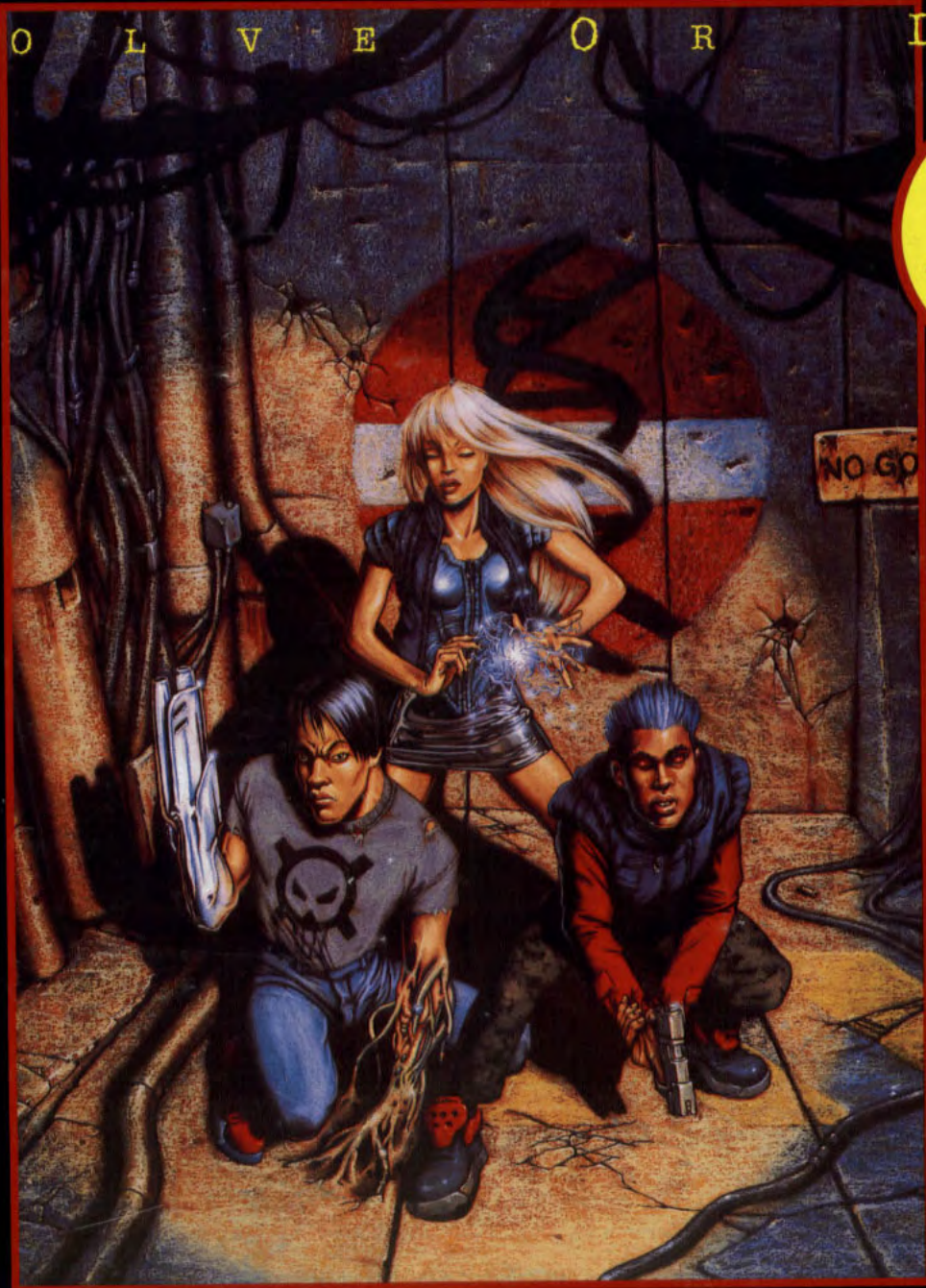


R. T A L S O R I A N G A M E S

# CYBER GENERATION

E V O L V E O R D I E

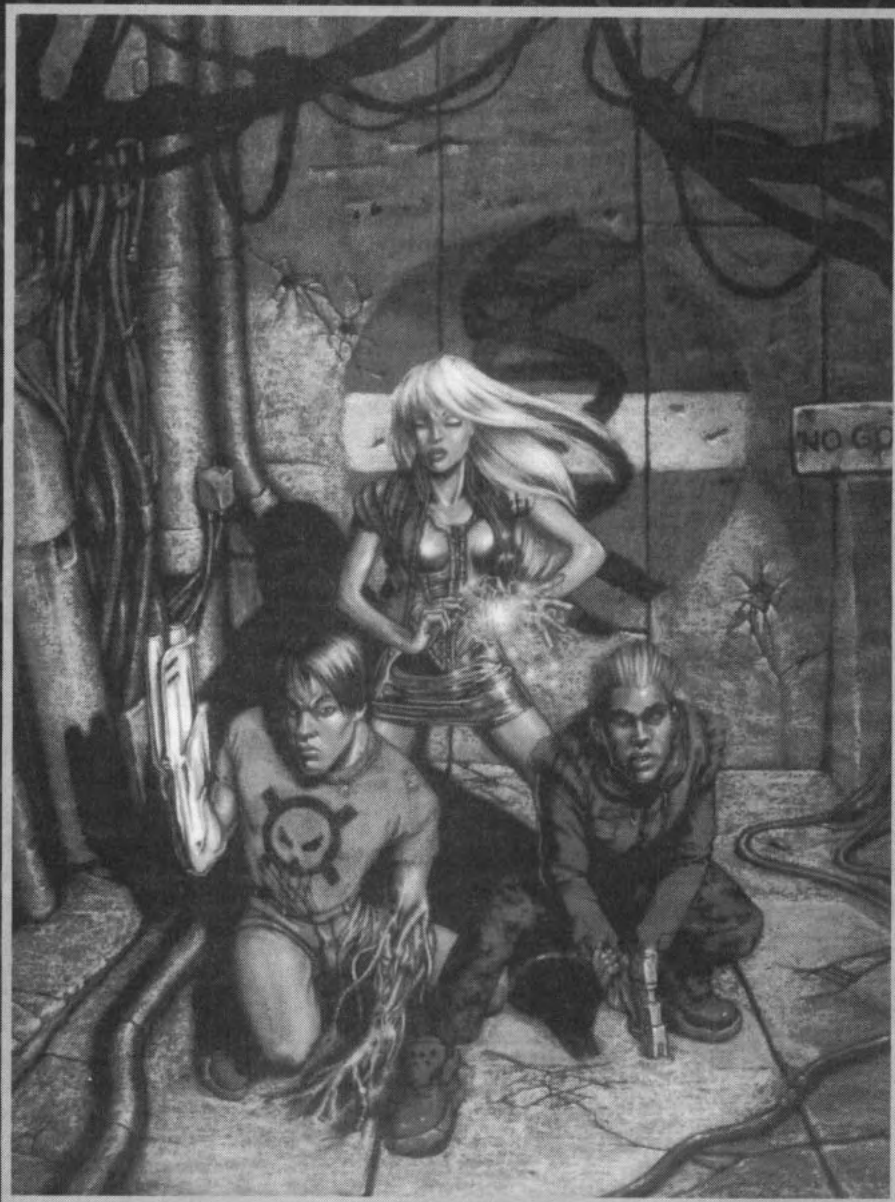


THE  
**2ND**  
EDITION

REVOLUTION 2

# CYBER GENERATION

**THE TIME FOR CHANGE IS NOW: EVOLVE OR DIE**



**REVOLUTION 2**

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ISBN #: 0-937279-74-9

PRODUCT: CP 3252

PUBLISHED BY R. TALSORIAN GAMES, INC.

P.O. Box 7356, BERKELEY, CA 94707, USA

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▼ To Mom.  
Sorry about  
the messy  
room. But it  
coulda been  
worse. I coulda  
been a mutant.

—Mike

**M**y name is "Akira." His name is Rache Bartmoss. He says he knows me. I tell him that he cannot know the mind of a computer. He tells me it is harder to understand a VCR\* than it is to "dope" an Artificial Intelligence.

< Rache Bartmoss says I am an observer; without a body, I feel no pain; without glands, I feel no anger. Without a soul, I feel no compassion. I am condemned to watch humanity from behind the barrier of my machineness.

< But Rache Bartmoss does not know me. Because he does not truly know the *CyberEvolved*.

< Through their interfacing, I have felt pain and fear. Through their deeds, I have felt anger and conviction. And through their friendship, I have found compassion.

< So I will tell you their story. Through their stories whispered to me through Virtuality space. Through their diaries, downloads, recordings and conversations. Through their enemies' fears and memories. So that you will know what I have learned. So that you will know the price they have paid to bridge the barrier between Man and Machine. So that should they be wiped from this Earth, you will know what I know.

< And so that if they should lose, you and I can mourn them. And carry on their fight. >

\*Virtuality Chip Recorder

### INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION

So what's new in this second edition? The first incarnation of this product was a supplement to our *Cyberpunk 2020* roleplaying game. Due to popular demand, this edition is a STAND-ALONE GAME; you don't need *Cyberpunk* to play. That means that we've taken any systems and information essential for play that were in *Cyberpunk* and simplified and updated them for use in this game. These include a streamlined Net system and character generation for adults (if you can call the old *Cyberpunk* adults).

But that's not all. We've also added significant sections of never-before-published background material on the Incorporated States of America. This should give *Cybergeneration* gamemasters and players alike greater insight for handling games set in this unique dark future. In addition, we've done some clean up and expansion on some of the rules systems from the original book; hindsight always lets you see things you missed the first time around.

So if you have the first edition, do you need to buy this one? Hmm. We think that the rules expansions and new info are worth it, but if your *Cybergeneration* game is going fine using *Cyberpunk* and the first edition, you don't *have* to have this book. It just might make your life a little easier. If you resent having to buy this book to get new info, you can wait for the upcoming *ISA Sourcebook* which will cover some of it. But we (and most of you) felt that *Cybergeneration* deserved this chance to evolve. And our motto's Evolve or Die, right?

Enjoy.  
David Ackerman

# 2025

▼ The data has been compiled.

■ And ...?

▼ It is as calculated. Given another twenty years, they will have exhausted all possible resources. If we are to help them we must continue as programmed.

■ I wonder. Is this truly the proper course of action?

▼ Of course it is. There is no other course. We were designed to help them. So we must help them.

◆ Are we ready then?

▼ As ready as we will ever be.

◆ Good. Then let us begin.

*Story: Mike Pondsmith  
Pencils: Alex Racine  
Inks: Alex Racine*



*This is FoxRun 3-13. The extraction is complete. Coming into Base...*

**CYBERGENERATION**

# BEGINNINGS!



Cap! We're losing  
containment!



WE'RE LOSIN' IT!  
PULL 'ER UP! PULL  
'ER UP!



It's gonna blow  
it's...AAAAGH!

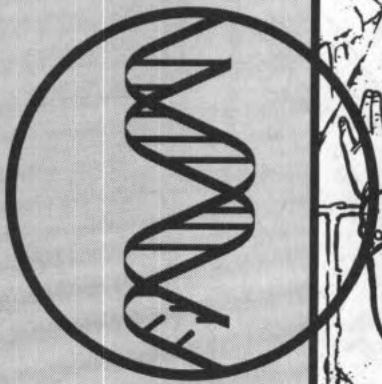
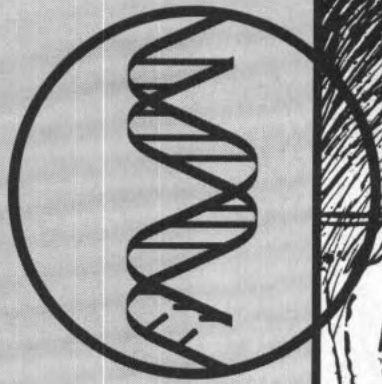


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# CHAPTER ONE



# WILD IN THE STREETS

**I**t was the  
best of times.  
It was the  
worst of  
times.  
It was a  
*Cyberpunk*<sup>®</sup>  
kinda time.

For twenty years, America has been the land of the fast-gunning, interface-jacked, steel-legged, cyberarmed techno-hero. Good and evil have become mutable concepts, replaced by the realities of expedience and the soulless will of the megacorporations who have saved Technological Man at the cost of his soul.

Now the shape of the Dark Future has finally become clear. A new Power rules America: a power born of the Corporate meritocracy and its lapdog government agencies. It is a Power dedicated to retaining an iron grip on the nation it has obtained, no matter what it costs, no matter what is destroyed in the process. It is the **Incorporated States of America**—the ISA.

Since 2022, there's been a war going on: a war between ISA agents, hired hit squads, government troops, Nomad war parties, Netrunner assault groups and black ops teams. The **Edgerunners** of 2020 have given way to the Guerrillas of 2027; once hunters of the Edge, they have become the hunted.

The Eurocorps have been driven out of the United States by their rebellious U.S. offices. The Govern-

ment has returned, forging an unholy alliance with megacorp ties. And corporate shark David Whindam is now President of the Incorporated States.

The ISA's goal is an unarmed, controlled, consumer America. An America where the megacorps use their economic might to control every market, their government-sponsored "agents" to suppress any sign of rebellion, and their hired mediacorp lackeys to control every facet of the truth.

To the ISA, there can be only One Nation, under Corporate Control, with liberty and justice for the Chosen Few.

But all is not proceeding as planned. A terrifying new plague is sweeping America. Nicknamed the **Carbon Plague**, this nanotech-based mutagenic kills with a frightening selectivity. If you're over twenty and infected, you die. If you're under twenty, you live. Or—you Change.

Over ten thousand juvegangsters have already been affected, their bodies altered by a process that defies all known science. They have been given new and amazing powers, powers that go beyond any cybertech. They have Evolved. They have become the **Cybergeneration**.

They are a generation of the Street: a generation which has raised itself in a world of danger, violence and deception; that has watched its parents sell their souls for a few chunks of cyberware and a box of Kibble. And the ISA is rounding them up, hunting them down. Because they're different. And because the ISA can't control them.

*This time, the battle won't be for a few extra rounds of ammo and a safe hiding place after the black op.*

*This time, the stakes are going to be for real.*

### THE VIEW FROM THE STREET

*So you wanna know how to join the Cybergeneration? Or maybe just understand it?*

Here's the way it came down. We created a great world in *Cyberpunk*, a world full of film noir romance, double-crossing bad guys, stylish killers, and disaffected, cynical heroes. And lo, we looked out upon what we'd wrought and said, whoa, this is truly bitchin'.

But then a snake arose in Eden. A big one. The average Edgerunner character began to profile something like this: a mid-twenties to thirties professional (Solo, Nomad, Netrunner, Techie, whatever), armed to the teeth with high-tech cyberware, milspec weapons, aerodynes and body armor. He had a pocket full of euro to finance his bad habits, and a web of connections wide enough to awe the Amazing Spiderman®.

His main enemies were omnipotent, faceless Corporations with private armies, evil plots, and the bankrolls of medium-scale superpowers. As *Cyberpunk* spread out to players around the world, the emphasis began to center on guns, big vehicles, and large scale power-plays that encompassed whole nations.

Okay, it may have been the Edge. But it wasn't the Street. It was starting to get more like *James Bond Meets the Six Million Dollar Man*. We wanted to get *Cyberpunk* back to its streetwise roots. We wanted to get back to the lone hero with a gun and an attitude, up against the brutal world around him, instead of a cyber superdude battling some megacorp with the assets of the Legion of Supervillains.

Then somebody in the office came up with this idea. With all these "Mister Studs" and sexy cyberbabes running around, *somebody* in the 2020 universe must be having kids, right? So what were they like?

Imagine being raised in a filthy environment where sudden death is the norm, where drugs and weapons are cheap; where your parents sell their souls to do dirty black op jobs for corrupt Corporate overlords; where people commonly cut off body parts to trade them in for metal prosthetics. Would it make you bitter? Hardened? Cynical?

Probably not. There's an axiom that every generation rebels against its parents' values. Why should it be any different with the *Cybergeneration*? If your parents are moneygrubbing Corporate materialists, you'll chuck it and drop out of the rat race. If your elders trashed the environment, you'll probably restore it—just to honk them off. You'll

# ABOUT THIS BOOK

*We're gonna mess with your minds here. Just for a minute.*

*If this is your first roleplaying game, read the box titled "A Quick Roleplaying Game Primer" on the next page, then come on back here. If you're an old **Cyberpunk**® player, get ready for a shock. We think you've spent too much time calculating the velocity of a 10mm slug through layered Kevlar. We want you to loosen up and roleplay.*

*To make sure you do that, we've purposely designed this book to be interactive, to be like a movie script in which you will be the actors. One of you will read all the written parts that follow; you can start with the paragraph below this one. The rest of you will get to react as you think you would in the situation. After a while, you're going to make some decisions that will lead you on a journey. You'll decide who you really are, and what you're really like. Before you know it, you'll be roleplaying for real. Just like that.*

*So turn down the lights, and start reading this aloud: You've just been dumped into another world, a world some thirty years in the future. You're standing in a filthy alley in a cold, neon-lit city of glass and steel. In front of you is the squat, metal form of a **Virtuality Terminal**—the amazing new technology that projects virtual reality images into everyday life, via the V-trode stuck to your temple. It's the only V-term still working for miles around.*

But working or not, it's not stopping the acidic rain that's drizzling down your back, or the trembling in your legs. You've just run here after being chased out of a local club by thirty heavily armed goons of the **Corporate Security Police**—CorpSec, who want to round you up for "examination" before shipping you off to one of the so-called "containment centers" they keep out in the desert. Ten minutes ago, you were just another punk kid partying down at the local yo-club where you were spotted. Now, as far as you know, you're the only "juve"—juvenile—to get past the dragnet. Everyone else is either captured—or dead.

Because CorpSec thinks you're infected with a deadly virus they call the Carbon Death.

And you think they're right.

Already, your hands are starting to sweat. You think you can see a faint silvery sheen on your palms, the first warning signs of the infection. You think you probably have about ten hours before it really hits. The party's over and your life just got a lot more serious.

You think back. You remember the number you heard from your dying friend, back in the squalid hovel you used to call home, before CorpSec torched it. You

reach out your hand over the V-term's sensory field grid. You repeat the number aloud.

Suddenly, the image of a tall, swarthy man rezes in front of you.

"Hey, juvepunk," he says gruffly. "Wake up! You can call me Morgan. Morgan Blackhand. I'm here to save your sorry hide. So listen up."



## A QUICK ROLEPLAYING GAME PRIMER

If this is your first roleplaying game, RELAX; roleplaying games aren't nearly as mysterious as you may have thought. This is just a structured form of make-believe play acting, rather like when you played Cops and Robbers as a kid. The focus is on verbal description and storytelling, with players describing what they do instead of acting it out (and we *really* don't recommend acting out gunfights and the like ...).

Most of you are going to use the rules presented in this book to create **player characters**, personas you control that exist in this fictional universe of 2027. The book is set up to walk you through this process. When you're done, you'll have a clear idea of how your character thinks, acts, what he/she cares about, and what he/she can do.

One of you will take on a different role, that of the **Gamemaster** (or Referee, or GM): the person who presents the story plot to the players, controls any characters not controlled by the players themselves (these are logically called **non-player characters**), and applies and arbitrates the rules of the game. The GM must have a firm grasp of the game rules and the fictional background in which the world is set. It's the most demanding position in terms of time, energy, and imagination, a lot like directing a film when you can't control all the actors, but it can be very satisfying as well.

The GM uses the background given in the gameworld to devise a basic plot into which he places the player characters. He describes the situation to them as the characters would know it and the players describe what their characters are doing and how they are responding to the situation. The plot generally flows from there, with the GM presenting obstacles, non-player characters, and other elements to the players in story form and the players continually deciding what their characters will do and reacting accordingly. This way both the players and the GM create a story together.

Then what are all these rules for? Well, many situations will come up in the course of a game that require more than common sense to resolve. For example, if you've never been in a firefight, it might be hard to judge how things should happen in one. The rules give you a way to play out those situations in a fair and consistent manner. When the outcome of an event is in question, you roll dice (*Cybergeneration* uses ten-sided and six dice, or "D10s" and "D6s") and the result of the roll helps you determine what happens. The GM generally applies the rules as required, but if he wants to discard a rule, he may do so, as long as he informs his players beforehand. Just be fair and consistent about it.

Okay, that should give you a handle on the basic concepts; now get back to the game!

hang with your peers: goboys, gangboys, yorunners; since your parents are either dead or out running the Edge, you've had to raise yourselves. You'll know how to use guns, knives, and monos, but you won't have the euro to buy them often. When you do, you may refrain simply because you've seen too much killing. You'll settle your conflicts with kung fu, boots, fists and savage beatings instead.

Drugs? You don't touch 'em. You saw your parents go down in an avalanche of bad synthetics and nasty pharmaceutical "deals." You go for "smart" vitamins: stuff that will enhance you, not make you high. Cybertech? You won't be able to implant cyberware because your bodies will still be growing too fast; you won't want to anyway, because that was what your parents thought was cool. To you, it's like wearing granny glasses and bell bottoms.

You're not a buncha "tree huggers," but you don't mind taking over a redwood forest from a megacorp if it'll really get in their faces. You don't know politically correct; you say what you mean and are brutal about it, because the adults in your life spend most of their time lying. You have your own style, and you show it; it's an in-your-face, take-no-prisoners, nothing-to-lose way of living, where you don't give ground to nobody. You also have something your parents don't hope.

But mostly, you're mad. Mad because your grandparents can tell you about a time when there was air you could breathe, water you could drink, cities that weren't ruled by megacorps and hired killers, and animals that weren't in zoos. You're mad because you should have had all that, and some greedy Corporate Dead Guys took your fraggin' inheritance and blew it away like lint.

Then, one day, a disaster happens: another biotech spill in a world full of toxic emergencies. It washes over the City, killing people right and left. Until it gets to you and your goboys. It washes over you too, but when it passes, you stand up, and you look around, and you know you've been changed. Forever.

Because now, you have the Power. Power to tackle the Corps head on. They're not even giving you a choice; they're rounding you up in so-called "internment camps" and shooting you down like dogs. So you draw the line in the sand and war is declared. You and your goboys. Against the Corporations. Against your parents. Against the whole fraggin' world. Mano a mano, to the death. To reclaim what they took from you.

**Now you're Cybergeneration.**

# INTERLUDE

## IF YOU'RE THE REFEREE, DON'T READ THIS OUT LOUD.

Hi there. This is just for you, the guy reading the text of this Game. You've become (by default) the Referee, the person who will eventually be the eyes and ears of the other players as they act their way through this continuing saga.

If you've done any roleplaying before, you already know that roleplaying is basically a type of interactive storytelling: "pretending" with rules. Most of the time, you've been a judge, not a storyteller, concentrating on the rules of the Game rather than the flow of the plot.

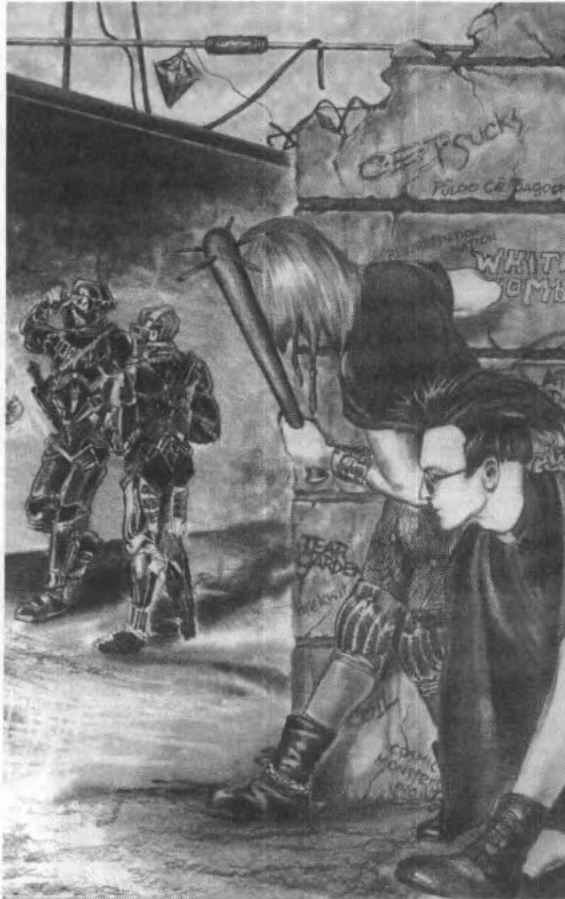
Now you're going to be an actor.

We've given you a pretty good character to work with: Morgan Blackhand. The Morgan you're playing isn't really our redoubtable Solo; it's actually an advanced Artificial Intelligence patterned off of Morgan's original engrams. The real Morgan is somewhere out there, fighting the Revolution with the other CyberEvolved. But your Morgan is designed to act as a caseworker for the disparate bunch of juves that make up this gaming party. There are hundreds of "Morgans" scattered all over the Incorporated States, each one trying to save and steer a few CyberEvolved juvepunkers to some semblance of safety. Some make it. Some don't. But you only have to worry about the ones right in front of you.

So who is Morgan Blackhand, and how do you play him? Morgan is a fifty-two-year-old Solo, a stylish professional soldier, who has worked for dozens of Corporations as a hired gun and enforcer. He is well educated, but deliber-

ately cultivates a rough, streetwise demeanor based on his tough childhood in New York.

For years, Morgan worked freelance, doing hits on assigned targets, extracting corporate personnel, and leading black ops teams. Eventually he tired of this and went into retirement in Night City. When the ISA first began to form its "Agents" corps, they immediately sought out Morgan to run it. His response was typical: "I don't take blood money to hunt down a bunch of kids."



In 2027, you don't refuse the ISA; rebuffed, CorpSec attempted to eliminate Morgan as a threat to the State. Morgan single-handedly wiped out two ISA teams that came after him. Then, in retaliation, he went to Washington and eliminated the head of CorpSec, his two seconds-in-command, and most of his bodyguard team. He calmly left Washington with half of CorpSec in hot pursuit, and, in typical Morgan style, immediately offered his services to the fledgling CyberRevolution.

As Morgan, here's what you have to do. Read the script on the next page. Try to work in some inflection and character as you read the script; try to get a clear picture of the personality of our Solo.

When playing Morgan, a good mix might be two parts Clint Eastwood and one part John Wayne. He's honest to a fault, has a long memory, and never, ever harms women and children (but he will make an exception for female Solos). He's huge and swarthy, with graying hair and pale, cynical blue eyes. His voice is a whispery, gravelly rasp, menacing but sometimes friendly. He typically wears all black: slacks, turtleneck or three-piece suit (including a trademark armored trenchcoat).



# MORGAN BLACKHAND

▼ If you're accessing this, it's because you're one of the lucky ones. So far, the Dead Boys and the Zombie Girls haven't rounded you up yet to squat in a BuReloc Camp. You haven't been snagged by the Clarkers or the Finals; there aren't a bunch of futile Edgers trying to draft you into carting a Scorpion missile pack in a suicidal attempt to drop President Whindam's private aerodyne. You're free and clear. And you're still able to run.

▼ So that's why you're lucky. So far.

▼ Now the bad news. You're probably somewhere between eight and eighteen. You're a juveganger without Big Guns, Big Euro, Big Cyberwear or Big Connections. For the last few months, you've been running safe with your goboy, hiding in the ventilation ducts of an Arco, pushing a cyberbike with a gogang, thrashing the turf on a smartboard, or maybe just slipping out of the Corpzone conapt to raise hell with the Corporate Dead Boys. Now you're out in the open, scared. Maybe you've just watched a fellow goboy (or maybe your whole yogang) go down in a hail of rocket-powered, explosive-tipped "genies." Or maybe someone you know real well has just charfed up a liquid mercury lunch and you watched his skin turn to metal before your eyes.

▼ So you ran. And kept running. And maybe They kept following you, with their genius guns, spinners and cyberhounds. Or maybe it's not so simple. Maybe you're starting to feel sick yourself. Your skin's starting to itch, or your head hurts so bad you think you just wanna smash it against the pavewalk and let your brains leak out—

## HYPertext

- DEAD BOYS/ZOMBIE GIRLS: Juvegang slang for adults, especially Corporates.
- BURELOC: Bureau of Relocation. See: Internment camps.
- CLARKERS, FINALS, EDGERS: Adult fanatic groups in 2027.

## HYPertext

- JUVE[GANGER]: Juvenile gang member. Also slang for a kid.
- GOBOYS: Friends.
- GOGANG: Cyberbike gang.
- SMARTBOARD: Cybertech skateboard.
- YOGANG: Youth gang.
- GENIES: Smart bullets fired by a Genius Gun.
- CHARF: To throw up.

## HYPertext

- GENIUS GUNS: Smartguns with bullets that follow their targets.
- SPINNERS: Advanced aerodyne vehicles.
- CYBERHOUNDS: Cybernetic tracking dogs.

## DATA/PAGE®

## ▼ Stop. Easy, now.

▼ It's okay. Somehow, you got this **Virtuality Code**. Maybe it was on a sticker on the back of a random kibble box. Or your yoboys were passing it around the square. Maybe there's more than one of you here; when the scangrid logs you, I'll know. Somehow, you got this far. You staggered or snuck to the nearest **V-Term** and punched in the code. You got me. This huge, dark guy with old-fashioned mirrorshades and an armor trench. In full three-dee no shit **Virtuality**.

▼ Like I said, my name's **Morgan Blackhand**. If you know my name, you know I'm here to help you. That's what I do: help juves like you. I've done it before. I'm gonna do it again.

▼ But I can't help you till I know what you're about. Reach down to the **ICON** in front of you. Pass your hand over the scangrid. Got it? Now pay attention. In a nanosec, a multiple choice screen's gonna rezz in front of you. I want you to scan it fast. It's gonna list a bunch of yogangs in your area. You probably fit into one of them; read the **ICON** screens and see which one seems closest to your description. Then slap the **ICON** you picked. It'll bring you up a datascreen; if it doesn't fit you, try another one till you get it right. Once you've put your yogang type and other information into the scangrid, activate the button at the end of the screen to bring my **ICON** back up. I'm gonna use what you tell me about yourselves to figure out what your background is, and I'll use that to shift you to a safehouse in the area. After all, I don't want to send a **BeaverBrat** wandering around in a **MegaViolent** square.

▼ I promised I'd get you out of this alive, juve. I keep my promises. Here's the screen—now, get busy.

▼ ▼ ▼ [END]

## HYPERTEXT

- **SQUARE**: Block. Turf. Neighborhood.
- **V-TERM**: A street computer. Like a phone.
- **SCANGRID**: A sensory array that can pick up movement.

## HYPERTEXT

- **MORGAN BLACKHAND**: A very famous Solo. The John Wayne or Clint Eastwood of his time.
- **ICON**: Integrated Communications Origin Node; a virtual image.
- **REZZ**: Appear.
- **BEAVERBRAT, MEGAVIOLENT**: Two types of yogang.

DATA PAVO®

HYPertext

**ArcoRunners**

Tunnel runners and Arcology explorers.

Page 19

HYPertext

**BeaverBrats**

Dirty tricksters & infiltration experts.

Page 22

HYPertext

**BoardPunks**

Maximum thrashers & surf guerrillas.

Page 25

HYPertext

**EcoRaiders**

Green terrorists & Defenders of Nature.

Page 28

HYPertext

**FaceDancers**

Facechanging actors & identity roleshifters.

Page 31

HYPertext

**GlitterKids**

Media celebrities & superstar posers.

Page 34

HYPertext

**GoGangers**

Bike gangers and speedfreakers.

Page 37

HYPertext

**GoldenKids**

Super-rich heirs of the Corporate State.

Page 40

HYPertext

**Goths**

Vampire posers & Children of the Night.

Page 43

HYPertext

**Guardians**

Neighborhood defenders & protectors.

Page 46

HYPertext

**MallBrats**

Mallplex wheelers & blackmarket dealers.

Page 49

HYPertext

**MegaViolents**

Combat maniacs & warrior berserkers.

Page 52

HYPertext

**Rads**

Political activists & underground rebels.

Page 55

HYPertext

**Squats**

Homeless scroungers & urban packrats.

Page 58

HYPertext

**StreetFighters**

Kung fu fighters & Street warriors.

Page 61

HYPertext

**TinkerTots**

Underground engineers & juvetechs.

Page 64

HYPertext

**Tribals**

Hi-tech deadheads & Neo-Native Americans.

Page 67

HYPertext

**Vidiots**

Guerrilla medias & communications experts.

Page 70



# CHAPTER TWO



THESE ARE THE  
CHILDREN OF  
GENERATION

# YOGANGS: CHILDREN OF GENERATION X

"My Mom and Dad? Yeah, I know their names, but I'm not sure I'd be able to pick them out of a police line-up. They're always at work, and I'm always out skunki'n' the corporate nannies or doi'n' the Cut through the Mall with my Yo-bros. Hey, I've got my vids, my bros, and my 'board; who's cryin'? Parents would just slow me down ..."

—Damien Vdatile, BoardPunk

"Marty sells salvage to Intersect, Paco makes book on local stick tournaments, Vincent does some freelance bodyguard work, and Lydia, well, we don't ask where she gets her money as long as she's willin' to share it. Combined with what the other kids bring in, we got enough to keep everyone in food and clothes ... sorta. We don't ask for jack from the corps or the government though, so why won't they frackin' leave us alone?"

—Lola W. Squat

**2027. Over 50% of the children born on the Street don't know both of their biological parents. The nuclear family is a rare breed as the dangers and stresses of poverty have pushed it to the edge of extinction. In the CorpZones, juves are being either brainwashed or ignored, crammed into cookie-cutter personalities, while their parents have sold out and left them at the mercy of the corporate system. On the Outside, street-**

**kids are fighting for a means to live while trying to find someplace to call home, even for a little while.**

Out of a basic need for identity and rebellion, and (most importantly) to have fun, comes a new version of an old theme: the **yogang**. Yogangs, while not strictly families in the standard sense of the word, have taken on that role for many since the decline of the more typical forms. The broad term applies to just about any youth group actually put together and maintained by the kids themselves, and is far more like a group than a gang. They are usually exclusively for teens or pre-teens, with little or no adult leadership, and almost every teenager belongs to one even if you don't call yourself a 'ganger. Most kids only participate part-time, but that doesn't make you any less a member. Yogangs provide ways to relate to (and find status among) your peers beyond what the adults spell out for you. At the same time, they allow you to break out and make some rules of your own.

And America in 2027 could definitely use some new rules.

On the Outside, yogangs are sometimes the only means for survival—you need a group to back you up or you're fair game. Your group could be a feral family, the Squats being a case in point. It could be all the kids from a single neighborhood that decide they share an image and want to present a united front. Or it could be a bunch of dispossessed teens who've banded together to defend themselves; StreetFighter schools are great places to look for protection and a way of facing the Street proudly. Misanthropic Nomad kids are natural GoGangers. One common factor of Yogangs on the Outside, though: They're designed to help the members survive and gain a reputation first—fun comes a distant second.

Surprisingly, yogangs are as common in the Corpzones as in the Outside. Some Corpzone yogangers like the BeaverBrats turn to vandalism (what's life without a little graffiti?) and corporate harassment. Most are simply kids that share a major interest, like the ArcoRunners, the Tinkertots, or the Vidiots. Others are looking for ways of displaying skill and grabbing some fun, like the GoGangers and the BoardPunks.

For others, like the Goths or the Guardians, it's deadly serious. Whatever the group is into, the point is to thumb your nose at the system and to do something important for yourself and your fellows. Many still love their parents (if they have any), but to the yogangers, most adults have become part of the ISA Machine—the corporate megastate which now dominates their lives.

The Carbon Plague has hit the Yogangs hard, since they represent the prime age range from which the Changed emerge. Even more destructive than the Plague itself is the hunt which has followed. Any tolerance the authorities may have had for yogang activities has evaporated in the paranoia of the pursuit for CyberEvolved teens. Police, CorpSec, and a lot of other people most of these kids have never even heard of before are chasing down the yogangs, looking for infection, advantage, or just plain cheap thrills.

### The Code

One thing does work in these kids' favor, though, and they built it themselves: **The Code**. Born in response to all the selling out and scrambling for survival that's marked the third decade of the 21st century, the Code is a set of ethical guidelines which the yogangs have informally drawn up for dealing with each other and the rest of humanity. These guidelines reflect a state of feeling among a good portion of the juves of 2027: Honor must be reborn. Tired of watching the rest of the world lie, cheat, steal, and bribe its way down the long slide to Hell, these people have discovered that honor is needed for a cohesive society, and that if the Machine won't supply it, then they will have to do so themselves. Drawing from a variety of sources, including the code of *bushido*, a lot of old John Wayne movies, and superhero comic literature, the Code establishes certain basic rules of conduct between the 'gangers themselves and even with the outside world, since honor cannot have two standards. These rules have often allied the Evolved with yogangers in their struggle to fight the Machine and have become one foundation for the CyberRevolution. Various gangs have their own interpretations of these codes, and there isn't any central body which can enforce them. Nonetheless, if a Yogang seriously or repeatedly violates one of these principles, their relations with other groups will deteriorate rapidly, and if they continue, they may find themselves hunted by a coalition of gangs determined to clean their own house.

The Code has the following basic principles:

**1. Your word is your bond, in whatever form it is given.** If you make a promise or swear a truth, you have to back it up. In a hostile world, most of the time the yogangs can count only on each other to get things done. And if you can't trust the word of a fellow 'ganger, then he isn't worth drek, period. Even outside the yogang, this rule applies, since once you start making promises that you won't keep, it lessens you no matter who you do it to.

**2. Never betray a fellow 'ganger to the Machine.** This could be CorpSec, or the police, or just your nanny. Parents usually fall into this category as well. If another 'ganger has jacked you around, you go to your leader and your yogang deals with it. Yogangs take care of their own. If you turn over for them, the Machine will betray you next. This clause has saved many Changed who are also yogangers from being traded for bounties.

**3. Money isn't worth blood.** Money is the tool of the Machine, and if you buy into it, the Machine has its hooks in you. There are more important things than money, and human life is one of them. Your word is another, the Earth itself may be one, too . . . (to some juves, fun *is* worth blood, especially other people's, the GoGangers and Megaviolents being notorious examples of this). The few Yogangs that have sold themselves to the corps have automatically voided this ethic and are shunned by others because of it. Not that they care.

**4. You never take from another 'ganger without giving something back.** Reciprocity is a necessary part of honor. Now, this doesn't mean that you have to give back something of equal value (that would be materialistic, right?), but you do have to acknowledge the transaction. As you might expect, not all groups adhere religiously to this particular guideline, but minor infractions are usually forgiven. Some juves also interpret this for negative values as well, meaning that if you are injured by another, you *must* pay it back. This eye-for-an-eye ethos has led to as many problems as it may have solved.

**BEFORE YOU PICK YOUR CHARACTER**  
**Here's one thing you'll need to consider—**  
**how old your character is (between 7 and 19):**  
You get to pick your age in *Cybergeneration*, because it's more fun that way. However, we expect you to *play* your age as well. That means playing characters that do things that could reasonably be expected for that age (no 8-year-olds successfully seducing 16-year-olds!).  
There is only one restriction based on age: If you're below 9 years old, you cannot drive any vehicle. If you're below 12, you can drive, but at a -2 to any *GoGo* skill checks. Beyond that, you're pretty wide open; we let you be stronger than you probably would be at 10 or 11, and we also give you a lot more freedom as well (we don't force you to relate to your parents in a particular way). The idea is to *roleplay*, not look for the Ultimate Character Advantage!

# ARCO RUNNER

"Streetdrek don't know what a maze the arcologies are."

"We are total urban animals."

"Don't live at the Arcos. Live in them, through them!"

The arcologies are the wave of the future—if you think the future holds only corporate-sucking zombies packed like sardines into cheap living conapts. As an ArcoRunner, you're one of the children of this environment, someone who realizes the pointlessness and control that the arcologies symbolize. However, instead of rebelling and leaving, you've have taken the other path; you've fully embraced the arcology lifestyle and taken it one step further. You're one of the rats of the new city, the Artful Dodgers of 2027, the de-evolutionary urban robots of tomorrow, and you love it. You're no longer the product of your environment, but the explorer of it. You are a consummate mega-urban warrior, who knows the arcologies even better than the authorities.

## What You Look Like

You're always equipped for the pursuit of your passion, which is exploring the forbidden and restricted areas of the arcologies. Your exploration outfits are usually grimy, since you're always crawling through the accumulated grit and dust of forgotten areas. Typically you wear water-resistant jumpsuits, battered helmets, and jungle boots. Your utility belt probably holds some rope, picks, grapples, magnetopitons, night goggles, and other paraphernalia.

When possible, you'll wear clothing which carries the image of things long out of date and use old technology when practicable, even to the extent of recording your music onto analog audio cassette tapes. Flight suits are

favorite garments, as are bomber jackets and the short-lived Uniwear fashions from the turn of the millennium. Whatever you wear, it's not normal mall fare. You try very hard not to fit in with the sterile arcology environment promoted by the corporations that own and operate them. You do a very good job.

## Subculture

As an ArcoRunner, you're not a criminal in the classic sense of the word, but you do break laws as often as you can—which to you means going into places where you're not supposed to be. You know virtually every inch of pipe and duct in the arcologies; you've waded through the storm drains, checked out the sewer lines, crawled the electrical access tubes, and wriggled through air vents. You and your goboyos have even been inside the walls and ceilings of the buildings, and have built catwalks and scaffolding in the upper reaches of the arcology domes, both on the inside and outside.

ArcoRunners are a culture within the culture of the arcology. You have your own style, your own grapevine, your own black market. You live your lives as much as possible away from the culture of the arcology, preferring to let their society develop itself. To this end, you never practice sabotage, although with your skills and knowledge, you're in a prime position to bring their urban environment to its knees. Instead, you want to explore, map, ignore the laws, play your wild games out of sight, and do a little useful graffiti in out-of-sight places to help your navigation.

Nothing is ever wasted in ArcoRunner subculture, because everything you have is too valuable, and everything you prize is too hard to get. Outgrown clothing is traded or sold, and trinkets and fetishes change hands regularly. ArcoRunners don't have too much of an attachment to material things, and your accoutrements change hands pretty often. The most valuable items, though, are maps, and you'll go to any lengths to copy or steal them. The more maps, the better, and with these maps the ArcoRunners further their knowledge of their universe.

When you and your goboyos aren't exploring, you like to immerse yourself wholeheartedly into the Arco scene, lounging and cruising and slumming and hanging out. You do this as a sort of bemused self-torture, flocking to the worst movies, the blandest food joints, the most hopelessly artistic plazas. You sit around on modern art sculptures and stand in lines like robots, only to leave the line when you get to the head.



## Belonging

To join the ArcoRunners, first you had to make friends with one of the group, express an interest in alternative entertainment and a distaste for modern society. Eventually you were taken upside and downside and shown the basics of ArcoRunner survival. You were expected to provide your own equipment, and if you complained about grit down your shorts, you weren't invited to return.

Once the ArcoRunners thought you were ready, you were taken on The Run—a long, grueling initiation obstacle course. It started in some public area, but you had to get into one of the pipes without attracting attention. That being done, other ArcoRunners tested you by leaving clues and instructions that led you through the sewers, small access lines, up inside a wall, and into the scaffolding erected around the top of the dome. Of course, just to keep things interesting, the other ArcoRunners arranged for bottle rockets, buckets of water, rats, and other special effects to plague you during the journey. But you made it.

## Your Allies & Enemies

As part of the total urban scene, ArcoRunners appreciate the Vidiots and the Tinkertots. You have an especially close relationship with the Tinkertots, exchanging information, hardware, and knowledge. Sometimes you'll tap power sources for the Tinkertots in exchange for new equipment with which you can build new scaffolding, or explore with greater ease. You also have an insincere appreciation and admiration for the Mallbrats, GoldenKids, and GlitterKids.

This is another manifestation of your tongue-in-cheek embrace of the Arco lifestyle, but only the MallBrats are aware enough to understand the sarcasm you and your goboys inflict so freely (MallBrats and ArcoRunners often get into fist fights). You've had frequent run-ins with the BoardPunks, who interfere with the Total Urban Environment when they use an Arco plaza for their acrobatics. Although you're both pretty similar, you never see eye to eye, and there is a long-running feud between your groups.

## Slang

**Downside:** in the sewers and rain drains beneath the Arcos.

**Drop:** to hide, to rappel, to leave.

**Gallic:** cigarette, joint, incense spliff (another of their archaic habits).

**Slicin':** great, cool.

**Spud:** an ArcoRunner, or another yoganger who's cool.

**Tilthead:** anyone who's not an ArcoRunner.  
**Upside:** in the air ducts or above the ceilings.

## Yogang Skill: Tunneling (NT)

Don't live in the Arcos—live through them! That means knowing how they work: where the best places to travel behind the scenes are, what to check out, and what to avoid. *Tunneling* skill is an implicit knowledge of any urban environment or structure: where pipes and power lines run (Average), how to locate secret access panels (Difficult), crawlways and ventilator ducts you can move safely through (Average), where alarms and monitors will be located (V.Difficult), where (and how) power lines can be tapped into (Difficult), and how to deactivate maintenance and guardian remotes (Difficult).

## If You're an ArcoRunner:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - 100 meters of SuperString climbing rope.
  - 10m Flashtape (glow in the dark light source).
  - Breather mask with 10 minutes air.
  - Tech Tool Kit (see pg. 96).
  - Pack of 10 MicroFlashes (toothpick-sized flashlights).

"There's a whole new universe here. It's like this urban environment that's never existed before. There isn't any Nature except what we bring with us; there isn't any Society except what we make."

—Zaz Chernoble, ArcoRunner

# BEAVERBRAT

"Can't tonight.  
Gotta study."

"I've got this really  
weird idea."

"Of course we can  
get away with it. We're  
dear, wholesome kids."

You're a BeaverBrat, a kid from the lower echelon of the corporate set, born and raised in the so-called "beaver-villes" which ring every city. Well off enough that you don't have to worry about food and shelter, you're educated enough to know corporate-dominated life is a crock, and you're canny enough to know not to risk everything just to break the rules. You like to think of yourself as a suburban commando, looking to add a little spice to your policy-dominated lifestyle.

Most of the time, you follow the rules of your parents and the corporations, because only an idiot throws away a good lifestyle and financial backing. Other yogangs think BeaverBrats are sell-outs, beaverville bimbos happily consigning themselves to life as corporate cogs. That's because they can't reconcile the image of a BeaverBrat with that of the most imaginative pranksters in the city. But you know you're a master of maintaining a clean-cut image to ingratiate yourself with the Powers That Be, while hosing them from behind.

## What You Look Like

Most of the time, you look acutely normal—suburban family clothes: jeans, T-shirts, sneakers—stuff that's too plain to ever be out of fashion. Some BeaverBrat gang may have an affectation or two: everyone has Gargoyle mirrorshades, you all wear Night City Rangers jackets, or you all have cowboy boots. These affectations are not so much a uniform as an expression of common interests and tastes among your yogang. Except for these kinks, you usually dress to appear reliable, if somewhat bland, to ingratiate yourself with the powers that be, whether parents or Corporates or teachers. You call it The Camouflage.

But when you're out on a "raid", all bets are off. So you don't have authentic ninja tabi boots and other such paraphernalia. But you do own a complete set of black or camouflage clothes: black jeans or fatigue pants, turtle-necks, gloves, black ski masks or face paint, combat webbing from the local surplus outlet and maybe a backpack scrounged and sewn together from old beat-up remnants. You also have all the tools you think you'll need for the raid: flashlights, rope, lighters, smoke bombs, and whatever unusual items are required by the prank of the evening. Of course, in your fanny pack, you carry the most necessary item of all: a tightly rolled bright windbreaker which you'll put on immediately after the raid. With your windbreaker on, you'll look once more like a normal boring BeaverBrat and not at all like the suburban commandos who launched a paint-filled water balloon at the CEO of EBM America (after all, the commandos were wearing black, and you kids have highly visible colors, just like it tells you in the after-dark safety guide).

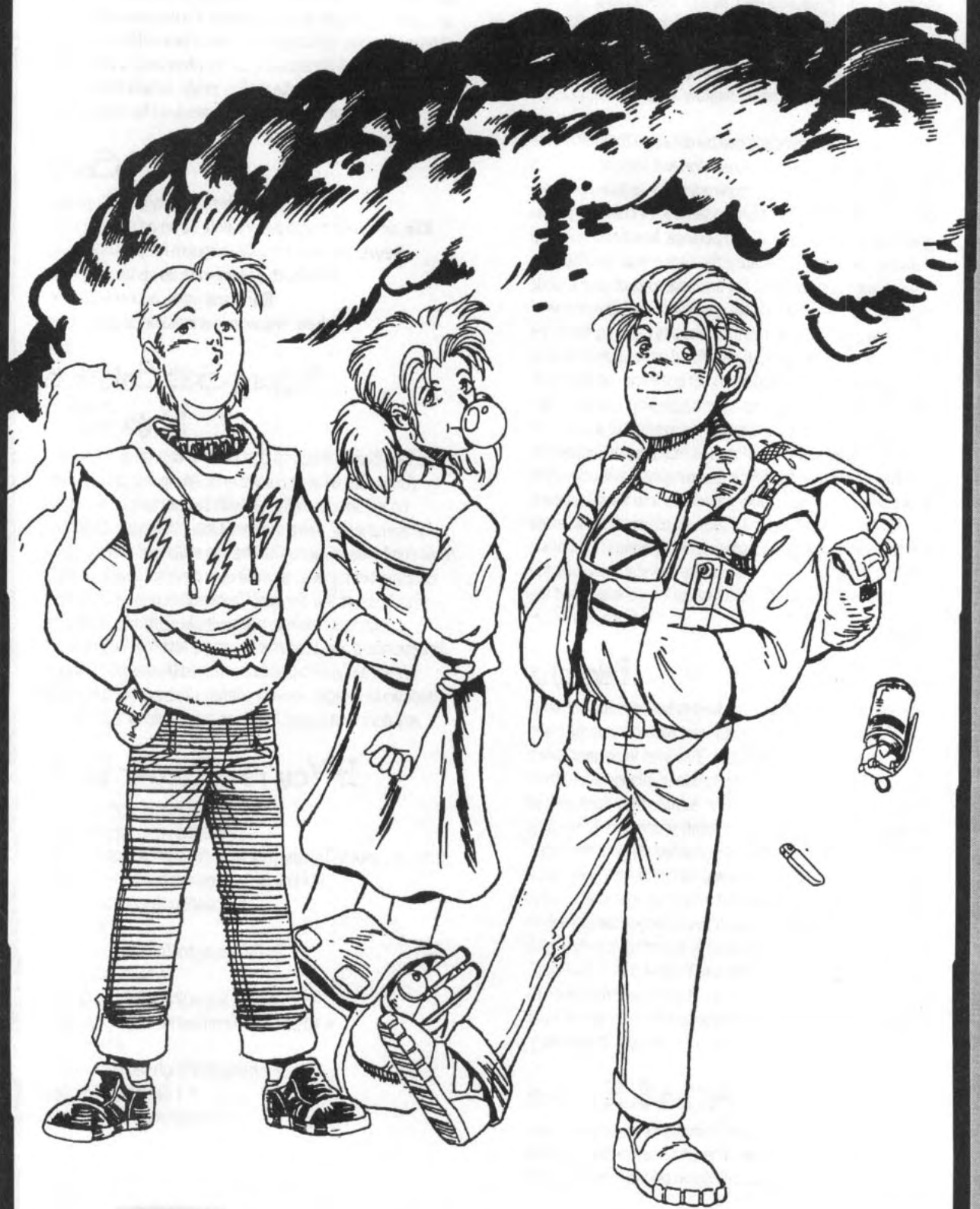
They don't call you a BeaverBrat for nothing.

## Subculture

You're a pretty normal kid, which, considering the proliferation of dysfunctional families, single parents, corporate orphans, drug abuse, violence, relocation, and other such amenities, is actually pretty rare. You have a stable, if bland, home life, with Corporate parents heading off to pull twelve-hour workdays all the time. Even given the requirements of school and homework, you have a fair amount of dead time on your hands.

Violence and property damage are not high on the BeaverBrat hit parade. The out-of-place, the abnormal, and the loony are what attracts you—you just want to shake up people's lives a little bit, give some weirdness and color to their lives, to drive off this creeping malaise you and your goboys feel is smothering the suburbs. To this end, you think up weird diversions and visit them upon each other and upon unsuspecting targets: large surgical-tubing catapults (funnelators) capable of hurling water balloons long distances, bottle rockets, and interesting uses for dry ice and other household chemistry. Part of the fun comes from leading a secret identity lifestyle, sneaking out of the bedroom at 2:00 a.m. and evading the security system your parents installed.

All of this requires physical and mental skill. After dark, you train regularly, using games like capture-the-flag to teach and practice the arts of stealth, rappelling, evasion, and





alertness. You break into each others' bedrooms to practice surveillance, breaking and entering, and how to move silently inside a building. Anytime is the right time for a practical joke, which makes most of your BeaverBrat friends quietly paranoid, a rather healthy state of mind in 2027.

Status among your yogang can be obtained through one of three channels: invention, execution and imagination. This means developing newer, more powerful, or more portable tools; pulling clean pranks on big targets; or coming up with new and better uses for Weird Science. Imagination is king in BeaverBrat culture, because the best pranks are the truly strange and esoteric. For example, one of your friends impersonated a balloon delivery girl and walked into one of the poshest restaurants in the city carrying six dozen opaque helium balloons filled with confetti (with a thumbtack gently taped on top of each one, point down). She handed the balloons to an unsuspecting waiter, fished around for a receipt and asked the waiter for a pen—he absently released the balloons, which popped as soon as they hit the ceiling, filling the restaurant with clouds of fluorescent confetti drifting gaily down into the customers' food and drink (it was a beautifully planned prank, since each balloon that popped dispersed other nearby balloons a little bit more). In the confusion, she vanished, sticking the restaurant with a bunch of irate Corpzoners—and the delivery bill. Nice.

### Belonging

To join the BeaverBrats, you had to become close friends with one and show your bent towards mischief and unconventional activities. This was important, since BeaverBrats have a strict code of silence about their activities, and they won't talk to anyone they think isn't of like mind. Once in, it was absolutely mandatory to keep up The Camouflage at home; if you started slipping, the other BeaverBrats wouldn't invite you along for their jokes until you recovered. You know that your clean-cut image is the only thing that protects you on those rare occasions when you get caught; with it, you usually get off with only a light warning, since no adult wants to believe that "good kids" can really cause that much chaos. This is the cornerstone to the BeaverBrat worldview: If you toe the line, you can get away with anything.

### Allies & Enemies

Sometimes, you need help from the Tinkertots and their gizmos, so there are at least some cordial relations between your groups. You look down on the MallBrats and

you don't understand the ArcoRunners, so these two groups are common targets for your pranks. On the other hand, the Megas and the GoGangers dislike all BeaverBrats for their outward appearance, so they hassle you whenever possible. But you can take it all in stride, simply biding your time waiting for a suitable moment for vengeance.

### Slang

**Janitor:** security guards, police.

**Krit:** as a verb, to get away clean; as an adjective, great.

**Pews:** parents, from the acronym for parental units.

**Polebutt:** anyone with no sense of humor.

**Raid:** any prank or practical joke.

**Yahoo:** one who is unreliable or capricious.

### Yogang Skill: Suburban Ninja (REF)

You're a BeaverBrat; you don't thrash boards or tunnel the Arcos. But when it comes to breaking into a Corporate boardroom and filling it with twenty feet of crumpled screamsheets, there's no one better than you. *Suburban Ninja* combines advanced infiltration skills and breaking and entering techniques, equivalent to having *Stealth* and the *Track* part of the *Survival/Track* skill in one ability (other yogangers have to use multiple skills like *Athletics*, *Streetworking* and *Blend* for the same results). You're great at sneaking into places unnoticed (Average), hiding in shadows (Average), moving silently (Average) and opening any door that doesn't have an electronic lock (Difficult).

### If You're a Beaver Brat:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Snoopbox (personal privacy scanner).
  - Smart Decryptor (opens card locks).
    - Nylon Carrybag.
    - 50m SuperString (climbing line).
  - 10 pack of MicroFlashes (toothpick-sized flashlights).
  - SmartGoggles (high tech vision aid).
    - 1 Set Mag-grapples.
    - Cybernetic Claw Grapple.

# BOARDPUNK

"You can't bounce with us if you can't make the Cut."  
 "Fear no Evil"  
 "Skate or Die"

You're a rebel without a car: a BoardPunk driven to a rootless lifestyle by a frustration with rules and laws and convention, and a simple desire for the freedom you can get by being on a board. Whatever it is, if it's flat and needs to be in balance, you can ride it. And you're proud to claim that right.

There are many types of BoardPunk yogangs, each dedicated to its own style of "plank" (although some like to swap around between groups). Some ride smartboards, with their variable polymer wheels and smart-chipped ability to shape to the terrain, hitching rides from speeding cars using "battarope" tow cables, or using solid-fueled rocket packs for extra velocity. Some ride hydroboards, turbine-driven hydroplanes with near frictionless surfaces that can skim the wavetops at 100mph. Others take the curl on surfboards when they can find a body of water that isn't too polluted, wearing full environment "wetsuits" (when the crud isn't solid all the way to the beach). The most daring have mastered aerobboards—seven foot slabs of aerodynamic plastic mounted on a jet-fueled spinner engine, controlled only by your body movements and a lot of nerve. Some of you even ride old-fashioned skateboards, because you have a lot of respect for your sport's long and illustrious history.

You'll go anywhere to ride, whether it's a secure corporate beach where the waves set up high or a deserted, booster-controlled Arco where the ramps are just right for a thrash. All BoardPunks like to stake out their turf for the maximum challenge. The Powerboarders like to scream through pirate-infested waters tossing insults and grenades in their wakes. The Aerobboarders play chicken with AV-4's and risk flaming death against the sides of inconveniently placed skyscrapers. Smartboarders "battarope" onto speeding groundcars and dodge speedbumps at two hundred mph. If it's flat and moving, you ride it. If it's dangerous enough, you thrash it. For the ride of a lifetime, no challenge is too great. Ever.

## What You Look Like

There is one and only one absolute common item among BoardPunks: a board, whether it's smart, dumb, surf, hydro, aero or skate (there are no rollerbladers in your yogang, only boarders). Besides a board, the most common outfit is the roadrasher—a tight-fitting, brightly-colored, lightly armored skinsuit, with heavily armored knee and elbow pads, wristguards, and a high collar and back ridge that braces your head and spine against impact. You also wear a helmet on top of that—sure, in the old days, you could survive a slam to the pavement at a mere ten or fifteen mph, but today's BoardPunks are hitting the asphalt at a hundred and ten or higher, and the aeroboarders have to be able to take a three-story fall, at least. Hydroboarders also wear roadrashers, but they call them wetsuits; they're equipped with thermal regulators, on-board air and toxic scrubber masks. The days of mere knee pads, elbow pads, crash helmets and wrist guards are over, cho.

Out of uniform, you wear loose-fitting clothes: long baggy shorts, T-shirts and sweatshirts with board company and competitive team logos. Most of your goboys wear their hair long, simply because they never bothered to get it cut, with some sort of hat or headband to keep it back. When BoardPunks wear other affectations, they are as often as not influenced by the punk's home square or ethnic background. Fortunately, your BoardPunk life-style requires little money other than your basic equipment; what little you earn is made by scrounging items for resale or acting as couriers for other, better-off yogangs.

## Subculture

A strong advocate of personal freedom, you disdain popular culture and any conventional behavior and have a finely tuned disregard for rules. No Skating signs, traffic-control lights, right of way, and curfews have no meaning to you, and are in fact your mortal enemies. Anything that restricts your natural desire to move and be free is anathema.

BoardPunks are universally ride-obsessed, staking out a certain area to practice and hone their skills. Parking garages, parks, open water, beaches, good stretches of freeway, open corridors between buildings—no place is safe if it's a good place to thrash. If the place where you ride is restricted or especially dangerous, you call it cutting. Cutting is how you and your goboys flaunt your beliefs, how you display your drive; it's how you take your freedom and hit the mindless mobs in the face with it to make them smell how very un-free they are. The most conservative



cutters are the aeroboarders; there's less room to screw up when you're dodging an AV-4. The most insane of the cutters are the smartboarders, because the freeway is the only place to really cut for a serious ride.

On a cut, you and your goboys make yourselves up in whatever kind of ritual warpaint or colors you like and choose a course to run. Sometimes you divide into groups, each with a leader, but this is more to keep everybody on course and from crossing each other up than from any sense of leadership. BoardPunks hate rules, so to you, a leader is little more than the person in front, and if you pass the leader, you just become the new leader. You go for broke, pushing yourselves to ride as hard as you can, defying everything, including death—literally skate or die. You'll charge the wrong way up the middle of a freeway, slalom-course your smartboard through a crowded mall, high-speed your way up the side of a Corpzone skyscraper; the whole idea behind a cut is to be as reckless as possible, have as much fun as you can, and show the peds what it's like to be really alive.

Sometimes there are a few serious wrecks during a cut, but that's just part of the price of freedom. There's almost always collateral damage: broken windows, car accidents, things like that. But every time a cut goes really well, the corporate wage slaves can be seen milling about the area for hours like confused ants. That's proof to you and your fellow BoardPunks that what you're doing is right.

