats maintain a substantial presence below ground, feeding information and money to Julius Angello and keeping the Italian Mob alive in the city.

While Angello's boys (or girls) try to keep munitions from falling into the "wrong" hands, other peddlers are less discerning or, in some cases, more desperate. The Black Hole Sun, for example, is a group of dissidents highly opposed to what they see as the growing power of the Combine in Atlantica. Perhaps ironically, they've become one of the biggest purchasers and distributors of weapons in Boston as they attempt to arm the populace and fight military shows of force and crackdowns on demonstrators.

For that matter, some of the political dissidents who have been marked as troublemakers for speaking out against the current state of affairs have moved into the Underground as well. It's easier to hide there than up above, and its close enough to home that they can keep up "The Good Fight."

Or, for those choosing to Fight the Good Fight in other ways, the Underground provides ways in and out of Boston less traceable than going through a transit hub like HUTI. Various “undesirables” (be they dissidents, non-humans, or even zeeks) have been smuggled out of Boston through the Boston Underground Railroad, and this same railroad has been used to help get Sims, hybrids, bioroids and other non-humans away from the eyes of the NAC.

Basically, the Underground Railroad is a great way for someone with enemies or a past to “disappear” himself—provided he can convince someone of his need. After all, the peeps running that operation have to be careful, so they don’t exactly maintain a booth somewhere.

And the peeps running the Underground Railroad aren’t the only ones interested in tunnels that run here and there: The Combine, various corporate interests (particularly Emperor Pharmaceuticals) and even a few smugglers and “prospectors” are interested in finding alternate routes to move around the city.

Given the potential dangers in trying to find safe and non-flooded routes through the Underground, there’s a certain amount of business potential for anyone willing to brave the dangers and generate accurate maps of the current situation down below.

For that matter, there are lucrative opportunities for anyone with the balls and lacking a bad case of claustrophobia. Remember those live munitions I mentioned? There are peeps in Boston willing to pay top credit for any usable weapons or bombs dredged up by an entrepreneurial explorer. Or how about those corporate bunkers? There’s also occasionally good money in either “cleansing” an old bunker, or even going in to “recover” something for someone—sometimes for the rightful owner; sometimes simply for someone who just wants the data or the dirt.

And if push comes to shove, there’s always bounty work. With all the dissidents, refugees, criminals and who-knows-what-else potentially hiding out in the Underground, there’s usually no shortage of bounties to be recovered by anyone with the guts to go after them.

Now, don’t get me wrong, tomo—it’s dangerous in the Underground, but it’s not like every step you take down there is fraught with peril. There are areas of just plain dark and damp or dusty, and a few peeps who just like to call the place “home.” Those peeps are sometimes referred to by locals as “Morlocks” or “Troglodytes” (“Trog” for short), but they’re much the same as anyone who spends all his time above ground—which is to say, they can be friendly, but generally want to be left alone by strangers, and can get downright hostile if they think someone’s a threat.

For the record, there’s an entire group of underground dwellers who consider the term “Trog” a sort of badge of honor (although they’re not so fond of the other appellations). In fact, they consider themselves the Troggs, and are the closest thing to an actual controlling body in the Underground. If you can get on the good side of one of these guys, though, you’ve potentially got a good guide—or at least someone who can provide you with shelter and a place to lay low in the event of a “problem”—and someone who can help you find good deals on food and merchandise in the Underground.

Part of the reason for that is Troggs tend to band together into small, very clannish neighborhoods. They buy, sell and trade, give birth, grow up, and die, sometimes without ever leaving the Underground. The result, depending on when you happen to enter a Trog hood, is a lot like stumbling into either a very poor part of town after a major catastrophe or during a street festival.

In the former case, you probably want to leave quickly unless you’re sure you’ve got something they want or a very persuasive reason for being there (at best, you’ll be accosted by any number of Troggs looking for a handout; at the worst, you might have to fight your way out). In the latter case, Troggs can be much easier to deal with, since they want to sell you something (in which case, anyone accosting you is trying to sell you something, be it his sister, a sack of roasted roaches, or a velvet painting of Kuami Featherstone).

Um... and you didn’t hear this from me, but if you don’t have a Trog buddy, you’re

probably going to be charged a lot more for anything—be it goods or services—than if they consider you one of them.

LOADING...
#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/ATLANTICA
FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.
TPN.SWW.GNET/ATLANTICAINFOBOMB

THE REST OF ATLANTICA

#FreeAtlantica1776: Hey folks. While #Wolfson did a great job discussing Boston and the underground, he failed to mention the rest of Atlantica, so Here I am, giving you the skinny on the rest of this great nation.

If there's one advantage to being appointed as a mid-level government official, it's that you get to leave your home city from time to time on the public dollar and see the rest of the country. I'm Chris Gregory, the Ops specialist who reports to Atlantica's Secretary of Defense. It's my job to travel to all of our key cities so that we can plan a proper defense, whether the aggressor comes in the form of the North American Coalition, the Great Lakes Union, or someone farther away, like China or Brazil. Of course, given the recent military engagement in New Jersey, the NAC is the most clear and present threat to Atlantica, and they are the ones that we stand ready to move against at a moment's notice.

That said, and as much as I hate to admit this, despite the fact that the NAC is spreading itself out on several fronts militarily, the odds of Atlantica resisting a full-blown invasion aren't good. Simply put, when the United States of America broke apart, the NAC inherited a huge portion of the nation's most advanced military in the world, and the rest of us have been playing catch-up ever since.

#Freedoms_blood_donor: Bah, the NAC will never take back Atlantica.

As far as I'm concerned (and being in government, I know that most top officials feel the same way), Atlantica is the state entity formerly of the United States

that best embodies its prime values. The NAC wraps themselves in their flag and their god, equating them as though the two have anything to do with each other, even while serving their corporate masters behind the scenes.

Truth be told, the corporate influence is felt here in Atlantica as well, but there are legal measures in place to keep their influence from becoming too powerful. More importantly, we embrace individual freedoms and liberty, and we have a true democracy, ensuring that all citizens get a voice in their government, regardless of their race, religion, or creed. That isn't to say that there's no corruption in government, but there seems to be somewhat less of it here than there is in the NAC.

PORTLAND, MAINE

Portland, Maine is the northernmost of Atlantica's great cities, and it lies the farthest away from the borders with the NAC. For this reason, many of the people here feel safe from the threat posed by our neighbor to the west. Many believe that they won't be affected if there's a full-scale war, and that if Atlantica loses the fight, the worst they have to look forward to is occupation or, more likely, incorporation into the NAC. Not many people would welcome this change, however, since it would likely mean an end to the open elections, the absolute separation between church and state, and an overall loss of liberty.

The current population is 5.8 million people, covering an area of 212 square miles. Like most of the coastal cities, when the sea levels began to rise, Portland's population was forced to decide between constructing massive dam-like seawalls to protect the city, or abandoning it. Like New York and Boston, they opted to build seawalls. What Portland did differently was to build a series of three seawalls that went out into the harbor, each with locks that allow ships to pass in and out of the harbor, and they covered a much larger area than what was necessary. Because Portland wasn't a particularly large city at the outset, they planned for growth and made the barrier much larger than it actually needed to be. This resulted in an excess of land, allowing the city to grow. And grow it did.

NEW HAVEN

New Haven is one of the major population centers for Atlantica, and it also serves as the primary command center for the nation's navy. Because of the rising sea levels, New Haven's existence is dependent upon a massive seawall that was erected to protect it. Although the structure is effective, the city wasn't able to create one on the scale seen in Portland or Boston. In fact, it was only large enough to protect the city proper, which meant that many of the surrounding territories, and even some of its own suburbs, flooded. The result was that the city's footprint remained relatively unchanged, but it was built up. Since the flooding, most of the buildings have been replaced with higher rising ones that are able to house more people. Neighborhoods that had single-family dwellings were bought out by the city and replaced with multi-story apartment buildings. Those who couldn't adjust to the more densely populated cities were encouraged to simply relocate, because only the wealthiest individuals could afford such homes.

#Simba: Yeah, they encouraged those people alright...At gun point.

New Haven's population is 3.5 million, and the city covers an area of only 25 square miles, making it one of the most densely populated cities on Earth. The entire city consists of skyscrapers, and the city streets are almost always full of people. To relieve some of the congestion, sky bridges have been constructed between many of the buildings, and a city-subsidized sky taxi service has been established. Even with these in place, personal space is at a premium. Most apartments are no larger than 500 square feet, and most of them contain three or more people. The tradeoff is that most buildings contain numerous open gathering places that are open to the public where people can go to socialize, catch up on their reading, or engage in a number of leisurely activities.

One of the more dangerous pastimes that has become popular here is a practice known as cloud jumping, where people

throw themselves off of perfectly sound rooftops, or high windows, and glide to the ground. Although this can be carried out with parachutes, the cool kids prefer to use cybernetic devices that slow descent. This is illegal, but that doesn't deter most people who enjoy this sport. It's not uncommon for one or two deaths to occur every month, usually the result of a jumper deploying the chute too late, or cybernetics suffering a delay before kicking in.

ALBANY

Albany is a landlocked city that has expanded to include the city once known as Schenectady. The urban sprawl now covers 256 square miles, and its northern and western borders are loosely marked by the Hudson and Mohawk rivers. The sprawling nature of the city has allowed ordinary neighborhoods to both survive and develop, as opposed to building up like most of the other major cities in Atlantica. The city has two downtown areas—the one originally belonging to Albany, as well as the one that was once the center of Schenectady. Both are filled with skyscrapers that are on par with the ones once found at the heart of New York City.

#AOD_Beermonger: If by "survive and develop" he means turning into an urban blight, then I agree.

The Atlantica military operates out of a base known as Bastion, which sits on twenty square miles of property to the west of the city and acts as the command center for all branches of the military. It also houses all of the military's top secret materials and research. Although it employs numerous contractors, security is extremely tight, requiring people entering and exiting to pass through several checkpoints before being allowed to enter the grounds. There is also a military prison located near the heart of the base, but it's believed that not every prisoner there served in the military. Many believe that many high-profile foreign prisoners are kept here as well. Despite the size of the base, very few members of the rank and file are stationed here. It keeps just enough forces on site to provide protection, while

the actual armed forces are located in strategic bases throughout Atlantica.

The mayor of Albany is an embattled cougar hybrid named Juan Pearson. Popular during his first term, he was re-elected and almost immediately found himself embroiled in a scandal where it was suggested that he authorized the use of city funds to pay off the Langoria Cartel to cover up a sex scandal. The allegations are that the family obtained photographs of him receiving visits from hybrid prostitutes, and then paid five million credits to purchase their silence. They obliged, at least until one of their hit men turned rogue and offered the story to the press.

SYRACUSE

Syracuse now has a total area of 66 square miles, with a population of three million. The city sits at the northeast corner of the Finger Lakes region of the New York territory, and its topography is largely flat, with some neighborhoods built on small hills. The city was once known for its trees, but these mostly disappeared when Syracuse was forced to expand to accommodate its new excess population. Its climate is mild, with cold, snowy winters, hot and humid summers, and average spring and fall seasons.

The downtown portion of Syracuse has been filled with an impressive number of sky scrapers, which has created one of the most beautiful skylines in Atlantica. But when people think about this city, it isn't the skyline that they typically envision. Instead, it's the Syracuse gambling district, which contains a multitude of hotels and casinos. Like Las Vegas in the west, this area is known for its neon lights, high profile stage shows, and its gimmicky attractions. In fact, when they were planning for the gambling district, the developers looked to Las Vegas as the model that they wished to recreate. The result is an exciting destination that people travel to from throughout Atlantica and beyond.

There is a seedy underbelly to the gambling here. While it's enough for most people to play the cyberslots, others want to participate in games that have a little more than mere money for chance. Just

off the gambling district are cheaper hotels, and games of death take place in many of them. Large amounts of money are bet on blood sports, such as Russian roulette, street fighting, and others. One of the newer "sports" to emerge is dope-fighting, where cybernetic-heavy tough sorts snort a small pile of cocaine and then fight until one of the contestants collapses from the pummeling, has his cybernetics junked, or blacks out from a drug overdose. Additional lines of the drug are given to the fighters between rounds, and often the fights that go into later rounds are decided more by the fighter less able to handle large amounts of the drug than by the fight itself.

The mayor of Syracuse is Elaine Ward, a tall, attractive woman with alabaster skin, silky raven hair, and striking features. She is the epitome of Syracuse glamour, and she plays this image to the hilt, making her the darling of the city. Although she has used this strategy to win re-election twice, she is also a shrewd politician who carries the favor of the majority of the city's elected officials, and has managed to quietly crush most of her opponents. Those who are familiar with the political situation beyond the public's eye often refer to her as the Iron Lady.

CANADA

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/CANADA

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN

TPN: WWW.GNET/CANADA

POSTED BY: #MARC-ANDRÉ, AKA BIGFOOT'S_IN_MY_BASEMENT

THE MOSAIC CRUMBLES

Someone once said that Canada was like a mosaic landscape—think he was a professor or something. The way he saw it, each piece of that mosaic was an ethnic group with one big piece for peoples of British heritage at the top and another good-sized piece for folks of French heritage right beneath it. All the other ethnic groups were pieced in below, making up one huge foundation. It was a nice, friendly landscape that a lot of folks around the world were keen to piece into. Yeah omae,



it was a real pretty picture. Too bad once things started shaking and rolling south of the border, some of the pieces in that nice mosaic didn't hold together so well.

People don't always handle rapid change too well, and as you'd expect things got ugly for a while. Atlantic Canada got the first whammy when Quebec occupied western Labrador—a bid by politicians in the young Quebec nation to safeguard their future with critical resources. The Canadian Navy was dispatched from St. Johns and Halifax, troops landed from Newfoundland, and shots were fired. Lacking the military resources of Quebec, the forces of Atlantic Canada weren't able to stand up to the invasion.

Not long after, a whole slew of problems reared up on the west coast. In some weird geopolitical arrangement, by the time the de Fuca quake hit, 90% of British Columbia's population was settled in the southwest corner. If that wasn't bad enough, due to a quirk of history the capitol was located on the southern tip of an offshore island. Yeah omae, that capitol would be Victoria—the major urban center hit hardest by the quake.

Rebuilding from the quake was a major suck on the BC and Canadian economy. You know what they say, ami; one country's misfortune is often another's opportunity. That would describe to a "T" the Chinese Mandarinate's and Techno-Shogunate's view of the situation. Already dug deep into the BC economy with heavy investment in resources and commodities, they saw a lot of upside in selectively financing the rebuilding of southwestern BC.

DOUGLAS COMMONWEALTH

This is one challenged young nation, omae. Even in 2090, Victoria is still building back from the damage of the quake 21 years ago. Meanwhile the small cities and towns in the rural regions on the mainland have their own problems, whether it be rebuilding from their own devastation or contending with a hostile Caledonia. Of all communities, the towns on the west coast of the island had it the worst. Being in the direct path of the tsunami, almost every community there got wiped off the map.

People in Douglas just refer to it now as the Waste Coast.

Nanaimo sitting in the middle of it all on the island's east coast is in the best shape, having gone unscathed by higher water levels and the tsunami. Being surrounded by devastation breeds its own problems though, and many of the citizens in this small city challenge Victoria for the right to be capitol of the new commonwealth. They're not alone—many other citizens up North Island and on the mainland don't want a repeat of the extreme rural-urban divide that plagued British Columbia. Victoria remains the capitol for now, but don't be surprised if it's relocated here.

Two decades now since its formation, Douglas has seen a lot of changes in its shifting landscape. A defense treaty with FreeCoV is now in place, so the fiasco stemming from its refusal to aid the free city against Caledonia two decades ago won't be repeated. Trade treaties with Cascadia, FreeCoV and Kootenay have brought it more into those nations' economic and political spheres, and companies from FreeCoV and Cascadia have branches here.

There's lots of diversity from one end of the Commonwealth to the other, but something you'll find throughout are non-humans. With less than 2 million citizens, so much land to govern and about a quarter million dead from the quake, the bureaucrats down in Victoria reluctantly agreed to grant non-humans rights as citizens. Androids, simulacra, and hybrids have all found decent livelihoods here, mostly employed in the gritty work of rebuilding. Many simulacra and androids with a military skew are employed in Douglas' ever expanding armed forces.

Non-humans are free to live anywhere, but most hybrids only choose Victoria if employment demands it. While the people there tolerate them, they're not exactly trusted or liked; the same isn't true for smaller cities like Nanaimo and Powell River, though. Hybrids are integrated tightly into First Nation communities throughout the Commonwealth; particularly on the Waste Coast where tsunami damage to First Nation settlements was severe.

KOOTENAY COMMONWEALTH

Historically populated by unpopular religious orders, radical labor unionists, back-to-the-land environmentalist, anarchists, hemp growers, and Vietnam draft-dodgers, this place has always been culturally out of sync with most of its neighbors. The locals joke that their beloved Kootenay is a nation caught between a RoC and a RoC, with the firm and friendly rock of the Republic of Cascadia to stand on, but a hazardous Republic of Caledonia rockslide ready to come down on all other sides. It's a strange situation for sure, omae, with the Commonwealth in a sort of love-hate-cynical love triangle with its 3 neighbors.

Other than in the capitol and a few smaller cities, people in this country are scarce, and everyone knows it. The country attracted many from Vancouver and Victoria after the devastation of de Fuca, but even counting all those transplants, there's barely more than a million here. The national council has addressed this in part by granting rural public lands to groups that will use them responsibly. It's attracted many who desire to live in an unspoiled wilderness with close neighbors to share in the experience. Called Lotuslanders, they now make up the brunt of the people living rurally here, especially along the Caledonian border.

That urgent need for citizens drives many policies, and it's why non-humans live here. What I mean, ami, is that hybrids, androids, and simulacra have constitutional rights equal to every other citizen. That makes the concept of human rights versus non-human rights non-existent here. If they're smart enough to get here on their own merit, then they can become fully-franchised citizens. You'll find all of the non-human races everywhere in society.

Probably the most unusual citizens here are zeeks. The Commonwealth prides itself on its ability to provide a society in which even psions can find a home. They're almost always settled amongst Lotuslanders, whose tighter community bond allows for more support. They may have a lot of compatibility and harmony with the communities they live in, but

they're a deadly threat to outsiders who have ill intent towards their neighborhoods.

Many may be living rurally here, but just about everyone here is connected to the Global DataNet. For a nation with so many mountains and remote locations, it's impressive how sophisticated and extensive the Virtual Reality infrastructure is here. The use of the Global DataNet here goes beyond just information though, as many of the national and local decisions are made by digital plebiscite.

REPUBLIC OF CALEDONIA

This country probably would have been another member state of the Alberta Republic, if it weren't for their annexation of the Slice. When Alberta and Saskatchewan combined to form a new nation, they saw fit to carve out the whole section of BC northeast of the Rocky Mountains. It's still an embarrassment and wound to Caledonians' pride, and despite sharing some similar views they have a deep mistrust of Alberta and their NAC allies. No one's quite sure if that land grab was a political miscalculation by them or the clandestine work of the Mandarinate or NAC. Either way it certainly succeeded in creating an unfriendly neighbor for the republic.

When they broke from Canadian and BC confederation, the people here were tired of a political system which from their perspective was about as meaningful as trying to talk sense to a Kootenay hemp head. They wanted a new system, with more checks and balances and no British flavor. Representatives of all the seceding regions met and voted to form a two house Republic with an elected president. In the hopes of preventing regional domination they placed the senate, congress and capitol buildings in the middle of the nation at Prince George.

Non-humans are scarce here, as the constitution doesn't grant them any rights and most are prohibited outright. In the minds of Caledonians there's only so much good work to go around and only humans are fit to do it. Caledonians would much rather invest in luring people from other regions to fill labor needs than allow artificials and fakes the right to work. Luxury simulacra are the exception and they're



found in licensed leisure businesses such as escort services. Hybrids are the most discriminated against as they're regarded as animals. In certain regions there are even shoot-on-sight laws in effect.

Caledonians have one of the biggest rock piles of wealth on the planet. With the exception of a few lake-chained valleys and high plateaus, the republic is all mountains. For decades people were trying to find and get at the valuable resources they knew were untapped by the mining of a century ago. Advancements in mineral exploration tech and the development of laser extraction were the answer, and many rich strikes have been discovered in the past decade.

In the forests super trees are bringing back woodlots faster than ever. The forests of the Republic were already getting lots of love before secession, with genetically engineered super tree stock widely planted. In 2090 some regions are already reaping the benefits, and nimble golemmechs allow loggers to get in and harvest quickly with minimal damage.

ALBERTA

No surprise, omae—the two western provinces where union with the USA and separation from Canada have historically had some support, were those that saw the NAC as an attractive model for a new country. The NAC's promise of a strategic alliance seemed like a better deal than remaining within the status quo of Canada. Not to mention, ami, that corporate citizens found the NAC's enthusiasm for company-run regions too good to be true.

