

Warped Adventures



COLLISION

*An Adventure for WaRP System Games
Written by Tracy Atkinson*

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INTRODUCTION

This adventure for the *Wanton Role-Playing System* or the **Over the Edge RPG** is set on the island of Al Amarja, a setting of weird conspiracy and intrigue. It may be adapted without much difficulty to another location, preferably one with a diverse and interesting population.

As it relies upon a set of pregenerated characters, this adventure has not been designed to

drop into an existing campaign, but rather stands alone as a single story.

To get the most out of this adventure, you should have a copy of **Over the Edge** for reference. If you're planning to adapt it to another location, only the WaRP System rules are required. You can find a copy of the System Reference Document at www.atlas-games.com/warp as well as other adventures and resources.



THE WAREHOUSE

Read this aloud to the players:

You awake in a small, dark room. Your muscles and joints feel sore and stiff as you adjust your legs and your skin scrapes on the cold concrete floor. You realize you are naked. You blink your eyes, trying to see your surroundings. Light enters the room where the walls meet the floor and ceiling, and provides very subtle, shadowy illumination. You can make out a few other human shapes in the room. There's an itchy, aching spot on your left arm in the bend of your elbow. Your head feels fuzzy, and it takes you a moment to remember who you are.

The “other human shapes” are, of course, the other PCs, but if you want to have them fumble around and figure this out on their own, that's kind of fun too. Inspecting the room reveals the walls and ceiling are made of aluminum. As stated, the floor is concrete. There's nothing in the room other than the PCs.

Should they inspect themselves or each other, they discover a **puncture site** on the left arm of each PC. There's no other indication of abuse to their bodies. Should they compare notes, they learn that each has lost time — about 12 hours.

There's a single point of entrance and exit to the room — a seam that is easily found by searching. This is actually a very simple, mobile-home-style door with a weak lock. Once the PCs leave, they learn that the “room” is in fact a cube-shaped, storage-closet-like structure in the approximate center of a **larger warehouse**. This entire warehouse space is covered in a thick coating of dust, with many

sets of footprints from the storage cube to the exit along with signs of something (or several somethings) being dragged through the dust.

In addition to the cube closet, there is a row of **dust-covered lockers**. Inside are six pairs of coveralls, each with a logo printed on the back. The logo looks like a human eye with the stroma of the iris rendered in double helix. A stylized flare on the pupil is shaped like an infinity symbol instead of a sphere; it's the logo for Fathom Infinity Now, Inc, although none of the PCs know this yet.

Two pairs of coveralls are unique: One has the name “Homer” embroidered on it, unlike all of the others; another pair has a small amount of cash in a zipped pocket — enough to cover a short cab ride and maybe a round of cheap drinks. All of the pockets in the other coveralls are empty.

Next to the row of lockers is a metal drain-pipe above a sealed drain. It looks as though these used to be connected to something that is no longer there. This, like all the dust, is a clue that the area is not currently in use. Between the drains and the lockers is a **heavy wrench** that might be useful as a weapon (**X2 damage**).

There's an office space — also covered in dust — near the pipe and lockers, separated by a thin partitioning wall. In the center of the wall are three panes of dirty glass. In the office space is an old desk with a squeaky swiveling chair with ripped green cushion and an **old computer**. The desk contains the sort of ordure one might expect to find in a desk: pushpins, dull pencils with no erasers, old menus — nothing significant.

The computer is password protected. If Jesus Jruidu is along, he can use his The Word fringe trait to ask the computer for the password, which it will tell him [on a roll of 3+](#). If he fails, they'll have to guess. The password is *Homer*, the name of a technician that used to work here. The computer has documents discussing the development of Human Enhancement Technologies (HET) including: reproductive technology, embryo selection, genetic engineering, plastic surgery, performance-enhancing drugs, cybernetic prosthetics, powered exoskeletons, biomechanical implants, organ replacement, nanomedicine, and consciousness transference. None of the information present is useful presently. It is only here to make the players aware that it exists in the game.

Further, the documents include transcripts of conversations between **J. Resnik Reynolds**, CEO and Lead Researcher for FIN, Inc., and an employee, a robotics specialist. The name of the robotics specialist has been redacted. Jesus Jruidu could ask the computer what the redacted words used to read on a successful roll. This will reveal the name of the robotics specialist: **Boris Albescu**. Otherwise, keep it a secret for now.

Read this excerpt of one of the transcripts to the players, remembering to omit the struck through name unless the PCs have discovered it already:

Resnik Reynolds: *"I think we can counter the degeneration with a regressive protein, Boris."*

Boris Albescu: *"No. We need to establish a hub for nanobots from which we can rebuild the cell wall."*

Rez: *"I'm not interested in your opinion today. We've wasted enough time with these little back-and-forths. Just make the injections."*

Boris: *"I won't do it. I've devoted too much time to the other project."*

Rez: *"Then we have a problem."*

This conversation establishes that Rez and Boris do not see eye to eye: Rez has a preference for biological alteration, while Boris is oriented toward robotics. It also shows something of the personality of each man; Rez as a forceful authoritarian, and Boris as a driven individualist.

There's **one exit from the main warehouse**: a simple door that is locked but can be unlocked from the inside. As previously mentioned, there are footprints leading from the cube closet to the exit. A casual look at the footprints reveals many tracks with a similar imprint. A more careful look — say [a Hard look](#) — reveals they belong to the same individual, who has apparently walked in and out of the building several times. The exact number is equal to the number of PCs plus one. These belong to **Scofield**, the manager of the office park and security operator for Rez. It was he who put the PCs in this location. The extra set of tracks and drag marks is from his first trip into the building in order to make sure it was suitable and to open the door to the cube closet.

Once outside, the PCs emerge from one of about a dozen warehouse buildings situated on a paved lot. A very high chain link fence surrounds the warehouse park with razor wire around the top. The area is lit but not well maintained, so there are areas of shadow spread around.

There is a group of **Satanists** led by a guy named **Mastema**. They are looting a nearby storage unit one section down from where the PCs are. If the PCs choose to engage the Satanists directly, delay the description of the warehouse park and go straight into the encounter found below; however, should they choose to look around in order to sneak past the Satanists or otherwise get a feel for the environment before engaging the Satanists, then give them the description of the Magazeno Warehouse Solutions Park.

MAGAZENO WAREHOUSING SOLUTIONS PARK

Type: Storage area

Rep: Not much. People store things there.

Brief: Rez Reynolds owns the park. This can be uncovered through research. Also, there is branding on some of the building doors for Fathom Infinity Now, Inc., Rez's company. The manager of the park — a man known as Scofield — has become embroiled in an antagonistic relationship with a cluster of local Satanists who are part of the larger Satanist collective, the Glorious Lords.

Address: 414 Colonial Liberation Lane, Great Men Barrio.

- This area is paved and covered in aluminum buildings. There are few places to park vehicles. Lights are evenly distributed throughout the park, though many bulbs are out.
- The logo of FIN, Inc., is present on some of the doors to storage units.
- Those familiar with the Great Men Barrio — such as Jesus Jruidu and Abbey Fortune — recognize the park once outside and understand where they are in the neighborhood.

Section A

This section is mostly personal storage units, though there are some large commercial units. None of these holds anything of interest; however, you could use these units to contain seed items for later stories if you wish.

The **guard post** is here, as well as the front gate, which is open. The security guard lies face down in a pool of his own blood. Mastema stabbed him to death (*see below*, Section B and GMCs); however, the Satanists did not take his equipment, which consists of: a **taser** (X5 damage, all temporary), a **knife** (X2 damage), a **flashlight** (X2 damage), a **walkie-talkie**, and a **pair of high-tension handcuffs** (Really Difficult to break, Hard to escape from).

Section B

These units are commercial storage. This is also the primary staging location for incoming material to be stored.

A group of Satanists led by a guy named Mastema are looting a unit in Section B. See the GMCs section below.

There is a **second security guard** here, also slain by Mastema. His knife and flashlight have been taken. His handcuffs are being worn as an accessory on Mastema's leather motorcycle jacket. His corpse is still equipped with a walkie-talkie and a taser.

Section C

This is where the opening warehouse is located. All of the other warehouses in this section are used for storage, principally commercial, though there may be one or two personal containers as well.

If the PCs think to look, the door from which they exited has the FIN symbol on the door, though it is old and faded.

Security

There were two guards, one at the guard post in section A and one roaming; however, the Satanists have killed them, leaving the gate open and the park unguarded. Scofield is not around at the beginning of the encounter, but he may arrive later to assist the PCs or to chase them off.

GET BEHIND ME, SATANISTS

Read this aloud:

You hear smashing and thrashing a short ways from where you exited the warehouse. You can clearly see there are other warehouses and smaller storage buildings around, but your attention is drawn to the source of the noise.

A group of men clad in black leather motorcycle jackets and leather pants are in a nearby storage unit. On the ground lies a prone figure. One of the men kicks the prone figure, spits, and then resumes rifling through items in the storage unit. They all seem engrossed in what they are doing and have not yet noticed you.

The men in leather are a group of Satanists without an official name. They are part of a larger group, the notorious **Glorious Lords**. The leader of this particular pack of miscreants calls himself Mastema. The prone figure on the ground is a slain security guard, lying in his own blood. His remaining equipment is noted above in the Magazeno Warehousing Solutions Park description, B Section.