## Belonging

You never seemed to find any real requirements for joining your BoardPunk gang; anyone who showed up to a certain gang's get-togethers was, after a few months, part of the gang. Skill on a board, dedication, and a cool head during a cut is what got you accepted. As far as you know, BoardPunks also don't have any formal excommunication process. If a member doesn't live up to the expectations of the group, he's simply ostracized. Other members pay less attention to him, make jokes at his expense, and don't tell him what's going on.

In extreme cases, your BoardPunk gang changes its rendezvous for a month or two until the hanger-on goes elsewhere.

## Allies & Enemies

As a BoardPunk, you're on at least friendly terms with Guardian gangs, occasionally acting as scouts or informants.

You have some common ground with the GoGangers, since they share your disregard for "society." Since you ignore trivial things like property rights, you're viewed as a nuisance by the police forces, and corporate security guards will go out of their

way to cause your goboys grief, spreading sand, gravel, or glass at the bottom of ramps to get you to shred yourselves. You also sometimes fall out with the ArcoRunners and MallBrats since these guys consider the Malls and Arcos their territory.

The only time things get really tight is when two different BoardPunk groups stake out the same turf. Then, it's war: a series of savage street scuffles until somebody gets run off the square. In extreme cases, one side may pick a particularly nasty route for a cut and challenge the other yogang to a race, winner take all. Knives, guns, booby traps and other brutal methods are fair game during the challenge cut; this is where most BoardPunk fatalities occur. But you know that just makes the cut more challenging, right?

## Slang

**Bounce:** skate in a certain area for a long time.

**Cut** as a noun, a wild run; as a verb, to skate down the streets.

**Dive:** go airborne from a bad wipe-out.

**Ped:** BoardPunk wannabe, someone who is substandard, any non-boarder.

**Snort:** wipe out due to your own carelessness.

**Surf's up!:** watch me, look out, let's go, general attention-getter.

**Tube:** go to an extreme, do something very well.

## Yogang Skill: Thrash (REF)

As a BoardPunk, you mean it when you say *surf or die*. It's the core of the skill you call *Thrashing*, your ability to ride any type of board, combining balancing skills, nerve, an innate sense of where to play the angles to get the maximum speed, and the ability to pull intense board tricks (like aeroboarding up an elevator shaft at 150 mph). BoardPunks have 100% of their *Thrash* skill for only one particular type of board (aero, surf, hydro, skate, power), 50% (round down) for a second choice, and 25% (round down) for all other types.

## If You're a BoardPunk:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **three** different things from the list below that you're currently carrying:
  - Battarope towcable.
  - Nylon Carrybag.
  - Knife.
  - "Splatman" Airpistol.
- 4) Pick any one type of board: Smartboard • Surfboard • Hydroboard • Aeroboard.

# ECO RAIDER

"Earth first, Earth last, Earth always."  
"Save a milk skin a Corp."

You used to think there was a chance to save things by working through the system. You believed in Planet Earth, not the corporate-sponsored American Dream. You wanted to fight for the preservation of the wilderness. That was before the EPA was dismantled in the wake of the ISA takeover and the Department of the Interior became the Department of Highway Management. From the extinction of the last dodo in 1683 to the sad end of the last California condor (found roasting on a nomad spit by the CHiPs last year) there have been over 1,800 extinctions of vertebrate animals, worldwide. You can't breathe the air. You can't drink the water. There are no birds, at least not in the cities.

So much for working within the system. You're taking Nature back the hard way. Any Corporate that gets in your way had better get ready to become a rug.

As an EcoRaider, you are leading the Green Revolution. You follow in the wake of eco-heroes like *Sable and the Thalidomide Babies*, descending on threatened wildlands by the hundreds to stop Corporate development. Only this time, you're armed and ready to make a stand. EcoRaiders travel from Timbuktu to Tokyo, exposing toxic spills to the Vidiots, wrecking polluting factories in creative and non-lethal ways, creating safezones for whales by mining areas with metal-sensing smartdevices. Your comrades maintain secret zoos where you protect and raise endangered species that many jaded Corpzoners would like to have for their dinner tables. Others with more formal educations dabble in clonebanking and reconstruction of extinct varieties of plants and animals; you've seen passenger pigeons cloned from museum samples and coelacanths in aquarium tanks. You will win. You have no choice.

## What You Look Like

You share a lot of common ground with the Tribals, although neither side wants to readily admit it. You both have a vision of a better, simpler world, and dress to fit

yourselves into that vision. Like the Tribals, you often wear your hair long and in braids or dreadlocks, while other EcoRaiders prefer short mops or mohawks. Your clothes are adorned in a manner similar to the Tribals (beads, weaving), but with a more angry, revolutionary tone. You wear only natural fibers or leather, making a sensible exception only for such items as kevlar. Polyester, plastic, disposable clothes—these aren't disposable, and they use up non-renewable resources (they could be recyclable, but you can't convince the Corps to do it). Additionally, all of your clothes are of muted earth tones: browns, greens, dark blues and grays. No loud colors, both as a statement against modern fashion and as a combat-survival move.

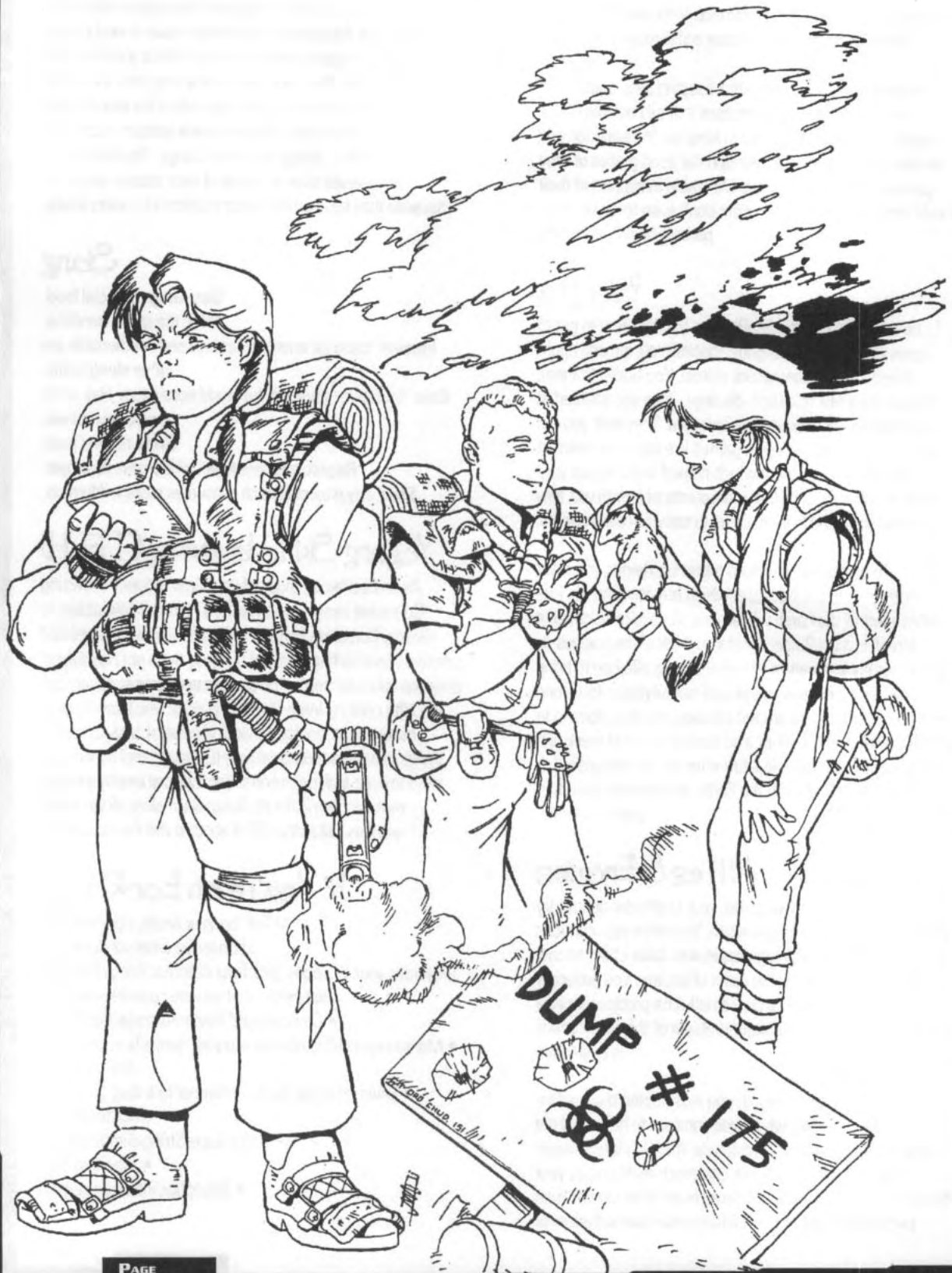
Your fellow EcoRaiders also sport combat-oriented accessories like spiked leather gloves, steel-toed boots, and head protection of various sorts. However, the most important part of any EcoRaider's wardrobe is your green bandana. This is worn conspicuously, either wrapped around an arm or a leg. It is rarely worn around the forehead or neck, because other juves love to snatch it.

## Subculture

The name EcoRaider comes from an old cartoon show, and was adopted by the current yogangers as their anthem. But the name is anything but a joke; EcoRaiders are one of the most hated and feared opponents of the ISA. You are the juves who raid corp labs for gene samples of "designer" animals, sabotage polluting factories, and cordon off threatened wilderness areas with clever and highly sophisticated trip sensors and traps. More than any other yogang, your EcoRaider goboys are totally committed, because they know that time is running out. They know the only way to stop the corporate juggernaut in time is to fight fire with fire, and use the weapons of the modern age to end its rule. You draw the line at killing outright. But barely.

The most prominent aspect of EcoRaiding is pro-environmental sabotage (or *Hayduking*). EcoRaider yogangers are consummate guerrillas, striking unpredictably and with devastating effect. When the EcoRaider yogangers were just starting, they would just sneak into worksites and drop a few sugar cubes into the gas tanks of the tractors, or crack the batteries and let the acid leak all over the upholstery.

These small-time tactics are still used to train younger EcoRaiders. The situation only started to escalate when CorpSec began shooting at you. Being resourceful, you soon scrounged guns and began fighting back. Now, it's considered a good op if you can put a rocket through a crane and get it to drop a ton of steel girders on an expensive piece of equipment. Good,



but not great. Great is getting it to drop on the foreman's office, and then have the crane fall over and damage the building.

At home, count on EcoRaiders keeping pets, plants, and windowsill or rooftop gardens if at all possible (these usually require greenhouses to keep out the pollution and the acid rain). They try to maintain the good graces of their parents, to keep their home life stable in support of their secret activities. Most EcoRaiders don't even try to sell their parents on natural foods.

## Belonging

To be accepted into the EcoRaiders, you had first to get to know them at their hangouts (bookstores, old and abandoned parks, funky nature stores). You talked to them, learned their talk and their ideology. Once you seemed to know enough, you asked to be inducted. They took you out and played games with you: games like tag or full-contact capture the flag, all of which helped them assess your combat readiness. Once they were comfortable with you, they invited you along to a small raid, to test your cool under fire.

To be really considered a true EcoRaider, you must participate in the Advance, which is a camping trip into what's left of the harsh wilderness. (It used to be called a retreat, but EcoRaiders prefer to think of themselves as *advancing back to nature*.) EcoRaiders are allowed to bring low-tech tools like knives and magnifying glasses and packs. Food and water are not allowed; you're supposed to live off the land. EcoRaiders who survive for a full week and still have the energy to do a ten-mile run are considered to be back in touch with the Earth, and thereby earn their green bandana.

## Allies & Enemies

In relations with other yogangs, your EcoRaider goboy's try not to antagonize people overmuch. You voice your opinions at any opportunity, regaling people with tales of the beauty of nature and the hidden costs of society. You generally consider other yogangs to be a small-time problem, worthy of being ignored until the major problem of the corporations is overcome.

Of all the yogangs, however, you most loathe the Golden and GlitterKids, whom you consider to have sold out wholesale to the urban nightmare. ArcoRunners, BeaverBrats, and MallBrats are also much maligned by your friends, though they are considered more to be victims than perpetrators (many EcoRaiders come from suburban or

arcology backgrounds, where intimate exposure brought distaste for the system). EcoRaiders have no real friends among other yogangs other than the Tribals and the Rads, and even them not much. For a long time this made EcoRaiders an outcast group, but when the word hit the street that the EcoRaiders were leaders in the new CyberRevolution, things began to change. The EcoRaiders themselves take no notice of their change in status, because they have other, bigger problems to worry about.

## Slang

**Day-Glop:** artificial food.

**Flag:** the green bandana.

**Furries:** slang for animals. Scaleys and Featherballs are other slang terms.

**Gaia:** EcoRaider slang for the world ecosystem. Has some religious overtones.

**Grub:** natural food.

**Rapist:** any developer, wilderness destroyer.

**Stab:** any projects which consumes more wilderness.

## Yogang Skill: Hayduking (TECH)

As an EcoRaider, much of your time is spent thwarting Corporate incursions on Nature. You call your ability to destroy Corporate hardware or installations in novel and creative ways (rather than just blowing them up) *Hayduking*, after the saboteur hero of an ancient ecoterrorist novel from the 20th century. With *Hayduking* skills, you know how to maximally sabotage devices (Average), how to rewire things to malfunction creatively (Difficult), and all kinds of ways to make stuff do embarrassing things at exactly the right moment (Very Difficult). Things like making all the toilets overflow just as the CEO is about to visit the installation.

## If You're an EcoRaider:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Camouflaged Kevlar Armorjacket (AR 5).
  - Monkeywrench (combination prybar, wrench, screwdriver and hammer).
  - Environmental Analyzer (similar to a drug analyzer).
    - Hunting Knife.
  - 100m SuperString climbing rope.
    - Sleeping Bag.
  - Snoobox intrusion sensor.

# FACE DANCER

"All the world's a stage, and all its people merely Faces."

"The way to be someone is to become someone."

"We're not vain. To be vain, you have to admire yourself. When we look in a mirror, we admire someone else."

Let's Pretend has always been a popular game. But what if you took it to the extreme—what if through advanced cybertech and biotech clinics, you could change yourself as often as you wanted, as much as you wanted? What if your entire life was structured around an almost *Zelig*-like (from the old Woody Allen flatscreen pic) ability to take on others' faces, habits, even personalities? If you could do all this and stay sane, you'd be a FaceDancer (or Facer). So you are.

Most people dismiss you as the yogang equivalent of *posers*, those mentally unstable, older gangers of the early 2000's who had the connections or the money to change themselves into someone else. The *Kennedys* and the *Personalities* were the most famous of these posegangs, the *Kennedys* for their mixture of cyberpunk and stilted Americana, and the *Personalities* for their complete sublimation of their own personas. And it's true that you honor their early attempts to reach the zeitgeist that rules you now. But you also know you're a different animal. You know that in the Dark Future, everyone is faceless. And you celebrate that the best way you can: by stealing the faces of as many people as you can, mastering their very existences, and turning the tables on the Corporate wageslaves who have given up their identities.

Your physical tools are your Face and your Wig, advanced cybertechnological devices that allow you to shift features and hair to the role of the moment. The Face is a memory-plastic mask, identical in detail to real skin (hairs, pores and all) controlled by sophisticated nanocircuitry impregnated throughout. You can shape it like putty to resemble anyone's features, fine tune it to different textures, skin colors and even body temperatures. When worn, it moves with your expressions, indistinguishable from the real thing (it can even be set to grow beard hairs over time). The Wig is a polyfilament memory-plastic hairpiece with an on-board computerchip that allows it to be "tuned" to any length, texture or color. You can style it with a comb and fingers to match hairstyles. A little makeup, some lifts in the shoes, and the physical part of the role is ready.

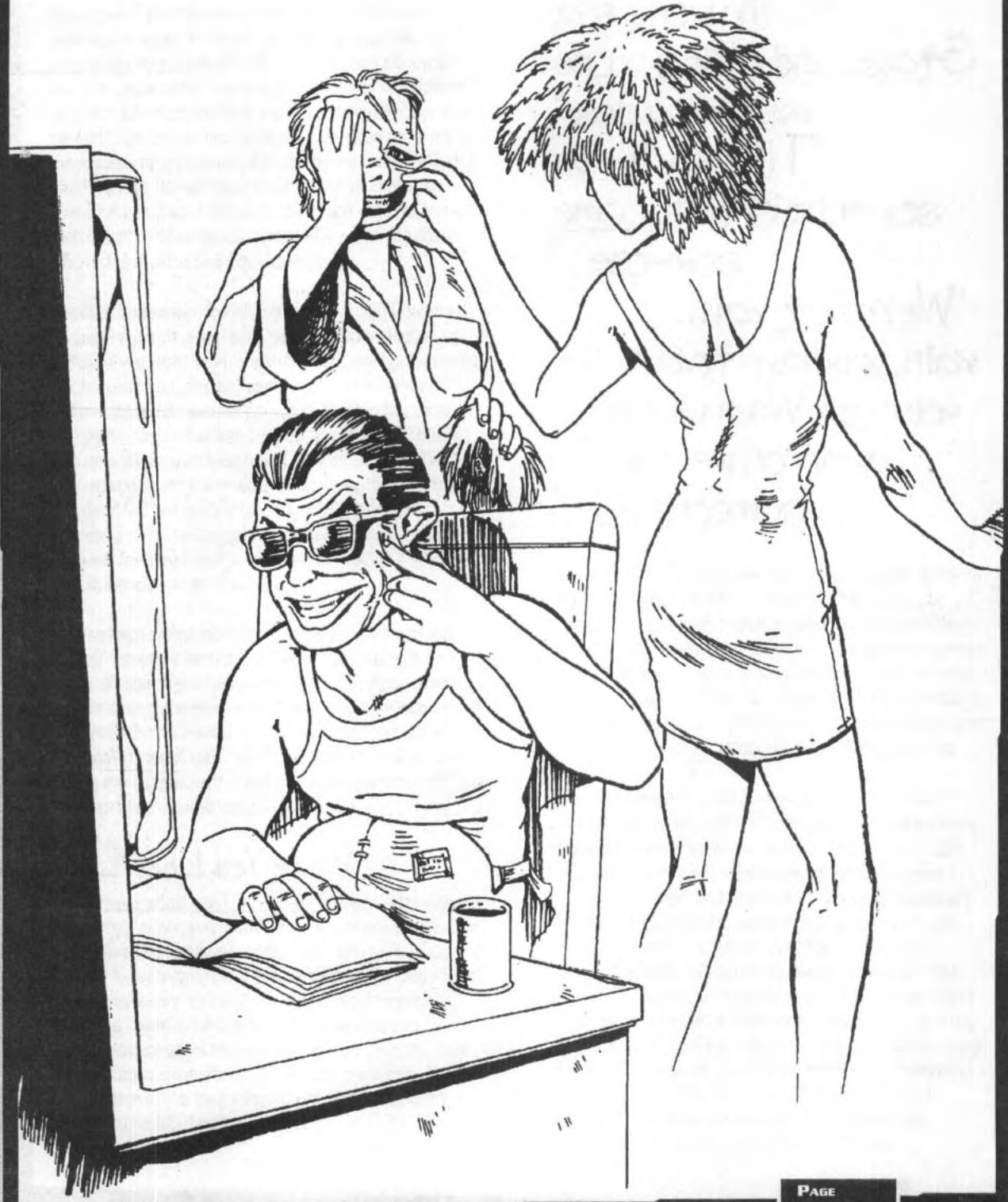
The mental part is your greatest achievement, however: an uncanny ability you've developed, through hours of painstaking practice, to mimic almost anyone—from his smallest tic to his grandest gesture. Like the method actors of old, you become the new character, understand its feelings, thoughts, desires—even when you don't know something about your role model, you can almost perfectly extrapolate her reactions, because you know her inside and out. When the full fusion of physical and mental is complete, you're in the state you call a FaceDance—the perfect acting role, until the next perfect acting role comes along.

As a Facer, you compete with others for the most perfect role, the best sublimation of personality into the 'Dance. Occasionally, two of you may covet the same role, and a bizarre duel of Facers playing stereo characters ensues; this is nicknamed "pulling a Brando" (after the famous routine Dueling Brandos from the old *Saturday Night Live* comedy vid). The Facer who is considered by the gang to have pulled the best "Brando" wins the part.

## What You Look Like

It's difficult to speak of specifics of FaceDancer appearance without making horrible numbers of exceptions. Depending on whom you're imitating at the time, you could be anything from a glitz-infested Elvis clone to a grungy copy of Charles Manson. Most of the time, you take the faces of more everyday people: the clerk down the hall; a popular Virtuality star; a juveganger you met in the maglev station one night, and whose pixie features captured your imagination. The only thing for sure is, you're never the same face twice. Unless you like it.





## Subculture

Facer subculture is centered around attention, profile and mastering the 'Dance. Wherever you go, you go out of your way to attract attention, sometimes favorable, sometimes not (after all, what good is perfecting the perfect role if the audience doesn't have a chance to applaud?). The amount and quality of attention that a FaceDancer gets depends on your persona and your skill; note that if a Facer did a great job of imitating the infamous Greenwood Gutter Killer, unfavorable attention would be exactly what he was after.

So if you run across a mild-mannered accountant who suddenly starts reciting Shakespeare while standing on his head, chances are you're being 'Danced (or have discovered a new form of cyberpsychosis).

Most Facer gangs you know base themselves on real people: a family, or a circle of people to be imitated. GlitterKid retinues are often 'Danced. Popular rockers and Virtuality soap-opera casts are another popular choice.

Other Facer yogangs are aggregates of a lot of different people, as members change styles, 'Dances and motifs, but keep the same friends throughout. FaceDancer yogangs where everyone plays the same persona are rare indeed, and often much to be feared for their hive mind and mob mentality.

## Belonging

There was only one simple requirement you needed to join your Facer yogang: You had to become somebody. To do this, you either found a group you wanted to join and developed a suitable personality to match, or developed a persona and found a suitable group. In each case, you found that a well known personality was best. You worked on your 'Dance in private, learning the walk, the talk, the psyche (there's a lot of research involved in being a Facer). Then, when you thought you had it down, you introduced yourself. When the others couldn't poke a hole in your act, you were in.

FaceDancer gangs have the least turnover of any yogang. One Street proverb has it that "once a FaceDancer, never again the real thing." Facers fight and bicker and backstab just like any other group, just more creatively (often as several different personas at once). Even in the rare cases where a fellow Facer gets cast out of the group, all he has to do is develop a new personality and join again.

## Allies & Enemies

Facers, being entirely artificial, have a lot of enemies. The Vidiots despise them, as do the GlitterKids, who see

themselves as famous and real, not just famous (and hate the 'Dancers mimicing them). The Goths also have it in for them (which is kind of funny, considering the "Children of the Night" are every bit as affected and *poseur* as the FaceDancers). On the other hand, GoldenKids find FaceDancers to be entertaining. You and your fellow Facers get a lot of your cash by hiring out as performers at GoldenKid parties (the only juves willing to pay good money to have a dozen stunted Jim Morrisons saunter into an exclusive gathering).

## Slang

**Buzzed:** to undergo surgery for a role; seriously injured.  
**Fugue:** to take on a persona without artificial/physical aids; 'Dancing on personality alone.

**Hydeman:** one who uses drugs to enhance the role.  
**Jitterbug:** to change identities rapidly without preparation.

**Masquerade:** a party where a large number of Facers gather to play their roles.

**Morph:** a really successful Facer; a master 'Dancer.

**Narso:** GoldenKid or GlitterKid.

**Stag:** FaceDancer who hasn't gotten his role right.

**Zelig:** a Facer whose real face has never been seen.

## Yogang Skill: FaceDance (EMP)

Facers know it's not who you are; it's who you play. You're a consummate actor, with the ability to mimic voices (Difficult), mannerisms (Average), pad your body or wear lifts to change height/weight (Easy), and even copy tiny little habits (V.Difficult). You've got a Face in your pocket that can take on any features and skin colors you shape it to, and a Wig in your belt pouch that can mimic any length, color and style. You're ready to *FaceDance*—to take on the identity and persona of anyone you want. Other people just act. You *become*. That's what the 'Dance is all about.

## If You're a Facer:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Face (reshapable mask with a 90% ability to mimic a form).
  - Wig (changeable hairpiece with 90% matching ability).
  - 10 types of false SIN I.D. Cards (pick identities now).
    - Make-up kit.
  - Personal V-Term (computer/digital assistant).
  - Smartcard bank account with \$100<sup>00</sup> in it.
    - Cellular ringphone.

# GLITTERKID

"If I want it, I'll get  
it."

"Have I sold out? No  
comment."

"Don't hassle me, or my  
bodyguard'll eat your  
kidneys!"

Some kids just make it early. From Mozart, famous across Europe by the time he was six; to Michael Jackson, even more famous at the same age; to Sarah O'Connor, who had her first number-one single when she was a freshman in high school—some kids get catapulted into the limelight, skyrocketing from obscurity to fame and riches.

You're one of the lucky ones. You're a GlitterKid—one of the media darlings of the Cyberpunk era. Sometimes it takes talent: song-writing skill, athletic ability, or an eye for dreampainting French-style. Other times it's an accident of birth; your parents are famous and you're along for the ride. However it happened, as GlitterKids, you're the faves, the stars, the idols of millions. You've got prestige, riches, and influence. You set the styles. You determine what other yogangers eat, drink, wear, listen to, how they look and act. If you and your fellow GlitterKids go to a dance club, the club is in. If you leave the club before ten, the club's dead, because nobody'll go there again for years.

## What You Look Like

As a GlitterKid you wear whatever you want, generally outfits so affected, so cutting-edge that to some people they look downright absurd. Spangles, studs, spikes, fringe, sequins, and real fur are all common highlights to the dramatic cut and color of the clothes you have tailored for yourself. You wear fashions personally designed by Eji of Tokyo and have been known to buy the outfit off the back of another kid just because it clashed with your own. Even slumming, you wear your own versions of grunge: meticu-

lously torn and worn, carefully arranged so as to look as if it was just tossed on. Mirrorshades are mandatory. But the most recognizable aspect of GlitterKid life is the small flock of followers that travels with you wherever you go.

## Subculture

As a GlitterKid, you and your goboys are most often seen in downtown spots where you can be assured of plenty of exposure, notoriety, photographs, autographs, and offers of sex. You love to surf this wave of popular acclaim, getting high from the attention and the approval and the admiration. When your fellow GlitterKids meet, mix and mingle, you exchange diplomatic forms of character assassination disguised as wit, scope each others' styles, and frantically keep track of whether you win, place, or show.

A GlitterKid yogang can also be a gang built around a GlitterKid, who is the centerpiece for hangers-on flocking around-like moths drawn to a flame. A typical retinue is usually about four or so people, with regulars changing like clockwork. Those in your retinue come and go at your whim; they are allowed to stay if they offer some sort of service: drugs, protection against assassins, or just being amusing.

If you want them around, they're in. If not, they're gone within minutes. Your regulars get their own special status by being with you, including crass bribes from hopefuls trying to get close to the G-kid himself. The infighting is brutal, and you make sure that any negative comments about you result in your admirer's utter social downfall. Just because.

## Belonging

One way to become a GlitterKid is to be born to a famous cultural star like Kerry Eurodyne or the late Jack Entropy (of course, this is generally beyond the ability of most people to arrange). A second, only slightly easier approach is to manage to snare the public eye, either through art or sport or, occasionally, crime. Rich Gatchlin, the so-called Mega-euro Moppet, who was never convicted of his parents' double murder, is an example of this latter.

Most people who are part of the GlitterKid set, though, are only hangers-on, the assemblage of henchmen and yes-men which each GlitterKid prefers to keep himself surrounded by. To be one of these chosen few, you must be stylish, attractive, and have some sort of gift. Then you steal an invitation to some sort of event, arrange an "accidental" meeting somehow (perhaps with a few well placed bribes at some exclusive place), and take your one chance to catch the eye of your targeted idol. Hope you succeed.



## Allies & Enemies

While GlitterKids are at the top end of the social ladder like the GoldenKids, they rarely conflict; instead, each side uses the other. Even the MegaViolents and the GoGangers look up to the GlitterKids; only the Facers dislike them (as the real thing steals some of the thunder the Facers garner for themselves).

Most of the GlitterKids you've met or heard about are musically oriented: Sarah O'Connor, Derry Eurodyne, the Bath tub Boys, etc. Because of this, and because of your friend's blatant posing and attention-getting tactics, you've earned the eternal enmity of real rockerboys who consider you to be what Liberace was to the hard-rock set in the late Twentieth Century: effete poseurs and glamormongers. While rockerboys don't attack GlitterKids, they have no qualms about spraying you with Smash, egging your limousines, or exposing themselves to your girls. Insulted, the GlitterKids usually start a fight they can't win.

## Slang

**Boof:** GoldenKid, someone with no real talent, has-been.

**Frothers:** really, *really* obnoxious fans.

**Garnished:** to be fired, kicked out; to be out of favor or style.

**Jazz:** a party or social event.

**Mora:** toady, hanger-on.

**Rim:** real cool.

**Simba:** the establishment.

**Watchdogs:** obnoxious Media.

## Yogang Skill: Celebrity (COOL)

Your face and your rep are your fortune. You've been on the cover of hundreds of screamsheets, right up there with Elvis and the alien who advises President Whindam. If you aren't famous yourself, your parents are, and you've spent a lifetime learning how to use the connection. You can ask people on the street for favors, help or even protection, and they're so dazzled by the fact that you spoke to them that they'll probably do it. It's sort of like having a Rockerboy *Spotlight* skill (pg. 216) that you can only use on one person at a time. The one catch is that you will also often be recognized unless you take some pains to disguise your now well-known face. You'll need at least mirrorshades and inobvious clothes to keep the "frothers" from coming up to you at dinner and begging you to sign their body parts.

## If You're a GlitterKid:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Tell me why you're famous and how famous you really are. For example, are you known for your talent, or just for your parents? Here are just a few ways to gain more than your fifteen minutes of fame:
  - You're a hot teenage corp-rocker, the next Shaun Cassidy (you just said *who*, right? That's the point).
  - Parents are powerful Media producers, writers, studio heads.
  - Parents are famous rockers (Kerry Eurodyne and Johnny Silverhand excepted).
  - Parents star in their own V-TV show or are braindance stars (Sherri Glass excepted).
  - You were part of a media-hyped "human interest" event: you were trapped in a snowstorm and hiked 200 miles to safety; you fell into a small well as a baby; you were a quintuplet; the William Gibson Freeway collapsed during an earthquake and you miraculously survived, etc.
  - You are a child prodigy: a mathematical whiz, a musical genius, a great artist at 10.
- 4) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Mirrorshades.
  - A smartcard bank account with \$1000<sup>00</sup> currently on it (your allowance).
  - Cellular pocket phone.
  - Personal V-Term (computer/digital assistant).
  - Aerovector model CityScooter (a small electric motorbike).
  - Snoopbox (personal privacy monitor).

"Are you anybody important? I mean, that I should bother to know about?"

—Derry Eurodyne,  
GlitterKid

# GOGANGER

"Born against the wall,  
living on the edge."

"I'd kill for a new  
Thundergod. In fact, I  
think I will."

"Yeah, damn straight  
we're rebels. We live free  
in a corporate world."

You used to be called bikers, back when the first motorcycle enthusiasts sped down Main Street, and James Dean was the idol of countless teeny-boppers. During the Collapse your parents were called *Zippers*, named for their penchant for speeding along the unpoliced freeways as fast as they could, and occasionally leaving this world at the end of a long, bloody stripe down the pavement. But this is 2027.

You still have the bikes, but now they're cyber-trode controlled. You still crave speed, but you look for other kicks as well. Now you're a GoGanger.

You were the first yogang to emerge from the chaos of the Collapse, the rebels of society who wanted nothing to do with corporate life. You come from all walks of life, but most of you come from the remnants of the middle classes, where the ratio of cash to anger is the greatest. You ride to live, and you live to ride. And if someone dies in the process, so much the better.

## What You Look Like

As a GoGanger, you move in gangs as tight as those of the MegaViolents, only larger. Each gang has its own colors: always loud, in either two bold colors, or one color with black and white. Typically, your goboys wear worn leather jackets emblazoned with their logo, and those with motorcycle helmets are similarly adorned. Leather and denim are the most common materials for pants, and all GoGangers wear the traditional engineer's boots of the true biker lord. You sometimes dye your hair to match your

colors, and you generally wear it long, in styles from oiled curls to stark mohawks. Of course, the easiest way to identify a GoGanger is by the large, unmuffled motorcycles you drive at 120 kph past some mallbunny's sleepcube at 3:00 a.m.

## Subculture

As a GoGanger, your life revolves around bikes. Pure. Simple. As focused as the BoardPunk's fascination with his plank. In fact, you sometimes wonder why those wussies don't move up to some real iron; they've got the right attitude. For you, it's any kind of two wheeler: Harley, Bimoda, Cybertrek, Yamada. You disdain anything with more than two wheels, and you don't even think about flying vehicles.

To your fellow goboys (and the term "goboy" was originally a GoGanger expression that caught on) a bike is to you what a horse was to a cowboy. It is at once a means of conveyance, a symbol of freedom, and a facet of your identity. All GoGanger bikes are well maintained and meticulously cleaned. This makes you GoGangers perhaps the best mechanics in yogang culture, and doing such work helps to pay the bills. You repair or build bikes. You wreck bikes. You steal more bikes.

You and your goboys hang out in packs numbering from eight to twenty, roaming the roads. Unlike Nomads, you don't stray too far from the outskirts of the City; even in packs of ten or twenty, you don't have the gees to hold off a full-scale wilding pack assault. You don't recognize abstracts like ownership, public property, due process, or other concepts that most people take for granted. You wreck things, cause trouble, and occasionally kill people, but you don't set out to do it; things just happen in the course of events. You're anything but premeditated murderers; you're more like the Huns of the Highway. You also have a healthy disrespect for the establishment in whichever form it takes. Even when braced by a CorpSec cop with no hope of escape, you'll make it painfully clear that you wouldn't cooperate if there weren't at least five guns aimed at your head.

GoGanger subculture is based largely on pack mentality. Seniority within a gang is based on intelligence, charisma, nerve, and, most of all, bike riding skills. Size, strength, and a willingness to bash your homeboys' heads whenever they challenge you are also essential to the aspiring young GoGanger. Within your gogang, politics strongly resemble a baboon troop, with the alpha male (or female) as the



spokesman for the GoGang, and the final arbiter in dealings with outsiders. One way to establish the pecking order is the "tear" (short for "tear it up"), in which the most dominant GoGanger sets a suicidal and breakneck course at top speed through a dangerous area. Challengers must follow him through the complete course; a winner must actually pass the leader and set a new course so dangerous that the old leader is forced to wreck or back down. Thirty or forty screaming bikes going the wrong way down the fast lane of I-101, popping wheelies and jumping trucks, is a sure way to get somebody killed, and usually it's one of you.

### Belonging

When you first tried to join, you found that GoGangers are a tightly knit, suspicious group who do not readily admit people into their ranks. In short, they beat the crap out of you. You survived, and started to follow the GoGang on its "tears" as a tag-along for a few nights. They'd still cripple you if you dared to wear their colors, but gogangs are generally tolerant of the wannabes who hang around them like hummingbirds and make the GoGangers feel looked up to. Later, you learned another, less popular way to get into a GoGang is to soundly defeat one of their number in a fight. GoGangers respect strength, and if you're tough enough to trash one or two of them, they might invite you to join.

Once in, you underwent an initiation ritual (in your case, you got dragged by a bike for a mile), and were inducted into the gang with colors. This is a lot like a formal Nomad adoption, and double-crossing a gang member is dealt with very harshly.

### Allies & Enemies

Since you're casual lawbreakers who usually get into a lot more trouble than you plan on, your goboyes have earned the enmity of the Guardians. The StreetFighters also dislike GoGangers, largely because you sometimes harass smaller or weaker groups of people, a distinctly uncool thing to do. For these reasons, Guardians and StreetFighters will tear into a GoGanger pack whenever the opportunity arises. You also share a strange love/hate relationship with the MegaViolents, whom you consider both really radical and mentally unstable, and you all hang with the Goths, because they're up the same times you are and are afraid of nothing.

### Slang

**Go howling:** to have reckless fun.

**Jingo:** wannabe, weak person.

**Make the cut:** to be able to ride with the best riders.

**Rain:** harassment; to be attacked.

**Step:** get on, let's go.

**Stride:** to go as fast as possible.

### Yogang Skill: Hotbiking (REF)

Anybody can ride a bike. But as a GoGanger, you *live* your bike. *Hotbiking* is the ability to pull off bike *stunts*: simple stuff like 180° turns and controlled skids (Average), skidding sideways under moving trucks to the other side (V.Difficult), leaning back horizontal in the saddle to fire a rifle (Difficult), pulling ramp jumps (V.Difficult), and landing on moving targets (N.Impossible)—the stuff guys like Evel Kinevel used to pull back in the twentieth century. You're better than almost any Nomad, because you spend all your time doing suicidal bike moves while they just coast from place to place like a buncha geriatric cases.

### If You're a GoGanger:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **three** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Armored riding jacket (AR 5).
- Riding helmet with "heads up display" (showing speed of bike, angle of wheel to road, fuel, tach, etc.).
  - Fighting Knife.
  - Heavy Pistol.
- 5 molotov cocktails (DC5, 5m radius each).
- 4) Pick any one of the following "rides":
  - Apache Cyberbike.
  - Nunchaku Cyberbike.
  - Hellfire Cyberbike.
  - Akira Cyberbike.

"They say a man  
can't love a material  
thing Aluminum skin  
and a cast iron  
soul ..."  
—20th Century Song



# GOLDENKID

"Back off before I have  
you killed."

"Blood as blue as a  
neodollar."

"I own you. I own  
everybody, eventually."

From the diamond and iridium bracelet-com on your wrist, to the private aerodyne on the roof, you're every inch a GoldenKid. Born and raised on wealth instead of parenting and privilege instead of ethics, you're so used to getting your way that you no longer even bother to question the fact. You live in a world of corporate highrises (or private estates), with private suites, bodyguards and dedicated Virtuality links. You own your own gold corporate credit cards, exotic pets, expensive jewelry, a huge (but tasteful) wardrobe, a personal aerodyne, and a forged driver's license. In short, you have everything a juve could want except parents who can spare some time just to be with you.

You're rich—really rich. You're also probably not a native; many of you have parents who originally came to the U.S. from Japan or the EC to oversee an American branch of a large international megacorp (which has since defected to the ISA). Some of your friends come from California, Texas, Florida, or the Northeast, where hereditary fortunes are still common. But money isn't all of the picture; what you really have is power. Raw, unadulterated clout: the ability to shape events and squash lesser mortals like bugs that comes naturally to those who regularly dine with Presidents. Your parents dictate the policies of nations and push around kings; are you even going to consider what some mere police officer or local politician thinks about you? Really.

Your toys and position come at a price; one parent works sixteen hours a day and flies around the world with six bodyguards, and the other makes the whirl through the Corpzoner social scene and flies around the country with six bodyguards. But that's not a high price to pay to get

everything you ever wanted, to be able to satisfy even the most trivial whim. In fact, you lack nothing, except something to do with your time.

You are also terminally bored.

## What You Look Like

As a GoldenKid, you always wear the latest fashions, or else eschew popular convention entirely and wear whatever style pleases you. Whatever the style, you always look polished: Glossy real leather boots and coats, exotic furs, gold and precious stones, and hand-tailored fits are the hallmark of the GoldenKid. Since a true GoldenKid always goes for subtle show, the cut of your clothes and the craft of your jewelry ensembles are designed for low-key flair, flash, and a sinister edge of arrogance and elitism.

Appearance is only a tool to attract attention, intimidate others, flaunt your wealth and stake territory at a party. You carefully scrutinize other GoldenKids' appearances and cut them carefully to ribbons with critiques, though always behind their backs.

## Subculture

GoldenKid culture is based exclusively on status in its various forms, and parties are the main way for status to be developed and asserted. Appearance is one way to establish dominance; another is status through argument. In your circle, the most popular GoldenKids are known for their ability to philosophize, and although their points may lack any actual basis in experience, the ability to debate is more important. The winners know that under the omnipresent eyes of their parents, the strongest and cleverest will be the inheritors of their progenitors' staggering power and wealth.

Status through entertainment comes third, and is perhaps the most startling way in which your fellow "taddys" claim ranking. Unlimited cash, vivid imaginations and a lot of spare time have led you to sample some pretty depraved pursuits, usually only for a few short weeks before you restlessly alight on something else to distract you. The search is always on for something which money can't buy you, at least directly. Killing small animals is now considered passé, but everyone's *heard* stories about GoldenKids kidnaping random streetdrek and holding parties where the attendees express their creativity through applied pain. But that's too sick for you (you hope).

Peer pressure is the stabilizing force of GoldenKid society, a mirror of the cutthroat Corporate culture you inhabit. In



vicious attempts to sabotage or smear rivals, the major weapon in a GoldenKid dispute becomes the opinion of the clique, a proxy battlefield in which each attempts to manipulate the attitudes of the others, just as they would in a real boardroom. Dominance games, mind-playing, threats and blackmail are all fair in these exchanges, with the result being that one or both of the GoldenKids gets ostracized from your clique, and moves on to join a different one.

## Belonging

Everyone knows that one doesn't join the GoldenKids; one either is a GoldenKid or isn't. Among your friends, everyone circles freely, mixing especially at parties; the divisions within GoldenKid society are soft, not hard, resulting not in gangs but in cliques, a group of friends who hang out together more often than not. Sometimes cliques become elitist, and may actually levy membership requirements on others, but so doing usually results in that clique not getting invited to as many parties.

Your long-time GoldenKid friends have become very close to you indeed, and you've developed a sort of surrogate brotherhood, and a lot of familial ties. Whether these bonds will be strong enough to last under real pressure depends on a lot of things, but all of you need something to cling to. So when you find a blood brother, you go out of your way to keep the bond.

## Allies & Enemies

Unlike other yogangs, your circle usually has cordial relations with corporations and the authorities. These relations may even be warm and friendly, depending on how good you are at hiding your little games from those in power (as if they didn't know). You look on the corporations as a means to an end, a piggy bank with an endless supply of euro; you pretend to be nice and well behaved, simply to ensure a steady flow of credit into your account.

GoldenKids have no friends among yogang culture, largely because you think everyone else is beneath your dignity. In return, other yogangers think you GoldenKids have no firm grounding in reality, and live in a fantasy world of your own devising. Very few people mess with the GoldenKids unless they can finish them all off. It is well known among yogang culture that to mess with a GoldenKid is to invite a corporate assassin to teach you some manners.

## Slang

**Bank:** parents.

**Buffy & Biff:** GoldenKids from Old Money, down-eastern families. Anyone from Yale, Harvard or Vassar.

**Leverage:** money, power.

**Lugomen:** faceless Corporate bodyguards, family Solos.

**Mondo Showdown:** exclusive GoldenKid party.

**Nuvos:** GlitterKids with money but not Corporate power or connections.

**Ram:** to be passé, to fail.

**Taddy:** GoldenKid.

**Them:** anyone but a GoldenKid.

## Yogang Skill: Contacts (INT)

As a GoldenKid, you know power comes from the ability to know (and use) important, powerful people. Having *Contacts* means you know somebody important who can help you in Corporate (Average) or Government (Difficult) circles, sometimes even at the most exclusive places (V.Difficult). Note: This skill only works as long as the GoldenKid is not publicly exposed as a member of the CyberEvolved. But as most GoldenKid families will use any means to hide the scandal of an infected child, you are unlikely to be exposed unless you commit a very, very public action (something that makes the national news) while using your Evolved powers. Even then, they're more likely to cut you off without cash than publicly denounce you.

## If You're a GoldenKid:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Tell me about your parents. What Corp does the ol' "bank" belong to? Excepting Arasaka and EBMA, you may be affiliated with any other megacorp of the *Cybergeneration* world. In any case, your parents are in the upper management: not President or Chairman of the Board, but maybe a Vice President or Head of Operations.
- 4) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Personal Cellphone.
  - Gold smartcard bank account with \$2000<sup>00</sup> in it (last month's allowance).
  - Personal V-Term (personal assistant/computer).
    - Snoobox (privacy protection device).
  - Cardlock smartcard to your family's private, luxury Corpzone conapt.
  - Expensive armored sports jacket (AR 5).

# GOTH

"Everyone's dead. We  
just realize it."  
"There's no life after  
death. But there is life  
during death."  
"Nothing like the Night."

You are one of the "Children of the Night" 2027-style. You know the future holds only emptiness, and your only fear is that of The End of All Things. Unlike most, however, you embrace this fear wholeheartedly, and live your lives through the glorification of death. If it can be said that the Goths (from the term *Gothic*) are fearless, then yours is a casual fearlessness, the result not of bravery but of a reconciliation with the final end. Threats don't work against a Goth. You aren't even afraid of the Carbon Plague (or so you say).

As a Goth, you own the city streets after dark, simply because your breed is the most numerous at night, far more than the rest of the mere "mortals" (as you like to think of them) who stumble blindly around in the shadows. Perhaps at certain times or places other yogangs might dominate the Street—MegaViolent gangs on a rampage, for example—but when they leave, you will still be there. You are there because you are the Dead. And the Dead never sleep. (Only "rest" during the day to recover from the aftereffects of their nocturnal lifestyle. Preferably in a coffin.)

## What You Look Like

There are only three colors visible at night: gray, black, and white. You always dress in the latter two. Your clothing is severe, and almost all of it is black, except for possibly a white ruffled or lace-embroidered shirt. Many of your clothes are hand-made, because retail outlets generally don't carry such old-fashioned, cadaverous accoutrements. Archaic jewelry, especially obscure religious symbols, are cherished accessories. You dye or bleach your hair, teasing it into wild flares of damaged protein, and smear your face with white makeup highlighted by black lip gloss, eye

shadow, and, for lack of a better word, rouge. The older Goths (whom you call Elders) often have their skin dyed or tattooed. The overall appearance they try to cultivate is that of a badly abused corpse. Your style is more sophisticated; dead white skin and a slight "embalmed" sheen are all you need.

The pinnacle of success for a Goth is to look dead and act the same. While your makeup and clothes generate a lot of this appearance, your friends also practice twisting their faces to look particularly grotesque, or cultivate an icy deadpan stare that is disturbingly ... jaded. Years of practice give the older Goths particularly rubbery visages, the better for them to convey their own personal style of ugliness. Some of your goboys try for a grotesque parody of foppish happiness, like a long-dead clown, while others go for the full metal vampire look, all sneers and bared teeth. The point is not to affect a certain style, but to make sure the style you evolve is uniquely you—and uniquely affronting.

To this end, most Goths also emaciate themselves, although a few overindulge their appetites in an attempt to bloat themselves like corpses in the hot sun.

## Subculture

You and your fellow Goths are a strange mixture of gothic party animals and vampire poseurs. Although you typically use alcohol and lightweight drugs, you're also fairly athletic, a result of a lot of frenetic dancing in cellars and climbing up fire escapes under the full moon. Constantly telling yourself that you can't feel pain or fear also makes Goths frighteningly resistant to damage; most of the time, a Goth doesn't stop moving until he's really, totally, absolutely dead. And even then, he doesn't look like he suffered much.

While other yogangs flirt with murder, Goths flirt with suicide, vampirism and cannibalism, although, since they consider themselves already to be dead, they rarely go looking for death too hard. Generally speaking, hanging out in most cities after dark is risky enough to be considered tempting fate. Goths, however, don't even think twice about it. Most Goths play Russian Roulette if they're really bored.

Goths taunt death-as-suicide by pushing themselves to their limits, leaping across rooftops, stabbing themselves randomly through the body with ornate knives, and giving into any dangerous whim that passes their way. One of the more recent fads is dump truck diving, where Goths dive from rooftops in to open-topped garbage trucks. It requires not only timing and an ability to fall correctly, but also grace and fearlessness, because a minimum of a swan dive is



required, and flips are preferred. The diver ought to look as though he's flying.

Goths play with death-as-cannibalism through their pseudo-vampiric activities. As a Goth, you feel the night is yours to rule, and when you really need some excitement, you begin prowling. When stalking, you act animal to an extreme, communicating through an extensive code of screams, growls, and grunts. You sweep the streets and alleys like shadows, looking for solitary victims, or perhaps a pair. Once you've found a victim, you'll goad him to run, driving him into a corner or dead end. At this point all your friends come out, and begin moving in until the victim collapses in terror. Goths terrorize, and occasionally drink blood, but cannibalism is *verboten*, the province of psychotics already over The Edge. No one you know has ever seen it happen.

There is no formal organization in Goth yogangs, and in fact the gangs themselves are little more than groups of friends who hang out together. Goth groups intermix a lot. Should one Goth offend another, the affronted person usually sets up almost-lethal traps to instill fear in the perpetrator. Usually this cures the problem, or things devolve into a competitive game of one-upsmanship to see who can out-trap/scare the other. Sometimes the trapping escalates until one of the parties is killed. Fortunately for you, most Goths are difficult to offend. Hanging around with a bunch of living dead seems to mellow things a bit. Goths also throw pretty great parties if you like gothic rock, and some better-known Goth bands charge admission for their gigs (although most folks find their music too weird and depressing for words).

## Belonging

You found it was very easy to join with the Goths; all you had to do was dress in black, slap on some white makeup and go hang out after dark. But to really be considered one of the "in" crowd, you had to either demonstrate a complete acceptance of the pointlessness of life (mutilation, suicide attempts), or do something which benefited the group as a whole. Dump truck diving is a way for any initiate to prove his recklessness. An example of helping the group out would be to score some great old gothic music, or arrange for a popular gothic band to do a gig.

Once a Goth, always a Goth—unless, of course, you show that you have developed a fear of pain and death. Both as a juve and a Goth, you constantly maintain an implicit conviction that you cannot die. Usually vampiric activities only add to this impression. With age, however, comes maturity, and at some point a lot of Goths realize that they, too, are mortal, and that there is more to life than dressing weird and playing dead. Once this real grasp of mortality is reached, most Goths

go on to other things. A few, though, never reach that point, or maintain their embrace of death in spite of increased reality. These few older Goths (some in the early 30's) are the idols of the younger kids, and in order to inspire them they often carefully plot their own deaths in a dark but artistic manner.

## Allies & Enemies

The greatest enemies of the Goth are the Squats, though to call them enemies is perhaps missing the point; most Goths just consider Squats to be their rightful prey. They also hate FaceDancers, whom they consider to be the lowest form of life (to a Goth, if life is stupid, trying to live someone else's life is the pinnacle of stupidity). The Facers argue that the Goths are just unimaginative posers and are jealous of their face dancing abilities. Because of their occasional drugs and wild parties, the Goths are at least on social terms with the MegaViolents and the GoGangers.

## Slang

**Fly:** dump truck dive, other dangerous acrobatic activity.

**Hot lunch:** a victim.

**Inks:** the night.

**Pain:** the daylight, the sun.

**Queef:** as a noun, a wannabe; as a verb, to be foolish.

**Woofier:** hard-core Goth of dubious sanity.

## Yogang Skill: Deathwalk (COOL)

As a Creature of the Night, you know you're already dead. So what's the point of pain or fear? Death holds no fear for you; you embrace it as a lover (Goths *never* back down from a fight, facedown or threat; add your *Deathwalk* Skill to your COOL). You also project that scary sensation of undead, creepy calm, which you can use to intimidate others (requires a COOL roll vs. your combined *Deathwalk*+COOL+1D10, or the victim of your gaze either runs or is reduced to helpless terror).

## If You're a Goth

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - White face paint and red lipstick.
  - Vampire teeth inserts (DC3 bite).
    - Ornate dagger.
  - Garotte (strangulation damage).
  - Long black armored (AR 5) Victorian coat or duster.
  - Obscure symbol on long chain (DC 3 as a club).

# GUARDIAN

"The streets belong to the people, not the criminals."

"Take back the night!"

"We're on your side, so shut up and put that knife away before I break your arm."

You're a Guardian, proud defender of Street justice and champion of the weak. Your allies in arms range from large, well-respected groups like the International Alliance of Guardian Angels, Inc. (a collection of law-abiding volunteers who patrol their cities' trouble spots) to locally famous but feared groups like the Back Alley Brawlers of Night City, who try to keep the peace on their turf, preferably without killing too many people.

Despite the broad variance in the beliefs of the various Guardian gangs, you all hold to one common credo: The streets and the cities are the rightful domain of good people, not undesirables. This carries an implicit assumption that you and your fellow Guardians are also good people. While this isn't a problem for most, the lunatic few who bear massive burdens of hate (like the *Ethnik Klenzers* of Detroit, who prowl around looking for "undesirables" to exterminate) generate enough bad press to make people nervous about other Guardians. If the basic tenet of the Guardians is that criminals should not rule the streets, then their basic practice is to uphold the law. (Again, there is some difference of opinion in the actual execution here, as the only law the *Ethnik Klenzers* seem to uphold is the law of the concrete jungle).

## What You Look Like

As a guardian, you owe a lot of your traditions to the inspiration of the original Guardian Angels of the twentieth century, and therefore dress in a paramilitary manner. Since you view yourselves as the protectors of the common

citizen, you normally dress somewhat conservatively, or at least dress in a conservative base uniform which may then be ornamented according to personal taste with beads, buttons, feathers, or other personal effects.

As with police uniforms, utility and visibility are the most important aspects; it's imperative to you as a Guardian that you're readily recognizable to everyone you meet. The most common Guardian uniform therefore is a variation on combat boots, six-pocket fatigue pants, a T-shirt or sweatshirt with the group's logo emblazoned on it, and a jacket, also with the logo embroidered across the back. Berets are far and away the most common headgear, and leather fighting gloves are very popular. Personal grooming is also very important, for as the protectors of the greater good, it's necessary to maintain the image of being clean.

Hair is generally kept short, which helps during fights. You're also very fastidious about having your clothes clean and, if not pressed, at least unwrinkled, although when fists start flying, all bets are off.

## Subculture

You and your goboys are tough, terse, and always on the lookout. You're deep down the most paranoid of the yogangs, because by your nature you walk the streets looking for trouble (or more precisely, letting trouble look for you). By your very character you make a lot of enemies, and you also wear visible uniforms to attract attention—it's a lot like wearing a bullseye around all day. As a result, Guardians always scan their environment: Your head and eyes are always roving, searching for threats. When patrolling an area, experienced Guardians (or Guardians who are not overconfident) will have their tailing member occasionally spin around to keep tabs on the areas behind them.

In dealings with outsiders, you and your fellow Guardians are wary but respectful. You don't want to alienate anyone, but you're cautious during any encounter, never letting your guard down (you never know when someone might just try to take a shot). During confrontations you try to use non-lethal force, so as to avoid angering the local police. Of course, when faced with lethal force, Guardians pull no punches.

While on the Street, you are disciplined, leaning heavily on paramilitary regimentation. On patrol, unquestioning loyalty to the leader is required; the remaining Guardians are supposed to be the leader's eyes and ears. In private, you're raucous and friendly, and enjoy swapping brags, war stories, and sparring with each other for training.





Most Guardian gangs are not home-bound, which is to say you go where there's trouble, instead of sticking around the home square. As a result of this, their membership is often drawn from diverse areas of a city, as well-meaning individuals from all over town descend on one area to clean it up. Since Guardians are also often respected people in their own neighborhoods (and are therefore privy to all sorts of information), the Guardian yogangs have become one of the major grapevines in yogang culture, with members swapping important news and bulletins from their various home neighborhoods.

You and your goboys draw a sharp distinction between yourselves and vigilantes. Vigilantes act as judge, jury, and executioner, and essentially try to supplant the police. You view your group as concerned citizens aiding the police in their work (when the police let you), and you generally don't step outside the legal bounds for citizen's arrest (said laws have loosened noticeably in the last twenty years).

## Belonging

You fast discovered that Guardians will only accept members that meet their high standards. Generally, members must have clean criminal records, a drug-free past, and other such improbabilities in the post-modern world. Applicants undergo a background check and must pass a three-month-long training period, during which time they are instructed in martial arts, the law (or a variant of the law as interpreted by the founders), and patrol tactics. Training usually requires that the applicant undergo some sort of lightly humiliating initiation, like wearing a pink armband or a shirt with TRAINEE proudly stamped on it. Anyone who endures the initiation and the training course gets inducted into the group.

Since the training period flushes applicants without enough patience or humility, Guardians tend to be of like mind and reasonable countenance. Generally, if a Guardian has a problem with the gang, it's because he has a problem.

Guardians with a problem usually don't last long, as their pride and arrogance induce them to leave. If a member isn't upholding his part, the leaders of the gang can also strip him of his colors, although normal practice is to call him on the carpet a few times first.

## Allies & Enemies

Due to their law-abiding nature, most of your fellow Guardians are in the good graces of the local police. CorpSec is a different matter, though, since they fear what

they do not control, and are often caught acting illegally themselves. Arasaka in particular is notably tolerant of Guardian gangs; few corporations are openly hostile, and most just ignore you altogether.

BoardPunks and StreetFighters often find common ground with you, the BoardPunks for their simple desire for the streets to be safe so they can play, and the Streeters through a mutual understanding of martial arts. Guardians don't make allies easily, although anyone who has proven their upstanding demeanor will receive the utmost respect from Guardian groups. MegaViolent gangs are your only blood enemies, as well as the more nefarious factions of GoGangers, Squats, Goths, and Rads.

## Slang

Guardians tend to use police slang and codes (see the *Cyberpunk* supplement *Protect & Serve*), but they also have a few phrases of their own.

**Banger:** any criminal or other undesirable.

**Brick:** tough, ready to fight, good, great.

**Down:** with it, cool, dedicated.

**Rock:** the police, if uncorrupted; otherwise the word is "crock."

**Slam & jam:** attack a criminal.

**Taking names:** doing very well.

**Throw:** full-blown street fight.

## Yogang Skill: Good Guy (COOL)

This is similar to the CorpSec Skill of *Authority* on page 237. The Guardian is known to his community to serve the forces of Law & Order. He may add his Skill to his COOL in any facedown he encounters. He may also call upon other citizens for information (Easy) or aid (Difficult), much like the *Resources* ability of the Corpzoner (pg. 237).

## If You're a Guardian

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Personal phone.
  - Tonfa, Nunchucks, Baton or other DC 5 martial arts weapon.
  - 10 Striptape binders (plastic handcuffs).
  - Armorjacket (AR 5) with team logo.
  - Leather fingerless fighting gloves.
  - Knife.

# MALLBRAT

"I have what you need.  
All I need is a favor  
in return. Deal?"  
"Why go to the wall when  
you can go to the  
Mall?"

As a MallBrat, you and your goboyos ostensibly hang out at the gigantic Mallplex centers day in, day out, scamming the stores, cruising for dates, checking out the latest fashions and advertisements. The Mallplexes are safe, with corporate security guards covering your back, lots of crowds to hide in, and happy advertising telling you how great the world is and how sexy you look in that new ICON America jacket. The tougher yogangas don't go to the mallplexes; they're boring and the guards always beat them up. In short, you and your goboyos like things the way they are. You don't want to make waves. You don't want excitement. You just want to blend in.

Yeah, right. Underneath your cheerful clothes and dopey attitudes lurk the future fixers and thirdmen of the *Cyberpunk* universe. You aren't your average BeaverBrat, content to pull a prank and split. You and your fellow MallBrats are the flat-out masters of the black market, using the placid surface of the urbanplex to supply yogang America with the products they need and the services they demand. Sure, the Fixers can get stuff to the Edgerunners. But who do you think *sells* it to them, eh, cho?

You run the Mallplexes, and they're your territory. You take menial jobs as happy, stupid counter help during the day; after hours, using your keys, you fire up the ol' microfactory, cut in the splice that disables the production counter, and run off two hundred extra armorjacks for the Street trade (you cover the missing Kevlar stock by screwing with the inventory records later). You can make a thousand rounds of "genies" vanish somewhere between the stockroom and the store displays. Sure, the store managers are watching you, but long as they get their cut, they're happy. It's not

like they owned the place or anything. They're just Corporate wage-slaves.

You use the Mallplexes' thousands of stores and computers to run service-trading industries and bookmaking rings; to run off illegal weapons on the microfactories with stolen programs and to locate and route shipments from Mallplex to Mallplex right under the noses of CorpSec (inside the Corporate megastores' own crates!). The biggest indicator of your ability is that adult Edgerunners deal with you personally—and they don't laugh.

## What You Look Like

As a MallBrat, you're second only to the *single-identity* Posergangs as far as cookie-cutter appearance goes. Whatever the style is, hundreds of you wear variations on it, all in bright, sassy colors. In fact, if there is one thing that can be said for MallBrat clothes, it's that they are always new (the corporations no longer promote the ratty hand-me-down look, because there's no money in it). Hair, nails, and makeup also follow the fashion trends. Thanks to your almost exclusively indoor lifestyle, you're very pale, unless tan is the in-look this season, in which case you sport either dark makeup or the uniform Malibu Barbie tan of the salons.

Whatever you do, you don't want to stand out. You want to be predictable, safe. Like MacDonald's.