The politicians and citizens over in Saskatchewan weren't as keen at first, but once Alberta's power-wielders started threatening to tighten the screws on the rivers flowing into their province, they came around. There was never any doubt for the corporate citizens in that province, though. With so many untapped resources in rural regions, to their minds company-administered regions were the golden road to the future. That many of their citizens might end up in the melting pot along with the gold getting there, didn't concern them much. In 2071 the electorate in both provinces voted in favor of referendums that took them out of confederation.

The land bordered by the two provinces wasn't enough for the politicians. Within a month of its proclamation, the new Alberta government made a military push and occupied all the land east of the Rocky Mountains. That meant slicing out a big wedge of northeast British Columbia. That annexation carved out all of the Peace River basin, some small cities and a lot of primo agriculture and range lands. They didn't go it entirely alone though, as the NAC lent a lot of military gear to the operation. The politicians in Edmonton claimed they were always meant to control Canadian lands east of the Rockies, but water and natural gas were the real reason behind it all. Many of the locals want out from under Alberta. Well there's some irony; the land that has long been known as the Peace Country is anything but peaceful now.

Unification into a new Alberta nation has been a boon to the two provinces. This is one of the few places outside of the radioactive Middle East that still has crude oil. Despite much of the world shifting to alternative energy, there's still a demand for it. The Alberta government is keen to exploit it for all it's worth. The resource companies here can now employ androids and simulacra more easily, which provides them workers that aren't averse to unhealthy conditions in eco-hazardous zones.

Better yet, they don't mind living in new, trashy resource towns and they don't demand benefits.

You won't find hybrids anywhere in the nation unless they're here illegally. That's not to say some aren't there, but they're only in remote, rural places where they can keep out of sight. Simulacra and androids are here in numbers, but they're far from franchised citizens. Not many seem to care though as the tradeoff of poor living and working conditions for decent pay makes it worth it.

REPUBLIC OF QUEBEC

Way back in the middle of last century, things started rumbling in Canada's la belle province. You see, omae, for decades Quebec was run by corrupt politicians who were in tight with the Church. If you called it a parliamentary theocracy, I wouldn't argue too much with you. Back then, folks



of British heritage living in Montreal dominated almost every aspect of Quebec society. Heck, in the early part of that century those Anglophones living along that city's "golden mile" controlled 70% of Canada's wealth!

The rumbling started in the late 1950's and by the end of the 60's it was a hurricane. The majority who were of French heritage wanted change and wanted it quickly. A group of militant revolutionaries even sprung up and caused havoc. Things got scary for a while and the big brass in Ottawa even slapped martial law on the place and sent in the troops. Those Francophones weren't fazed though. They eventually elected their own separatist party, drove of Anglophones left, and by the mid 1990's the second referendum for separation failed by only a sliver. All of it made Quebec a very distinct piece of the Canadian mosaic by the time the new millennium rolled in.

The Death had one mucho impact on Quebec. Being a primo go-to place for refugees for centuries, Canada opened her doors again to survivors of the Middle East wars and global flooding and many jumped at the opportunity. Thing was, the politicians over in Quebec didn't have the right to control immigration into their own province and many non-French speakers began settling in. Not a good situation, omae, it created lots of tension and unease among Quebecers who started feeling that their culture and language were slipping away. The quiet revolution that had been smoldering for decades started to heat up.

The Quebec government tried to lure Francophones in from the GLU to restore some balance. Things were a bit too cozy in the GLU for many to bite, but the campaigning did elevate Quebec's profile there. Rich Francophones there saw a lot of raw potential in Quebec. With the GEU economy running flat out they had a lot credits to invest, so they funded resource exploration and established branches for some of their manufacturing. Montreal and Ville de Québec entered a boom era and some rural towns that were almost flat-lining started to resuscitate. It all helped make Quebecers feel a lot more confident about driving their own destiny.

The breakup of the USA and the Juan de Fuca quake, were the events the Politicians in cite Quebec were waiting for. Those events slapped another layer of fear and uncertainty onto the minds of Quebecers. The politicians sprang at the opportunity and pulled a snap referendum in 2070. Unlike the previous two, it sailed through with over 70% pushing the [oui] button.

More cynical peeps think the real reason the powers in Ville de Québec and Montreal pushed for secession was to combat the dilution of language and culture by the virtual world. Then there's the even more cynical who think it was all a manipulation by the francophones in the GLU. Whatever the real reason; with Quebecers of 2090 spending so much time TAPPED in and delving the Global DataNet, the culture and lingo of the outside is constantly flooding in. It's a funny thing ami. While everyone here speaks French in public, when it comes to the Global DataNet the lingua franca for the savvy is cyber-creole.

To hit back, the government has created strict laws for HR object signage—it's en français or the highway, omae. Even a street vendor broadcasting a simple one-liner in cyber-creole for their wares is certain to get a visit from la Police de Culture. And if you haven't got the language, don't expect the fancy language translation program you're running to work, because it's certain to be blocked. Lots of citizens here think this cultural policing is a grand waste of tax payers credits, but it has wound up in a lot of tradition and the brass in Ville de Québec have too much invested in it to see it in any other way.

Apart from the cultural enforcement, Quebec of 2090 is a model society where liberal values are held in high regard. That liberal touch doesn't extend to packing around firearms though—they're restricted to all but the military, law enforcement workers, and citizens with a Right to Carry (RtC) chip. Not too worry though, ami—many of the bureaucrats and law enforcers here are corrupt. Law enforcement will turn a blind eye to gang or syndicate members that are carrying, just as long as they conceal it and they've



paid their bribes. Heck, you pay enough and you can even buy an RtC! The same is true for lethal cyberware—pay up and no questions asked. Lay a brutal maiming on an innocent citizen though, and the police locale are going to be busting you pronto.

FREE CITY OF VANCOUVER

Going it alone as a free city and building back from the devastation of the de Fuca quake for two decades hasn't been easy for FreeCoV. It's a fully-functioning region now, but on the surface it doesn't exactly look like the Vancouver of the past. With water flooding in on many sides since the 30's, forty-five foot tall seawalls dominate much of the shoreline. The city had one huge challenge holding back all that water and some areas got wiped out or abandoned when the swell of the de Fuca tsunami breached the walls.

Richmond, Stanley Park, Gastown and Chinatown got the brunt of it. If you boasted that out of all the FreeCoV communities Richmond had it the worst and made the best of it, I wouldn't argue with you, ami. The original civic planners weren't thinking too well when they surveyed that city. Built on an ancient flood plain, the ground turned into a milk shake during the quake and after the levies were blasted aside many buildings just tilted over and sank beneath the waves. By the time the shaking stopped, the entire commercial

district along 3 Road was crumbled and underwater with the rest of the city.

New Shanghai rose out of the water, muck and rubble of Richmond like a miracle, and it wouldn't have happened without the Techno-Shogunate and Chinese Mandarinate pumping in the credits. With one of the largest populations of peoples of Asian heritage, sticking their noses into the building of a new glittering city was just too much of a golden opportunity to pass up.

The city's like a mix of west coast urban and early 20th century Shanghai-Bundt, with a nice dash of Chiba neon thrown in. This place has HR signage that's about as glitzy, exotic and mind-boggling as it gets, omae. The builders left their personal signatures on the place with the beautiful Bundt Shoreline district and spectacular Shogan Plaza.

It depends upon your perspective, omae; some say FreeCoV is a shining example of what's achievable when a free city partners with super powers, while others say it's a city that shrugged off its former governments for new Mandarinate and Techno-Shogunate masters. No matter what your view, there's no denying the two super powers cast a long shadow here. FreeCoV is governed by a regional council of elected citizens, but the Mandarinate and Shogunate are always in the background. The Republic of Cascadia and





the Douglas Commonwealth are the mitigating factors—without treaties with them there's no doubt FreeCoV wouldn't be able to boast the "free" in its name.

It hasn't exactly been a bad proposition for FreeCoV citizens. Nope, far from it ami; this is one moving-and-shaking region. The footprint of the two Pacific giants is deep, but gentle. Their infusion of credits buoyed up a sinking economy and resulted in impressive complexes built in the style of their Asian funders. The creation of a Pacific free trade zone in New Shanghai has attracted companies like GPI and Kensei who have constructed large centers of manufacturing.

#YukonJoe: FreeCoV is a great place to live, especially if you're a freelancer. There's plenty of work if you're into the smuggling game. Of course, the usual suspects are always hiring. The new megacorps are fighting a shadow war for control of the market. That means work for folks like us.

#Ripperjack: Don't forget all the contracts for fugitives from the Douglas Commonwealth. Plenty of creds to be made, chum.

THE GREAT LAKES UNION

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLOYGROUND.NET/GLU

FQDN: JACOBSPLOYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET/INFO.GLU

POSTED BY: #PRAETRORIAN_GUARD

Trying to make sense of the Great Lakes Union can be damn confusing for anyone, but it's easier if you realize it's all just different parts serving one big body. Serve the Union and the Union will serve you is what they say in the GLU, ami. That sums things up nicely, except if you want to live there you better know who serves whom and how those GLU body parts are meshed.

First you've got the Union; it's the head, omae, where most of the thinking and decisions are made. The Union assembles the bureaucracy, hammers out the laws, forges the military and weaves the social

safety net. They're just GLU citizens that have kicked and kissed their way to the podium, but their vision is so homogenous and their power so omnipotent, that most living in the GLU just refer to all of society as the Union.

Then you have the oligopolies: mega-corporations which, like the body's organs, fuel the whole. There's not many of them, but they include some of the largest corporations in the world. They're not exactly like the oligopolies of the early part of the century either. Far from it, omae; GLU megacorps are diversified to an impressive degree with their fingers poked into many pies. Even the retail strips in commercial districts are usually nothing more than a series of franchised businesses owned by an oligopoly. Sure there are Unionists proprietors calling them their own, but what they actually own is only a small share.

The Oligopolies aren't so powerful that they live outside the law. The power brokers in Toronto aren't interested in giving their authority away to them. They still have to abide by the law, and if they ever break water laws, they're sure to have a few of their execs iced. A number of them have pushed for the right to own and develop abandoned regions, but in local economic vacuums like that the Union usually just plunks a Union Corp down and takes over.

Then you've got the Unionists; like the body's limbs they carry the brunt of the burden. Unionists work for the oligopolies, serve in the military, turn the gears of bureaucracy and pay their dues. As long as you serve some aspect of the Union well, omae, you can count on a good life with your needs taken care of and some security for the future. Fail in your servitude though, and you'll quickly find yourself serving on the front lines.

Most races can become Unionists, although hybrids aren't exactly welcomed in the large cities unless they're playing in one of the gladiator sports leagues. Androids are most appreciated in military buffer zones or the towns and cities close to them. If you're one of those simmies born in a vat though, don't expect to find a home in the GLU. Employing a simulacrum



for any form of labor is strictly taboo and carries stiff penalties. By far the most prized Unionists are human 2.0. The Union launched a program for the ideal Unionist decades ago, and that first generation is now entering adulthood.

Being smack in the middle of a continent that recently suffered a civil war and the breakup of two major countries, you'd think things might be a bit tenuous in the GLU. Well if that isn't the truth, omae, we all must be just playing in a VR game. Coexisting with its neighbors is one heck of a balancing act for the GLU, and even the slightest movement or change could twang it off the tightrope. Some say if you were to talk about the situation between the GLU and its three neighbors like they were people, they'd be like a Priest, a Rogue, a Brother and the Brother's Antagonist.

THE PRIEST

The North American Coalition. With their theocratic flavor of governance, the NAC is like the patronizing priest that's annoyed at the GLU's conduct and wants penance. On the other hand, the GLU is like the ex-congregation member who's turned to a different path just to spite him.

THE ROGUE

Now that would be the Republique du Quebec. Quebec is the rogue nation that in the eyes of the GLU plucked up Atlantic Canada when the Union was least able to respond. They're also the Rogue that lusts for control of the Ottawa valley and that sacked and pillaged Ottawa City.

THE BROTHER

The nation of Alberta is in tight with the NAC with trade and military treaties, and its mimic in many ways, Alberta is like a brother nation to the NAC. The NAC may be the big brother, but Alberta is happy to be its lesser sibling after all the fuss it's stirred up with Caledonia and the GLU.

THE BROTHER'S ANTAGONIST

The Great Lakes Union wears that hat, omae. When the GLU lured Manitoba in, they denied Alberta vast, water-rich lands and in the process made it a land-locked nation. That's enough of a pin in the eye of Alberta's ambitions that it makes the GLU more of an antagonist to it than the Republic of Caledonia.

With all that hostility with its neighbors, you'd think the Union would be bullied and beaten into submission. Thing is, ami. While there's all that hostility, there are also other factors loosening the pressure on the screws. Brother-Alberta would like to grab Winnipeg and its huge lake lands, but it's already defending the Slice against the Caledonians; fighting on two fronts is more than they can handle. Rogue-Quebec would like to push its border into the GLU beyond the southern bank of the Ottawa River, but too much of what they do pisses off Atlantica. They're irked enough by the Rogue's actions to ensure they have a strong military presence along the New York-Quebec border and good relations with the GLU.

The Priestly NAC would like to rein in the GLU and deal them some discipline, but they're still dealing with the bad global press from their aggressions in Chicago decades ago. Its militias' actions in southwestern Manitoba didn't exactly win them merit points either. The ambitions of the Chinese Mandarinate and the Techno-Shogunate in the northwest keeps both the NAC and Alberta uneasy. Those two Pacific superpowers realize that FreeCoV's prosperity hinges on strong treaties with Douglas, Kootenay and Cascadia, and the only superpower that's close enough to throw a wrench into that is the NAC.

You'd think all that would put a big damper on the GLU's outlook. It doesn't matter much though, when you've got some of the planet's most powerful megacorps, close to a 100 million citizens, and enough water to drown most of the NAC.

That's not to say that the outlook is rosy in every corner of the Union—far from it, omae. Detroit, Minneapolis and Winnipeg



are all located within 100 miles of the NAC border. All three are living on the edge with an anxiety that permeates throughout all society.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: *I've been to Detroit a few times. A lot of people like to peg Detroit as an urban blight, and it was at one time. Now, things have improved. Don't get me wrong. There are many places in the Motor City that are reminiscent of a warzone, but there are also some good areas, too.*

The presence of the military is felt everywhere, from the roar of hover jets in no-fly zones, to the distant rumble of military golemmechs, and razorback-congested intersections. The Union's mandatory conscription means there's a large standing military and all three cities host a high population of military personnel. Leisure culture is well established there and you can buy just about any pleasure and delight you could imagine—just as long as it wasn't grown in a vat.

Law enforcement in the Union is a moving target—the Union keeps trying to nail down the right formula, but Unionists keep getting targeted by gangs, syndicates and terrorists. For some of the Union's

cities like Detroit, it's a continuation of past realities. For Winnipeg and Toronto, it's a dose of culture shock. Law enforcement is still to grappling with relaxed gun ownership and the radically altered playing field caused by a proliferation of firearms.

There aren't many places in the Union where you have the right to pack a sidearm around, but no worries, omae; with so many Unionists serving in the military what difference does it make? Even worse, many retiring Vets faced with the prospect of a lesser life after service, hold on to their gear or sell it on the black market. Military grade weapons have filtered down to the streets, and neighborhoods can turn into small war zones whenever a turf war erupts.

Then you've got the Union's stance on drugs, ami; they see them as all equally bad, but tolerate them if they serve a purpose. Even alcohol isn't viewed favorably by the Union's health bureaucrats in Toronto, but it's considered a necessary evil in any city or town that hosts the military. Stimulants are handled much the same way. It doesn't seem to matter much anyway, omae—there are many laws dictating what's prohibited here, but there're that many more smugglers willing to brave the Atlantica and Quebec borders to bring it in.

The Union has a similar attitude toward enhancements—they're damned if they do and damned if they don't. Tolerance of lethal mods in particular is relaxed amongst young military conscripts. Those enhancements only become a problem if a conscript doesn't make the grade and finds his way into some gang or syndicate. Contending with Strain is a big challenge for the GLU military, but not having cyber-brutes to patrol volatile borders is a bigger problem.

With three unfriendly neighbors stymied from using conventional military action, you'd expect there to be a high incident of cybercrime here and if that isn't the truth, ami, nothing is. The Union is one the biggest targets on the North American continent for hacking and cyber-sabotage.

They've fought back with a huge investment in safeguarding the connection to the Global DataNet for oligopoly, military and government domains. All that means is that hackers have to get their work done with HR hacks. Hacker subculture is strong and widespread there, with hacker dens existing in every metropolis or abandoned town.

If you said Unionists have water on the brain, I wouldn't disagree with you, ami. Water flows down through every nook and cranny of GLU society, from the protectionist policies of government, through turbines powering oligopolies and out through the gray-water recycling pipes of Unionist homes. There isn't much here that's valued higher than water, and the buy-in for oligopolies and Unionists wanting to exploit it is steep. It's as if those Unionists want to hold on to it at all costs, even if its eventual flow across borders is unpreventable. Of course just about every other nation wants to fill their jugs with it.

Water factors in big when it comes to where Unionists want to live—a neighborhood without river or lakefront is a neighborhood where people probably don't want to live. Redevelop some rundown district that hugs a shoreline and you can reap mucho profits. Even the less fortunate Unionists want to be close to waterfront areas, even if it means living in a neighborhood with all of the character of a Malmart and about as much upside as Baghdad.

Towns situated away from shorelines are the least desirable places to live. If they're small and unfortunate enough to be in a buffer zone, they're usually abandoned with only a few hangers-on. Meanwhile, cities like Toronto, Detroit, Windsor, Minneapolis and Winnipeg (each with plenty of shoreline are booming). Not that they don't have their bad spots—whoa omae, there's plenty of those—but the initial impression they give any visitor is thriving, glittering metropolises towering above impressive shore front malls and parks.

Their enthusiasm for the liquid stuff doesn't end with neighborhood preferences, ami—water leisure is the primo pastime throughout the Union. On the social scene, not having a boat in the garage or moored at the marina is as big a plunge in prestige as canoeing over Niagara Falls. Social pretenders are sure to have fakedwatercraft licenses and shamelessly flash them about at social events. Lake bays near bigger metropolises on holidays are clogged to the point that you can almost walk across them boat-to-boat. Meanwhile, if your child has the aquatic skill of a rock, it's a good reason to have her augmented with some cybernetic turbo-fins.

CHICAGOLAND

#INFOSOURCE

#STREETTOSTREET.TAG.DONATE

LOCAL: KNOWTHESTREETS.PEDIA.ORG

FQDN: KNOWTHESTREETS.PEDIA.ORG.

CHITOWN.06TN.TPN.SWW.GNET

A FREE CITY?

Ironic calling a city "Free" when it's surrounded by one big-ass wall. Who's free, then? The saps stuck inside or the ones on the outs, who don't have to deal with the whole crab-bucket tangle? Ami, Chicagoland got the distinction of being the juicy bit of bone the war dogs of GLU and NAC scrapped over during the Second Civil War. Ain't that an honor? Funny thing is, those rabid pups weren't used to their bones biting back—and that's where the metaphor breaks down, neh? The good people of Chicago decided they didn't want to be gnawed on and started to making a nuisance of themselves.



It took three whole dirty nukes to knock sense into the bunch of lunatics, and the city's been recovering ever since. Slow and steady. Plenty of theories, conspiracies more like, on who dropped those bombs, and plenty of fingers pointing every which way to this day. But the past is the past, ami, and we Chi-town folk like to think on more important future matters, like where our next meal is coming from, or how we're gonna dodge the choppers that just jumped us outta the alley.

Live in the moment, neh? The sprawl will make you appreciate every last moment you're lucky enough to experience. When you're in Chi-town, every breath is a gift, ami. Every beat of your pulse has its price, and you better be willing to pay it if you want to walk the streets of Chicago long enough to know which ones will give you a nice stroll and which ones will wind you up as so much scrap in a dumpster behind a chop shop. Now pay attention, 'cause here's where it gets interesting.

LIFE IN CHICAGOLAND

Chi-town is all about give and get. You won't see it on any TAP overlays or domains, but every single person has a running tally in their heads of the debts they owe and the debts they're due. That's what it often simmers down to in the end, when the grenade smoke clears.

We've got nearly thirty million souls crammed in behind the Wall, and when that many elbows and hips are bumping and grinding, sooner or later heads are going to start knocking and rolling right along with them, capisce? But you're a survivor, aren't you? Here to make a few credits, leave a few bruises and bodies in your wake. Make people remember your name, whatever its worth.

GETTING IN

You'd think people would wise up after a while, thinking they're going to hop in here and immediately be the big fish among millions of shrimp. The migrants keep coming though. Fresh meat, in more ways than one. The ports are the main entries to the sprawl proper, and you've got a few options on how to make your way

through those. Getting an official passport is the safest way, but requires the most patience. If you want to run the risk and pay the credits, you could find someone to smuggle you in or forge you a fake passport so you can skip to the head of the line. As high as the Wall is, numerous operations are in place to help you slip over, under, or through the boundary for a price. If you aren't careful, though, those same "helping hands" may just take your credits and then turn you over to the guards for a bounty. However you get in, you can be sure you'll be paying with time, credits, blood, or a mix of all three.