The actual number of Satanists present depends on the size of the PC group. A good amount is half the number of PCs plus 4, in addition to Mastema. This should make the PCs think twice before attacking. Scale it down if you want to encourage a fight or beef it up if you want to further deter them from fighting.

While you cannot predict exactly what the players will choose to do, here are some basic options:

Sneak past them and leave

- This requires that the party explore the park a bit, if they have not already. Emphasize that there are patches of darkness where burned out and broken lights have not been replaced. This could encourage sneaking.
- If they choose this option, it should be **Easy** or **Moderately challenging** (about a 5 or 6 Difficulty Factor).
- Use the lowest rating of the stealth traits of the group for these rolls. Remember, if the character has no stealth trait, he gets two dice.
- **Success** means the PCs are free and clear, but they learn nothing from the encounter. Skip ahead to the next scene.

- **Failure** means they have been discovered, and have to try one of these other options.

Try to reason with them

- Mastema can be reasoned with **Easily** (4) if approached coolly. If the PCs approach him too weakly or too strong, then it is a **Hard** (11) task. He is a cocky and aggressive thug, with an elevated sense of his own importance, which you can demonstrate in your play of the character during negotiations.
- **Failure** results in a fight. Mastema doesn't have time for this, just as he didn't have time for the security guards.
- **Successful** diplomacy reveals that Mastema and his gang frequently give Scofield, the industrial park's director of security, a hard time. They were on their way to do the same this evening when they saw him carrying a number of bodies into the warehouse the PCs just left. With Scofield occupied and unlikely to call the cops, the Satanists decided to raid one of the storage lockers. They killed the security guards when they interrupted them, but they don't seem at all bothered by this admission to the PCs.
- After the revelation, the PCs can simply leave. If they instead try to search the rest of the park, have the sounds of Peace Force sirens heard in the distance. That should clear them out. If the players discuss about hiding or talking to the PF instead, Mastema hastily advises them against that and run away.

Attack them

- The time-tested RPG approach to conflict resolution, though it certainly is not the best option. They learn nothing and could get injured or die.
- Should the PCs appear to be losing badly — one of them is grievously injured or downed — Scofield appears on the rooftop

of a warehouse and starts sniping Satanists with a high-powered rifle. You don't need to roll this; just announce that he's killed one each turn until they run away or are defeated by the PCs. Either way, read this:

You hear a hiss, like an expulsion of gas, followed by a loud cracking sound. One of the Satanists topples over, his head now a gory mess. The others are startled and panicked, looking around trying to figure out what's happening.

- If the PCs win, Scofield arrives and tells them to leave, that he has called the Peace Force. If the PCs refuse, he simply waits stoically for the PF to arrive.

GMCS

Mastema

Satanist alpha

Mastema has a nasty attitude and generally mean disposition, but much of this is bravado to keep his cohorts off balance and in line. He is very smart and generally reasonable, despite what he would have everyone believe; however, he will kill people in order to maintain his status and to show strength, so careful negotiation is required to avoid a violent outcome.

Use his stats for all the Satanists.

Al Amarjan men, early 20s, each approximately 188 cm, 136 kg.

Languages: Al Amarjan patois

Attacks: 3 dice each, X2 damage (knife, club, or flashlight)

Defense: 3 dice each + 1 point of armor (leather clothes)

Hit Points: 21 each (looking for trouble)

Traits

Mean-looking Thugs, 3 dice — Mastema and the others rely mostly on their looks and reputation to intimidate people. They are used to fighting, though, so they can if needed. And

they have already demonstrated they are willing and able to kill. (Menacing looks, Satanic imagery on clothing, blood of the guards on their faces and hands)

Cowardly, penalty die — These guys are not prepared to face serious threats to their person, nor to remain engaged in a conflict that could result in serious injury. They'll fight as long as their numbers are larger, or until one of them gets seriously hurt. (Talk tough but reluctant to engage, easily chased off)

Equipment

Each has a knife or bat (X2 damage either way) but not both.

Mastema also has a flashlight (X2 damage) and a pair of high-tension handcuffs.

Each is wearing leather clothing, which gives 1 point of damage protection.

Scofield

Warehouse foreman, security operator

Scofield is the foreman for the warehouse park. He dresses that part. In truth, he's a security operator that works for Rez. He has also been "upgraded" with human enhancement technologies (HET) designed by Rez. Rez had Scofield release the PCs into the warehouse for a few reasons: he owns it; it is a relatively obscure location; and it is guarded, so they will be safe. Or so he thought ...

Neither Rez nor Scofield were expecting Mastema to strike. Scofield has been instructed not to intervene unless the PCs are in life-threatening danger.

He carries a knife (X2 damage), heavy pistol with suppressor (X5 damage), walkie-talkie, and a high-powered rifle with suppressor and telescopic sight (X7 damage). Note that he carries this last item in the losing combat scenario only.

American man, age 45, 180 cm, 73 kg. Somewhat stocky build. Usually wears a blue short-sleeved buttoning shirt with jeans or work pants. Sometimes wears glasses, though this is an affectation.

Languages: English

Attacks: 5 dice, X2 damage (knife), X5 (pistol with suppressor is quieter but still makes a lot of noise)

Defense: 5 dice

Hit Points: 70 (augmented), takes 1/2 damage

Traits

Operator, 5 dice — Scofield is among the deadliest people in the world. In addition to fighting, he can use this trait for sneaking, following people, and disguise. (Blends in, hard to shake, deadly strikes)

HET, fringe trait — Rez has enhanced Scofield's resistance to pain, such that he takes only 1/2 damage, ignoring the half that is from pain in shock. His strength is also much greater than his apparent size, and he is able to lift several hundred pounds and run about twice as fast as a well-trained runner.

Old hand, penalty die — Scofield has been doing this a while and relies on routine and familiar tactics. Observant players can use this to their advantage, causing Scofield to be penalized when employing a similar approach. (Indifferent expression, sticks to "what works")

SUMMARY OF THE WAREHOUSE CLUES

Here's a list of likely clues from the opening scene, along with some ideas about how the players could follow up on each one:

- The **injection site** on the arm of each PC
- Many players may want to go the hospital or some other clinic for **drug testing** or medical evaluation. There's the D'Aubainne Hospital & Trauma Center in the Justice Barrio (see *Over the Edge, Second Edition*, p. 78), if you want to tie into happenings there. If you'd rather steer clear, there's Betty's Health Center right there in Great Men (see *OTE, 2nd*, p.67). It's typically used for selling plasma and organs, but they could run the tests.
- Tests reveal the PCs were drugged with an

anesthetic called **ketamine**.

- The dust in the warehouse, as well as the old drainpipes, show that the warehouse is **not currently in use**.
- The PCs may wish to obtain records about the warehouse in order to find out when it was used last and what it was used for. This reveals that Magazeno Warehousing Solutions Park is owned by **FIN, Inc.**
- Following up on FIN, Inc., reveals that it is owned by J. Resnik Reynolds and headquartered in a facility called the **Bel-Lazarus Complex**, located in the center of the island in the Critica Mountain Range.
- Scofield made **footprints and drag marks in the dust** in the warehouse when he was carrying them into the warehouse, one at a time.
- Logo on the back of the coveralls, on the warehouse door, and on other storage buildings: This is the logo of FIN, Inc., which leads to Rez.
- The name "Homer" from one of the coveralls was meant principally to provide the **password for the computer**; however, an especially industrious PC may try to locate Homer. Investigation reveals that Homer was a research laboratory technician for FIN who just vanished one day. Homer's body is liquefied in a barrel somewhere over the Brink, having asked Scofield one too many questions, and is of no further use to the story. His identity, though, could be used to gain access to the Bel-Lazarus Compound later in the adventure.
- Information from the computer about HET, Rez Reynolds, and the robotics specialist (Boris Albescu). Following up on Human Enhancement Technology reveals that FIN, Inc., is the leader in that field, and you're back to Rez.
- Researching Rez's past reveals there was an **accident** at the Bel-Lazarus Complex.

Scofield

- If the players know about Scofield, then they know he is the manager of Magazeno Warehousing Solutions Park. If they have learned Rez owns Magazeno, most players can make the leap that he works for Rez.
- If they also talked to Mastema, they know it was Scofield who dumped them in the warehouse.
- If they didn't talk to Mastema, and they are especially bold or foolhardy, players may want to locate Scofield to question him.
- Questioning Scofield should be difficult but not impossible. After all, he does not know much.
- What he does know is that Rez instructed him to take the PCs to the warehouse

and leave them there. He was to destroy anything they were wearing or carrying, and then leave but also monitor them until they woke. The key piece of information here is what they were wearing: various clothes but each had a FIN nametag.

- If they question him about the FIN nametags, he won't remember any of their names. He says he thinks they look "kind of familiar," like he has seen them around before, but doesn't really know any of them personally. He explains that he doesn't spend much time at Bel-Lazarus, that he's usually "out and about." Which is another clue: they were taken from Bel-Lazarus, presumably where they worked.

MANAGING THE SANDBOX

As you probably know, the term “sandbox” refers to an open environment where the players can go wherever they like. Al Amarja is an interesting place with a lot going on. The nature of the rules of this game combined with the interest of the setting may urge players to spread out or wander around. The degree to which you let them do this is entirely up to you. Only you know the style of your particular gaming group and what they will enjoy or find frustrating.