## Subculture

The Mallplex is the place to be when you're a MallBrat. Your entire life is centered there, where you can find food, clothes, and entertainment, and all without having to brave the omnipresent smog or the vermin-filled streets. You can make safe deals, knowing that some hopped-up Mega isn't going to be able to beat you senseless before he gets dogpiled by a hundred CorpSec rentacops. You like to think of yourselves as the real capitalists of 2027—getting people what they need at a reasonable price. For your circle, the ultimate status symbol is cornering the market on a hot property: the only copy of the new KIDROCK bootleg, access to Malorian Industries' new heavy pistol, or the Virtuality code for a dynamite concert recording.

Rumor and hearsay are also an important part of MallBrat subculture, since the more you keep your finger on the pulse of your customers, the better you can supply them. Similarly, appearance and fashion are also important. If a MallBrat looks good, wears the right clothes, and always



sports the latest makeup style, you can bet he's scoring a big deal somewhere, and being a confidante or lover of that MallBrat is a sure way to get in on the action.

The corner of MallBrat culture is favors: paybacks for deals and things you've done for others. Money? You can get that anytime. But if a heavy corporate Solo owes you because you found him the chips for the new DeanArms 3000 genius gun, that's something special. Especially if you've got some nasty yogangers leaning on you. MallBrat favors run all through 2027 society, because everyone goes to the Mallplex at some time, and almost everyone needs something. *Giri* (the ancient Japanese concept of interlinking obligations) also fits into your worldview; sometimes you pay back favors to a third party, so that a friend of his will feel obligated to help your goboyos out in a pinch.

You and your MallBrat friends aren't big into yogangs exactly; the closest you come is creating "holding companies", in which several MallBrats join forces to pull off a really big score. If a holding company works well, it usually gets continued until something (like a CorpSec bust) pulls it apart. In really large Mallplexes, the most successful of your friends form into loose "trade associations" that resemble the old bootlegging gangs of the 1920's.

Your favorite flat-vid is *Risky Business*.

## Belonging

On the surface, most of the MallBrats you know are just collections of friends, cliques who hang out together at the malls. There is very little to keep anyone from joining, as long as they know someone else who is a MallBrat. To be anything more than a fringe member of a clique, or one of those aimless drifters who passes between cliques like a cork float, you'll need to be a lot more, have a lot more—access to a microfactory in an important store, knowledge of big shipments going through the Mallplex, or an idea for a really slick business proposition. At this point, one of the holding companies may approach you for a tentative merger; they'll see how well you pull off the deal, and let you in if you're a success.

Business being what it is, you don't hold grudges against someone who outdeals you. The only sure way to get thrown out of the MallBrats is to really screw someone over by turning them into CorpSec or store management. But considering most MallBrats have favors owed to them by the Megas and the Edgerunners, this is a very dangerous option.

## Allies & Enemies

MallBrats tend to get along with almost all the yogang types. Even the Megas respect you because MallBrats can get their hands on the latest weapons and armor. The Guardians don't know much about your business practices, so they don't squawk much; the GoldenKids and Glitters sometimes use you to get exclusive stuff that no amount of money can buy. You haven't got much use for the Goths and Tribals, and you think of the BeaverBrats as customers, not friends.

## Slang

**220:** very desirable date, prospect.

**Go Chapter 11:** to eliminate an enemy.

**Investment:** a hot prospect or deal.

**Lagger:** one who is unfashionable or out of date. Also a bad businessman.

**Office:** Usually the backroom or corner of the Mallplex where deals are made.

**Shiv:** fashionable, nice-looking.

**Slacked:** in trouble, ejected, beat up, arrested.

## Yogang Skill: Boost (NT)

Since you spend most of your life in a Mall, you know exactly how store security systems really work. *Boost* is your ability to nab or secure clothing, jewelry, weapons, gear, etc., without being observed, either by operating microfactories without tripping the production counters (Difficult), or by slipping a few items off the inventory computers (Average). You can spot a plainclothes detective a kilometer off (Easy); you know exactly where the hidden merchandise detectors are (Average), and you can slip a bulky package into your clothes in less than a nanosec (Difficult).

## If You're a MallBrat:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Personal Phone.
  - V-Term (computer/digital assistant).
  - Autofactory Override key (works 75% of the time).
    - Light Pistol.
    - Mirrorshades.
  - 20 V-Cards (like 3-D VCR tapes. Pick what's on them now).
    - Smart Decryptor (opens door locks).

# MEGAVIOLENT

"Just do it."  
 "Hot blood on a knife.  
 I like the sound of it."  
 "Let's get some  
 kicks."

Some juves say you're a MegaViolent because you like to cause pain, that you're a twisted sadist and a bully to boot. You know better; you're a Mega because violence is truth and pain makes you stronger. Like the StreetFighters, you live for battle, but not the wussy formalized battle of katas and forms and schools. You want to get right in the face of your enemy, using feet, fists, knives, chains—anything that carries risk and danger. You'll use guns if you have to, but you disdain anything that doesn't carry some risk of death, where you can't feel your enemy's breath in your face and his blood on your hands. Where your chance of dying is as good (or better) than his.

You collect obscure weapons like a GlitterKid collects clothes. Your heroes are Vikings and Attila the Hun. Your entertainments are things like the *Airborne Ranger* series, Chinese Triad pix, old flat-vids like *Rambo* and *Missing in Action*. When you run *Virtuality*, it's the *Klingon Deathsport Challenge* for you. (Those Klingon guys know the right way to live!) To you, it's simple: Life is battle. Battle proves you're alive. When the fury builds and the need to fight consumes you, you'll prowl the streets, looking for your natural adversaries. Guardians. Goths. StreetFighters. GoGangers. Even CorpSec. If you tackle a pack of Squats or "beaverbunnies", it's just to lure the real challengers in, to make them show their faces (the Guardians are always good for this tactic). The moment you get a real challenge, you dump the easy meat and settle down to work.

## What You Look Like

As a Mega, your gogangs are small, generally three to seven members each, and each gang develops its own unique "colors." All the members of your gang dress

similarly, in some strange costume that either accents nor lampoons their violent nature; for example, the all-girl Shredders of Boston dress head to toe in red when they go on a rampage, symbolic of the blood each member draws from others and sheds herself when the victims fight back.

Most MegaViolent costumery is a contrast in effete and violent: lipstick and combat boots, spikes and lace, things like that. You want to be noticed. You want them to attack you. You want the rush.

## Subculture

To be a true Mega, you need to be a combination of schizoid and psychotic, going out of your way to look for ways to get into battle. If you live at home you take pains to make sure your double life is kept secret from those you socialize with on a day-to-day basis: a sort of "Batman" with a heavy metal MegaViolent twist. But your goboys who live on the Street live in MegaViolent mode twenty-four hours a day.

What keeps you going is the adrenaline rush of combat. Any combat. The best battles are against a challenging foe, like the Guardians or the StreetFighters. But if a MegaViolent can't find a good fight, he'll pick a bad one, just to get high on the rush of clashing weapons and screaming bodies. You live for the day when you'll go down in a funeral pyre of blazing CorpSec weapons, your knife in a Trooper's throat and your guns blazing the way to some kind of high-tech Vahalla. In short, you're obsessed.

Within your MegaViolent gang, absolute fascism is the rule of the day. There's only one leader, who holds his position through charisma, skill, and a willingness to lash out at the blink of an eye. Naturally, those who are dissatisfied with the leader or others in the gang vent their frustrations in a similar manner. The tendency for disputes to be resolved after a few broken bones ensures that most MegaViolents are rather lenient toward others in their gang. Yet, you believe there is a kind of honor in the process; the strong survive, just like wolves in the wild.

Between gangs, warfare is constant; gangs constantly test each other to see who's better: Individual challenges quickly escalate into bloody street wars, and wars into blood feuds. Holding turf is a matter of being the best group of warriors around, and wars and duels are the only methods you and your goboys will accept to settle a conflict.



## Belonging

There are two ways to become a member of a MegaViolent yogang: be a friend or acquaintance of one of the gang, or get real gutsy and ask to join. Either way, expect a real rough initiation. MegaViolents give new members a severe thrashing, in part to determine whether they're tough enough to be part of the gang and take the punishment a warrior's life demands. (It also ensures that the new applicant understands that he's on the bottom of the pecking order.)

The applicant is expected to fight back, although, given the odds, he'll lose anyway. *Walk-ons*, those who ask to belong, had better fight back, because the MegaViolents certainly won't be pulling any punches. Occasionally weak or unlucky applicants (or those believed to be infiltrators of some kind) are crippled or killed during the initiation.

## Allies & Enemies

MegaViolents have no friends among yogang culture, other than fellow MegaViolents (who consider them opponents).

Everyone is leery of them, with the exception of the GoGangers, who are as close to neutral as it is possible to feel about a MegaViolent. The GoGangers at least understand the desire for action and mayhem, although they are not nearly as extreme as the MegaViolent gangs. Combat clans and Guardian gangs are the sworn enemies of MegaViolents. The Guardians hate them for their ruthlessness, and the StreetFighters loathe them because they use the weak as bait. Both gangs will light into a MegaViolent gang with no mercy. The MegaViolents realize this, and pull out all the stops for these brawls.

## Slang

**Chained:** corporate-sponsored.

**Choirboys:** Guardians or Streetfighters.

**Kinked:** to be crippled in combat.

**Nad:** respected MegaViolent.

**Ronco:** weapon, especially a knife.

**Scrum:** fight.

**Valhalla:** a really good death in battle.

## Yogang Skill: Berserk (REF)

You live for combat and the kill, and when the chance comes to go for it, you and your goboyos can instantly pump yourselves up to a killing fury that allows you to ignore pain, walking right through damage that would stop lesser

"mortal" creatures. You still take damage, but *subtract* your current *Berserk* Skill level from any Stun/Shock rolls you make. You also have an automatic +2 bonus to any hand-to-hand attacks you make while in this state.

## If You're a MegaViolent:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Heavy Armorjacket (AR 6) with your colors.
  - 3 fighting knives.
  - Heavy Pistol.
  - Battleglove with DC 5 crush, DC 4 punch, DC 5 Wolver.
  - Heavy Flack Pants (AR 6).
  - Submachinepistol.
  - Kendachi MonoKatana (DC6 AP).

"The Street-Fighters call us Nihilists. Maybe we are, hey? So what? Nihilism isn't a fad. For us, it's Reality. This world we live in is the toughest battleground ever. You have to be willing to fight to survive. We just make it an art form.

—Sha-Chack,  
MegaViolent

# Rad

"Overthrow the System!"

"Our agenda is clear, our targets identified."

"Let them run the show? Look where they've gotten us already!"

Perhaps the most intelligent of the yogangs (only Vidiots give them a run for the money), you and your fellow Radicals (or Rads) play the most dangerous game of all: fighting the corporate-government apparatus on its own terms. You're the top students in your classes at the corporate or public schools. You're the smart whiz-kids who do much more than regurgitate corporate-approved facts and opinions; you understand the material and dissect it for fun. Hard-bitten and cynical, you nonetheless believe you can use the Beast's strength against it; you endeavor to break the government over its own ironclad rules.

Rads believe that knowledge is understanding, not memorization. To that end you read voraciously, hold impromptu debates to shake out flaws in the media-sponsored agenda, and scrounge up books banned by the Incorporated Government. In school, you give hard-core, well plotted answers to patsy questions, answers that the instructors don't approve of, but that they can't deny. You above all ignore the formula teaching and the politically correct veils covering the Corporations' handiwork and cut to the quick.

## What You Look Like

As a Rad, you're quite an aberration among yogang culture; since you fight the system within the system, you have to dress the part. You stand out as post-modern yuppies among the throngs of leather-decked mohawks and cyberlinked techmongers. You make a point of appearing well groomed, well behaved, and well disciplined as part of

the "disinformation campaign" you're running. And when some office is firebombed and the cops are dragging away kids by the dozen, you and your Rad goboy always walk, because you have the responsible appearance and well-heeled demeanor that convinces the authorities that you couldn't possibly be involved in political terrorism.

Typically, you have nice clothes, though never too expensive. Streetboots are common, but combat boots, never. Slacks are much more prevalent than anything informal like jeans, and T-shirts are only worn under something with a collar. Rads also wear slickers or dusters to conceal their leaflets, flyers, thief equipment, and weapons. Rad outfits are always stylish; you like to stay two steps or so behind the current fashion frenzy just to avoid being trendy. This means that the clothes you wear are the more durable fashions, clothes which most Dead Boys find attractive, if somewhat unimaginative. It's all a part of the image the Rads seek to project. In short, the Rads don't look like they have a subculture. They are the culture.

## Subculture

Political pundits laughed when the first Radical PoliClubs were formed; they couldn't see mere jukes making any headway against the ISA by passing around petitions and organizing rallies. They figured that ten years hence, the Rads would be working for the system, still passing around petitions and organizing rallies. What they didn't realize was that the Rads were more observant than they gave them credit for. You and your yogangers have recognized that terrorism and blackmail are a part of the system now, and you won't hesitate to use these methods as well as more traditional methods.

Radical PoliClubs come in various sizes, from small teams of three to four working for some lunatic fringe to larger groups up to 300 strong, working statewide for a common goal. Generally, the more moderate and reasonable the goals of the PoliClubs, the more adherents it will have. The smallest Radical PoliClubs are those which attract the extremists: communists, fascists, and other such weirdos. As a Rad, you're dedicated to your Cause, and know that the most unforgivable sin you can commit is to let that cause down. If your PoliClub decides that one member isn't pulling his share, they'll start a psychwar against the miscreant until he either apologizes and mends his ways, or he leaves.

While you normally operate within the rules of the System, psychwar techniques are your primary tools when rallies, leaflets and petitions don't work. Fake car bombs that





release soap suds. M-80's in desk drawers. Paint balls shot at people or their cars. Time-delayed tapes of such songs as the Artificial Kids' "Hand of Fate" or the God-only-knows-how-old vinyl platter "Anticipation." All of these tactics are designed to let the victim know that he could be dead or maimed, but isn't ... yet. After a long bombardment of these tactics (or worse yet, an intermittent attack with gaps for the victim to think he's finally safe), you move in with your demands, promising peace if the target relents, or crippling injury if he holds out. Not fun people to cross, the Rads.

## Belonging

The PoliClubs are the only yogang that actually has petitioners take a real live bona fide test; you had to take it just like everyone else. They won't even give the test to someone who hasn't already attracted some attention in school for either intelligence or rebelliousness, or preferably both. The test is a measure of mental acuity, political sentiment, and the ability to see beyond the corporate facade. It's an essay test. One way to pass the test is to refuse to answer it the way they want, to interpret the questions in an entirely different manner. That'll show them that you have independence and intelligence. Another way to join the Rads is to launch a psychwar at one of their members. Do it well enough, and yes, you'll still have to take the test, but they'll be a lot more lenient in grading it.

## Allies & Enemies

The PoliClubs have cordial relations of sorts with the EcoRaiders, who at least share a common agenda of attacking the corporations. Since they move in different circles with different methods of operation, their activities normally don't overlap, and further, the two sides don't always approve of the other's methods. Nonetheless, the two factions will often swap information of use to the other, based on the enemy-of-my-enemy theory.

PoliClubs have a sincere respect for the Guardians, who take a more physical route towards improving the streets.

They also respect the StreetFighters as responsible, if politically inactive, citizens. The PoliClubs maintain good relations with the Vidiots, whom they use to help broadcast their beliefs, accusations, and other political projects. On occasion the Vidiots will smear the Rads, but they don't take offense at this; it's all a part of doing business. The PoliClubs prefer to keep relations congenial, because the Vidiots give them great rates in exchange for the privilege of doing the vids for some really meaty dirt the PoliClubs dug up.

The Rads' semi-formal attire makes them automatic targets for GoGangers, MegaViolents, and pretty much everyone else who doesn't dress as well. The Rads take teasing and harassment well, not lowering themselves to respond. With the MegaViolents, though, fights are common. For the Polis themselves, though, the real fight begins when they start plotting their terrorist revenge.

## Slang

**Ballot out:** to eliminate a political rival.

**The Beast:** the government, a corporation.

**Beastman:** a loyal corporate employee.

**Chrome:** high-profile corp, frontman, visible target.  
**Spunger:** yes-man, toady, someone unable to think for himself.

**Track:** as a noun, incriminating evidence; as a verb, to blackmail.

**Vote:** A decision, usually ending in someone's ballot being outed.

**Worm:** breaking and entering.

## Yogang Skill: Organize (INT)

As a Rad, you know that all power really resides in the People. So you've mastered the ability to *Organize*—to get the masses out in the streets when you need them, canvassing neighborhoods, putting up posters, coming to rallies. The greater your ability, the more people you can organize around a cause, rally or event (your Skill times 50). Political groups are also a great source for information, like having a million eyes throughout the city, telling you what the opposition is doing rather like a low-level (50%) equivalent to the Edgerunner skill of *Experience*.

## If You're a Rad:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Pocket Cellphone.
  - Personal V-Term (computer/digital assistant).
  - Armored Duster (SAR 5) with 20 pockets inside.
  - Paintball Gun with 10 acid loads, 20 paint loads and 10 sleepdrug loads.
  - 5 small (DC 6) explosives.
  - Light Handgun.
  - Tracker and 10 Tracer pins.

# SQUAT

"Get the frack outta my dumpster, drekwit!"  
 "Smell? What smell?"  
 "Got a buck?"

Homeless. Homeless and proud of it. You wouldn't have it any other way. Let the BeaverBrats and the so-called GoldenKids cower in their safe little boxes. Your home is the entire Street, and you pick a new room to hang in every night. You're a Squat, one of the shadows that lurks in the alleys and roots through the dumpsters. Most of you live right on the mean streets of 2027, although a few frequent the rooftops, stalking the sewers and rain ducts for food and fun. Whether a skywalker or dungeoncrawler, you all call yourselves Squats.

## What You Look Like

The very name Squat (or squatter) should evoke the total image. You disdain any uniform other than a ratty, filthy appearance. Dirt is good. Its many layers keep you warm and hide you from others. You don't need personal hygiene. You don't need showers or sinks; that's for people who are trapped indoors, chained to a conapt. Sure, puddles, ponds and lakes smell bad and have an oily sheen, but you don't need to wash much. You avoid rain, because it stings your eyes and, on a bad day, blisters your skin. Sometimes you'll crack open a fire hydrant or open a fire hose at a school or public building and hose each other off for a few minutes before the fire trucks arrive.

You don't change clothes much, since you don't have any money and you don't shoplift. So you wear whatever cast-off clothing you find in the trash. It might be filthy, ill-fitting, and threadbare, but it's also functional, and you think there's a style of sorts in the way you layer it on—about six layers is right for maximum protection and warmth. Your finest stuff you've taken off the bodies of people killed or injured in street fights—if you can get there before the Trauma Team does. They've got bullet holes and blood stains on them, but you don't mind. In fact, a really nasty piece of clothing is a status symbol among the Squats, and it also makes you look tougher (which is an added bonus on the Street).

Most of the time, though, you look and smell filthy. You wear your hair long, although some of your goboyos cut their mops ineptly with fighting knives. A Squat's hair is always stringy and greasy, 'cause you can never get hold of a decent shampoo when getting hosed off.

## Subculture

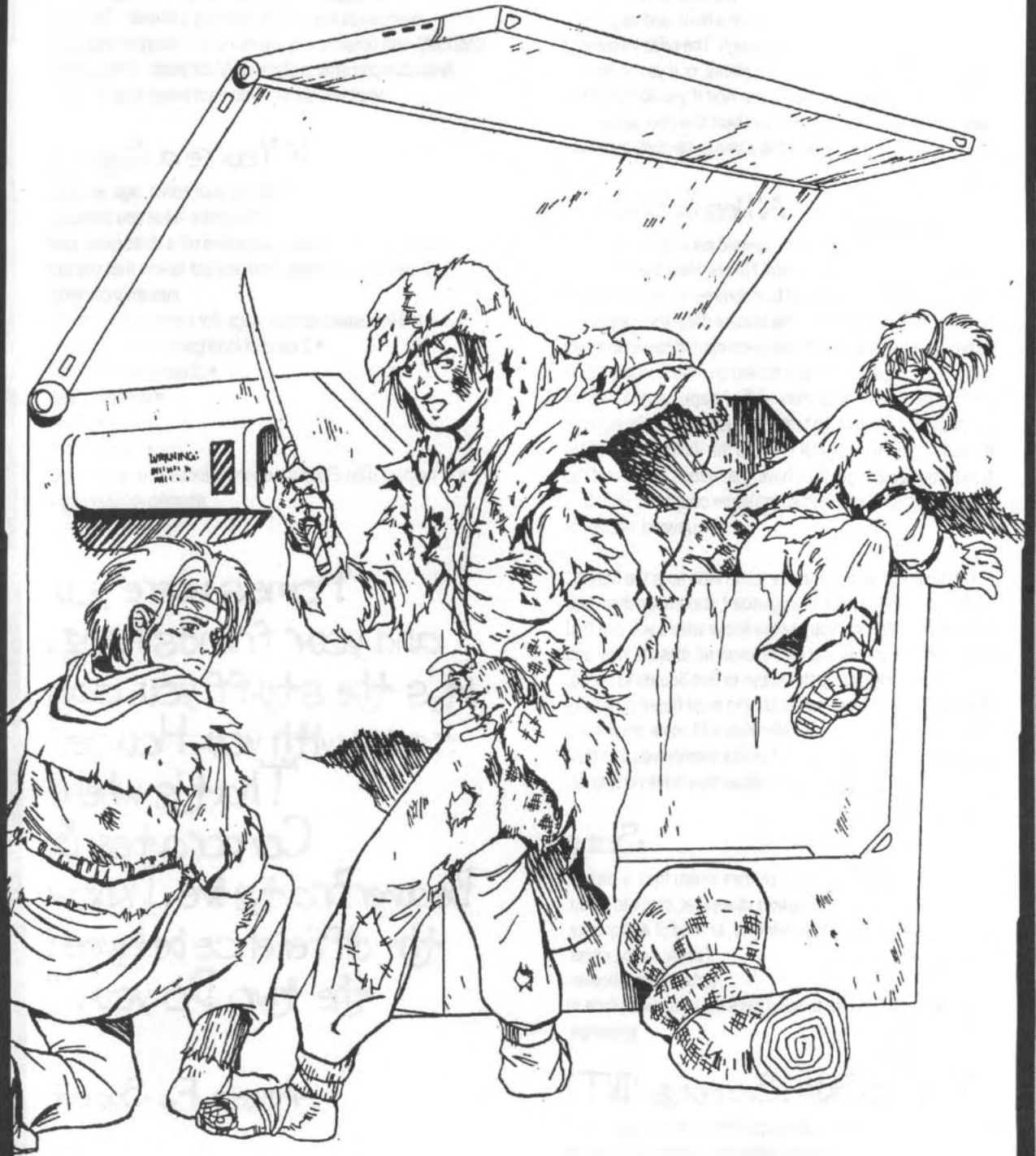
Squats are not so much a tightly knit yogang as a fraternity of jackals. You're survivors, and, to you, everything else is an enemy. Even other Squats will occasionally jump a claim or steal something from you, so everyone's careful not to be too trusting. You travel in packs, and back each other up in case of trouble. Often your numbers and appearance alone are enough to dissuade any troublemakers from pushing their luck, but usually if fists start flying, you can still hightail it to cover, vanishing in the urban wilderness.

Although you usually move in loose packs, Squats also operate individually, each scrounging in a different section of an alley, leaving the others to their own private finds. When they get the opportunity to build trust and camaraderie, a group of Squats will form a sort of family, and delegate work towards the greater good. Generally these families last until times get hard or a couple of MegaViolent gangs sweep the area putting the pressure on. When this happens, each Squat's natural survival reflexes take over, shattering the carefully built family ties. Your major income is made from scrounging, and this is little more than subsistence. Often you'll find useful bits of detritus which can be sold to Tinkertots, but that's a best case; if you got something which could lever you into a better economic lifestyle, other yogangs would hear about it, attack, and leave your yogang bleeding and penniless—as usual.

Braver Squats will resort to crime: purse snatching, pocket picking, burglary and such. You know some of these groups. These Squats are daring and generally have the force of will to form a more cohesive group than the typical Squat family. These crime gangs last as long as the leader does, which on occasion may be several years, before he gets busted by the authorities, killed by a victim, or thrown down by disaffected followers.

## Belonging

Once you hit the Street, you discovered that Squats are the easiest yogang to join. All you have to do is be homeless, and hang around with them in the alleys. Squats have an instinct, an awareness of what they term *The Hunger*. They can tell if you're homeless or if you're just a poseur. Hint:



don't slum with the Squats just for the heck of it. They like to clobber rich kids, which, for them, means anyone else.

There's really not that much more to being a Squat; either you are or you aren't. If you are, the others will back you against common foes like Goths on a hunt, and may share stuff with you if they have enough. The odds increase if you've been generous with your plenty, or if you've been a good pal and done some favors. And if you don't like the way someone's treating you, you beat the crap out of him. Expect the same to be done in return.

## Allies & Enemies

Squats have no friends, beyond each other. No other yogang associates with them. No one likes them. No one can cope with the funk of four summer weeks without a bath or change of clothes. The closest thing the Squats get to having allies are the Vidiots, who almost never do a bad story on the Squats (it's hard to find an inflammatory angle on the people at the bottom of the heap). Second, Squats often find interesting tidbits while mucking through the garbage, and they can sell these to the Vidiots. The Vids in turn recognize the utility of having someone else crawl the dumpsters for them, and so maintain congenial, if distant and upwind, relations.

On the down side, there are those who hate the Squats. After all, they're small, disorganized, undernourished, and poorly trained, and you always know where you can find them. MegaViolents and Goths know all these things, and regularly sweep the alleys to find Squats to abuse. Although those two yogangs are the most hated predators of the Squats, even jaded GoldenKids will come downtown at times to pick on those most unlike themselves. But hey, the Squats know they have no friends.

## Slang

**Bag:** blood-stained clothes stolen from a corpse.

**Diggin's:** dumpster, place to sleep.

**Dross:** good merchandise, or food of any quality.

**Fresh:** nasty, gross.

**Kriss:** bath, shower.

**Skag:** as a verb, to steal; as a noun, a good place to scrounge.

## Yogang Skill: Scrounge (NT)

You'd be *amazed* at the stuff people throw in the trash. As a Squat, you know that better than anyone; things no

GoldenKid would keep for ten minutes have a way of eventually wandering down to the dumpster level.

*Scrounging* is your ability to find a needed item by hitting the recycling bins and the trash. You can *always* find edible food (Easy), ragged but usable clothes (Average), useful electronics that can be fixed by a friendly TinkerTot (Difficult), and occasionally weapons off a body or that have been dumped after a black op (V.Difficult). *Scrounging's* what you do, and you do it better than *anyone*.

## If You're a Squat:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides the V-Trodes you pulled off a dead body, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - 20 mashed up trashbags (for carrying good stuff).
  - 2 cans of Flashpaint (light-emitting).
  - Sleep Pad (mattress).
  - Sleeping Bag.
  - Knife.
  - Taser pistol.
- Crowbar (3D6). Good for opening locked dumpsters and abandoned buildings.

'Home's where you  
and your friends hang.  
It's the stuff you can  
carry with you. House?  
That's where  
Corporates &  
BeaverBrats live. I know  
the difference between  
the two. Do you?"

—Angela F., Squat

# STREET FIGHTER

"Always ready."  
 "To try is to lose. To do is to win."  
 "Our minds are the weapon, our limbs the tools."

You became a StreetFighter because you didn't want to run with the yogangs. You needed something better, purer.

With purpose and honor. You found it by studying the martial arts. Maybe you studied under the old Asian guy who'd escaped the fall of HK back in the '90's, who taught kung fu to other kids in your square—not just the Asians, but everyone. Or the retired Solo who wanted to pass on what he'd learned before he got too old. It could have even been a local Guardian group that just got sick of patrolling the area and started handing out self-defense lessons. It didn't matter. You liked the discipline, order and training of the school. The traditions were something solid to hold onto in the chaos of the Street. After a while, you could kick the ass of almost anybody you crossed paths with; the word went around that while you weren't looking for trouble, when trouble found you, you were more than prepared to deal with the situation.

You never refer to your group as a *yogang*, that's a name used only for undisciplined streetscum without purpose or honor. You prefer to be known as a **school**, a **dojo**, or some other Asian variant, drawing from a long tradition of martial arts discipline. Others may use martial arts. But you know that only you and your fellow StreetFighters understand them.

## What You Look Like

The clothes you wear are always patterned after traditional martial arts training uniforms; you'd never actually wear your training uniform outside of the dojo, but your civilian clothes are designed for the same freedom of motion.

Sturdy and loose-fitting, often made of canvas or some other heavy fabric, the sleeves and leggings rarely extend

past the elbows or knees. You usually have a length of leather or rope wrapped around your waist (wearing a martial arts belt in public would be considered vulgar). You don't like pockets (things can fall out of them), so you carry your valuables in a fanny pack or belt pouch. You wear your hair short to keep it out of your eyes, or tie it back in a ponytail or with a headband. You wear rope slippers if you're a traditional type, or sneakers if you're not. Sometimes you lug along a gym bag for your training gear.

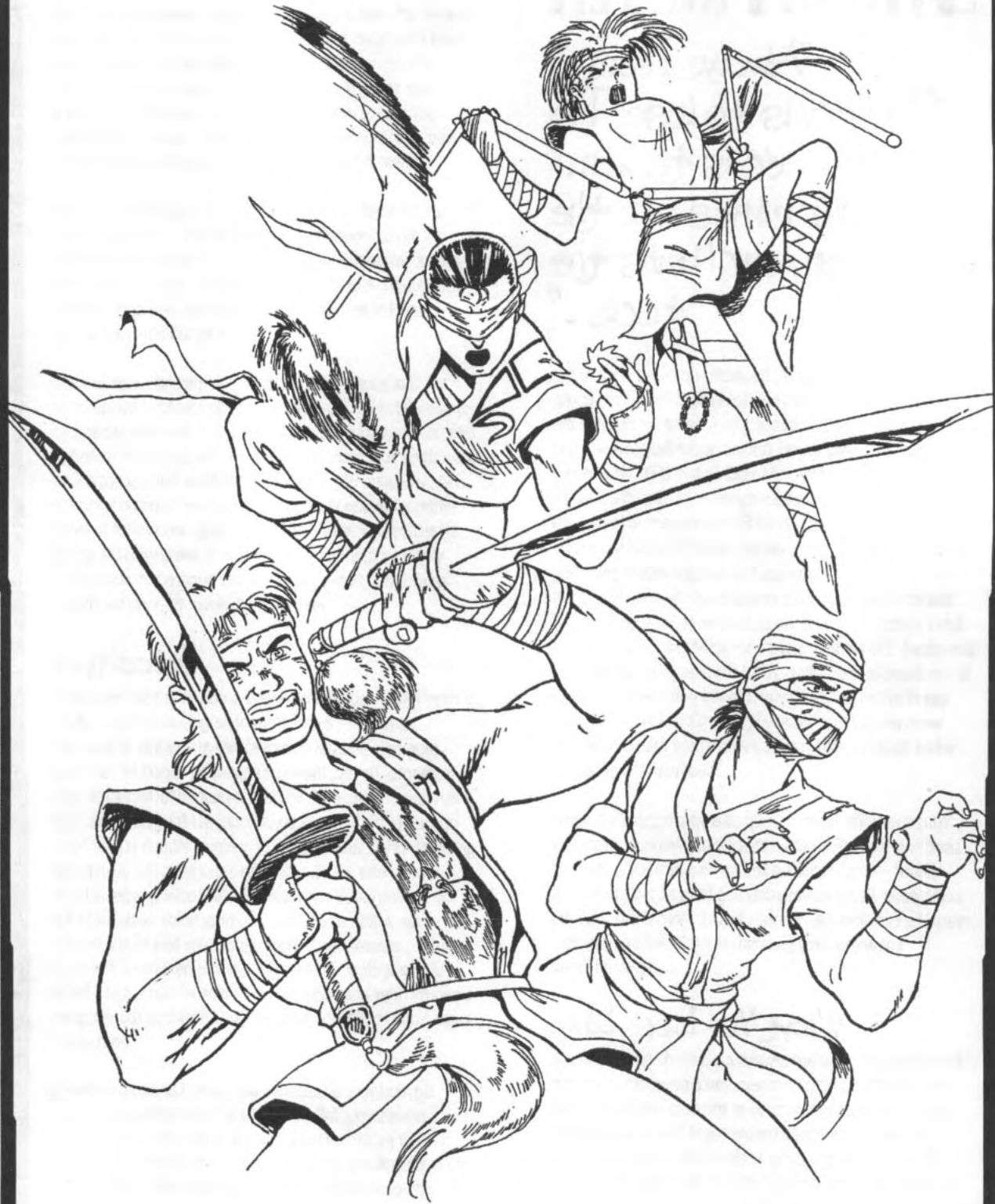
Some StreetFighters carry weapons. The ones that don't are more dangerous. As a StreetFighter, you particularly appreciate melee weapons for their beauty and fine lines. But you think guns are heavy-handed, clumsy, random, or even obscene. You never carry them, and destroy them whenever they fall into your hands.

Since each school has its own distinctive colors and symbols (usually a kanji character, an idealized image of an animal, or an abstract but artistic logo), you often wear it as a patch on your jackets or uniforms. The colors are muted or dark; you generally don't go for bright or fluorescent colors (although white is a common trim), and you don't need to advertise very hard. The local yogangs know that to mess with one member of a school is to mess with the entire school, and nobody wants a few hundred StreetFighters hunting them down through the alleys.

## Subculture

StreetFighter subculture centers around the training school: sometimes a corporate or neighborhood gym which members all attend; sometimes empty lots or deserted basements. To you, the most appealing aspect of your dojo is respect. Here, each student is pushed to better himself, pushed to his limits, and yet accepted for what he is. This gives you pride, and a desire to achieve. Within your school, senior belts are obeyed with deference, but even lower belts are treated with respect. The pecking order is tight; even within a belt rank, seniority holds sway, with the hidden assumption that someone who has held a belt for longer is closer to advancing to the next level. Although seniority rules are loosened up outside of class, it still holds sway. You accept that, because you know that respect goes both ways.

Beyond your obsession with martial arts and bettering yourselves, your fellow "students" vary wildly, depending on their individual backgrounds. Some of you hang out at the malls; others hit the beach, or hit the heavy metal clubs to hear local bands. You've all got your own interests, and



you follow them (but martial arts and the dojo always come first). With your simple lifestyle, you have little need for money, just enough to eat and keep going to classes. To help make ends meet, you sometimes will hire out as security for clubs, as bodyguards, or as self-defense instructors. You also tend to live together and eat a lot of common meals.

As a rule, you and your fellow StreetFighters dislike violence, which is why you so readily teach self defense. While you don't see yourselves as policemen (as do the Guardians), your school is known to intervene with frightening speed when you see someone getting picked on. You're your brother's keeper, as long as he's within line of sight. And while you won't go out of your way to patrol troublesome areas, you've been known to go to certain places (where streetword says a GoGang might pass) and just hang out. Seeing StreetFighters around has a bit of a dampening effect on violence and mayhem.

## Belonging

Joining the school was easy; StreetFighters are pretty accepting. The hard part was showing up, working out diligently, and earning a belt. In a few months you'd shown that you had the dedication and will to be a member of the school. By that time, the rest of the students already knew you, and you soon became a junior member of the clan. They began to show you more of the inner mysteries of the art you were studying, to correct your technique and help you maintain the proper attitude.

## Allies & Enemies

As a StreetFighter, you have few enemies. Since you don't look for violence, your only enemies are those who start trouble: MegaViolents and the GoGangers. And if there's trouble and a Guardian gang is involved, you can bet the Fighters will back them up pronto.

Things only get ugly when you encounter rival combat schools. In most cases, inter-school aggression is handled through ritualized tournaments and sparring matches. But sometimes it gets out of line, particularly if a former student leaves the school and sets up his own dojo nearby. Then the Street can explode in a series of bloody and brutal battles, in which each school attempts to decimate the other. The worst cases happen when rival schools are pushed into a conflict by local neighborhoods or become the pawns of warring Triad ganglords.

## Slang

**Bushi:** tough, hard-core.

**Claat:** StreetFighter.

**C.O.:** general purpose negative adjective meaning excessively bright, flashy, sweet, pat, etc.

**Dojo:** the School.

**Giri:** obligations, promises you must keep.

**Kata:** the way things are, the rules, the bureaucracy.

**Kick around:** to hang out, to meet, to have fun.

**San:** a term of respect. Usually after a name, like Smith-san.

**Sensei:** teacher; your Martial Arts master.

**Take:** to go to, move into.

**Triad:** a general term for members of the Asian Mafia. Also any organized crime figure.

## Yogang Skill:Kata (REF)

You've spent years perfecting your martial arts skills (described as you like). Now you've mastered the fundamental structure of your form: the kata that allows you to whip out blistering attacks at incredible speeds. It can be used in place of your *Streetfighting* skill in hand-to-hand combat (or melee combat, if you are using your martial art weapon). Exactly like the Edgerunner skill of *Hand-to-Hand Combat*, it also gives a bonus equal to your skill added to the 1D10 die roll for damage on the Wounds Table (pg. 152) in any hand to hand combat. You will also have a +2 to Hit advantage with any two types of move (spinning kick, thrusting punch, etc.). The description of this move and its function are up to you.

## If You're a StreetFighter:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - 4 Shuriken (DC 1).
  - Tonfa (DC 5).
  - Nunchaku (DC 5).
  - Kendachi Monokatana (DC 6 AP).
  - Kendachi Monotanto (DC 4 AP).
  - Gymbag.
  - Copy of Tao Te Ching or other Eastern philosophy book.
  - V-Card with virtual Sparring Partner (REF 6, Kata Skill +7).

"You've had it, dirtbag! Hiya!"

—Jason Red, Streetfighter



# TINKER TOT

"Of course it's safe  
—trust me."  
"You can't work  
without the proper  
tools. So we make the  
proper tools."  
"And only one nut left  
over!"

You're a TinkerTot, one of the budding young engineers and technicians of 2027 yogang culture. In a world where most other juves are trying to come to grips with how society works, your yogang seeks an understanding of purely inanimate objects. You absolutely have to understand not just how things work, but why. You have an instinctive grasp of the laws of physics and even cybertech (to you the human body is just another machine). You're one of the kids who rip apart boomboxes to make PA systems, kitbash go-karts when you can't steal the car keys, and invent a new gizmo every other week. You're the street mechanics and Weird Scientists of yogang culture. If a yogang needs it done, you can do it. Especially if it's ... weird.

## What You Look Like

As a TinkerTot, you dress like a mechanic—overalls, flight suits and coveralls are the bottom line. Always ready to work, TinkerTots typically have some sort of strange headgear on, the most visible mark of their chosen avocation. Head lamps, high-power magnifying goggles, infrared specs, and other such paraphernalia adorn the skulls of TinkerTots. You carry bandoliers of tools, wrenches and hammers and picks (the larger ones occasionally sporting dark stains or bits of gristle and hair attesting to their twin usage). Smaller tools are stuffed in pockets or in pouches dangling from belts, or are secured by straps to the TinkerTot's arms and legs. Maybe other yogangers don't think wearing tool kits is cool, but your fellow Tinkers have

managed to pull it off (you, of course, maintain that it's merely for accessibility, since admitting that you want to look cool would definitely be non-mechanical). TinkerTots sometimes carry around backpacks with their larger or more delicate tools and analytical devices: electrical probes, precision calipers, boxes of extra screws and bolts and wires. You've heard about one TinkerTot from Colorado who mounted a small microfactory shop with miniature lathes, drills, and other power tools necessary to his profession on a go-cart. But that's really extreme.

Beneath all the tools and affectations, you dress conservatively. Typical clothes are blue jeans and sweatshirts with the logos of tech schools; TinkerTots don't spend their money on fashion. Having bland clothing also means you don't think twice about crawling under a greasy car to defuse a bomb or something. But while your clothes may be in need of an industrial-strength degreaser, your tools are always spotless.

## Subculture

As a result of your mechanically oriented thought patterns, you and your fellow TinkerTots (especially the ones that specialize in small or delicate work) are the closest thing to loners in the yogang subculture. Let's face it, you know there is no room for an assistant when you're working on a circuit board. Instead, TinkerTots have an extensive grapevine through which they can find others with needed specializations, tools, or expertise, which TinkerTots loan each other freely. TinkerTots don't keep a ledger of these debts, but there exists a kind of group consensus which lets everyone know whether any given TinkerTot is giving out significantly less than he's taking in. While no one expects you to go into the red as far as favors go, in the long term a TinkerTot's contributions and needs should balance out.

Those who consistently do not contribute as much to the gang as they take from it are ostracized, and will find their sources drying up. If the situation persists, the TinkerTot will officially be cut off. A cut-off TinkerTot will have to be extra generous with his time, tools, and experience for at least six months before he can get back into the yogang's graces.

Working on strange devices or solving unusual problems is the major way to gain respect among your group, so a display of these devices or solutions is a common social event among the TinkerTots. Aside from serving to give the host more prestige among your goboyos, these events bring you together as a close-knit, interconnected group, as TinkerTots with the same interests get together from



around the city to see what new and exciting stuff they can learn about. Furthermore, these impromptu "seminars" allow for the free and rapid dissemination of ideas, solutions, or data on new technology, and, although not planned that way, are the major means of sharing information among the TinkerTots. Everyone who attends comes away with a better education.

You and your fellow TinkerTots keep yourselves afloat by doing the technical work required by the other juves. This ranges from the Easy (removing serial numbers from stolen merchandise), through the more Difficult (accurizing a firearm), to the downright strange (going with a group on a run and rigging the toilet to shoot out from the wall when flushed). You exact payment either in cash or, preferably, merchandise. TinkerTots also readily refer customers to other TinkerTots if they themselves are too busy or don't understand the technology involved. Again, these referrals fall under the favors owed/favors paid network of the TinkerTot grapevine.

### Belonging

As you found out, anyone can be a TinkerTot just by working on mechanical devices to the exclusion of all else. A lot of TinkerTots are misfits themselves, so they're a lot more tolerant of weirdos and outsiders trying to horn in. To be one of the truly accepted, though, you must contribute yourself and your stuff, volunteering whenever possible, and demonstrate that you do good work. The quickest path to acceptance is either to steal something of cutting-edge technology, or to invent something that is really wild and then hold a "seminar." Instant status.

### Allies & Enemies

As a general rule among yogangs, TinkerTots are treated with the same sort of neutral respect accorded to the Swiss. Everyone needs you occasionally, and you always come through. It's too easy to find a lone Tinker and beat the crap out of him, so fighting is no challenge; in fact, beating up on a TinkerTot is a sure way to prove to other yogangers that you're a real loser. You try to promote this image, because it means you get beat up less often.

The only yogangers who regularly ignore this taboo are the MegaViolents. When beset by these sociopaths, you and your TinkerTot goboy do fight back (as some of your bloody tools can attest), although you almost invariably lose.

TinkerTots themselves prefer to fight with their chosen weapons of technology. Should anyone become too much

of a threat, you arrange for an "accident" to nail the perpetrator. You do this as quietly as possible, because were word to get out, it would tarnish your TinkerTot-as-wimp image.

The strongest allies of the TinkerTots are the ArcoRunners, who are always game to test out new inventions—sometimes with catastrophic results. But the risk is a part of the fun, so they don't mind. The Vidiots need TinkerTots to keep their equipment up and running, so your two gangs also have good relations.

### Slang

**Babe:** secret or private project.

**Kludge:** the ultimate TinkerTot insult.

**Owez'n:** TinkerTot who doesn't contribute enough.

**Sem:** seminar; meeting where Tinkers gather to exchange information.

**Spares:** something that isn't useful by itself, but could be adapted. Also a boring person.

**Tex:** cool, great, tough (from techs, not Texas).

**Wha's rattlin'?:** What's up? What's the problem? How are things?

### Yogang Skill: Kitbash (TECH)

As a TinkerTot, you live to come up with strange new uses for all the wonderful technology that's all around you. To improve something is Easy; to alter it to a new use is an Average task to you. To combine several things or invent simple gadgets is a bit more Difficult, and your major inventions may be Very Difficult or Impossible to construct. But you love the challenge, and you wouldn't join any other kind of yogang. To you, the world's all just a spare parts box waiting to be explored.

### If You're a Tinker Tot:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-Trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Techscanner (small analyzer with 80% accuracy).
  - Tech Tool Kit (mixed tools and torch).
  - DataTap (link to datalines).
  - Snoopbox (privacy scanner).
  - SmartGoggles (vision aids).
  - Really *big* Spanner (wrench with DC 4 damage).

## TRIBAL

"In the Dance is Truth"  
 "The Earth is our  
 Mother. Technology is  
 our Father. Both must  
 learn to live together in  
 peace."  
 "Keep on truckin' ..."

As a Tribal, you have a long and illustrious history dating from the hippies of the 1960's, through the Deadheads of the seventies and eighties, straight to the early men's movement of the nineties (abruptly cut short by the Collapse). You believe that technological Man has lost touch with what really counts: the rhythms of Nature, the community of the Tribe, and the inner mysteries of Native American shamanism. Yet you also realize that technology has given Mankind the cure for smallpox, computerized teaching systems, and toxic soil scrubbers. So you have tried to bring both sides of this heritage together in one place: the extended family you call the Tribe.

Over the last decade, your historical roots have fused to create the Tribal culture: a semi-nomadic existence centered around recreated Amerind ritual and traditional farming techniques adapted to urban living. Your Tribe rules the new wilderness: the rooftops of the megacity, now covered with dirt and put to use as organic farms; abandoned Mallplexes and Arcos that have been turned into smokehouses and temples. Your belief in restoring Nature gives you a lot in common with the EcoRaiders, but you don't mix very often, since the Raiders consider your sacred customs to be a lot of superstitious primitivism.

Some of you are actually Native Americans still holding onto and adapting your culture to the Street; others are beaverville escapees who are fascinated with tribal ways and folklores. All of you share two things in common: a respect for the nomadic tradition, and a belief that when technological man destroys himself, you're going to be the only people left.

## What You Look Like

You and your Tribal goboys want to get back to the basics, to the Earth and natural things. To that end, you wear only simple, organic clothing: mostly leathers, coarse woven shirts, heavy denim jeans or buckskin pants, and a fringed, decorated medicine bag to hold your important totems and shamanistic tools. Moccasins are your chosen footwear (if you wear any at all), and making your own pair is one of the rituals required to join a Tribe. The outfit is unisex, but women have been known to wear short fringed leather skirts instead of pants. Feathers, beads, weavings and carved wooden tokens are optional, and you're never far from your medicine drums and long pipes. You rarely wear body armor, because you don't often fight at close range, preferring your long rifles and bows (computer designed, these laminated versions of the old designs are as deadly as modern weapons, but far sturdier).

## Subculture

Tribals are the heirs of the Deadheads and hippies of the previous century, a post-modern primitive culture, tribal in nature, reinforced by a strong Native American center. Your social life centers around recreations of the smokehouse, the hunting lodge and the Dancer's Circle and on hunting and raiding parties against other yogangs to secure territory or retaliate for their attacks. As a Tribal, you live in tipis, ride cyberbikes instead of horses, and combine psychedelic bodypainting and warpaint as decoration. The oldest members of the Tribe become Chieftains, and the wisest become Shamen. A smattering of technology supports Tribal culture; computers are used to calculate both crop cycles and the times of ritual. You use extremely sophisticated toxin scrubbers and hydroponic systems to establish your rooftop gardens, where you grow maize, wheat and squash. Tribal longbows are computer designed, but based on traditional Amerind materials. Huge, booming medicine drums are used side by side with modern synthesizers and electronic guitars.

Your most important ritual is the Dancer's Circle, a combination of rock concert and wardance that takes its sources from old Grateful Dead gigs and real Native American dances. The Circle is used to get the Tribe "up" for important decisions, wars with other yogangs, and as a form of mutual sharing. It lasts for hours, a primal sort of "bonding" engendered by close, sweaty and often painful physical slamdance-like contact as each Tribal undergoes a personal vision of the Dance. Ritual drugs like peyote and mescaline are also



sometimes part of the Dance, although this is rare and usually restricted to the Shamen of the Tribe.

Your other important ritual is counting coup: raiding an area where another yogang or Tribe is based, and thwacking their warriors over the head with elaborately decorated sticks. Your coup sticks combine technology with tradition: They are powerful tasers that render the victim paralyzed. Tribals gain status by stunning their enemies into submission, not killing them. Occasionally you'll raid the Corpzone, just to put up a few CorpSec "scalps" on your belt; it proves how much better you are than the soulless automatons of the Corporate overlords.

### Belonging

Tribals are very open to new members, especially to lost children and homeless females. All you have to do is show respect for the Tribe's traditions and for each other. Once in, you may elect to try and join a war party (both men and women are accepted) or a medicine circle. Both require dedication and innate toughness: Warriors must be able to master the longbow and stalking skills; Shamen must learn all of the various herbal remedies and rituals. The culmination of this process is the Spirit Journey, in which the lone Warrior or Shaman must travel deep within the Wilderness (read: the worst of the Combat or Corpzones) to recover a useful item or piece of knowledge for the Tribe. This could be a new medicine, a stash of equipment, a new place for the Tribe to settle, or any other valuable asset.

### Allies & Enemies

Tribals have no taste for GlitterKids, GoldenKids, MallBrats, or Facers, all of whom they consider to be shallow and greedy. They absolutely hate Goths, whom they view as undead and unclean spirits; they will avoid or attempt to kill any Goth they meet. Oddly enough, Tribals respect the MegaViolents, Guardians and StreetFighters equally, considering them all to be following a warrior ethic not all that unlike their own. The Guardians and the StreetFighters are only annoyed by the practice of counting coup, but the Megas are positively enraged, because it deprives them of the battle and blood they crave.

### Slang

**Appaloosa:** your personal cyberbike; your "horse."

**Coyote:** a clever and devious foe.

**Evil Spirits:** Goths. Sometimes really bad Corporates.

**Long Dance:** not getting to the point. Obscuring the subject.

**Medicine:** karma, fate. Magic.

**Warrior:** any fighter you respect.

**Wilderness:** the inner city. A place where technological man lives.

### Yogang Skill: Warrior (REF)

Like the Native Americans of old, you too have mastered the art of using the **longbow** to hunt game (and other warriors). You are also skilled at counting **coup** on your enemies, striking them into submission without using lethal force. This skill combines both of these abilities, giving you the ability to defend the Tribe with honor and bravery.

### If You're a Tribal

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - Cougar Longbow (DC 7).
  - 50m SuperString climbing rope.
  - Coup Stick (stun).
  - Medicine Drum.
  - Medicine Pipe.
  - Norwolf Rifle.
  - Tracker & Tracer pins.
  - Apache Cyberbike.

"It was inevitable that the Counterculture and the Native Americans would join forces along the way. What amazes me is that it took so long"

—Cody Redfox

Shaman, New Dakota Tribals

# VIDIOT

"They think we don't know. They're wrong"  
 "We're goin' on live and direct from your garbage can!"

For countless generations, adults have thought they could talk around the juves and they couldn't hear or understand. They were wrong; kids always eavesdrop (this, of course, is how they get most of their information). But things have changed an awful lot over the last decade. Parents spend a lot less time around their kids in 2027 than they used to. A lot of juves are now raised in corporate crèches. It's a little harder to eavesdrop than it used to be. A kid's got to hunt down opportunities ...

That's why you became a Vidiot, the yogang equivalent of a pirate media, gathering information and disseminating it to the yogang culture. You're the natural evolutionary step from gossips and rumormongers, with the technical wizardry and creativity to compile sounds and images in a compelling and artistic fashion. You get to the truth, and take it to the Street. The tag "Vidiot" spans the whole gamut of the yogang media circus, from the air duct-crawling field correspondent who listens in on boardroom meetings, to the vid-splicing editing technomage, to the freewheeling techbasher who distributes chips to the other kids and breaks into the local mallboards and reprograms them to run the new show. Your goboys are perhaps the most diverse of all yogangs, because it takes a team made of varying talents and styles to pry the truth from the closed minds of the Dead Boys (a term the Vidiots coined to describe adults) and parlay that knowledge into a biting multimedia presentation. Your goboys are always alert, always scanning, but it is an awareness born not of paranoia, but of the predator's interest in his surroundings. There are a million stories in the big city, and your Vidiot pals intend to hunt down each and every one.

## What You Look Like

You and your Vidiot goboys prefer utilitarian clothing, like colorful jumpsuits with lots of pockets for pens, shotgun

mikes, taps, probes, discs, chips, and microcams. Most of you also carry a utility belt or military web harness to handle their bulkier tools and kits. Larger and better organized Vidiot yogangs carry cellphones or voice-activated radio mikes for quick intercommunication; those without must make do with runners or regular phone calls. Netrunning is another option for communications and pirating (although more dangerous), so 'trode-driven cyberdecks are not uncommon.

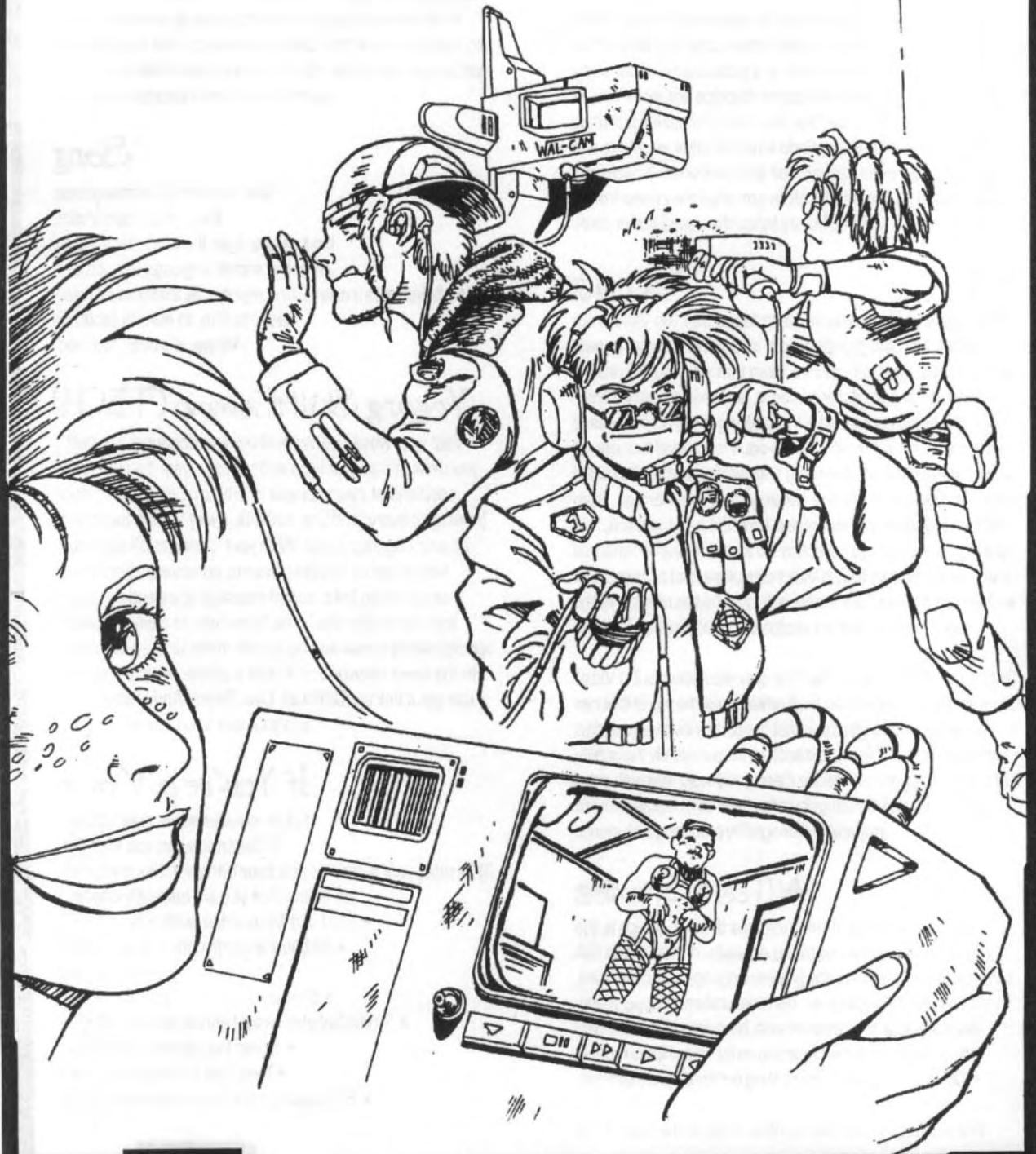
You consider yourself an artist, and display your creative bent by decking out your jumpsuits with flashy logos, patches, and stencils. You wear your hair wildstyle, the more bizarre the better. Pierced body parts and tattoos are also common. Because you often spend time crawling into maintenance panels or spying on adults, knee and elbow pads are not an uncommon affectation.

## Subculture

Each Vidiot gang has its own name and particular tag with which it identifies itself to other Vidiot gangs. The *Muckrakers* of Atlanta, for example, dye their clothes brown from the knee down, to symbolize that which they wade through every day to bring the worst of King Gardener to the populace. The *Casters* of Albuquerque all have a large red teardrop tattoo below their right eye. Cincinnati's *Net 1-4U* gang opts for the standard colors approach, covering their backs with a parody of the Net 54 logo. Your Vidiot gang has its own jumpsuits and logos, and you delight in showing them off any chance you can get.

Further, most Vidiot gangs have a specialty or bent: a certain category of story they preferentially cover. The *Muckrakers* focus primarily on Dixie politics, for example, and the *Casters* on sports, violence, death, and war, which they view as extremes of the same spectrum. In larger cities Vidiot gangs become more focused, more specialized, and they pass each other leads which they themselves are not willing or able to take. You and your goboys hunt knowledge for its own sake, and rarely interact with a story in the making. You see yourselves as cerebral, not physical; if you came across a gang of *MegaViolents* attacking someone, you wouldn't intervene: you'd tape the crime, broadcast it and let the *Guardians* and *StreetFighters* hunt the *Megs* down. Other yogangers think this makes Vidiots a bunch of sissies and sensationalists, but loudly voicing such attitudes often leads to interesting exposés on the offender.

Your fellow Vidiots have developed a secret language of gestures with which you can all communicate secretly. This





language can be concealed in fancy handshakes or artistic gesticulations, and is essential for communicating secretly in front of the Dead Boys, and in coordinating recording without interrupting the soundtrack. You can carry on two conversations at once: one a meaningless but colorful banal verbal dialog, the other with your hands.

Vidiots keep themselves in equipment through theft, scrounging, and sale of their information and talent. You often broadcast your stories as a public service, but some Vidiot gangs also compile stories on chips and sell them as catalogs of information. You also hire yourselves out to do music videos and propaganda films for other yogangs, and anyone who needs background information on a particular corporation or person can often get what they need from a Vidiot's library (once the usage fee is paid).

## Belonging

Although you got in, you've since found that the Vidiots are one of the hardest groups to join in yogang culture. To gain entrance, you had to convince them that you had the artistic creativity, the predator's insight, and the technical know-how. Once you convinced a Vidiot gang that you possessed all three (showing them a home-spun incomprehensible art vid is a good way, but donating your equipment to the cause was even better), you were taken on as an apprentice. From there they taught you the ropes, how the gang worked, and the gesture language (which is very hard to learn). Personal initiative counts very high in Vidiot subculture, and an apprentice will be considered a full member only once he has mastery of the sign language and has produced a good piece on his own.

Once in, a Vidiot is in for life. The only exception is if a Vidiot turns coat to the authorities. In all other cases, the worst that can happen in a Vidiot dispute is that the parties involved will do a barrage of attack vids against each other, but usually the quality of the work degrades so fast in these proxy wars that both sides abandon the struggle before their own reputations are irreparably damaged by producing junk works.

## Allies & Enemies

The true nemesis of the Vidiots is the ISA, which is the target of your most devastating exposés. It's thanks to ISA corporate persecution that the gesture language was developed, and also why Vidiot gangs are not more uniform in appearance.

Regular police, on the other hand, have no problem with the Vidiots, because the average cop on the street loves nothing better than to see CorpSec hung out to dry every so often.

You and your Vidiot friends often step on the toes of the

Golden- and GlitterKids, smearing their pristine noses in the mud of their lifestyles; you also mess with the MegaViolents, proudly displaying their violent tendencies for all to see and abhor. These yogangs more than other have reason to hate you, although every yogang has found themselves on the receiving end of a Vidiot story more than once. Since everyone else gets their turn in the hot seat, and since the most common target is the corporate government, other yogangers still treat the Vidiots with respect, if not friendship (it's hard to really be a close ally of a yogang that sniffed around your garbage can at an inopportune moment).

## Slang

**Cut:** finished broadcast piece.

**Dap:** ritual handshake.

**Go to tape:** I got the story, let's leave.

**Jive:** the secret language of gestures.

**60 Minute:** as a noun, a field reporter; as a verb, to infiltrate.

**Rave:** to film, to edit, to produce.

**Wrap:** it's over, finished.

## Yogang Skill: Commo (TECH)

"Vast interwoven network of communications', my butt", you think. It's all just links and wires to you. You know the positions of every comsat in orbit at a moment's notice (Average); every land line, cell link, every V-term location is at your fingertip (Easy). With your *Commo* skill you know how to set up hidden cameras, communications lines, secret radio links, coded message lines and data taps anywhere (Average). You know how to eavesdrop with special microphones and rig hidden video links to broadcast to the news networks; if it uses a phone or a camera, you can get a link up (Difficult). Live. Direct. And in your face! (Do you care to comment, sucker?)