GETTING OUT

Why would you ever want to leave? Plenty of folks never step foot, paw, or claw outside the sector they were born in, and they aren't complaining. And there's got to be a reason so many people are fighting to get in here. But if you want to go see the wide world, here's how you do it. You either scuttle out the nearest port, hook up with a ride across the lake, or shuttle up the Space Elevator, and start guzzlin' air canisters. Going that route usually means handing over plenty of credits, or selling your soul to some space-bound corp that reminds you every day how lucky you are that they keep you alive. The trick usually isn't getting out of here; it's getting back in.

GETTING AROUND

Get some boots. Heaviest ones you can strap on. That's the best piece of advice I'll ever pass your way, and this is the only time it's free.

Want something a little faster than clomping along? Individual maglev vehicles, VTOL craft, and JUMP cars are pretty nifty if you can afford them. Public transportation such as the maglev "El-Trains" make a knot of the place, and the subways are decent, so long as you remember which stations to avoid once it gets dark. You can always go old-school and chug your way down the streets with a motorbike, chem car, or other clunker.

If you ever get lost, then I pity you, because the hyper object navigation infrastructure embedded throughout the entire





sprawl makes it near impossible for that to happen—unless your guidance system has been hacked.

GETTING BY

That all you're gonna settle for? Just getting by? I'd hoped you had bigger dreams than that. A little spark of vision. This here is a microcosm of the Solar System itself, a regular bottomless pit of opportunity. And everything in the sprawl runs on credits. How do you get those precious credits, you ask?

Sell your soul. Sell your mind. Sell your skills. Sell your body. Hell, sell someone else's body, preferably cold in a bag, ticked off your bounty list. Plenty of odd jobs always need running. This gang wants that gang leader snuffed. This corp needs espionage run on that rival conglomerate, or a pretty piece of tech stolen. Or you could go legit and run-n-gun with the militia.

In other words, get tough, or get rich and muscle to protect you. Make friends in high places, or buy them off. Learn enough to make yourself useful to the right folks, or learn how to make others useful to you.

THE POWERS THAT BE

Time to get a clue about the pizza pie of power this city has been sliced up into. Otherwise, you might take a bite of the wrong slice and wind up with a mouthful of anchovy instead of a delish meatball deep dish. Oh god, I'm salivating. Someone ring up DP!

Anyhoo, ami, it's all about loyalty—which, luckily, can often be bought with enough credits. So, are you going to stick by the faceless corps through thick and thin so long as they keep your water running and fill your trough with slop? Got a thing for helping friends and family keep all their vital organs on the inside, where they belong? Or are you the "all for one, and one for screw you guys" type? Here are the major players you should keep an eye on.

CHICAGO GOVERNMENT

You've heard Chi-town referred to as the "Free City of Chicago," haven't you? Well, there's always those who like to amend

that to the "Free So Long as You Do What We Say City of Chicago." How's about we see who's set themselves up as judge, jury, and executioners this week, ami?

THE COUNCIL

Their faces have been popping up on the Hyper Real channels lately, promising big changes, peace and prosperity and all the usual blather. And by "faces," I of course mean those virtual constructs they've been using to mask their true identities. Only thing different about them, compared to the other hundred would-be rulers that pop up every year? This Council seems to have the military influence to back up their orders, and their presences have been detected in every sector.

But the Council is bad news, lemme tell you. Even if they are trying to do right by us sprawlers, it won't matter in the end. This city has a thing against centralized authority. Especially ones who try the anonymous route. Are they men? Women? Hybrids? AIs? A mix of all the above? Who knows? Yes, the Council knows, very funny. But they ain't saying, and maybe we're better off staying ignorant.

CHICAGO DEFENSE FORCE

When it comes to keeping the sprawl free, not even the biggest wall will do any good if it isn't manned and backed up with enough firepower. Besides, sometimes the threat isn't an external one. If a crisis ever overwhelms the private security organizations, that's when the Chicago Defense Force is called into action; a last line against the apocalypse. Problem is, the many noble volunteers and conscripts who compose the CDF can get a little power-hungry once they're let off the leash, and end up causing just as many riots as they put down. Still, it's a bit better than dropping another nuke on all our heads, neh?

If you want a name to link them to, look no further than Petrus Desonvacce. Yeah, the baby-faced spokesman you see on the feeds, talking about how wonderful it is to serve the city. Supposedly, they're keeping him out of active duty, though, in case he's unlucky enough to ruin that handsome complexion with a scar or two.



On the other hand, if you want a grittier truth, then bring a bottle of whiskey (the real stuff) to Obed Lothem, AKA the Obsidian Wolf. Used to be a run-n-gunner in the wilds who got conscripted to turn his gun sights on malcontents inside the Wall instead.

CHICAGO MEGACORPS

Wanna hear a hilarious megacorp joke? Too bad, because that's in violation of anti-humor regulation V.33.Axxii and you are now terminated from your position. Proceed immediately to the exit or you will be fired upon by building security. Do not attempt to "liberate" your coffee mug from the break room.

Sad thing is, I'm still not sure if that's serious or not. The megacorp funnel plenty of credits into Chi-town, but they're pretty picky about who those are distributed to. It's all trickle-down with them, and the corps know how reliant blue-platers are on them, since they provide everything from our water to our food to our shelter to the filtered air. They know they can squeeze us dry, and the only reason they haven't is because they're too busy fighting each other.

Even while they're scrapping over us, there's tell of a secret meeting that happens a few times a year, one where you don't get invited unless you're worth at least a few billion credits. The deals struck there are overseen by an utterly ruthless honcho who is somehow unaffiliated with any one corp but has them all quaking in their sim-leather boots—goes by the name of Guilder, but you didn't hear that from me, ami.

THE UNITED NATIONS

Nothing united about it, except that every nation involved acts in their own interests. Oh, and they've got nice uniforms. Minimal presence here, though they do pay attention when the dogs of war start sniffing around. They're all about keeping the peace, but everyone knows they keep peace best by occupying volatile territory and maneuvering so they're the ones in charge when the tear gas settles. UN General Adony Okimbe keeps a cold eye on their troops, while their

political front is handled by a polished and prim official named Stella Rezuvoltk. She gives speeches so flawless that she's been accused of being an android, letting her handlers remain in the shadows.

THE WOLVES

Chi-town is a bleeding beast, and the wolves are always circling, waiting for it to stumble so they can leap in to gouge out the juiciest flank. Chicago has a crowded pack of wolves prowling its streets and back alleys, and they're always getting into nasty scrapes, trying to establish alpha status.

BARBARIANS AT THE GATE

In a time where even the poorest of the poor can get a TAP, you've got to make a pretty conscious choice to reject the net completely. The Barbarians at the Gate are a singularly savage bunch who dress in leathers and furs—often stripped from unfortunate hybrids or neko—and wield rustic weapons they've forged with their own hands. They choose leaders by the diplomatic technique of "who collected the most scalps this month?" and that current distinction goes to a set of twins: Ulrik and Reshan. Other clan leaders include Behadja, who always has a pack of starving mutts ready to attack on her command, and a lunatic called Gullet, who has made cannibalism into a fine art. Somehow, their backwards brains have decided proximity equals property, so if they're squatting by the ports that control Chicagoland access, then they must be in control of the whole city, neh?

THE GANGS

Pinged this old slang the other day that describes gangs perfectly: "Dime a dozen." Now, I don't rightly know what a dime was, but these days, gangs are giving the roaches a run for their credits when it comes to infesting all the corners and holes they can find in the sprawl. Some are run like mini-corps, all precision and profits and calculated territory expansion. Some just want to see the people bleed and the sprawl burn. Then there are those bound by codes of honor they think makes

'em oh-so-special. Whatever gets them up in the morning, gangs are active in every single sector to a large degree, and are often the blunt tools (or rusty knives) being manipulated by hidden hands in larger plots.

Watch out for the South Side Storm Troopers, who go out of their way to prove they're still the deadliest gang-bangers in Chi-town. There are few subsectors where they don't have at least a handful of cells. The Burners are a unique bunch, populated entirely by hybrids and mutants who have taken the hazardous Arlington Heights rad zone for themselves and welcome all comers who dare to defy that claim. And if you wander too close to the Aurora barrens, be prepared to pay homage to the Aurora Angels of Death, who hold onto control there with tight and blood-soaked fists. While spread throughout the sprawl, the Angels concentrate operations closer to the Wall, with their troops funded by smuggling goods and people into the city.

THE SYNDICATES

Without leaders, illegal activities amount to nothing more than spitting into the wind. Doesn't really accomplish much and just makes a mess, capisce? When criminal organizations actually start getting organized, though, look out. Enter the Chicago crime syndicates. They're not motivated by emotional fluff like most gangs. Syndicate members are there to enforce their bottom line. The credits, man, the credits. Syndicates are responsible for much of the bribery, blackmail, racketeering, and smuggling throughout the sprawl. There are rumors they've even got agents planted deep in the Triads, Mexican Mafia, and major gangs throughout the sectors. Intelligence and ill-intent makes for a nasty, if extremely efficient combination.

The Black Rose Syndicate is on top of the heap at the moment, the main competition to the South Side Storm Troopers in the Gary Hell Zone. They've secured such widespread influence by being extremely well-organized, almost a criminal corp, and are tightly linked to the Bratva-Vory "Brotherhood."

THE TRIADS

Bet you never would've guessed it, looking around at all the Borgs, chimeras, and ronin walking these streets, but Chicagoland has a pretty big reputation for diversity. All that means, though, is we get to take our pick from a variety of colorful criminal factions. Among these are the Triads, Chinese-based gangs who like to style themselves as a shadowy army ruling by means of drug trafficking, credit dupes, data-theft, gambling, and—when all else fails—ruthless elimination of all opposition. Secretive and with numerous ceremonial rankings, Chi-town's triads encourage loyalty through highly ritualized inductions and oaths binding new members for life.

One of the more active triads goes by the unassuming name of the Purple Incense Party, and they're identified by the tattoo of a dragon's eye peering out of a stylized sketch of flame and smoke. Their Dragon Head is the elderly Shou Gao, whose frail build belies a cunning intelligence. A young woman known as Li Xiao is his Vanguard, handling offense operations. She's never seen without a veil covering the lower half of her face, and there's rumors that she's been spliced for super-human senses and speed.

THE BRATVA-VORY

Also known as the Russian Mafia, this "Brotherhood" has muscled into numerous sectors, hiding its activities behind brothels, cyber fight clubs, Simsex parlors, unauthorized augmented reality simulators, illegal Hyper Reality domains, and even lethal VR hacks. On the streets, they're represented and protected by the Black Rose Syndicate, who get plenty of weapons, upgrades, and stims in exchange for their loyalty. Far more overt than the triads, the Bratva-Vory is quicker to resort to violent ends when they've been the least bit slighted, and they can hold grudges like no one else. Making them angry is akin to rousing a bear from its den. In other words, you better be able to skip town fast, have better connections and protective measures, or have someone you can trip and push into their vengeful path as a distraction.



The Big Brother of the band is a meat-head called Oleksy Kovalik; though in the past couple years, he's been letting a love for fine vodka muddle his self-control, and an up-and-coming smuggler, Artur Sokoloff, is apparently gunning for the top. A coder known as *отравленный язык* is famous for managing their gambling domains and crafting truly spectacular VR hacks that have turned plenty of their enemies into gibbering idiots within seconds.

THE MEXICAN MAFIA

Chicagoland has certainly made a brave effort to round up and incarcerate the more undesirable elements from the streets, maybe thinking sticking all the malcontents in one spot will somehow make them see the error of their ways. Instead, what they got was the Mexican Mafia, a prison and penitentiary-based criminal organization that continued operating within the heart of our very own faulty justice system. Vicious, bloodthirsty, and unforgiving, the Mexican Mafia has actually thrived inside the VR prisons its members populate. If you ever end up on the wrong side of the law, making contact with this organization might be in your favor. They're often identified by symbolism linked to the number thirteen...since M is the thirteenth letter of the alphabet, capisce? Death is the only escape from their ranks.

Jesús Salazar is their current general, and has a flair for using occult spookery to scare new recruits into submission. His immediate lieutenant, Alejandro Gutierrez, is handy with a shiv and any sort of make-shift weaponry. The skull tattoo covering his entire face tells you all you need to know about his charming personality.

THE UNALIGNED

Sure, I get going solo. Fewer folks to split the credits with. Bigger boost to your rep, less overhead. But lemme tell you, precious few make it for long without at least a few fellow ronin to fall back on. And you aren't the first to strike out alone. Plenty of like-minded souls could use your knowledge and skills.

Besides, have you ever thought about how the other gangs and territory lords will take to some punk snitchin' gigs out from under them? Sure. Forget the hidden handshakes, the tattoos, the blood oaths, and wearing your underwear on your head—but never forget the value of having a few unaligned allies at your side. In Chicagoland, you're never totally alone.

FIXERS

Hey, you got a problem with credits lately? As in, not nearly enough of them? Then you'll be happy to bump into a reputable fixer who happens to have a contract that could keep you afloat a little longer. Fixers are the go-betweens who keep certain faces anonymous and certain hands clean of any blood. They can be your ticket to bigger and better things... but remember that pretty much anyone can call himself a fixer. Sometimes the only way to tell a good fixer apart from a rotten one is by who pulls out a blaster after you complete a job.

FREELANCERS

Freelancers chart their own path through Chi-town. No two are alike, and we like it that way, because it means there's plenty out there to handle the down-n-dirty jobs no one else wants. 'Course, that also means they get jobs that toss plenty of shiny credits their way. Anyone wanting to set themselves up as a freelancer will be entering a world of cutthroat competition. The work is often illegal, dangerous, and sure to end in blood and tears. In the end, all that matters to a freelancer is her reputation and the number of credits in her account.

INFOBROKERS

Verily I say unto thee, learn to love info-brokers, for they are the road to salvation. They're tapped into the deepest data feeds twenty-four/seven, and are making connections between yesterday's megacorp assassination and today's half-off deal at McCafe that you wouldn't even dream of imagining. You want to run a successful contract? The more informed you are going into the fray, the better. But beware. The DataStream flows both ways, ami,

and info brokers won't blink twice before selling whatever dirt they've dug up on you to the highest bidder.

SMUGGLERS

Point A to Point B, no questions asked. That's the beauty of Chicagoland's smuggling system, a vast under-network of transportation specialists who know all the hidden sprawl byways, or have a particular talent for running a black-market golem-mech across town and making it look like a flower delivery to their grandmother. Illegal weaponry, implants, data...whatever makes your little heart go pitter-pat. Confidentiality is their specialty, and some go to extreme lengths to guarantee it. Even saw a smuggler who'd spliced his mouth shut so he literally couldn't squeal on his clients...though of course, a rival eventually bombed his VTOL car and just brain-hacked his corpse. C'est la vie.

CHICAGO LAWS

Our legal system, huh? Righto. I could use a good chuckle. Only thing that makes me laugh harder is the concept of a code of honor. Ever heard of "might makes right?" That about covers it. Oh sure, the megacorps have whole underground vaults and AI archives full of their precious

regulations. But when you take away all the shine and skim, it all comes down to "Behave, or your pretty skull will be beaten to a bloody pulp." Of course, the definition of "behave" is what's slipperier than a greased hog chimera to hold on to.

Best advice is to familiarize yourself with what's expected in the main areas you'll be working. And you'll always find people are pretty imaginative in reinterpreting even the most basic laws to work for their advantage in a particular situation.

PORTS OF ENTRY

You sure you want to get into Chi-Town, omae? Well here's a list of the legal ways to get in, but just remember, when you find yourself bleeding out in a gutter because you went some place you shouldn't be, don't say I didn't warn you.

HAMPSHIRE PORT OF ENTRY

The main entry port into the sprawl, watched over by Chicago Militia and private security forces alike. Most official migrants are processed through here and given a handful of basic supplies, a TAP if they need it, and a quick orientation session so they can avoid getting killed their first day on the inside.



NORTH CHICAGO PORT OF ENTRY

Thanks to its proximity to the Ravenlocke North Sector HQ, this port acts as a primary military ingress and the port of choice for visiting political and corporate representatives looking for safe passage into Chi-town.

CREST HILL IMMIGRATION ZONE

The second-highest concentration of would-be immigrants beyond Hampshire, the Crest hill Immigration Zone is actually overseen by numerous megacorp representatives searching for new labor and particular skills among the rabble. Lucky migrants are often approached with contracts ready for signing, offering them streamlined entry so long as they sign over at least the first ten years of their new lives to one corp or another.

PLAINFIELD PORT OF ENTRY

One of two main ports servicing the Crest hill Immigration Zone, the Plainfield Port is most often privately employed by megacorps who have successfully rounded up a new crop of employees from the shanty towns beyond the Wall. These are shuttled through to sanitization clinics and undergo employee orientation within their first twenty-four hours of city life. Welcome to the grind, ami.

JOLIET PORT OF ENTRY

The other main port used for the Crest hill Immigration Zone, the Joliet port is more used by migrants who enter the sprawl without any sort of corporate sponsor. These get no welcoming committee. Just a couple food paste tubes and a "good luck" slap on the ass.

GARY PORT OF ENTRY

The Gary Port of Entry is the wretched sewer the desperate can crawl through to get into Chi-town while dodging official channels. This winds them up straight into Gary Hell Zone, where plenty of gangs and scroungers are waiting with broad smiles, open arms, and sharpened razors, ready to dice up the fresh meat. This port has been subjected to numerous bombings over the years, so even getting through the half-collapsed tunnel is a treacherous option.

I-88 Port of Entry

Chicagoland does a good job of generating all necessary goods and services its citizens might desire from within, but that doesn't mean it refuses any trade with the outside world. Merchant runners use the I-88 port for trafficking goods into the sprawl—and this, of course, has fostered a heavily entrenched smuggling ring that operates within the port's processing center, diverting select shipments.

CASCADIA**#INFOSOURCE****#GYRO.TAG.DONATE.CHITOWN.ETP****LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET****FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.****TPN.SWW.GNET****#INFO_FLAG: ORIGINAL SECTION MISSING, AUTO-****REPLACED FROM JACOB'S PLAYGROUND****POSTED BY: #BUYMARTMAN, ATLANTICA/ALBANY****STREET SALES GENTLEMAN**

Hey, tomo, I hear you're looking to make a buy. I got what you need. Just got in some primo Sticky-Icky. None of the state-grown hydro bullshit, either. Straight out of the ground, no taxes, and nothing goes to the CEF.

What? You're looking for, like, info and crap? Man, I ain't no infobroker. Tony gave you the wrong number. Still, I hate to send a customer away empty-handed. Here's what I got on Cascadia, what the generals in Olympia call "The Republic."

You must be new in town, since this crap is what you can find anywhere in the Global DataNet, assuming you know where to look. If anyone asks, you didn't get this from me.

#Spider-Bot17: Yeah, so, this file's got some major errors in it, and is filled with the author's biases. Still, it does have some useful stuff in it. Just don't take everything as gospel. It ain't that bad here.

#Eriksen_W: And your slag against this piece doesn't have anything to do with you wanting to sell your own work, amiright?

#Spider-Bot17: Yes, I've got a guide to Cascadia for sale. [[[TAP ADDRESS SCRUBBED]]]. So what?



THE REPUBLIC TODAY

The area of the old United States known as the Republic of Cascadia owes much of its present status to catastrophe. Though largely spared a direct role in the fighting of the Second American Civil War, the Pacific Northwest and its logistical and air-support structures played a large part in various operations. With the breakup and balkanization of the American state, the Republic officially came into existence with the Treaty of Tokyo in 2049.

The economic effects of the war were enough of a problem for the fledging Republic, and if the Juan de Fuca earthquake—which devastated much of the Pacific Rim in the year 2049—had been the only ecological disaster to hit, things might be very different.

In addition to the tsunami and loss of life that got so much media attention, the quake also set off Mt. Rainier, a volcano in old Washington State situated near the Seattle-Tacoma area. The volcano had been on the verge of eruption for decades, and when the thing went off, the explosion was very likely the largest natural disaster in human history.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Pure hyperbole. The volcano's eruption was large, yes, but hardly the largest natural disaster in human history. Far from it.

#Spider-bot17: This bit about the Rainier eruption being “the largest in history” is overstating the thing.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Uhh. I just said that.

#Eriksen_W: If you think that, you obviously weren't in the area when the damned thing went off ami. There was clouds of ash and volcanic lightning everywhere.

SeaTac had been one of the largest population centers on the West Coast, a sprawling metropolis teeming with millions of people, hybrids, androids, Sims, and who knows what else. The destruction wrought by the volcano was on such a staggeringly large scale that the final death toll, which we'll never really know, must certainly number in the hundreds of thousands.

#Spider-bot17: Note the not-so-subtle dig at hybrids, Sims, and others as being different from “people.”

#Eriksen_W: Damn it, Spider. You know what he means. He's not saying that hybrids aren't people. Just that they're not normal, ordinary people. You go looking for problems, and then have to invent them when they don't exist.