Given this, here are some common things players may want to do when not engaged directly in an encounter scene.

- After leaving Magazeno Warehouse Solutions Park, many players are going to want to get equipment from their residence. They may go together to each PC’s place, one-at-a-time, not wanting to split up; or, they may split up, get their stuff, and then rendezvous at some agreed upon location. They may want to procure new items.
- Most players will want to follow up on the clues from Magazeno. This is a good time for them to do that; however, some players may want to return to Magazeno, but the Peace Force will have the place taped off for the rest of the night.
- Some players may want to try to leave the island altogether. Refer to the D’Aubainne International Airport (*OTE*, 2nd, p. 80-5) for lots of ideas as to how to stop them from leaving.
- Some players will have already put things together and will want to go straight to

Rez. While this is not recommended — mostly because they will just have to turn around and go back later — you need to be prepared to manage it when they ask.

The following two events should happen during this time. It’s up to you to decide where they would be best placed. It’s recommended that they both happen before the PCs start trying to make contact with Rez and/or during attempts to leave or get involved in potential sidetracks.

COLLISION POINT I

Read this aloud:

Your head feels fuzzy, your vision blurs, and it takes you a moment to remember who you are.

From now on, each member of the group remembers what the other characters do, even if they are not present when it occurs. So if Jesus Jruidu splits from the group and goes to Great Men to talk with the Satanists, once he returns to the group, everyone else in the group has that memory as well. This should help solidify the group and encourage them to work together. Also, it probably impels them to uncover why this is happening.

MYSTERIOUS CALLER

Pick one of the PCs when they’re at their place of residence. Say the phone is ringing. If they answer it, or if they let it go to the machine, read this aloud:

An obviously distorted voice asks, “Do you know who this is? Nevermind. It does not matter. I have urgent information about your condition. I know what is happening to you ... all of you. Meet me in the Plaza of the Four Cardinal Points at midnight, and we can talk.”

You hear the familiar clicking sound of a line disconnecting.

Acting note: For the distorted voice, try speaking into your own fist like a cup, or using an actual cup. Try to speak slowly in a somewhat monotone voice. Speaking into a box fan also works well, but might be cumbersome to set up.

The caller is Boris Albescu, Reznik Reynolds’ estranged lab assistant, and he wants to meet so he can manipulate the group into breaking into the Bel-Lazarus Complex and retrieve **schematics** for the **Consciousness Transfer Device** (CTD).

If they’re interested in the mysterious meeting, encourage them to pursue that first. This saves them a trip to Rez’s place later.

THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY

This encounter takes place should the players decide to meet with the mysterious caller. Advance the story to midnight. If there are small, incidental things they want to do before then, that’s fine. This could even include things like talking with Scofield, since he’s mostly just going to direct them to Rez.

This scene is set in the Plaza of the Four Cardinal Points (see, *OTE*, 2nd, p.66, for a full description). This is a poor, dangerous area with no protective entities. That’s why it was chosen. You could easily move it to another locale if you felt it would be more appropriate or if you just like another spot better.

Once they are there, read this aloud:

Standing next to the broken fountain of fetid water in the center of the plaza is a figure in a black trench coat with a black hat. There’s a scarf wrapped around the mouth and ears, so you can’t make out any details of their appearance beyond the clothing.

The figure look suspicious, yes, but there is no one around who cares. Only two other people are nearby, and they both look in dire need of food and some sort of chemical.

The figure waves you over with a gloved hand.

The figure is Boris. Your job in this scene is to get the players interested in going to the Bel-Lazarus compound. This shouldn’t be terribly difficult at this point, since all roads lead to Rez; however, some players may feel they lack the necessary motivation to go any further, despite the nature of their character perhaps.

Also, another collision point occurs here:

COLLISION POINT 2

Read this aloud:

Your head feels fuzzy, your vision blurs, and it takes you a moment to remember who you are. You feel like you have been here before ... or maybe have met this person before, even though you cannot recognize them.

Have one of the players notice a zero (see *OTE*, 2nd, p. 156) lying nearby who simply vanishes in front of the player character’s eyes. From now on, this can happen during any scene, though it should always be with an incidental, unnamed character, not one central to the story.

AVOIDANCE OF CONFLICT

Boris says there is something happening to them all and that he knows what it is and that Rez is behind it. He won’t tell them what the deal is unless they agree to retrieve something for him from Bel-Lazarus.

You may need to act quickly here to avoid a fight. Read this aloud:

The figure speaks, again through voice distortion and says, "Please understand it is a matter of trust. I have devoted too much time and effort to have it all slip away from me now. Also, while I do know what is happening to you, I cannot do very much to assist you until I have these documents. So it is mutually beneficial that you do this for me. Show me I can trust you, that you will not betray me like he did, and I will help you with your problem."

There are some clues in this speech that point to his identity. First is the phrase "I have devoted too much time," which the astute player will recall from the transcript on the computer at the warehouse. Second is the mention of betrayal, which more a suggestive clue than a deduced one.

If players correctly guess his identity at this point, reward them. Have him relax and be more friendly and forthcoming with them. Refer to the encounter, **Returning to Boris**, for more detail about his demeanor once he trusts the players.

The "documents" Boris is referring to are actually schematics for a piece of tech called the Consciousness Transfer Device (CTD).

Boris supplies the PCs with a number to call from one of their residences when the job is done. The number does not connect to an active line, but he can monitor it to see the incoming number. He then calls the PCs with information about the next meeting.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the players adopt a hostile stance toward him, Boris flees. Should they chase him, this could be a fun chase scene; however, catching him won't yield much more than a fight, which he is likely to win. He won't kill them unless he has to, though, because he needs them for his plan to succeed. Thereafter, he is resistant to meeting

with the PCs again, though he might consider working with them over the phone and use a dead drop to pass the schematics.

In the event Boris is injured, there's a chance the PCs puts together that there's something inhuman about him. The PCs may try to uncover his identity and learn more about him. That's fine. Some players may have already done so, and he's going to tell them later anyway.

GMC

Boris Albescu

Revenge-thirsty fringe scientist cyborg

Boris Albescu is a biotechnology research scientist — Reznik Reynold's former lab assistant — whose specialty is robotics. He is also a former professor at D'Aubainne University (see *OTE*, 2nd, p. 86 for its description), so if PCs try to gather information about him, that's the place they are likely to find any.

Boris is motivated to gain revenge on Rez Reynolds, whom he believes tried to purposefully kill him out of jealousy — his burn scars are the outward sign of this incident. His plan is to confront Rez and burn him as he was burned. Ultimately, he would probably kill Rez if given the chance.

Boris used his knowledge of robotics and biotechnology to improve his body with cybernetic devices and implants, as well as mechanical and electronic assistive technology in the form of an exoskeleton that supports his limbs and a voice modulator for his throat. He also has a flamethrower and an atomizer that sprays different types of gas at close range.

He was "modified" by Rez with Human Enhancement Technology (HET) prior to his injury, which is what enabled him to survive the ordeal in the first place.

Romani man, age 50, 175 cm, 45 kg. Dark hair with silver streaks. Crippled, burned, emaciated body with gaunt features that look almost mummified. His breath has a raspy quality to it, and his voice has a muffled digitized sound

when speaking through the modulator. He dresses all in black complete with a fedora and trenchcoat — the way he imagines people do in spy movies. He also keeps all of his flesh covered so people cannot make out his identity or notice his burns. This includes sunglasses during the day and a special pair at night that look the same but have nightvision lenses.

Languages: English, Romani (Crimean Romani, if you want to be specific), Russian, some French, Italian, and German; reads most forms of Latin and Greek; can pick up new languages easily; speaks with a very slight Romani accent

Attacks: 2 dice

Defense: 4 dice + 6 armor, 2 bonus dice vs. psychic/magic (see below)

Hit Points: 28 (cyborg), takes 1/2 damage

Traits

Fringe Scientist, 6 dice, narrow — Boris knows something about everything. His real genius lies in biotechnology and human replication implemented through robotics and man-machine integration, both in terms of human processes and human likenesses. He is an expert in all the disciplines associated with these pursuits, though he has little formal education, and his credentials have often been questioned. His ideas are too far forward to be taken seriously by most contemporaries. (Can answer almost any technical question immediately and with full confidence, hates his peers, is pretty obsessive)

Cybernetic Exoskeleton and Life Support, 4 dice, defense only, 6 armor — Boris has installed a cybernetic interface connected to his central nervous system that allows him to manipulate an exoskeleton. The materials are lightweight and durable and afford considerable protection. His natural voice is quite weak now and so he has a voice modulator and amplifier he speaks through in order to make his voice louder and to conceal his identity. The modulator is part of a mask and air filtration system designed to protect him from the vapors he sprays. (Wears a trenchcoat, movements are stiff and odd, voice sounds robotic)

HET, fringe trait, 2 bonus dice to relevant defenses — Rez has enhanced Boris' resistance to pain, such that he takes only 1/2 damage, ignoring the half that is from pain in shock. Rez also enhanced Boris' mind and immune system, providing him 2 bonus dice against invasions of a psychic or magical nature that would target his mind or general health but not damage. (Survived being burned alive, abnormally strong will)