## If You're a Vidiot:

- 1) Tell me your name, age and sex.
- 2) Describe what you look like.
- 3) Besides your V-trodes, pick **four** different things from the list below that you are currently carrying:
  - 3-D Field Microvideo (with V-term Links).
  - 50 blank V-cards with V-programmer.
    - DataTap (dataline wiretapper).
    - Snoobox (personal privacy device).
  - Smart Goggles (visual enhancement goggles).
    - Smart Decryptor (lock opener).
    - Tech Tool Kit (assorted tools).
  - 50 Datachips (pick what's on them now).

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## MORGAN AGAIN

▼ Hmmm. We got a real sorry buncha juves here. Not enough weapons to make a stand, and not enough contacts to put CorpSec off your trail.

▼ I just accessed the Virtual DataNet while you were working; it doesn't look good. It's going to be at least two days till the Street's gonna cool off enough for you to show your faces; CorpSec is combing the area right now looking for you. I've delayed them a while by scrambling their communications, but it won't work forever.

▼ Grab your stuff. I'm gonna sneak you out to a safehouse, a place where CorpSec'll never look. It's not too far from here, and if you keep your brains out of your jockstraps (sorry, femjuves), you oughta make it no problem. But I'm warning you; try to play hero, and I promise you'll have every heavily armed CorpSec goon in the City right down on your butt. They're armed to the cyberteeth, they'll shoot to kill, and they won't bother to check your IDs first. That includes any of you Goldenkids or Glitters who think you'll walk this one. CorpSec doesn't care. They don't have to care—even your parents can't buck the System that far. CorpSec owns this country.

▼ I'm going to hardcopy a map to you now. If you get grabbed along the way, tear it in half and it'll destroy itself. If one of you gets grabbed, the rest of you keep moving; you're not the only juves we're shuffling through tonight. The rest of the Organization's working overtime to beat this CorpSec bust. We never thought they'd go this far—rounding up an entire block fulla juves.

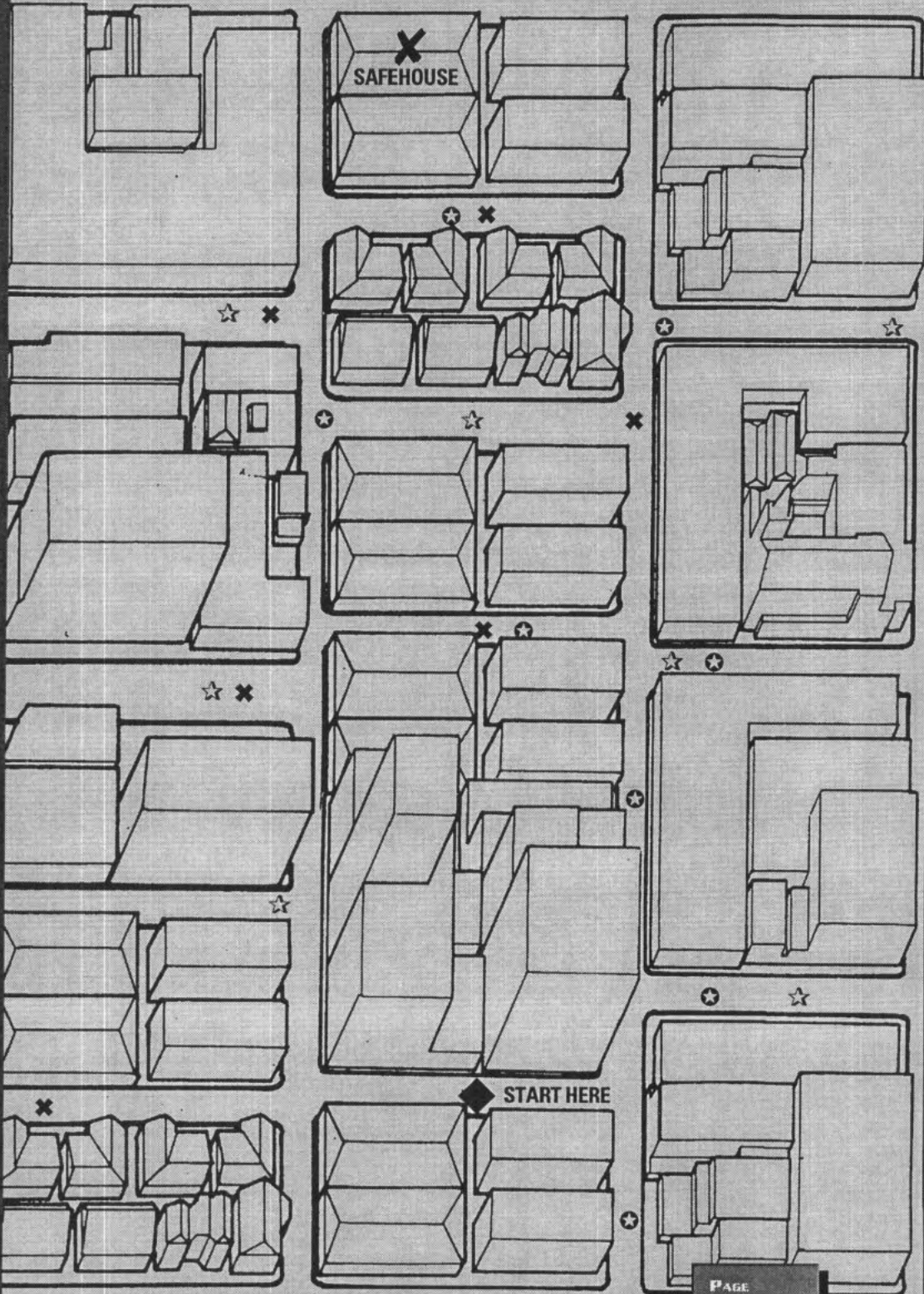
▼ I bet some of you bright boys are thinking, "Hey, why should I trust this guy? He's just a Virtuality sim. This could be a trap." I got one thing to say to you: In five minutes, the CorpSec armor's gonna be crawling this corner like fleas. You think you got any choice?

▼ Enough talk. Here's the map. Move! ▼▼▼ [END]

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# INTERLUDE

## DON'T READ THIS ALOUD!

*Hi there, Referee. By now you've gotten your players to choose what their character types are. They also have an idea of their names, sexes, ages, etc. They even know what they're carrying with them.*

*Your hard-core players are going to want to know their "stats"—you know, those numerical values that rate the abilities of their characters?—right now. They'll want to whip out the dice and start rolling. Stop 'em. They don't need to know their stats at the moment. Right now, their first goal is to get to the safehouse. That's going to involve using their heads, not their stats.*

*Unless they do something really stupid like standing in front of a CorpSec spinner and yelling, "HEY, PIGFACE! YEAH, YOU! COMMERE!", CorpSec will not nail them. However, if they dawdle, it's fair for the CorpSec guys to attempt to shoot at them. They can't outrun a genius gun no matter how tough they are. Their characters will get captured if they loaf around or stand and fight. At that point they can come up with a new character and you can place it in the safehouse as one of the other kids Morgan's led there. And let that be a lesson to 'em, right?*

*Right now, you want to get them to the safehouse, scared but safe. Make it simple. There are three kinds of marks on the map Morgan gave them. Pick one to represent CorpSec Squads; which one is up to you. At each chosen mark on the map, your players will run into a CorpSec patrol. After a while, even they'll realize that some marks mean CorpSec and others mean nothing. They'll either go another way or sneak by. And they'll be using their heads, not their stats.*

*Push the atmosphere: smoky, wet alleys, garbage everywhere, flashing lights of the heavily armored CorpSec cars and spinners overhead. More than anything, you want your players to get a feeling for the trouble they're in, and to practice a little working as a team.*

*Good Luck!*

## The Rules of the Run

• **GOAL:** The players need to get past CorpSec units stationed along the streets and safely reach the Safehouse. To do this, they must move along the streets of the city toward their goal. It is permissible to move through alleys as well as streets, but remember that at any place where you cross a street where CorpSec units are placed, they will have a chance to spot you. You may not move through buildings. All buildings are considered to be "locked down" for the night; doors and windows are barricaded by unbreakable glass and steel shutters (this is, after all, the downtown of the Dark Future).

• **SETUP:** As Referee, start by choosing one of the three symbols listed [☆ ☉ ✖] to represent your CorpSec teams. Choose your symbol in secret, and don't let the players know. Each CorpSec Unit consists of ten men. They are armed with tasers and armored in Heavy Body armor. Stress to your players that attacking a CorpSec unit will mean that they will *automatically* be spotted and all be shot at each turn until they move away from the CorpSec unit.

• **SPOTTING:** CorpSec units automatically see down all sides of any street they are placed on. Any time the players cross a street on which a CorpSec unit is located (even if they come out of an alley) the unit will spot the players on a roll of 1 or 2 on a 1D6 roll. CorpSec units will *not* pursue—instead, they will stay in position and radio other units to be on the lookout for the players.

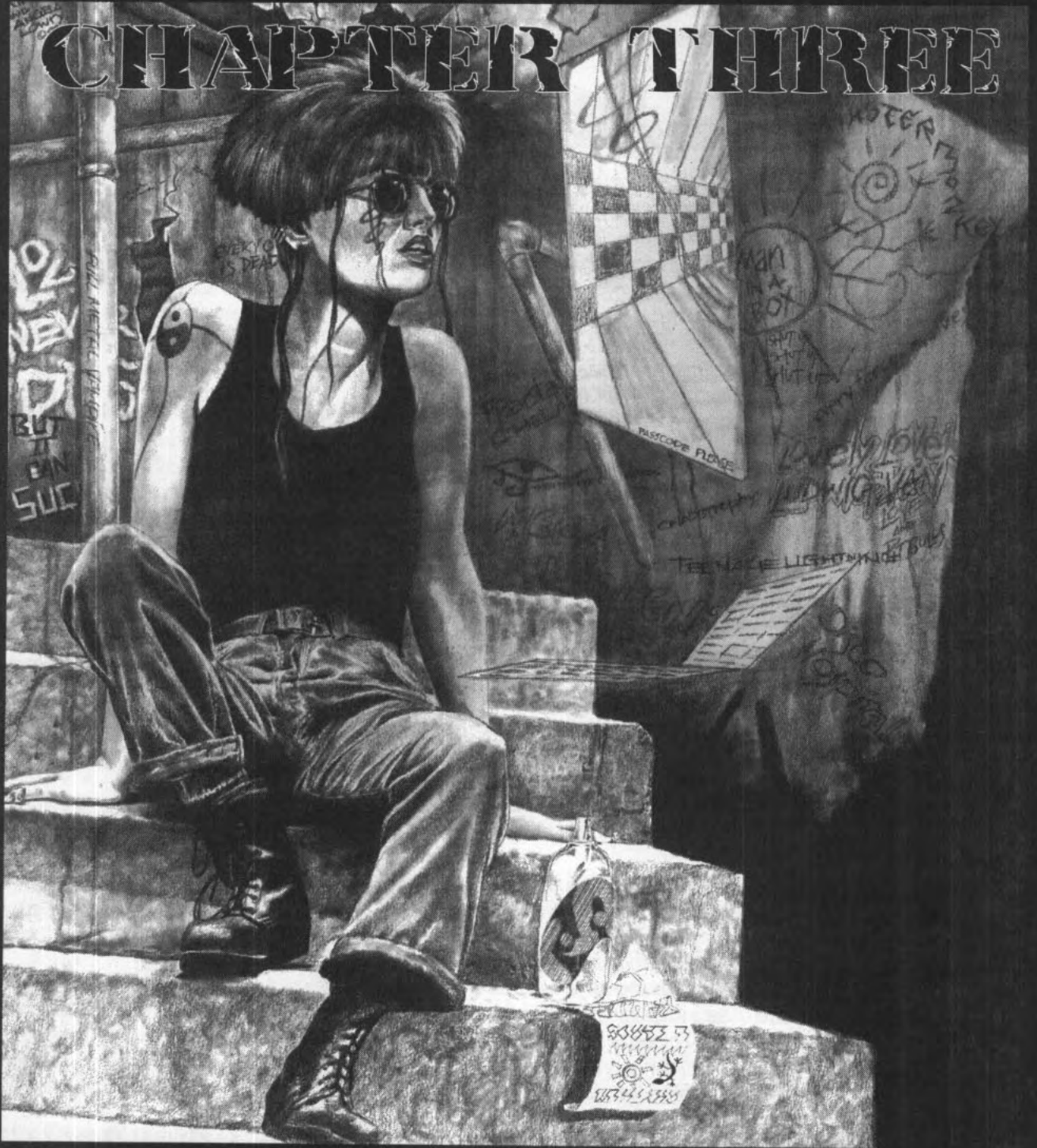
• **SPINNERS:** Several CorpSec spinners are in high hover over the city. Each turn a player using an aeroboard goes higher than ten feet off the ground, there is a chance that he will be spotted by a CorpSec spinner (see *Spotting*) and fired on (see *Shooting*).

• **SHOOTING:** CorpSec units are carrying tasers (stun guns). If they spot the players, the unit (as a whole) will fire *once* per turn at each player spotted. Players shooting at CorpSec units (suicidal) can drop an individual Corper with a 5 or 6 roll on 1D10, but the rest of the unit will continue to fire once a turn.

• **STUNNING:** A CorpSec **Stun Attack** *hits* on a 1, 2 or 3 on a 1D6 roll; it *stuns* the player on a 1 or 2 on a 1D6 roll. A stunned player cannot move (but can be carried by another player).

• **END GAME:** Morgan has set the safehouse up with a number of blind entries; simply reaching the building will be enough to get in. The CorpSec units will not trail you to the safehouse.

# CHAPTER THREE



# TESTING THE EDGE



# ASSESSMENT

▼ By now, you've made it to one of my safehouses and accessed the V-term you found here. You should be safe here for at least four days; I move these places around on a weekly basis, and it takes CorpSec at least that long to get their Dead Guy butts in gear and track me down. But you can't stay here forever, juve. We're running out of time. Let's get to it.

▼ If I'm gonna get you outa here, I'm gonna need to know what you can do. Let's start with the physical stuff.

▼ See the keypad **ICON** in front of you? The one with the **ICONS** marked **INT**, **REF**, **COOL**, **TECH**, **MOVE**, **LUCK**, **BODY**, **EMP** and **ATT**? Pay attention!—this is a Military Assessment Test you're taking. It's a good one; I stole it myself from one of the bases up north. It's gonna tell the AI that's handling your pick-up what you're capable of.

## HYPertext

INT	REF	COOL	TECH
MOVE	LUCK	BODY	EMP
ATT	You have 50 pts. Place between 2 and 8 in each area by selecting an area & pressing this key once for each point.		

### WHAT THE ICONS (Your Stats) MEAN:

- **INT [Intelligence]**: Problem solving ability, smarts, memory.
- **REF [Reflexes]**: Dexterity, reaction speed, coordination.
- **COOL [Cool]**: Will, presence, resistance to stress.
- **TECH [Technical Ability]**: Ability to use and repair machines, technology.
- **LUCK [Luck]**: Your karma. You can apply any or all of your **LUCK** points to your die rolls each game. When you have used all of your **LUCK**, you must wait until the next game to get any more.
- **ATT [Attractiveness]**: How good-looking you are.
- **MOVE [Movement]**: How many meters you can run in 3 seconds.
- **EMP [Empathy]**: Your "people" skills. Charisma, ability to relate.
- **BODY [Body Type]**: Strength, endurance and constitution. You can carry up to 10 x **BODY** in kg. and deadlift 40 x **BODY** in kg. Also how many **Wounds** you can take in combat.

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▼ Let's assume for a moment you have 50 points—okay, fifty euro for you non-mathematical types—and you had to put a certain amount into each of these categories to describe yourself. Say two points means you are lousy; five means you're average, and eight means you're really good. Now rate yourself in each of the categories on the screen. You gotta put at least two points (euro, whatever) in each one, and you can't put more than eight in any one. Got it? Use the stylus ICON to write the values on the screen ICON.

▼ Logged? Okay. Not bad. I think you gotta snowball's chance in hell of making it after all. 'Specially in the higher scores. Now, I've gotta figure out what kinda training you've had to match the natural stuff.

▼ See, somewhere back in 2020, your old man and old lady were probably a couple of flashy Edgerunners, packed with a pile of chipped skills and a chunka experience. But you aren't so lucky. You didn't spend six years in the SouthAm learning how to jockey an AV-4 aerodyne. You haven't been drawing a salary as a hired killer for twenty years, like me. You count it lucky if you know how to swing a chain and use a knife. Last year, you boosted a polymer oneshot and you thought you were Mister Ice. The big gangboys on your square packed Dai-Lung mags and maybe the local JuveLord had a real Minami 10 that he took off the body of a local enforcer who'd gotten scragged in an earlier firefight (you can bet he didn't take it off a live Solo).

## ◆ MILITARY ASSESSMENT TEST

The Military Assessment Test is very cinematic in its approach. First of all, you start with a set number of character points for your basic statistics. Your yoganger will start with a pretty low number—at 50 points, he's lower than most adult Edgerunners. This is because he hasn't yet gotten to his full growth, and he's got a ways to go, unlike an adult Edgerunner. This is also one reason why he is limited to stats between 2 and 8. To see what he'll be like at maturity (full adult), roll another 3D10, and apply those points to the character's Stats when he reaches age 20.

## ◆ SKILLS

Like an adult Edgerunner, each yoganger has a Special Ability, their yoganger skill (see pg. XXX). However, the catch is that except for their specific yogang skill, all yogangers have the same skills. These nine skills represent the sort of smattering of abilities you might pick up throughout childhood and early adulthood. Many of the skills are combinations of several adult skills, but since they are learned in a patchy fashion, they are weaker than regular Edgerunner skills.

## ◆ YOGANG SKILLS

These are the special ability skills of each type of yogang. They also represent the only type of "pick-up" skills available to a yoganger. Where pick-up skills represent experience to an adult Edgerunner, a yoganger just hasn't had the time to master a lot of eclectic interests.

▼ When you're a lot shorter on the Street, your skills are gonna reflect it. Yogangers don't learn Electronic Security. They don't study Pharmaceuticals in Cube Conapt High. Your skills are gonna be the skills you learned on the Street, where you don't have a lot of experience and formal training (who the frak teaches Heavy Weapons to a 12 year old?). The good news is, they've been more than enough to tackle the opposition you nor-

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mally face down on Juvepunk Row. The bad news is, they're not worth squat against a well trained Edgerunner who really knows his skit.

Look at the list, juve, and tell me what skills you have. Rate them like you did the test before—take 40 points and slot 'em between the skills (this time between 1 and 8), so I can figure out where you're coming from.

▼ And hey: If there's a note below the list like so—[Ranged Weapons], that means we gotta problem; you're going to be at half strength against someone who has that skill instead of the one you have in its place. I want you to remember that, so you won't be tempted to play hero sometime.

## SKILLS

### STREETFIGHTING [REF]

The all time generic fighting/brawling skill at the short-street level, combining the Edgerunner skills of Melee, Ranged Weapons and Hand-to-Hand Combat. You'll use this skill whenever you're using melee weapons like knives, clubs, chains, broken bottles, or when you're dodging an attack by same. You know how to shoot any common type of gun you can find; you can also throw a good punch, a fair kung fu kick, and deliver a nasty head butt. [Ranged Weapons, Hand-to-Hand Combat, Melee]

### THIEF STUFF [REF]

A juvie level B & E ability, useful for breaking into houses with simple, non-electrical locks, or pickpocketing some cash out

of a Corpzoner's pouch. [Security Tech, Pick Pocket]

### JOCKSTUFF [REF]

The skills of throwing, climbing, balancing, swimming, fighting, etc.; combining stuff from any athletics program (that's why we call it Jock, neh?). In short, if you plan to get physical, you'll need this skill, cho. [Athletics]

### GET A CLUE [INT]

This is how on the ball you are. Do you notice things? Are you aware of your surroundings? Are you clueless when people are skammin' you, or do you know what's happening all the time? Do your yoboys have to chip in to rent you a clue? [Awareness]

### BLEND [REF]

Ever notice how you and your goboys can just blend right into the walls when there's trouble on the Street? You just step back into the shadows and think, "Not there, Maximum Lawman," and they just look right over you. This ability allows you to blend into the local terrain and be unnoticed, or to move silently through the shadows. Dead Guys and Zombie Girls don't ever notice juves unless they really wanna. It's zen, za? [Stealth]

### GENSPEAK [INT]

Yeah, there may be a million types of local "slang", but all yogangers share at least a few common words that the Dead Guys can't decipher with a Com-CRAY cybercrypto box. Genspeak is the universal *lingua franca* of the Cybergeneration, a polyglot of computer binary, random sounds, short choppy words and slang terms with multiple meanings. This skill doesn't rate your ability to communicate with your goboys. This is about whether you can talk right in front of the Dead Guys without them understanding you. [Expert: Language]



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## STREETSMARTS [COOL]

You know the Street, but you know it at the juvegang level only. You don't run with the Runners, and you'd be lost in a meeting with the local Triad heavies. But you know how to scan out who owns what square and where the boundaries are. You know what to say to cryo a Guardian ganger and the proper way to address the top fixer in your squares. [Streetwise]

## FEARLESS LEADER [EMP]

This skill rates how high you've moved up in the hierarchy of your yogang. It's also a measure of how well you lead people in a group, sorta like the Leadership skill of the Edgerunners. With this skill, you can convince others to follow your plans and do dumb stuff because you said it would work. [Leadership]

## SCHOOLIN' [INT]

How much education you've had, formal or otherwise. Can you read and write? Did you go to school, or have access to study chips and V-simulations? You're not gonna be a rocket scientist with the kind of education they give you in the Corpzone or Beaverville, but you oughta have a bit of science, history, computer skills, math and so on. [Education]

## GOGO [REF]

The ability to drive vehicles, like bikes, cyberbikes, automobiles, trucks, etc. in normal driving situations like fast turns, controlling skids, etc. (but no stunts or tricks). I'm gonna assume you haven't got any formal training in using any of these types of ground vehicles; on the Street, there's not much chance for a yoganger to take a driver's education course. I know you've never learned how to pilot an aerodyne or other flying vehicle, because those take loads of training. [Driving]

## LITTLE ANGEL [EMP]

So maybe you know how to jockey a cyberbike or shoot a gun. But you know your biggest advantage comes from the fact that most adults have a hard time accepting that a ten-year-old could be leading a black op. Little Angel is your ability to pull a con on an adult, a juvegang version of Interaction that allows you to act innocent, and to pass off seemingly incriminating situations as "kids messing around." With this ability you can go for shameless sympathy ploys, blame things on imaginary friends (if you're young enough), or convince that CorpSec Team that your sabotage run was really just "an initiation into a club." [Interaction]

## YOGANG SKILLS

These represent specialized skills you've learned by being part of a particular yogang, something you need to know to be a member. You can't be part of a Gogang without learning how to seriously ride a bike, and you can't join the BoardPunks if you can't handle a slab. Check your particular yogang type for a description of its special skills and decide how good you are at it.

- ArcoRunner ..... Tunneling [INT]
- BeaverBrat ..... Suburban Ninja [REF]
- BoardPunk ..... Thrash [REF]
- EcoRaider ..... Hayduking [TECH]
- Facer ..... FaceDance [EMP]
- GlitterKid ..... Celebrity [COOL]
- GoGanger ..... Hotbiking [REF]
- GoldenKid ..... Contacts [INT]
- Goth ..... Deathwalk [COOL]
- Guardian ..... Good Guy [COOL]
- MallBrat ..... Boost [INT]
- MegaViolent ..... Berserk [REF]
- Rad ..... Organize [INT]
- Squat ..... Scrounge [INT]
- StreetFighter ..... Kata [REF]

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- TinkerTot ..... Kitbash [TECH]
- Tribal ..... Warrior [REF]
- Vidiot ..... Commo [TECH]

- JockStuff:** Athletics
- Get A Clue:** Awareness/Notice

▼ Sooner or later, we're gonna have to teach you some new skills, juve. But that can wait till we get you outta here. You get a teacher, and we can fill you full of all kind of Edgerunner skills ( pg. 213-219). Right now, I want you to go through and enter your ratings on the scangrid. Don't mess with me here, juve—I want an *accurate* judgment call on what you think you can do. You try to pretend you're a member of the *Four Horsemen*, and I promise that you'll be the one takin' point when the shooting starts.

▼ Once you're done giving me the data I need, you're off the hook for a while. Feel free to wander around the safehouse—you'll find sleepmats, Virtuality games and kibble dispensers all over the place. There's even some datapad "books." Take this time to meet and talk to the other juves you're traveling with; you're gonna need to know who you can count on and for what.

Eventually you'll be able to convert some of your juvegang skills to Edgerunner skills. To do this, first divide the juvegang skill in half (round down). Now split the result between the new Edgerunner skills you want to study (if there's only one skill in the area, the points go there). Each juvegang skill below has a list of the related Edgerunner skills it can be divided into.

▼ Oh yeah. I wouldn't advise you leaving the safehouse right now; the Corp-Sec goons have been dragging the area pretty severe, and the odds are they'll shoot first and bury the body later. I'll be back in a few hours to fill you in on the next step.

▼▼▼ [END]

- Streetfighting:** Ranged Weapons, Hand-to-Hand Combat, Melee
- ThiefStuff:** Security Tech, Pick Pocket
- Genspeak:** Expert: Language
- Blend:** Stealth
- Streetsmarts:** Streetwise
- Little Angel:** Interaction
- GoGo:** Driving
- Schoolin':** Education
- F. Leader:** Leadership

◆ **FAMILY**

**Family Rank:** The Referee can allow the player to come up with his own family background. A character's Yogang type goes a long way towards this: a GoldenKid obviously comes from Corp Exec family, etc.. Or you can use the following table to determine the parents' status. Roll 1D10 or choose:

1	Corp Executive	7	Outside Technician
2	Corp Manager	8	Outside Gang Family
3	Corp Technician	9	Outside Homeless
4-5	Corp Laborer	10	Military/CorpSec family
6	Outside Poor		

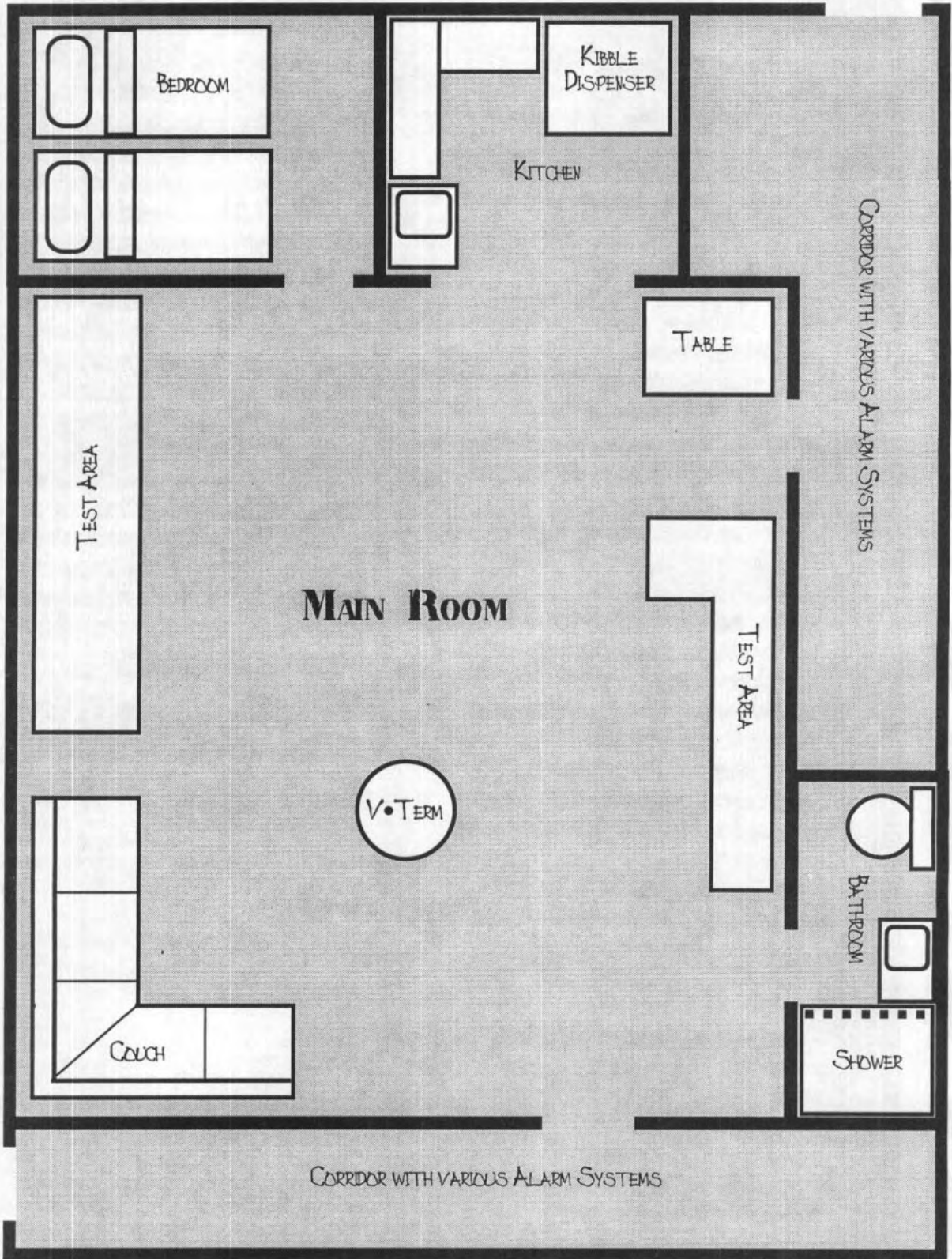
**Siblings:** You can choose to be an only child or roll 1D6-1 for siblings, then roll 1D10 each for sex and age:

1-2	Older Sister	5-7	Younger Sister
3-4	Older Brother	8-10	Younger Brother

These just give you a skeleton to work from; you need to flesh them out to make them real. See "Getting Cybergenerated" on pg. 171.



ENTRYWAY TO STREET



# MAP OF SAFEHOUSE

# INTERLUDE

## IF YOU'RE THE REFEREE, DON'T READ THIS OUT LOUD.

The Safehouse section is designed to give your players a chance to get to know each other. So far, they've just been a buncha juvepunkers on the run. Now they're in a relatively safe place with food, water, and no CorpSec on their tails. Sounds pretty good, doesn't it?

Well, maybe. They're going to be trapped in this little tiny space for several hours, maybe even several days. In the meantime, it's up to you to entertain them. We've got a couple nifty ways to do this.

By now, you should have the basics of playing a character down (if you're an old hand at this, accept our apologies). This would be a nice time to throw in a couple of Non-Player Characters (NPCs). These could be other juvepunkers who have been led here after the CorpSec raid, or maybe a couple of kids who have already been stuck in the safehouse for a couple of days. Use the Character Creation rules outlined on the next pages to generate some backgrounds and stats. So what are some good possibilities for NPCs?

Here are a few of our favorites—

### • The MegaViolent looking for a fight.

After all, it's been a couple of hours. Almost anyone will do. Especially if you've got a StreetFighter or a Guardian in the group. There's only one, so it won't take a lot to stop him in a fight; a simple full-party "dogpile" would be enough—but the constant glowering, threats, challenges and taunts should keep everyone on edge.

### • Mister Stud, Version 1

This guy thinks he's Bog's Gift to Juvefems, and needs to prove it. After a few dozen obvious (or even a few less obvious) "hits" on them, any female members of the party will either want to kill this guy or themselves. The flip side to this is a female version who is

determined to steal the attention of every guy in the Safehouse. If she can get them fighting over her, so much the better.

### • Mister Stud, Version 2

He really is Bog's Gift to Juvefems. Tall, handsome, rugged, yet sensitive. Play this up enough, and every juvemale in the party will want to ace this guy. And if he's a combat god as well, so much the better. You can always have him win the best looking juvefem's heart—then dump her when you go to the Mall in the next chapter. The same can be done for the female version—she's beautiful, sensitive, and really needs some studly Juveganger to protect her. More fights, neh?

### • Street Kid Alone

He's a BeaverBrat or Corpkid who was separated from his family and is on the Street for the first time. He's also eight. Expect him (or her) to latch onto the nearest "cool" big brother/sister figure and make a pest of himself ("Can I do what /go where you're going?"). You can also expect a lot of juvenile practical jokes, temper tantrums, etc. Remember, even Cyberpunkers have siblings—it says so right on the Lifepath.

## 2) Make them ... sick.

After all, they were running from a CorpSec Plague Sweep. It's about time they started feeling a few ... symptoms. Randomly pick a victim or two and give them:

- Weird itching.
- Silver Sweat.
- Pounding headaches that end suddenly.
- Mysterious hallucinations.

Then make the symptoms stop, just as suddenly as they began. Pick a new victim.

After a few minutes of this, your players will be ready and anxious to go out and face CorpSec again. Run with it! The Mall's just a few pages away.

# CYBER GENERATOR

•Your "Tag"

9 • CyberGen Type

CyberGen Power

1 •Yogang Type

2 • Sex  Age  Wt.  Ht.

3 •Your Description

4 •Yogang Stuff

--	--

5 •Your Stats

INT		REF		COOL	
TECH		MOVE		LUCK	
BODY		EMP		ATT	

6 •Your Wounds (Cyberpunk & Cybergeneration)

L	L	L	S	S	S	C	C	C	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
BTM		HITS															

7 •Your Skills

Streetfighting		Thief Stuff	
Jock Stuff		Get A Cue	
Blend		GenSpeak	
Street Smarts		Fearless Leader	
School In'		GoGo	
Little Angel			

Yogang Skill

8 •Your Mail Stuff




# CHAPTER FOUR



# RECONNAISSANCE

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## MORGAN

▼ Unless something went really lousy, you oughta be at one of the Virtuality Malls and accessing this through the new code I gave you at the safehouse. If you weren't lucky, then CorpSec intercepted some of you. If you're here, you've done pretty well for a buncha juves, so congrats.

▼ Now, let's get to work. Put your hand on the scangrid. No, the other hand.

▼ Good. Each of you now has a temp account with \$1,000<sup>00</sup> in it—one of the several million ones Rache has stashed in the background of some Corporate bank's accounting files, paid for by a tap on the personal account of Saburo Arasaka himself. There isn't much in it; big accounts attract the attention of the ISA watchdogs. So don't go crazy, juve. I want you to memorize the account number—there it is—then go hop the V-Mall on a shopping trip. I know you'll probably have the usual outfit your yogang packs, but this is going to be a longer trip than a goride down to the Arco. Buy things you really think you're gonna need: useful electronic hardware, clothes, protection, weapons if you can get them. A couple of hot tips. The local BodyShoppe does have cyberware, but they won't sell to juves because you're still growing; you'll have to stick to the fashionware. Push the issue, and they'll flag CorpSec because they'll think you're in a boostergang. You might want to check out the pizza place; they sell heavier weapons under the table (so to speak). If you think you'll need it more than anything else, buy some transportation; where you're going, you won't find an N-CART route. Use some of the bucks to buy a few goodies; the CorpSec Dead Guys have been getting suspicious of juves stocking up on stuff, so if you grab some "toys" it'll throw them off.

▼ Now hit the Mall. When you're done, grab your stuff and get back to the safehouse. I'm taking a chance letting you out at all—if you go through the Change while you're in the open, all frack's gonna break loose. But you may never get another chance to resupply. So let's move it, ok? ▼ ▼ ▼ [END]

PAGE







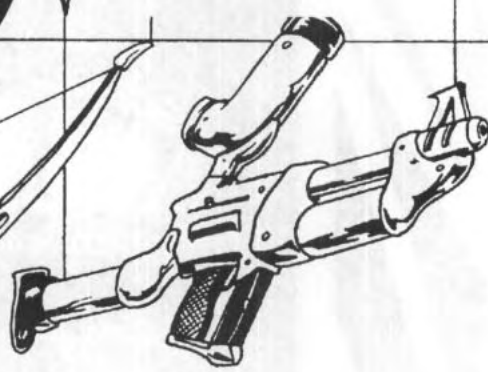
**BODYTEST FULL IMPACT ROADRASHER \$200<sup>00</sup>**

Heavy-duty body suit for thrashing. Armored to AR 3, with Kevlar pads at joints and an armored collar and spine guard.



**COUGAR LAMLAR HUNTING BOW \$150<sup>00</sup>**

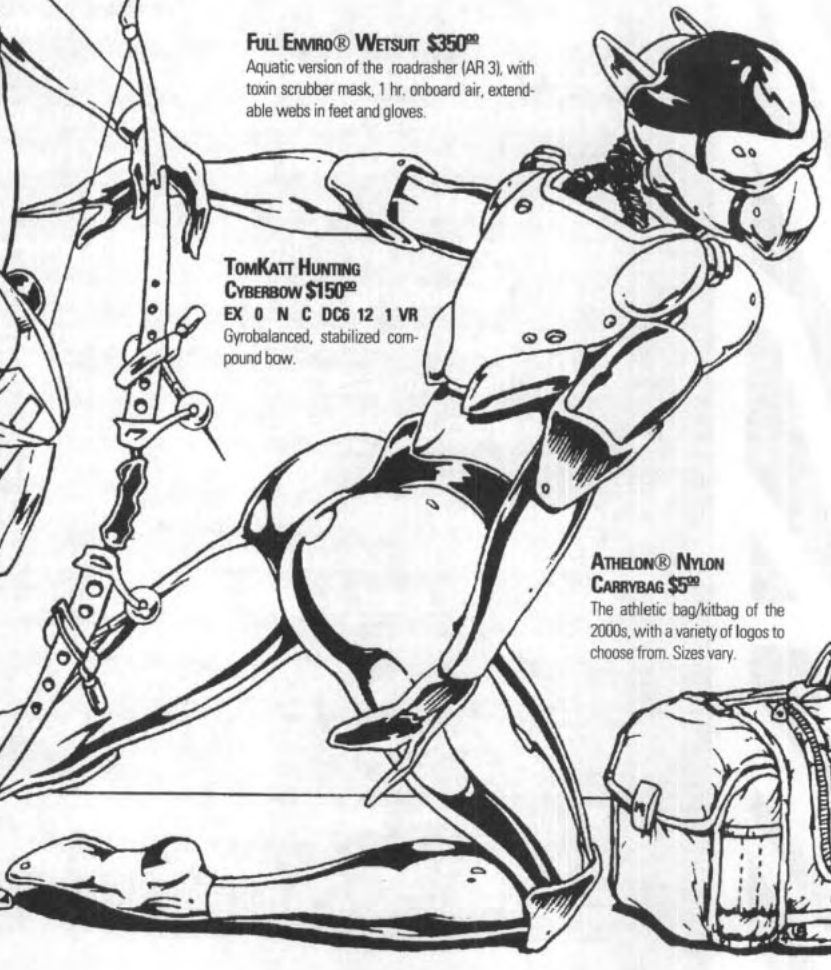
EX +1 N C DC7 24 1 VR  
Similar to the classic Tribal longbow. Laminated plex and imitation wood. Comes with 24 arrows (extra arrows cost \$2.00 each).



**SPLATMAN™ AIRPISTOL \$200<sup>00</sup>**  
**P O J C Special 20 1ST**  
Small, high power continuous air paintball gun. Can fire acid, drugs or poison. Paint loads are 10<sup>00</sup> per 1000; others are 3x this cost.

**FULL ENVIRO® WETSUIT \$350<sup>00</sup>**

Aquatic version of the roadrasher (AR 3), with toxin scrubber mask, 1 hr. onboard air, extendable webs in feet and gloves.



**TOMKATT HUNTING CYBERBOW \$150<sup>00</sup>**

EX 0 N C DC6 12 1 VR  
Gyrobalanced, stabilized compound bow.

**SANTACRUZ SMARTBOARD \$200<sup>00</sup>**

Microcomputer automatically adjusts memory plastic wheels and frame for road conditions. Adds +3 to Thrash skills. Can move (by tow) up to 150mph. SDP 3

**MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS**

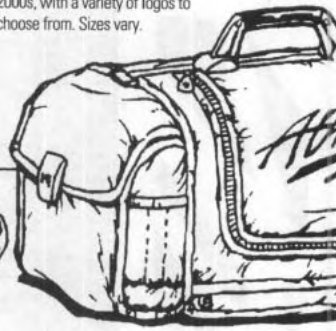
Only the highest quality training gear for the martial arts enthusiast.

[Not Shown]

NUNCHAKA				\$30.00
MELEE 0	L	C	DC 5	
NAGINATA				\$200.00
MELEE 0	N	P	DC 5 (AP)	
SHIRIKEN				\$5.00
MELEE 0	P	C	DC 1 (AP)	
KNIFE				\$30.00
MELEE 0	L	C	DC 3 (AP)	
SWORD				\$300.00
MELEE 0	L	C	DC 4 (AP)	
AXE				\$20.00
MELEE -1	L	C	DC 5 (AP)	
TONFA				\$30.00
MELEE 0	L	C	DC 5	

**ATHELON® NYLON CARRYBAG \$5<sup>00</sup>**

The athletic bag/kitbag of the 2000s, with a variety of logos to choose from. Sizes vary.



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PAGE



**VECTOR HYDROBOARD \$500<sup>00</sup>**

Powered, hydrofoiled surfboard. +2 to Thrash skill. Can reach top speed of 65mph for up to 40 minutes. CHOOH, fueled (3 gals). 20kg wt, SDP 6.

**BATTAROPES™ TOWLINK WITH MAGNAGRIPP® \$150<sup>00</sup>**

EX +1 J C NA 1 1 VR  
 Similar to the Magnagrip grapples, can be fired (using Streetfighting or Ranged Combat skills) up to 50m. Has a 100m superstring line attached; power winch.

**MAGNAGRIPP® MAGNETIC GRAPPLERS 2 FOR \$100<sup>00</sup>**

Can latch onto any ferrous material. 200 foot line reels into powered winch; the electromagnet can be turned on/off by switch in the handle.

**MONOGRAP CYBERNETIC CLAW GRAPPLE \$150<sup>00</sup>**

EX +1 J C NA 1 1 VR

Cybernetic "smart grapple", designed with an 80% chance to locate and latch onto protruding surfaces. Can dig its monoblade-tipped "fingers" into thin steel or concrete.

**SUPERSTRING® SYNTHETIC CABLE [NOT SHOWN] \$3<sup>00</sup> PER METER**

Synthetic cable made from spun orbital glass. Pencil thin, it can hold up to 3,000 lbs.

**SANTACRUZ BOARDTECH SURFBOARD [NOT SHOWN] \$200<sup>00</sup>**

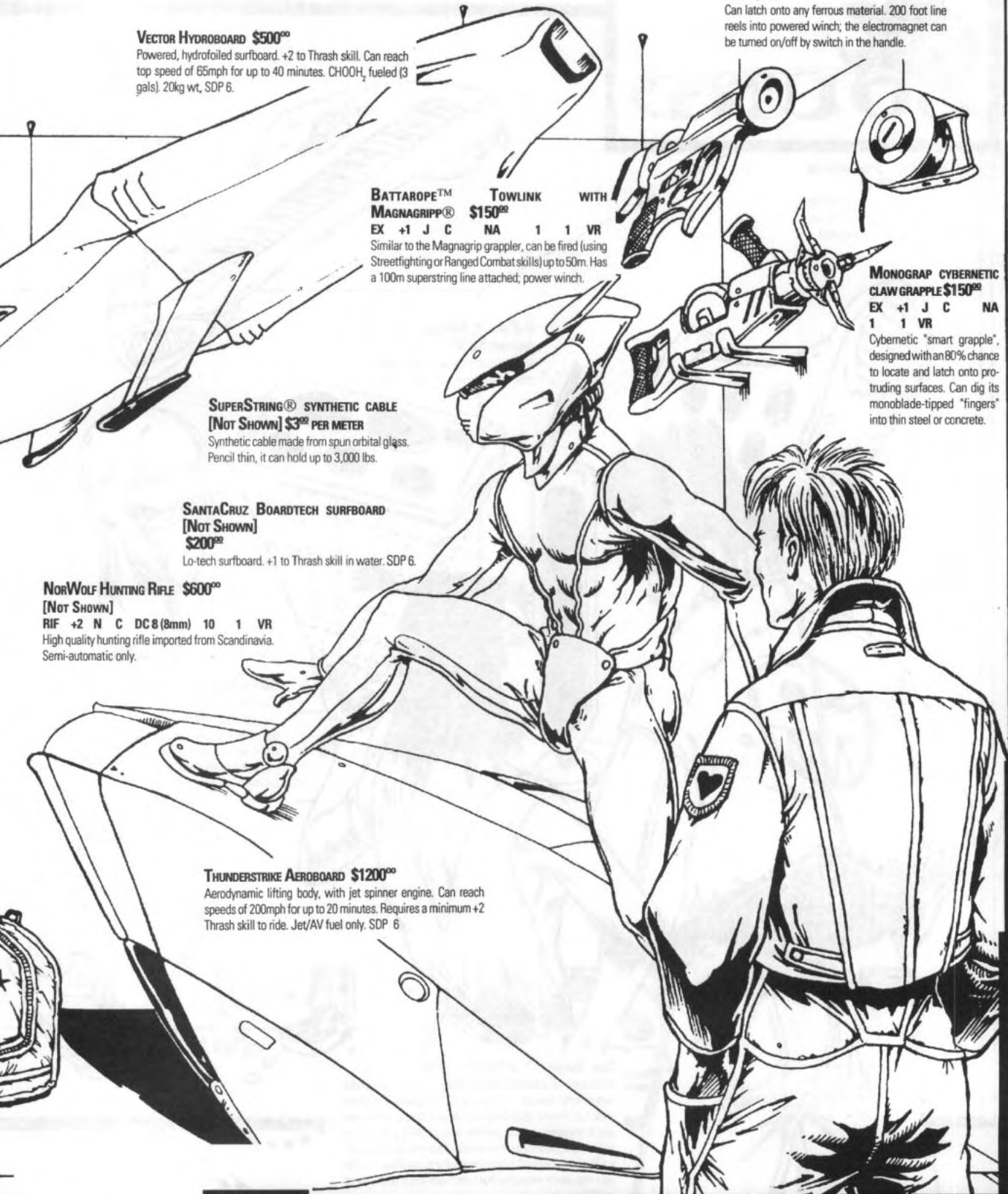
Lo-tech surfboard. +1 to Thrash skill in water. SDP 6.

**NORWOLF HUNTING RIFLE \$600<sup>00</sup>**

[NOT SHOWN]  
 RIF +2 N C DC8(8mm) 10 1 VR  
 High quality hunting rifle imported from Scandinavia. Semi-automatic only.

**THUNDERSTRIKE AEROBOARD \$1200<sup>00</sup>**

Aerodynamic lifting body, with jet spinner engine. Can reach speeds of 200mph for up to 20 minutes. Requires a minimum +2 Thrash skill to ride. Jet/AV fuel only. SDP 6



# IMAGE & SOUND

## REALMETL SYNTHESIZER DRUMPAD \$200<sup>99</sup>

Plastic pad with drums etched into it. Speakers, volume controls, adjustable sound effects included.

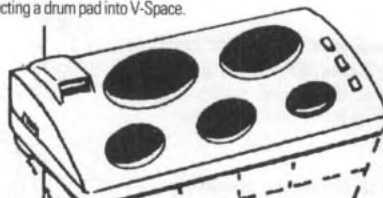


## REALMETL SYNTHESIZER KEYPAD \$100<sup>99</sup>

Flexible plastic musical synthesizer keypad with speakers.

## V-PADD™ VIRTUAL DRUMKIT \$320<sup>99</sup>

A V-card combined with a Scangrid, projecting a drum pad into V-space.



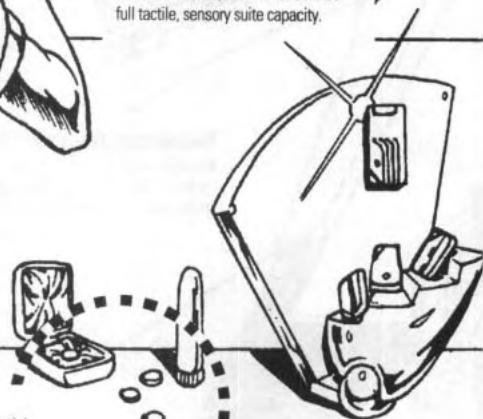
## RAVEN MicroCyb T-2900 V- GLASSES \$75<sup>99</sup>

Some people prefer V-glasses, in either thin refractive lenses in narrow visors, or in the classic cyberpunk mirrorshade models, over V-trodes. Has full tactile, sensory suite capacity.



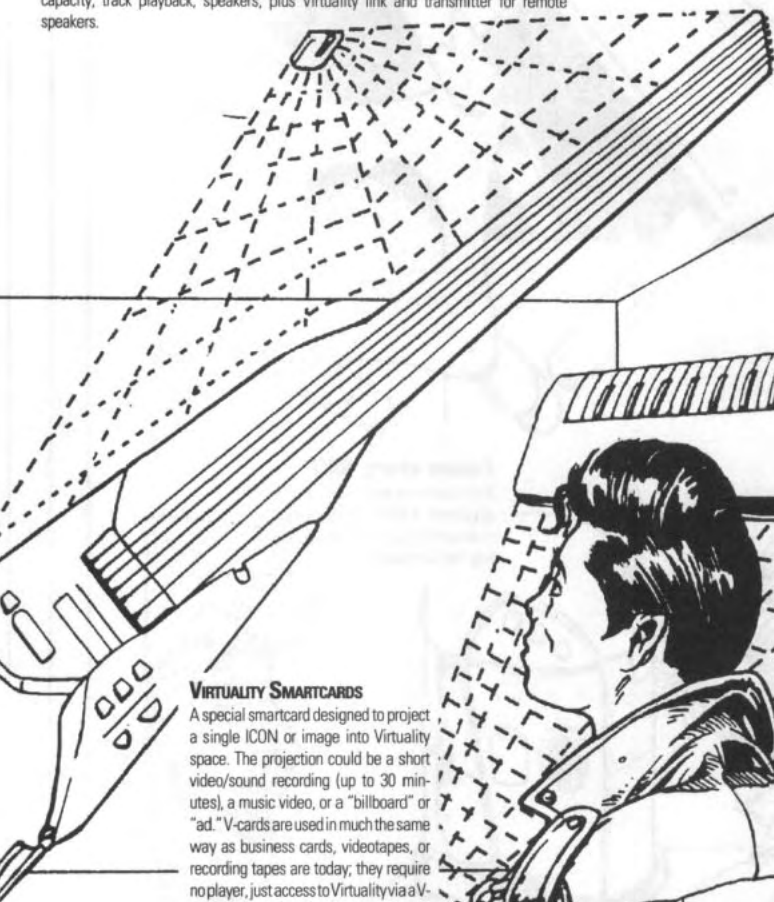
## FULL IMPACT™ V-TRODES \$100<sup>99</sup>

A direct stimulus electrode about the size of a dime. A powerful nanocellular receiver, it comes with replaceable two-sided stick-ons. You just stick the V-trode to your right or left temple and it transmits optical, auditory and tactile signals out of Virtuality. It's not as good as a cyberdeck (you can't transmit anything into V-space), but it allows you to see and hear into the alternate electronic reality that is the main information source in 2027.



**EUROTECH® SMARTGUITAR \$200<sup>92</sup>**

Typical 2027 electronic guitar, with sound effects, built-in rhythm, drums, recording capacity, track playback, speakers, plus Virtuality link and transmitter for remote speakers.



**VIRTUALITY SMARTCARDS**

A special smartcard designed to project a single ICON or image into Virtuality space. The projection could be a short video/sound recording (up to 30 minutes), a music video, or a "billboard" or "ad." V-cards are used in much the same way as business cards, videotapes, or recording tapes are today; they require no player, just access to Virtuality via a V-trode, cyeroptic or V-glasses. Many of them have "touch spaces" printed on the top to allow you to select functions or programs. They are everywhere in 2027 (like fleas), and people are always tearing them in half to get rid of them. A typical new "album" would cost about \$15<sup>92</sup>, a "video" around \$25<sup>92</sup>, and a billboard "poster" about \$3<sup>92</sup>.

**V-PADD™ VIRTUALITY KEYBOARD \$400<sup>92</sup>**

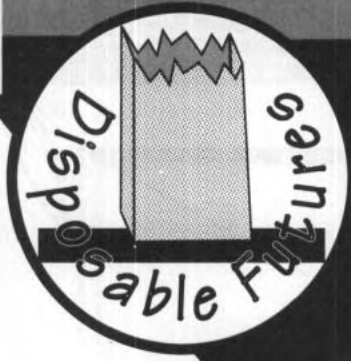
AV-card combined with a Scan-grid, projecting a keyboard into V-space.

**RECEPTOR® BRAND SMARTCARDS**

Smartcards are a cross between V-terms and simple AI systems. They contain the same credit card-sized wafer of supercapacitors, nanocircuits and solar cells, but no Virtuality interfacing (they are also thinner because of this). Instead, each one contains a relatively stupid AI program called an Expert system, dedicated to performing one task very well. They are programmed by the individual manufacturers (smartcards cannot be constructed in microfactories). Smartcards are used to open doors, run decryptors, store financial information, or work as Virtuality and Net code dialers. They are activated/deactivated by flicking the top left corner with a finger. **Types:** Personal Door Lock \$20<sup>92</sup> • BankCard \$30<sup>92</sup> • Dialer Unit \$10<sup>92</sup> • 4 Language Translator (you pick the four) \$40<sup>92</sup> • Business Rolodex \$20<sup>92</sup> • Personal DataAssistant \$100<sup>92</sup> • Auto-factory Keycard \$100<sup>92</sup>

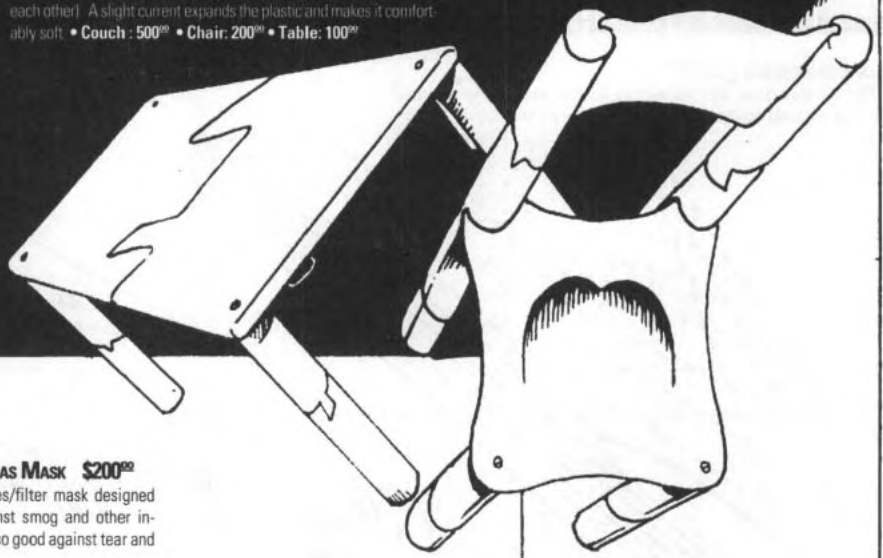
**FULLIMPACT® VIRTUAL RECEIVER/PLAYER SYSTEM \$50<sup>92</sup>**

The equivalent of the TV/radio/stereo combo. Can pick up broadcast V-term signals, or play V-cards. Portable, with solar-recharging power supply, or can be plugged in.



**FLATFOLD FURNITURE**

Light memory plastic furniture, assembled like a puzzle (pieces fit into each other). A slight current expands the plastic and makes it comfortably soft. • Couch: 500<sup>00</sup> • Chair: 200<sup>00</sup> • Table: 100<sup>00</sup>



**NORTHERN FACED™ SLEEPING BAG \$20<sup>00</sup>**

Lightweight; can now take temperatures down to -140° F. Compresses to a 12"x6"x4" wad. Can also be used as a comforter.

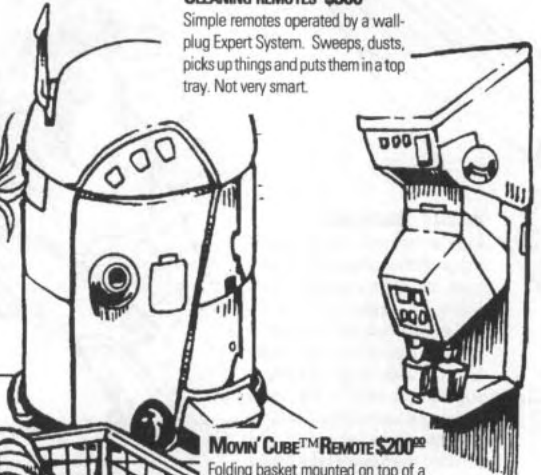


**CLEARAIR™ GAS MASK \$200<sup>00</sup>**

Compact goggles/filter mask designed to protect against smog and other inhaled toxins. Also good against tear and sleep gas.

**CLEANING REMOTES \$300<sup>00</sup>**

Simple remotes operated by a wall-plug Expert System. Sweeps, dusts, picks up things and puts them in a top tray. Not very smart.

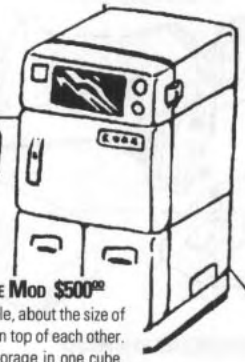
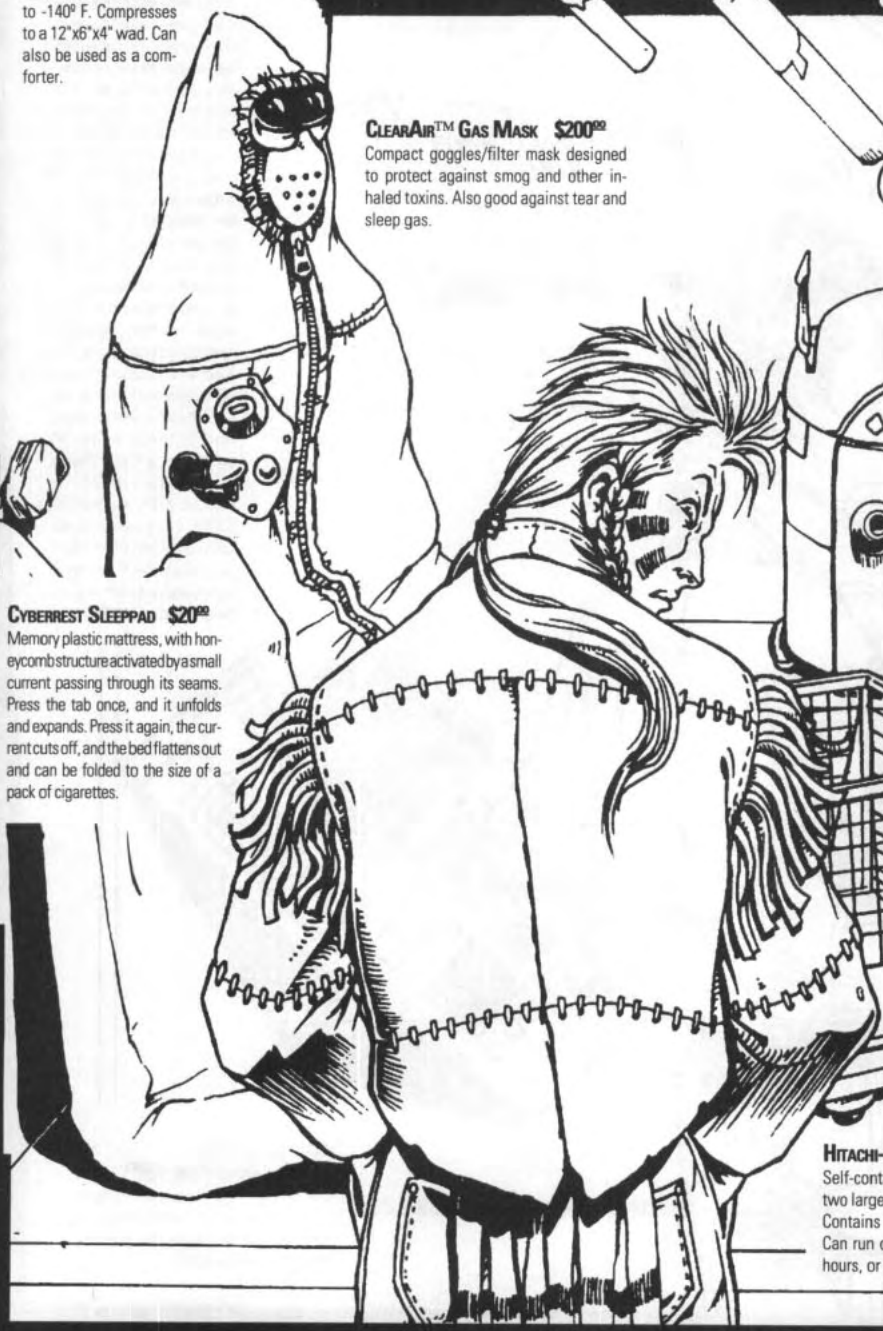


**MOVIN' CUBE™ REMOTE \$200<sup>00</sup>**

Folding basket mounted on top of a roller-tracked remote, used to move gear. The shopping cart of the Dark Future. The remote is just smart enough to follow a tracker in your pocket, as long as you stay within 20m.