#Spider-bot17: So, you're saying that hybrids aren't “normal” people? That being a hybrid makes you something other than “regular folk”?

#Eriksen_W: Ah, bite my crank, you freak!

GOVERNMENT IN THE REPUBLIC

People new to Cascadia often assume that the place is run much like the old US. This is not the case and the differences can, at times, bite people in the ass. Cascadia is a constitutional republic. The head of state is called the President, who is elected every four years by popular vote (see note on citizenship and voting below). The current President of Cascadia is Gabriel Ono, who is about as typical a Cascadian as you can get; he's an emancipated combat simulacrum, with a law degree and military experience during the Second American Civil War and the fighting that occurred in the aftermath of the Treaty of Tokyo. Ono's one of the only simulacrum politicians to hold an office of this caliber, and many blame the tension between the Republic and the NAC on this fact.

#Spider-bot17: If you squint and look at this dig at Ono's race sideways, there might actually be a valid point in it. It is true that there is talk within the NAC's various media outlets that Ono's not fit to serve as a leader because of his race. It is also true that politicians within the NAC express a desire to free Cascadia from the dreaded simulacra President. However, painting this as Ono's fault, instead of the fact that the NAC has enshrined sim-phobia as the Law of the Land, is one of those points where the author's biased view of reality gets in the way of his objectivity.

#Eriksen_W: You're acting like being objective is the author's point, or even something worth chasing. What's wrong with the author having a point of view on the subject? Lots of people think idea of a simulacra as president is wrong.

#Spider-bot17: The problem is that these "lots of people" aren't trying to get others to think their ideas are legitimate and objective, when they're anything but.

The government is structured like the old US: three branches oversee the function of the government. The legislature consists of a single house, known as the Senate, and is made up of representatives from districts across the Republic, and a five-member Supreme Court oversees the judiciary. However, there are several important differences. Given the near-constant threat of invasion from the NAC, the Republican Army (a combined navy, air, and infantry force) holds a great deal of sway over the function of government.

FRANCHISE AND VOTING RIGHTS

The process of gaining a franchise (that is, official citizenship and voting rights) is lengthy, involved, and filled with corruption. In general, only the rich are citizens, and the system is designed to keep undesirables from having too much say in politics.

These measures are spun as necessary evils to deal with the threat of the NAC. The belief is that, given the porous nature of the borders, anyone can get into Cascadia but they can't gather in numbers to undermine security without undergoing extensive scrutiny and thorough background checks. While there is some truth to the supposed threat, the system keeps the poor and disenfranchised in their station, making crime the only way to improve the lives of most of those who live in the Republic's borders.

#Spider-bot17: This is one of the few places where the author is right, and, as per usual, he's only half-right. There was a much-publicized case a few years ago where a supposed "terrorist cell" was arrested, attempting to set off military grade explosives at Pioneer Courthouse

Square. These men and women were said to be members of the Curb stompers, and claimed to have received covert-ops training from the NAC, and, in an astonishingly convenient encounter, where all were gunned down trying to escape from custody.

#Eriksen_W: Man, this sort of crap happens all the time. We're always hearing about the cops or the army nabbing some lone whack-job sneaking across the border.

For most of the wealthy and influential, when their children reach the age of maturity (18, with some exceptions for particularly bright children), citizenship is a matter of paying a fee and passing a written exam about the Republic, its history, and the function of government. This is the sort of thing all children would learn, if there were public schools.

The only other fast-track to citizenship is military service. The army is so eager for recruits that it offers citizenship upon honorable discharge, as well as money, equipment, access to high-grade medical care, and a host of other benefits. A term of enlistment is a real path out of poverty, and is pretty much the only way out of squalor for most of the people who call Cascadia home.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Even with the effects of the Death still rampant in some sections of Cascadia, one thing has remained true: the climate here is ideally suited to growing certain types of plants. This is why you'll see rose bushes, azaleas, and rhododendrons all over the place here, and why encroaching ivy and other invasive plants continue to be a problem. More in keeping with our topic, large sections of Cascadia are ideal growing conditions for Sticky-Icky. It grows so well here that just about any seed dropped will sprout, growing, well, like a weed.

Since the country makes so much money on drug sales, they've had to search farther afield for the bulk of their supply. To that end, Cascadia has developed a variety of lucrative trade treaties with the drug

kingpins of the Southern Badlands, who ferry mass amounts of Cascadia's drugs of choice through the CDZ, up the I-5 Corridor, and into the Portland-Olympia area. These caravans are heavily armed, armored, and regulated by both countries to make sure that the flow of goods goes uninterrupted.

The ugly underbelly of the drug policy is the sad fact that Cascadia has a huge problem with addiction. The legislature that established the DCB stores originally had amendments that put education, awareness, and treatment programs in place, but these were removed by lawmakers who speculated that the programs would be too expensive. They also downplayed the impact a population of addicts would have on the fledgling country's infrastructure.

#Spider-bot17: Well, the wealthy can afford treatment when their addictions become problematic. Private detox facilities have sprung up all over the Republic, typically in isolated sections of forests that used to be parklands.

#T1mb0: Plus, if a bunch of hybrids, Sims, and poor regular folk die from crippling addiction, it's not like the powers-that-be are losing votes, right?

THE SPOKANE DMZ

The Treaty of Tokyo established much of the borders in what was North America, and, by and large, the nations involved keep to them. However, the border between the NAC and northern Cascadia is one notable exception to this. The NAC claims territory as far west as Spokane, while Cascadia says the Treaty puts its eastern border past Coeur d'Alene, (pronounced "core duh-lane") Idaho. Both cities are along a relatively major highway system, and, as such, are hotly-controlled territory.

The land between these two cities, not more than a few miles at its largest, is called the Spokane DMZ, and what's left of the cities is the site of an ongoing struggle between the two nations, as each pushes against the other in a bid to take the cities once and for all. The DMZ has seen some of the dirtiest, most bitter fighting in the modern age, made all the more tragic by the very worthless nature of the contested ground. It's largely symbolic at this point, but don't tell that to the families of those who have fallen here, or those who continue to fight over it.



PORTLAND, OREGON

Though the ecological damage done to Portland isn't as dramatic as what the Mount Rainier eruption did to Seattle, the city was no less disrupted. Most of Portland was at one time situated where the Columbia and Willamette Rivers met before flowing to the Pacific Ocean. Due to the change in sea level and the tsunamis associated with the Juan de Fuca earthquake, the water level in the Rose City rose to the point where a great deal of what used to be central Portland is now under water. This includes the once-vibrant downtown districts and Portland International Airport, once one of the largest travel hubs on the West Coast.

While the flooding was unstoppable, it was also slow enough that steps could be taken to minimize the damage done. As the water level of the Columbia and Willamette rose, dikes were put in place to allow people and businesses to relocate to other, higher portions of the city. These all eventually failed, sometimes in spectacular fashion, though the loss of life and productivity could have been much worse.

#T1mb0: The word in the recesses of the Global DataNet is that a whole shit load of organized crime rings use the shipping situation to keep the demand for imports high enough that the black markets in Bridgetown are as profitable as possible. If you happen to be in Old Downtown at night, you're almost certain to see a firefight between rival gangs, motoring around in cheap Toyota Super-Specials.

The central area of Portland, called Old Downtown by the locals, can be quite a sight. The waters of Lake Portland are 40 to 50 feet deep in some places, and even the shallower places have enough water in them to utterly ruin any transportation besides small runner-craft and VTOL vehicles, which the most wealthy and influential use if they can get them. Sky-scrapers poke up out of the water; modern buildings have been adapted to rest comfortably with foundations set in the lake-bed, while older buildings have either

collapsed from water damage, or are designated to be demolished when/if funds and attention warrant. Some sections of Lake Portland are shining examples of modern architecture, in what some describe as a modern-day Venice, while other parts are creepy, water-logged ruins where the ghosts of old buildings seem to beg for release.

Since the formation of Lake Portland, the city has generally expanded westward, filling the formally rural Willamette River valley with buildings, businesses and factories. Portland always had a reputation for computer and other technological developments, and this trend has continued in the 2090s. SAGEIT owns major production facilities here, and Nike, now a wholly-owned subsidiary of Central Belarusian Steel, continues to market footwear, through its major lines are military-style boots (to better advertise for the Republican Army) rather than athletic shoes.

In recent years, Central Belarusian Steel has been quietly buying up media companies in Cascadia, which is a little odd for them. Though they have fingers in a lot of pies, the media purchases are frequent and located mainly in Cascadia and neighboring countries. No one's really sure why they're doing this, though supposedly there are people willing to pay to figure it out.

CULTURE AND OUTLOOK

One major element that sets Cascadia apart from the NAC is that the Republic is very welcoming. Anyone, regardless of beliefs, appearance, or political views, can feel safe here. Hybrids and Sims are quite common, though baseline humans and Human 2.0 make up the bulk of the population. Zeeks have a surprisingly large presence, especially in urban areas where they have a better chance of going unnoticed or banding together for mutual support and protection.

#Billy-Black-Eyes: I would feel bad if I didn't mention that Cascadia isn't as friendly to zeeks as this article suggests. They stand a better than average chance of getting nabbed by the military, and are often pressured into undergoing training



for black ops against the NAC and other nations.

#Magpie: Maybe in Cascadia Proper, but if you get up into the Emerald City, you'll find that isn't the case at all.

THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET

#INFO_FLAG: ORIGINAL SECTION MISSING, AUTO-REPLACED FROM JACOB'S PLAYGROUND

POSTED BY: #SERAPHTHERANGER, MERCENARY

Texas operates similarly to the way it ran as a state, and later as one of the FEMA regions during the Death. Our current president is Jason Meyers the Third, the grandson of the zoine's FEMA Director who stood up to President Calhoun just before the civil war. In fact, you can't even run for President unless you have done some form of civic duty or were part of the defense of the nation. Even doing humanitarian work for our allied nations counts, but it has to be a full term of service; that means four to six years, amigo. You also must be over the age of 35, have verifiable education, and be Texas-born. A clause in our Constitution states that in twenty years, you must be at least second generation (or longer) Texan to run for the office, and you can only ever hold the position for two four-year terms. In addition, the post is as a civil servant so you don't make much money doing it; the idea is that you are doing it for Texas and not yourself. Our Congress and Supreme Court operate the way they did back when we were part of the United States.

As a small nation, we don't put our criminals in an institution for years and years. Thanks to the wonders of the TAP and VR, we can make a day seem like a lifetime—as the brain has no concept of time. Believe me when I say this shit works! Depending on the crime, you may experience your actions from your victim's point of view replayed over and over, or you may spend it in a small VR room that serves as your prison, or any other creative ways we can think of so that not only does the punishment fit the crime, but justice is served.

Habitual offenders (of which there are few) typically get a longer time or the law comes up with some other means of justice through either VR or inducing something like Korsakoff's Syndrome—where you can only remember things for five minutes at a time so all you can do all day is put things together on an assembly line. Needless to say, heinous crime is very low here. Petty crime is still there, but the criminals are getting smarter at hiding their tracks. They still get caught, but sometimes it takes a bit longer. As the Texas Rangers say, "No Crime Goes Unpunished."

As for law enforcement, the Texas Rangers can't be everywhere—much as they'd like to be. Texas is divided up into 254 counties. Each county is overseen by a sheriff and his/her deputies (one deputy per 100 residents in the county), who enforce the law. Each sheriff answers to the Texas Rangers, who have jurisdiction over the entire Republic (despite not being able to be everywhere).

MEGACONGLOMERATES

In addition to Act of God Armaments, we do business with Alat Petroleum (roughly 50% of the oil we managed to pump out before GLUTTON had its way with it is stored in special protective tanks thanks to Alat). Featherstone helped us out with the specs and nano-fabricators for the needle, as well as providing other nano-related technology. Aside from AGA and Alat Petroleum, probably the next biggest company we do business with is Jian Foods Group, based out of Pyongyang, Korea—they buy up and process roughly 75% of the Brahmin beef we clone...err produce, and they pay the ranchers a very nice sum for that meat.

INDUSTRIES

Texas is not only a new nation, but a growing one. Not outwards (we have no place to go and don't like the land beyond our borders anyway), but internally. VR and HR broadcasters are in every major city and with the exception of the spotty Southern and Eastern areas, you can enter the Global DataNet just about anywhere. There are exceptions, of course, but like

any modern country we have state-of-the-art casting and some of the smaller towns have their HR sculpted to resemble towns from the Old West: in fact some of those towns resemble the Old West with or without the benefits of technology, so be on your guard.

Our industry grows, but we don't really diversify. Like my grand pappy used to tell me, "Do what you're good at," and I believe he's right. Now, I've already mentioned the major megas we do business with on a constant or near-constant basis, so I won't repeat myself. However, here's some of the things the RoT produces and some projects we're getting ready to release upon the world.

CLONED BEEF

Dotted across most of Western and Northern Texas, you'll find various swathes of land dedicated to one of Texas's greatest accomplishments: cattle. To tell the truth, these aren't the same cattle from before the Death. Those sad and ugly critters died off. So we decided to make even sadder and uglier beasts through genetic modification. These GM (genetically modified) beasts are 100% synthetic—well maybe that's not the right word. They're alive, and they eat and grow, but they can't breed right without our help, unless you want to see some wicked nasty mutations. We call 'em Brahmin—some guy's idea of a sick joke (one which eludes me to this day). After the Death, geneticists used stored DNA samples of the cattle we used to have to clone bovine cultures in tanks. The idea worked, but when a video feed of this stuff growing in a tank of purple slime hit the Global DataNet, folks decided a different road needed to be taken; there was no way they were going to put something like that in their mouths. Thus, with the help of some megacorp geneticists, the first generations of Brahmin cattle were born.

THE MILITARY

As an independent nation, we need a standing military to protect our borders and our interests abroad (although we have no bases outside of the Republic's borders). Our main base is Fort Hood, but

we have other bases coming online and have renovated other smaller ones across the Republic.

FORT HOOD

During the Texas Tussle, and the Second Civil War that followed, it was thought that the military members stationed at Fort Hood would follow the orders of their Commander-in-Chief. Well, as I mentioned earlier in this post that wasn't the case. Today, Fort Hood is the largest and most well-defended military base in the Republic.

TEXAS NAVY & AIR FORCE

In addition to a strong ground force, the Republic has a small navy—mainly scavenged from the leftover Coast Guard cutters and other vessels converted to patrol of the Gulf. Many of these go out and run patrols of the many "abandoned" oil rigs floating in the waters. The others patrol the coastline for the various pirates and ne'er-do-wells who try and infiltrate the Republic via the coast. Bad move amigo, if you ask me.

Our Air Force is a bit stronger. We have roughly fifty fixed-wing aircraft and a small amount of rotor-wings that survived the Second Civil War and the fallout afterwards. These are scattered out across the various operational bases—including Fort Hood.

They mainly patrol the borders near the NAC and Mexico, but head out from time to time to take a look-see out across the Gulf.

TEXAS RANGERS

"One Riot, One Ranger!" That's our motto in the Texas Rangers. Back in the days of old USA, the feds had marshals that had the authority to cross state jurisdictional boundaries and enforce federal laws; that is with the sole exception of Texas.

Based out of Austin-Antonio Megaplex, the Rangers used to serve as state-wide law enforcement, but now they do it on a national level. However, since becoming our own nation again the Rangers have also changed. In addition to serving as a national police force, criminal investigation, and serving as protection for our beloved President, they also serve as a military force. The Rangers provide

trackers, intelligence gathering, and other services that serve the interests of the great Republic of Texas.

The Rangers serve a director, who is assisted by the Assistant Director of the Texas Rangers. Currently, we have about 200 Rangers in the field, including several squads outfitted and trained to drive golemmechs.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

As a new nation, the RoT has begun to branch out and forge relations with our cracked-out neighbors, and other countries. Here's a listing of who we trust, and who we don't, and who we'd like to find a few nukes and return a small favor:

ATLANTICA

Texas has enjoyed a great relationship with Atlantica. Our main export to them is our ability to achieve cold-fusion. The whole thing's a bit dodgy, but we still ship energy cells to them. While we've begun to break ground into helping them build their own cold-fusion plants, it looks like that may be a few years off. Smuggling between Atlantica and Texas is at an all-time high, however. Mainly because the NAC squats right between them and us. However, despite this, what we can make it across their borders brings in a premium, and vice-versa. We do a little bit of technology trading through the Global DataNet since the NAC is really trying to crack down on any border crossings into Texas. Yet, they can't patrol everywhere.

BAJA MEXICO

Encompassing the southern half of what remains of California, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico, Baja Mexico is the closest ally the Republic has on the North American continent—literally. While this area contains the free cities of Phoenix and Las Vegas, it is also one vast desert. Once the Needle comes online we'll be shipping Baja's nano-manufactured goods up the well and out into the orbitals and ships in need. This will wring a tidy profit for the Republic. However, I think something isn't right with this deal, and I'm not the only one. Let me just say that the national

director of Intelligence is also interested in the going's-on of Baja Mexico.

EURASIAN UNION (EU)

Up until the EU was under cyber-attack by Charon, we enjoyed cordial relations with them. We would ship fundamentals and oil and minerals, and they would send us foodstuffs and other items we couldn't get here. Now it looks like we may be helping out with more drastic matters—refugees are already starting to trickle in.

THE GREAT LAKES UNION (GLU)

Again, another great (pardon the pun) ally of ours. The GLU was a huge supporter of our early efforts to secede and we backed their plays as well. Unfortunately, they suffered the same fate we did when Chicago was nuked with a dirty bomb. Currently, we have a standing agreement to supplement their power needs, and ship Brahmin meat to them, and they give us clean drinking water when our desalination plants can't meet our national needs. Act of God Armaments is also a large supplier of the GLU and so we have a brotherhood in arms, so to speak.

THE NAC

These hateful bastards should rot in their own excrement. Enough said! The NAC is an ultra-conservative nightmare of religious fanatics who should be judged by their own misguided views. Technically, a state of war exists between our nations, but shots haven't been exchanged since the Second Civil War. Still, if the word is given, I'll be one of the first on the line. We still owe these bastards for the dirty bombs they detonated on our soil.

TEXARKANA

Texarkana is a border city that exists between Texas and the NAC. A giant wall was erected down the middle of the city and around it; and the only way across it is to pass through one of three check-point stations. Most of the city is a lawless morass of mercs, ex-pats, and religious hate-mongers. However, there's also a strong community of hybrids and simula-cra on the Texas side. Rumor has it that the NAC sends in groups of thugs disguised



as “honest Texans” who go out and either kill or beat up these poor souls. Of course, rumors also say that Texans disguised as religious psychopaths sneak into the NAC side and raise hell, but I have a hard time believing that part.

MEXICO AND THE SOUTH

Aside from the NAC, Mexico has been a constant enemy for Texas since the 1800’s. Time and again we try to extend the olive branch, and time and again it gets burned. We even made a huge media circus about giving back General Santa Anna’s leg (look it up), but that was a fake. Right after the Secession, we made a proclamation that we still had the stinking, rotting, piece of wood and that was kicking over the ant hill. Mexicans from all over the place took up arms and tried to invade us. However, that didn’t end well—for Mexico. You see, when you have a border patrol and trackers like the Texas Rangers supported by some of the best-trained military in the world, and backed with weaponry from one of the world’s premier weapons manufacturers, your opponent has no chance of winning.

Our diplomats have managed to cool things down, so now all we have are border stations and guard towers watching the border—along with drones and trackers who know the best routes into Mexico. Something is going on according to the intelligence community, but we have no idea what it is yet. Regardless, we find evidence of their scouts entering our country and then hear about raids on the southern settlements and towns. So we retaliate in kind.

INTERNAL ISSUES

Like any nation, Texas is not without its own issues and dirty laundry to air. While we don’t have a lot, what we have is bad enough that they could destabilize our nation and bring everything we fought for crashing to the ground.

RANCH WARS

I mentioned earlier that Brahmin were the replacement for beef and that each ranch has its own group of geneticists and

scientists who monitor herds. Each ranch has its own brand of beef, and each wants to steal the other’s geneticists so they can have the best beef on the market. This has led to a silent war in which ranchers will hire ronin and mercs to kidnap their rivals’ scientists for their own.

SMUGGLING

As a growing nation, Texas has many needs. Most of these we are able to provide, but there are creature comforts we cannot provide either due to a lack of resources or a lack of facilities. Thankfully, the megas happily give us what they think we need, but at a premium. As such, a sub-culture has arisen: smugglers.

Despite being against the law, the government tends to turn a blind eye towards smuggling in general. If they can benefit from it, all the better. Smugglers are a creative lot and have found many ways to bring items into the country.

GEOGRAPHY

Texas has a variety of terrain and several major megasprawls covering the countryside. We have mountains, hills, forests, rivers, and so forth. Sometimes we even get snow, but that’s a rare occurrence anymore. Unofficially, Texas is divided between the north and south.