Psychic Skiptrace, fringe trait — Once Boris has made contact with a person, he can save an imprint of their psychic resonance field to a magnetic drive, which he can then use to track and locate them. Since he has already met all the PCs who come with this adventure, he can track any of them and know their whereabouts within minutes. Note that if the players were to steal the drive from Boris, it would disable this trait; however, they would not be able to use it themselves because it interfaces directly with his brain through his cybernetic interface. (Always knows where the PCs are)

Afraid of Fire, flaw, penalty die — Boris is very fearful of fire since he was burned. He will shy away from it in most circumstances but will not flee unless it is a very large or aggressive fire. He is determined to face and overcome his fear, but he is still penalized when around fire. This includes when he uses his flamethrower. (Body becomes stiff near fire)

Crippled, penalty die, don't re-roll 6's — The fire has severely limited his range of motion. While he has used assistive technology to compensate for this somewhat, his movements are still jerky and imprecise. He gets a penalty die on fine motor tasks, and cannot re-roll 6's for any physical task if you are using that optional rule. (Withered limbs, tight skin, cybernetic exoskeleton)

Equipment

Boris uses a cybernetic exoskeleton that responds to his movements, enhancing his strength and mobility to something comparable to his pre-injury functionality. The exoskeleton itself is very resilient and provides Boris with armor. It is also outfitted with different weap-

ons. Note that Boris's mask acts as an air filter and he has a limited supply of oxygen (about an hour) that he can switch on for better protection. He has an atomizer on the left arm of the exoskeleton, equipped with different sprays:

- *Soporific* – used to put people to sleep. The range is very short, so he will only use it for people who are right on top of him. X7 damage, all stun.
- *Tear gas* – to cause crying, coughing, sneezing, temporary blindness and so on. Affects all characters in the area. X5 damage, 1/2 stun. This will be his default weapon until he runs out.

He also has a flamethrower attached to the right arm of the exoskeleton. Remember, he incurs a penalty die when using it because he is afraid of fire. 50-80m range, X5 damage + Easy to catch on fire. Once on fire, damage continues. Boris will only use this on Rez or people who have backed him into a corner and are trying to kill him.

BEL-LAZARUS COMPLEX FETCH

Once the players have decided to go to the Bel-Lazarus Complex, they will need to establish a general approach to this task. Players may employ some combination of these approaches:

The Ninja Approach

This requires being very sneaky and not being seen by any FIN personnel. Unless they have procured some fringe items that enhance stealth, this is problematic for the group as most of the PCs do not have stealth traits.

Face Approaches

There are a couple of different ways players could use confidence-style approaches.

- They could pretend to be FIN employees using the jumpsuits they have from the warehouse and go in through the service dock entrance.
- They could pretend to be some group interested in Rez's research and let Gabriel Adamian or a similar player character take the lead. This will get them into the lobby of the facility.

The Direct Approach

There is often one player who wants to kick in doors. Broze Reynolds would make a good candidate for point on this one for two reasons: his personality and his relationship to Rez. This method leads to a special encounter, **Rezervations For Dinner**, detailed later.

Fringe Approach

Fringe powers make the game more exciting. They also make it harder to predict.

- Players could use Jesus Jruidu's power to talk with the building and ask it to let them in undetected. They could then use the building to guide them to the documents they are looking for.
- Players could use Chelsea Ardennes' power to surf the chakras of the valet or a dock worker to retrieve memories needed to gain access.
- Players could buy spells or other fringe items in The Edge that would help them gain access.

The Bel-Lazarus Complex makes use of narrative blocks for key locations within the larger area. There is a section later labeled "Atmospherics." Descriptions in that section can be used anywhere in the complex to enhance the players' sense of unease about the place or to tighten tension.

Also note that the Consciousness Transfer Device (CTD) is now referred to by Rez as the **Experience Collider** (EC) in order to more accurately reflect what it does, rather than what it was designed to do. This change is noted on the design schematics. Further, this serves as a hint to the PCs as to what is happening to them.

THE BEL-LAZARUS COMPLEX

Type: High tech research facility, private residence

Rep: Many believe demonic forces were instrumental in designing the Bel-Lazarus Complex, as the whole of the place seems to function from an alien geometry.

Brief: The Bel-Lazarus Complex is part of the Experience Collider itself, and Rez is connected to the Collider. He has direct awareness of everything happening in the complex and can manipulate many items by direct will. The building is labyrinthine and mutable, perpetually changing as Rez's experience changes.

Address: The complex is located in the middle part of the island in the Critica Range, about 23 km east of The Edge, The 'Burbs, and Airport, but not quite to Mt. Ralsius.

COLLISION POINT 3

Arrival at the Bel-Lazarus Complex causes Collision Point 3. Read this aloud:

The sight of the Bel-Lazarus Complex is overwhelming. The place has a very strange look to it, with angles that seem impossible in places and an eerie green light emanating from the base of the structure. The air feels and smells strange, as if recently ionized. Your hair starts to stand up, your head feels fuzzy, your vision blurs, and it takes you a moment to remember who you are. You feel very tired and drained — like the life is being sucked from you. But this feeling soon passes ...

They are actually recalling the trying times of working there, not the mind-altering or tests — that's later.

From now on, they'll gain an additional bonus die when working together on a problem related to Bel-Lazarus.

A NOTE ABOUT SECURITY

Rez has technology that does not yet exist at his disposal and presumably everything that happens within these walls does so under his nose. His intervention or non-intervention, though, will be based upon what he thinks would serve him best in the long run. So he may allow characters to think they are bypassing security when in fact he is totally aware of their presence and intentions.

VALET

At the front public entrance to the Complex, there is a valet who will take the vehicle away for parking. Should the PCs refuse this, the valet will not argue but will simply move the vehicle after they have left, even though he has no keys.

ENTRANCE AREA AND SHUTTLE

The entrance area feels kind of like a waiting room. It is mostly white and lit from ambient sources that are hard to locate. The furnishings are orange and very modern, though quite comfortable. Instrumental renditions of famous pop songs play while people wait.

The shuttle looks like an elevator. It moves along a monorail in various directions and transports visitors into the heart of the facility. From there, they can move to research areas or private living areas.

ATMOSPHERICS

Once in the heart of the facility, use these bits of narration to enhance the mood and feel of the place:

- *You hear the sound of footsteps approaching, but no one ever materializes.*
- *There is a clicking and swiping sound, like a credit card, followed by a beep. As far as you can tell, nothing happens.*
- *Your neck hair stands on end, and you feel as though someone is looking over your shoulder.*
- *Someone calls your name, but you can't tell where it's coming from.*

RESEARCH AREAS

There are loads of labs and offices spread throughout the facility. Any of these could provide information on transhuman science, though this is likely of little interest to them; however, visiting this area triggers a unique collision point.

Read this aloud:

Your head feels fuzzy, your vision blurs, and it takes you a moment to remember who you are. You remember when these spaces opened — these labs began to be used. All of your efforts were made real. Everyone was so excited ...

The person described in the collision could be any of the pregenerated PCs, even if they are not there. It's a clue that the PCs were employees working on the construction of the complex.

From now they have 3 dice to roll to see if they can understand a piece of technology in the Bel-Lazarus Complex. This may come in handy during the conclusion.

FILE STORAGE AREA

The schematics the PCs are looking for are in the file storage area, and are kept in an aluminum file cabinet. There are about two hundred such cabinets in the area, so unless they have a fringe power or roll very well, this takes some time. The main point about that is to play the tension of the scene and concern about being caught, not to discourage the players or make it terribly hard. It's just narration. Use atmospherics to enhance the effect.

PRIVATE LIVING AREAS

There are several private living quarters that look as though they used to be inhabited but are now vacant. Visiting any of these will trigger a unique collision point.

Read this aloud:

Your head feels fuzzy, your vision blurs, and it takes you a moment to remember who you are. You remember putting your clothes away here for the first time, feeling exhilarated, profoundly curious, and more than a little afraid ...

The person described in the collision could be any of the pregenerated PCs, even if they

are not there. It's a clue that the PCs lived there when they were employees working on the construction of the complex.

From now they have 3 dice to roll to see if they can find their way back to a location they have been in the Bel-Lazarus Complex.

REZ'S QUARTERS

It's up to you to decide if you want Rez to be in his quarters. If so, have him floating around in a sphere of force, perceptible only where its boundary bends the light slightly. You can also have lightning crackling around in the room or outside his floor to ceiling window, which has a panoramic view of Mt. Ralsius. This visual can be a useful piece to insert so that the players get a sense of Rez's power level before encountering him.

- If the players wish to engage him, skip to the event **Red-Handed** and set it in this room. If they have not already found the schematics, they can just ask him for them, and he gives them to the PCs.
- Otherwise, they could just sneak away and have that encounter later. The only real difference is whether they get a preview of his power or not.
- If you choose to have him not be there, you should make this room locked by maglock and password. Jesus Jruidu or Abbey Fortune could defeat it.

Once inside, there's a password protected computer terminal with access to the schematics they are searching for. They can print from the terminal, but it will take some time. Play this for tension and drama. Through this method, they can also read notes by Rez explaining his side of what happened with Boris:

4 January — I don't understand what Boris thinks happened. The fire was not the result of my error or intention. He knew the risks just like I did. It could have just as easily been me set ablaze as him. And why

wouldn't he let me help him? Why did he run away? I swear, I will never understand that man ...

This piece of information could change the characters perception of Rez, so if they find it, be sure to play up the more unlikable aspects of his personality in the **Red-Handed** event. If they question him about it, Rez will say the information is confidential, and he is not interested in discussing it further.