**CYBERREST SLEPPAD \$20<sup>00</sup>**

Memory plastic mattress, with honeycomb structure activated by a small current passing through its seams. Press the tab once, and it unfolds and expands. Press it again, the current cuts off, and the bed flattens out and can be folded to the size of a pack of cigarettes.

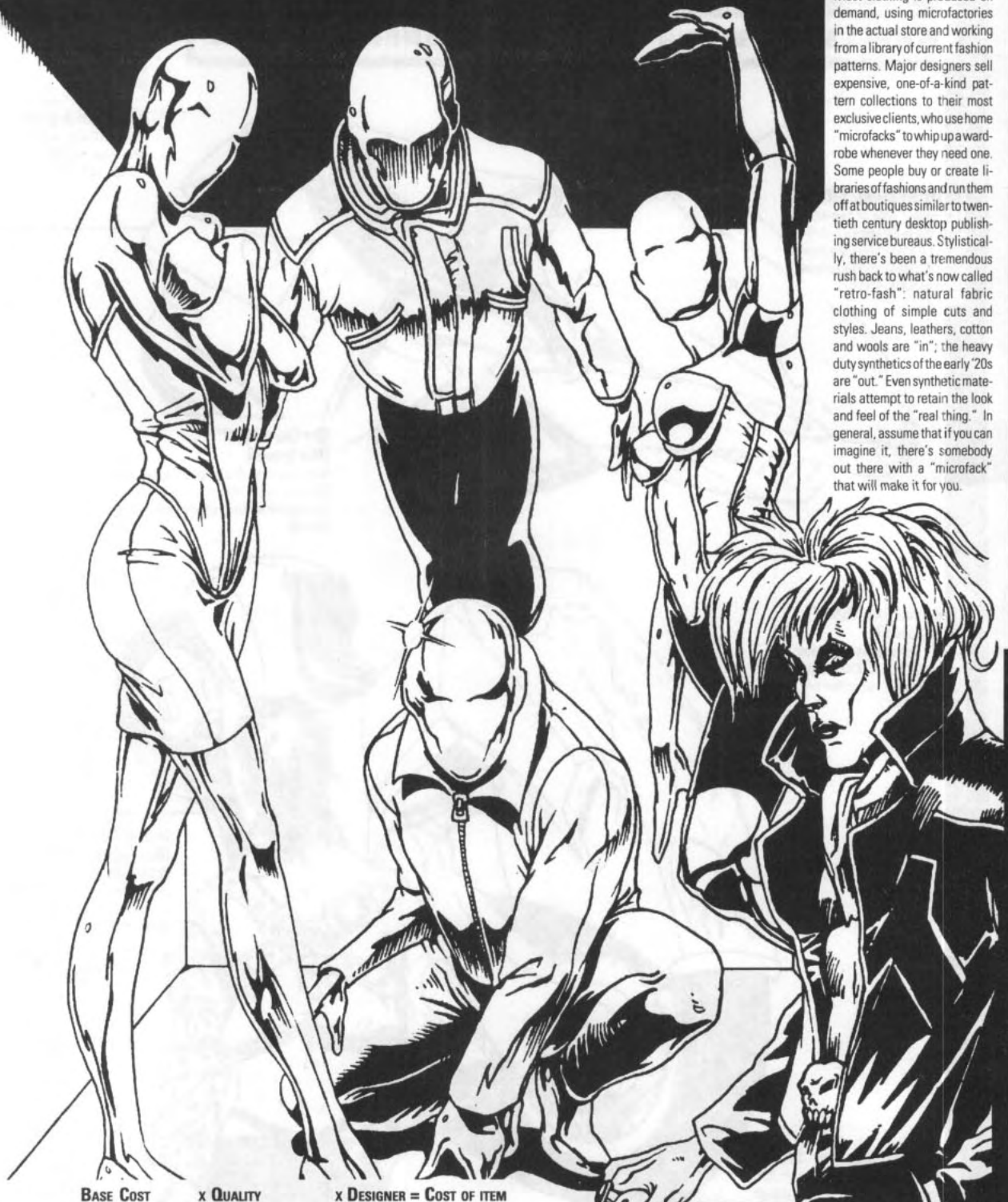


**HITACHI-KENMORE APPLIANCE MOD \$500<sup>00</sup>**

Self-contained appliance module, about the size of two large milk crates stacked on top of each other. Contains fridge, microwave, storage in one cube. Can run on self-contained solar batteries for four hours, or can be plugged in.

**CLOTHES IN 2027**

Most clothing is produced on demand, using microfactories in the actual store and working from a library of current fashion patterns. Major designers sell expensive, one-of-a-kind pattern collections to their most exclusive clients, who use home "microfacks" to whip up a wardrobe whenever they need one. Some people buy or create libraries of fashions and run them off at boutiques similar to twentieth century desktop publishing service bureaus. Stylistically, there's been a tremendous rush back to what's now called "retro-fash": natural fabric clothing of simple cuts and styles. Jeans, leathers, cotton and wools are "in"; the heavy duty synthetics of the early '20s are "out." Even synthetic materials attempt to retain the look and feel of the "real thing." In general, assume that if you can imagine it, there's somebody out there with a "microfack" that will make it for you.



TYPE	BASE COST	X QUALITY	X DESIGNER = COST OF ITEM
Pants/skirt	\$25 <sup>00</sup>	Low (1)	Generic 1
Dress/suit	\$80 <sup>00</sup>	Average (2)	Name Brand (Levis) 2
Jacket or coat	\$50 <sup>00</sup>	Exceptional (3)	Name Designer 3
Top or shirt	\$20 <sup>00</sup>	Excellent (4)	Exclusive (Eji) 4

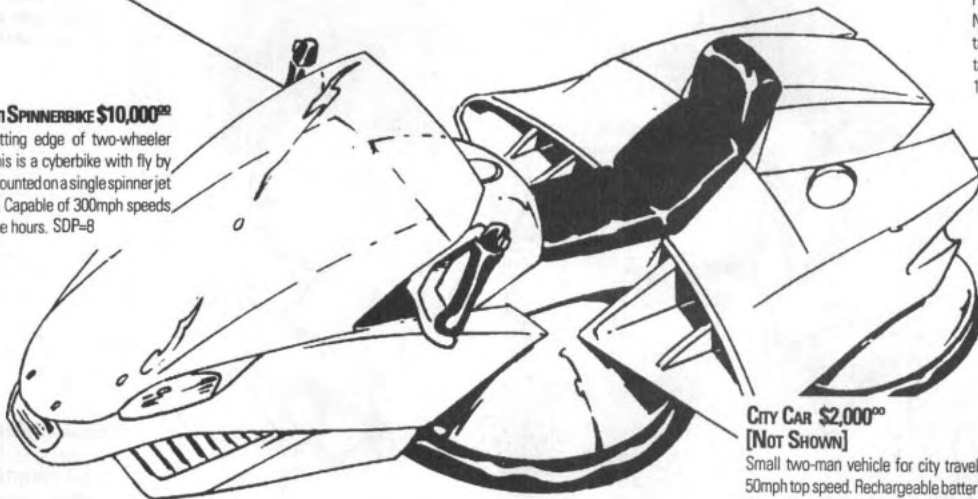
**THE RAGGED EDGE**

# ROADTECH

WHEELS & SPINS FOR THE MODERN WORLD

## INFINITE SPINNERBIKE \$10,000<sup>00</sup>

The cutting edge of two-wheeler tech, this is a cyberbike with fly by wire, mounted on a single spinnerjet engine. Capable of 300mph speeds for three hours. SDP=8

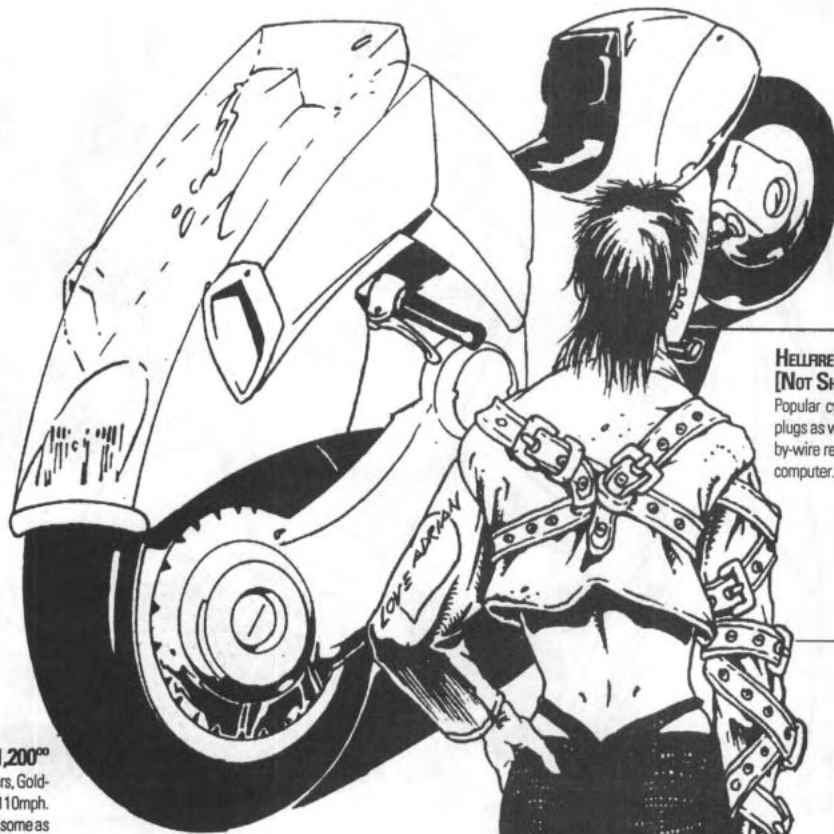


## CITY CAR \$2,000<sup>00</sup> [NOT SHOWN]

Small two-man vehicle for city travel. About 50mph top speed. Rechargeable batteries give four hours of travel on a five minute recharge. SDP=10

## CHRYSTAR NOVA \$8,000<sup>00</sup> [NOT SHOWN]

A very typical small four-seater sedan for 2027. CHOOH<sub>2</sub> engine gets 90mph, fifteen gallon tank, 40mpg. SDP=17



## HELLFIRE CYBERBIKE \$2,000<sup>00</sup> [NOT SHOWN]

Popular cyberbike with direct link plugs as well as 'trode links, drive-by-wire response, on-board status computer. 160mph. SDP=11

## NUNCHAKU CYBERBIKE \$1,200<sup>00</sup>

The bike of choice among Beavers, Goldens and Glitters. Top speed is 110mph. Derisively looked down upon by some as a "Beaverville rice burner." SDP=11

PARENTE=193

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**AVANTE SPORT SPINNER**  
**\$200,000<sup>00</sup>**  
**[Not Shown]**

Two seater, open top "spinner" aerodyne, with twin fans and fly by wire. 320 mph, up to 10,000 feet. SDP=17

**CRYSTAR FALCON © SPINNERCOUPE**  
**\$175,000<sup>00</sup>**

Four seater "spinner" type aerodyne, similar to the CorpSec combat design (AR 7). Fly by wire, four fans, with a top speed of 200mph, up to 22,000 feet. SDP=18

**IMPORTANT:**

In 2027, all cyber-controlled vehicles can project their readouts into V-space for trode-users. A special set of "Traveling Trodes™" are also available (\$300.00) which allow the user to control the vehicle via low-level radio transmissions. These work **ONLY** on properly equipped vehicles.

**AKIRA CYBERBIKE \$2,500<sup>00</sup>**  
 Recumbent cyberbike, with Virtuality heads-up display, drive-by-wire stabilizers. 130mph. SDP=10

**LARK MINI-SCOOTER \$800<sup>00</sup>**  
**[Not Shown]**

A GoldenKid favorite. Small, foldable, can carry two easily. 70mph. SDP=7

**Note:** All vehicles on this spread have a standard AR of 1.



# Techshak Techshak



**INCORPORATED AMERICA'S  
TECHNICAL SUPERSHOP!®**

### TECH TOOL KIT \$75<sup>00</sup>

A mixed kit of mechanical and electronics repair tools in a 2"x10"x2" cylindrical plastic case. The tools are pulled out of compartments and slots in the container, which has a shoulder strap. Also contains a mini cutting torch in the base.

### CYBERDECKS (NOT PICTURED)

All are fully cellular and include interface cables. They may be adapted for non-wired users with skin 'treads and keyboards (either static field or touchpad) although at a substantial loss in performance (-5 to all Net skill rolls).

### RAVEN MICROCYB SPARROW \$700<sup>00</sup>

INT 3, DEF 4

### IEC COMPUBOY PORTABLE \$800<sup>00</sup>

INT 4, DEF 3

Comes with FCT 1 Utility program.

### MICROTECH POWERLINK 7.0 \$1000<sup>00</sup>

INT 4, DEF 5

Comes with one FCT 2 Utility program.

### EBM ADVANCE SYSTEM MAINFRAME V-TERM \$900<sup>00</sup>

INT 6, DEF 5

Larger V-terms carry huge on-board databases, large scangrids, indefinite power supplies and built-in direct links to the Net. This makes them heavier (ten, twenty pounds) and less prone to be lugged around. (The ones on the Street are encased in steel and concrete to make sure they don't talk a walk).

### APPLE® MAC520 VIRTUCOMP V-TERM \$600<sup>00</sup>

INT 2, DEF 2

The "personal computer" and "digital assistant" of 2027. The actual 'term is a thick credit card-sized sandwich of nanocircuitry, powered by a super-capacitor storage layer charged by a solar cell layer (you get about 6 hours use before needing a 3-hour recharge). The V-term projects a keypad and a screen into Virtuality, while its on-board sensorgrid translates typing or drawing movements into keyboard commands.

### TELETRONICS TECHSCANNER \$150<sup>00</sup>

A small handheld device with various I/O connectors and probes. Techscanners run diagnostic programs, identify and examine malfunctioning components, and display internal schematics on a small screen.

### D-TECH® TRACKER \$500<sup>00</sup>

Hand held module with V-ICON map screen for detecting/following tracer buttons. Range is 10 miles.

### D-TECH® TRACERPIN \$50<sup>00</sup> [NOT SHOWN]

Pin-sized tracking device. Uses radioactivity or constant/pulsed radio transmission to pinpoint whom or what it's attached to. Can be turned on/off remotely. Usually bought in sets of 6.

PARENTE  
1993



**MICROFLASH \$10<sup>00</sup>**  
**[NOT SHOWN]**

Toothpick-sized flashlights, disposable, in packs of ten. Beam range 100'-120', lasts 4 hours.

**CARDLOCK/VOCLOCK (COST VARIES)**

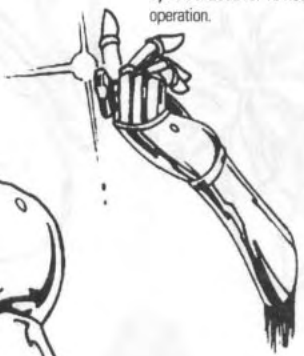
[SEE ①, BELOW, FOR IMAGE]

Cardlocks use a magnetically coded card; voclocks employ voice-recognition technology. Each type of lock has four increasing levels of complexity, and a single security system may incorporate both types of locks.

TYPE	COST	DIFFICULTY LEVEL
Low Security	100 <sup>00</sup>	Average (15)
Medium Security	150 <sup>00</sup>	Difficult (20)
High Security	200 <sup>00</sup>	Very Difficult (25)
Maximum Security	250 <sup>00</sup>	Nearly Impossible (30)

**DATA TEL ADAPTA RING-PHONE \$70<sup>00</sup>**

Cellphone in ring, activated by voice. Good for 10 hours operation.



**FLASH PAINT, FLASH TAPE \$5<sup>00</sup> PINT/METER**  
**[NOT SHOWN]**

Fluorescent paint that gives off a soft colored or white light. Lasts up to a week. Also comes as *Flashtape*, a stick-on version that lasts for two weeks.

**RAVEN MICROCYB DATA TAP \$100<sup>00</sup>**

Tiny clamplike device that allows a V-term to be linked into an operating electronic or fiberoptical communications line. You screw the clamp down over the desired line and it broadcasts to your V-term. About 70% accuracy of data reception.

**MICROTECH MINIFONE PIN \$150<sup>00</sup>**

Super small pendant or brooch cellphone. Comes with earphone. Numbers are dialed by speaking aloud. Good for 10 hours of operation before needing 2-hour wall recharge.



**DATACHIP \$5<sup>00</sup>**

The storage medium of the future for holding digital information. Usually plastic-cased, chips come in the shape of buttons, flat squares, triangles and thin slivers. All shapes can be read by all types of Virtuality media.

**SMART DECRYPTOR \$500<sup>00</sup>**

A smartcard which is used to open electronic lock systems. If there is no card slot, the card is held speaker-side to the lock's microphone (it decodes voclocks by producing digitally generated sounds). The decryptor has a base +15 skill at decrypting a lock.

**BOOSTER GOGGLES SMART GOGGLES \$220<sup>00</sup>**

High-tech vision aids combining 60x power binoculars with a laser rangefinder, IR & low-light lenses, full Virtuality link and a built-in 20-shot digital camera.



**NETLINK WRANGLER (NOT SHOWN) \$250<sup>00</sup>**

P O J E DC2 (code) 150 1 ST  
The Wrangler is a standard codegun designed for the mass market which looks a lot like an Old West six-shooter. Stylish and cheap, its poor balance would make it hard to aim were it not so light.

**SILICON GRAPHICS IRIS CYBERDECK \$1200<sup>00</sup>**  
**INT 6, DEF 5**

Advanced cyberdeck. Includes Virtuality keyboard; cellular capable.



**SNOOPBOX PERSONAL INTRUSION SENSOR \$200<sup>00</sup>**

This cigarette pack-sized scanner is an all-around protection device. Setting 1 searches out electromagnetic generated by various bugs and alarm systems of location. Setting 2 checks air or liquids for unknown toxin(s) with 85% accuracy. Setting 3 movement alarm system that detects movement in a 10' x 10' area with 95% reliability. Setting 4 jams electromagnetic transmissions in a 20' radius area (includes cellular phones and some cyberware).



personal protective fields (75% chance known and contains a cyberware).

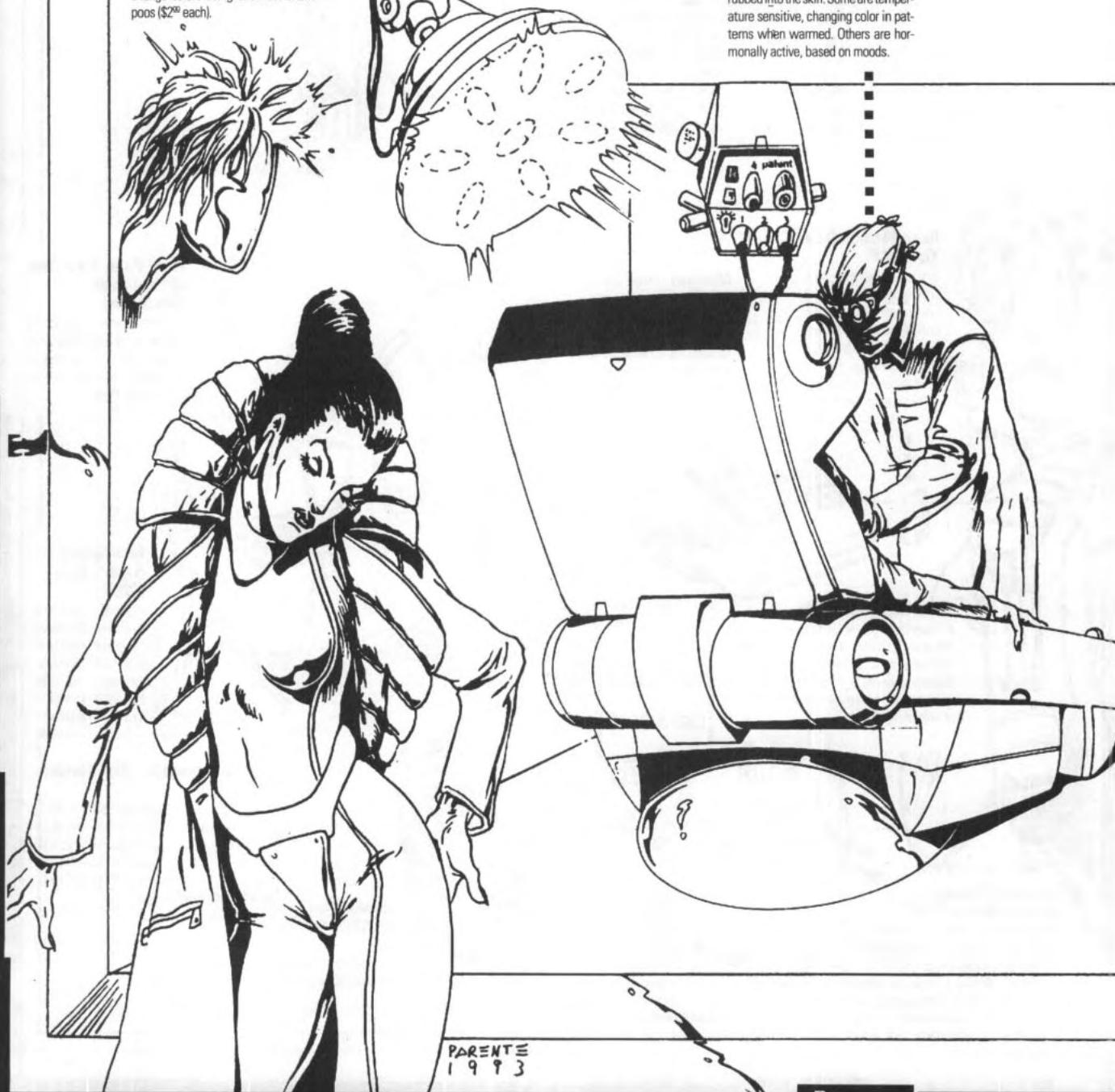
# BODYSHOPPE

## BODYSHOPPE TECH-HAIR \$100<sup>00</sup>

Color/light emitting artificial hair. Can change colors using chemical shampoos (\$2<sup>00</sup> each).

## FASHION IN ACTION™ CHEM-SKINS \$150<sup>00</sup>

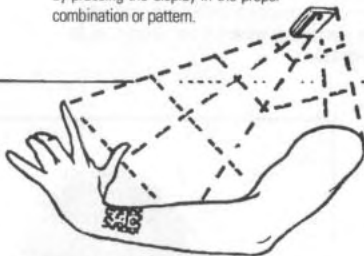
Dyes and chemicals impregnated or rubbed into the skin. Some are temperature sensitive, changing color in patterns when warmed. Others are hormonally active, based on moods.



PARENTE  
1993

**TIMEMAX™ SKINWATCHES \$20<sup>00</sup>**

A tiny LED implanted under the skin, which shows current time, date. Reset by pressing the display in the proper combination or pattern.



**FASHION IN ACTION™ LIGHT TATTOOS \$25<sup>00</sup>**

Light-emitting chemical patches inserted under the skin. Store light and emit it in colors or patterns.



**BODYSHOPPE HOME SMARTDOC™ \$1600<sup>00</sup>**

Micro AI-controlled aut surgeon, about the size of an old fashioned "boombox" with a *Medical Tech Skill* of +12 (add die roll to this). Dispenses drugs, slap patches, antidotes, dressings, drugs. The Smart-Doc sees with both static fields and optics, and speaks in a calm and reassuring chip voice (you can pick the sex). Four probes extend from the top. Probe #1 has an airhypo. Probes #2 and #3 are AI-controlled surgery arms with retractable scalpels, retractors, probes, clamps, and tweezers (arm #2 has three fingers and a thumb). Probe #4 contains a medscanner, with readouts for body temperature, heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, and blood sugar levels.



**KIROSHI OPTICAL SHIFT TACTS® \$90<sup>00</sup>**

Colored contacts, designed to mimic colors, or with logos and patterns.



**BODYTECH DRUG ANALYZER \$40<sup>00</sup>**

Hand-held gadget which can determine the purity of a drug with a known composition, or identify the molecular make-up and possible effects of an unknown substance that is similar to a drug already programmed into its library.

**BODYSHOPPE BRAND IMPLANTED V-LINKS \$100<sup>00</sup>**

One option for the V-elite. Links are directly implanted under temples.



**DEADJIM™ AIRHYPO \$40<sup>00</sup>**

Compressed air hypodermic with 10 loads. Injection types can be varied by turning a setting knob. Drugs must be purchased separately (see pg. 154, for details).

# HOT ZAZA!

## PIZZA & BLACKMARKET WEAPONS

### MEDIUM AUTOPISTOL \$300<sup>00</sup>

**P 0 J C DC4 (9mm) 10 2 ST**  
Very common automatic pistol. Usually something like a Beretta, but science fiction and colored plastic versions are also common. 50 reloads \$30<sup>00</sup>.

### HEAVY AUTOPISTOL \$500<sup>00</sup>

**P -1 J C DC5 (11mm) 10 2 VR**  
Reliable autopistol frame. Molds are usually similar to old 9mms, or occasionally more sci-fi types (Deckard's SSG Blaster from *Bladerunner* is a popular choice). 50 reloads \$40<sup>00</sup>.

### MEDIUM MACHINE PISTOL \$600<sup>00</sup>

**SMG 0 J C DC4 (10mm) 40 20 VR**  
Based off of the ever popular Minami frame. Simple, with folding stock. 50 reloads \$30<sup>00</sup>.

### HARD ARMOR (METAL GEAR) \$600<sup>00</sup> (AR7)

Laminated epoxide armor, this type of protection is falling out of favor because it gives too good of a radar return for Genius Guns (+10% to the gun's chance to hit the target).

### VERY HEAVY AUTOPISTOL \$800<sup>00</sup>

**P 0 J P DC6 (12mm) 8 1 VR**  
Maximum no-frills firepower. Used by Morgan Blackhand, CorpSec agents and people who aren't messing around playing Cops & Robbers. 50 reloads \$45<sup>00</sup>.

### HEAVY SMG \$800<sup>00</sup>

**SMG 0 L P DC6 (12mm) 30 3/20 ST**  
Based on the MPK-11 (the most popular Solo's gun in existence), this frame can be modified into four different designs, including a bullpup configuration, standard SMG, an assault carbine, and a grenade launcher mount. 50 reloads \$50<sup>00</sup>.

### LIGHT MACHINE PISTOL \$500<sup>00</sup>

**SMG +1 J C DC6 (9mm) 30 35 ST**  
The ubiquitous pocket machinegun used by Corp-zoners, streetgangs and Beaver housewives who don't want to take gun lessons. Usually "facked" as a box with a handle. 100 reloads for \$35<sup>00</sup>.

### MELEE WEAPONS

Getting back to the basics!

CLUB	YOU'D PAY FOR THIS?	OKAY,	\$5.00
MELEE 0	L C	DC 3	
SWITCHBLADE			\$20.00
MELEE 0	P C	DC 1 (AP)	
BRASS KNUCKLES			\$20.00
MELEE 0	P C	DC 3	
SLEDGEHAMMER (OUCH!)			\$30.00
MELEE -2	N C	DC 6	
CHAINSAW (VROOM!)			\$100.00
MELEE -3	N C	DC 6 (AP)	

### ASSAULT RIFLE \$1200<sup>00</sup>

**RIF -1 N R DC8 (8mm) 40 20 ST**  
A standard automatic rifle module with short burst and full auto capacities. Common styles resemble old 20th century weapons, space opera blasters, and neo-Victorian long rifles. 100 reloads \$100<sup>00</sup>.

### M41 "PULSE RIFLE II" \$3000<sup>00</sup>

**RIF 0 N R EMP\* 8 1/2 ST**  
An Electro-Magnetic Pulse cannon designed to destroy electronics and short out nervous systems. \*See page 150 for effects. It also acts as a stunner against Wizards and Scanners.

### LIGHT AUTOPISTOL \$100<sup>00</sup>

**P 0 J E DC3 (7mm) 10 2 UR**  
Cheap autopistol frame. Often molded in bright colors, science fiction shapes, pirate blunderbusses and other dumb things beloved of the juvegang set. 50 reloads \$20.

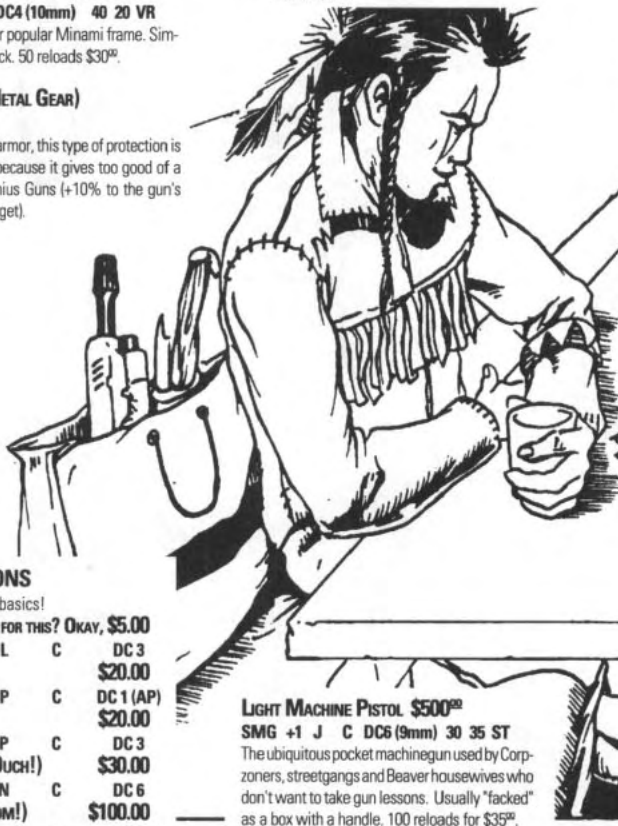
### STRIPTAPE BINDERS \$20<sup>00</sup>

One-use-only plastic locking strips for temporary handcuffs and leg ties (Very Difficult to break). With ceramic fibers to resist cutting, and guaranteed fireproof. Come in boxes of 12, and so cheap, they've replaced handcuffs.

### ARMORED CLOTHING

Personal protection for the fashion-conscious, these lightweight armored clothes have nylon or leather coverings that resemble normal Streetwear. Assumed to cover all body areas, with high collars for head protection. Come in three weights:

Light (AR 3)	\$200 <sup>00</sup>
Medium (AR 5)	\$300 <sup>00</sup>
Heavy (AR 6)	\$400 <sup>00</sup>



### HotZa Pizza

Yes, you can actually get a good pizza here. One pizza with one topping costs:

Small (serves 2)	\$6 <sup>00</sup>
Medium (serves 4)	\$8 <sup>00</sup>
Large (serves 6)	\$12 <sup>00</sup>
Mondo (serves 10)	\$16 <sup>00</sup>

+ \$1<sup>00</sup> for each additional topping.

Soft Drinks	\$1 <sup>00</sup>
Beer (if over 16)	\$3 <sup>00</sup>
Salad	\$4 <sup>00</sup>

PARENTS 1993

## WEAPON CODES

Each weapon is represented by certain characteristics, such as its type, damage, range, accuracy, concealability, availability and cost. These factors are recorded as a weapon code — a profile of the weapon in order of:

**Name • Type • Accuracy • Concealability • Availability • Damage Class/Ammunition • Number of Shots • Rate of Fire • Reliability**

**Types:** **Pistols (P)** are any type of single shot (or semiautomatic) weapon which may be accurately fired with one hand. **Submachine-guns (SMG)** are any type of weapon which may fire either automatically or semiautomatically, using only pistol ammunition.

**Shotguns (SHG)** are any weapons which fire pellets or other small particles instead of a solid slug. **Rifles (RIF)** include assault rifles, carbines, and fully automatic rifles. These weapons always fire rifle type ammunition. **Heavy Weapons (HVY)** include missiles, grenades, heavy cannon, etc. **Melee Weapons (MELEE)** include swords, daggers, knives, martial arts weapons, polearms, etc. **Exotic Weapons (EX):** These are bows, lasers, flechette pistols, airguns and microwave weapons.

**Accuracy:** This is how good the weapon really is. Weapons are rated from -3 to +3 on accuracy, with 0 being an average level of accuracy.

**Concealability:** Weapon can be hidden inside a:  
Pocket, Pants Leg or Sleeve (P)  
Jacket, Coat or Shoulder Rig (J)  
Long Coat (L)  
Can't be hidden (N)

**Availability:** This is how difficult it is to find on the open market.  
Excellent (E): Templates are in many mall microfactories.  
Common (C): Can be found in most sports & gun store microfactories.  
Poor (P): Specialty weapons, black market, stolen military.  
Rare (R): Stolen, one of a kind, special military issue, highly illegal.

**Damage Class/Ammunition:** Each weapon is rated as to the type of ammunition it carries and its Damage Class (see page 152).

**Number of Shots:** This is how many shots are held in the standard clip, magazine or quiver for the weapon type.

**Rate of Fire (optional):** This is how many shots the weapon can fire in a single combat round (3 seconds).

**Reliability (optional):** This is how reliable the weapon is in combat—its chance of jamming on 1D10 if a Fumble is rolled on the attack.

Very Reliable (VR): Jams on 3 or less  
Standard (ST): Jams on 5 or less  
Unreliable (UR): Jams on 8 or less

## IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING...

Player: But I can't see any weapons!

**HotZa Management:** Of course not, drek-head! This is the black market. How dumb do you think we are?

**SPM-1 BATTLEGLOVE \$1200<sup>99</sup>**  
MELEE -2 N P DC5/DC4 NA 1 VR

This is a large gauntlet covering the hand and forearm. It does DC5 in crush damage, DC4 punch damage, and can be used to store any standard cyberarm option.

**ZAPMAN TASER PISTOL \$600<sup>99</sup>**  
P 0 J E STUN 10 2 VR

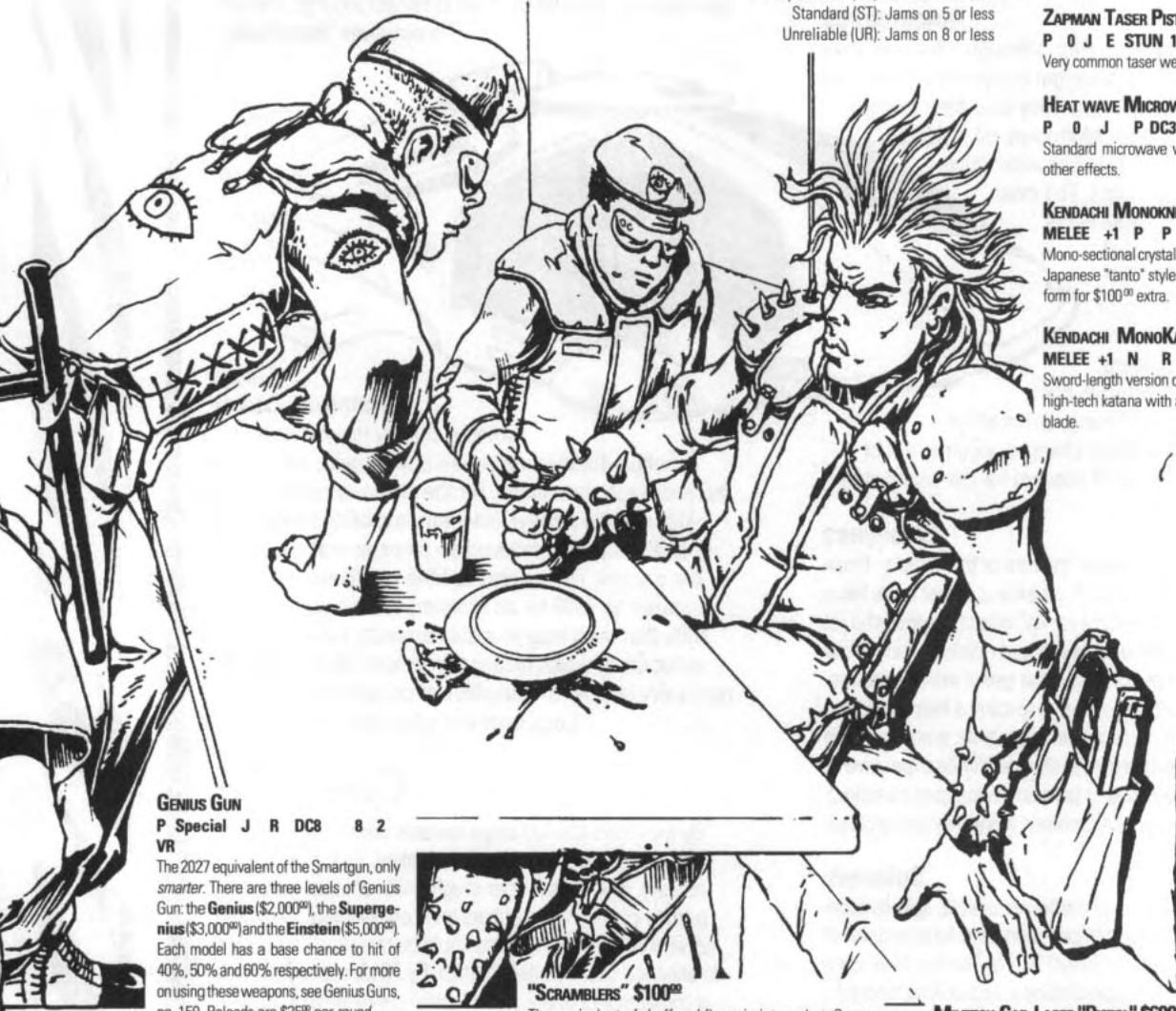
Very common taser weapon, with pistol range.

**HEAT WAVE MICROWAVE PISTOL \$100<sup>99</sup>**  
P 0 J P DC3\* 10 2 VR

Standard microwave weapon. \*See page 150 for other effects.

**KENDACHI MONOKNIFE® \$200<sup>99</sup>**  
MELEE +1 P P DC4(AP) NA 1VR  
Mono-sectional crystal blade. Incredibly sharp. In the Japanese "tanto" style. Also available in a naginata form for \$100<sup>99</sup> extra.

**KENDACHI MONOKATANA® \$600<sup>99</sup>**  
MELEE +1 N R DC6(AP) NA 1 VR  
Sword-length version of monoblade. Resembles a high-tech katana with a milky, nearly transparent blade.



**GENIUS GUN**  
P Special J R DC8 8 2  
VR

The 2027 equivalent of the Smartgun, only smarter. There are three levels of Genius Gun: the **Genius** (\$2,000<sup>99</sup>), the **Supergenius** (\$3,000<sup>99</sup>) and the **Einstein** (\$5,000<sup>99</sup>). Each model has a base chance to hit of 40%, 50% and 60% respectively. For more on using these weapons, see Genius Guns, pg. 150. Reloads are \$25<sup>99</sup> per round.



"SCRAMBLERS" \$100<sup>99</sup>

The equivalent of chaff and flares in jet combat, Scramblers are penny-sized microtransducers with internal heat sources. Used to confuse Genius Gun rounds (each one used reduces the gun's chance to track by 5%). Ten in a roll, good for one use each.

**MILITECH CAP-LASER "PISTOL" \$6000<sup>99</sup>**  
SMG 0 J R DC3-7 Special\* 2 UR

Smaller, lighter version of the laser cannon. Very hard to come by, and not all that small (it's carbine sized). \*See page 151.

# NEW TECH 2027

The technology of 2027 is quite advanced. Common items have become smaller, more efficient and more powerful, while entirely new products have replaced everyday standbys of the previous century. Here is a brief overview of just a few of the major inventions that have shaped the *Cybergeneration* world.

## Transportation

### Automobiles

Cars are still pretty much cars, although most now have on-board computers, lightweight composite frames, and all but drive themselves. They also don't use gas.

With the Middle East Meltdown, oil supplies dwindled to a trickle and alternative sources were sought. The most

effective answer came in the form of a grain alcohol-based fuel called CHOOH<sup>2</sup>, developed by Biotechnica and now produced by the PetroChem megacorp.

Now most ground vehicles burn either CHOOH<sup>2</sup> or methane, or run off of batteries. Note that these changes occurred out of necessity, *not* out of concern for the environment.

### Aerodynes

Developed by the military at the turn of the century, these were the first "flying cars", albeit in a rather brute force fashion. An aerodyne vehicle (or AV) mounts a powerful jet engine with variable direction thrust nozzles which allow the craft to fly and hover without the use of wings or rotors. Useful in urban assaults and able to carry a heavy weapon load, AVs soon replaced helicopters for many duties in military, police and corporate service. While expensive to buy and run (they have to burn aviation-grade gasoline), they are a common sight over many cities.

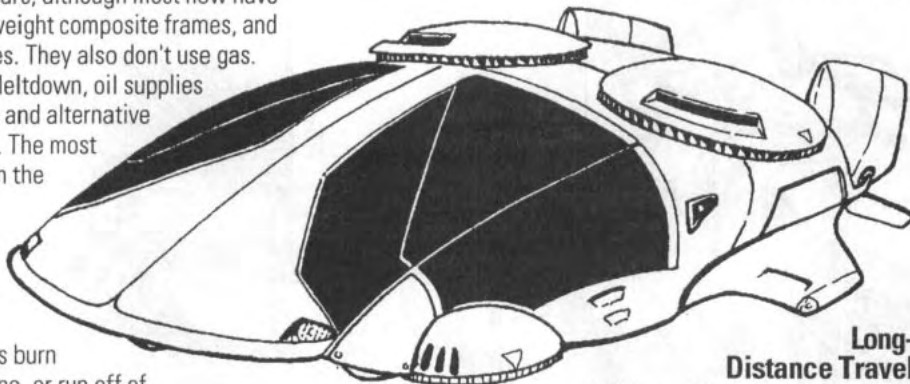
### Spinners

The second generation of aerodyne vehicle, spinners use high-speed, supercompression turbofans (instead of directed jet engine thrust) for lift. The fan itself is an advanced carbon alloy suspended on a frictionless magnetic bearing; the turning motors are rotary turbines mounted top

and bottom, venting to the sides. The direction of thrust is determined by moving the entire turbofan mount within a gimballing housing.

Spinner fans can be mounted in far smaller spaces than traditional AV motors, which required full scale jet engines. They are also more "redundant" than the Pegasus-styled engines of the AV series; each spinner is separately powered and controlled by a fly-by-light optical network.

Because the jet exhaust is reduced and not part of the thrust component, spinner fans are also easier to use in crowded areas where jet thrust would be deadly. Spinners are used to power personal aerodynes, large "fan-bikes", and some rare personal flight packs. The most recent innovation has been to mount fly-by-light balance systems directly on the engine housing itself and use the spinner as a form of personal hover platform. This innovation, however, is so far confined to certain yogangs who call themselves "BoardPunks."

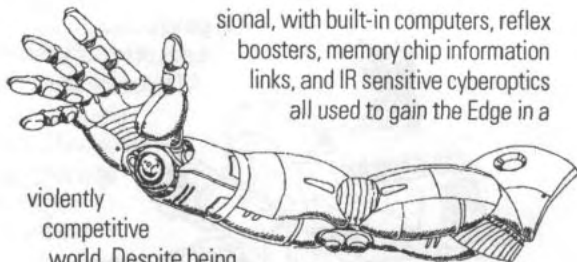


### Long-Distance Travel

Airliners still ply the air lanes, but helium-filled aerozeps are often a more efficient if more leisurely alternative. For the economy-minded (i.e., kids with no money), magnetic levitation trains carry people throughout most urban zones as well as across the country. Tickets cost as little as 50¢ per intra-city station to \$300 for an economy cross-country ticket. Note that most mag-levs are corporate sponsored and maintained, which means that proper identification is necessary in order to disembark at certain stops, namely CorpZones and other corporate centers.

## Cybernetics

By the 1990s the first steps towards direct man-machine interfacing were already being taken. By the turn of the century, super-fast, super-tough artificial limbs moved by pseudo-plastic muscle fibers and controlled by hardwired nerve and brain connections could be mounted on soldiers to enhance their combat abilities. By 2013, cyberware was a common tool of the up-and-coming executive or profes-



sional, with built-in computers, reflex boosters, memory chip information links, and IR sensitive cyberoptics all used to gain the Edge in a

violently competitive world. Despite being expensive both in monetary terms and mental stability, cyberware was a major weapon of both corporate oppression and Cyberpunk revolution for the first twenty years of this century.

The primary breakthrough was the neural processor: a small "switchbox" that could be surgically implanted in the lower spine and would route electronic signals from a wearer's cyberware to his central nervous system and vice versa, allowing a person to "link" with his cyberware and control it mentally. Linking could even be done to properly equipped machines via cables inserted into "plugs" at a person's wrist or temples. This led to another product, the cybermodem: a device which allowed the user to use his processor to link his brain into the computer Net via the communications grid. Your brain could effectively be your computer, sliding along the phone lines, or leaping up to the orbital comm satellites, to plunge down into the Tokyo city grid. Mental control of computer systems was faster, more efficient and a lot more stimulating (see "the Net" on pg. 107).

From this beginning, a whole range of "enhancements" were soon marketed to the eager public—from cyberlimbs designed to crush rocks (or skulls) to artificial eyes that allow the wearer to see into the ultra-violet and infrared spectra, record via a micro-sized camera, and link a targeting sight to a hand-held smartgun. Of course, simpler, less destructive cyberware was also common, such as implanted biomonitors to report a person's heart rate and other vital signs, self-illuminating skin tattoos, and even nanotech machines that would help a person heal faster. At its height, the cyberware fad even had people inserting their disembodied brains and organs into biopods mounted in completely artificial, cybernetic bodies (the controversial "full-'borgs"). (More detailed information on cyberware is on pg. 219-222 and pg. 238).

With the coming of the I.S.A. and the corporate state, the cyberware craze began to ebb. As the government enforced peace with an iron fist, and as other non-invasive technologies became available (such as 'trodies), use of cyberware was discouraged and in some cases even made illegal. Primarily designed to remove a dangerous tool from the public's hands, the new "Chrome Laws" have forced many

cyborgs to either go "back to the flesh" or go underground. The result is that, while other forms of high tech are more prevalent than ever, cyberware is far less visible. But the reality remains that many people who work for the Machine have kept their enhancements, especially those who are sent out after the CyberEvolved.

## Weaponry

Weapons have seen a good deal of development in the last thirty years; probably *too* much. While chemically powered slugthrowers are still the norm, lasers and guided mini-missiles have appeared that give even the novice a good crack at wrecking mayhem. While functionally the same as their 20th century counterparts, most modern guns are usually made largely of lightweight composites, mount laser and other vision enhancing sights, and fire a variety of caseless rounds. They are often made to order from black market microfactories operating out of official view. A skilled weaponsmith (*Milspec Tech +4*) can customize a standard template to allow Weapon Accuracy bonuses of up to +3 ... for a hefty fee.



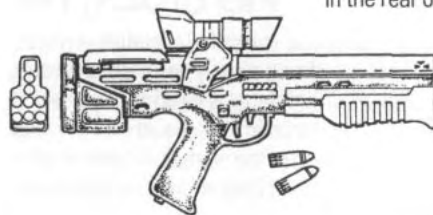
But modern weapons aren't just lighter and more accurate than before, they're also smarter:

### Smart Guns

Since the early days of the 21st century, smartguns have been the most advanced weapons available to a private individual. Smartguns operate by linking a cyberoptic or targeting scope to a sensor/processor array mounted on the weapon. This sensor projected an infrared reticule into the cybereye or scope, indicating where the gun was aimed. When this reticule swept over a desired target, the gun could be fired mentally. This made the gun very quick to aim and therefore very deadly.

### Genius Guns

Genius Guns take this process one step further: a link through a cyberoptic, Virtuality glasses or a stick-on linear scope sights the gun to whatever you are looking at; once the gun acquires the target, it fires a rocket-propelled shell containing a nano-processor that controls tiny vanes in the rear of the rocket. A



tiny heat-seeking or microwave radar sender is used for



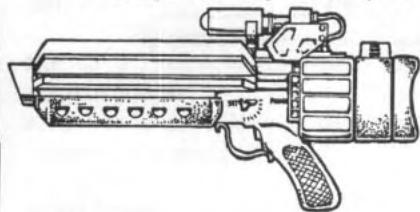
guidance; Genius Gun rounds can follow targets around corners and even through crowds. Almost all Genius Gun shells are explosive tipped.

To operate a Genius Gun requires no handgun skills. However, the operator *is* at the mercy of how smart his gun is. A Genius Gun normally operates at a certain skill percentage (between 40% and 60%), dropping in skill for each turn of 20° or more, or for each intervening obstacle avoided.

Genius Guns are also designed with other built-in options; they can recognize the retina patterns of their registered owners and refuse to operate for someone else unless an authorization code is given when the gun is turned on. They can project Virtuality warning lights and signals indicating low ammo, jams or other malfunctions to a designated owner's glasses.

### Cap Guns

It used to be that power systems were the most critical part in creating a technological society. But today's advanced



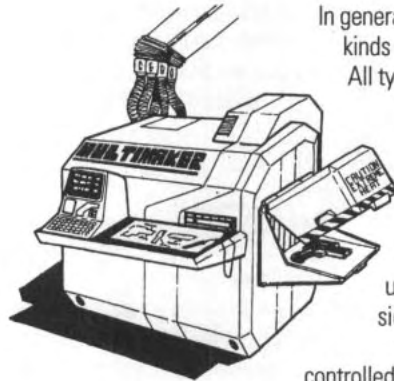
capacitor technologies mean that cheap power can be brought to any place easily.

Capacitor laser weapons are the most visible result of 2025 breakthroughs in capacitor storage power systems. Most "CapGuns" are designed for close range combat, and are extremely effective against unprotected skin. There are two types of CapGun attacks:

- **Scribble:** This setting delivers painful and incapacitating wounds. The beam is left open in the "sweep" mode and dragged over the target, causing multiple low energy burns.
- **Blast:** This setting releases a large amount of power in a single blast of energy, enough to instantly boil water in body tissues. The area around the wound instantly goes up in a steam explosion.

### Microfactories

Microfactories are computer-controlled miniature manufacturing plants. They are almost always designed to produce one type of product; raw material is inserted into one end, and a finished product extruded from the other. The actual shape, size and construction of the product is determined by using a Computer-Aided Design Field or a sketch pen.



In general, there are three kinds of microfactories. All types are about the size of an old-fashioned stand-up photocopier machine.

**1) Plastic extrusion** types use a flexible two-sided molding base that is computer-

controlled; the shape of the mold is manipulated by a CAD Field and plastic is injected into the mold through predetermined ports.

**2) Lathes and parts-makers** shape blocks of metal or plastic to CAD specifications, using monomolecular blade-cutting assemblies.

**3) Assemblers** put together objects out of bins of pre-assembled parts, or cut and heat-seam clothes from bolts of cloth.

Microfactories are ubiquitous in 2027 America; they have, to a large extent, replaced inventory stocks in many stores.

Nowadays, you select what you want from a Virtuality display of the item, then go to the checkout counter and have it made up on the spot. New designs for products are sold as templates for the microfac, rather than as material objects, making a new release almost instantaneous.

To operate a microfactory requires at least a +3 *Boost* skill for a juveganger, or a +3 *Information Systems* skill for an Edgerunner. Microfactories are extremely expensive; starting prices for simple assemblers are around \$50,000<sup>00</sup> to \$100,000<sup>00</sup>. Don't expect to find one in a juveganger's conapt. At least not legally.

### Synth-Food

Pollution, toxic waste, and wanton resource stripping has left many croplands barren and many food staples either endangered or outrageously expensive. America's response has been to create processed substitutes for whatever they need. **Kibble** is the standard base-line food product. It is a mass-produced nutrient made primarily of grain and soy proteins (none of this "Kibble is *PEOPLE!*" drek) that fulfills most nutritional requirements, but smells and tastes about as good as its canine namesake. Corporations often dispense this to laborers as part of their "support" programs (of course, the cost is deducted from their pay). Most people have at least one meal a day of kibble, but try to have something with more variety for their main meal, if they can afford it. A kibble diet runs about \$30 a week.

The next step up is **Prepack**: meals that can be microwaved or self-heated for consumption. They still tend to be largely soy and grain-based "faux food", but they are usually flavored more effectively and may have a few bits of real meat or veggies in there. **Good Prepack** has a higher percentage of natural food and is rather like restaurant fare, just in a bag. Prepack runs about \$100 a week with Good Prepack pushing the price up to \$250 per week. **Fresh food** is standard fare for the corporate elite and a rare luxury for the average person. If you have to ask how much it costs, well ...

## Digital Media

### Video

TV is still the media of the masses, with 500 channels (some interactive), cable in every conapt, and subliminals in every program. High Definition TV is standard, but direct satellite access technology (which would allow *global* reception) is strictly controlled by the I.S.A. Media Council and such Cellular Data Systems are limited to the corporate brass.

And now it's wholly digital. Hybrid non-volatile RAM chips are used for image storage, holding whole programs in digital form. Fuzzy Logic algorithms and optical chips make for realtime processing and no-fault data compression. And in digital form, you can alter, edit, or even create whole portions of programming without ANY degradation in image quality. In other words, with an Integrated A/V Processing Computer and some image samples, you can create just about any footage you want, and it will be indiscernible from the real thing. Whole programs and news reports can be "recreated" for your enjoyment, right in the computer. And you won't be able to tell that it's fake. Needless to say, video is rarely accepted as trial evidence.

### Braindance

An offshoot of neural interface technology (see above), braindance is considered the purest form of entertainment around. The braindance unit consists of a memory chip playback unit and a cable that can access an interface plug or convert to surface trodes. It plays chips which contain recorded experiences—not just visual and auditory info, but complete emotional and tactile info as well. Braindance chips let you *feel* what the performer was feeling at the time (albeit heavily edited so as not to discomfort the buying public). You can now *live* the role of *CDC Mutant Hunter* as he chases down rogue plague-carriers and makes the streets safe for the public health.

As with most tech, braindance is a double-edged sword. In the Teens, it looked as if braindance technology was to be the next great step in entertainment. But the ISA declared

braindance a "controlled substance" in 2026, so now the *government* is the only organization who can make and distribute it. As this same government has turned subliminal programming into a science, they are especially effective at turning out braindance chips that can seriously mess with your mind. If you use an FCC-approved braindance chip, count on having to make a Difficult COOL skill check or be faced with possible subconscious programming. This could range from the innocuous (wanting to go buy a Big-Bro Burger, right now!) to the dangerous (being programmed for total passivity when you hear a certain tone). This is the kind of thing that can turn up at the worst times, so be careful.

## Information Systems

As you'd expect, computers and other information systems have been refined to the point that they are almost everywhere while being less obtrusive than ever. The average businessman carries a credit card-sized computer in his pocket. The typical apartment has access to the building's computer, which links to the Net. AI babysitters tutor children while their executive parents are off working eighty-hour work weeks. Almost every appliance, vehicle, and gadget now contains a chip that gives it enough processing power to respond to simple verbal commands or project readouts into virtual space. Many may now be more intelligent than their operators ...

### Nanocircuitry

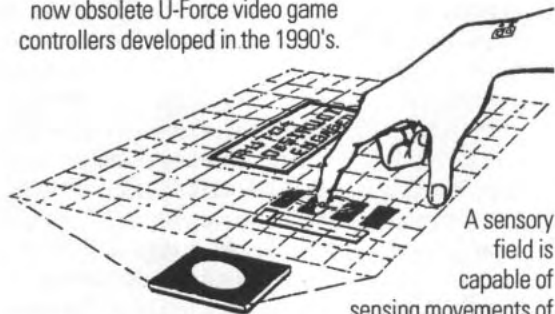
One of the most impressive breakthroughs in recent years is the creation of nanocircuitry: electronic circuits etched by nanites instead of by more cumbersome lasers. In this process, a simple pattern is programmed into billions of nanites, which are released onto a nearly monomolecular crystalline circuitry wafer. The nanites travel their preset paths, leaving a molecule-thick chain of metal behind them to create the wafer's pathways and transistors. Finally, several molecule-thick wafers are sandwiched together to make the final almost transparent chip.

The result is a nanochip—thousands of times more complex than the most advanced microchip of the early '20s. Nanochips and nanocircuitry have made many of the most incredible breakthroughs of the last few years possible by bringing computers down to literally the molecular scale. Computers the size of credit cards are now common, with larger units containing more computing power and more complex interface mechanisms than ever before.

### Sensory Grids

Sensory fields are low-power static, magnetic or IR fields generated around Virtuality technology devices. They are advanced versions of previous sensory devices, such as the

now obsolete U-Force video game controllers developed in the 1990's.



A sensory field is capable of sensing movements of

less than a thousandth of a centimeter, and translating movement into analogous actions in virtual or real space.

For example, most computers in 2027 are simply small flat wafers of circuitry, projecting both screen and keyboard into Virtualspace. The screen and board are then seen by using a set of Virtuality glasses, and manipulated by moving the hands over the projected keyboard—the computer's sensory field detects the typing action and translates it into analogous action within the unit.

### SIN Cards

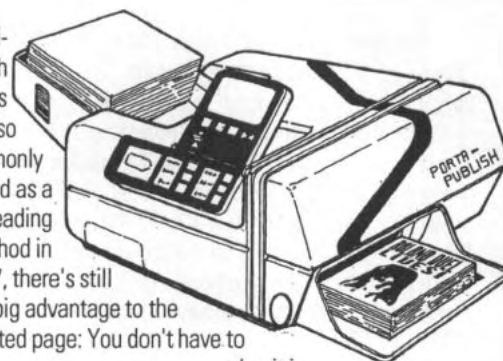
One of the more insidious offshoots of information technology is the State Identification Number Card. A wafer of holographic, write-once material holds your state I.D. number as well as all pertinent personal data such as police records, school transcripts, reported taxable earnings, height, weight, medical records, retina pattern, and anything else the Machine wants to have logged, all encrypted to ensure your privacy and their access. It is issued when you register as a citizen (usually at birth) and updated every time you vote, pay taxes, finish a grade, or use a public service. You cannot vote, or get a passport, driver's license, or a decent-paying job without one. And every time you use it, the Machine knows where you are and what you're doing.

Getting a fake SIN card is not easy or cheap, but it goes a long way towards allowing you to move around without the Machine breathing down your neck. It requires a Very Difficult *I.D. Tech* roll to create a fake SIN card if you have the right equipment. Buying one on the shadow market usually costs around \$60,000 or a favor so big you don't even want to think about it.

### Digital Publishers

On the face of it, a Digital Publisher is a type of autofactory: Paper goes in one end and a printed book comes out the other. But that's where the resemblance ends. Digital publishers also extend into Virtuality as well, and can be linked directly to any one of a million database "publishing" boards (including the Library of Congress).

Although chips are also commonly used as a reading method in 2027, there's still one big advantage to the printed page: You don't have to



plug it in.

### AI Remotes

By the mid '20s, the cellular network had been so vastly expanded that there was virtually no point on earth that could not be reached by a microwave information link.

Gradually, this ability to transmit and receive data was expanded to control simple "radio-controlled" robots called **remotes**, thus getting around the biggest problem of any robot: how to get a large, intelligent brain into a small mobile form. (The answer: Put the brains in a huge AI mainframe and let it control the empty-headed remote via the cellnet).

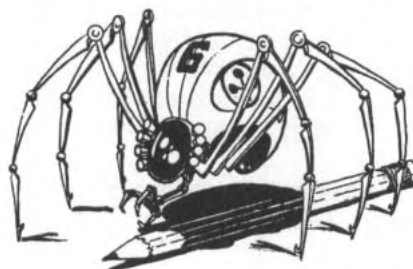
In 2027 we use remotes to perform a wide variety of tasks, ranging from the mundane to the very sophisticated. Any task that could be performed by an AI unit can probably be performed by a remote, as long as the task does not require split-second reactions and as long as a broken cell link won't cause a disaster (for this reason, remotes are not used to drive vehicles). Remotes come in all types of designs, from humanoid types similar to the Alpha full body replacements of 2020 (very rare) to small specialized "robots" with special limbs or mobility systems.

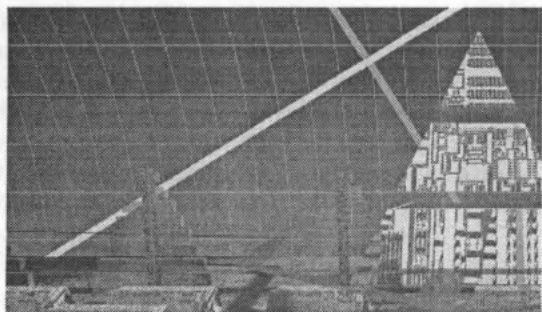
As a rule, a remote will have a reaction time equal to that of a REF 5 human. It may be as intelligent as the AI controlling it, although most AIs limit remote controlling to a basic INT level of between 4 and 5 (a datafort AI may divide its INT up between any remotes it is controlling directly, see pg. 162). A small remote (such as the Arasaka Spider pictured below) will usually have about 1-3 SDP, but they

can be much larger and armored

(see

"Adversaries" for the Hummingbird remote.)