NORTH TEXAS

Considered to be the more “civilized” part of Texas, northern Texas is where the majority of the megasprawls are and where the majority of civilization can be found. Pretty much everything north of San Antonio is considered North Texas. Everything south is corrupt, taken over by bandit scum, overrun with shithead militia wannabes, or all of the above. Okay, I’m exaggerating; there are a few bright spots to be found, but those are the places where eking out a life is tough and they have the firepower to keep the scumbags away from their turf.

NORTH-TEXAS MEGASPAWL

The North-Texas Megasprawl consists of the cities of Dallas, Fort Worth, Garland, and all points around and between. The

cities grew together roughly forty years ago and despite being separate cities, the whole megasprawl is overseen by an elected governor, the Honorable Joseph P. Sentry. It is also policed by Allied Star Security. The Global DataNet here runs standard as you would find in any typical sprawl, except that in VR things take on an Old West feel—as it does in many places here in Texas.

AUSTIN-ANTONIO MEGAPLEX

The Austin-Antonio Megaplex is the merger of Austin and San Antonio. This is near the unofficial border that divides the north from the south. There are black cyber-clinics and drug dens to be found here. Corporations have hidden compounds running hybrid experiments, and street talk says more than one AI has control of several gangs infesting the streets of the 'plex. Several companies are contracted to police the Megaplex, including Lone Star Enterprises and private conglomerate security.

AUSTIN

Austin is the headquarters for Armaments of God, and is the shining nugget of Texas. Austin is where the seat of the national government is, and as such is policed very well. Yet, despite the surface luster, underneath is a corruption that runs deep. The NAC has managed to infiltrate this city and are beginning to distribute a new street drug called "Synth." This drug causes a high unlike most others, but it gets more intense with music—which the NAC is also distributing through the Global DataNet...along with a subliminal carrier that slowly undermines the user's will so he will find the NAC more appealing.

SOUTH TEXAS

South Texas is a near-lawless band of country that is still reeling from the after-shocks of the Texas Tussle and Second Civil War. Many settlements dot the area, as do secret corp facilities, but the biggest problem is the gangs and smugglers who make this place a police nightmare, but a bounty hunter's dream.

GULF REGION

There are dozens of floating oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico. Some have been taken over by rich entrepreneurs and turned into floating casinos and so forth. Others are used by the megacorps for ultra-secret, black-ops experiments. However, there are some derelicts that have been taken over by squatters and pirates. That's right amigos, you heard right: pirates!

Many of these scumbags are no threat to anyone with the firepower to repel them. That doesn't include the settlements they raid and pillage, but it does include those with the know-how to stop them. A few operate by running "toll booths" and holding transports for ransom, but some dig their own graves by taking on a mega-conglom ship. I almost feel sorry for those poor bastards—almost.

#Vasquez: South Texas has a lot of problems, but this guy over simplifies the issue, and he doesn't even mention the fact that there's a border war with Mexico going on.

#Sidewinder_Special: @Vasquez: There hasn't been any official declaration of war. I live in El Paso, and things are starting to heat up, but neither the Republic nor the Mexican government have said much of anything about it.

#Smilin_Jack: Interesting commentary about the gulf, though I'm not so sure the guy's ACTUALLY been out there. Those "pirates" he likes to talk about are rovers who have been living there for years. Sure, they steal, but mainly from the corporations that kicked 'em out of their homes. As for "raiding and pillaging," I don't know what century this guy is living in, but rovers aren't flippin Vikings. Sheesh.

#Stone_Cold: The HR in Dallas isn't what he makes it out to be. DFW doesn't look anything like the Wild West, in Hyper Reality or otherwise. I've been here for fifteen years and I haven't seen a single sprawler with a cowboy hat on.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: After reading this, I think I need to go down to Texas and check it out. Anyone know some good places to stay? Any people I can get with to see about getting a job or three?

#Sidewinder_Special: It depends on where you're thinking of going. If you haven't figured it out by now, Texas is big. I'd suggest the North Plano free zone; that's in the North Texas megasprawl. The burb's tame compared to other areas, but I wouldn't walk the streets without a weapon. As for the other...Contact me off-list.

#Clutch: You can find some decent coffin motels in Arlington.

#Sidewinder_Special: @Clutch; Arlington? Really? Might as well send him to the Russian/Chinese battlefield. @Billy: Don't take Clutch's advice. Stay the hell out of Arlington.

THE NEW YORK RECLAMATION ZONE

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: VINTAGESTEAMTRUNK.COM.BNY

FQDN: VINTAGESTEAMTRUNK.COM.BNY.04TN.TPN.

SWW.GNET

POSTED BY: #BROOKLYNGUY, NYRZ TOUR GUIDE

New York was one of several East Coast cities eyeing rising sea waters due to global warming. The city invested billions on sea walls to keep the water out while other, smaller communities abandoned the coast. Both New York, NY and Newark, NJ decided to stay and fight Mother Nature. Newark's sea wall project went off without a hitch, while New York's preparations were plagued by delays, terrorist attacks, and rumors of corruption ranging from stolen materials at sites to million-dollar graft at the city contract level. The New York project finished in 2026, and the Newark project a year later.

The sea walls were in place for five years before it became apparent that they would not hold. The Death accelerated the cycle of harsh weather that battered the walls, and made the flooding of subways and streets as common a sight as hot dog vendors and yellow taxi cabs. It also pushed death and murders in the city to heights unheard of. Hospitals became little more than twenty story tall morgues. Blocks once full of vibrant neighborhoods counted survivors by the handful. When it became clear that the city police were

barely holding on after losing 30% of its force during the Bronx Food Riots, the hard decision was made. On October 25th, 2031, President Davis announced the abandonment of Manhattan Island to the sea. Anyone who wished to continue to be a United States citizen had six months to get out of New York City.

What the military did not expect was resistance from those citizens who decided that if the US was abandoning the city, they didn't want to be part of it anymore. Small skirmishes broke out in Brooklyn and Queens as the military vehicles rolled through the streets. Many of these attacks were launched by individuals with criminal records afraid of being taken into custody. A few began as shouting matches between soldiers and civilians. It was not the transition the government had hoped for, especially with the revelation that there would be some people staying behind.

The destruction of the Manhattan seawall remains a mystery to this day. The rush of seawater devastated the island, the only evidence of the city being those skyscrapers that stayed above the waterline. The rush also overwhelmed the seawalls of the Bronx and Queens. Staten Island and Brooklyn stayed mostly dry.

New York faded from most minds until about a year ago when an Atlantican force marched on Queens. The North Atlantic Coalition mobilized its defenses to repel what it considered invaders. The tension soon decreased, though the NAC began regularly patrolling flooded areas of the city. The presence of military attention set the warlords and ruling gangs on edge. The citizens of New York keep living day by day, but they also recognize that something must give soon.

A few short days after the completion of Juliet Foxtrot Kilo Base, footage of a press conference flooded the Global DataNet. Atlantica struck an alliance with the corporations of C-7. In exchange for tax considerations and very lucrative contracts, the corporations were given the island of Manhattan to do with as they saw fit. The corporations are coming to what they now call the New York Reclamation Zone. New York will never be the same.



MANHATTAN

When most people think of the New York Reclamation Zone, the image that comes to mind is of the island of Manhattan. The water overtook most of the skyline, though many buildings poke through the surface of the water. What were once testaments to the financial power of the world now rot from the salt water. The skyscrapers became a strange archipelago of glass, steel and iron.

One World Trade Center rises out of the depths to this day. Built to restore the Manhattan skyline after 9/11, the building became a rallying point for those looking to return the city to its former glory. The building serves as the C-7 headquarters in the Reclamation Zone. Each of the corporations carved out a floor for its operations, though none currently have any personnel in the tower yet. One World Trade Center recently activated a power source unconnected to the old grid, becoming the first building in the zone with updated capabilities. The locals refer to the building or anyone connected to it as OWTCS, pronounced "out sees."

Benoit MacroSec landed the contract to establish the headquarters for the Reclamation project. They cleared out the floors for the C-7 members. They provide security for the employees refurbishing the building and building the pumps to free up the lower floors. Benoit MacroSec's contract includes clearing out the squatters from the lower sections of the building. Rather than risk their own personnel and equipment, the project lead put out feelers for subcontractors willing to kick in some doors. So far, local help has been hard to find, but as the word gets out, more pros will be happy to spend time ripping up carpeting with their submachine guns.

#Swiggler: MarcoSec are little more than a corporate-funded gang. If they catch you squatting on their turf, you're fish food in Turtle Bay.

#MarcoSec88: We do our jobs, assclown. Nothing more. We're not murderers. We even pay the homeless to move elsewhere.

#Swiggler: Yeah, right.

BROOKLYN

This borough is the closest that any neighborhood comes to resembling a real city. It runs more like a free city than a real city, but it is also still above water. The streets are tough, the security is private, and the corporates flee to private compounds on the mainland nightly. The city compresses the vibrancy of a big city into a smaller area. The rich look down on the dirty streets, but occasionally the gangs rise up and shatter the bulletproof penthouse glass to spread the wealth around. The bars are hotbeds of fixers looking for teams, since the clientele is such a strange mix.

Out of all the bridges that once connected New York, only the Brooklyn Bridge still stands. The edge of the bridge heading into Manhattan now forms a circuit on which weekly races keep patrons busy. The vehicles range from motorcycles and cars to exotic golemmech races. The races are the ultimate mix of high and low class members from the New York Reclamation Zone. Executives surrounded by security sit next to gangers howling for one of their members to win. The smell of cheap beer and amped fuel hangs heavy in the air.

The Zone Razors run the races on the bridge. The races mix bleeding edge tech, garage built mods, and drivers ready to kill themselves for the roaring crowd. The Razors won control of the bridge four years ago during the annual endurance race called the Gypsy Cab 500. The course starts on the bridge, runs through the other boroughs and ends back on the bridge. The team with the last car running wins the race. The reigning champions get the advantage of planning the route, in addition to laying out ambushes on the track to work in their favor. Anything goes during Race Week, including bribery, threats, and rocket launchers on the track. Last year, the Razors lured the rival drivers to a big party before the race and gunned them all down.

One of the most surprising remnants from the fall of New York remains Coney Island. The Wonder Wheel still stands, lit and whirling. It still functions as a place



to relax and unwind. Only now it caters to a specific clientele. Locals call it Gangland, because the gangs that keep the city running meet there. It's considered neutral ground; bangers from all sets feel safe. Scraps break out from time to time, but the offending parties are escorted off the grounds before things get out of hand. While gangs of all stripes come through the city, outsider gangs are only allowed if they are being escorted and sponsored by a member gang.

#Squeeks: If you're looking for a good time, definitely check out the races. Just make sure you come strapped. BrooklynGuy is playing down the violence, omae.

#Swiggler: Truth. I've seen many a sprawler get ventilated and tossed off the BB and into the East River. Most days I prefer to spend in the Bronx. It's River Rat territory, but Shady-Eight keeps his boys in check.

#Twitch: It's not THAT bad. Sheesh. You guys make it sound like a warzone. Ya'll shilling' for the River Rats? Pissed the Razors are outtin' into your turf?

#Squeeks: Fuck you Twitch.

THE BRONX

The Bronx survived Davis Day intact. Of course, it was already a Zero Zone in everything but name. The walls built to keep the gangs in kept the sea out and the other boroughs fell further and faster. Even though it's a jagged scar of burned-out buildings, wild gangs and firefights in the street, it is the last unbroken link to New York's history. All the other boroughs were changed by the sea, but the Bronx clung to the surface with bloody fingertips.

The Bronx Zoo displayed exotic animals from around the world before the fall of the city. The cages are still full, but now the creatures inside were built rather than captured. The galleries are by invite only, either to corporate customers looking for controversial bio-sculptures, or private customers looking for creative organic security solutions. Occasionally, the zoo sponsors gallery nights where the elite are invited to talk shop while the hottest

bands play and the strange creatures look on from behind their double-weight security glass.

Yankee Stadium became the heart of the Zone after Manhattan went underneath the waves. The landmark started as one of the rallying points for refugees from the Bronx flooding. It is now the largest open-air market in the Zone, selling everything from tech hawked on the third base line, to flesh in the old luxury boxes. Much of the action in the Zone comes through the stadium at some point—and if it comes through the stadium, the Keys get a taste of the action.

The stadium operates under the protection of the Keys, one of the few gangs that survived from before Davis Day. Younger members of the gang are given memorabilia from the old Yankee baseball team as their colors. The older, made members of the gang wear pinstripe suits to declare their allegiance. When the Keys send a message, they leave a house key in the mouth of the victim. The Keys know they are on the cusp of turning from a rough street gang to a respected criminal syndicate. It's a dangerous position. The gangs below want to take them down to show their dominance. The syndicates above want to hold the Keys down to stay on the top of the heap.

QUEENS

Most of Queens is still under water. The ocean is a constant danger as forgotten levees crumble and let in more. Queens offers many entrances to the Sixth Borough, thanks to the subway tunnels that run back to Manhattan. The borough's population consists primarily of hybrids. Aquatic hybrids in particular flourish thanks to the maze of flooded streets and submerged buildings. These gangs provide protection for this part of town, though they often squabble for territory as the flood waters recede and change.

On September 19, 2089, Atlantican forces moved into the neighborhood. Mobilized infantry and heavy golemmechs made their way through the submerged ruin of JFK International Airport. The soldiers built a new sea wall, restoring military service



to the airport. Kennedy Base represents the official Atlantican interest in the New York Reclamation Zone.

The Golemmech Division One Base is the famed "War Pigs" column out of Atlantica. Though the golemmechs have proven surprisingly useful after a few modifications to run underwater, the soldiers understand that they are here primarily for symbolic value. Knowing that a concerted attack by the NAC patrols would overrun their position quickly, the Pigs eye the developments on Staten Island warily.

Juliet Foxtrot Kilo Base is Atlantica's public face in the Zone. However, rumors persist that Atlantican agents inserted themselves into the city for deep cover operations decades ago. Such sleepers would have children helping them by now. Families with roots in neighborhoods and communities could have stashed weapons, collected intelligence and have files on unfriendly elements ready to strike. These agents, if they exist, would be in the market for deniable assets willing to do their dirty work while allowing the agents to keep their cover.

STATEN ISLAND

The only borough completely untouched by the flooding, Staten Island was quickly absorbed by Newark and the North American Coalition. NAC claims it is the true Old New York City, though this claim is not recognized by anyone outside of the NAC. It serves as a large military base for the NAC but also serves as the home to refugees from New York City that couldn't leave their home completely behind.

The center of the NAC's power is located at New Wadsworth Base, located near the ruins of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. Locals shorten the name to Newads. It was built to keep an eye on New York Harbor, as well as establish a buffer between the Reclamation Zone and the uncontrolled city of Newark, New Jersey. The base takes its name from the old Fort Wadsworth located nearby. The old fort is preserved and open to the public, offering a history lesson showing how the only true American Remnant of the United States is the Coalition.

Coalition Patrols run out of Newads. The patrols were content to stay close to the borough, but with Atlantica's advances their captains are bolder. The patrols now make it as far in as Manhattan. While they were once content to let the pirates fester in the old skyscrapers, now the patrol boats pursue the ships back to bases.

NEWARK

INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: VINTAGESTEAMTRUNK.COM.NEWARK

FQDN: VINTAGESTEAMTRUNK.COM.BNY.04TN.TPN.

SWW.GNET

POSTED BY: #BROOKLYNGUY, NYRZ TOUR GUIDE

Even with its heated rivalry still in place, Newark remains the gateway for people looking to get back inside New York. The most famous coyotes moving between Newark and New York are called the Deep Six. They've secured some of the old commuter train routes that connected with the old subway system. Rather than running with full power to draw attention, the gang runs animals and other low-tech options through the tunnels. The Deep Six handle everything from people to weapons on their genetically engineered pack creatures. They prefer to deal in barter and trade rather than currency.

CENTRAL WARD

The Central Ward is the oldest section of Newark. Most of the buildings feature original architecture with modern conveniences bolted on the side. While other cities tear down and rebuild, Newark is concerned with adding on to keep things running. The Central Ward has always been the heart of Newark and its feel reflects the functionality of its current version. It doesn't look like much, but it's better than the alternatives. Living in a part of town filled with old, grey buildings is better than one where the organleggers work.

Vroom Alley is the center of Newark's law and order. Though it is a free city, there are still matters of bureaucracy that keep a city functioning. The Boss holds court here, meeting with the leaders of the Five Stars to discuss Newark's operations. The tradition of drugstore judges began here

in Vroom Alley. Drugstore judges opened “courts” in storefronts all across the city and somehow managed to keep the peace. The first drugstore judge was Judge Nathan Judd, a colorful former police captain who set up a court for anyone to come in and plead their case. His judgments were eclectic but fair. His popularity soon earned him an “official” sanction from the Boss.

NORTH WARD

The North Ward reeks of money. A collection of colonial mansions, high rise condos and new constructions during the corporate transformation make this the section of town everyone wants to live in. It also makes security tight as a drum. The citizens who can buy a home here can also afford excellent private security. Many firms have offices in the vacated corporate towers in addition to the on-site services they provide. The residents of North Ward can likely live where they want, but choose to stay in Newark for business, family or tax shelter reasons. This ward is one of the main sources of wealth for the rest of the city.

Forest Hill is the cream of the crop, featuring houses built before World War II. The residents of the area included celebrities, senators, and CEOs before the city went free. It was one of the few neighborhoods untouched by the Ivy Hill riots. Forest Hill parties are lavish affairs, where politicians can rub elbows with mobsters and never bat an eye. It’s the one place in a free city where everyone should feel safe. Most of the shadow work that comes out of here ends up in different locations.

The Tancredo family came into existence when two of the largest crime families—one Italian, one Mexican—merged to protect their interests. They stayed in Newark as other crime families moved elsewhere without the cash cow of nearby New York to sustain them anymore. They are also the unwritten reason why North Ward stays safe. Anyone that pulls a job here ends up as a target for retribution. The Tancredos don’t crap in their backyard for a reason, and anyone who does is likely to end up the latest resident of the Passaic River.

EAST WARD

Immigrants have always left their mark on East Ward. The biggest influence today are the Portuguese. Many of the signs and HR in East Ward is in multiple languages. This was the neighborhood where the unwanted ended up, and the immigrants who climbed up the ladder crawled out of it. Today, the population is primarily hybrid, sim and human 2.0. The area is economically depressed, but is often fertile recruiting ground for individuals looking for shadow work. The area also has a reputation as a safe haven for escaped Sims and robots. Returning one to an original owner is a quick ticket to being ostracized by the neighborhood, even if the reward pays the rent for a few months.

Down Neck Saloon gets its name from the neighborhood it anchors. Down Neck sits on the Passaic River and the Saloon overlooks Ferry Street, with big neon letters spelling out its name perched along the roof. The second N fell off during the Ivy Hill riots. Rather than toss the letter out, however, the owners made it part of the architecture when they rebuilt. Entering the bar means stepping in under the arch of the letter. The saloon functions as a general gathering place, a drugstore courtroom, and a place for individuals seeking “off the book work” to find reliable fixers.

The Ironbound take their name from an alternate nickname for the area. The gang is comprised of simulacrum members with a few human 2.0 hangers-on. The Sims go out of their way to show violence towards any normal humans they encounter on their turf. Officially, they’ve toned down their headline stance since becoming the Star of the East Ward, but that may just mean they’ve gotten better at hiding the evidence when a “meat boy” takes the wrong turn in the ward. Members can be identified by a stylized FE tattoo somewhere on their body. The F is reversed and the letters are connected at the main vertical stem.



SOUTH WARD

The educational and medical centers of the city exist here. Multiple hospitals, schools, and colleges give this part of town the nickname of “The Academic Sector.” Black labs and gene splicers have a knack for showing up in this area, thanks to the free city status that doesn’t ask questions about how they use the office space they lease for double the going rate. The Helios complex in the South Ward is one of the city’s largest employers, both directly through employees as well as the shops, restaurants and local businesses those employees frequent on lunch breaks.

WEST WARD

The West Ward was where most of the New York refugees who settled in Newark after Davis Day ended up. It was already a mix of multiple ethnicities, and dumping hundreds of thousands more into the mix added untold tension. The Ivy Hill Riots started here and the ward never really recovered.

The Boom-Boom Room rises above the squalor by taking advantage of the melting pot of music. It lures talent from all over the world by encouraging collaborations, mash ups and team-ups that only happen in the DJ booth. Strange mixes add to the Boom-Boom Room’s mystique, and it’s rapidly climbing up the latter of influential clubs where screaming hot acts get their start. The club is open every night, and is almost always packed to capacity. Life in a free city is rough, but the appeal of coming down to the club and hearing something you won’t hear anywhere else keeps the dance floor packed and the drinks flowing.

Wrecked Neck Records continues the grand tradition of mixing music with muscle. Criminal syndicates need front organizations to launder money, and this media company provides an excellent outlet for the Ivy Hill Gang, or IVG, to legitimize their money. The leaders hold court in the VIP lounge that overlooks the main floor. Many of the acts here owe something to the IVG, either as a new act or as a drug supplier. IVG members are known

for the tattoos that wrap around a single limb, either an arm or a leg. Each flower on the vine represents someone the member has killed for the gang.