GETTING LOST

The compound follows a bizarre logic that only Rez seems to understand. This tends to lead to people getting lost. Again, play this as a narrative concept, not to make everyone frustrated. Use the atmospherics section to help describe what they are experiencing, then lapse time and put them in an area. Use this judiciously. If they start to get too frustrated, just put them in the file storage area.

SERVICE DOCK ENTRANCE

There is a loading dock used by service personnel on the southwest side of the facility, partially overhung by an outcropping of a mountain.

The entrance is maintained by one GMC, **Hollis Copland**, who is not dangerworthy. He will not try to interfere with the PCs and unless they make it obvious to him that they are not employees, he will make no effort to verify who it is they are. He is easy to sneak by and to fool, but remember you don't have to tell the players this. They are probably expecting lots of security and guards so exploit that expectation and maintain that feeling of tension.

THE EXPERIENCE COLLIDER CONTROL AREA

There may be a player who, after finding the schematics, reads them and learns of the Experience Collider. Such a player may then

wish to find it. Hold onto the reveal that the complex is part of the Collider and that the device wraps around and through the island and extends out into the Mediterranean. But let them find the **control console**.

The control console is accessed by an elevator, which they can typically only find by getting lost. If they have been to the living quarters and had the unique collision there, they can use those 3 dice to try to locate the collider control console.

The console is locked but can be defeated with Moderate success on a relevant roll; however, the console informs the user that the device is not working properly and is being modified by a privileged user. That's Rez, of course.

The main point of this scene is to inform them that the collider is still active and that it is not functioning correctly.

Being here also triggers a unique memory for the group:

You remember Rez's face that day, kind and comforting. He extended his hand and said, "It's all right. Come with me. I'm going to make everything all right ..."

You feel sick to your stomach.

This memory precedes Rez anesthetizing and experimenting on the PCs that worked for him, ultimately wiping their memories. On a moderate roll of 2 dice (3 if they visited the living quarters) they will recall bits of the tests:

You can somehow breathe this fluid and can see out the tube in which you are contained. Rez's face is scrunched in frustration. You cannot make out his words through your fluid-filled ears, but you can tell he is dissatisfied. The fluid fills with electrical current and your body tightens as you shake uncontrollably ...

There is nothing else to be learned here at this time.

RED - HANDED

After the PCs have obtained the schematics, they either leave or try to explore the complex further. Either way, Rez chooses to talk to them at this point.

Read this aloud:

The strange-smelling air fills with a pleasant fragrance that draws your attention. You turn to see a somewhat short man with longish hair standing straight in places as though from static. His eyes are hard and steely, though he smiles widely at you. It feels good to be in his presence. It's comforting somehow ... oddly comforting.

He says, "I see you have something of mine there. Oh how rude of me. I'm Rez Reynolds."

The reason it feels oddly good for the PCs to be in his presence is because it's a sort of "anti-collision" point, where they feel the connection to Rez emergent from the collision and can feel themselves becoming a part of him.

Rez does not care that they have the Experience Collider schematics. He just wants to know what they know. If they don't know anything — or at least don't let on that they know anything — he offers to escort them to the shuttle and see them out politely. If they ask why he is all right with them taking the schematics, he says the schematics don't matter anymore. The truth is, he just isn't that concerned about the PCs.

If they ask him questions about their "abduction," he insists that he has not kidnapped anyone — which he hasn't. In fact, he released them from the Bel-Lazarus Complex. **Tests used to detect if he is lying should be of Moderate difficulty.** Failure means they think he is lying when in fact, he's not. If they don't believe him and are insistent, he points out that their story is farfetched and not likely to be believed by anyone. He has no further interest in discussing it.

Also note that Rez is not intended to be a contestable adversary at this point. The entire complex is attuned to him and protecting him in a bubble of force. If the PCs try to hurt him, they discover this. Further, Rez is prepared for fringe assaults as well. Should Chelsea Ardennes try to "surf" him, he meets her there and speaks to her directly.

PLAYTESTING NOTE

During playtesting, Rez was played several different ways. The best received was when he was played as a stuck-up jackass, one who seems very evil and indifferent but also somewhat friendly to the players. Remember that you are in control, both as Rez and as the GM. Even if the PCs get aggressive, they can't hurt you. You know who they are, but they know very little about you. You see yourself as sophisticated and urbane, so of course you would be courteous. Plus, it is very intimidating to people when you are so calm about catching them in your facility. It makes them worry that you are not worried.

REZERVACTIONS FOR DINNER

If the players choose to utilize the relationship between Broze Reynolds and Rez, as described on Broze's character sheet, Rez agrees to meet with them for dinner around 8 P.M. at Chateau D'Or in Broken Wings Barrio.

This is where players have an opportunity to learn more about Rez. He has undergone many changes and is not quite human anymore. This should come out fairly naturally in the way you portray him and can be accomplished by having him speaking of how he "used to be like everyone else," or by using phrases like, "but I am beyond all that now."

Since this scene concerns Broze and his background, Rez is particularly fascinated by him, though Rez can't seem to recall any of their shared family moments. His recall should improve as the scene progresses.

Read this aloud:

The dining room is elegant in a way, though its beauty and style are subverted by an eerie quiet and chill to the air. Ornate brass workings set under glass line the walls, ceilings, and furniture.

There is a small meditation area in a sunken well near the rear of the room. It looks as though it has gone unused recently.

Rez walks in from a side entrance to stand by the head of the table. He wears an easy smile, laden with contempt.

"Welcome, my honored guests and ... brother." He says this last word with a strange inflection, almost as though he might laugh.

He waves his hand and chairs slide away from the table. He continues, "Please. Sit."

You get the feeling he isn't asking ...

Rez is fairly forthcoming about his scientific interests but little else. He ignores questions he does care about (or you don't know the answer to) and will focus on asking Broze questions about their childhood. This may require some roleplaying and improvisation on the part of the player, so be prepared to swoop in and rescue him or her with some memories, such as these:

- One time when they were boys, Rez was working on an experiment for school and Broze accidentally broke something. Rez told Broze it was all right, then hit him in the head with a beaker when he wasn't looking.
- Broze remembers taking a date to Rez's wedding. This is confusing, because Rez is apparently not married. If asked about

it, Rez says, "That's interesting. I wonder what she would have been like?" ...but nothing more.

- Broze will recall beating Rez at armwrestling after a night of drinks. Rez smiles at this and say, "How could *you* ever beat *me*?"

Rez is curious about Broze Reynolds because he knows he has no brother ... or at least, had no brother. He's intrigued by how the Experience Collider is altering reality and is both amused and somewhat annoyed by how he watches his own memories change from interacting with Broze. As the scene goes on, Rez starts to remember these events too, and joins with Broze in remembrance; however, he tires of this quickly and wishes to leave. He permits the players to stay and look around if they wish. If they want to leave, he escorts them to the shuttle.

If they stay, after a moment, they hear the voice of a woman saying, "Help me." There's nothing they can do. This is just an atmospheric.

GM C

Rez Reynolds

Morally flexible transhumanist

J. Resnik Reynolds, III, is the founder, CEO, and Research Director for Fathom Infinity Now, Inc. He is regarded by his peers as a visionary in transhumanist efforts, weaving the fringe elements of the perspective effortlessly with traditional hard science.

Rez can appear a difficult character to portray, but it's really not that tough. He basically acts like he is better than everyone else and tries to be charming. That's all.

His motivation is complex. He wants to understand what is happening to him due to the collision. When the PCs first meet him, he is not clear why or how his personality structure is changing, or his memories, or how to stop the process. He will continue to work on

this throughout the game and will solve it during the conclusion.

American man of Slovene extraction, age 54, looks about 35, 170 cm, 63 kg. Medium length brown hair. Rez is very fit from diet and exercise, as well as from his transhuman experimentation.

Languages: English; most Indo-European languages; some Japanese and Russian

Attacks: 6 dice

Defense: 6 dice

Hit Points: 90 (augmented)

Traits

Transhuman futurist, 7 dice, narrow — Rez has practical solutions for most technologies associated with transhumanism. He can create methods as needed to enhance performance or to solve specific problems. He can translate these technologies to practical applications for many different areas of human interest. He has effectively halted his own aging. (Seems more than human or inhuman, speaks about humanity as a problem to be solved)

Genius Intellect, 6 dice — Rez is very smart. Most of what he thinks is at once simple and entirely alien to the rest of his peers. (Can answer any question thoroughly and completely without hesitation, holds several PhDs, good at trivia games)

Neuroplasticity, fringe trait, 3 bonus dice — Rez's mind is very flexible and adaptable at the neurological level. He adjusts to any situation within a matter of seconds, fully prepared to achieve the best-desired outcome. He gains this bonus for any task that he has had to roll before in this game. (Learns from mistakes, difficult to fool)

Augmented body, 6 dice — 90 hp, recovers 1/2 of total hp not current. Through the use of genetic modifications, biomechanical implants and assistive technology, as well as nanotechnology, Rez has become something more than human. He is a capable fighter, though he has no real interest in it. (Capable of seemingly superhuman feats of athleticism, looks younger than he is)

“Advanced” Sense of Morality — Rez does not consider issues from anything resembling a familiar framework for most people. While he feels justified in his actions, they would probably not be seen as moral by others. (Seemingly no regard for the life or suffering of others)

Equipment

Rez has access to cutting-edge scientific research laboratories. He also controls the Bel-Lazarus Complex as an extension of himself.