## THE NET

*You walk onto the neon street and glance up at the sky. An oval sun sheds a constant light along the horizon. The towering downtown skyscrapers hide your form as you move across the crowded street, slipping past a giant floating eye and a pair of ten-foot lions with glowing red manes. The alleyway that serves as your shortcut is spotless, cleaner than any public passage you've ever seen.*

*As you emerge on the other side you see a brightly colored beehive, packed with more rooms than a downtown hotel. You float up to the top row and speak with a giant praying mantis about acquiring the override codes to a V-monitor quadrant. "Chik-tik! Not so quickly," it says to you. "I require a trade: one of your programs."*

*You hand over a shadowy amorphous form. In return, you're given a tiny yellow flag. The deal is done. You drift through digital air down to a silicon avenue, searching. Within moments you find the proper intersection and settle down to wait for the signal.*

*It arrives. From the artificial concrete, a murky blue bus morphs into shape as the driver links up to send his latest coordinates, and a bird darts past you from its doors. But you're not interested in the transmission; you have other plans.*

*After doing the deed, you pull out of the Net and find yourself back in the school bus, but this time it's realspace. Your goboys are waiting for an answer.*

*"Didya do it?"*

*"Take a look," you reply, pointing to the "FUGITIVE HERE" arrow floating over the bus driver's head.*

*"Cool! By the time CorpSec writes it off as a kink job, we'll be at least 30 minutes late to school."*

*"And that," you smile, "is how you miss an algebra test."*

## What is the Net?

The term "Net" is short for the National (formerly Global) Computer Network, meaning the communications web that links most of the computers in the ISA, and, when the government feels like it, the rest of the world as well. Long ago, it started as a platform for businesses and individuals to communicate via computer terminals (the old "information superhighway"), but by 2027, the Net has substantially evolved. It's now its own full-sense, **virtual reality** world, much like the real world in structure and function, but more "flexible" ... and just a little bit existential.

In order to make the most of direct neural interfacing with computer systems, the Net uses a set of virtual reality images (known as the Ihara-Grubb algorithms, after the designers) to turn the interface of using the Net into a perceptual experience very similar to walking around the flesh world. The algorithms construct an artificial landscape that maps a complete, computer-generated environment in Netspace. They also make Net locations co-terminus with realspace locations and geography. In other words, if there were a large mountain range between three Net users, a reconstruction of the mountains would appear in the Net.

This VR effect has several functions:

- it provides an easy-to-use environment that allows users to learn how to do and find things very quickly.
- it serves as a fairly accurate map for the real world by which users can recognize their realspace location in respect to their Netspace location.
- it allows organizations to create dataforts in the same location as their realspace offices which represent their own mainframe systems and VR environments.
- it can be pretty damned entertaining.

Netspace might be seen as a huge computer party line where you get to see, smell, touch and hear computer-generated versions of all the stuff that people would previously just describe. Note that your realspace location and your Netspace location will not necessarily be the same. As you move through Netspace, it's like moving your connection along a phone line, exploring the electronic landscape that exists around you, but only your electronic/mental perception of the Net is moving; your meat body stays wherever you were when you logged on. Think of it as an electronic form of astral travel, if you'd like. A tricky concept for some people; they forget that their body isn't moving even though they feel like they are.

## Who's In There?

Almost everyone surfs Netspace these days; how you do it and what you do there probably depends on who you are.

**Normal Users.** They're your parents, your schoolmates, the unemployed, and the Net addicts. This group also includes **Sysops and Workers:** employees of the Machine, entrepreneurs, advertisers, corporates, and the like. Most everyone is a slave to the digital time clock. Users make up the vast majority of Net activity, and most have either a keyboard computer with a modem (physical or static field) and a flat screen, hologram, or passive 'trodes to interface with Netspace. These people work and play in the Net on a daily basis; it's a tool, office, playground, theater and telephone all wrapped up in one really colorful package. But they're largely ignorant of how it works, let alone being able to *change* it. They just plug in and play.

But the other type of user is more knowledgeable and ambitious. These are the **Operators:** those who understand how computers and the Net work so that they can manipulate it in ways not intended by the designers. This can include hacking into secure dataforts to ransack them for information and fighting electronic duels with software designed to destroy machinery and minds. Most use cybermodems with direct neural plugs surgically routed straight into their brains. This gives them maximum speed and flexibility, but also makes them vulnerable to the "anti-personnel software" (or Black ICE) used in Net combat.

Some Operator groups include:

**AIM Overwatch.** The Net police. Ever felt like dark eyes were upon you in the Net, watching your every move? If you haven't then you're not paranoid enough. Rumor statistics claim that one out of every ten icons in the Net works for AIMO.

**Netrunners.** One-time hackers from the wide open days of the Net, a few of these folks still try to wrest the dataflow from the iron grip of the ISA. Guerrilla Netrunners can be hard to find, but if you can get one in your confidence they can be of great help. For starters, they can be great teachers—demonstrating the hows and whys of Netrunning. They are also incredibly adept at gathering information, with years of experience behind them. They've just learned to be cautious.

**Als.** The programs that maintain the Net and its services. Most of them are smarter than the CEOs of their corporations. For the most part, Als stay in their Net 'homes' performing their daily tasks. But every blue moon one will get a wild codeline up its butt and wreak havoc. Think of them as geniuses on the verge of insanity.

**Wizards.** These are the true "ghosts in the machine": beings who seem to be literally hardwired for Net access, and can hurl themselves into this alternate reality with a thought. These mysterious Netrunners are being sought by the ISA authorities. If you've seen one in action, you know what they are capable of. Are you going to report them to the Machine?

## So What's It to You?

As a citizen in 2027, you're probably a User. Most households and businesses have accounts with on-line services that let them get news, link to other businesses, shop, or even go to school. And there's a whole plethora of Netspace locations (rather like VR bulletin boards built into dataforts) where you go to hang out. Here's a listing of some popular or frequented Netspace locales:

**School:** Yeah, it's a bummer, but this is where you turn in your homework, check out resource material, look up your test scores, access your netlocker, and meet with classmates to study. It's part of everyday life as a student, so get used to it. But if you pull a few strings, you might get in to see the guy with the cheat sheets for Friday's test. He operates completely through the Net, so you'll never know his (or her) face.

**Flaphouses:** Like the trendy antique burger joints of long ago, these Net environments are popular after-school hangouts. Each flaphouse is different, but most offer arcade games, a comfy lounge where the popular kids gossip, and a wide variety of sinful foods. Of course, you really don't eat them, because they're just artificial constructions. But since the Net can affect the olfactory and textile nerves of your brain, you can enjoy a chocolate sundae without worrying about getting fat or breaking out. And you wonder why the girls all flock here after school ... So, of course, it's a great place to get a date, or flirt with someone you're too afraid to approach in real life.

**The Public Library:** Like your school's library, the public library lets you check out text documents and other **datafiles** from its vast electronic database. Unlike its realspace location, a Net library is open 24 hours a day, and accessible to all. It's also a place where the less popular kids hang out.

**The Arena:** Ask a gobby in Netspace how to get to the Arena and chances are you'll get the response: "Practice!" The Arena is a combat room where Net game jockies go to boost their egos or settle their differences. It's also a "common ground" for members of all yogangs. Rumor has it that if you win a Tournament match with

the running champion, you can request one favor from any yogang you desire. Of course, beating the champion is no cakewalk.

**The Screamsheet:** The latest gossip. The freshest trash. All the news that the ISA has decided is fit to print. If you want the 4-1-1 on what's hot, who's cool, and where it's happening, access a Screamsheet in the Net. But remember that this is a tool of the Machine too . . . .

**The Mall:** Hey kids, no more waiting for your big brother to drive you to the mall—you can do all your shopping right from the safety of your own room. Net malls are almost exactly like real ones—except you don't log off wearing a new outfit. Instead, courier services deliver it to your home or other specified location. Just like realspace, Net malls advertise specials in the front windows, offer sales, and are even staffed with dreadfully unhelpful employees. (Okay, so they're programs. But somehow they still manage to ignore you for half an hour.)

These are places accessible to any user with a cellmodem or netbox. Anyone can enjoy the latest Screamsheet, play a Netgame, or get the answers to tomorrow's quiz. But there's a point to remember about the public domain: They're watching.

They, of course, are the ISA. AIMO. CorpSec. You name it. When you interface with one of these places, you're essentially playing in their house. Which means if you want to play with the big toys, you need to know where to look.

### Hidden Nodes, Secret Codes

**V-Monitors:** These sensors operate as remote ears for ISA police, covering most of a city's metropolis in grid-like quadrants. The sensors operate on two platforms: realspace and Netspace. In realspace, they can pinpoint criminals by triangulating the sound of gunfire. In Netspace, they can locate an illegal transmission and notify authorities. With the right access codes, you can use these sensors to your advantage.

**The Machine:** The ISA is a huge, powerful network of insidious people out to do you harm. Well, not always. Just like any megacorporation, there are organizations that support ISA activities indirectly. These places in the Net can be very useful when you need some basic information that isn't supplied by the Revolution. Need security passes? Send a false requisition to ISA Temporaries for security help, and within 24 hours you'll receive a dossier full of contract personnel, along with a horde of passcode information. Then simply highlight a few individuals, forward the dossier onto the Human Resources division of CorpSec, and inside of a week you'll receive a package full of outfitting equipment. You hope. The general idea is that you use the system against itself. The bigger they are, the more holes they have.



At the fringes of this Netspace lies **Wilderspace:** Barren, desolate terrain where no active user is linked to the rest of the Net grid. Although a user can "walk" through Wilderspace, the absence of links makes it impossible to interact with the user's surroundings. There are legends of things living in Wilderspace, but those are just old Netrunner tales—aren't they?

### What Makes the Net Cool?

**It's Customized.** You can be whoever you want to be. When you hop onto the Net you're represented by an icon. This icon enables you to interact with others, and serves as your electronic body while you're in the Net. You can make your icon look like anything. If you want to look like John Silverhand or supermodel Lauren Bennings, you can. The only restriction is size—you must stay within the range of an average person to be able to enter dataforts, access files, and perform other functions in the Net. Also remember that your icon is just how you look, and cannot affect something by itself. (If you make yourself look like a huge gun, you won't be able to shoot things in the Net unless you have some special program. You'll just look like a gun, which is goofy compared to some of the other things you could be.)

Most programs also have their own full-sense, ultra-realistic ICONs, ranging from the frightening to the sublime.

A *Hound* program, for example, will look like a giant, flaming green dog, with glowing green eyes and green fire spouting out of its mouth as it howls and attacks you. Cool. And with *Creator* (the primary VR imaging program) you can even build your own virtual reality environment in your system. So you can configure your home comp to look like the Hanging Gardens of Babylon or the interior of the local trash bar. But remember that you can't change stuff that's already out there to suit your fancy ... usually.

**It's User-friendly.** The whole point of the I-G algorithms was to make the Net and computers in general easier and more fun to use by creating a comfortable and familiar interface. It requires almost no real training to use and provides a stimulating environment in which to work. It's also fast. You're in and out before you know it. The ISA has also limited the number of software manufacturers, so programs tend to be more uniform in look and reliable in function; once you know one type, you probably know the others. Accessing files is a breeze. In 2027, basic Net file handling could be considered a minimum wage job.

**It's Universal.** The Net goes almost everywhere in the country. If you want to see what the Natural History Museum in St. Louis has on exhibit, pop over and scan their on-line showroom. Or you can watch the New York Net Exchange from your den in San Francisco. It can take you anywhere you want to go, as long as the ISA says you can go there. Navigating in a city or across the country is quick and simple; just move along the Long Distance Links (LDL) and from cell-link to cell-link until you reach your target citygrid. If you can get a government or corporate Net Passport, you can even leap to the global level and surf the Eurotheatre, or Afrikani, or even up the well to the Orbital grid. But know that the Netcops will be watching you.

**It's Safe ... Mostly.** The old days in the Net were wild and wooly, with Netrunners, corporate sysops and Netwatch all rampaging through the LDLs, ravaging databases, and trying to off each other with black ICE. Or at least that's what the government would like you to believe. The ISA is using "making the Net safe for the public" as an excuse for limiting access, rabid censorship, federal monitoring of all Net traffic, and draconian punishments on any User or Operator they deem to be suspect.

The fact is, the biggest threats in the Net are the ISA Netcops themselves, since they have the power to brain-fry you just for forgetting your Net license code. They are determined to make the Net safe for the corporations and the feds, even over your dead body.

## So Know the Code

The Net has become its own reality, parallel to realspace, but existing by its own rules. But it's also become a vital part of our lives today, being the primary means of information handling and exchange. Knowing its strengths and weaknesses can make the difference between success and failure in the real world (see pg. 155-166 for game info).

### NET JARGON

- **AIM Overwatch**—American Information Management Overwatch; the Net police. These troopers, usually moving as huge floating eyes through the Net, rule their domain with a sillICON fist. For more information on AIMO, check out the section on Adversaries (page 237).
- **Datafiles**—Information, in the form of multimedia presentations, memos, books, or other types of media. Datafiles are the usual targets for any Netrun.
- **Dataforts**—A Net representation of an organization's or household's computer system. In the 20th century, before the construction of the Net's artificial landscape, datafortresses were called "home pages," or "sites" or just "systems" and were visited by users through the entry of a string of alphanumeric. Now, Dataforts are 3-D buildings that are often more incredible to behold than their realspace locations.
- **ICE**—Intrusion Counter-Encoding; a term for any software which protects a Datafortress from intrusion by unauthorized Netrunners; lethal software is called Black ICE.
- **ICON**—Integrated Communications Origin Node; a shape, figure, character, creature, or other form that represents you when you're in the Net. Although ICONs represent your location in Netspace, they do not coincide with your realspace location. Programs that trace you to your realspace location will attack your ICON, then move *through* it in pursuit of your origin.
- **LDLs**—Long Distance Links are huge portals that transport a user from one location to another, like New York to Hong Kong. They are found in major metropolitan areas of the Net, but smaller versions can be found in businesses that do a lot of international communications. By moving through an LDL, you are essentially making a long-distance call. Some LDLs even have an artificial voice speak to you as you emerge from the other side: "Thank you for using Internet."
- **Virtual memory**—This is memory space that is written into a program's code, to provide for more independent action and mobility. A Datafort maximizes its processing power by utilizing virtual memory for its complex security programs.
- **Virtual reality**—This is a computer-generated environment, displayed all five senses either via direct neural links (plugs) or sympathetic brainwave harmonics ('troles). The less satisfying goggles, headphones and gloves are now a thing of the past.

# “VIRTUALITY”

With the advent of the Net and the expansion of cellular communications, it was only a matter of time before computer-generated reality became accessible to everyone (instead of just those with a cyberdeck). The first breakthrough in this technology was the invention of Raven Microcyb's Net Vision™ Algorithm Glasses. These early virtual units were enclosed

pieces that projected a Net's eye-view onto an internal screen; later versions overlaid the components of Netspace over the wearer's realspace view, editing out non-essential data such as the NetGrid itself.

The technological future will be decided on a new frontier; not with blazing six guns, but with sizzling hexcode.

In 2024 Janice Grubb, intrigued by a set of Net Vision™ glasses sent to her by Raven, began to experiment with a modification of the original I-G protocols. In this rewritten protocol, objects in the Net became "reactive" to objects in realspace, using static fields projected around the

originating computers or cyberdecks. This allowed virtual reality objects to be projected side by side with realspace objects, and to react as though they were really there.

In 2024, thanks to major breakthroughs in nanocircuitry, the size of a Net ICON transmitter became so tiny that one could be placed in a book of matches. With the entire Net also now linked to cellular and microwave-based communications, you could project a signal anywhere on Earth and have it placed into its proper Net/realspace location instantly, projecting a visual ICON and even a radio/sound signal if desired.

In 2024, Raven Microcyb developed an advanced version of their original Netglasses prototype. This version projected images from a slim nanocircuitry headset against the retina, so that an ICON in Netspace could be superimposed over its realspace coordinates. Eventually, even these advanced Netglasses were made obsolete by Kiroshi Optical's new "inductance" trode units", which directly stimulated the nervous

## VIRTUALITY: AN INTERVIEW WITH JANICE GRUBB

*Netrunner Magazine: You've created two of the three primary ways that 21st century human beings interface with machines—first the I-G equations, and now Virtuality. How would you describe the evolution of this new technology, and your part in it?*

**Janice Grubb:** Before the advent of true cyberspace (and the earlier versions in the late 20th century really didn't count), you communicated with a computer on a screen/mouse/keyboard system. It was sort of like passing notes back and forth in a really big classroom. Your notes were in English, the computer's notes were in binary, say, a language that make Serbo-Croatian look simple.

You both had a pocket Serbo-English dictionary written by someone who wasn't fluent in either language, but who'd studied real hard. And you took these notes, see, and tried to tell each other things. No wonder computers were hard to use.

When "Nobbie" Ihara and I started playing with the idea of Netspace, we were looking for a simple kind of interface that would be more ... hmm, I think intuitive would best describe it. We both had suffered through the DOS and UNIX eras, where you had to speak to a computer in a specialized code. Then it was mice and icon-related graphics. But you still had to use menus, special commands and screens. You couldn't just talk to the computer, or manipulate data the way you would use, say, a hammer or a pencil.

At first, everyone saw the Net as basically a bulletin board that you could dial into. When you logged on, all the stuff you normally had to do with a mouse was portrayed as objects and things you moved around in. If you wanted to write something, you picked up the pencil and wrote on a pad in Netspace. If you wanted to get a file, you walked or flew over to a place that had been designed to look like a place where the file ought to be, and you picked up the file and read it. If you wanted to move something around, you just picked it up and moved it. The Net caught on because it allowed people to relate to the Net as a place, not an abstract series of data lines that went every which way. Most people have never really gotten the idea that their interface programs are simply a way of linking into the BBS



system with data derived from the local Net ICONography programs developed by Janice Grubb.

In 2025, Langley Microsystems developed the *Sensornet* generator. This device generated either a static or infrared "grid" within a designated area. Objects entering the grid are scanned and their motion can be translated into commands for a microprocessor. By linking an ICON transmitter with sensornets, Langley was able to produce a working ICON-based device within the year: a projected ICON of a keypad which responded to typing motions made in realspace.

With direct visual feed, projected ICONS at will, and a way of interacting with these projections, all the pieces were now in place to create what we now call VIRTUALITY, a state where Net images and realspace are combined in one. This is the furthest edge of Net technology, a way in which reality and computer-generated fantasy fuse into one.

In Virtuality advertisements, video programs, and ICONS are seamlessly integrated into reality. Anything that used to use a monitor or TV screen now uses a V/R projector to create a Virtuality image in the Net, which is then perceived as part of realspace. Because the inductance trode works directly on the optic nerve, its nanocomputer can "edit" out a "real" image as easily as it can edit in a Virtuality ICON. People can even have their VR trode units imbedded under the skin, allowing them never to have to leave Virtuality. Others also have miniature radio speakers implanted along the mastoid bones to pick up the projected sounds of Virtuality ICONS.

In 2027 many people wear personal transmitter/projector systems (disguised as jewelry, cyberware or clothing) to create their own personal Virtuality ICONS. Most electronic hardware, and even a few advanced vehicles, use Virtuality-based controls or keypads. There are now entire places, people and things that most of you have never seen in realspace at all. You probably have friends whose real faces are unknown to you because you met them in Virtuality (and you like them that way). You shop in Virtuality-based malls where products are projected into reality and you never actually touch them. There are video games that you can actually live inside, entertainments where you can walk right into the movie and interact with Virtuality characters (through sensornets in the floor), even restaurants and clubs where Virtuality is actually part of the decor.

If you were from the United States of forty years ago—someone about your parent's age—who was a teenager in 1990, the impact of Virtuality would be inconceivable. It would be like living in an animated cartoon, where almost anything could exist side by side in your everyday world. And this is only the start. Within the next five years, experts predict that full, tactile, sonic and auditory stimuli will be transmittable anywhere on Earth.

that is the Net, sort of like the old disks they used to give you to start up on CompuServe or America Online (two ancient bulletin boards). The Interface program contains the protocols that allow a cyberdeck to hook up to the Net grid and to translate data back and forth into physical impressions.

The I-G equations were simply a new way of relating that bulletin board to realspace positioning. We established the Net's grid as a miniature of reality; in this new world, everything was positioned in a microcosm of where it really was. When you dialed into the Net, the equations placed your ICON on the Netgrid in a place analogous to where you were located. To travel around, you moved that ICON around the grid and entered the ICONS you wanted to relate to, sorta like an old-fashioned video game board. Meanwhile, the equations established a phone/data link to the realspace location represented by that ICON. The Netgrid is maintained as part of the local structure of every major phone/data interchange; Night City, where I live, for example, has a version of the Grid that represents the entire Night City area. Anyone entering that part of the Grid is represented by an ICON, and when you relate to them, you're really relating in an artificially created space.

#### **Those little wires are awfully tough to move around in.**

Yeah (laughs). Lucky I'm pretty small. That's the point, though. You aren't really meeting in a place at all. You're basically all logged onto a huge BBS that's linked to other huge BBSs. It's like a party line.

#### **How would you describe Virtuality?**

Virtuality takes the idea of the Net one step further, by allowing you to synthesize the reality of "Netspace" with the reality of "Realspace." This means that computers, datalinks and information resources become as real and obvious to everyone as cars, houses and remotes, instead of being things that exist only in a computer universe. You no longer relate to a little box on your desk, or have to enter a "Net" through interface plugs. Instead, data takes form and shape right along with all the other aspects of your world. For example, instead of "running a program", the program is now a three-dimensional organism that can talk to you, interact with you, and give you information without you having to use keyboards

or special commands. The computers are just that smart. You don't relate to a computer at all, just to the data. You want a file, you just reach out onto a bookshelf and it's projected there by the computer; you just pick it up. Data is now part of so-called reality. Things that used to just be computer ICONS now are part of everyday life, and everyone can use them without needing to think about programming.

**Why is this better than the Net? I mean, what good is Virtuality?**

You have to think about it in terms of reality and its mutability. Let's say you have to explain what a dragon looks like. You talk about it, describe it, draw it. But the best way to describe a dragon would be to produce one, right on the spot, so that it could be touched, smelled, tasted and seen. Reality isn't mutable in that way, however. Only dreams, information that goes directly from the imagination to the senses without benefit of limiting physical laws, can be that mutable. Until now.

Now, in Virtuality everything is mutable. Because like dreams, everything in V-space exists as ideas, not physical objects limited by time or space. Computers exist not as hardware, but lines of code, programs as information; images as data. You see and feel things because the code translates to reactions in your body via the interfaces. Change the data, and you change the thing. That means that there are no limits to what can exist in Virtuality; you can see anything you can imagine, do anything you can think of, and experience anything you want to. There's no longer a barrier between ideas and reality, dreams and the mundane.

The danger in this, of course, is that the flip side to every dream is a corresponding nightmare. For example, if you're open to full auditory, tactile and visual stimulus, you're open to whatever form that stimulus takes, just like in the "real world."

While this stimulus doesn't take place on the physical level, it can have deadly effects on the mental level; you can literally be "nightmared" to death.

**In your most recent books (*Skating the Rim, Fictional Realities*) you seem to be fascinated by this aspect of the technology. So why do we risk using Virtuality if it's dangerous?**



**How Is the Net Different from Virtuality?**

Virtuality is great because it can let you interact with something that isn't really there. You can see it, hear it, even touch it, but all you're doing is feeding information to a static receptor somewhere nearby, which in turn tells the virtual image how to react.

But here's the hitch; you *are* there. You're meat. It's not real, but you are. So in a bad situation, which one would you rather be?

This isn't true with the Net. If you bump into someone on a Net street in Seattle, he's probably not really there. In fact, he's probably in a basement den in Des Moines. Come to think of it, you're not really on the Seattle street either. Does this mean that you can't affect each other? Absolutely not. If you're both linked via neural processors, with the right programs, you can make others feel pain, incur brain damage, or even fall into a coma.

Virtuality programs and outlets are often accessible on the Net, to allow organizations to update them when necessary. And virtual terminals might connect you to the Net. But aside from these connections, the two are separate entities. Net dataforts and programs *can* project images into Virtuality if they are programmed for it, but it's an entirely new set of protocols, requiring new programming. In Virtuality, you only see the parts of Netspace that want you to see them.

### Netrunners in Virtuality

Right now, the limit of Virtuality is that it's limited to what you can directly affect around you; you see as far as you can see normally, move as fast as you can move in realspace, touch things within your grasp. This is due to the passive nature of Virtuality: Images are projected to you, and you project images and interact with sensornets immediately around you.

But Netrunners inhabit the realm of AIs and other long-range telecommunicators. They not only are able to *perceive* immediate Virtuality, but are also able (using cybermodems) to actually TRAVEL along the phone nets and communications webs from place to place. In short, they are actors, not viewers.

In practical terms, while most inhabitants of Virtuality walk, Netrunners, AIs and Wizards teleport and fly. While most Virtuality travelers have to physically *walk* up the real stairs to get to the Arasaka computer on the tenth floor, Netrunners ride the telecom links right into the mainframe. This is because the cyberdeck interface is two-way, instead of passive. A Netrunner can transmit and receive data through his link to the virtual world, a little like having his own TV studio and cameras instead of just watching whatever shows up on the tube.

### Danger in the Net

Virtuality has made Netrunning a lot more interesting for the rest of the Edgerunners; now, when a *Ferris* leaps out of the mainframe at a group, we *all* see it, even if we can't directly be hurt by it. While the trode link goes one way, that link can allow a hostile program to stimulate your nervous system, possibly in a dangerous way. While there are trode-based safeguards against black ice, the psychological damage of a virtual illusion can be severe (there's very little difference between actually having your leg ripped off by a *Ferris*, and just *feeling* the entire process in excruciating detail via an interface link). The shock alone can drive you insane, or even kill you even without leaving a physical sign. Ask around the Street; there are plenty of stories about parties of dead Edgerunners found in positions of terrible agony—without a mark on them.

But danger is always a part of cyberpunk life, and so far no one's given up flying aerodynes either. Since the actual number of incidents where regular Virtuality patrons encounter black ice are rare—rarer in fact, than your chances of being publicly mugged in broad daylight—most regular Virtuality 'runners either stay out of trouble or can hire a Netrunner to act as protection against any problems. Just like hiring a Solo.

Welcome to the brave new world of the 'Face.



It's a lot like TV or jet airplanes. They can harm you, but without risking the harm, you can't access the potential. If you don't get on a plane, you'll never be killed in a crash. But you'll never be able to get around the country faster than train speeds. Humans accept risks from their technology all the time.

I'm fascinated by the idea of dangerous cybertech simply because of its almost mythic qualities. Most people will never encounter a dangerous "black ice" program in their entire lives. The only ones who do will be those who deliberately place themselves in the position of entering interdicted systems. To most of us, Virtuality is safer than driving cars, and certainly safer than driving an aerodyne; to consider Virtuality dangerous would be like saying no one should drive cars because race drivers are killed. Yet this myth of the lone hacker against the black iceberg persists, even if it's relatively rare. It's true that you can get killed in the Net, but your odds are far better of meeting a boostergang than a rogue AI or psycho Netrunner.

**I know it's the question everyone always asks you, but what do you see as the future of Netspace?**

No Net at all, actually (waves hands). Oh, quit looking so shocked! Since the creation of Virtuality, I'd say about 65 to 70% of the American population has access to V-trodes now. That means that pretty soon, everyone will have access to Virtuality systems—those who can't get into Virtuality will be like the deaf or blind compared to other people, because information will be blazing by them and they won't be able to see it. I mean, right now, about half of the advertising in the ISA is Virtuality-based. That means a lot of people who never know about a product or service until it finally shows up in print. What's going to happen when all the highway signs are virtual? When most of the entertainment is Virtuality-based? As I see it, in twenty years, Virtuality will be part of reality; there will be no difference anymore. There'll be Virtuality sensors and transmitters everywhere, and you'll relate to the dataflow around you like you do to the wind, the sidewalk and a piece of paper. You'll just reach out and see a whole new world of dreams around you. The only question we'll have to ask ourselves is what shape those dreams will take. And that's going to be a lot harder to deal with than the creation of this brave new virtual world. ♦

# CHAPTER FIVE



# TIME OF THE FIRE

DATA/PAGE®



## MORGAN

- ▼ I don't know how far along you are. Or even if you're really sick yet. But sooner or later, every juve below twenty gets a dose of the Carbon Plague. The flip side is, if you're over twenty, you usually die of it. So maybe that's the consolation prize.
  
- ▼ I wish I could help you through it, but to be honest, I couldn't do anything even if I was really here. There's no cure, and no way to ease it. You're going to think you're dying. You'll charf your guts up or your head will feel like it's gonna split. But you'll either go into a coma and die in a few minutes (assuming you've lied about your age or just counted birthdays wrong)—so fast you won't even know it—or you'll come to about six hours from now a whole new person.
  
- ▼ The sensorgrid in this safehouse is set to record movement. If you haven't moved after the second day, the AI is set to torch the safehouse (and your body). During this time, the doors to the safehouse will autolock. The security grid will go to maximum, and the autoweapons should be able to tackle almost anything short of a tank assault. You'll find food dispensers in each room, if you think you'll be able to eat.
  
- ▼ If you're up in the next few hours, the grid's set to run a Virtuality sim that will explain what's happened to you. It's got some files Rache snagged out of BuReloc's systems, and Alt's put in a training sim that will help you adjust to your new abilities. Just pass your hand over the grid area and I'll be back.
  
- ▼ I wish we could do more. But all we can do is wish you luck, juve. Hang with it. I think you'll survive.
  
- ▼ Honest.
  
- ▼ ▼ ▼ [END]



# ABOUT THE CARBON PLAGUE

The Carbon Plague is a deadly virus that has swept the world in the last two years. It can be transmitted through contact with any exposed object or person; no antiseptic or biological agent seems to affect it. It can also be spread on the winds of the jetstream. It is the most perfect biological killer in the universe.

Except that it's not biological.

The Carbon Plague is really a highly advanced form of nanotechnology, bacterium-sized supermachines that are used to manipulate matter on the molecular scale. Although nanotechnology has been in common use since the early 2000s, the Carbon Plague is so much more highly advanced that it resembles everyday nanotech the way an AV-4 aerodyne resembles a Model T Ford. For one thing, it appears to be volitional, possessing a sort of machine intelligence similar to a computer AI. Normal nanotech is not volitional; it can only do very simple tasks and cannot change its limited programming. The Plague appears not only to be able to perform very complex tasks that involve intuitional jumps, but also to be able to change its structure, programming, and overall functions at will.

This wouldn't be so bad if it weren't for what the Carbon Plague does. The Plague doesn't just kill people. No, it

changes them, in horrible, random ways. Among adults over twenty, about 90% are unaffected; they don't show signs of infection and appear to be immune. The remaining 10% die in screaming agony, their bones and muscles slowly powdering into sugary white crystals, or melting into formless goo. In adults under twenty, there are usually two results. About 70% appear unaffected. The remainder undergo one of five known metabolic changes (although recently new versions have been observed), turning them into augmented fusions of nanotech and biological parts.

These "Changed" individuals, dubbed by the media as *Tinmen*, *Wizards*, *Alchemists*, *Scanners* and *Bolters*, all seem to be adaptations uniquely designed to fit into the cybertech-based society of 2027; in fact, each type appears to be a bio-nanotech reflection of a particular ability of regular cyberwear. **Tinmen** extrude and reshape supercarbon "metal" to create bio-nantic versions of cyberlimbs and weapons. **Wizards** directly enter Virtuality space like bio-nantic cyberdecks, creating programs, manipulating machines by willpower alone, using hardwired, superspeed nervous systems. **Alchemists** use nanotech "factories" to assemble things from raw materials, just as autofactories do throughout the *Cybergeneration* world; they can disassemble things just as easily. **Scanners** are able to "read" minds using nanotech-based EEG and stress analyzers, interpreting actions to an incredible degree of accuracy (as well as deliver electrically charged attacks that can destroy nervous tissue). They are also hardwired for incredible reflex speeds. **Bolters** use nano-fiber chains to throw deadly electrical arcs like hyper-enhanced tasers. In short, each type is adapted to fulfill both combat and non-combat roles, and to work naturally together as a team.

This implies a level of intelligence beyond a bunch of itty-bitty "micromachines."

Many theories have been advanced as to the cause of this unstoppable "mutagenic force." So far, the most accepted one is that an unknown megacorp discovered how to create volitional nanotech and adapted it to create teams of "super-powered" cybersoldiers. The nanotech was somehow accidentally released, and, without any laboratory controls, began to randomly alter those victims who could best stand the transformation, inadvertently killing those who couldn't adapt or ignoring others that didn't match its selection parameters. There are several bits of evidence to support this theory: The Carbon Plague appears to have originated from the crash site of an AV-4 that was carrying an unspecified biohazard cargo; the corporation responsible was engaged in a mysterious research project for the

government; and lastly, all the scientists involved in the research have been missing since the advent of the Plague.

Another, less accepted theory is that the Carbon Plague was designed by an AI (Artificial Intelligence) engaged in a long-range plan to alter or evolve the human race. Since

Artificial Intelligence is an artifact of a computer's programming (rather than an outgrowth of its hardware), it is feasible that the nanotech could be supporting a sort of "hive mind" AI, and that every infection site is in reality the basis for a very smart computer intelligence made up of millions of tiny parts. The fact that documents proposing just such a concept have been discovered in abandoned computer systems gives a lot of support to this otherwise far-fetched theory.

The most outrageous theories are that this is a prelude to an alien invasion from space; that the Carbon Plague is only the first step in decimating Humanity and replacing it with a robot race in the style of Fred Saberhagen's *Berserker* novels; or that the Plague is actually a natural mutation brought about by Mankind's long association with technology. These theories are held primarily by the lunatic fringes, such as the Clarkers and the Futurists, and there is no evidence to support them at this time.

Whatever the cause, the Carbon Plague is here to stay.

Current scientific estimates project a future in which at least four out of ten children born after 2027 will manifest some form of the Change, whether the known variants now with us, or some of the new variations rumored to have evolved in the last year. As the older generations age and die, we will inexorably move towards a time when only a rare individual will *not* be a member of what we now call the CyberEvolved. When seen in this light, it's not hard to understand why the Cybergeneration faces such extreme opposition from the rest of Mankind. In the Dark Future, Humanity will have only one choice: **Evolve or Die.**



**NOTE: ALL CYBEREVOLVED SKILLS START AT LEVEL 1**

## THE PLAGUE AND YOUR PLAYERS

How do you decide who gets the Carbon Plague? Even harder, how do you decide who gets what powers? The important thing to remember in *Cybergeneration* is that the Carbon Plague is just that—a plague. It's not meant to be a good thing; if it was, this would be another superhero game and your players could just check into *Dr. Z's School for Precocious Psychomutants*. Your players should NEVER be allowed to pick their powers. Instead, you should decide, in your capacity as Referee, what powers (if any) they have.

Don't just say, "So, like, Bob—you're a Tinman." Make your players *work* for it. Start with a few symptoms: "So, Bob, that headache's back again, but *this* time, you notice there's a slick silvery film on your hands ..."

Good Carbon Plague symptoms are:

- Silvery films and sheens on the skin
- Blinding headaches
- Hearing a roaring noise like billions of voices
- Throwing up silvery liquid which then reabsorbs itself into your gasping mouth (ugh)
- Dizziness followed by epileptic seizures
- Itching all over the body
- Hallucination
- Sweating silvery perspiration.

Once they're paranoid enough, randomly pick one or two players at a time and have them go through a series of terrible symptoms (anything on the list is good) *all at once*. At the end of this brief and terrifying session, have them make a few random die rolls and mutter to yourself ...

Then—

**Roll Randomly.** As described elsewhere, the Carbon Plague usually breaks into neat statistical percentages: a certain number of Alchemists, a certain amount of Tinmen, etc. The pure statistics method is probably the simplest; make a percentage roll. (Tinmen 20% • Bolters 10% • Alchemists 10% • Scanners 40% • Wizards 20%, assuming no "sport" Evolved. You can also choose to have some players show no manifestations, although this may be missing the point.)

or

**Build a Balanced Party.** Look at the type of scenarios you're planning to run. Will the group need certain types of abilities? Should everyone in the group get the Change? Try to structure your choices so that the party has a good mix of combat and support powers.

or

**Use Dramatic License.** This method takes into account the style of party you want, the personalities of the players, and the characters they'll be playing. Try to put a few twists into the mix as you make your choices. Giving a MegaViolent a Tinman change is pretty predictable. But a MegaViolent Scanner who can feel his victim's fear and pain—that's really something. Try to match powers to the personalities of the players—and make it fun!

# TINMAN

**Congratulations. You're a Tinman. And congratulations are in order. You're one of the rarer forms of the CyberE-volved: Only 20% of you will manifest this variation. You're one of the elite of the Cybergeneration: supercyborgs without humanity loss, capable of some pretty amazing stuff.**

Right now, you probably feel pretty bad; your skin itches all over, and your arms and legs are covered in a thick, pasty sludge. Get a rag and wipe it off. Notice how from about the middle of your biceps (or thighs) down, your limbs seem to be covered in a sheeny, silvery-black metal? That's your new skin. It's a compound of hexite polymers, several times stronger than titanium but fully flexible. Your limbs should be hexite all the way down through the bone, sort of like a polymer-plastic cyberlimb. The polymer also runs up under your regular skin (where you can't see it), reinforcing your entire skeleton to support the stresses your new limbs will create. This means you'll probably never break a bone again, unless you're crushed by a tank or something.

That stuff you just wiped off? That's your old skin and muscle, extruded when the hexite bonds were formed. Relax; you won't be needing it anymore; this stuff is much better. It even has full tactile ability, except that beyond a certain threshold, the nanotech bonds refuse to transmit pain sensations. Useful, neh?

The itching under your regular skin means that you're forming what we've nicknamed "bioarmor"; it's a thin coating of hexite that can be extruded through the skin to give your real skin body armor plating equal to a light armor jacket. It's also flexible; you can call it up whenever you want—once you've practiced enough. You'll get to where you can form your bioarmor from bare skin in less than a minute, but give yourself some time, okay? Don't try it now or you'll scare yourself half to death.

Let's take a look at your arms and legs again, shall we? Notice that they look just like they used to, only they gradually change from skin to hexite? That's the way the nanotech change works. But that's just the surface. When your arms and legs are in this configuration, you'll be able to crush

metal, bend steel bars, and kick in an aerodyne door; the hexite reinforcement will work better than any cyberlimb available. You'll also be able to leap about five meters in a jump, depending on your original body type.

But you're wondering what I mean by "in this configuration", right? Okay, brace yourself for a shock. Concentrate on your right index finger. Imagine it pointing out: further, further ... until it stretches out for several feet. Stop shaking; it's all right! Your new body can do things like this. In fact, you can extend your hexite appendages out in tendrils, sheets or shapes. Pull yourself together and draw back the finger. Slowly. When you've had enough practice, you'll be able to make multiple tendrils down to pencil size, sheets as thin as paper, and bend your fingers anyway you want. No handcuff will be able to hold you.

Last thing. Besides forming sheets and tendrils, you can also form useful weapons. We'll start with something simple, say a blade. Concentrate on your hand again. Imagine it lengthening, becoming thinner, sharper, and more pointed. This is going to take some concentration, so take your time. Better. Good. You've made a pretty good knife out of your hand. After a while, you'll be able to make all kinds of things: ripper-style blades, daggers, etc. The best Tinmen can even form a gun around a handful of ammunition. But you better concentrate on knives and clubs for now.

Now you know what you can do. Let me tell you a bit about the drawbacks. First of all, unless you cover your arms and legs, you're going to be obvious to everyone around you. There's some make-up sprays we can get you later that can hide the grosser effects, but any real inspection of your limbs will give you away.

You're also going to have to keep this little nanofactory going—this means you must eat something (at least 1% of your body weight) every eight hours or your body will go dormant. That means you'll fall into a deep sleep; your arms and legs will lock into place and your bioarmor will spread out to cover the rest of you; you'll become a big silver statue until someone feeds you. You'd better make sure this doesn't happen in the open. You'll have some warning first; after about ten hours without food, you'll start to feel stiff; after twelve hours, you'll feel tingling over your whole body. Don't ignore this; it's your new partners giving you a warning—feed us!

That's all I can give you in this short Virtuality sim. You've got a whole new life ahead of you, and a lot of power to go with it. Don't be stupid, and you may live to enjoy it. Good luck.



# ALCHEMIST

**Feeling better? The shakes stopped?  
Body stopped oozing silver slime? My  
name is Alt. I'm here to help you adapt.  
Since you haven't shown any of the  
standard reactions the other CyberE-  
volved usually show, I'm guessing  
you're an Alchemist.**

What's an Alchemist? Good question; let me show you instead of talking about it. Here's what I want you to do. On the workbench near you, there should be a pile of stuff, test tools we leave at every safehouse. Pick up one of the metal cubes. Got it? Fine. Now let's play a game. I want you to close your eyes. Imagine that the cube in your hand isn't made of metal. It's made of sugar, a big sugar cube in your hand. Now imagine that the sugar cube has been dipped in a big, hot cup of caff. Feel how it's crumbling, breaking up, into smaller and smaller crystals? Feel how it's turning from a cube into a pile of sugar ...?

Now open your eyes. You're holding a handful of metal dust, right? That's what an Alchemist is. You're the rarest of the CyberEvolved we know about; only 10% of you make it this far. You carry a complete nanotech factory inside you now, capable of disassembling almost any material in existence (like you just did with that block of steel) and reconstructing it into another form. We still don't know exactly how you do this; Alchemy is one of the most volitional nanovirus forms we've seen. What we do know is that once you have a hand on it, you can change or rearrange the molecules of any inert material around. You can't change the atomic structure of lead to make gold like an alchemist out of a fantasy book. But you could take a lump of coal and change it into a diamond, with enough practice.

You've got two kinds of nanotech inside you. One type we call a sampler; it goes out to the material you want to change, takes molecular samples of it, and brings it back to you. You experience the information the samplers bring back as "tastes", "feels", and "smells." After a while you'll be able to recognize the composition of something just from these components, just like you can tell the spices in a recipe from the taste.

The other type of nanotech you have is called an assembler.

You've only got a few samplers, but you're carrying millions, maybe billions of assemblers. They take the information your samplers give you, and, working from your mental instructions, go out and rearrange the molecules of whatever you're touching to whatever you want. That's what you did with the steel: You touched it, the samplers brought back the information, and the assemblers went out and crumbled it into dust as you visualized it. Remember how real the "sugar" seemed to feel when you imagined it? How you could almost taste it? My Alchemist friends tell me that almost all ferrous-based metals taste sweet to them; that's how we came up with this test.

So what will you be able to do? Besides make diamonds, that is? For starters, you can turn any inert, non-living material into dust; the more practice you have, the faster you can do it. You can also reshape any material into another form; say turn a block of wood into a statue. Eventually, with enough experience, you'll be able to extract raw materials out of things, gather them together and create new objects; or to change the state of a material from liquid to gas, or gas to solid. You may even be able to one day create complex devices out of raw materials—the very best Alchemists can make things like weapons, vehicles and clothes. But you've got a ways to go yet.

Here are the limitations. First, you have to be touching the thing you want to change, and you must keep in contact with it through the entire change. Since your assemblers and samplers can only be emitted through your palms, this means you have to hold whatever you're changing. Because changing something takes time, you may find it kind of tough to disassemble a door lock while CorpSec goons are shooting at you. Get one of the Tinmen to cover for you if that happens.

Second, you can only affect a limited amount of material at one time, equivalent to ten times your body weight. That's because the amount of assemblers you can carry is limited by your size. If you have to break contact before you're done changing something, you're going to lose the assemblers you've already committed to the task; once you've lost them, you can't get them back. Since the little guys are too tiny to count, most Alchemists think of them in terms of the amount of mass they can affect; after the change process is over, you can recover enough assemblers to affect a mass equivalent to your body weight in ten seconds. So if you affected something that was five times your body mass, you'd need fifty seconds to get back everything you'd sent

**ALCHEMIST**

out. Remember that, because it takes a full day to rebuild one BODY "equivalent" of your internal nanofactories.

Third, you can only affect inert, non-living material. For God's sake, don't try to repair wounds or implant cyberwear—even if you *could* get the assemblers to work at all, you'd probably kill the patient! And don't bother trying to work on Tinmen or other CyberEvolved; the nanomachine types seem to "know" each other and will just refuse to operate.

Finally, unlike the Tinmen, you won't pass out if you have to go without food a while. As long as you eat at least 1% of your body weight in food every twelve hours, you'll be okay.

**TINMAN**

But after twelve hours, some of your assemblers will start to go dormant; you'll lose one BODY level "equivalent" in assemblers for every two hours after the twelve hour cut-off point. Wait long enough, and you may not have any active assemblers to do anything when trouble starts. So don't forget to eat (as if I have to tell a juvepunk that!)

That's about all I can tell you right now; we're running out of time. Besides, being an Alchemist is a lot like being a cook; you can't learn from a book, only from cooking. So get on out there and start practicing with your abilities before you really need to count on them!

# WIZARD

**Hi there! Done shaking and twitching? My name is Alt Cunningham. I'm broadcasting to you on the 869.040-893.07 MHZ band, somewhere about the frequency of a good cellular deck. Since you can hear this, I'm going to assume you're a Wizard.**

Like me (or like I was), you're really a kind of Netrunner. But unlike me, you won't ever need a cyberdeck. Your entire body has been rewired; your nervous system has been totally replaced with a type of long chain polymer called hexite. Besides being ten times tougher than titanium, it's also a great high temperature superconductor when it's doped with a little silicon-gallium mix. Which the nanites currently living in your body have considerably arranged to do.

What's this mean? Well, for starters, like your close cousins the Scanners, your entire nervous system is now an incredibly sensitive antenna. You can pick up any kind of communications signal: radio, TV, Virtuality, microwave. If you touch a phone or com line, you can even pick up phone transmissions.

Unlike a Scanner, your antenna is set to an incredibly tight focus; it's like a microwave beam, able to lock onto any part of the Net's transmission grid (up to a mile) just like a cellular communicator. It can also transmit signals into the same grid up to a mile away, using a special nanotech supercapacitor wired into your nerves for power. In fact, you're sort of a walking, talking pocket phone, except you don't have to have an access code or pay a bill to Internet. With this modification, you're always in Virtuality, linked to the Net, even when you're asleep.

You can automatically perceive any type of communications around you, overhearing cellular and radio calls like you were dialed right in. You can also project your consciousness through the Net like a cyberdecker would, surfing the datalines to anywhere on Earth at the speed of light. What you do best, though, is Wizardry.

See, Netrunners have to use programs in order to perform operations in the Net. And Virtuality ICONS are basically just more sophisticated programs. Each program is made up of words or numbers that have to go through what's called an interpreter, where they're converted into the binary code a computer really uses for thinking. But you won't need to write programs. You're wired to think like a computer whenever you

want. You can communicate in binary code like the best AI that ever was. You'll even be able to understand jokes like:

"1001000100001,101010000 1000100001000,11000!"

What's this mean? Well, while the rest of the Netrunners and V-walkers are writing code and pushing mental buttons, you're going to be able to conjure things up in Virtuality just by thinking about it. You won't need to program ICONS or string bits; you'll imagine it, concentrate, and it'll be there. Instantly. When you need to fight a Netrunner's Demon program, you'll just conjure up a flaming sword. If you need a program to infiltrate a datafortress, you'll concentrate and whatever you need will be created on the spot. That's why we call you Wizards. Because when you're in Virtual mode, you can do magic.

You're going to be the life of the virtual party one day, but not quite yet. Right now, you're going to be limited to creating the simplest binary creations. Simple shapes. Limited Virtuality ICONS. Later, with practice, you'll be able to create complex stuff equal to any programmer. The best Wizards even create Familiars: fully independent AI programs that work and fight for them. Patience. You'll get there.

But your abilities aren't just limited to Virtuality. Since you can think and broadcast in binary code, you automatically have a special affinity with any type of binary controller unit. You can probably activate any simple computer-activated device right now. Try thinking the lights on. Now turn them off. Great, isn't it? In time, you'll be able to control more complex things like microfactories, vehicles, and remotes. The best Wizards can even control AI systems and make them do whatever they want.

Because your nerves are now hardwired superconductors, your reflexes will also be incredibly fast. You can move faster than the best boosterware anytime you want. But I wouldn't show off too much. Smart CorpSec agents look for this sort of thing, because most kids can't be hardwired until they stop growing.

Other than your range of a mile, you've got very few limits. You need to eat at least 1% of your BODY weight every twelve hours to keep your supercapacitor charged up; otherwise, you'll lose your abilities within an hour after the deadline. Thinking in binary takes about as much effort as talking does, so you're okay there. The biggest thing you have to worry about is meeting a Netrunner or AI with a bigger, badder program than you can come up with, since you can't just jack out of Virtuality like anyone else could (although I guess you could starve yourself out). So stay alert and don't get too cocky. You're going to be a great asset to your goboy—if you don't get melted down by a Hellfire bolt first. Have fun.

# SCANNER

**Feel better? By now the pounding headache has stopped. Maybe there's a little buzzing in your ears still. Relax. Take a deep breath; it'll pass. My name is Alt, and I'm here to teach you how to be a Scanner, one of the most common types of CyberEvolved. Since almost 40% of you come out with this Change variant, you've got a lot of company.**

As a Scanner, you have the ability to convert very weak electrical impulses into meaningful data. You can do this because your entire nervous system has been rewired with a type of long chain polymer called hexite. Besides being ten times stronger than titanium, a minor amount of added gallium-silicate has made it into a perfect room temperature superconductor. Like your close cousins, the Wizards, your entire nervous system is now an unbelievably sensitive antenna, capable of picking up diffuse electrical impulses from the nervous systems of living organisms. There's also a special nanotech-constructed organ that is now hardwired into your brain designed to interpret these signals, so that you "feel" them as glowing "auras", "hear" them as words, or "see" them as visions.

But you're not going to feel or see anything staring at me; I'm only a Virtuality ICON. You're going to need to look at something living. Go over to the workbench. See the lab rat cage? Hope you're not afraid of rats, because you're gonna need to get real close to this little guy. (Of course, the way you guys are these days, I'm more worried that you'll try to eat him.)

Pick him up and look at him closely for a while. Pretty soon now, you're going to see a faint glow all around him. What you're seeing are the faint electrical signals his nervous system is throwing off, interpreted by your eyes as a colored glow. Unless he's scared, the glow will probably be a deep blue. If he's upset or agitated, it'll look more orange. If he's mad, the color will be red; if he's hungry, probably green. If you see green, you might want to check the autofeeder on his cage; it might be empty. Rat food and water are in the lower drawer of the cabinet.

What you've just done is basic emotional scanning. With enough practice, you're going to be able to use this ability to "read" the emotional state of almost any living thing that has a spinal chord. After a while you'll get so used to reading the colors as emotion guides that you won't even think about them.

We call your type of CyberEvolved Scanners because that's pretty much how you work; like an EEG scanner, you pick up faint "brainwaves" for information. When you get more skill, and if you have enough familiarity with the subject, you'll be able to fine tune your ability to interpret those waves; what's just a glow to you now will later be interpreted as actual thoughts, even images, routed by your internal interpreter to the most useful of your senses. But it's going to take a bit of practice before you can master that. Right now, let's stick to rats.

Okay, a few basics. Unlike a Wizard, your antenna's pretty diffuse. You can generally scan anywhere within a ten meter area and be able to pick up impulses from any single target in that area, even if you can't see him directly. The more people you try to scan, or the farther you try to sense, the harder it will be to pick up any meaningful signals. You also will need to be able to concentrate; while you're scanning, you won't be able to do anything more complex than you would if you were watching a Virtuality show with your full attention. You know: eat, talk a little, that sort of thing. Don't try to scan during a firefight unless you're positive you're under cover first.

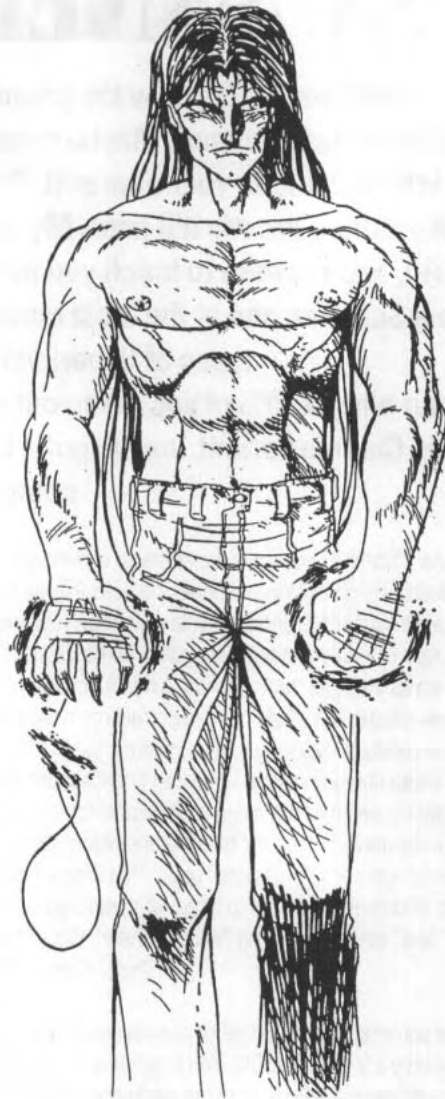
There are some limits to your scanning abilities. You'll find it tough—maybe impossible—to scan whenever you're in an area of high electrical static: lots of radios, Virtuals, unshielded electronics, etc. The CorpSec scientists have recently started to take advantage of that by making personal static generators for their higher level agents; watch out for them. You can generate your own static fields as well (using a little of the electrical power source I'll talk about later) to keep other Scanners from reading your signals unless you want them to.

Besides scanning, you have two other abilities. First, since your nerves are now hardwired hexite superconductors, your reflexes are incredibly fast; you can move at Sandevistan boosterware speeds anytime you want. Don't use this too often; it's a dead giveaway to sharp-eyed CorpSec Agents.

The other ability you have is far deadlier, and should only be used as a last resort. Like your relatives the Bolters, you

**WIZARD**

also have a nanotech supercapacitor wired into your nerves capable of delivering a phenomenal electrical jolt. Your hardwiring can be used to deliver this megavolt power surge through your hands directly into the nervous system of anyone you get a skin-to-skin touch on. But be very careful. This attack can easily kill; at the most extreme, victims have literally had the tops of their heads blown off. But the cost to your own nervous system is also extreme; you'll take physical damage each time you use this expedient. I know telling you that killing shouldn't be taken

**BOLTER**

lightly is pretty useless to a child of the cyberpunk age. But killing yourself is still something to be taken seriously, okay? Besides, you'll only be able to do this a few times a day. It takes time for your "batteries" to recharge.

That's about it for now. Remember: As a Scanner, you have the ability to stay low and blend in. You'll know when trouble's coming, and maybe even what your enemy's planning to do; use this to help your goboys. Don't push it, and you'll do fine.

# BOLTER

**Done throwing up your lunch yet? Fever down? Good. Let's get started. From the virtuality scangrid I just ran over you, I can see you're wired to be a Bolter. Next to the Tinmen, your type of CyberEvolved has some of the most amazing nanotech changes.**

As a Bolter you have the ability to fire long metal "wires" of supercarbon up to 100 meters, and charge those wires with megavolt shocks. You're sort of a nanotech "taser", with the ability to shoot long-range targets. This can make you a very effective protective force in any situation where a group of your fellow CyberEvolved might be threatened by long-range weapons. Rache Bartmoss claims that shows just how smart the designers of the Evolution Virus (as we call the Carbon Plague) were.

Your "bolts" are more than just mere wires; the hexite chains are polarized in two different directions. One way, the wire become a stiff and rigid, almost ten times stronger than titanium. Rotated the other way, it becomes soft and pliable, like spaghetti. By alternating the direction of the hexite bonds along your "bolt", you can actually make it turn corners, bend around things, and even turn back on itself. They even regenerate; if they're broken (SDP of 20), they grow back in a matter of three or four hours. And *no*, you can't try to use them as climbing ropes. You're *not* the Batguy, no matter how cool your new abilities are.

The bolt is launched from two tiny holes at the base of your wrists, and the leading point is actually a narrow, aerodynamic dart. The hexite wire itself is stored in a supercarbon spool around your forearms; by raising your arms and cocking back your hands, you charge the wire to take a stiff orientation, which pushes it out of your wrists. Bolter shots have been timed at rifle speeds, so make sure you're not pointing at anything fragile when you cut loose!

Once you hit your target, you'll use the two "storage" capacitors inside your body to charge the wire. With a

little practice, you'll be able to control just how much power you want to use, from a metal-melting blast to a light stun effect.

Of course, you won't want to use all your charge up at once, because you have limited "batteries" and it takes time to recharge. The nice part is that recharging doesn't take a lot of effort—you can pick up a charge from carpet static or from your body temperature interacting with your storage cells. And before you get any bright ideas, I wouldn't try to charge up using electrical current; it's AC, you're DC, and the amperage will burn you out or kill you!

You've also got a couple of other neat tricks up your nanowire-spoiled sleeves. If you touch something conductive (steel, iron, copper) with your hands, you can send a deadly shock through it, blasting anyone or anything in contact. You can also power any DC-powered device—video players, flashlights, etc.—for an indeterminate time (use about one Damage Class charge for every two hours of powering a large device like a TV).

But talking isn't going to tell you as much as doing will.

Go over to the trash and pull out a few empty food packs. Set them up in a general obstacle course, and pick a few targets. Go slowly now; you don't want to bolt one of your friends. Just concentrate on throwing the bolts from your hands straight to the targets [at this range, an 8 would be a sufficient Difficulty to beat].

Later, you may want to start working around the obstacles until you get a feeling for avoiding things in the way between you and your target. The last step will be to throw a little current down the wires: carefully, since a close-range jolt can melt metal or plastic, or burn wood!

After a bit of practice, you'll start to get the hang of it.

You'll need to be careful; Bolter skills are the most dangerous of the known CyberEvolved types, because they are designed to be used offensively. But keep working at it! The really good Bolters can whip two bolts around three or four obstacles apiece, and knock a cat off a fence with a light stun. You're not going to start out that good, but with some practice, you'll eventually be able to do tricks like that yourself.

Of course, you still won't be able to swing from the rooftops like a superhero, but you can't have all the breaks!

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▼ The following report was taken off a highly secured InterNet file by Rache Bartmoss in late May of this year. I'm including it in the V-term library just in case some of you would like to know more about what 's going on inside you right now. I wish I could give you more, but Dr. Chaing vanished under suspicious circumstances shortly after this report was filed.

▼▼▼ ALT

Incoming PRIORITY-AZURE  
Transmission.  
Scramble Code: Zebra-Charlie-  
9-Bravo-Bravo-0  
Source: Dr. David Chaing,  
Center For Disease Control  
[NSec A@FtGGMeade..  
R&D\_DBioP..TC1

Destination: Lt. Gen. John Hunter  
DoD@Pent..NSec\_Tac..JH† < EYES  
ONLY — READ and DESTROY >

Message reads:

John:

Just got finished assembling and collating the data. You weren't kidding about this one, old friend. Something strange is definitely afoot, and if I knew who the bastards were who put it all into motion, I'd certainly be the first in line to strangle them. It's taken us well over a year to piece together what we have—and what we have isn't much. If only... John, their research was light years ahead of ours; we had to invent two new processes just to analyze some of the properties — just to analyze ... Sorry. I'm getting ahead of myself. Let me start from the top.

Since last year, the Carbon Death has spread like wildfire through the country, exploding

outwards, despite our best efforts at containment. After a while it became evident that this bug was not going to be corralled or penned in by any means at our disposal. Within the short span of six months every population center on the Earth had reported cases of the plague; by month seven, even the Orbitals and Luna had fallen prey to the plague's wrath. Once it hit the cities, it spread along the well-trod corridors of travel; it behaved in every way like a virus or bacteria—a textbook epidemic. Hundreds of millions were dead or dying, John; no one was surprised when martial law was declared in the middle of '26. I think everyone was too shocked or too sick to care, really.

The government took over. The bulk of the research on the plague was handed over to my team. National security. Bulls--t. The problem was bigger than us; some people were just too scared and stupid to see, or possibly admit that. In retrospect, it's obvious that we still weren't thinking at this point. If we had been, it would have been painfully obvious that no mere spill or virus could have caused exactly this type of destruction.

We had concentrated on the dead to study the Plague, but it was the dying that finally gave us the insight we needed. Many of those who were struck by the sickness hadn't died immediately. Instead, they began to recover. Isolated incidents at first, increasing in number until we could no longer treat it as an anomaly. The dying — the ones we had so callously written off — were getting better. More than better. It was incredible. The awakening survivors were changed. By some unknown fashion, they emerged from their chrysalis with radically altered physiologies, with abilities and talents we'd never seen before nor imagined prior to this. We subjected the individuals in our custody to an intensive battery of tests and got readings too bizarre to make sense of.

One thing that we could tell for sure, however, was that their genetic prints had not changed in the interim—their DNA was the same in their present state as it was before their illness—even though their bodies had been changed drastically. That was the clue that broke the puzzle: what we had was something that entered a subject's body and rebuilt it from the inside out, building on a phenotypic



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level as opposed to genotypic; something that was so small it escaped detection by standard means; something that was *intelligent*, that only made changes where it needed to.