THE NORTH AMERICAN COALITION

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: [JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET/NAC](https://jacobsplayground.net/nac)

FQDN: [JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN](https://jacobsplayground.net/chitown.06tn)

TPN.SWW.GNET

POSTED BY: #DLANTON_SYSMASER

Greetings, Ami. I’m Derrick Langton, a former security agent from the Helios technology company. Well, I was at Helios the longest, but I worked for several companies in my time. Of course, none of them were too pleased with me when I left, even if it was for a larger paycheck and a bigger office. Truth be told, I only spent half the time in the office, since I needed the rest of my time to track down leaks, check up on our former employees—to make it clear that staying silent about what they did for us would be most conducive to their continued health—and, of course, making sure that our facilities remained secure.

Through the course of my tenure in security, I had to spend time in pretty much every major city in the NAC, and I had no choice but to get to know them pretty well. Some places are better than others, depending on who you are and what you’re doing there, but you can never escape certain realities. The first is that while much of the world’s population has moved away from religion, the NAC managed to integrate religion into the state with the blessings of the people. That means no matter who you meet, no matter how good or bad they might be, they will have something to say about the almighty. Personally, I have more important things to think about than what I’ll be doing with eternity after my meat shell is gone, but good for the people who make it important, I guess.

The next thing to remember about the NAC is that prejudice runs deep in many areas. In some cases, people are still up in arms about the fact that some folks have different skin colors than them, but those are mostly a bunch of geezers who



have managed to turn a blind eye to the developments of the past fifty years or so. These days, it's all about discriminating against folks who are different on a fundamental level. Hybrids, simulacra, even engineered humans—all have some group that hates them. People's reasons for this hatred span a range, from being afraid that good jobs are being stolen from the ordinary folk (a common theme throughout history), to religions that have declared such people unholy abominations.

#Xenslicer101: *Wow, talk about hyperbole. I think this guy's going a little overboard with the hate. Sure, the NAC has its fair share of fundies, but so does every other nation on this planet.*

The NAC is not the best place to be different from the norm, but at the same time, the corporations are the real power behind the theocrats, and they need people of all different types to keep the wheels of business moving. Because of this, those corporations may be up to all kinds of shady dealings in the high-rise offices and dank back-alleys, but they tend to promote a message of tolerance to a populace who are largely interested in ignoring what they have to say. There's still a good number of people who can't abide by all this bigotry, and they embrace people of all different types.

Alright, so enough of that. I'm sure you already know all there is to know about the NAC on a macro scale. What you need is a guide to the people and places you're going to find as you travel around. When they came to me and asked me to write this, I almost told them to fuck right the hell off. After all, the damn publishing company had passed over my resume enough times after my last layoff, but then I realized that I can actually help people avoid some of the hairy mess in the cities of the NAC. So I decided it was worth the paycheck. So let's get going... I'll start with Denver, Colorado, since it's the seat of power in the NAC.

#Xenslicer101: *So let me get this straight; this guy worked on some seriously intense security for a tech company, but later couldn't get a job with a publishing company? Sounds to me like he seriously screwed up along the way.*

#Dianstarred: *Oh please, Xenslice_baby, everyone has major cred problems where you're concerned. Has it occurred to you that he might just be a victim of the crap economy like the rest of us?*

#Xenslicer101: *Note the way he said that he'd worked for a number of companies but didn't list them all. I really think he burned a few too many bridges, or worse, sold one of them out. He's lucky to have landed this gig at all, from the sounds of it.*

DENVER

As the Capitol of the NAC, Denver is a hotbed for religions and the mega churches. The First Faith of Christ and the Templars of God are the largest ones based in Denver, and maintain enormous facilities for worship and business. The downside of religious activity is the various hate groups, and each of them seems to have their own favorite brand of human to hate. While skin color is rarely the emphasis of hate, religiously motivated hate is directed at everything from AIs to simulacra, hybrids, and especially zeeks, considering such individuals abominations. The Knights of Jehovah is the largest of these; it operates openly, claiming to be a legitimate religious organization, and it primarily takes aim at hybrids.

Denver is located between the Rocky Mountains to the west and the High Plains to the east. The city has an area of 173 square miles.

The central portion of the city is dominated by skyscrapers, many of which originated during the 20th century, though they have since been renovated. The largest buildings in the city are the three massive Helios Towers, which occupy the center of the Denver skyline. The buildings themselves have equilateral triangular bases, with each building forming the corner of a greater triangle. Sky bridges connect all three buildings at two points: one at the top, and the other at the mid-levels. The majority of these buildings are dedicated to office space; the north tower is entirely occupied by the Helios Corporation, while the rest of the space is rented out to other companies. Roughly an eighth of the space is dedicated to high-end residential apartments.

The government of the entire NAC is based out of Denver, so politics takes place on both a regional and national scale, with the majority of the press coverage belonging to national politics. The mayor is Raymond K. Ross, a tall, lanky man with steel-gray hair, blue eyes, and a hooked nose. Ross holds widely popular evangelical beliefs. Politically, he is a staunch conservative who has re-allocated

much of the city's welfare budgets to the security and prison budgets. The result is widespread poverty throughout the Metro Slum Zone and the Flats, and an increase in crime, arrests, and imprisonment. Behind the scenes, Ross is known as a man who doesn't tolerate dissent with his policies, and there have been two cases of high-ranking elected officials who disagreed with him disappearing without a trace. Despite investigations into the disappearances, both cases have gone cold and have been promptly forgotten.

Ravenlocke Securities is employed by the city of Denver for law enforcement. The Chief of Security for the entire Denver Metro area is Charles Edwards, who earned his way to his position through a long career as a beat officer. Cybernetically enhanced with the Gunslinger Package, Edwards has a reputation for not shying from engagements with criminals, while applying a fair approach to law enforcement that was rarely criticized. During his time as chief, he has notably achieved a higher standard of conduct among the force, and he has overseen a major internal investigation that ferreted out a group of bad cops who were on the take and helping out a major drug smuggling ring. Edwards holds a seat on the city council and is one of the key voices in determining public policy.

One of the major attractions in the central portion of the city is the VR Arena. This is an open stadium-sized space that is integrated with the Global DataNet, and delivers holographic games on a massive scale. These games may be individual or team based, and they usually include material licensed from major media franchises. The games are captured on video and distributed to their own video channel, which has become a major hit.

Because of the emphasis on law enforcement, gangs and lowlifes struggle to maintain a foothold in Denver, despite the fact that they thrive in most other cities. The Silicone Crypts, the most prominent street gang in the Metro Slum Zone, specialize in accosting people on the streets and performing impromptu surgery to remove cybernetics. The Fenzini Cartel moves more illicit drugs than any other



organization in Denver, though there are countless smaller organizations and individuals who cut in on the same trade. In addition to this, the sale of banned ordinance is present, but because this is Denver, a city of corporate intrigue, big business is done in the sale of personal unregistered weapons, often finding their way to various corporate agents and the various hate groups that operate in Denver.

PHILADELPHIA

The city of Philadelphia is widely recognized as being divided into three primary zones, which include the Skyzone, the Depths, and the Sprawl. The Skyzone consists of all the tall buildings crammed together, and comprises two thirds of the city. Each building is like a miniature city of its own, with commercial space, residential housing, eateries, and markets. The buildings are connected via sky bridges with moving walkways, which enable people to move quickly from one building to the next without having to go down to the ground level.

The Depths include everything from the ground level and below. The streets are a lawless zone filled with drug addicts, the dispossessed, and the mentally challenged, and other lowlifes. Most of the city's people who couldn't find a place in the Skyzone found their way here, where they're forced to fight for survival. The sewers, steam tunnels, and other subterranean complexes are included in the Depths, and are well utilized by the city's various gangs and other denizens who are forced to exist in this region. Defensible regions below ground are typically held by one group or another, and are jealously defended.

The sprawl contains all of the old residential zones that were protected by the seawall and didn't succumb to the flood. Because most people were forced to relocate to the high rises, this area in the Sprawl became highly sought after because of the lower population density and the more laid-back lifestyle. Home values have skyrocketed, and as a result, even small homes are considered a luxury and not affordable to the blue platers.

Because of this, street crime is a nuisance at best in these areas, though home invasions and targeted violent crime is just as common as it is in the Skyzone.

In these tough economic times, the city government of Philadelphia struggles to meet the needs of its citizens with the revenue it is able to raise, while providing for other expensive works, such as the massive seawall protecting the city from ocean flooding and maintaining security. Terrorist organizations like the United Front have attempted to destroy the seawall three times in the past ten years—the most recent attempt resulting in a massive hole blown in the center of the structure that had to be patched while seawater spilled in. The seawall remains an attractive target, particularly by religious extremists who see the salvation of the city as the thwarting of God's will, and others who would drown the city in order to weaken the NAC.

#UnitedFront: One day we'll purge this cesspool from the face of the earth!

#Lawdog: Over my dead body.

Lowlifes and gangs pose a constant problem in Philadelphia, as they do in most urban cities. The most obvious of them are found chiefly at street level and below, though many criminals operate in the Skyzone as hackers, corporate infiltrators, and assassins. The most notorious street gang is called the Spatha, whose symbol is that of a sword in the style of Ancient Greece. They are led by Aaron Filkins, a tall, bald mercenary with an appetite for chaos. They operate from a series of connected rooms in the steam tunnels. The Spatha frequently venture out into the streets to rape, pillage, and generally cause mayhem. The city is well aware of their existence, but the cost of dislodging them from their hideout is considered too high, not to mention that if they were cleared out, they could simply return to re-inhabit the same space. Aside from random violence, the gang has their hands in the illegal weapons trade, human trafficking, and virtually every other illegal endeavor within the city.



One well-known criminal is Matthew Braine, a thief credited with breaking into the Philadelphia Museum of Art and famously stealing Vincent Van Gogh's *Vase with Twelve Sunflowers*. Braine spent the early part of his adult life in prison for petty theft, but he managed to hone his skills while he was incarcerated and made numerous contacts that he has been able to call upon when pulling a variety of heists. His notoriety has made something of a celebrity of him, though he's careful to appear in disguise when in public, in order to avoid capture. Publicly, he's known for a famous portrait in which he wears a black suit with a tie depicting a pair of dominoes. Multiple warrants are out on Braine, and the reward for his capture is currently set at one hundred million credits. This has motivated a number of bounty hunters and his fellow associates to try to find him in order to collect.

ATLANTA

Atlanta is 160 square miles and sits at a high elevation, making it more temperate than most southern areas of the NAC, though still far warmer than most northern cities and regions. It receives abundant rainfall during the spring and a small amount of snow during the winter months.

The downtown area of Atlanta has changed little over the past hundred years. A few skyscrapers have been torn down and replaced with larger ones, and the skyline has been extended by about a third, but the changes have been relatively small compared to most other major cities. The city contains three major high-rise districts, which form a north-south axis along Peachtree: Downtown, Midtown, and Buckhead. Beyond those are less populated neighborhoods. Over the past fifty years, the city has fallen once more into a state of urban decay, with gangs comprising the dominant power structure in over half the city's neighborhoods. Even the city's security force is viewed as just another gang in this wasteland.

The city is led by Mayor George Holman, a black man who was a football celebrity before entering politics. He's a tall, physically imposing, athletic man with a trademark scowl, bearded chin, and shaved head. Between his appeals to a higher authority, he's an endless crusader for the welfare of the poor and downtrodden, constantly pushing to increase funding for social programs his predecessors deemed too expensive and ultimately unnecessary. Because of this stance, he's popular with Atlanta's people, though he has numerous enemies within the city's corporate community. The majority of the





government still opposes his programs, though they occasionally bend to his will when there's enough support for his initiatives among the city's general population.

Atlanta is one of the great areas for the production of robotics. Lifelike Robotic Corp is the largest producer of robotic parts within the city, though its sales lag significantly behind other industry giants, such as Mango Systems Inc., and Roboboy. The CEO of the company is Michelle Lemieux, a physically diminutive woman in her mid-forties, who is unusually youthful-looking for her age, with pale skin, long black hair, and striking blue eyes. Despite her size, her natural grace and keen (some would say ruthless) business sense make her somewhat of a celebrity within the NAC, and in some quarters beyond. Her life and the lives of her two daughters are frequently covered in the various celebrity gossip vids.

Unknown to most—and very much a threat to the NAC and nearly every place that sells Lifelike Robotic Corp's androids—is the fact that the virus AI Charon has infiltrated the corporate production facilities and embedded itself in every android that has been produced over the last three years. Although this programming remains dormant for the time being, the AI has the ability to activate these robots and use them for its own nefarious purposes.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: I'd like to see proof. As far as anyone knows, Charon hasn't spread to North America.

#Simba: I'm not so sure Billy; some of those androids have been going on rampages. Could be Charon is morphing into something different.

#Neon_Bright: I did a job down in Atlanta recently. Lifelike Robotics' R&D database is a nightmare hack; ICE is thick, and like nothing I've ever seen before. Something is definitely going on down South.

ST. LOUIS

St. Louis is one of the key areas where the NAC and the Great Lakes Union bump up against each other. Shipping along the Mississippi River is vital, and this has given rise to disputes between the two nations.

In addition to this, it's a haven for smugglers who transport all manner of goods, from weapons to drugs, from one nation to the other.

St. Louis has become a militarized city, with large ground and air bases standing at the ready for the order to move into the Great Lakes Coalition. The St. Louis Arch still stands, but what once symbolized the gateway to the west is now a symbol of defiance, promising to one day swamp the Great Lakes Coalition with NAC troops who will annex the whole of that nation. A plaque now stands on each side of the arch, which reads "Portal to Victory."

St. Louis is 80 square miles. Its population hit a peak in the 1950s, at which time it began a slow decline that continued until the end of the Second Civil War. At that time, it became an important strategic location, which led to the military buildup, and an increase in the general population that catered to the military's needs. This, in turn, led to a greater corporate presence, creating more jobs and industry, and as a result, the city's population quadrupled.

Beyond the downtown area, the city is divided into 85 distinct neighborhoods. The vast majority of these are fairly safe, though the western portion of the city is Hell town, known for its notorious high crime rate. To the north is Silicone Park, a relatively small upscale neighborhood where technology and cybernetics are manufactured. Although insignificant in size, this is one of the zones with jobs for those seeking a better quality non-military career in St. Louis. It is also frequently the target of angry thugs who resent the wealth being concentrated in such a small area.

The current mayor of St. Louis is Janelle Taylor, a short, heavy-set woman with iron-gray hair, who also sits on the board of directors of Bastion Tec—which is the top military contractor that operates within the city. While she claims impartiality, her record clearly shows that her policies have favored the company. Even though this fact has been noted by several organizations and media outlets, nobody in a position of authority has dared challenge her, fearing they would bring ruin upon themselves. She does not have a

reputation for being kind or forgiving, and many officials who have run afoul of her have been bumped out of their positions. Despite her ruthlessness, Taylor remains popular among the people, who see her as a symbol of strength.

EAST TEXARKANA

Texarkana is a border town between Texas and the NAC in Arkansas. The city originally straddled the border between states, but after the Second Civil War and the Balkanization that occurred as a result, the city became contested. Despite similar views on many things and several failed attempts at establishing peaceable accords, Texas and the NAC found themselves at odds. In response to this, Texas demanded that a wall be built to divide the city along the border.

Since the war, East Texarkana has transformed into a manufacturing city. Everything is produced here, from ordinary household goods to high-tech products that include cutting edge computers, simulacra, and cybernetics. This is largely due to the fact that the cost of operating manufacturing plants is extremely low, which means wages are the lowest in the NAC, so people have a hard time making ends meet, even if they are employed. Many people supplement their income by less than legal means.

OKLAHOMA CITY

Oklahoma City is the largest city directly north of Texas, making it a strategic point for the NAC, not to mention one of several cities where smuggling is lucrative. Because the borders are closed and patrolled between the two nations, this is one of the key staging grounds for most ventures into Texas, whether they are state sanctioned or otherwise. Although East Texarkana lies on the border itself, most consider it too heavily patrolled to make any tactical ventures through and stand a realistic chance of success. Given the amount of open territory between Oklahoma City and the border, however, there are numerous places where the geography is more likely to hide the attempts.

Oklahoma City itself is 690 square miles and consists of a downtown area with numerous towering high-rise buildings, surrounded by miles upon miles of residential neighborhoods and suburbs. In this city, the primary force driving the economy is the military, which is constantly on a heightened state of alert, as it stands ready to go to war with Texas. Energy production, which has been a major industry here since the glory days of petroleum production, is the largest private enterprise, followed by food production, with one of the largest livestock markets in the world. Cybernetics and simulacrum production count as secondary industries here, but because of the emphasis on agriculture and energy, this is one of the cities of the NAC that is said to have changed the least over the past hundred years.

As with other places in the NAC, military interests drive public policy in Oklahoma City. For many, this isn't perceived as a serious problem since this brings countless civilian jobs; however, there are those who don't appreciate the fact that General Oseas Echevarria holds more power than Mayor Chi Richardson. The truth of the matter is that the entire city council is a mostly powerless body. During elections, they take stock of all the problems in the city and create plans to address them, only to have those plans dashed once the election is over because the military dislikes the programs or needs the budget in order to maintain its constant state of readiness.

SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

#INFOSOURCE

LOCAL: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET

FQDN: JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.CHITOWN.06TN.

TPN.SWW.GNET

DATASOURCE: MYTEL TAP CACHE ARCHIVE

#TAP::3E87CDF98EE:: (UNREGISTERED TAP)

The northern Americas haven't had a monopoly on geopolitical changes over the last century—borders south of the Rio Grande (or Río Bravo del Norte, depending on which side of the river you keep your crib) have shifted significantly as well. New Brasilia has functionally become one



of the world's leading superpowers, while the New Republic of Mexico has taken great strides to stabilize and unify Central America in the face of ecological and economic disasters.

Of course, that doesn't mean there aren't tensions. Most of the smaller countries around New Brasilia (and even a couple of the larger ones, for that matter) view her with the same ambivalence that's always greeted superpowers—they're rich, which is a good thing; but they're also powerful, which is very threatening.

But let's take things one at a time, and start in the north.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Let's face it, tomo: national borders are on the flux all over the globe, and if you'd been around about a century ago, you wouldn't recognize the borders of Mexico any more than you could make sense of all the North American nations.

The Nuevo República Mexicana currently covers an area from Durango and Monterrey in the north to Panama in the south, with its capital still in Mexico City.

Ironically, one of the biggest breaks Mexico got in recent history was the collapse of a strong United States, but maybe not for the reasons one would think. Although the early 21st century had seen Mexico make a little headway against the drug cartels that were tearing the country apart, it was the sudden cessation of the "War on Drugs" that did them in.

Between that, the Death, and New Brasilia's highly religious new regime in the south, the drug cartels simply didn't have the market to sustain themselves. Most of them collapsed on themselves in minor squabbles and skirmishes, but a few got smart and cleaned up their acts. In fact, it's a dirty little secret that two of the most prominent movers and shakers in NRM politics—the Guzman and Martinez families—originally made their money in drugs.

Bear in mind, tomo: While these guys aren't exactly saints, they've put their very bloody and illegal roots behind them (and don't exactly enjoy having their grand sires' proclivities pointed out to them).

However, the thing that's probably gone the farthest in bringing much of Mexico under the umbrella of a single government has been the institution of Las Concesiones. Almost feudal in its application, a *concesión de tierras* (that'd literally be a land grant, *tomo*) is nothing more than the government handing a chunk of land to an individual, who is given the title of *Gobernador*. A governor has almost absolute control over his (or her) territory, and is given a certain amount of support (militarily, economically, or technologically) based on the revenues he can bring to the Republican government from his grant.

Technically, the governor holds the position for life (barring extenuating circumstances), and—while the title can't technically be inherited—the scion of a governor can continue to hold the position if confirmed by the Republican Senate.

SOUTH AMERICA

When most peeps these days hear "South America," they think "New Brasilia," and with good reason: Brazil is currently one of the leading powers in the world today. Of course that doesn't mean things are quiet and peaceful there.

Let's recap a bit for those of you who may not be up on world history.

Back in the early-to-mid part of this century, the collapse of the "strong" northern hemisphere nations created a vacuum that the southern hemisphere could fill—especially since countries like the former United States were no longer in a position to effectively have any say in what was going on down south. This was further impacted by the discovery of a number of new "Super Drugs" and "Wonder Drugs" based on the properties of various flora and fauna only found in the Amazon Jungle basin. It meant that, in spite of the loss of most of the world's fossil fuels, Brazil had a means of massive income through pharmaceutical conglomerates.

The timing was also perfect for a theocratic government (the *Liga dos Apóstolos*) that had just taken the reins in Brazil. It enabled the Apostles to claim "divine providence" to further fuel their growth and popularity. That, in turn, enabled Brazil to

pretty much subsume many of the surrounding countries (well, that and the fact the Apostles are just a little militant).