SUMMARY OF THE BEL-LAZARUS COMPLEX FETCH

Here's a list of the major events of the encounter as well as some questions the players may have for Boris:

- The PCs experienced memories while in the Complex
- Many players may wonder if these are their own or if they are being implanted or suggested by the Complex
- Some players may have already put together that they were employees working for Rez who lived at the facility and were mindwiped by Rez. They will probably want to know why.
- The PCs may have uncovered Rez's version of the incident with Boris.
- The players may wish to either reconcile the two sides of the story, or may try to bribe Boris with the information.
- The PCs have probably discovered the CTD is actually an Experience Collider. They may have also learned that the EC is still active.
- The players likely ask Boris what he knows about the Experience Collider.

IT'S DONE: RETURNING TO BORIS

Boris wants to meet the PCs at Goba Harbor in Skylla, an ancient port city just north of The Edge. Again, you could set this elsewhere if you like. It's chosen for its atmosphere and absence of concerned entities.

If the PCs haven't figured out who Boris is yet, keep referring to him as "the figure" or "the mysterious caller."

Once they are there, read this aloud:

The tolling of ship bells rings in the distance as you approach. The smell of the sea tainted by pollution and human waste makes you wrinkle your nose in disgust.

Standing in the night against the backdrop of the harbor, scarf loose at one end and flapping in the sea breeze, the mysterious caller seems both anxious and triumphant.

With a black-gloved hand, he reaches, asking, "Do you have it?" And then saying before you can answer, "Give it to me! Give it to me, and I will tell you what is happening to you!"

Different players may approach this encounter different ways. Some will want to just hand the schematics over. Some will want to try to extort Boris to learn the information first. At any rate, there are three important pieces to this encounter:

- Boris answers the PCs' questions to the best of his ability. Note that his understanding of what is happening shifts once he sees the schematics. More on this later.

- Boris divulges his relationship to Rez and his perception of what happened during the incident when he was burned.
- Boris tries to convince the PCs to return to the Bel-Lazarus Complex to take down Rez. He will do anything he can to accomplish this, but a strongly sympathetic portrayal from you, the GM, is probably the best way.

So, prior to seeing the schematics, here is what he will say:

"You are all rats! Rats in Rez's maze! You are part of an experiment that began about a year ago and failed. He had his flunky, Scofield, dump you at the Magazeno warehouse, your memories gone with no way to link it back to him."

This probably won't satisfy the PCs, since there are many problems with his theory. Once they are sure he doesn't know anything else, they may be willing to give him the schematics anyway. If they aren't, he has to beg and bribe them probably, which he's willing to do.

Once he has the schematics, he studies them for a moment, then say:

"Oh no ..." He makes a sound, like an electronic whimper. *"All hope is lost."*

This leads into his history with the device, which he explains:

"I am Boris Albescu. I am a robotics expert and was a close colleague of Rez Reynolds. I helped him build this device, though that is not what we set out to do.

"We were working on uploading consciousness ... putting minds into machines with the hope we could prolong life indefinitely. Later applications would follow, such as transferring minds into robots or perhaps even new bodies. That was decades off, to be sure, but this device was to lay the foundation for those efforts.

He tilts his head somberly toward the schematics and continues, "Instead, it would appear we made something much worse. This device, as he explains it, does not transfer consciousness but collides it. The problem with that, is there cannot be replications of unique experience in the universe. So all the experiences are becoming a singular experience.

"I have no idea what this would be like ... I can't even be sure if it's affected me in some way ..."

He's silent for a moment, then says, "It doesn't matter. We have to stop it. If any of you are to survive — perhaps if any of us are to survive — we must stop it."

Further questions about his past, his relationship with Rez, or any refusals to help, prompt this reaction from Boris:

Boris violently yanks the flowing end of his scarf, revealing seared and wrinkled flesh with sunken angry eyes.

"He burned me! He burned me alive! We were colleagues — friends! And he burned me!

"Why? Why would he have done this to me? We were so close!

Boris regains some composure and points a finger toward you, saying, "I'll tell you why ... because he's jealous! He's always been jealous of me. Ever since we met, all those

years ago. I've been the truly brilliant one! I've carried him and he's robbed my fame, my success, my science! I was the one who thought of the CTD. I was the one who work shopped it to investors! Me!"

None of this is true, but Boris thinks it is, so attempts to tell if he is lying are not needed. He has no way of knowing that he, like the PCs, was just another employee who has become enmeshed in Rez's identity. This is why neither he nor Rez can understand why the other would do what they did. **It was an accidental fire that happened at the point of collision.**

Some players may have learned something to this effect from Rez's computer, but Boris doesn't believe them. He settles for nothing less than revenge, saying:

"Can't you see through his lies? This is a cover-up! An attempt to whitewash the truth! This is what he does, this is how he works. The only way to stop this is to disable the device and kill Rez."

If Jesus Jruidu, Broze Reynolds, or other PCs do not want to kill Rez, Boris cedes this point in the interest of enlisting their aid, but it should remain obvious that Boris cannot be trusted to keep his word about letting Rez live.

Some players may have already tried to hurt Rez or may otherwise be concerned about their ability to challenge him. Whether they bring it up or not, read this:

Boris studies the schematics intently. He nods and then says, "He is part of the collider now. He's attuned it to his brainwaves and his body's heat signature. If we can disable those links — sabotage the collider in a critical area — then he will be vulnerable.

His voice growls as he says, "And then we can ... do whatever it is you think is right."

SUMMARY OF RETURNING TO BORIS

Here's a short list of what was learned and likely will lead to the final scene.

- Boris believes Rez hurt him on purpose, even though to many players this may seem gray by this point. There's no convincing him otherwise.
- Boris knows little about the PCs' situation, but he does understand the device and how to stop it.
- Some players may want Boris to accompany them, some may not.
- If he goes with them, he performs the sabotage himself.
- If he does not go with them — perhaps because they fear he will try to kill Rez — he instructs them how to perform the sabotage, conferring a *Sabotage technical trait of 2 dice* to the PCs. He will then use his *Skiptrace trait* to follow them anyway.
- The players should be feeling pretty tense by this point, like their very existence rests on stopping the collider.
- If they're not feeling that way yet, add Collision Point 4. Otherwise skip it and go straight into the final scene.

COLLISION POINT 4

Read this aloud:

Your head feels fuzzy, your vision blurs, and you start to feel good. Really good. You are starting to remember all the things you did in your life and becoming okay with each one, as it slowly dissolves away ...

You shake your head feeling as though you'll soon be out of air.

From here on out, other characters the PCs have encountered in the game won't remember or recognize the PCs, with the exception of Boris and Rez. This leaves them with nowhere to go but Bel-Lazarus.

WHEN WE COLLIDE

Read this aloud to the players upon their return to the Bel-Lazarus Complex:

Your body shudders, cool at first then warming, as you approach the Bel-Lazarus Complex. You're starting to remember now ... the ad in Little Scratches ... the interviews ... the long days and longer nights ... the thrill of success. It's all come to this. It feels like coming home ...

Utilize the same entry options presented for the first Bel-Lazarus encounter, but speed it up. This scene should feel tense and like many things could go wrong: alarms could sound; the building keeps shifting in apparent effort to keep them away from the collider; however, it should, in game terms, be very easy to accomplish. It is essential to the story that they do this. But keep the feeling of pressure on.

SABOTAGING THE COLLIDER

If they visited the living quarters before, they have 3 dice to locate the elevator to the collider. Otherwise, have them get lost and then go to the living quarters. Read that collision point, and proceed to the Experience Collider Control Area.

If Boris is with them, he sabotages it. If he's not, then the PCs have the Sabotage technical trait they learned from Boris. Use tension and atmospherics to make it seem as though they could fail or could get caught. But they can't.

CONFRONTING REZ

Once done sabotaging the collider, the elevator takes them to Rez. Read this:

The elevator makes a strange sound, like a hiss and a squeal, then radically shifts direction, throwing you all to the ground. It is moving at incredible speed and the force has you pinned down. It comes to a surprisingly gentle halt, and you stand, looking out the open doors, seeing Rez standing with his back to you.

It is important to inform the players that there is a print-out spooling off the printer behind Rez when they arrive. It comes into play later.

If the players brought Boris or in some way take Rez to task for what happened to Boris, Rez says:

"Boris only wants the CTD for himself, so he can be free from his body. The problem for Boris is, the CTD isn't that at all ... it's more accurately an Experience Collider. And we are in its grasp ..."

If Boris is there, he does not deny this. If Boris is not already present by then, he arrives, having used his [Skiptrace](#) trait. He attempts to burn Rez alive with his flamethrower.

Read this:

You hear a slight hiss and two clicks, followed by a streaming sound as flame sprays from

Boris' right arm. The flames lick around Rez, who flips from the floor over his own head and away from the flames.

"You will burn for what you've done, Rez!" Boris yells as he rushes forward, tracking Rez more carefully with his arm.

Rez speaks calmly, "All I've done, Boris, is try to make you better. To make all of us better than we are."

Boris looses another stream of fire, which burns Rez slightly on the face as he runs past Boris, snatching the collar of his coat and hurling Boris across the room.