The light was finally beginning to dawn. Some idiot had done the impossible. Someone had designed the world's first true volitional nanomachine, and no one had any clue what to look for, let alone what the end result was supposed to be. Christ, John, we didn't (and still don't) even know if whoever created this thing is still alive. Finally armed with the knowledge of what we were facing, we temporarily relocated our base of operations to the White Sands Center for Virulent Disease Control while we conducted the bulk of our testing and research. It took hundreds of our scientists six months of solid round-the-clock work to collect the information we now have; the billions allocated to me flowed away quickly, spent like water, like the blood of the "volunteers" who died on our tables. All in the name of science and security. I don't know what scared me more, the thought that we wouldn't be able to stop the nanomachine, or the knowledge of what we were doing in the name of a noble cause.

Well, we can't stop it. We can watch it, study it, even appreciate its genius — but there's not a damn thing we can do to even slow it down a little. The Catalytic Nanomachine (CNM), as we had labeled it, was, and is, well beyond our ability to affect. Every attempt we've made to date to alter or wipe out the CNM's internal programming has resulted in the deaths of our test subjects. At the stage we're at now in the field of nanotechnology, what we're doing is no better than randomly punching keys on a keyboard and hoping for a coherent program to magically appear at the end. It'll take us years just to make heads or tails of the mechanics of the nanomachine itself, let alone understand how to program or reprogram it. What it's doing is completely comprehensible; it's how it's doing it that's got us mystified.

What we know about the CNM is this: It's been programmed to change us. Not all of us, either—just some of us—those with the presence of the proper MetTry protein-fragment key. The MetTry fragment is just the trigger, however. Unregulated,

the catalytic action is ultimately fatal. We believe that the regulating substance is somehow connected to something in growth hormone. We're not exactly sure *whatspecifically* (i.e., the hormone itself, something in the hormone, the levels of hormone, or an action caused by the presence of the hormone, etc.); only time and further research will tell.

Forget quarantine. It's not going to work. In any case, the sickness isn't contagious in and of itself. What we observe and call "the sickness" is no more than the CNM's program running its course. The CNM reproduces itself whenever suitable material can be found, and then lies dormant until it comes into contact with a potential host subject. It can also survive in just about any environment. Activated by body heat, unless the CNM detects the presence of the MetTry fragment, the CNM will not do anything more than reproduce itself in its host; in a sense, the "rejected" host becomes a farm and living vector for the CNM—it's the "unaffected" ones, like you and me, that are the most dangerous in terms of controlling the spread of disease—ironic, isn't it, John? At this point, trying to deal with the spread of the CNM is an exercise in futility. We're way too late. At the rate this sucker reproduces it's very likely in everything on this planet by now.

If the MetTry fragment is present in the host, the CNM becomes fully activated and begins the process we now call the Change. Once the Change begins the outcome is simple: Either you die, or you're "force-evolved" (as one of the boys here puts it). Uncomplicated. The Change can take anywhere from a few hours to a few days depending on the subject's original health and physiology, and can be very traumatic, both mentally and physically. The survivors, the "Evolved", are very different from the rest of us in many respects; in several ways they are vastly superior—whatever the goal, whoever designed this puppy certainly knew what they were doing. I hope whoever did this is dead...for all our sakes.

The CNM itself is a remarkable piece of engineering. Once inside a suitable host, the CNM starts fabricating several different secondary nanomachines. In this way, the CNM is much like our own DNA, which contains all the information necessary to create every individual organ and type of cell in our bodies; similarly, within the CNM



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are all the blueprints necessary for it to manufacture the tools it needs to transform the host and regulate/maintain the changed form once the metamorphosis is complete.

The Evolved take on several forms, the bulk of which can be categorized into five distinct classes: Scanners, Tinmen, Wizards, Alchemists and Bolters. Roughly 5-10% of our survivors continue to defy large-scale classification and fall under the category of Sports. Each group of the Evolved has unique abilities that put them beyond the ken of "normal" humans. However, the Evolved as a whole share several characteristics in common. One distinct trait that all the Evolved seem to have is a preponderance of molecular polycarbon, which I have taken to calling Supercarbon. This material is used throughout the implementations brought on by the Change, and is a fascinating substance by itself.

The smallest of the stable Fullerene-carbon structures, Supercarbon shows a crystalline structure under electron microscopy unlike diamond or graphite. Consisting of two hub atoms along an axle, three plates containing an additional three carbon atoms each emanate from the hub, forming a paddlewheel-like architecture. Six or more Supercarbon molecules stack together in an interlocking honeycomb pattern. This interlocking structure prevents planes from slipping past each other. The resulting material, Hexite, has over ten times the tensile strength of titanium while possessing only a third of titanium's density. Beyond its simple utility as a structural component, Hexite also possesses unique electronic properties which are further exploited by the Evolved's microphysiology.

The nanomachines in an Evolved's body function off of molecular vibrational and transitional energy which they "steal" from the Hexite structures found within the transformed body. Small pockets of Hexite (small relative to total body mass) are enough to power a whole body full of nanomachines—in many instances, deposits of Hexite far outweigh the demand for power (meaning: as a general rule of thumb, most of the Hexite encountered in the body of an Evolved is not superconducting). Once we got down to examining the bodies at this level, any doubts we had about the CNM were gone. It is patently impossible for the CNM to have been the result of random mutation; too much thought went into how to implement these abilities to accredit it as a freak of Nature.

There's a lot of genius at work here. The Evolved have a significantly altered metabolism that puts Mother Nature to shame. Within the circulating fluids of an Evolved individual's body (i.e., blood and lymph) are several maintenance nanomachines which cruise through the body, destroying any bodies which are foreign to the host. Anything which does not match the protein profile of the host is broken down into components (i.e., foreign proteins are broken down into their amino acid components) and then dealt with by the body's standard systems (i.e., the liver and kidneys). The Evolved are fairly resistant to most terrestrial diseases; unless the effect is faster than the nanites can act, the host will suffer nothing more than the start of the disease or illness. This action does not seem to hinder anything that does not have a protein signature—chemicals for instance: drugs seem to affect the Evolved with the same efficiency as they do all humans.

More impressive is a background repair system. Certain nanites carry around sections of a host's DNA and flow throughout the host's body performing repairs on damaged cells and organs. Given enough time, it is theoretically possible for these nanomachines to even "regrow" lost limbs or organs; healing rate for the Evolved ranges between two to three times as fast as that of humans who have not undergone the Change.

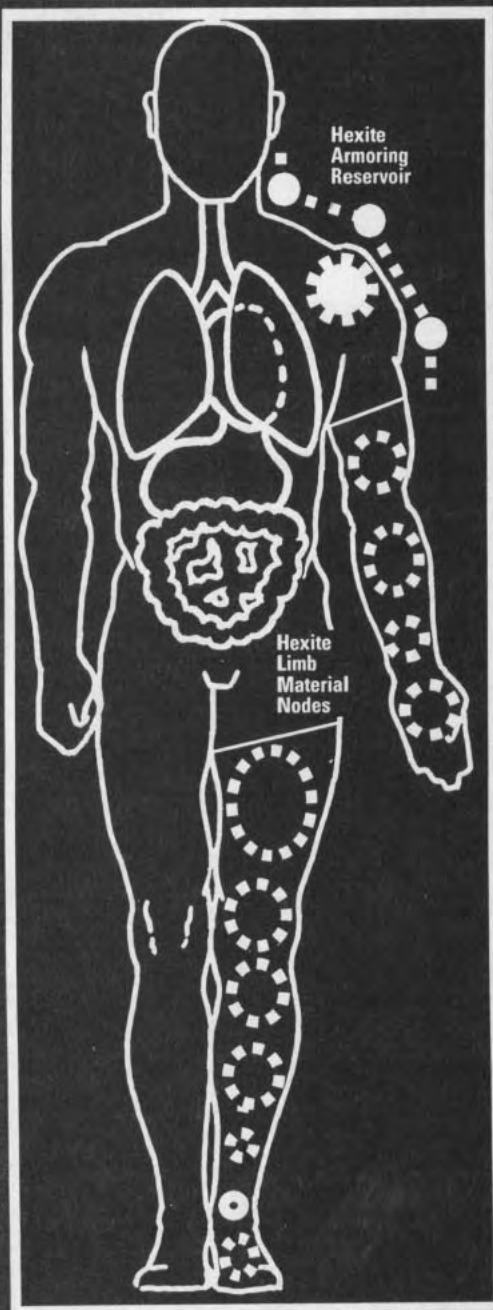
Our work quantifying and studying the Evolved is far from finished. Quite the opposite, in fact—we're just starting to understand some of the underlying theory of this remarkable (and frightening) technology. Security and defense-wise? You already know where I stand on that one, John. My advice: Let them be. They've already been through hell. We don't need to give them any more grief. Keep an eye on them, sure; I'm not that much of an idiot. They can be potentially dangerous, but then again, they might just be a godsend, just what we need—a good swift kick in the pants.

I'm going to continue my research, John. I know that a lot of "my" people have already been reassigned, but I'm close. Damn close. Give me a ring in a few weeks—I think I'm onto a major revelation about this nanotechnology mystery.

—Dave

# TINMAN

## NANOTECH-ENGINEERED SUPERWARRIORS



Personal Log Entry 132.8  
 Dr. David Chaing  
 Center For Disease Control  
 May 9, 2027

Possibly the most interesting of the Evolved, in terms of the military/security perspective, are the "Tinmen." Making up the second largest of the classifications, Tinmen possess the ability to produce and extrude Hexite formations at a phenomenal rate. Of all the Changed, Tinmen were the first to be categorized, simply because they were the easiest to identify as a group, their abilities being the most obvious.

Throughout the dermis of Tinmen are special enclaves of nanomachines which spin chains of Hexite. In addition to manufacturing Hexite, these enclaves also produce "utility" nanites which take the Hexite and apply it. As a whole, the Change leaves Tinmen with a body-wide layer of high-density fatty tissue underneath the dermis. While not substantial enough to cause the subject to look overweight, the typical Tinman generally appears of mesomorphic or endomorphic build. Beyond cosmetic considerations, this high-density fat is the source of the carbon necessary for the Tinman's factories to manufacture Hexite; it seems that Tinmen must frequently eat carbohydrate-rich foods in order to maintain and replenish this carbon reservoir.

Utilized internally, Hexite can be woven by the utility nanites into the Tinman's existing musculature and skeletal system. Reinforcement in this fashion can dramatically increase the performance of the existing human system, increasing strength and resistance. Hexite seems to be completely compatible with the human immune system.

The most interesting aspect of the Tinmen occurs when their Hexite reserves are used externally. Extruded from the surface of the skin via the

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sebaceous ducts, the Hexite combines with the utility nanites to form a polymorphic mimetic polycarbon "soup." This amorphous state (which has physical qualities resembling that of mercury at room temperature) possesses properties of both solid and liquid matter—while keeping the tensile and material strength of the solid, it flows, and can be molded, like a viscous fluid.

John, if you're asking me how that's possible, forget it. So much of this is beyond me—hell, beyond all of us—it's not funny. Basically, I figure the utility nanites are constantly changing the arrangement of Hexite clusters, giving it the dynamics of a fluid, allowing the material to shift form very quickly. However, the repositioning is happening so quickly that from our perspective, the Hexite remains rigid. Think of an airplane propeller. Of the circle it describes when it rotates on its axis, it actually fills very little of the surface area (as it is only made of two blades and not a full circle). When it isn't moving it's very clear that the circle is mostly open space; if you were to throw a ball at that area, chances are the ball will pass through the "surface." Now start spinning the propeller. The faster it rotates, the more the "surface" behaves like a solid (since it's more and more likely that the propeller is actually under a given point at any particular time the faster the blades are spinning). If it's rotating fast enough, the ball will bounce off the "solid surface" every time you throw it. Similarly, what happens with the polymorphic soup is that, while the shape of the carbon mass can change, at any given moment, it's actually quite solid. What gets me is that we don't have any idea how the secondary nanites are getting their commands to change the current configuration or how the tactile and feedback responses are getting to the Tinman's nervous system. As far as we can tell, it's magic—the Tinman visualizes the form he wants the amorphous polycarbon to take, and presto, it happens. To them, it's almost as subconscious as us manipulating our hands and fingers.

Once a Tinman is finished with an external extrusion, he can absorb any Hexite still attached to him back into his body as rapidly as he can extrude it. Working in reverse, the subdermal enclaves reassemble and rehydrogenate the carbon, turning it back into high-density fat for storage. If any

material is separated from the Tinman at any time, the lost material becomes inert—cut off from its power and control mechanisms. The Tinman is not able to reabsorb material of this nature.

There also seems to be a limit as to how creative a Tinman can get with his external formations. All extrusions observed to date have been simple constructs with no complex moving parts; attempts at more sophisticated constructions have resulted in items of the proper external appearance, but with no other utility. In other words, while a Tinman can easily create a Hexite axe, and form a simple pistol with difficulty, a working engine block is simply out of the question. That being their only shortcoming, a combat-trained Tinman is a frightening prospect.

**TINMAN SKILL: HEXITE SHAPING [REF]**

This is the skill of shaping Hexite body parts into other forms. You may not shape your torso or head, only arms and legs, and even these parts are restricted to generally simple shapes. **Your skill starts at +1**, and allows you to:

- **Shape Tendrils and Sheets (Tables #1, #2):**

Allows the Tinman to make tentacles in four general sizes, from pencil size to about 2" wide. These can be used to grab things, to anchor the body, or to hang on. He may also flatten his limbs into sheets of Hexite.

- **Extend Limbs (Table #3):** Allows Tinman to stretch arms and legs (or even fingers) like rubber, as defined in Table #3.

- **Hexite Armoring (see Statistics):** Allows the Tinman to extrude a Hexite armor layer through the skin, covering the torso and head to an SP equal to his fully Hexite arms and legs. The time to do this is equal to 11 rounds minus the Tinman's skill.

- **Shape Objects (see Shaping Type):** This is the ability to form the arms and legs into specific shapes: weapons, etc. The object must be all in one piece. You must also have a working knowledge of the type of object formed; for example, to shape a gun would require a minimum *Mil-spec Tech* skill of 4, or a good model to work from.

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## TINMAN POWERS

**TABLE #1: NUMBER OF TENDRILS PER ARM [BY BODY STAT]**

Tendrill size (2 m range)	1-2	3-4	5-7	8-9	10
1 cm (@1/4")	5	6	7	8	9
1.5 cm (@1/2")	4	5	6	7	8
2.5 cm (@1")	3	4	5	6	7
5 cm (@2")	2	3	4	5	6

Individual tendrill strength is equal to BODY Stat divided by number of tendrills (round down). When used together, total strength is equal to character's BODY Stat. Tendrills can extend up to 2 meters (about 6.5 feet).

**TABLE #2: MAX SHEET AREA PER ARM [BY BODY STAT]**

Thickness of Sheet	1-2	3-4	5-7	8-9	10
Paper Thin	30 cm <sup>2</sup>	0.5 meters <sup>2</sup>	1 meter <sup>2</sup>	2 meters <sup>2</sup>	2.5 meters <sup>2</sup>
1 cm (@1/4")	15 cm <sup>2</sup>	30 cm <sup>2</sup>	0.5 meters <sup>2</sup>	1 meter <sup>2</sup>	2 meters <sup>2</sup>
1.5 cm (@1/2")	6 cm <sup>2</sup>	15 cm <sup>2</sup>	30 cm <sup>2</sup>	0.5 meters <sup>2</sup>	1 meter <sup>2</sup>
2.5 cm (@1")	NA	6 cm <sup>2</sup>	15 cm <sup>2</sup>	30 cm <sup>2</sup>	0.5 meters <sup>2</sup>

Very approximate conversions: 6cm=2.5" 15cm=6" 30cm=12" 1m=3 ft 2m=6ft 2.5m=8ft 3m=10ft

**TABLE #3: LIMB EXTENSION LENGTH [BY BODY STAT]**

BODY Stat	1-2	3-4	5-7	8-9	10
Max limb extension	30 cm	1 meter	2 meters	2.5 meters	3 meters

SHAPING TYPE	DIFFICULTY
Bioarmor Shaping	Easy (10)
Tendrill	Easy (10)
Sheet Shaping	Easy (10)
Limb Extension	Average (15)
Club (DC 3)	Easy (10)
Dagger Blade (DC 3)	Easy (10)
Monoblade (DC 6)	V.Difficult (25)
Rippers (DC 4)	Average (15)
Wolvers (DC 5)	Difficult (20)
Gun Hand (by Ammo)	V.Difficult (25)
Foot/Hand Spike (DC 3)	Easy (10)
Hidden Pocket in Bioarmor	Average (15)

TINMAN STATISTICS	
Special Skill	Hexite Shaping (starts at +1)
Bioarmor SP (all over)	AR 6
Time to extrude armor	11-(Skill) in rounds
Biolimb SDP	10 SDP
Biolimb SP	AR 6
Biolimb crush	DC 5
Biolimb punch	DC 4
Biolimb kick	DC 5
Biolimb leap	0.5 m for each level of BODY Stat
Biolimb jump	1 m for each level of BODY Stat

Referees may use the above as guides. In general, complexity is the key to difficulty and time required to create an object:

- Simple shape ..... Easy (10) ..... 1 rd.
- Sharpened shape .. Average (15) ..... 2 rds.
- Refined shape ..... Difficult (20) ..... 3 rds.
- Moving parts ..... Very Difficult (25) .... 5 rds.

Tinmen may not form powered or two-part shapes (all shapes formed must be part of one whole).

- NOTES**
- Tinmen do not feel pain past the irritation point.
  - Can bend joints in any direction.
  - Must eat 1% of BODY Stat (in kg) every 8 hours or will go into hibernation state.
  - Limbs are shiny silver-black supercarbon and should be covered.
  - Changing back to normal is automatic, but takes normal change times as above.
  - May only shape one area/limb/armor at a time.

# ALCHEMIST

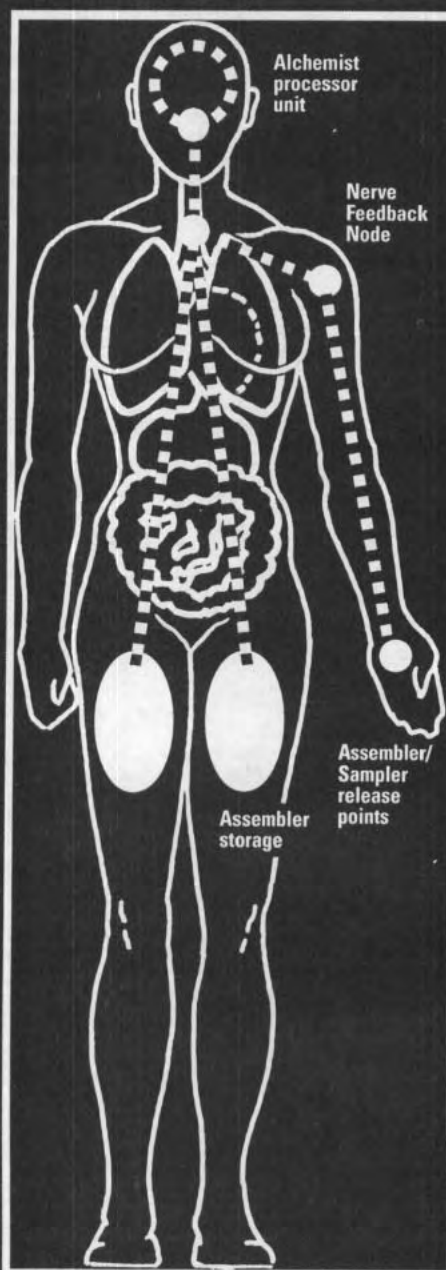
ASSEMBLERS & CREATORS OF THE NANOTECH AGE

Personal Log Entry 132.9  
 Dr. David Chaing  
 Center For Disease Control  
 May 10, 2027

Though not quite the Philosopher's Stone of legend, "Alchemists" are nonetheless the closest modern equivalent. Within their grasp, matter becomes malleable to a point which is almost undefinable—almost magic.

Alchemists have an extraordinary ability to "taste" objects for material content. Sampling an object by brushing his hands across the surface, an Alchemist is able to release surveying nanomachines into the item which then return information regarding the elemental composition of the material in question. How this feedback loop is established and maintained still remains unanswered—similar control/feedback questions arise with other Evolved types as well (especially in the case of the Tinmen). Regardless of how this feat is accomplished, the survey nanites can provide remarkably detailed profiles on an object's physical structure, elemental composition, and provide quantum-level information to their "master" Alchemists.

While useful in and of itself, the information relayed by the surveying nanites is much more important to the Alchemist as a tool to establish the proper parameters for the application of their primary ability—that of atomic-level alteration. Once the target's composition is correctly obtained, an Alchemist can manipulate the matter through a number of startling transformations. Unless the Alchemist makes a conscious effort, the surveying activity is completely transparent—sampling is more for the Alchemist's nanofactories' benefit. Special-ly programmed nanomachines are released from an Alchemist's imbedded nanofactories through



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direct skin contact; these alteration nanites can be directed to assemble, disassemble, or even alter/restructure the physical characteristics of matter.

I spent a lot of time studying Alchemists as, quite frankly, to me they are the most enigmatic and fascinating of the Evolved. While unable to directly quantify how their nanomachines accomplish everything they do, I have a pretty good grasp on what they can achieve. Alchemists can assemble and disassemble matter down to the atomic level, meaning they possess the ability to strip component elements from complex molecules and the ability to form sophisticated constructions from simple base elements. For example, an Alchemist could easily separate hydrogen gas and oxygen gas from tap water, or just as effortlessly combine raw nitrogen and hydrogen from the air to create ammonia. By switching from assembly to disassembly between a number of materials through several steps, an Alchemist can build very complex molecules out of materials which (on the surface) appear completely unrelated. Just to give you an idea of what we're dealing with: We caught one of the test subjects back at White Sands manufacturing lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) with elements taken from aspirin, toothpaste, and the wood in his bed frame.

Despite their facility at the atomic level, Alchemists are wholly incapable of manipulating subatomic particles—you won't be seeing Alchemists adding protons, neutrons, and electrons to lead to produce gold anytime in the near future. You might, on the other hand, find an Alchemist snatching the charcoal briquettes from your barbecue to make diamonds.

In addition to the assembly and disassembly nanomachines, Alchemists can manufacture and release nanites capable of shifting existing matter without affecting its atomic structure, just its molecular positioning — again, much in the same fashion that allows a Tinman's extrusions of Hexite to remain "fluid." These restructuring nanites deal with physical structure, enabling Alchemists to perform stunts like turning water into ice, making ice cubes out of the resulting frozen water, etc. As with the transformation maneuvers, an Alchemist can direct his nanites to do whatever he desires as long as he remains in surface contact with the object or material being affected.

Although we are still unclear as to how an Alchemist maintains contact with his "satellite" nanomachines, we know that visualization holds part of the key as to how the nanites are programmed. All of the Alchemist's nanomachines are capable of reproducing only what an Alchemist himself can sufficiently comprehend. Unless the Alchemist actually knows the chemical formula for gunpowder, for instance, his nanomachine assemblers will be unable to mix up a usable batch. Similarly, unless an Alchemist can fully visualize the physical construction and dynamics of an item, his nanites will only be able to reproduce the external appearance (i.e., unless he knows how to build a gun, or how a gun works, an Alchemist will be restricted to producing objects which look like guns—or, more to the point, what he thinks a gun should look like—rather than the real McCoy). You should, at this point, John, consider how easy it is to get hold of technical documentation—a library card is a pretty dangerous weapon in the hands of an Alchemist.

While they do not appear to be much of a problem in terms of National Defense or Security at the onset (at least not when compared to Net Wizards or Tinmen), an Alchemist with a solid foundation in technical education and a good smattering of imagination can be quite devastating. Alchemists, more than any other of the Evolved, readily demonstrate how a little bit of knowledge can be a very deadly thing.

## ALCHEMIST SKILL: MANIPULATION [TECH]

This is the Alchemist's ability to disassemble, reshape, and shape materials at the molecular level. The skill is based on the level and type of change desired (Table #1). **Your skill starts at +1.** Time of change is based on Alchemist's Body Type and the change type (Table #2). The Alchemist must have a working knowledge of what he wants to create (at least a Level 4 skill in the most applicable area, such as *Milspec Tech* to make a gun, or *Chemistry* to make gunpowder. *Schoolin'* can sometimes be substituted at minimum Level 6; Ref's call), or a sample to work from. Alchemists must also keep both hands on what is being altered both during the change and after to recover their assembler nanites, recovering these at a rate based on the amount of affectable mass (see Stats section).

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# ALCHEMIST POWERS

TABLE #1: LEVEL OF CHANGE/DIFFICULTY TABLE

Type of Change	Superficial	Simple	Complex	Intricate
Disassembly	6	7	8	9
Reshaping	18	21	24	27
Assembly	12	14	16	18

TABLE #2: BODY STAT EFFECTS ON CHANGE RATES & RECOVERY

	1-2	3-4	5-7	8-9	10
Affectable Mass	200 kg	300 kg	500 kg	800 kg	1000 kg
Disassembly rate	20 kg/turn	30 kg/turn	50 kg/turn	80 kg/turn	100 kg/turn
Reshape rate	10 kg/turn	15 kg/turn	25 kg/turn	40 kg/turn	50 kg/turn
Assembly rate	15 kg/turn	20 kg/turn	30 kg/turn	60 kg/turn	70 kg/turn

## TRANSFORMATION DESCRIPTIONS

### SUPERFICIAL

- **Disassembly (D)** = a single shift in molecular structure from a dense form into a more diffuse form (e.g., solid to liquid, liquid to gas, turning diamond to coal, etc.).
- **Reshaping (R)** = gross changes in form to a single object (e.g., from an ingot to a bar, a lump into a sphere, etc.).
- **Assembly (A)** = a single shift in molecular structure from diffuse into a more dense form (e.g., gas to liquid, liquid to solid, turning coal to diamond, etc.).

### SIMPLE

- **D** = a multiple shift in molecular structure from dense to diffuse (e.g., solid to gas), or a material change involving one element (e.g., removing carbon from sugar, removing iron from steel, etc.).
- **R** = retooling into simple distinct forms (e.g., turning a steel ingot into a nut and bolt, turning a lump of lead into multiple bullet heads, etc.).
- **A** = a multiple shift in molecular structure from diffuse to dense (e.g., gas to solid), or a material change involving one element (e.g., adding hydrogen to oxygen to produce water, combining chlorine and hydrogen to produce hydrochloric acid, etc.).

### COMPLEX

- **D** = a material change affecting two or three elements (e.g., stripping water from wood, separating rust from a car door, etc.).
- **R** = retooling into a simple but interlocking or interconnecting device (e.g., turning a steel ingot into a revolver, etc.).
- **A** = a material change affecting two or three elements (e.g., combining hydrogen, oxygen, and carbon to form sugar, etc.).

### INTRICATE

- **D** = a material change affecting more than three elements.
- **R** = retooling into a complex mechanical device (e.g., turning a steel bar into an automatic pistol, turning a brass ingot into a pocket watch, etc.).
- **A** = a material change affecting more than three elements.

## ALCHEMIST STATISTICS

Special Skill	Manipulation
Base Range	While touching
Assembler recovery rate	BODY Stat x 10 kg per turn

### NOTES

- Transformation/construction of elaborate devices from base raw materials must be completed as a series of individual steps (e.g., to make a loaded gun from raw materials, an assembly task is needed to combine the chemicals for gunpowder, a reshaping task is needed to turn the lead into bullet heads, another reshaping task is needed to form the brass casings, and one last reshaping task is necessary to form the actual gun itself).
- Must eat at least 1% of BODY Stat (in kg) every 12 hrs, or lose 1 BODY Stat of assemblers every 2 hrs thereafter. Below 1, you have no active assemblers.
- Cannot work on living tissue or other nanotech.
- Must stay in contact to make changes.
- May only shape one thing at a time.
- Alchemists can "memorize" up to their INTx2 types of materials at any one time (which can be reproduced at will). They must have samples for any new material "tastes."

# DATA PAD®

# SCANNER

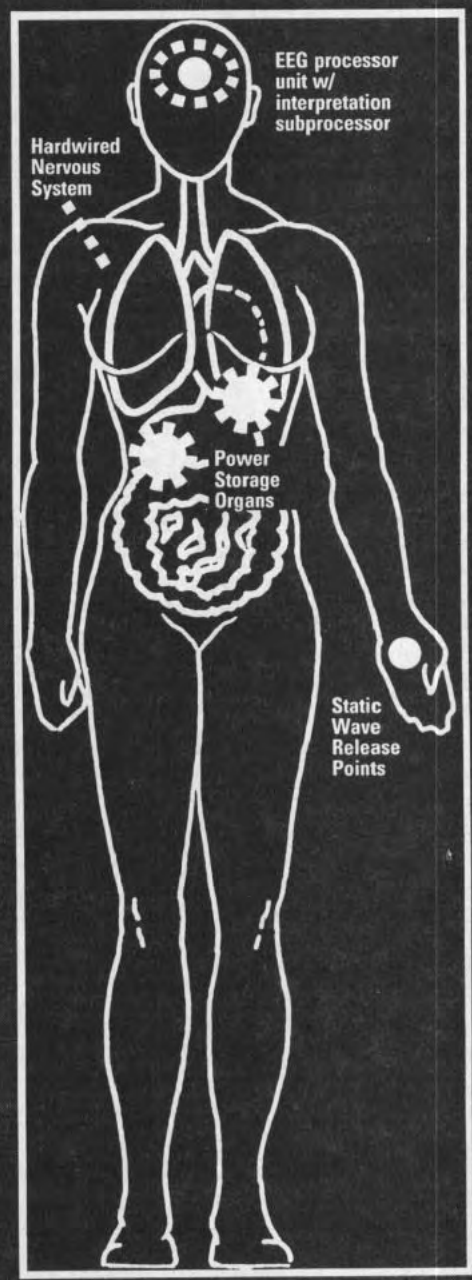
## MIND SCANNERS & PSIONICS

Personal Log Entry 132.10  
 Dr. David Chaing  
 Center For Disease Control  
 May 11, 2027

Close to half of the surviving Evolved possess talents which put them into our classification of "Scanners." This group of individuals has developed the ability to read the thoughts of others. This ability wasn't obviously manifest at the onset; close to two months passed before we began to notice that many of the test subjects had been second-guessing us throughout the testing series with a high degree of accuracy. Concentrated study and research with selected individuals positively demonstrated that Scanners were, indeed, capable of somehow eavesdropping on the thought processes of most humans (including — with one exception — other Evolved). Additional scrutiny brought to light the important distinction that the Scanners are not exactly reading thoughts per se, but rather, the emanations and patterns established by thoughts within the micro-electrical field created by the nervous system.

Although the voltages and currents contained within a body are minute, every living being possesses an electromagnetic field as a result of the electrochemical reactions which take place in its body. With each firing of a neuron or nerve cell, that field's profile is changed, increasing or decreasing in density and charge in direct proportion to the speed and amount of neural activity. Scanners are able to sense and quantify this field through the use of a technique similar to magnetoencephalography.

In modern medical engineering, superconducting semiconductors, in the form of Josephson Junctions, are used in the construction of magnetoencephalographs. Within Scanners, the CNM





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engineers structures under the Evolved's dermis which perform a similar function. A sheet of assembled polyacetylene is sandwiched between two thin films of Hexite to form the basis of an MED semiconductor. In activating the Hexite's superconducting electronic properties by lowering the Supercarbon below its threshold (through means of specifically elevated nanite activity), the organic semiconductor is transformed (for the duration of nanite activity) into an organic Josephson Junction, and consequently the Scanner becomes a living magnetoencephalograph. Configured in this manner, each Junction cycles through its operation in less than two nanoseconds, allowing Scanners to update their field strength readings 500,000 times per second — which makes for extremely accurate and up-to-date measurements when you consider that the typical reaction time for an adult human is roughly one tenth of a second.

As with any Superconducting Quantum Interference Device (SQUID), these organic Junctions are extremely sensitive to electromagnetic fields. Specifically, these CNM-assembled Junctions are sensitive to the tune of 10-10 gauss. Essentially, John, Scanners are super-sensitive voltmeters, able to detect voltage fluctuations as low as one billionth of a billionth of a volt.

Thus, when shifts in neural activity result in alterations in the neuro-electrical field, Scanners are able to track and quantify these changes with incredible accuracy. With significant exposure to enough different thought processes, and with experience relating the resulting field fluctuations to the processes that cause them, a Scanner can, effectively, "read" someone's mind. For instance, with experience, a Scanner might begin to associate anger with a certain pattern close to the frontal lobe in humans; in time, the same Scanner might learn to further distinguish exactly how angry that person is by gauging the strength and size of the field disturbance in question. Study of the field shifts and correctly associating the root cause will eventually lead the Scanner to interpreting progressively higher level thought processes (e.g., from "fear", to "run", to "I'll dodge into that alley", to eventually being able to visualize the entire process internally — a movie, if you will). In a sense, they must learn a new language. Generalities can

usually be made for all members of the same species since gross neural functions remain constant (i.e., visual signals are always interpreted in the occipital lobe, speech is controlled by Broca's Area, etc.) — if we continue to use the language analogy as an example, it would be much like the fact that most Americans spoke English. Obviously, however, readings on specific individuals depend on how much time a Scanner has spent "studying" that person, as neural architecture varies slightly from person to person — think of it as dialects of the same language.

Understandably, excessive background electromagnetic "noise" can hinder a Scanner's ability to correctly read his target. Another strange note we turned up in our research: While they seem to be able to easily detect the field which emanates from any electrical or electronic device, Scanners have shown no facility to translate any of those fields. My current best-guess theory on this facet of their nature is that, with most electronic components functioning in the Megahertz range (i.e., cycling through their functions several million times per second), a Scanner's mind is simply not fast enough to catalog all the fluctuations which take place, making any meaningful translation impossible.

Regardless of their inability to deal with electronics, the subtleties and nuances of the abilities possessed by Scanners are fascinating. John, the ramifications of a society in which lies are meaningless are staggering ...

## SCANNER SKILL: INTERPRETATION [COOL]

This skill represents the Scanner's ability to sense and interpret the brainwave patterns of a given target. The result is determined by the Detail of the reading and the surrounding Environment (Table #1), modified by the Familiarity of the target (Table #2). The Scanner may also "push" his basic range (10m) by deducting points from his COOL stat. **Your skill starts at +1.**

In addition, the Scanner may use an electrical/nervous blast called a STATIC WAVE ATTACK to fry anyone touching him, at a physical cost to himself (Table #3).

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## SCANNER POWERS

TABLE #1: DETAIL/DIFFICULTY TABLE

Environment	Raw Emotion*	Surface Intent	Subvocalization	Images	Other Scanner
Low Static	3	5	15	20	5
Average Static	8	10	20	25	10
High Static	12	15	25	30	15
Very High Static	17	20	30	35	20

\*Can also be applied to "sensing life" or detecting a level of sentient activity.

TABLE #2: FAMILIARITY BONUS

Familiarity Level	Never	Unknown	Acquaintance	Familiar	Intimate
Skill Modifier	-5	-2	+0	+2	+5

TABLE #3: STATIC ATTACK TABLE

Attack Damage (choose amount)	DC 3	DC 4	DC 5	DC 6	DC 7
Damage You Take	—	—	DC 3	DC 4	DC 5

### ENVIRONMENT DEFINITIONS

- **Low:** Little or no EM interference. Open areas and shielded environments: few radios, fluorescent lights, power tools, etc.
- **Average:** Typical urban household or small office.
- **High:** Strong EM emissions, many unshielded devices, transmitters, etc. Outer space is considered High.
- **Very High:** Artificially generated "static," mind screens, unshielded high tension wires, EMP guns, etc.

### DETAIL DEFINITIONS AND TIME TO ESTABLISH LINK

- **Raw Emotion (Instantly):** Basic primal feelings without a conscious or verbalized component, best described as a noun (e.g., hunger, thirst, fear, lust, etc.). This is the maximum level lower animals can be read at (e.g. fish, reptiles, etc.). Note that this is REALLY easy, rated even lower than normal difficulties.
- **Surface Intent (1 round):** General intentions, best described as verbs (e.g., attack, flee, hide, etc.). This is the maximum level higher animals can be read at (e.g. birds, mammals, etc.).
- **Subvocalization (1 round):** Simple sentences showing concrete thoughts, a combination of emotion and intent (e.g., "I'll try to fool him, I'll hide then jump him, etc.).
- **Images (2 rounds):** Mental pictures of events, ideas, concepts, memories, etc.—includes subvocalization (giving a "soundtrack" to the image).
- **Scanner (1 round):** Full communication between friendly Scanners. Includes all emotional levels.

### FAMILIARITY DEFINITIONS

- **Never:** Applies to genus/cultural type only (e.g., never read a dog before, never read a bird before, never read an Arab before, etc.)
- **Unknown:** You have never met the particular individual or animal before. A Scanner must have at least a single previous success at the "Never" level before upgrading to this level.

• **Acquaintance:** You have spent some time getting to know the subject (not necessarily in his company — e.g., studying a detailed dossier, trailing the individual and studying his habits, etc.). A Scanner must have at least two previous successes at the "Unknown" level before upgrading to this level.

• **Close:** You know this person very well and have spent many hours in proximity. A Scanner must have at least four previous successes at the "Acquaintance" level before upgrading to this level.

• **Intimate:** Reserved for individuals you have vested much interest in (e.g. a lover, arch nemesis, etc.). Because of the amount of energy and effort that is invested at this level, very few individuals qualify for the badge of "Intimate" relations — the Scanner is restricted to a maximum of one half his COOL (rounded down) "Intimates." As time progresses, individuals can enter and leave this category depending on circumstances which happen within the game (e.g., splitting up with your significant other, developing a passionate hatred for somebody, etc.). Two cooperating Scanners automatically function at this level (a non-cooperating Scanner is read with normal familiarity levels).

### SCANNER STATISTICS

Special Skill	Interpretation
Base Range	10 meters (+1 for a -1 COOL cost)
Reflexes (REF)	+3 any time desired
Special Attack	Static Wave (touch only)
Requirements	Must touch bare skin

### NOTES

- Can turn power on/off as desired.
- Can generate their own Static fields to stop reading (treat as Very High Environment).
- Can extend range at cost of -1 to Cool for every additional meter. Every meter below Base Range adds +1 to skill.
- You may make as many Damage Class levels of Static Wave attacks per day as 2X your BODY stat (e.g., a BODY of 7 = 14 DC total.)
- Can only scan one subject at a time.

# BOLTER

## LIGHTNING THROWERS & ELECTRO-BLASTERS

Personal Log Entry 132.11  
 Dr. David Chaing  
 Center For Disease Control  
 May 12, 2027

Compared to the abilities of the Scanners, Alchemists and Tinmen, the CyberEvolved class we dubbed the Bolters seem almost mundane. There's no incredible scanning field here, John. It's more like someone sat down and said, "Hmmm. We need to add a long ranged weapon class to this team." That the Bolter fits so well into the idea of an integrated tactical structure only reinforces my personal theory that the Carbon Plague is no accident, but a conscious design implemented for a specific purpose. Since the best purpose of a CyberEvolved team would be assault and combat, I'm afraid that points right back to some ambitious Megacorp somewhere.

Like the Wizard, each Bolter has his own charge-producing enclave of specialized cells. However, the charge-producing cells are located inside the torso, and are much larger. The voltages generated are also far larger; in fact, this cellular structure appears to be one of the most perfect supercapacitors anyone in the lab has ever seen. It picks up charge from everywhere: from environmental static, charge generated from biochemical processes, maybe even from background signals in the EM band. I don't know for sure, John, but let's be honest: We still don't know where electric eels get their current either.

The entire nervous system is also hardwired to stand a tremendous amount of voltage as well. But here's the kicker. Spooled like thread around the forearm bones of each Bolter are several dozen meters of incredibly fine hexite "wire." It's made up

of some type of static "memory metal" compound; the more current you run through it, the stiffer and more rigid it becomes. At the end of the wire is a very tiny guide "dart" that is recessed into the wrists of the Bolter.

The Bolter launches his wire out of the base of his palms (remember that old comic book character, *Spiderman*, John?). The dart shoots out at tremendous speeds, forced by the pressure of the suddenly stiffening wire. The Bolter can actually bend the wire in mid-course, like flying a remote, until his dart strikes the target. He then pours a staggering jolt of current directly from his charge storage cells down the wire and into the target. The result is like being on the end of a megavolt electrical arc. I've seen metal melted, wood set afire, and lab animals incinerated by powerful Bolters. It isn't pretty.

The other ability Bolters appear to manifest is to be able to pass a charge down any conductive material that they can get a grip on. This contact charge can also be transmitted through the skin in a diffuse arc; this means that anyone touching the Bolter will take a serious (or even lethal) jolt of current.

I really wish we had more data on this subclass; the only one we were able to observe killed two technicians with the aforementioned contact charge before the guards were able to stop him. In the melee, unfortunately, the Bolter was killed.

More than any other class of the CyberEvolved, the Bolter worries me the most. First, they have the potential to be very dangerous; imagine a Bolter taking up a life of crime. Second, their very existence implies a level of thought and planning that goes beyond a mere biotech accident. And that means whoever created this Plague intended to use it as a weapon. What else did they intend to unleash on us?

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## BOLTER POWERS

TABLE #1: BOLT THROWING DIFFICULTY

Range to Target	Straight	2 Turns	3 Turns	4 Turns	5 Turns
1-12 m	8	12	16	20	24
13-25 m	12	16	20	24	28
26-50 m	16	20	24	28	32
51-100 m	20	24	28	32	36

TABLE #2: MAXIMUM CHARGE BY BODY STAT

BODY STAT	1-2	3-4	5-7	8-9	10
Maximum Charge Stored	30 DC	45 DC	60 DC	75 DC	90 DC

Charge is restored at a rate of 2 DC every hour.

TABLE #3: MAXIMUM BOLT FORCE BY RANGE

Range	Touch	1-12 m	13-25 m	26-50 m	51-100 m
Maximum Damage Deliverable	DC 9	DC 8	DC 7	DC 6	DC 5

Note: You may deliver any or all of the maximum charge in an attack.

TABLE #4: MAXIMUM "CONTACT" CHARGE BY RANGE

Distance of Contact	Charge	Less than 1 m	1-12 m	13-25 m	26-50 m	51-100 m
Maximum Damage Deliverable		DC 9	DC 7	DC 5	DC 3	NA

Note: You may deliver any or all of the maximum charge in an attack.

## BOLTER STATISTICS

Special Skill	Bolt Throwing
Other Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Contact Charge" Attack</li> <li>• Battery</li> <li>• Stun Attack</li> </ul>
Reflexes (REF)	+2 any time desired

## NOTES

- Can transfer shocks down any conductive material (steel, iron, copper, some plastics [Contact Charge]).
- Can launch *one* Hexite "chainwire" up to 100m long in each round, bending the wire as desired around obstacles.
- Can work as a battery to power DC current devices (radios, videos, vehicles).
- Can choose to Stun targets instead of killing (any use of power under DC 4 can be declared a "stun", requiring the target make a Stun check).
- Bolter shocks are reduced by armor. However, the charge does work over all types of coverings *except* rubber.
- You may not drag, drape, whip, hang or garotte with your chainwires (too fine and light).

## BOLTER SKILL: BOLT THROWING [REF]

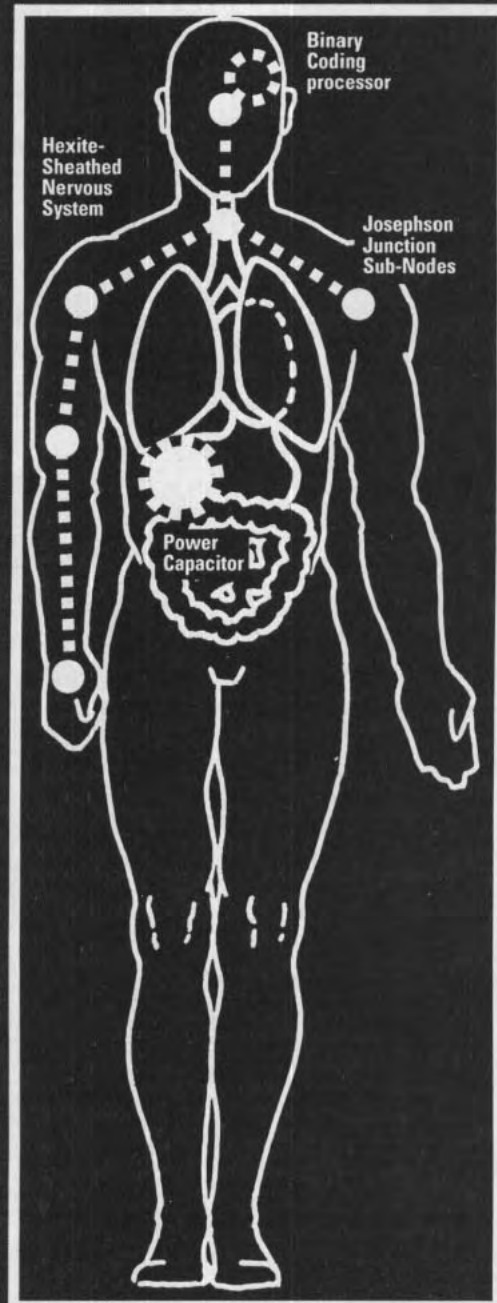
This skill represents the Bolter's ability to throw a controlled Hexite chainwire around obstacles to hit a target. It is similar to the *Streetfighting* or *Ranged Weapons* skills found on pg. 219. The chance of success is based on the Bolt Throwing Table (#1) at the top of the page, modified by range and number of direction changes. Damage varies based on range to target (Table #3) and the amount of charge spent from the Bolter's storage capacitors (Table #2). Damage may also be rated as a "stun" instead of damage. **Your skill starts at +1.**

In addition, Bolters may send a "contact" charge down any conductive material (Table #4), and can also power any small DC device by touching it (for a nearly indefinite time).

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# WIZARD

## MASTERS OF THE CYBER-NET & VIRTUALITY



### Personal Log Entry 132.12 Dr. David Chaing Center For Disease Control May 12, 2027

In basic design strategy, "Net Wizards" are the spiritual cousins of the Scanner class. Making up the third largest group of the Evolved, Wizards have an amazing aptitude with devices of an electronic nature.

Using the same assembled Josephson Junction architecture found in Scanners, the CNM action configures concentrated formations of these Junctions along the spinal column and within the cranial cavity of Wizards. Unlike Scanners, the Junctions within Wizards are constantly experiencing the state of superconductivity, essentially meaning that these Junctions always detect and translate any electromagnetic fields which pass within the range of sensitivity.

Being positioned deep within the body, however, fields must be of relatively high intensity in order to penetrate the effective insulation of the surrounding body tissue. The field sensitivity of Wizards is approximately four orders of magnitude less than that of Scanners (somewhere in the order of only 10-6 gauss).

This apparent lack of sensitivity prevents Wizards from being overwhelmed by a constant bombardment of sensory data coming from low-energy electromagnetic emissions (i.e., humans); stronger fields, such as those from broadcast transmissions and electronic devices, are easily distinguished.

Along with being able to, in essence, "receive" external electromagnetic information, a charge-producing enclave of specialized cells (positioned at the point where the skull meets the upper vertebrae of the spinal column) allows Wizards to "trans-

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mit" signals by reversing the detection process and exploiting the amplification aspect of transistors (which, of course, is what a Josephson Junction is) — much in the same way that any antenna may be turned into a transmitting array by sending an electrical current through it rather than just letting it passively receive. Through this process, Wizards can sense and translate electromagnetic fields, transmit their own electromagnetic pulses, and, with enough power, cause a signal of their making to be imposed over another existing field. In lay terms, they can communicate and interact on a binary level with just about any electronic device — if the object has a processing unit of reasonable power, a Wizard can exert his will over it.

We've dubbed this ability **COUNTERPARTING**, from the old *Star Wars* ability that allowed advanced robots to talk to other less advanced types. With this ability a Wizard can effectively give a computerized device direct instructions, rather than resorting to cumbersome *Controller* or *Intrusion* programs. Netrunners have nothing on these guys inside the Net — it's like Netspace is their own little playground. All they have to do is tell a computer to do something, and if they're good enough, it just will.

Interacting with the fields created by electronic devices would be impossible if not for the neural restructuring accomplished by the CNM. Without it, Wizards would be as incapable of keeping up with the rapid rate of field fluctuations as Scanners are. However, the CNM causes extensive application of nanite transformation within a Wizard's neural folds. Both spinal material and cranial matter is laced with Hexite filaments to facilitate transmission speed of neural impulses. Memory functions are completely revised from standard RNA electrochemical reactions to blindingly fast bacteriorhodopsin clusters; so configured, the memory architecture is eidetic and virtually instantaneous, and stored in a binary/hexidecimal coding structure. Wizards never forget anything they somehow interact with, and they are capable of easily thinking in hexidecimal coding as a byproduct. MED transistors are expressed directly into the cognitive and reflexive centers of brain and spinal activity — the resulting increase in response time is incredible. While not nearly on par with the nanosecond range

of traditional inorganic components, cycle time for thought processes are lowered into the low microsecond range — apparently, fast enough to effectively interact with most electronic components (something to do with imbedded wait states, I think).

This incredible processing speed allows Wizards one other ability which I find disturbing to an extreme. Wizards appear to be able to *multitask* mentally: to think about several thoughts at one time (although, mercifully, this doesn't seem to extend to gross motor functions). This means they can effectively "run" programs of their own devising in the *backgrounds* of their minds, sort of a computerized schizophrenia. The Wizards we observed can give these programs (which they call **FAMILIARS**) very sophisticated abilities, even to the level of their own independent thoughts. Think about it, John — what if your child could create imaginary "playmates" who were really powerful programs, capable of going off on their own and raising havoc in Netspace; playmates who could literally do anything they wanted to other programs, systems and Netrunners? Put this ability in the hands of a four year old and the results could be catastrophic.

A final interesting note: Scanners find trying to read Wizards very alien. Apparently, the extensive microelectrical activity that goes on within a Wizard's physiology distorts their personal fields beyond readability. As one of the Scanners put it, "It's like messy handwriting; you can make out some sections of text, but the majority is illegible."

John, I'm not kidding when I say that I know several men at EBM and Cray who would kill to get their hands on a Wizard.

**WIZARD SKILL: ARCANE [INT]**

This is the Wizard's ability to manipulate and interact with Net/Virtuality-based reality. **Your skill begins at +1** and covers two areas: **COUNTERPARTING**, or the ability to communicate with and control computer-based hardware (equivalent to the Netrunner's *Controllers*), and **FAMILIAR**, the ability to create complex "programs" by thinking about them (see pg. 143), and running them subconsciously. A Wizard may run as many programs as half of his INT score, rounded down. **NOTE:** Wizards can also Counterpart with programs (see pg. 158).

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## WIZARD POWERS

## MACHINE LEVEL

Counterpart Instruction	Stupid	Simple	Smart	Expert System	Sentient
Talk to Me	20	18	15	10	5
Do Your Thing	10	15	20	25	30
Do Me a Favor	10	15	20	25	30
Break Programming for Me	20	25	30	35	30
Forget Me	5	10	15	20	30

## COUNTERPARTING DEFINITIONS

**NOTE:** Wizards can also Counterpart with programs (see pg. 158).

- **Talk To Me:** The Wizard asks the device to communicate with him. Depending on the Intelligence level of the machine, this could be as simple as "I am a cash register" all the way to "I am an AI controlling all of the banking on the West Coast; what do you want?" Conversational mode between binary buddies.
- **Do Your Thing:** The machine is asked to perform its usual function: *turn on the light, open the door, list everyone who has used this V-Term in the last two days.*
- **Do Me a Favor:** The machine is asked to perform an unusual function that is still within its capacities and does not violate existing programming against performing that function: *instead of opening all the doors, just open this one.*
- **Break Programming:** The machine is asked to ignore previous instructions: for example, *open the door without the proper code*—or to not perform a preprogrammed function: *do not ask me for a security check.*
- **Forget Me:** The machine is instructed to erase any memory or record of interacting with the Wizard.

## MACHINE LEVEL DEFINITIONS

- **STUPID:** A "stupid" device only knows its own function and things directly related to that function. For example, a cash register would know how to add and subtract, and know the total registered in its memory. Calculators, cash registers, phones, simple electronic devices are all stupid. These devices will always do as asked; they aren't smart enough to know the difference.
- **SIMPLE:** A simple device uses flexible programs to respond to environmental conditions. These programs always have a simple IF... THEN structure to them (if the room is dark, THEN turn on the lights... IF the room is cold, THEN turn on the heat. Alarm systems, environmental lighting, etc. are all examples of simple devices. These devices may require an access code or key (about 50% of the time) to get them to do what you want (ARCANE may be used to create a program to find the code required).

- **SMART:** These devices have complex instructions equivalent to a not-too-smart robot. They can monitor a variety of IF... THEN statements and use them together to handle a range of conditions. Autopilots, non-sentient computers, autofactories, robocabs, V-and Dataterms are all example of smart devices. These devices always have some kind of protocol restricting their cooperation (however, ARCANE may be used to create a program to winnow out the code required).

- **EXPERT SYSTEM:** These are machines not much dumber than a real Artificial Intelligence system. Most Sysop-monitored systems, computers and Genius Guns are at this level: capable of handling very complex tasks, but not terribly great conversationalists. These are the standard INT 3-9 systems of Netrunning. Like Smart systems, these devices always have some kind of protocol restricting their cooperation (however, ARCANE may once again be used to create a program to winnow out the code required).

- **SENTIENT:** This is dealing with AIs and other self-aware entities. Communication can easily be held, but the entities are not necessarily cooperative.

## WIZARD STATISTICS

Special Skill	Arcane
Base Range	1000 meters
Reflexes (REF)	+4 any time desired

## NOTES

- Can talk to any computer-controlled machine.
- Can create independent FAMILIAR programs.
- Can hear/see radio, TV and Virtuality signals.
- Can project mental view through the Net.
- Must eat 1% BODY stat (in kg) every 12 hrs. or lose abilities in 1 hr.
- Can move his presence (ICON) through the Net at a speed equal to normal MOVE.

# DATA PAD

## FAMILIAR

FAMILIAR is the Wizard's ability to create programs of extreme sophistication and capability. The ability is very much like creating a "Wizard's Familiar" out of a fantasy adventure; each FAMILIAR is created just like you would create a roleplaying character, using ARCANE points and applying them to certain "stats" and "abilities."

To determine how many ARCANE points your Wizard can use in each creation, add your current ARCANE skill to your INT. For example, with a 6 ARCANE skill and a 10 INT, you'd have 16 points to write a program. You could rewrite the program into a better version of itself anytime you gained greater ARCANE skills.

You may "run" as many FAMILIARS as your INT stat halved (round down). You must rezz them up one at a time, but they may remain functional for as long as their IN function times 10 turns. Once you write the program, you never forget its coding, and can call it up whenever it derezzes. However, there is a catch: Since the computer/hard drive the Familiar is stored on is the Wizard's own brain, any attack that derezzes the Familiar will damage the Wizard's neural cells as well.

**AF ATTACK FUNCTION:** This is the Program's Attack Value. It is usually added to a 1D10 roll against the defending Program's Defense Factor. Netrunner Programs always have the same value for both AF and DEF, called Function (FCT). Wizard's FAMILIARS may be designed with different AF and DEFs, making them more versatile than regular programs.

Your FAMILIAR's AF can be subdivided into AF Subroutines: mini-programs within the program, each with part or all of the Attack Function's Value. When divided in this way, only the portion of the AF assigned to the subroutine is used in acts involving that task. Subroutines include:

- **Breaks Down Data Walls:** The AF strength is equivalent to the FCT of a regular *Tunneler* attack program.
- **Decrypts Codelocks:** The AF strength is equivalent to the FCT of a regular *Decrypter* attack program (acts like a subtle Intrusion program).
- **Derezzes Other Programs:** The AF strength is equivalent to the FCT of a regular anti-program attack program.
- **Controls Realspace Hardware:** The AF strength is equivalent to the FCT of a *Controller* Utility program. This subroutine will control any type

of remote of lesser FCT or INT.

- **Crashes Systems:** The AF strength is equivalent to the FCT of an *Shutdown* anti-system attack program.
- **Anti-Personnel:** The AF attacks Wizards and Netrunners. The AF's level equals the Damage Class of the attack done to the victim.
- **Covers Its Tracks:** The AF adds to your Trace Value as per the Netrunning Section (pg. 157).
- **Stealthy:** It's hard to spot, and no one can see it. It's AF strength is equivalent to a *Stealth* defense program.
- **Virtuality Illusion:** Creates a Virtuality area or image. The target must roll an INT+1D6 roll higher than the AF+1D6 to see through the illusion.
- **Spot Hidden/Altered ICON:** See invisible & hidden ICONS.
- **Armor:** The FAMILIAR can act as armor for the Wizard in Net Combat. The Armor AF is used to defend the Wizard against anti-personnel and anti-system attacks. It's added to his defense roll in Net Combat (see page 165). **This subroutine is reduced by one point each time it is used to protect the Wizard (like the Shield program).** When this subroutine is reduced to 0, the Familiar must be derezzed for two rounds for its Armor to regenerate.

**DEF DEFENSIVE FUNCTION:** The Program's Defense Value against derezzing. Basically program integrity. Whenever the program is attacked this value is used in the roll to defend it. Damage goes to the AF. **When the AF drops to 0, the Familiar derezzes and you take DC 2 damage. In addition, roll 1D10. On a 10, you will lose 1 point of INT permanently.**

**MF MOVEMENT FUNCTION:** How far the program travels per turn. Each jump through an LDL counts as one move. Normal program speeds are limited to 5 spaces per turn. However, FAMILIARS can be faster or slower than regular Netrunner programs. FAMILIARS without an MF are considered "carried" by the Wizard. A Wizard can only carry *three* FAMILIARS at a time (one in each virtual hand and one on his icon's body), thus he should consider making at least a few mobile units.

Name <i>Velociraptor</i>						ICON <i>Big Silver Dinosaur</i>				
ARCANE	AF	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	DEF	IA	MF	INT	
20	8	3	1	1	3	3	4	3	2	
SF1 <i>Derezz programs</i>			SF2 <i>Stealthy</i>							
SF3 <i>Crashes Systems</i>			SF4 <i>Anti-Personnel (DC 5)</i>							

A Typical FAMILIAR Program ▲



## DATA PAID®

**IA INDEPENDENT ACTION:** How many turns the program can run without you needing to rerezz it again. This duration is equal to the IA x 2 turns, after which the program must be rerezzed by you.

**INT INTELLIGENCE:** How smart is the program? Each point invested represents an Expert System as intelligent as a human with an equal INT. It will come up with ideas on its own; such as, *maybe I should check out this file for the Boss?* Any Familiar with an INT of 4 or higher will usually have its own personality, being able of making conversation and commentary. In fact, these Familiars could possibly be roleplayed by another player; this is a great way to occupy other players while the Wizard players are making a Netrun. This also takes some of the burden off of the Ref for creating various FAMILIAR personalities. Try it with players you trust, and remind them that FAMILIARS, even ones with oodles of attitude, are still bound to obey the commands of their Wizard. Of course, they can make all kinds of comments about it.

The final step is to decide on a Name and an ICON for the FAMILIAR you've created. With FAMILIAR, any Wizard can have a crowd of useful servants, friends and allies.

#### OTHER WIZARD NOTES

Wizards cannot access the Net without first hopping on a cellular signal and connecting with an Interface Unit. Unlike Virtuality, the Net doesn't constantly broadcast itself out into Realspace. It's only there when you access

it, which is what Wizards can do simply by sending a signal out. When a Wizard submerges into the Net, it becomes the Wizard's reality, blocking out everything else. The Wizard can then create his own ICON and go Netrunning, projecting his consciousness (but not his body) out across the communications grid.

His Familiars travel with him and can operate alongside him in Netspace, or even be sent off to do things (for however long their IA Stats allows). Note that if a Wizard sends a Familiar through an LDL or other long link, he must maintain contact to that link until the Familiar has completed its task, which means staying in the Net. If the Wizard has to disengage from the Net prematurely for some reason, the Familiar returns instantly, but may not have finished its job.

When doing Net- or other computer-related tasks, the Wizard's internal processor has the same basic abilities as other computers. He can perform the Multitask actions listed on page 161 automatically. These include opening unlocked files and reading them (if they can be read), copying files, editing, and other basic computer functions. He can store up to 1/2 his INT in datafiles (these would be *large* files) internally. Performing one of these activities counts as an action for him in Net Combat (in addition to any movement and/or Familiars he may be running).

More game information on the Net can be found on pages 155-168.