New Brasilia and her protectorates now include (in addition to Brazil) what used to be the countries of Venezuela, Guyana, Surinam, French Guiana, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, and any portion of Argentina northeast of the Río de la Plata. Part of this expansion has been in the name of “The Rainforest Protection Act”; part has been in the name of “securing borders.”

For over a century, Brazil’s largest cities have functionally consisted of two distinct societies living side by side and pretty much ignoring each other: the favelas (basically the rural poor who moved to the city in the hope of a better life and have now become the urban poor) and the asfaltos (those who belong to the city and even profit from urbanization). Urban restructuring has largely resulted in many favela neighborhoods being built over and on top of.

Many favelas have simply accepted the new order and either live (literally) beneath the asfaltos or have been conscripted into maintaining the “fronteira”—the boundary where the city meets the jungle. But others aren’t so happy with things. The least militant simply apply various degrees of civil disobedience (up to and including the support of crime syndicates in extreme cases); the most militant have moved into the fringes of the jungle, where they operate as guerillas (sometimes against the asfaltos, and sometimes against anyone “intruding” on “their territory”).

#Billy_Black_Eyes: It’s a little-known fact that Brazil and China are already at war—at least in the Global DataNet. Strikes and counter-strikes by either side are almost a daily occurrence.

#Magpie: i’ve never noticed it when i’m virtually there. @_@

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Of course not. Unless you actively break into a “battle,” you aren’t likely to see it as anything but a data slowdown and chalk it up to high pipe traffic.

#D-V8: Damn, Billy. That just sounds like more of your conspiracy bullshit.

#Billy_Black_Eyes: Whatever...

One other item of note: Some of you may have heard stories from long ago about German and Italian refugees fleeing to Brazil for sanctuary. Well, tomo, that’s all true, and they settled in (largely in the south of Brazil), got married, raised families, and so on. And all the while they spoke of the “Glory Days” and brought up their children with visions of how great fascism was.

Believe it or not, “The Dream” never died, and there are still a few hard cases who speak either longingly or fervently of bringing about a Novo Império (or for the real fanatics, a Neue Reich) that would see humanity made “pure” and all humans socially prosperous. Fortunately, this group is a small minority—largely centered around the city of Curitiba—but they can make things ugly for the unwary, and there are other people who find their rhetoric compelling.

Okay, you say...You’ve been patient, but now you want to know about the countries that aren’t part of New Brasilia. Fair enough. Here’s the lowdown.

The South American countries not aligned with Brazil fall into one of three camps: Either they’ve banded together into alliances of mutual interest (Argentina and Chile), sought outside assistance (Peru), or—in a couple of happy instances—found their own legs to stand on (Colombia and Ecuador).

The alliance between Argentina and Chile was functionally ratified in the early ‘80s with the Treaty of Patagonia, which was their attempt to unite their mutual resources and create stable economies in the face of Brazilian growth. And, sad to say, it was spawned more out of mutual contempt for Brazil than any respect for each other. Basically, the Argentinians think Brazilians are “obnoxious” (and visa versa), as do the Chileans (and visa versa). In fact, the Argentinians and Chileans aren’t too fond of each other, either, but they happen to currently find each other less distasteful than Brazilians.

Colombia and Ecuador, on the other hand, were the two countries that managed to find a way to maintain themselves (and if you know anything about South American history, you might find it just a tad ironic).

Ecuador is something of the South American “Golden Child.” Over the last couple of centuries, the country’s kept something of a low profile while still staying active in United Nations politics, and she weathered economic crises fairly well in the past, given that the country sat atop a fair chunk of South American oil fields. Ironically, in spite of the oil, the GLUTTON virus actually managed to help Ecuador.

Colombia, on the other hand... Well, tomo, if Ecuador is South America’s fair-haired kid, Colombia is the Black Sheep.

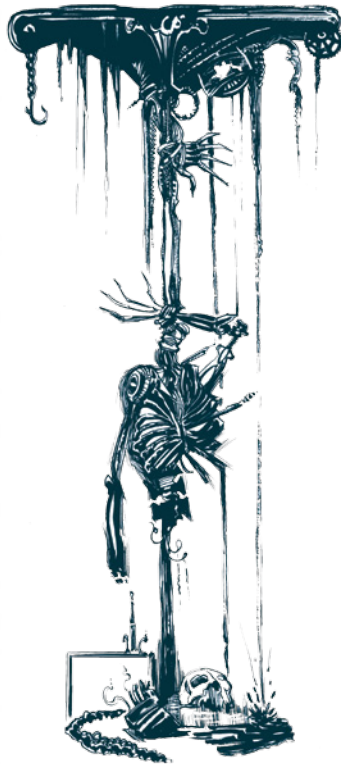
Let’s face it: even before the turn of the millennium, Colombia was having problems—largely due to having an economy tied to drug trafficking, but also based on the fact the country has had a history of internal violence for a good two centuries. After the collapse of the Colombian drug cartels and the institution of a new democracy, there was still fighting going on between the government and militant rebel groups until well into the 21st century.

The “fix” came as a sort of odd compromise.

In 2024, after over a decade of attempted (and failed) peace talks, the Colombian government offered a deal to the FARC-EC; the largest of the guerrilla factions fighting the government.

The Colombian economy was reeling in the wake of the GLUTTON virus, and the FARC treasury was dwindling with the slow collapse of their drug corridors. So the deal was this: the Colombian government would subsidize FARC as a military organization if FARC would allow its soldiers to be “leased” to other countries by Colombia as mercenaries.

There was doubtless a lot of back room dealing that went on—the FARC Resolution Treaty is kept out of the public eye and is not considered a matter of public record—but, in the end, an accord was struck and what has come to be dubbed “Colombia’s Rent-A-Thug Program” was born. Well, officially, it’s called “Military Outsourcing,” but it’s still considered a little shady and controversial by more conservative governments.





Planets spin along a set path, a trajectory through space, just as the sun spins along a path determined by the galactic core. Like ants, humanity scuttles about the star Sol, making little holes in the surface of the rocks, but never really affecting the grand scale of the universe.

Captain Hanz “Hands” Freiberg grinned from his perch on the hull of his one-man planet jumper. Life as a Zero was good. His ship was en route to the dwarf planet Ceres. Since it wasn’t in orbital prime right now this was a three-week trip, but that also meant security would be at a minimum.

He slapped the hull of his mistress, the Jagged, and did something no grounder could ever understand. In the vast reaches of space, he watched Earth pass between him and the sun. Colors blazed as the eclipse filled and a burning cornea surrounded the planet. The backdrops of stars and other planets stood out against the bands of colors that were distant galaxies.

Hands smiled to himself in the confines of his suit and activated his NutriPump, sipping a piña colada through it. He cranked up the tunes and lost himself in the majesty of the panorama before him. Yeah, life was good as a Zero, and he wouldn’t have it any other way.

THE SOLAR SYSTEM

#INFOSOURCE
#GYRO.TAG.DONATE.CHITOWN.ETP
WWW.JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET
SWW.GNET.JACOBSPLAYGROUND.NET.ETP
JAKE PLISKIN'S WHO'S WHO OF SOL

Here is a condensed overview of what you’ll find in the great black yonder, ami. If you want the full story—especially all you hash-taggers who want to leave their two

credits—I’ve got that too, and you know where to find it!

Life in space, 2090, is a life on the frontier. Terran life has conquered the final frontiers of the human body, the human mind, cyber space, and geographical expansion. Planet-dwelling philosophers say there are no new frontiers for humanity, but they are wrong. Life in space is wild and filled with peril. Much like on Earth,

free agents roam the streets of the colonies from job to job, just looking to make it to the next day.

Space started as colonies tied to Terran governments and corporations. As the number of colonies grew and their populations expanded, freedom from Terran oversight became a larger and larger concern for the populations and bureaucracies. In 2090 there are over 500 prime colonies, mining outfits, and orbitals. Earth alone has 60 orbitals with populations in excess of 3,000 people apiece. Prime colonies have grown to the size of minor plexes, housing over four million each. The total estimated population of the space colonies is thought to be around 250 million.

The current political climate is one of tension, but also one of possibility. The growing political maneuvers of the colonies to break free of Earth's control, combined with tensions between the colonies themselves, have created an air of suspicion amongst the various governments. The general feel of the colonial populations is one of hope. With the recent lunar and cererian revolutions a new age is in sight, and everyone knows it.

HISTORY OF SPACE EXPLORATION

2010–2019

- **2011:** Spartus Space Group launches first commercial space liner into low orbit.
- **2011:** United States cuts funding to NASA's shuttle program.
- **2012:** Hurricane Nicole. Cape Canaveral destroyed.
- **2013:** GENIE begins. Worldwide satellite network re-purposed to create global Wi-Fi.
- **2014:** GENIE phase 2. Wireless repeater network deployed across Earth's mesosphere.
- **2015:** GENIE phase 3. Cloud technology hubs re-purposed to support GENIE.
- **2015:** GENIE phase 4. "The Bottle," a hand-held device allowing for full spectrum communication and Internet access is released for early adopters.

PDAs, cell phones, and tablets crash in sales numbers.

2020–2029

- **2023:** GENIE phase 5. Aerosol form micro signal repeaters released into global cloud layer. Firmware patch of additional aerosol release is planned in two-year increments.
- **2029:** Quantum entanglement engines are successfully linked to a "sub orbital" satellite, providing the first geostationary Orbiting object within Earth's atmosphere.

2030–2039

- **2033:** China begins program for Mars Landing. The US follows suit, then changes destination to moon colony.
- **2036:** GENIE admins develop STRAP; an implanted crown of electrodes for Wi-Fi access.
- **2038:** Construction of first orbital habitats begins.

2040–2049

- **2041:** Matter assemblers de-factorization announced. Matter assemblers will be smaller and more consumer friendly.
- **2042:** Nanomachine matter assembly devices licensed to global corporations. Within 6 months they are part of all orbital and colony designs.
- **2043:** April 13. China successfully lands humans on Mars.
- **2043:** Teams from Eurasia and Brazil land on Mars.
- **2045:** NASA develops variable specific impulse magnetic plasma rocket, which speeds up missions to Mars.

2050–2059

- **2052:** Colony simulacrum production begins on Mars, with plans being drawn into other colony's construction specs.
- **2053:** Ceres colony is established.
- **2054:** Europa Prime Colony is established.
- **2054:** Ganymede Prime colony is established.



- **2056:** Saturn colony established, actually a series of 12 orbital style plexes known as "The Rings."

2060–2069

- **2060:** First US colony on Mars; lifers and deathers allowed indentured servitude on Mars as alternate option to sentencing on Terran prison.
- **2061:** CHIMERA lands on Hailey's Comet and refuses to share findings. Rumors are that CHIMERA left two ships on the comet.
- **2065:** Low-yield dirty bombs are used on Chicago, Denver, Dallas, and Tucson (destroying the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, and over 50% of the separatist Air Force planes, including orbital jumpers).

2070–2079

- **2073:** The Omega protocol is rejected in colonies.
- **2077:** Colony taxation repealed as the 100 colonies band together and form the United Civilizations (UC). The UC is modeled after the 20th century United Nations, rather than the modern UN.
- **2078:** UN and UC go head-to-head as UN tries to claim UC as a subservient governmental body.
- **2079:** UC outlaws Stopwatch off Terra Prime.

2080–2090

- **2081:** "The 52" are established. Fifty-two "mining" colonies established near the moons of Callisto, Europa, and Ganymede. The 52 are suspected by the UC of being black ops colonies of the Stopwatch Underground.
- **2082:** Lunar embargo on Earth shifts political currents to form the United Territories of Luna. Corporations are banned and Luna becomes first true democracy in 50 years.
- **2082:** Ceres colony follows lunar example and General Bjorn Smith-Gustafson leads a coup, establishing the Free Territory of Ceres.
- **2085:** The "Year of Embargoes" begins. Rising tensions between Terran-controlled colonies, Corporate colonies, free colonies, and rumored

Stopwatch-controlled colonies creates a series of embargoes and trade restrictions.

- **2085:** Black market and "street" Zeroes quickly respond by forming the "Guild of Allied Traders" (nicknamed GoAT).
- **2087:** Headway is made with embargoes as Bjorn Smith-Gustafson brokers a series of UC treaties between corporate-controlled Jupiter Moon colonies and Chinese Mandarinate-controlled Mars colonies.
- **2088:** GoAT denies all ties to a series of suspicious terrorist strikes which appear to violate Jupiter-Mars treaties.
- **2089:** GENIE expands beyond Saturn in preparation for phase 4 system development.
- **2089:** GENIE phase 4 picks up a signal coming from approximately 100 million miles beyond Neptune's orbital path. Hex keys from signal appear to match Terran IPs. No one understands how this is possible. System-wide media buzz the story for a couple weeks but stories die down as no explanation is found.

LIFE IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM

Life in the zero-scape is something the Terrans cannot understand. It isn't just a lack of gravity or atmosphere. There is something fundamental in the human soul which changes when exposed to the vast openness of space. When first confronted with it, a person either changes forever, or his mind breaks. The street philosopher Wang Xi (named after the ancient metaphysician Wang Bi), calls space the great embodiment of Yuan Wu; the existential nothingness from which all worth comes. Those who haven't been to space, or have just visited, don't understand Yuan Wu.

The popular terminology for someone living in space is a "Zero." This slang was popularized by Wang Xi as a way to describe not only someone used to zero gravity, but also someone who has embraced the worth of nothingness.

Sprawlers rarely do well in space, at least at first. There is a whole set of skills that they lack. How do you aim, when



gravity pulls the bullet down at a different rate and changes trajectories? How are martial arts changed by zero gee and partial grav environments? Even drinking and eating are a far different experience. The most common setting for first timers to space is the pleasure orbitals and resort, designed to be an almost perfect match to Earth's gravity.

Tourism is a very large industry inside the Inner Solar System, which encompasses the areas from Venus to the outer asteroid belt. Once you get past the outer belt, travel times become too great for tourism to thrive.

LIFE ON THE "STREET"

Life on the street as a Zero is mainly the same as life for a sprawler, other than the fact that they are not on Terran soil. There is a saying on Earth; "the streets are the streets, ami." For a sprawler it means that if you know the streets in one city, you know the streets in every city. For Zeroes, it means that you can find work on the streets no matter where you are. There is always a segment of society that wants to hang out in bars and hire shady people to steal things from other people, or even steal other people.

LIFE ON THE SHIPS

Sizes of ships vary wildly from single-person transports to cruise liners capable of transporting about two thousand people. The average traveler in space will be on a smaller ship, housing maybe a dozen to two dozen people. Personal space is at a premium, no matter what size ship you are on, and because of that thievery is dealt with as seriously as murder. Either can result in a fracture that rips apart an entire crew.

LIFE WITH THE CORPS

Those of you wage slaves who might be transferring from Earth to work in a place like TRIC city can look forward to this type of greeting from your new masters:

Welcome to the shiny new facility that will be your home for the length of your contract!

All of the best amenities are on site for you, and space, the grand adventure, is in

the palm of your hand! Oh, wait. You didn't sign an executive contract? Sorry, you live in a bunk room, perhaps a studio if you are on one of the larger colonies. Your schedule is rigidly set by the corporation, and life isn't easy. What's the advantage of life under the corp to life on the free colonies? You are an asset of the corporation, and of no value if dead or damaged. While you may have to sign an extension of your contract, no one has medical facilities that can match those in our corporation.

Sounds great, doesn't it?

LIFE ON THE FREE COLONIES

Those who live on the free colonies are the masters of their own destinies. Life is grand. Sure they may not have the best facilities, but no one controls them. They can choose their role, do what they want. Hell ami, wanna take a day off and just watch Mars get eclipsed by Ceres as they both line up with the sun? Go for it. The entire Solar System is your playground!

THE LAW

There are numerous law enforcement agencies in space. Here are some of the major entities.

THE UNITED NATIONS

On a fringe technicality, the UN has control of all official law and jurisdiction in space. While the UN still has a strong and powerful presence surrounding the Earth, the further one gets away from Terra, the less its influence and power is felt. The UN claims to set policy, and hears major criminal cases, from the International Space Station. More and more, the UC fills these functions remotely across the colonies.

THE UNITED COLONIES

As the free colonies began emerging, the UC was formed as a counterpoint to the United Nations. A bitter rivalry exists between the two organizations and their doctrines. The UC doctrine is that Earth is just one of many human settlements, and the UN believes that all of space is a territory of Earth.

THE CORPORATE COUNCIL

A counterpoint and official “helper” to the UN, the Corporate Council is made up of representatives from each C-7 corporation officially involved in off Earth activities. The Corporate Council handles corporate law and officially advises the UN. The council has vast influence in space, largely due to the Corporate Council being responsible for funding the majority of current Solar System exploration and colonization efforts.

GUILD OF ALLIED TRADERS

The Guild of Allied Traders, also known as GoAT, is a market response organization formed by traders financially harmed by the embargoes and tariff war between the colonies. They quickly allied with the UC and emerged as the system’s strongest non-allied body. The UN sanctioned them as the corporations started hiring GoAT to transport goods through embargo lines for them, and the only rivalries that still exist are with COPS (Colonial Officer Protection Services) and StarSec.

UN SOLAR MARSHAL SERVICE

The “Space Rangers,” as they are nicknamed, are responsible for peacekeeping and law enforcement in space. Woefully understaffed and underfunded, they are made up of volunteers from UN peacekeeping forces. Marshals tend to be very highly competent individuals, or have very short careers. The highest ranking marshals are given jurisdiction to act on their own, and even break the law in face of dangers which would result in massive loss of life, or threat to an entire colony. The Space Rangers have a bitter rivalry with “StarSec” and there are increasing incidents of the two resolving chance meetings in deadly-force combat.

STARSEC

Corporate Star Security is known as StarSec for short—or the “SS” to its detractors. StarSec is a wholly owned and recognized collective corporate security force that answers to the Corporate Council. The UN gave the Council permission to form a security force which would police the space lanes between colonies

and satellites to protect against pirates and smugglers. StarSec is more numerous and better funded than the Marshals, but less competent as a whole, and far more open to graft and corruption. StarSec often targets members of GoAT, and when they do joint training sessions with C.O.P.S., they bring databases of all known GoAT members and ships.

ORGANIZATIONS

SOLAR FREEDOM MOVEMENT

This is a collective, and growing, body of dissidents across the colonies and satellites who are calling for all space-dwelling humanity to formally cut ties from Earth and the UN and to declare their independence. Though they applaud the actions of the UC and the free colonies, they don’t feel the battle has been taken nearly far enough.

THE COLONY LIBERATION FRONT

This terrorist organization attacks not only UN holdings and officials, but also any corporations with ties to Earth. Publicly, they have no ties to the Solar Freedom Movement, but the Space Rangers, StarSec, and COPS all constantly look for connections between the groups.

ASTEROID MINERS ASSOCIATION

The official union and trade guild representing all miners across the colonies, not just from the asteroids. Thanks to a lack of manpower, the AMA is able to actually force some concessions out of the corporations that control the mining. However, the AMA is also full of corrupt leaders right alongside idealistic ones. In many places the AMA is little more than an organized crime group extorting everyone around it, and controlling organized crime throughout much of the colonies. Despite the “shady” nature of the organization, they do actively and primarily fight for higher safety standards and better compensation for their members.

THE MARAUDERS

The Marauders are the largest collection of Solar System pirates currently in

existence, and have a secret seat on the voting council of GOaT. The Marauders are a small private army, and a major cause of concern for both StarSec and the Marshals. COPS avoid the Marauders, not willing to engage in a losing struggle. Rumors put the Marauders as having not only their own capital ship, but a space station hidden somewhere as well.

THE VOID SCREAMERS

An apocalyptic cult that sees the presence of humanity in the Solar System as a major sin. The Void Screammers engage in terrorist acts dedicated to causing colonies and space stations to fail, with the long term goal of having humanity abandon the stars. Rumors say they are taking orders from an AI. Their motto is "Space is the river Styx, and to cross it you will pay the ferryman."

CORPORATE PRESENCE

NEW FRONTIER ENTERPRISES

Responsible for terraforming technologies used by the majority of colonies, New Frontier Enterprises focuses on the manufacture of hydroponics, artificial gravity generators, oxygen scrubbers, and quantum entanglement platforms.

CENTRAL BELARUSIAN STEEL

Mainly involved with heavy mining operations, C.B.S. runs or assists with mineral extractions on the major colonies and in the asteroid belt.

GOLDEN PROMISE

Golden Promise, Inc. administers to most of the needs of the Chinese colonies, being the largest service provider on Mars, but is now hoping to expand beyond the reach of the Mandarinate in space. They are focusing on the outer planets, looking to Saturn and Neptune as prime colonial development sites.

THIRD LIFE INNOVATIONS

While overshadowed by CHIMERA back on Earth, Third Life does substantial biological research in space, hoping to overtake CHIMERA by reaping the rewards

of space. They have a heavy presence in the asteroid belt, and work well with the Free Colony of Ceres.