In the instant Rez is burned, you are burned too, in the same place.

"You see," Rez says, "It's started. We are already one. You cannot do anything to me without doing it to yourself."

The PCs have the choice to try to intervene in some way, to facilitate a discussion, or to fight either Boris or Rez. They quickly learn, if they don't believe what he said, that fighting Rez is fruitless. Each time they hurt him, they are equally hurt. So their only real option is to stop Boris from burning them all alive. Boris is perfectly willing to do this, even if it means his own demise.

When Boris is defeated or convinced to stop fighting, read this:

Boris coughs through his mask, his electronic voice weak and bitter. He says, "I can't believe it ends like this."

Rez looks first at him, then at you and says, "It doesn't have to."

Rez walks to the print-out spooling from a printer in the rear of the room. He studies it for a moment, then says, "The collision has never stopped. You know that by now. But by disabling the collider, it seems to be enlarging. It will soon spread to the rest of the island and then beyond. I have no idea what that will do, but it won't be pleasant."

After another moment of studying the data, he says, "I think I can stop it. If we can use the collider a second time, I can invert the existing collision. This should undo everything that has changed. Of course, I won't survive."

"Alternately, I could try to pace the original collision with the second, and speed up the collision between us. I don't know what would happen to us exactly, but based upon what has been happening, I think we would all collide into one being."

The PCs have to make a choice, to speed up the collision and be joined with each other, Rez, and Boris in an ontological singularity, or to let Rez sacrifice himself.

Either way, the EC has to be fixed. Narrate this tensely, to try and get the device online before the collision engulfs the island. This should be played much like the sabotage but shorter and with the clock ticking. Perhaps use a literal hourglass or stopwatch for dramatic effect. Remember though, they need to succeed.

ENDINGS

With the EC fixed, the players now have two choices of ending:

If they let Rez die alone, read this:

"Where I go, I go alone. I'm sorry, Boris ... or whoever you were before you got involved with me. I am sorry to all of you. You helped me realize my dream, and it cost you your identity. I lost myself, too, along the way. I wanted to be remembered for all I've done, for everything I did to help humanity. Now I hope you forget it all — that everyone forgets that I ever lived or did anything. I hope there is something left in the wake."

Rez smiles a little and activates the machine. The entire complex rumbles. Alarms sound. Warnings screech in your ears. You feel your chest expanding, separating as though your

ribs and sternum may break. You feel your throat tighten and dry. You are certain this is the end as your vision fades to black.

You awake on a large, empty plain at the base of a mountain. Your muscles and joints feel sore and stiff as you adjust your legs, your skin scraping on the cold rocks and stiff grass. You realize you are naked. You blink your eyes, trying to see your surroundings. There is light everywhere, shining over the horizon, silhouetting the mountains.

You see each other. Your head feels clear and calm. You remember everything, though you can feel your memories fading before your eyes, your life re-arranging into the way it was before, the way it will be again.

If they choose to merge with Rez, the PCs are now the people they were before they met Rez. Any trace of Rez, Bel-Lazarus, or the Experience Collider is gone. Read this:

As you all nod to Rez that you are certain this is what you want, he activates the collider.

The device whirls to life, light shooting out of various vents, steam hissing and electricity crackling.

You feel a swelling in your temples, followed by a deep pain in your chest. Tears stream from your eyes. Your vision blurs, seeing double, then triple, then ... only one vision.

Your whole body shakes and twitches in unison — all of you the one you ...

You feel our essence lifting from this frail physical form into the space of dreams and of thoughts and beyond. We reach outward in every direction, filling infinite space and taking no room at all. We are underneath the structure of reality, and we are beyond its furthest limit.

We are everywhere. And we are nowhere, when we collide.

In this ending, the players have become an ontological singularity and have transcended physical reality into something beyond. This is the end of these characters as separate playable entities, though the new being could make cameos or play an important role in later series. Or this could simply be the end of their story.

WHO ARE THE PLAYER CHARACTERS?

The central mystery behind the identity of the PCs is that they were employees who worked for FIN and helped build the Bel-Lazarus Complex. The exact nature of their “original” indentities is not included because it no longer exists due to the experience collision. Depending upon the ending, the focus of a new series could be to develop who they were before the collision and presumably who they are once again after Rez and the collider are gone.

Over the next few pages, full game stats and backgrounds for the recommended player characters are provided. You may print them out or have the players copy them onto blank character sheets.

APPENDIX: PLAYER CHARACTERS

Abbey Fortune

Streetwise problem solver

Abner Fortune (née Abha Kulkarni) is the daughter of an Indian Sikh man and an English anthropologist mother from Shields. Though her mother often called her Abbey, she adopted her chosen name when she was sixteen.

Abbey is one of the most connected people on the island. She knows who all the relevant characters are and can find information on others very quickly.

She also knows quite a lot about the island itself. She has explored much of Al Amarja and has developed a theory that the island is perpetually changing and expanding but has no good way to account for this.

Abbey is motivated by wanting to know everything that is going on around her and is uncomfortable with people having information about her without her consent.

English woman of Indian extraction, age 33, 158 cm, 49 kg. Chin length black hair with straight bangs at the brow, light brown eyes, black leather blazer, dark eye makeup and lipstick, cat eye glasses.

She owns a knife, lock picks and a tension wrench, and a master magcard with keypad for defeating magcard locks.

Abbey keeps a flat in Flowers Barrio.

Languages: English (The Queen's English, that is, with a Sandancer accent)

Attacks: 3 dice (knife, x2 damage)

Defense: 3 dice + fringe power for escapes (see below)

Hit Points: 21 (tough)

Experience Dice: 2

Traits

Heuristics of the Alleyways, fringe trait, 2 dice — Abbey has preternaturally good systems for solving problems. She's been around enough to know how to find the right info, grease the right palms, who knows what about what, and so on. She can also use trait this to cause problems for others so she can elude capture or detection, spread disinformation, or otherwise obstruct people moving against her. (Always knows a guy, good guesser, frequently says, "I have an idea")

Fierce Protector, 3 dice — Abbey is a brave and protective person. She will fight to stand up for anyone she sees as being wronged, victimized, or otherwise aggressed upon. She can hold her own in a fight. (Stands up to physically larger people, shouts at strangers on the street, gets into fights a lot)

Locksport, technical trait, 1 die — As a hobby, Abbey practices defeating locks and notifying the manufacturers as to how she was able to do so. She makes a portion of her living doing this on contract as well. Obviously, she could use this for less scrupulous purposes. (Carries picks and a tension wrench)

Traceuse, 3 dice — Abbey practices parkour and can cross city terrain at a rapid speed. She can also use this trait in combination with *Heuristics of the Alleyways* to escape pursuers. (Turns quickly while running and bounces off walls and objects)

Can't Be Snooped, flaw, penalty die — Not many people enjoy being watched, tailed, or duped, but Abbey simply cannot abide these things. She has to stay in the know and cannot let her guard down. (Always checking windows and watching over her shoulder, tracks down people out of spite).

Broze Reynolds*Gentleman soldier of fortune*

Broze Reynolds is a globe-trotting mercenary too rebellious and vindictive to stay with one employer for any length of time and too refined to hang out in the mud for long. In fact, he has been ejected from national military service and has not found lasting success with private military companies due to personality conflicts. So, he tends to jetset from one exotic locale to another, finding small pieces of work as a bodyguard, security consultant, or assassin. He's come to Al Amarja for such reasons, and to see his somewhat estranged and aloof brother, Rez, with whom he has had little contact since he was a young boy.

Broze is motivated by money or even the promise of money, as well as his connection to his brother.

American man of Slovene extraction, age 45, 178 cm, 82 kg. Dark brown hair worn very short, green eyes, designer clothes.

Broze owns a custom pistol & rounds that will elude all but the most sensitive metal detectors, a big knife of fashionable design, about five tailored designer suits, and high end casual wear.

He is on a weekly rate at The Midas Hotel in Golden Barrio.

Languages: English

Attacks: 4 dice (big knife, x2 damage)

Defense: 4 dice

Hit Points: 28 (in great shape)

Experience Dice: 2

Traits

A Knight Without Armor, 4 dice — Broze sees himself as a gentleman and socialite, though he comes from a poor family and is a professional mercenary. He never works with governments, only private clients, often ones who cannot afford his full-scale rates. He is a capable fighter and is skilled at negotiation and diplomacy, provided he chooses those routes. Use this trait for fighting, charming, and other sorts of derring-do. (Designer clothes, very well groomed, strong grip, hard eyes)

Health & Fitness Nut, 3 dice — Broze only eats whole food that has not been processed, and he exercises about four hours a day. Obviously, he will adapt if absolutely necessary, but he is fairly rigid about these activities. Use this trait for any health related situation outside of physical injury, such as poison, illness, endurance—that sort of thing. (Well-sculpted physique, looks younger than he is, picky eater)

Weaponsmith, 2 dice, technical trait — Broze can repair and customize most standard weapons. He can construct one from parts, too, but that will take a while unless he has all the parts already, in which case it's really just a matter of assembly. (Custom pistol, packs his own ammo)

Rebel, flaw, penalty die — Broze has a romanticized view of himself as a champion of lost causes. What's closer to the truth is that he's angry about being rejected by the mainstream military and law enforcement agencies and has a large distrust of authority in general. Broze will make impulsive and reckless decisions when an opportunity to embarrass an authority figure presents itself. Further, he has frequently endangered his life to prove a point or take a stand, even when doing so yielded very little real benefits. (Dresses slightly off occasion, argumentative about control and freedom, vindictive, can't let things go)

Chelsea Ardennes [are-DANE-uh]*Supersensory surfer*

Chelsea Ardennes is a recently retired pro surfer from Bermuda who came to Al Amarja because of rumors of a strange surf effect on the island's southern shore. She was disappointed when she failed to locate the effect but became friends with a street smart woman named Abbey Fortune. The friendship and her transitory state of retirement has left her content to stay a while and keep hunting the wave anomaly. Chelsea will be compelled to unravel the mystery and help the other PCs initially because of her friendship with Abbey and perhaps Gabriel, depending upon which characters are in play.

Chelsea retired from professional surfing after a transcendental experience during a surfing accident. Since her recovery, she has learned that she can perceive the astral plane and "surf" there as well.

Bermudian woman of Afro-Caribbean and Dutch extraction; age 24, 180 cm, 57 kg. Curly dark hair bleached by the sun. Somewhat plain, square face with light freckling. Thin, athletic, muscular body from surfing her whole life. Tattoo of the Laughing Buddha between her shoulder blades. Always dressed for the beach.

Chelsea owns a professional quality surf board and surfing gear, an ordinary necklace that she believes balances her chakras, and a ukulele.

She keeps a modest apartment in Flowers Barrio.

Languages: English

Attacks: 2 or 4 dice

Defense: 2 or 4 dice

Hit Points: 21 (athletic)

Experience Dice: 2

Traits

Surfer, 4 dice — Her coordination and balance are quite good, and her body is very strong. This trait is physical, so in addition to being used for surfing, it can be used for attack or defense but not both in the same turn. Also, due to her strong mind-body connection, Chelsea can use this trait to defend herself from fringe dangers including attacks and spells from other characters—anything that would harm her bodymind.

Chelsea can also use this trait while projected into the astral plane and "surfing" someone's chakras to surf "the big wave," an enormous wall of perceptions and memories that separate the person's conscious mind from the unconscious and beyond. The person may resist with a mental, psychic, or magic trait.

Successfully surfing the big wave brings the person to a cathartic reconciliation of their unconscious conflicts. This could lead to developing new traits or losing a flaw. It could also make them better disposed toward Chelsea. (Likes being near the water, surfs, uses surfer jargon, somewhat philosophical)

Astral Projection, fringe trait, 1 die — Chelsea sees the astral plane as an endless prismatic sea and can "surf" ley lines like waves to travel very quickly. She can also "pipeline" in the chakras of others, gaining access to their perceptions. Use this trait when she wants to try to gain impressions of their thoughts or memories, or if they are psychically defended against traits like this one. Otherwise, no roll is needed. She gains an intimate connection with each person she pipelines, and there's a 1 in 6 chance they will recognize her if they meet in physical reality. She can also use this trait to try to locate someone she has surfed before. Difficulty is based on the intensity of the connection she felt to the person, with less intense connections being harder to find again. Note that Chelsea is in an altered state of consciousness but is not unconscious while using this trait; however, she cannot do anything else or she will "wipeout" and return to her ordinary state of consciousness. (Sits in a meditative position or just lays down, usually closes her eyes too)

Aspirant musician, 3 dice — Since retiring from pro surfing, Chelsea has become a singer and ukulele player. (Sings to self, good timing)

Magical thinking, flaw, penalty die — Chelsea has an exaggerated sense of the impact of her actions and fears that her choices will result in some event that is disastrous in scale. Apply this penalty on rolls when action is needed but could result in an undesirable outcome. The penalty also applies to actual sympathetic magic. (Somewhat spacey, believes in everything, nervous about making decisions)

Gabriel Adamian [uh-DOM-yon]*Intrepid seeker of truth*

Gabriel has always sought truth in life. He has two doctorates of philosophy: one in psychology, the other in philosophy & religion. He has traveled the world weaving together threads of the tapestry of human experience in earnest effort to create a unified understanding of human behavior and the meaning of life. His thoughts have been occupied lately with trans-humanism and the relative merits and dangers of those who wish to redefine what it means to be human before truly understanding that same condition.

American man of Welsh and Armenian extraction, age 35, 183 cm, 75 kg. Curly black hair with male pattern baldness, generally cut close or shaved. He usually wears a blazer, often made of tweed or linen, though he tends to take them off outside. He wears reading glasses but can generally see fine without them. He prefers cashmere sweaters with lightweight wool pants and loafers.

Gabriel owns a wallet with some cash, a walking cane concealing a foil, a notebook, and a lightweight flashlight that fits easily in a jacket pocket.

Gabriel keeps a sparse two-bedroom apartment in the Science Barrio.

Languages: English**Attacks:** 2 or 3 dice (foil, x2 damage)**Defense:** 2 or 3 dice**Hit Points:** 18 (stalwart)**Experience Dice:** 2**Traits**

Psychologist, technical trait, 2 dice — Being a student of human nature, Gabriel can use this trait to discern the traits of other characters, gain trust, get characters to share secrets, and to uncover the motivations of other characters. If he has used this trait successfully on a character before, he thereafter gains a bonus die on interactions with that character. He can also use this trait to try to guess what another character might do, to impersonate a character he knows, or to convince someone he has a trait he does not have. (Discerning gaze, patient, good listener, makes insightful comments)

Fencer, 3 dice — One of the ways Gabriel manages stress is fencing. He is above average but not exceptional. He could use many common items to improvise a foil, so this trait could be used for combat if he has such an item. Otherwise, treat it as a physical trait. (Structured and precise movements, attention to detail, good reflexes)

Clinical Investigator, 3 dice — Gabriel's education and work from bachelor's level research methodology up through his dissertation have honed his mind to think critically, comprehensively, and categorically. He has a good eye for fine detail, can organize disparate pieces of information quickly, and can form a working hypothesis immediately from the information available. This trait can be used to gather information, review clues, and to generate new leads if the player is stuck. (Asks good questions, remembers to follow up on details others miss)

Can't Leave Well Enough Alone, flaw — A burning desire to know and understand has served Gabriel well inasmuch as he has crafted a comfortable professional life and has hewn an impressive intellect; however, he often ventures into areas that others would not. He follows his curiosity, wherever it may lead irrespective of what others might warn. (Hard time wrapping up conversations, perpetually curious, wanders around dangerous parts of town alone at night)

Jesus Jruidu**[JEE-zuss DROO-eh-doo]***Homeless hippie, The Second Coming?*

Jesus was born in Ghosttown in West Oakland, California. Growing up amidst wanton violence and crime, he found his calling when a nonprofit group built a house for his aunt and his grandmother, the women who raised him. He helped with that project and was allowed to help on other projects in the area. He did not realize he was the Son of God until he was 17, when an angel appeared over the San Francisco Bay and told him who he was and that his mission was to redeem all of mankind. Since then, Jesus has moved from place to place, doing construction work and trying to help people get their lives together.

African American man, age 32, 175 cm, 68 kg. Kinky black hair worn loose in curls or wound with multicolored string into Bantu knots. He often has a beard, though he shaves it every month or so. Jesus wears a casual Dashiki with lightweight, tan workpants. He has a pair of walking sandals and a pair of heavy workboots for construction jobs.

Jesus' only worldly possessions are a carpenter's tool belt, work boots, and walking sandals.

He lives at a shelter in Great Men Barrio.

Languages: All

Attacks: 2 or 4 dice

Defense: 2 or 4 dice

Hit Points: 28 (life of manual labor)

Experience Dice: 2

Traits

Modern Missionary, 4 dice — Jesus is either the actual Son of God, living again on Earth, or just some guy that thinks he's the Son of God who goes around trying to help people. In either case, he can use this trait for trying to gather information, counsel people, solve problems, or protect himself. He can also use this trait to try to recover hit points, even once he's "dead," either because of his divine nature or because of a strong will to live. (Helps those in need, lives an ascetic life, survives very dangerous situations)

Social Alchemy, 1 die, fringe trait, 1 shot per scene — Through cooperation, organization, or inspiration, Jesus can seemingly make a lot out of very little. This trait generates bonus dice for use by other players or for the group. The number rolled using this trait correlates to the Sample Difficulty Factors in the *WaRP* OGL rules. Use the "Blowing the Top Off" option, so 6s can be re-rolled. So a roll of 4 would yield 1 bonus die, a roll of 7 results in 2 bonus dice, and so on. The minimum yield is 1 die, the maximum 6. (Water to wine, loaves and the fishes ... that sort of thing)

The Word, 1 die, fringe trait — Jesus can speak with anything and understand it perfectly, though the conversations may not make much sense to anyone else and may not yield anything useful. The die roll is to determine how relevant the information is to the story or problem at hand. Jesus is also abnormally persuasive and rolls this trait when trying to convince people. He doesn't get to choose. (Talks to lamp posts, rocks, trees, rats, speaks every language; very persuasive speaker)

Master Carpenter, 6 dice, narrow trait — Jesus is very good at building things from wood. (Wears a carpenter's tool belt)

Trying to Save the World, flaw — Even when it is ill-advised, Jesus tries to help. He believes his sole purpose in life is to save the world and redeem mankind. He will pursue this at any opportunity. (Does not shy away from difficult problems, will help anyone)