RED PLANET INDUSTRIES

The first major successful "off-planet" conglomerate. Red Planet would be a second or third tier corporation on Earth, but in the Solar System has made a name for itself. Red Planet makes everything from food to space ships, and is based out of Mars. It is always looking over its shoulder at the Chinese Mandarinate and Golden Promise, but has thus far managed to stay autonomous despite its locale on the Red Planet.

COLONIAL OFFICER PROTECTION SERVICES (COPS)

COPS is a professional mercenary and private security firm which, like Red Planet Industries, operates strictly off Earth. All members are specially trained for zero-G combat and ship-boarding actions.

CHIMERA

CHIMERA is a huge presence in the outer planets, controlling most of Jupiter. CHIMERA dabbles in almost every facet of space and will overpower any colony it believes the UC is not watching over.

STARDUST ESCAPES, INC.

Stardust is a corporation completely dedicated to creating vacation hot spots and "pleasure palaces" for the well-to-do of Earth. From floating casino space stations hovering over Venus, to Martian spas, Stardust is the first name in extra-terrestrial vacationing. One of their most popular spots is the orbital "New Vegas" just eclipsed by the dark side of the Moon.

MAJOR SETTLEMENT AREAS

NATIONAL COLONIES

National colonies are the rarest of the bunch: settlements still tied to a governmental body on Earth.

FREE COLONIES

Free colonies are those settlements which have officially broken all ties with



their previous Earth-based governments, or never had them in the first place. Free colonies are fully governed by themselves, but still subject to United Nations laws. Every Free Colony has a representative to lobby on its behalf at the UN International Spaceport.

CORPORATE COLONIES

Corporate colonies outnumber free colonies by a small margin; together the two make up the most common settlement types. Corporate colonies are further broken down into two varieties, those wholly owned by one corporation, where every resident is a new corporate citizen and employee (the rare ones), or a colony funded by multiple corporations coming together and providing resources and labor. The residents of these colonies have more freedom and independence compared to their corporate citizen counterparts, but have to put up with the machinations of each corporation invested in the colony competing with one another for greater control.

VENUS

AU: 0.7

AN PRIME: -0.3

AN WORST: -1.1

Mass: 80% Earth's mass

Surface Conditions: The Venus cluster of colonies survives amongst one of the most hostile environments known to mankind. The surface of the planet is silicate sand, with heavy volcanic activity. The atmosphere is composed mainly of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane, and the surface temperature is 400 degrees Celsius. You have to be tough to survive on these colonies, even in the orbitals.

Dominant Colonizer: Central Belarusian Steel.

Rivalries: There are no rivalries on Venus. Due to the highly inhospitable environment, the average life expectancy of a colonist is only 13 years.

Exports: Silicon 40%, Iron 33%, Various Minerals 27%. The primary method of exporting goods from Venus is to use cargo barges to slingshot lumps of mineral

around the planet and fling them at magnetic clamping docks on other colonies' orbitals.

Number of Colonies: 39

Population Range: 500–21,000

NOTABLE LOCATIONS:

VENUS' PALACE

Run by Star Dust Inc., Venus' Palace is a casino and super resort for the wealthy, floating over the atmosphere of Venus. The primary focus of the Palace is space-based spy games and espionage.

LUNA PRIME

AU: 1.0

AN PRIME: 0.01

AN WORST: -0.05

Mass: 1.2% Earth's mass

Surface Conditions: The moon is a barren wasteland of rock and freezing temperatures. Despite this, the population is overall happy. They do not, generally, feel that life is a struggle, but rather that they are in on a big secret that no one else is privy to. Perhaps it is the sight of the Earth, floating in their sky, that makes lunar colonists not feel separated from the rest of humanity. Or perhaps it is the large size of the colonies.

Dominant Colonizer: Free colonies

Rivalries: Earth, any corporate or Terran-controlled colony

Exports: Information Technologies. Gateway information flow from GENIE to Solar System.

Number of Colonies: 12

Population Range: 50,000–375,000

NOTABLE LOCATIONS:

UN INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

Located between Luna's free colonies and Earth, this is the largest "hub" style space station in the Solar System. It contains shops, ship yards, the governing body of colonial representatives (according to the UN), the corporate council's HQ, and the home of both the UN Solar Marshals as well as StarSec. It's a place of politics, intrigue, and far-reaching consequences.

LUNA PRIME

This colony went independent after the United States fell to civil war. It is now a large sprawl site full of corporate influence, crime, corruption and with a seedy underbelly. While it does a brisk tourism trade, and bills itself as being “free from Earth,” in reality coming here is like most any other sprawl on Earth. But, as with any sprawl, there is another side to it. A vision of hope and fierce independence lives in the hearts of the population. Luna Prime was the home of the free colony movement and the city spends a lot of its profits supporting other colonies across the system wishing to become free.

RIO DE LUNA

Rio De Luna is a fiercely religious city, originally founded with the USA’s permission to harbor South American interests. When the US fell, the colony broke ties with all other lunar colonies, other than Luna Prime. They supported the freedom movement, wanting to break ties with Earth to found the New Lunar Church of Christ. Christians on Earth simply call them the “Loonies,” but they are well-respected amongst the free colonies as a philanthropic and charitable faith.

UN LUNA PRISON COLONY

This city started as being home to Solar System prisoners of the worst order, along with criminals too dangerous to be kept on Earth. During the freedom movement the city broke its shackles, but is closely watched by other lunar powers.

CENTRAL AFRICAN UNION COLONY

For reasons unknown to many, the Central African Union built a colony on the dark side of the Moon. Rumors say they created it with the intention of building some sort of super weapon on the surface, or conducting illicit research. After the freedom movement the colony became much more open than its Earth counterpart, and lets tourists visit. The colony is a known smuggler haven, yet one that is polite, safe, and civilized. Perhaps there is honor amongst thieves.

MARS

AU: 1.5

AN PRIME: +0.6

AN WORST: -2.1

Mass: 10.7% Earth’s mass

Surface Conditions: The Red Planet, both in appearance and in government, has a surface covered in iron oxide. Its



atmosphere is mostly carbon dioxide and it has volcanoes and vast valleys. Underground ice deposits are mined by the colonies to provide oxygen and water, as well as exports to Venus. The small planet is considered the last planet of the Inner Solar System and has two small moons, each a fraction the size of Luna.

Dominant Colonizer: Chinese Mandarinate, Golden Promise Inc.

Rivalries: While Mars presents a very uniform face, there are rumors amongst the Zeroes of trouble brewing between the Mandarinate colonies and those controlled by Golden Promise.

Exports: Iron 89%, Ice 6%, Various Minerals 5%

Number of Colonies: 77

Population Range: 200–40,000

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

NEW SHANGHAI

The newest Chinese colony, New Shanghai is large and full of Mandarinates, not to mention those who have petitioned to become citizens of the Mandarinate. In name it is a governmentally run colony, but in truth it is overseen by Golden Promise, which secretly wishes to push the colony to independence.

TIEN PAO MA

China's first colony is smaller than its new brother, but more entrenched and established. It is home to an older generation of colonists, mainly those having grown up living inside the colony. In a Chinatown that happens to be on Mars, the Triads are firmly entrenched within the sprawl's borders, to the point of not-so-secretly controlling the local government. The residents of Tien Pao Ma are not happy with the establishment of New Shanghai and actively avoid trade with the colony as much as the Mandarinate will allow them to.

THE TOTAL RE-ENVISIONED INDEPENDENT COLONY CITY (TRIC CITY)

The only former American colony built on Mars, TRIC City is also the only free colony and UC member on Mars. TRIC City has grown over the years to encompass

roughly thirty square miles. This colony is full of people trying to make a real life for themselves, braving the new frontier and fighting for their autonomy. A decent segment of the population are refugees from other Martian colonies who sought freedom from the Mandarinate. TRIC City is also the headquarters of Red Planet Industries, a source of pride for the people who live there.

GOLDEN CITY

Built by several of the mega-corps working in tandem, though named and run by Golden Promise, this colony is a top-of-the-line, ultra high tech and comfortable colony to live in. Intrigue and industrial espionage are rife behind the scenes, with ronin teams and mercenaries hired by the corporations to strike at one another in attempts to control greater parts of the colony. Despite the intrigue, and due to the high-life amenities of the colony, Golden City also generates a high amount of tourism revenue.

OLYMPUS MONS SKI RESORT

Built by StarDust Escapes, the massive Olympus Mons Ski Resort is a domed enclosure built into the side of Olympus Mons, the largest mountain on Mars (or Earth) with snow generators creating slopes suitable for skiers, snowboards, astro-boarders, and anti-grav skaters of all skill levels. Hands down this is the best, top-of-the-line, ski lodge in the Solar System—complete with spa and shopping complex.

PHOBOS PRIME

This is a private research and development facility located on Mars' moon Phobos. It is a known science research station where they're conducting experiments using zeeks and bio upgrades. Discovering more than that would require being a researcher at the facility.

STAR CHILDREN'S REFUGE

Deimos, the sister moon to Phobos, is home to the religious group Star Children, which took to the stars and now lives in its ideal promised land, separated from everyone else... yet they still need to trade

with outsiders to survive. Though they strive to bar outsiders, one can gain access to the colony as a trader or by feigning interest in joining the cult.

CERES

AU: 2.7

AN PRIME: +1.7

AN WORST: -3.7

Mass: Ceres has less than 1.0% Earth's mass and is approximately 1,000 km in diameter.

Surface Conditions: Ceres is a dwarf planet in the middle of the "Belt" which is composed of an ice mantle covering a water interior. The core of the planet is mineral, but the true value of the Ceres colony is water. The ice cities of Ceres pump water from the ocean under the surface directly past the dwarf planet's weak atmosphere and freeze it in space around nanite electro magnets. The most interesting fact about Ceres was the discovery of microbial life in the oceans. Current theories propose that Ceres was the source of all life in the Solar System and the colonies have a healthy export industry shipping microbes from the ocean to off-world R&D facilities.

Dominant Colonizer: Free colony

Rivalries: Earth, any corporate or Terran-controlled colony.

Exports: Water 44%, Microbes 56%

Number of Colonies: 7

Population Range: 25,000–400,000

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

CERES PRIME

Ceres Prime is an enigma of corporate bureaucracy and anarchistic piracy. You are free to do as you will here, as long as it doesn't affect profits. Need a job? There are far too many to pick from, and only a small percentage of them will get you killed. Only here will you see convoy escort mercs negotiating with pirates over the best time to jack a shipment. Hey, the shipment is insured, so everybody wins. This solid ground mega-colony is the gateway to the heart of Ceres, in more ways than one.

THE INNER BELT

AU: 2.2–3.3

AN PRIME: +1.2

AN WORST: -4.3

Mass: The belt contains almost a million asteroids that are over 1km in diameter, but the entire belt still only has a mass one thousandth that of Earth. The belt encircles the Sun, nestled between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. Unlike old cinematic depictions of "asteroid belts" crowded with crashing rocks, these are spaced so far apart that navigation through the belt isn't a significant challenge.

Surface Conditions: The colonies in the Belt are all on asteroids with only a view of distant space. Colonists in the Belt suffer a higher rate of space sickness (sudden onset dementia) than anywhere else in the Solar System.

Dominant Colonizer: Varied

Rivalries: Every power in space has colonies or mining operations in the Belt and with 239 colonies, there are about 500 rivalries.

Exports: Minerals 39%, Research Information 31%, Espionage 30%

Number of Colonies: 239

Population Range: 100,000–180,000

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

THE CENTRAL BELARUSIAN STEEL ASTEROID COLONY

The largest purveyor of mining in the Solar System has its key colony here overseen by one of the crazy Russian aristocratic members of the family. The colony atmosphere has a weird post-Cold War Russia feel to it. A power struggle within the family that runs CBS may be playing out here behind the scenes for something interesting going on.

C136DZ

This is the largest asteroid in the outer belt currently being mined, with a diameter of 250 kilometers. It is also the only asteroid in the outer belt to have developed a tourism trade. It has a very Wild West frontier town feel to it, with a mayor who used to be an executive for StarDust. There are plenty of shady deals, along with outlaws and law enforcement going at it.

JUPITER

AU: 5.2

AN PRIME: +4.2

AN WORST: -6.2

Mass: 31,800% Earth. Besides the prime colonies, there is an abundance of colonies on the four moons, Ganymede, Io, Callisto, and Europa.

Surface Conditions: Gaseous. All Jupiter prime colonies are orbitals, floating in different levels of the gaseous atmosphere. Rumors say that CHIMERA found advanced life less than a billion years behind Earth's life (in the multicellular stage). CHIMERA keeps Europa locked off from any other colony, responding militantly to settlement attempts. The one concession made is the export of microbial life, equal in development to Ceres' exports.

Dominant Colonizer: CHIMERA

Rivalries: Golden Promise, Mars

Exports: Solid State Gases 54%, Minerals 37%, Microbes 9%

Number of Colonies: 79

Population Range: 500–900,000

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

THE HIVE

The rings of Jupiter are like a mini Belt: solid minerals and too small to colonize. The Hive runs the mining operations. It's called the Hive because, well, it's like a beehive. With so much traffic, it's easy to ditch a tail. It is also a great place to buy uppers or find great pilots eager to earn a quick credit.

SATURN

AU: 9.5

AN PRIME: 8.5

AN WORST: 10.5

Mass: 9,500% Earth

Surface Conditions: To date there is no Saturn prime colony. The 52 colonies are spread amongst the 62 moons and the rings. Every one of them is a mining facility. There are rumored secret colonies on the two largest moons, Titan and Enceladus (both of which have tectonic movement and volcanic systems). What those colonies

do though, or even how big they are... they are just rumors. Right?

Dominant Colonizer: Stopwatch

Rivalries: All other colonies

Exports: Mineral 100%

Number of Colonies: 52

Population Range: 50–250

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

INKTOMI COLONY

The place to go in Saturn's subsystem to spend all those hard earned credits. The colony is small, but has an atmosphere. However, unless you want to know what it feels like to have your lungs freeze, better not pop open that visor.

COLONY TECHNOLOGIES

Colonies come in many flavors across the Solar System-as many as there are colonies. The technology to colonize different types of planets stems from the varied atmospheric conditions. As different conditions were discovered, humanity quickly adapted and grew, retrofitting and redesigning existing orbital technologies to make these new terrains survivable. While full-scale terraforming is not yet within the species' grasp, micro-climates and controlled terraforms inside of colonies have become a standard. Differing types of colonies have been engineered for surface colonies, those plexes which are located on a solid or semi-solid body, versus orbital colonies, which are plexes designed to float anywhere from inner atmosphere to outer orbits.

Each colony has a distinctly unique flavor, based upon a combination of the tech required to make the colony stable, the governing body in charge of the colony, who built it, and who the current inhabitants are. That aside, there are six basic themes for colonies, all based on the raw design.

SUBTERRANEAN

Subterranean colonies are plexes that are mostly underground. These exist in areas where the surface and even the inner atmosphere are too vicious to maintain any other type of colony. Subterranean



colonies are anywhere from 80% up to 99% underground. Every colony of this type will have at least a small portion above the surface to anchor solar arrays and provide extra power for the plex. Most of these colonies are very spartan, with the exception of a lavish central park, which has been terraformed to maximize life support systems like oxygen, water filtration, protein production, and mental health.

SURFACE

Surface colonies most frequently have a carbon nanoweave glass (the standard for all glass from vacuum to high pressure) shell, and most closely resemble the cities in the sky so often depicted in the previous century's science fiction. These colonies have massive terraformed sections, frequently constructed to be even greener than Earth. Combined with the view through the nano-glass shells these colonies are picturesque and opulent in appearance. Vacation and resort colonies generally refuse any other construction, on the shared motto that every space experience should be "better than Earth."

HYDRATIC

Hydratic colonies, like on Ceres, are those colonies built on or in water. The ice colonies use a similar construction method to surface colonies, with one major notable difference. Every hydratic colony is built with three specs not found on other colonies. The first is that each has tectonic stabilization plates, a system engineered to prevent capsizing. The second is the fluid filtration system. Terraforms and life support parks are less important to a hydratic colony than ice and water processing systems; the same systems that double as a failsafe to the tectonic stabilizers.

The third, and perhaps most important difference, is that hydratic colonies are designed with modular shells, so in the case of catastrophic tidal conditions they can separate neighborhoods and launch into low orbit. These systems have not yet been tested in actual catastrophe conditions, and whether or not they will actually work is the source of much debate.

ORBITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Orbital technologies are adaptations of the "floating city" philosophy of plex design. They are not exclusive to any particular system type, and may often be found as support colonies for various types of surface colonies. Orbitals all float, some in the atmosphere, some beyond it. Since they can technically, though not practically, be moved they are often research or distribution colonies. A small percentage of them are floating casino cities.

INNER ATMOSPHERE

Inner atmosphere orbitals, depending on the location, can be found as low as 500 feet from the ground up to the outer reaches of the planet's surface conditions or magnetic pull. These use a wide variety of technologies to stay loft, from turbine lift up to lighter than atmosphere buoyancy shells. Lower floating inner atmosphere orbitals generally have anchors to the surface and maneuvering jets to help create stability.

UPPER MESOSPHERE

Upper mesosphere orbitals are the first class of "space worthy" orbitals. While they are technically found in the atmosphere of a celestial body, for all intents and purposes they are scaled-down space stations. They are most frequently used as ports of entry and space docks for ships that are not able to land on the surface. Upper atmosphere orbitals are unique in the use of quantum anchors to stay in perfect geostationary orbit.

SPACE STATIONS

Space stations are engineered to withstand the rigors of supporting life in total vacuum. The most common station type is the "hub station." Hub stations rotate around a central core using centripetal force to mimic gravity. From a distance, a hub station resembles a wheel rotating around a spike. Space stations are often all-in-one facilities, containing a space dock, ports of entry, vacation spots, colony storage...they are designed to handle any form of commerce.



SHIP TECHNOLOGIES

Ship technologies have vastly improved as the decades of travel have passed. During the early part of the twenty-first century, travel took about one month per 10,000,000 kilometers on average, and was impractical for manned flight beyond Mars. Advancements in technology rapidly brought this number down to weeks, and as of recently, days and hours. The sleekest, fastest ship can make the trip from Earth to Mars in just a few days.

THRUST OPERATED

Thrust-operated ships exist in two functions. The most common is inter-fleet and surface to orbital transportation. For these purposes standard rocket propelled thrusters, vector thrust, and jet propulsion are sufficient to transport people or goods. However, there are throwbacks to the ships of old floating around the system. Interplanetary thrust-propelled ships take about six times longer than the average nuclear-powered drive to traverse their courses.

NUCLEAR POWERED

Nuclear-powered acceleration drives are the most common in the system, and the current basis for travel times. These vessels use controlled nuclear micro-detonations to power light sails. Excess force from the detonation is channeled out a series of burst cells around the craft, which helps control the direction of travel.

The primary motive force is a series of energy sails which can be deployed in various configurations around the craft. The "sails" catch the radiation and light and propel the craft forward. The engineers who devised this system were inspired by the Earth sport of wind-surfing.

MAGPULSE DRIVES

Magpulse drives are the newest technology in Solar System travel, and by far the fastest. Crafts utilizing magpulse drives are superior in build, moving about twice as fast as their nuclear counterparts. The technology is based on creating magnetic poles on the ship and collapsing tandem

magnetic bubbles to propel the ship. So far, this is the best hope for fast travel, though theoretically these ships will be useless outside of the Solar System where they cannot interact with the Sun's gravity and magnetic fields.

SINGLE PERSON CRAFT

Single person crafts can be any of the above types of drive, depending on the finances of the owner. However, the most common of the single person crafts found in the 2090 Solar System is known by Zeroes as "The GeeHawg." While it looks nothing like a motorcycle, resembling the shape and size of a Terran VTOL, the fact that it is a one-man ship has created a culture around the craft. "Biker clubs" of GeeHawgs cruise the asteroids and moons of the Solar System.



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CHARACTER SHEET

NAME

ASPECTS

High Concept

Trouble

Free Choice

Crossing Paths

Crossing Paths

FATE POINTS

REFRESH

INITIATIVE STEALS

STRAIN/TOLERANCE

FIREWALL

RESOURCE STRESS

SKILLS

Superb (+5)

Great (+4)

Good (+3)

Fair (+2)

Average (+1)

RESOURCE CONSEQUENCES

Mild

Moderate

Severe

UNSPENT PAYMENTS

OCCUPATION PERK

STUNTS

EQUIPMENT AND AUGMENTS

Free Invokes

PHYSICAL STRESS

MILD CONSEQUENCE

Moderate Consequence

MENTAL STRESS

Severe Consequence

FULL METAL CYBERPUNK

INTERFACE ZERO 2.0

You're hanging from the summit of a mile-high skyscraper, your cybernetic claws holding you in place while gunfire shatters the windows around you and a computer virus burns its way through your brain. When your network link to the rest of your team goes offline, you're sure of one thing:

You should have charged the client double for this mission.

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