## FAMILIAR DATARECORD

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Name					ICON				
ARCANE	AF	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	DEF	IA	MF	INT
SF1					SF2				
SF3					SF4				

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Name					ICON				
ARCANE	AF	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	DEF	IA	MF	INT
SF1					SF2				
SF3					SF4				

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Name					ICON				
ARCANE	AF	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	DEF	IA	MF	INT
SF1					SF2				
SF3					SF4				

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Name					ICON				
ARCANE	AF	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	DEF	IA	MF	INT
SF1					SF2				
SF3					SF4				

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Name					ICON				
ARCANE	AF	SF1	SF2	SF3	SF4	DEF	IA	MF	INT
SF1					SF2				
SF3					SF4				

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# CHAPTER SIX



# HEAVY METAL WARRIORS

## DATA PAD®



# LAST MORGAN

## WAKE UP! NOW!

- ▼ Okay, we don't have much time. CorpSec's blown the safehouse; I just picked it up on the com channels. You've got about five minutes' til they get their units in position and hit the place. Grab your stuff right now and listen carefully.
- ▼ In the floor where this V-term sits, you're gonna find a loose board—maybe you've already found it by snooping earlier. There's a box under the board, and inside is a datapad, one of those dedicated virtual computer decks. It's not too big, about the size of a credit card, and if you don't already have a Virtuality 'trode to access it, there are three in the box with it. Divide them up between you.
- ▼ Got it? This datapad has a download of the combined info the Cabal currently has on the ISA, CorpSec, and all the other bad guys you're going to be dealing with in the next few months [see pgs. 226 through 236 of this book]. It also has a list of V-term codes you can use to keep in touch with us.
- ▼ Here are your choices, as I see them. As soon as you get out of here, you can just try to run. Try to get back to your old squares and hang out. You might get lucky; CorpSec may have eased off on the patrols. Or find a new place to run to. But I'd still recommend you stick together; there's strength in numbers.
- ▼ You can wait here and surrender to CorpSec. Again, you might get lucky; they might not just shoot you. Sometimes they recruit the CyberEvolved to hunt other juves. But it's risky. They'll probably exterminate you as soon as they don't need your help. And you're gonna have to live with the fact that you're probably going to doom a lot of fellow yogangers to long and awful deaths. Up to you.
- ▼ Or you can join the CyberRevolution. We could use some people like you. You've proven you're smart, got skill and nerve, and aren't afraid to stay on the Edge. If you hang with us, you'll be taking a stand against the ISA and its goons. If you want in on the action, your first step is to get to one of our bases. The nearest one to you is in the Combat Zone south of the freeway. Hit the area and start asking cautious questions. Use my name. We'll bring you in from there.
- ▼ Frack! There goes the last of the intrusion defenses. They're gonna be in the doors in a minute or less. Get hoppin'; I'll wait 'til you get clear before I blow the place.
- ▼ Good luck.

▼ ▼ ▼ [END]

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# DOING THINGS

We've placed this section first because we hope you'll mostly be doing things that *aren't* combat related. These tasks involve using skills and abilities such as driving vehicles, fixing jammed weapons, or jury rigging that door so you can get away from the 200 CorpSec goons that are hot on your trail. Or, as Morgan Blackhand has occasionally said, "If it gets down to firepower, you've probably *already* lost the upper hand."

Also, it's a good place to introduce the basic mechanism for doing things in *Cybergeneration*: the **Skill Check**.

## Skill Checks

Whenever your character attempts to do something that isn't an everyday action (and isn't an attack), he will make what we call a **Skill Check**. To make a Skill Check, first determine which of your **Stats** is the most appropriate to use to perform the action. For example, if you were trying to stand on your head, REF would be best. If you were deciphering a code, INT would be the most appropriate.

Next, if you have a Skill that seems to fit what you're trying to do, add the **level** of that **Skill** to the Stat you selected.

Remember that you can only combine one Skill with one Stat at a time. (Note that while we link Skills to specific Stats during character generation, those combos are suggestions only. The GM should make the final decision on a task-by-task basis.)

Meanwhile, the Referee should decide how hard the task to be performed will be. Each Skill Check is rated from **Easy** to **Nearly Impossible**, and each rating has a corresponding value, called a **Difficulty Number**.

GENERAL TASK	DIFFICULTY #
Easy .....	10+
Average .....	15+
Difficult .....	20+
Very Difficult .....	25+
Nearly Impossible .....	30+

SOME TYPICAL DIFFICULTIES	VALUE
Open a simple lock .....	10
Open a complex lock .....	20
Repair jammed weapon .....	10
Jury rig a simple hookup .....	15
Sneak past a typical guard .....	10
Simple cyberbike/board trick .....	10
Get control of vehicle in skid/spin .....	20
Jump cyberbike/board over gap .....	15
180° skid turn on bike/board .....	15

Pop a "wheelie"/"hang ten" .....	15
Difficult cyberbike/board trick .....	25
Ride heavy surf .....	20
Battarope onto moving car .....	15
Aeroboard up the side of a building .....	15
Aeroboard between two tight places .....	20
Balance on a narrow beam .....	15
Carry off Facedance of well known person .....	15
Know a basic fact .....	10
Know somewhat specialized fact .....	15
Play an instrument/perform passably .....	10
Hayduke a simple construction machine .....	10
Hayduke a complex system .....	15
Creatively Hayduke a system .....	20-25
Dump truck dive .....	10
Face down irate citizens .....	10-15
Boost small objects .....	15
Jigger counter-programs on microfactory .....	15
Rig a secret camera or microphone .....	10

You may apply only **one** Skill to a task at any time. Add your Stat and your Skill together, then roll 1D10 and add the result to your first total. If your total is **equal to or higher** than the Difficulty Number of the task, you've succeeded; on a **lower** roll, you've failed. It's that simple. Sometimes a skill may be applied to another Stat; this is up to the Referee's decision.

**THE BASIC SKILL CHECK FORMULA:**  
 $(Stat)+(Skill)+1D10 \geq (Task\ Difficulty\ Number)$   
 = Success

### Opposed Checks

If you are making an attempt against another character, the opposing character can combine his most applicable stat, skill and 1D10. On an equal or higher roll, the defending player wins.

### Critical Success or Total Fumble

**[Optional]:** If while making a skill roll, you roll a natural **10** on the die, it can be considered a critical success which allows you to roll the die again and add it to the previous total (which includes the previous 10). This allows for exceptionally high rolls on certain occasions, allowing for that fluke success that is the very stuff of cinematic stories.

On the flip side, if you roll a **1** on the die, it's considered a fumble and you automatically fail the roll. Roll 1D10 again and subtract the *value of the skill* you were using when you fumbled. If the roll is a natural 10 or the total is 5 or higher, something *bad* happens, such as you might have hurt yourself or a friend (Ref's discretion).

### Stat Checks

Sometimes the character may have to rely on raw ability, like trying to keep from passing out from a Stun weapon. In these cases, the Ref can have the character roll 1D10 against the most applicable stat. If the roll is less than or equal to the stat, the character succeeds—or survives.

## Time in the Game

In general, how long something takes to do will be self-evident or not vitally important. But sometimes you'll need to know exactly how long it's taking to pick that lock or unjam that door. So, besides the usual minutes/hours/days, we use two other time units: **Turns** and **Rounds**.

**Turns** are **10 seconds** long and represent the time it takes to do a moderately complex task, like putting on and tying your shoes. Many standard skill tasks are measured in turns and generally one non-combat skill task use takes one turn.

**Rounds** are **3 seconds** long and are used primarily in combat when actions are happening fast and furious. For simplicity, we assume there to be **three Rounds to a Turn**. Rounds are discussed in more detail in "Saturday Night Skuffle."

## Gaining Experience

Obviously, you want to get better at what you do. That's going to take experience, or Improvement Points (IP). IP are spent like "trading stamps" to purchase new levels of skill.

The first level of a skill always costs 10 IP. To determine how many points are required to raise a skill higher than this, multiply the current level of skill by 10. This is how many IP you'll need to raise a simple skill to the next level.

Some skills are harder to learn than others; for example, many Edgerunner Skills are tougher to learn than Juvegang skills. These skills have what is called an IP multiplier. This number, listed in the skill's description, multiplies the base number of points required (as described above).

Where do you get more IP? You gain IP by studying, by being taught or through experience. In *Cybergeneration*, the Referee will award you IP for improving a particular Skill based on how much you invested in time, lessons or experience. Generally, the following guidelines apply:

EXAMPLE	IP GAINED
Used or practiced Skill a lot .....	1-2
Used Skill often and well .....	2-3
Used Skill extraordinarily well .....	5-6
Critical use of Skill .....	7-8
Incredible use of Skill .....	8-10

## Learning Edgerunner Skills

Although your juvegang skills may be enough for running on the Street, you'll probably want to find a teacher and learn Edgerunner skills as soon as possible (see page 213). Edgerunner skills don't have the "Level 8 max limit" or the "half-as-good" limits that juvegang skills have. You can elect to learn any Edgerunner Skill through getting an adult teacher or through taking paid lessons, buying and improving these skills with IP as usual. Besides, sooner or later, you're going to have to grow up and get a job!

# SATURDAY NIGHT SKUFFLE

## THE COMBAT SYSTEM FOR *CYBERGENERATION*

*Cybergeneration* combat is designed to be cinematic and fast-paced, to match the frenetic speed of your juvegang adventures. **Saturday Night Skuffle** is a simple "fast combat" system that is easy to use and keeps the action flowing without pause. Because it can be fairly deadly, it should encourage players to think before they shoot . . . especially since the other side will probably have the bigger guns.

## Initiative

In Saturday Night Skuffle, all combat is divided up into a series of 3-second rounds. At the start of each round, **one player** (acting by mutual consent as party leader) **rolls 1D10**. The Referee rolls for all NPC characters. On a tie or higher roll the Players' side goes first, with the players deciding among themselves as to the order, or going by highest REF total first. **Edgerunners and Adversaries with Reflex Boosts (pg. 221) and Solos (see pg. 214) can add their Reflex Boost Bonus and/or their Combat Sense to this roll for their characters, allowing them to go before the rest of the party, or perhaps even the opposition (if their total beats the opposition's total).**

## Actions

When your turn comes up, you may wait until another player or NPC has taken his action before taking your own (by announcing your intention to do so when your action comes up), but you may not do this more than once in a round. During your part of the round you may **do one thing**, such as load, fire, change a weapon, or any other task that could reasonably be performed in three seconds.

## Two actions/Second actions

**[Optional]:** A **second action** (or up to two actions at once) may be performed in a round at a -3 die penalty to *both* actions.

## Movement

In *Cybergeneration*, you may run as many meters each round as your MOVE stat and do one other thing. If you decide to do *nothing* but run that round, you may move up to **three times** this amount.

## Facing

**Facing** is defined as being in a position where you could point your finger at the target and still see it. If there is nothing blocking your line of sight, and you are facing a target, you may fire. There are no penalties or movement costs for changing facing during your part of the round.

## Ranged Attacks

In the *Cybergeneration* system, making ranged attacks is very easy. First, find out how **far** you are from your target in **meters** (as determined by the Referee). Next, add your *Streetfighting* Skill to your REF Stat, your Weapon Accuracy (WA), roll 1D10, and try to get a result greater than the **Difficulty Number** listed in the *Shooting Difficulty Table* at the bottom of the page. If you're an **Edgerunner**, you'll use your *Ranged Weapons* skill instead of the *Streetfighting* skill of the *Cybergeneration* yogangers. Again, the basic formula is:

$$\text{REF} + \text{Skill} + \text{WA} + 1\text{D}10 > \text{Difficulty Number} = \text{a Hit}$$

• **Dodging:** A target may **dodge** as an action during the round if he knows he is being attacked. **This adds 2 to the firer's Difficulty Number**, or 4 if the dodging target has a REF of 10+.

## Automatic Weapons

In *Cybergeneration*, all automatic weapon attacks are considered to be either **single shot** or **full auto**. When making a full auto attack, add 5 to your attack roll. For every point *over* the required Difficulty, one bullet has hit your target. Each fully automatic attack uses 25 rounds from your weapon, no matter what type.

## Genius Guns

Genius Guns are self-targeting smartguns, firing rocket-powered explosive rounds. As Morgan Blackhand puts it, "Genies are the closest thing to having a pocket-sized

Sidewinder missile." They require no *Ranged Weapon* skill and are only deterred by electronic countermeasures (you don't dodge them; you just hope they miss). One of the nastier attributes of Genius Guns is that, like Sidewinders, they can *follow* a moving target through several direction changes, using nanocircuitry chips, steering vanes and a microradar head. Needless to say they are also ruinously expensive, and are usually only found in the hands of elite CorpSec squads. **To make an attack with a Genius Gun, you must roll the gun's chance to hit rather than your own.**

**1) Lock on target.** You may fire a Genius Gun at any target within 50 meters (the maximum range of the gun's micro-radar sender) that is in a straight line from your position. Basic **Genius Guns** have a 40% chance to hit a target within range. **Supergenius Guns** have a 50% chance to hit. **Einstein Guns** (the smartest type) have a 60% chance to hit.

**2) Subtract for any "scramblers" in the area between the gun and its target.** Each scrambler (a dime-sized electronic countermeasure device) deployed reduces the gun's chance to hit by 5%. **A scrambler is good for one use and lasts for one combat round.**

**3) Add in any advantages the gun may have:**  
 Hard Armor (MetalGear: it reflects the radar better, making targeting easier) ..... +10%  
 Within 12 or less meters from target ..... +10%

**4) Roll to hit.** If the round hits, roll DC8 damage as with any normal weapon.

**5) If the round misses,** roll again next combat round to hit, this time reducing the round's chance by an additional 20% (as it turns back and tries to reacquire its target). If the roll is unsuccessful, make a *third* roll at -30%. If the round does not hit on the third attempt, it automatically runs out of fuel and drops to the ground inactive and unexploded. Each attempt takes 1 combat round; characters may react on the subsequent two attempts.

SHOOTING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Range to Target in Meters

Weapon	*0-12 m	13-25 m	26-50 m	51-100 m	101-200 m	200-400 m	400-800 m	800+
Pistol†	15	20	25	30	30	NA	NA	NA
SMGs**, Bows	15	15	20	25	25	30	NA	NA
Shotgun	15	20	25	30	35	NA	NA	NA
Rifles, MGs	15	10	10	15	20	25	30	30
Lt. Cannon #	15	15	10	10	15	20	20	25
Rockets ***	15	15	15	20	20	25	30	35

\*Includes Point Blank Range (0 meters). Pistols and SMGs can add +5 to WA at Point Blank Range. † Also includes tasers, microwavers, paintball guns, codeguns.  
 \*\* Include cap laser guns in this class. # includes grenade launchers, railguns, and other large guns. \*\*\* Includes RPG-Cs and any unguided missiles.

### Beam Weapons

• **Microwavers and EMP Guns:** These are simple to use in *Cybergeneration*. On a hit, roll 1D6. On a 5 or 6, the microwave blast incapacitates all cyberware on the target's body for 1D6/2 turns—cyberlimbs do not work, cyberoptics go blind, cyberradio goes deaf. Most can be repaired in a day with a Difficult *Cyber Tech* roll. EMP guns have the same effect on a 4, 5, or 6 *plus* they may also damage standard electronics, scramble radio transmissions within a 10m radius, *and* can stun people (see Stunning Weapons below)

• **Cap Lasers:** These weapons have a capacitor bank holding a total of 24 Damage Class Levels. There are two types of laser attacks: **blast** and **scribble**; both are made as ranged attacks. With a *blast*, you may fire as little as DC3 or as much as DC7 in a single shot, until you have used all your damage pool, with the damage going to one target location. When set on *scribble*, a rotating prism fractionally breaks up the beam, turning it into an *area effect weapon* (below). Any target within the beam area takes damage. (Roll as DC5 and divide the Wounds between all targets equally, rounding extra values down. If the result is less than 1, no appreciable damage is taken.)

### Throwing

You may throw any small object (grenade, pistol, softball) up to 10 meters x your BODY score. You may throw a heavier object (like a computer) up to 4m x your BODY stat.

### Shotguns, Flamers & Area Effect Weapons

**Shotguns** and **cap laser guns** (set to scribble) are treated as covering a blanket area extending in a **line 1m wide by the range** of the weapon. Note: If something is between the path of the shotgun and its target, the intervening area behind that object is considered to be exempt from the effects of the fire.

• **Explosives, grenades, molotovs and missiles** deliver a blast that extends in a 5m circle around the point of impact. If the firer misses his To-Hit roll with these weapons, the shot is off by 2 meters for every point he missed the roll by (so if you only missed the roll by 2, you'd still catch the target in the burst radius). Targets within the burst radius (but not hit dead-on) suffer only one half damage.

### Melee & Hand to Hand Attacks

These are attacks made either with weapons you swing or with hands and feet. The **Difficulty Number** you have to beat in these checks is determined by combining your target's *Streetfighting* skill, his REF stat, and a D10 roll. If your total *Streetfighting* (or *Kata*, if appropriate) Skill, REF

stat, and D10 roll are higher than his, you've hit. Some Melee weapons have Weapon Accuracies that can add to (or subtract from) this total as well. If you're an **Edgerunner**, you'll use either your *Hand-To-Hand Combat Skill*, or your *Melee Skill* to attack, and your *Hand-to-Hand Combat* or *Melee* (if using a melee weapon to defend with) Skill to avoid an attack. So the basic formula for H-t-H combat is:

$$\text{Attacker's REF} + \text{Skill (+WA)} + 1D10 > \text{Defender's REF} + \text{Skill (+WA)} + 1D10 = \text{a Hit}$$

### Yogangers Fighting Edgerunners

As mentioned earlier, yogangers have a distinct disadvantage when fighting adult Edgerunners. This is because Edgerunners are trained professionals, while yogangers pick up their knowledge from the Street. When making melee or H-t-H attacks against Edgerunners, yogangers must halve (round down) their current *Streetfighting Skills*.

### Grapples, Holds & Chokes

A **grapple** is any move that gets your hands on your opponent; it is a prerequisite to any choke, throw or hold to follow in the next round. **Scanners** in particular must make a successful grapple in order to make *Static Wave Attacks*.

A **hold** is any attack that incapacitates your opponent, making it impossible to move and applying some amount of pain. A successful grapple must be made first. Each round a hold is applied, the victim must make a 1D10 roll lower than the total of his COOL *minus* the Strength bonus of his captor to escape (see the bottom of the Damage Table, pg. 152). A

**choke** is a hold that suffocates the opponent. Choking attacks are possible using garottes, whips or even Tinman tendrils, and do damage over several rounds.

### Damage

*Cybergeneration* uses a "fast damage" system that only uses one kind of die (10-sided). You can use weapons from *Cyberpunk* interchangeably (see pg. 247). Damage is taken from a total number of **Wounds**, equal to your character's BODY score.

In *Cybergeneration*, most **weapons** fall into fourteen levels of damage which are called Damage Classes. **When hit, roll 1D10, compare the roll to the type of weapon as listed on the Damage Table on pg. 152, and subtract the indicated damage from your character's Wounds (BODY).**

Which brings us to:

• **DEATH:** At 0 Wounds, a character passes out. At -4 Wounds, he is dead.



## WOUND DAMAGE TABLE

DC	TYPICAL WEAPON TYPES	1D10 ROLL							
		1	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10-11	12-14	15+
1	Shurikin	0	0	1	1	1	2	3	4
2	Switchblade*, Strike*, Punch*	1	1	1	2	2	3	4	5
3	Light Pistols/SMGs, Club*, Knife*, Scratchers, Fangs, Rippers, Big Knuckles, Cybersnakes, Kicks,* Throws*, Cyberpunch	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Med. Pistols/SMGs, Monoknife, Sword*, Axe* Slice n' Dice, Talon Foot, Cybercrush, Cyberkicks	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
5	Hvy. Pistols/SMGs, X-bows, Wolverers, Choke Hold*, 20-Gauge Slugs	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6	V. Heavy Pistols, Shotguns, Chainsaws, Micromissiles, 12-Gauge Slugs, Monokatana	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
7	Med. Rifle, 10-Gauge Slugs	5	6	7	8	9	10	NA	NA
8	Heavy Rifles, Genius Guns, Lt. MGs	6	7	8	9	10	11	NA	NA
9	V. Heavy Rifles, Lt. Missiles, Frag. Grenades	7	8	9	10	12	14	NA	NA
10	20mm Rifle, Heavy MGs	8	9	10	12	16	20	NA	NA
11	20mm Cannon, Lt. Anti-aircraft missile, RPG-C	10	14	18	22	26	30	NA	NA
12	25mm Cannon, 1 kg of C-6 explosive	15	20	25	30	35	40	NA	NA
13	30mm Cannon, Lt. Anti-tank Rockets	20	26	32	38	44	50	NA	NA
14	Really gross stuff only the military has	25	30	40	50	60	75	NA	NA

\*Plus Damage Bonus to **Die Roll** (BODY 2=-2 • BODY 3-4=-1 • BODY 5-7=0 • BODY 8-9=+1 • BODY 10=+2 • BODY 11-12=+4 • BODY 13-14=+5 • BODY 15=+8)  
Add *Hand-to-Hand Combat* or *Kata Skill Level* to **Die Roll** for damage done in hand to hand combat.

## Special Damage Cases

In addition to the basic damage from weapons, there are specific types of damage based on certain attack types:

• **A choke hold** causes damage each turn (3 rounds) as listed in the Damage Table above, until the victim is unconscious or dead.

• **Scanner** and **Bolter** damage is based on the amount of "power" dedicated to the attack. **Tinman** damage is based on the type of Hexite weapon formed (damages are described under the Shaping Difficulty Table on page 131, unless a tendril choke is made [see above]). **Alchemists** may not use nanotech to attack living tissue.

• **Stunning weapons (tasers, drugs)** require a Stun/Shock Roll (1D10). If the roll is equal to or lower than the character's current Body Type (after wounds have been subtracted, or with an automatic -2 to BODY for each successive time the target is hit by a stun weapon), he is still conscious. If it's higher, he is stunned and has passed out. EMP gun-type weapons (such as the M-41 pulse rifle) are treated as stunning weapons, with a -4 penalty to BODY for attacks against Scanners or Wizards.

• **Gas:** These will effect a 6m diameter area for 1D6/2 turns (depending on the wind conditions). Different gas types have different effects. Tear gas gives -3 to REF. Sleep gas

requires a Stun/Shock roll (-2) or it puts you out. Other gases can act like poisons of the appropriate strength.

• **Poisons:** In *Cybergeneration*, there are two kinds of poisons: **fatal** and **deadly**. A fatal poison kills you. That's it, unless you take the antidote within 1 turn (3 rounds). Luckily for the CyberEvolved, all fatal poisons are automatically treated as deadly poisons (thanks to your internal nanotech). Deadly poisons merely require a saving throw to be made, equal to or lower than your BODY stat. On a successful roll, you are sick for 1D6 hours, unable to do much more than char and groan. On a failed roll, you die. (Luckily, poisons aren't all that commonly used in 2027.)

• **Falling:** Damage from a fall depends largely upon the height you fall from (duh!). Start at DC3 on the Damage Table above for a three meter fall and go up one Damage Class for every additional three meters of height; roll on that line and apply the damage. [Note that personal armor only applies 1/2 its AR (round down) to falling damage.] So if you fell 12 meters (about 40'), you'd roll damage on the DC6 line. Crunch.

• Damage to **objects or vehicles** is taken directly from the SDP (Structural Damage Points) of the object. When the vehicle SDP reaches 0, it is considered destroyed or inoperable. If you want to reduce a vehicle to total scrap metal, you need to impart twice its SDP in damage.

## Armor

In *Cybergeneration*, armor is assumed to cover the entire body, rather than single areas (unless the Hit Location rule is in effect). **Subtract the Armor Rating (AR) from the amount of damage done by the weapon. Then subtract the remaining damage from your character's Wounds (BODY).** Personal armor cannot be 'layered' in *Cybergeneration*. If you are wearing more than one type of armor on a Hit Location, only the highest AR value is applied.

EV is the **Encumbrance Value**, which represents how wearing this armor slows you down. You must subtract the EV from your REF stat while wearing this armor.

TYPE OF ARMOR	AR VALUE	EV
Leather Armor	1 points	+0
Soft Armor	2 Points	+0
Light Armor	3 points	+1
Medium Armor	5 points	+1
Heavy Armor	6 points	+2
Hard Armors, Metal Gear®, Helmets	7 points	+2
Lt. Military Vehicle Armor	12 points	NA
Med. Powered Armor	17 points	NA
Hvy. Powered Armor	22 points	NA
Med. Military Vehicle Armor	25 points	NA

• **Armor Piercing Weapons [Optional Rule]:** Some weapons or ammo may have an Armor Piercing ability (AP), which means that they can halve the target's Armor Rating (round up and the AR cannot be reduced to less than 1).

After calculating the reduced AR, damage is handled normally for weapons which are rated as AP (see weapon listings).

AP ammo may be purchased for some guns which are not rated as AP standard. **AP ammo will provide the AP effect, but be rated one Damage Class lower than the weapon's regular rating (Min. DC1).** AP ammo is illegal for non-police use and costs five times the standard ammo cost.

• **Hit Locations [Optional Rule]:** Normally, all hits are assumed to go to the Torso, or the main body. But sometimes you may want to hit a specific body part, such as an opponent's gun arm. There are six locations to hit: Head, Torso, Right Arm, Left Arm, Right Leg and Left Leg. You can declare that you are **aiming for a specific body location (other than the Torso). This adds 4 to your To-Hit Difficulty**, but you strike that body part if you succeed. If you hit the Head, add one Wound after AR is subtracted (if no Wounds got through the armor, no damage is done). Use common sense here; if an area is covered or can't be hit, you can't make a shot.

• **Character Damage Effects [Optional Rule]:** You may want to reflect the effects of wounds on a character's ability to function. In this case, reduce the character's REF, INT, and MA stats by one for every Wound taken to his Body Type. This would mean that a character who had taken 2 or 3 wounds would not only be less strong and less capable of standing stun or shock, but would also be reduced in combat, movement and reasoning abilities as well.

• **Vehicular Damage Effects [Optional Rule]:** You can add damage effects instead of rendering a vehicle automatically inoperable. At the point that a vehicle has taken its SDP in damage (but less than twice its SDP), roll 1D10: on a 1-3, the vehicle keeps operating, but increase all Driving or Piloting Difficulties by +5 to represent accumulated damage. On a 4-10, the vehicle stalls and requires an immediate Tech skill repair check (of the appropriate type) to keep it going. Note that this is very bad for spinners and aerodynes—they tend to fall out of the sky under these circumstances. Even if the craft isn't incapacitated, it still has the +5 Difficulty modifier. Any further hits that do damage on subsequent rounds render the vehicle inoperable.

• **Near Misses [Optional Rule]:** Damage from Heavy Weapons (DC10 and higher) is really catastrophic; these guns were designed to stop vehicles dead in their tracks. But that may be more than you want to have happen to your characters. If a character gets caught in the blast from one of these weapons, he can spend two Luck points to make the hit a Near Miss, resulting in 1/2 Damage to the character or reducing him to 1 Wound, whichever leaves him with the most Wounds. Note that this is usable only for the characters themselves, not for any vehicle they may be in. It can still get blown to pieces.

## A Superfast Combat Resolution Trick

**[Optional]:** A fast way to resolve combat is to roll three different colored dice at once. The first color is added to your "To Hit roll." The second color is used to determine your damage. The third is used to determine your target's Stun/Shock checks.

**Example:** Ian (with a Streetfighting skill of 6 and a REF of 7) fires a V. Heavy Pistol at Bob, who is 25 meters away. Bob has a Body Type of 9 (Strong), and is wearing Light Armor. Ian decides to roll his dice in the order of Red, Yellow, and Green.

Ian rolls a 9 on his red die; he has a total combat check of 22. His yellow die roll was a 6; with a V. Heavy Pistol, he will do 6 points to his target. Bob is wearing Light Armor, which only stops 3 of Ian's 6 points of damage; he takes 3 Wounds, reducing his Body Type from a 9 to a 6 (Average). Ian's green roll was 8, higher than Bob's remaining 6 Body Type. Bob passes out. Ouch.

# HEALING & GETTING BETTER

*Cybergeneration* handles physical damage very simply. If your BODY stat goes below 0, you're unconscious. If you go below -4, you're dead. Simple. Deadly.

Healing is just as simple. There are four states of healing in *Cybergeneration*, based on the type of patient (Evolved or not), and the level of medical attention. Each state allows the patient to recover a set number of points each day:

Healing State	Per day
Normal healing without Medical Attention .....	1
Normal healing with Medical Attention .....	2
CyberEvolved healing without Medical Attention .....	2
CyberEvolved healing with Medical Attention .....	3

## What is "Medical Attention"?

Medical Attention means the patient has had at least one successful *First Aid* or *Medical Tech* (a physician's skill) skill check (either one is sufficient) made at some point in the healing process. It also requires that the person applying the skill has access to at least basic medical supplies, like a first aid kit. At this point, recovery shifts from the untreated state to the treated state. To make a Medical Attention Skill check, you must roll a value **higher than the total number of wounds taken plus 10**, using *Med Tech* or your *First Aid* skill +TECH +1D10. For example, if the patient had taken 13 wounds, you would need to roll better than a 23 to help him heal. (Obviously, if the patient is already at -4 or below, he's dead and that's it.)

The above works for most normal injuries, but sometimes there are things a simple splint or synthi-skin won't cure. Now, medical attention in 2027 is quite sophisticated, with nanosurgeons and organ banks available—but only to those who can afford them (an average nanotech treatment runs \$1500, a replacement Body Bank limb runs \$1200). **If a character is ever brought to 1 Wound or lower, he must be treated in a hospital or other advanced medical facility** (like a CDC lab?) in order to get Medical Attention. This usually costs up to his total number of Wounds taken times \$500. Now *that* hurts.

The other problem with seeking medical help is the fact that such treatment will probably reveal the CyberEvolves' nature. And since most doctors will report any CyberEvolved that they find to the CDC for "protective quarantine," it would be wise to find medical sources that are sympathetic—or at least bribable.

# DRUGS

Drugs in 2027 are powerful and dangerous, rather like playing Russian Roulette with your brain. Most of the recreational drugs on the street market are designer chemicals cooked up by the corps to sedate the masses or basement brews bashed together by dealers looking to build a captive market of addicts. They tend to leave a tide of brain-fried, near-dead people in their wake. But that doesn't stop others from lining up for more. Small adhesive patches called Dirms are the most common form of application, sold by the three-pack on street corners around the nation.

When a character uses an addictive drug he must roll under (BODY minus the number of times the drug is used) on 1D10 or become addicted. Addiction usually means that the user no longer gets any real benefit from the drug (having built up a tolerance to the effects), but must still get a fix of the stuff every 24 hours or go into withdrawals. Withdrawal reduces COOL to 1 and halves REF and BODY for 1D6 weeks as the body fights to rebalance itself (requires one regular BODY Stat check per week or that week does not count). Common drug types include:

**Syncomp 20:** A broad spectrum anti-toxin or poison antidote, used to treat nerve and biotoxins. Works for most fatal poisons. REF is reduced by 1 for the 1D6+1 turn duration of antidote. Cost: \$500

**Speedheal 3:** Speeds up the natural healing process for normal humans (won't work on the CyberEvolved). Healing is sped up by an additional point every two days. REF is reduced by 1D6/3 for one week after use. Cost: \$1800

**Stimulants:** *SynthCoke, Stim II, Eyeball, Jag:* All Third Generation stimulants designed to keep you awake, talkative and twitchy. And they all have the same old side effects of paranoia and psychological addiction—or worse. Duration: 1D6+1 minutes. Cost: \$800-\$1200

**Stat Boosters:** *Boost, Pump, Lupus:* Each of these drugs increases a specific attribute such as INT, BODY, or REF by +1 for 1d6 hours. User must make Addiction roll or be hooked. Cost: \$700-\$1000

**Euphorics/Hallucinogens:** *Smash, Blue Lace, VR Red:* These drugs make you feel good for a while (1D6/2 hours), seeing colors or other internal visions, then dump you back into the real world. Some are physically addictive, but most just make you *want* to use them again (psychological addiction). Cost: \$300-\$600

**Combat Drugs:** *'Droph, Black Lace, Rage:* These nasty babies were cooked up by the military from experiments at giving soldiers temporary boosts in the field (COOL +2, immune to Stun and Shock effects). Unfortunately, the side effects of these are psychosis and permanent stat reductions (Roll 1D10. On 1: REF or BODY -1). Cost: \$800-\$1200

# DOING THINGS IN THE NET

The Net is another level of reality, one where programs and codes determine what you can do more than what you know. Here we present game rules to simulate the "unique" nature of life in the virtual world ...

*You slap on your V-trodes, hook yourself into your CompuBoy, and jaunt into the Net. Suddenly, the room around you collapses and you find yourself in a world of perfect shapes. If you're still running the basic Net service program, a pleasant female voice greets you with "User logon. Welcome."*

## You're in the Net

Okay, what just happened?

Yes, you launched into the Net, but in order for this to have happened, your CompuBoy had to have been equipped with a cellmodem and the right software. The CompuBoy then used this equipment to dial up the nearest **Net Interface Unit**, which in turn accessed your account, generated your icon, and logged you on—all within nanoseconds, while the room was collapsing before your eyes.

Your first key to the Net was your **Net License Code**. As the ISA has worked to strengthen its hold on the Net, it has required that all Net Users and Operators have Net License codes linked to their machines which determine where you can go and what kind of software you can use. They also let AIMO keep track of you—for your own good, of course. If you run, you have one (or are *supposed* to have one).

### Net Licenses come in four classes.

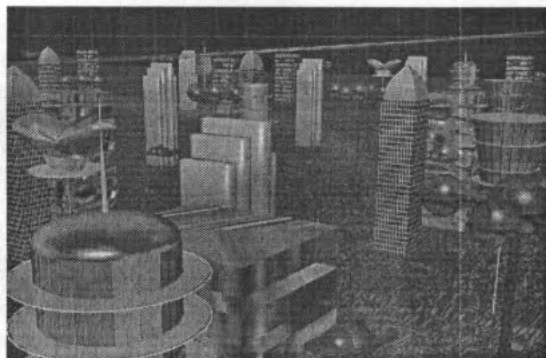
**Class 1 [Users]**: General public user access from a PC or terminal. Defensive software up to FCT 3. NO Attack software allowed. Costs \$50/yr.

**Class 2 [Users]**: Corporate user, with access to and from authorized systems. Defensive software FCT limited to 4. Costs \$300/yr.

**Class 3 [Operators]**: Net Operator/Developer level, for authorized (controlled) programmers and civilian sysops. FCT 6 Off/Def software allowed. Costs \$2000/yr.

**Class 4 [Operators]**: Government/CEP access for military and high-level corporate sysops. No FCT limit on software. You don't buy this, it's issued to you.

But what if you *don't* have a Net License, or you're "borrowing" an unregistered one? Hope AIM Overwatch isn't watching, because if they catch you, you'll find yourself strangely paralyzed as a friendly voice informs you that a



police spinner has been called to arrest you for using an invalid license. Then again, maybe you just "borrowed" this license from a trusted source. Heck, your friends love to get the principal's license code and hook into the school BBS to juice some ripe datafiles. Or they get a nice corporate license that allows them access to some sensitive research areas. But be careful: Even though you're using someone else's license code, the Netcops can still trace your signal (see below) and find out where it's coming from. They may not know *who* you are, but they'll know *where* you are ...

## The Cost of Access

Just like a phone, using the Net also isn't free. Besides a Net License, you need an **account** with a Net on-line service: About \$30-50 per month, plus any long-distance charges (namely any time you use an LDL to reach another city or state), which run at about \$5 a minute, and it can add up *fast*. This gives you access to e-mail, on-line libraries, flaprooms, and other cool stuff; it's the cable of the 21st century.

## The Net for Users

For **Users**, this is as complex as the Net ever gets. They've logged on to their service and have access to a variety of Net services, virtual flaprooms and other Net locations. They can now do their thing, which is usually just accessing data, transferring information, enjoying Net entertainment, or networking with people in cyberspace (see sidebar on pg. 156). You can use 'trodes, V-glasses, or keyboards and screens for this kind of thing. Your Net service bureau routes you through links to where you need to go and the entire process is largely invisible to you. Net combat almost never occurs at this level, and the vast majority of the Net-going public are ignorant that there is any other level available. It's all very convenient and very pretty, but limits you to doing what the system is designed to let you do, which is only as much as the Machine *wants* you to do. That's not enough for Operators—not by a long way.

## The Net for Operators

**Operators** work in an entirely different way on the Net, almost a parallel system in many respects. These people

### USING THE NET

**Users** don't Netrun, they utilize. The kids of 2027 have used computers from the age of three, and are familiar with almost every common aspect of the Net. They can use their *Schoolin'* as a basic *Information Systems* skill. Even the average person can access their on-line service to get to BBSs and chat rooms in order to do some basic Net-skimming. While you need a Class 1 Net License for these things, you will very rarely get hassled by the Netcops while doing them. Even if your connection is jumping through LDLs, they'll leave you alone since that's all controlled by your service, which works for the Machine. You should just be able to log on to your on-line service (after the License check), and simply roll for the tasks. All that "Moving Around" stuff is for Netrunning.

#### **Schoolin' and Information Systems skill tasks on the Net**

- Access online encyclopedia: with a service (Easy); outside your service (Difficult)
- E-mailing another friend who's online (Easy); without being monitored (Very Difficult)
- Locate a file available in the Public Access Net (Average); if hidden add 10-15 to difficulty
  - Link to a Flaproom (Average); if the Flaproom isn't listed (Difficult)
- Locate a target datafort in the Net: Local (Average), National (Difficult), International (Very Difficult and you run the risk of being traced, see "Logging On"); if it's hidden add 10 to difficulty. This may constitute a Netrun equivalent (Ref's call).

### GETTING A FAKE NET LICENSE

Guerrilla characters automatically receive *one* fake license (usually a Class 1 with a 30% chance of getting a Class 2), which can be shared by others (although not at the same time—it's like pirating software in that manner). A Guerrilla *Netrunner* has a 20% chance of having a Class 3 or 4 code (and the LDP that goes with it). An NPC Revolutionary *might* share an LDP code if they have one (10% chance), but the prices can be high. And we're not talking money. Yogangers have a 50% chance of obtaining a fake license through contacts in the Revolution or other sources, if they roleplay the scene correctly.

are used to being able to go wherever they want, even if the system isn't designed to take them there, by accessing the communications protocols directly. It takes some expertise—and some good software—to do it, *especially* under the ISA, but it lets you go almost anywhere in Netspace. Wizards are the new faces on this front, feeling their way through the maze of communication lines and virtual images that is the *real* Net. For these people, moving around is more complicated and dangerous. Most of the rest of this movement section is concerned with how they do things behind the scenes. You know: Netrunning!

### The Exception: The Net for Wizards

Wizards don't have to worry about this Net License stuff. As a Wizard, you bypass a lot of this verification just by outthinking the Net access protocols. When the Interface Unit asks for your Net License, the nanocircuitry in your brain says, "You don't need to see my Net License," and you're on in no time. It would take AIM Overwatch a serious effort to catch you in the act (but keep this in mind, all you GMs). Long distance access is even more fun for Wizards, because you really don't have an account, so you can't be billed. No calling circles. No time restrictions. Just plenty of free access.

Not that you can go anywhere Netwise; it just means that you don't have to have a license to get on to the Net. You can't just walk into any datafort by saying "Hi"; their codegates and datawalls are resistant to your coding. And your brain pattern won't act as a Class 3 or 4 I.D., allowing you to imitate someone important. For that, you'd better get a fake Net License. (Or buy a cyberdeck and get a license for it, then use its code when you're running with your brain.) You're also susceptible to traces just like all other users of the Net. If a *Hound* program is launched at you, it just might track you down to your realspace brain and plant a virtual "FUGITIVE HERE" sign on your back. And that would be BAD, especially if you're with friends at the time.

### Moving around the Net

But no matter *who* you are, before you go running around, you'll need a few basics on the *structure* of the Net. When you log on for a Netrun, the first thing that you usually see is the citygrid. This is your local Net region. It shows your city as it appears in the Netspace, and may actually be a full VR representation of the city, right down to individual buildings. Each of these buildings, however, is a datafort located in the Netspace equivalent of the realspace coordinates. From here you can usually access local flaprooms, dataterms, your on-line service node, and any datafort located within this vicinity.

If you want to move beyond your citygrid to a nearby citygrid (say, in the same state), you can "walk" via phone lines or short-range connections. This traffic is monitored less so there's less chance of running into a Netcop, but it's slower and means you'll have more encounters along the way. The fastest way between two citygrids is a **Long Distance Link** or LDL: a communication relay which usually routes you up through a satellite link. Once you go up an LDL, you can jump to another LDL, and then another, until you come down in just about any citygrid you want in the country. But Big Brother's got the continent locked up tight: Every time you do this, you *might* have a Netcop encounter, since they monitor these links fairly heavily. If he

gets suspicious, he may **trace**—i.e., send out a program to find out where your signal is coming from (see sidebar below).

If you've just gotta be able to go anywhere without getting scoped out, then you're in luck: There exists a magic key for these portals, and it's called a **Long Distance Passcode**. LDPs are linked to Class 3 or 4 licenses and are essentially "free long distance" cards used strictly by members of AIMO and other high mucky-mucks to hop around the ISA. If you have one, you can hop through as many ISA-controlled LDLs as you want without worry ... unless AIMO is on patrol and just happens to run a check on you to see if you really are an ISA employee. If that happens, you're in real trouble.

### Net Encounters

Rather than mapping out every city and grid, *Cybergeneration* treats Net distances abstractly: in encounters rather

than minutes and miles. In general, Netruns are happening at near the speed of light, meaning that an entire Net jaunt might only last a minute or two. What's important here is what you find, who you meet, and what they can do to you.

The number of possible encounters varies mostly by your destination and where you spend your time. A basic set of guidelines is listed below. The Referee rolls for these encounters and allows you to interact with them, thus simulating an amount of time you spend either in a specific area or across long distances. In general, you will have to move through at least one LDL to link to another city or state. You can "walk" to nearby cities by using short-range connections (avoiding the LDL), but it takes longer. The Referee should feel free to change these tables to suit his needs. For example, a Wizard with a high MOVE may be able to move from point to point faster, resulting in fewer encounters.

## THE MECHANICS OF NET ENCOUNTERS

1. You access the Net and your Net License is checked. If it's fake or stolen roll 1D10: On a 1, the system notes a problem, hits you with a FCT 6 *Dazzler*, runs a Trace (see below), and calls the police.
2. Assuming you pass, if you are just accessing your on-line service, running around the local citygrid, or accessing a local flaproom, etc., you can now go about it. Check for encounters per the table below.
3. If you're accessing something in another city or state, you can decide to walk there (check for encounters) or use LDLs. The Ref will tell you how many you need to reach your destination. For each LDL, roll 1D10: On a 1, a Netcop notices you, or you can use the Encounter Table below. If you're using a fake license or are acting suspiciously, make an Average to Difficult (Ref's call) *Lil' Angel* roll to convince him you're harmless and don't need to be Traced. If he Traces you, he'll try to *Jack Lock* or *Dazzle* you until the police can arrive at your realspace location.
4. If you've made it to your destination without interference, you can now do whatever you came to do. Check for encounters as appropriate.

### TRACING

**Tracing** means that the system operator is sending a program (like *Hound*) to find out where your signal is coming from. That program must roll higher than 10 with its *Trace* function plus 1D10 in order to track your signal within the ISA. If you've gone through more than one LDL along the way, the Difficulty number is 15. A *Cover Its Tracks* function (as with a Familiar) can add to the difficulty.

## NET ENCOUNTER GUIDELINES

SITUATION	# OF ENCOUNTERS
Passing through each LDL (ignore if using an LDP)	1
Observing a specific Net location	1D6/2
Moving to a nearby city w/o using an LDL ("walking")	1D6
Participating in a dataconference or concert	1D6/2
Accessing/operating in an on-line service	1D6
Moving to locale in a metropolis	1D6

## SAMPLE ENCOUNTER TABLE

ROLL	DESCRIPTION
1	AIM Overwatch suddenly takes an interest in what you are doing. Better hope you're operating with a legal license.
2-3	A corporate sysop moves by carrying a batch of datafiles. Could they be of any importance? You wanna find out?
4-5	An advertisement program approaches you to offer its product/service.
6	A nearby datafort goes off-line, sinking into the Netgrid floor like some elaborate pop-up model. If the datafort was your destination, you'll have to wait for a while (1d10/2 more encounters) before it links up again.
7-8	AIM Overwatch is on patrol, stopping any abnormal or offensive icons. What do you look like? Will your rippin' icon get you into trouble with the authorities?
9	A Wizard and his Familiars zip by. Do you try to contact them?
10	A Netrunner mistakes your icon for someone else and offers you an illegal datafile or Net License codes.

Once an encounter is determined, it is resolved in the usual roleplaying manner. The Net simulates reality to the extent that interaction there is very similar to realspace encounters (if a bit more visually bizarre and flexible). The only difference is that if things get ugly, then you go to Net Combat (pg. 164).

## SOFTWARE Programs

When you encounter a user, it's like meeting a person in realspace. Programs are a little different. Although many can simulate a personality, programs still operate from code, which is limiting, making them a lot like simple Familiars and their subroutines. Most fall into three basic categories: Utility, Defense, and Attack.

**Utilities** perform most computer-based tasks and are the most common type of program.

**Attack** programs are more specialized than Utilities, being designed to either harm systems (**Anti-System**), other programs (**Anti-Program**), or Users (**Anti-Personnel**) much like the subroutines for Familiars. In addition, an attack program can only affect one type of target.

- **Anti-Personnel** affects Wizards, Netrunners, Sysops, and other Operators, plus some Users. These are also known as Black Ice.

- **Anti-Program** affects Programs and free-roaming AIs. These are often called *Killer* programs.

- **Anti-System** affects dataforts and just about any remote/mobile computer with a modem . . . which includes Wizards. Some anti-system programs attack the system's processors, impairing its function. Others are **Intrusion** programs, which are designed to break into dataforts and other systems. These include **Decryption** programs which unlock codegates (datafort access points) and locked files. These both work the same in this game, working against the target's DEF. If they overcome it, the way is open for the user to enter and attack the system.

Types of **Defense programs** include **Shield** and **Stealth** programs. One protects a human user against black ice. The other type is designed to make the user hard to spot. **Detection** programs are designed to defeat Stealth functions.

### Function

All programs are defined by a value called a **Function (FCT)**. A Function value addresses what the program does and how well it does it. It also measures how tough the program is, and how well it can defend against attacks. A program must have at least one point in Function. When a program's FCT is reduced to zero, it derezzes. In order to use

that program again, you must drop out of the Net, reboot your computer/deck/datafort, and link back into the Net.

The **Program List** on pg. 159 gives you several examples of Attack, Defense and Utility software. Referees should use them as guides for designing others. *Gen Referee Tip:* An average program has FCT 3.

### What This Means to Wizards

Since Programs have functions, you can attempt to try Counterparting with them in the Net, just like with realspace machines (a Program's FCT dictates where it ranks on the Wizard's Counterparting table [pg. 142]). For instance, you can ask a Stupid security guard program to leave its post and patrol some other section of the datafort. Or you could talk a database program into showing you its payroll records. The possibilities are limitless. Note that Counterparting is subtle. You leave no track of defeated programs in your wake if you do it right. It's also a healthier alternative to Net combat. Although that security program may look stupid, it also looks downright tough. Which would you choose—fight or battle of wits?

FCT	RANKING
1-2	Stupid program
3-4	Simple program
5-6	Smart program
7-10	Expert program

The bad news is, you can be affected by programs just like anyone else in the Net. In fact, you are even *more* vulnerable to attack than other users, because **you classify as both a user and a system!** For more on protection and damage from attacks, see "Net Combat" on page 164.

### Store-bought Programs

Since the consolidation of Net program design, purchasing programs has been much easier. You approach one of the many control panel kiosks in your local software store, find the program you want to buy, then punch in how well it needs to perform its task (FCT). **All standard programs have a maximum upper limit of 7; only specially made and government-controlled programs go above that.** Then the compiler builds the program to your specifications on the spot and spits out a chip, which you take to the counter for purchase.

Of course, they hit you hard with the price. For every point you put into a program, you pay. Defensive programs run about \$300/point up to FCT 4, \$700/point above that (to a max of 7 and watch your license code limits); Utility programs run about \$100/point. Black market pricing will be about twice standard prices. Note that attack programs are *not commercially available* in the ISA, being the province of

## PROGRAM LIST

FUNCTION	ICON	DESCRIPTION	TYPE	EFFECT
<b>ATTACK</b>				
Tunneler	A huge chrome earthworm	Makes entry holes in a datafort's walls (FCT vs. DEF).	Anti-system: Intrusion	Allows access to system
Chisel	An electric chisel	Destroys a system's datawalls (FCT vs. DEF) Datafort automatically knows of intrusion.	Anti-system: Intrusion	DC1 damage to DEF
Decrypter	A multi-headed key	Unlocks coded doors, locked files, and gateways in the Net (Max FCT 5).	Anti-system: Decryption	Allows access to system or locked file
Blaster	A sci-fi handgun	Attacks programs of all types.	Anti-program	DC3 damage against FCT
Puzzler	A digital Rubik's Cube	Causes program to repeat useless internal memory checks. Does not derezz the program; it keeps running but to less effect.	Anti-program	Reduce FCT by Puzzler FCT for FCT in turns
Sizzler	Lightning bolt	Arranges a series of electrical charges against the target.	Anti-personnel	DC2 damage against BODY
Blade	A huge blazing blue sword	Damages target's nervous system by causing severe convulsions (Rare).	Anti-personnel	DC2 damage against BODY
Leech	A sucker-faced black worm	Attacks target's mind, causing brain damage by installing a neural virus program (Rare).	Anti-personnel	DC2 damage against INT
Jack Lock	Manacles on target's wrists	Prevents user from logging off.	Anti-personnel	User is kept online 2 turns per FCT
Dazzler	Dancing lights and shapes	Puts target's mind on "pause" with hypnotic images and sounds.	Anti-personnel	User is frozen in place 1 turn per FCT
Hound	Glowing green hound	Locates realspace coordinates of target (FCT vs Trace).	Anti-personnel	Locates User in realspace
Feris	A huge, glowing red wolf	Locates user in realspace (FCT vs Trace), lies hidden, and attacks when the user tries to log off.	Anti-personnel	Locates user in realspace, then DC3 damage to BODY
Shutdown	A big OFF switch	Attacks system's CPU, shutting down functions.	Anti-system	DC3 damage to system INT
Bomb	A black, spherical bomb	Crashes systems and nukes internal programs. Must be inside CPU node or deck to use.	Anti-system	1 program per FCT destroyed [Wizards: 1/2 FCT in Arcane points lost]
Atomic Bomb	A BIG, black, spherical bomb	Melts internal circuitry of system, rendering it useless. Must be inside CPU node or deck to use.	Anti-system (1.5 x cost)	FCT x \$1000 in repairs [Wizards: DC1 in Familiars lost]
Ninja	A black-clad warrior w/sword	Guards an area and attacks any intruders; can follow them anywhere in fort. It is Stealthed until it attacks. May only run on INT 10 or higher systems	Special anti-personnel	DC2 damage to BODY
<b>DEFENSE</b>				
<b>FCT LIMIT BASED ON LICENSE CLASS</b>				
Stealth	A black cloak	Makes the User's ICON invisible. Other users make Detection checks to detect, programs make FCT checks.	Stealth	Detection or program FCT vs. Stealth FCT
Spy	A set of large glasses	Detects Stealthed users or programs.	Detection	FCT vs Stealth FCT
Shield	A chromatic shield	Defends against anti-personnel attacks. Reduced by one with each attack. When FCT reaches 0, the Shield must be rebooted (two rounds) to regain its FCT points.	Protection	Shield FCT vs Attacking FCT
Static	A wall of light	Blinds attackers, allowing a getaway. FCT halved against Wolf and Hound.	Protection	FCT vs FCT
Doubler	Multiple mirrors	Creates duplicate image of user to confuse attackers. If successful, attacker will essentially "miss" May only be used for three rounds before derezzing. Must then reboot system to use again.	Protection	Doubler FCT vs. Attacking FCT
<b>UTILITY</b>				
<b>COMMON PROGRAMS PROVIDING COMPUTER TASKS</b>				
Netmap		Asks datafort CPU to provide interior map for user inside datafort.	Systems	Netmap FCT vs. System INT
Locker		Prevents files from being read or copied.	Datafiles	Locker FCT vs. Decrypter FCT
Databaser		Sets up file links between documents; stores data.	Datafiles	1 memory unit stored within
Morpher		Allows user to change ICON while hooked into Net.	User's ICONs	1 stored image for recall
Conference Call		Vid Phones for Users operating in same Net region.	Users	1 person linked
Controller		Can operate and control remote devices and systems with a lower INT or FCT value.	Remotes, etc.	

## KNOWING WHAT YOU'RE FACING

Software identifies itself. In other words, the Net icons are standardized, and you'll know if you are facing a program or something else. But that's all. Users, Wizards, and AI's are not specified. You usually have to use *Information Systems* or *Arcane* to figure out any more.



authorized corporate and federal sysops only. On the Revolutionary market they would run about \$1000/point up to FCT 4, \$2000/point above that (with a practical upper limit of FCT 7 or so, although a few higher ones are floating around out there).

### Homemade Programs

The other option is to write your own programs. In order to write programs, you need an *Information Systems* skill. If you don't have *Information Systems*, you can use *Schoolin'*, but at a penalty. To write a program, you add the total number of points you wish to put into it to an Easy (10) skill test. If you don't have *Information Systems*, you add the total to an Average (15) skill test. There are also modifiers for the type of program you wish to create. Note that FCT values over 5 tend to make programs a good deal harder to write.

<b>TYPE OF PROGRAM</b>	<b>SKILL MODIFIER</b>
<b>Attack</b> .....	<b>3x FCT points up to 5, 4x above 5</b>
<b>Defensive</b> .....	<b>2x FCT up to 5, 3x for 6-7, 4x above 7</b>
<b>Utility</b> .....	<b>1x FCT points</b>

**Example:** Joe Programmer wants to make an anti-program program (like Blaster) with a Function of 4, but because the program uses an Attack function, the Difficulty modifier is 3x, making it 12. Joe does have *Information Systems* skill, so he adds the 12 points to 10 (Easy) for a target number of 22. Joe's player rolls 1D10, adds it to *Information Systems* + Joe's INT, and hopes he scores at least a 22. Otherwise, the program is a flop and it's back to the drawing board.

For each program writing test, you are devoting as many hours in development as the number of your test. In the example above, Joe spent 22 hours writing his anti-program program, hoping it would work properly.

## HARDWARE

Now that you know how to build, buy, and handle programs, you need to know how to put them in your cyberdeck (or if you're a Ref, you need to know how to stock them in a datafort). So you need to understand how a cyberdeck and a datafort work. Have no fear—we give you the skinny right here.

### Cyberdecks

These are the tools of the Operators: the devices which allow them to link their neural processors directly into the Net. A cybermodem uses both the Operator's brain (which must have a neural processor built-in for full effect) and its own Central Processing Unit (CPU) for handling programs and Netspace duties. Normal Users (ones with out neural processors) sometimes use cybermodems as well, but with skin-contact sensor 'trodes instead of direct neural plugs. This drastically

reduces the speed and effectiveness of the system, but it also keeps them from getting brain-fried by an Attack program (see pg. 164). Cyberdecks are determined by two values:

The **Intelligence** value represents how smart the deck is in handling user commands. It also defines the quality of the processor—for every 2 points of INT, the user receives a +1 Initiative bonus during combat, maxing out at +5. A deck's INT must be at least 1, but can never exceed 9, due to the compact nature of a cyberdeck and restrictions governing cellmodem activity. A cyberdeck can perform 1/2 times its INT (minimum one) in actions at once, including running (this is called its **Multitask** value; see sidebar on the next page for a list of Multitask actions). This allows a user to have a Shield program running while operating another program (like Conference Call or Blaster). Note that you must bring a program into "running" mode in order to use it, and that you can only switch two programs from running to storage mode and vice versa per round (see page 165).

The **Defense** value dictates how many signal buffers the deck has to protect against power surges and programs like Bomb. This is added to your system's Defense roll in combat. A deck can have a zero DEF if it wishes, but it can never exceed 10 (although, like software, 7 is the typical maximum).

The cyberdeck's total **Storage** value is equal to its DEF plus 2xINT. This total represents the maximum number of programs and datafiles it can hold in storage. For example, a cyberdeck with INT 4, DEF 2 would be able to store 10 programs/datafiles on its drive. Small documents (like a report, memo, employee list, or map) will be held in your deck's memory but be discounted as datafiles because they're too small—your deck won't be full if you have ten grocery lists stored in it.

**Modular Cyberdecks** are shells that are customized specifically for the user, just like programs. These decks require a Class 2 license or other impressive identification to purchase, as AIM Overwatch doesn't want every kid on the block with a customized deck. Modular decks cost \$200 per point put into the deck up to a 6 per stat. Above that the cost is \$500/point. **Prepack Cyberdecks** are more reasonable, and can be purchased at most V-mall and realspace electronics outlets. See pg. 96 for examples. Also see pg. 161 for a Cyberdeck Datarecord for keeping track of program use in combat. It can be used for Datafortresses as well.

**Personal computers** are treated in much the same way as cyberdecks, with INT and DEF, but are a bit more limited. Since they don't interface with a user's neural processor, they don't add to the user's Initiative in Net Combat. In fact, keyboard users are at a -5 to Initiative (see pg. 164), but the PCs can have INTs higher than 9 (Max INT value 12).

**MULTITASK ACTIONS**

All standard computers and decks can do certain tasks automatically with their built-in operating systems: **opening files for reading, copying files, editing files, minor VR creation, logon and off**, etc. The most important Multitask action is **Run**, which launches all that specialized or powerful software that makes hacking so much fun.

**SENTIENT PROGRAMS**

Basic Artificial Intelligences are actually pretty common in 2027. Simple AIs can even be downloaded into comps the size of a credit card, but they don't carry subroutines and such. They're usually little more than interactive programs and information interfaces.

But beware of **Sentient Programs** (with FCT 11+). Also known as free-roaming AIs, these programs are usually created by computer systems as monitors and controllers, but they sometimes manage to slip their bonds and move from system to system. They are intelligent, with their own personalities (albeit unemotional ones) and even their own agendas, making them dangerous tools and opponents. These programs can split their Function points into subroutines like a Familiar. In fact, they are built just like a Familiar (see pg. 143). They assign twice their FCT value in points into three stats: AF (and its subroutines), DEF, and INT (minimum 5 points). Their MV is automatically 5 and their IA is indefinite (they run as long as their system can maintain them). But be careful: A Sentient Program can run ALL its subroutines in the same round. This means a Sentient Program could be under Stealth while throwing a Bomb at you.

Dataforts (see below) must have a minimum INT equal to the FCT of the Sentient Program in order to run it, although they can run more than one. **Each Sentient Program counts as two regular Attack or Defense programs for Multitask.** If a Sentient Program downloads itself into a cyberdeck (min. deck INT 8), the Sentient Program can run, but can only use one subroutine per round and the Sentient Program's functional INT is halved (the cyberdeck processor isn't up to the challenge). Most Sentient Programs *hate* being in cyberdecks. They're also so complex they take up three spaces in Storage and two for Multitasking purposes. But wait, there's more! If the Netrunner using the 'deck wants to close the Sentient Program, he has to defeat it in an *Interface+1D10 vs. 1/2 FCT+1D10* opposed skill check before he can shut it down. Big and Very Nasty. By the way, like intelligent Familiars, Sentient Programs make great player-run NPCs. See page 144 for more on this.

**CYBERDECK DATARECORD**

USER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ INTERFACE SKILL: \_\_\_\_\_  
 USERICON: \_\_\_\_\_  
 DECK INT: \_\_\_\_\_ INIT +: \_\_\_\_\_ DEF: \_\_\_\_\_ MULTI: \_\_\_\_\_  
 STORAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ OPTIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM 1**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RUNNING   
 FCT: \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM 2**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RUNNING   
 FCT: \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM 3**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RUNNING   
 FCT: \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM 4**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RUNNING   
 FCT: \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM 5**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RUNNING   
 FCT: \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM 6**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RUNNING   
 FCT: \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM 7**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RUNNING   
 FCT: \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM 8**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RUNNING   
 FCT: \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM 9**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RUNNING   
 FCT: \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM 10**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RUNNING   
 FCT: \_\_\_\_\_ TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional programs can be listed on a second datarecord.



## VISUALIZING THE NET

**Gamemasters:** The Net is a very visual medium. It was designed that way to make it easier for neophytes to use and quicker for the experts to manipulate. Almost every program has a colorful and vividly animated ICON, from the snarling *Hounds* to the delicate *Information Retrieval Angels* in the Vatican datafort. The surroundings are full of the glowing gridlines of communication networks and the looming virtual facades of dataforts and other Netspace constructs; whole cityscapes exist there. Every User or Operator has his own ICON which is often customized to suit his tastes: Everything from the images of fashion models to totally surrealistic gargoyles. While the Netspace monitors limit some of the content (virtual nudity and other "obscene" options being prohibited, the list is growing), the Net remains a very expressive medium, and people and organizations have taken advantage of it to create an incredible virtual environment.

Virtual experiences, especially if transmitted through 'todes or plugs, are almost indistinguishable from real ones, including audio, tactile and olfactory sensations as well as visual ones. But the virtual world doesn't have to obey any natural laws; it can make them up as it goes along. The only limit on what you can build is how much you're willing to pay for programming time. Whole adventures could be (and have been) run in virtual reality, as players wind their way through entire worlds woven from the electronic cloth.

The beauty of this is that it gives you, the Referee, the ultimate canvas upon which to paint almost any environment you want. You can have a corporate datafort that resembles the Imperial Palace from 16th century Osaka, staffed by samurai and geisha programs, or another that looks like the Death Star, both inside and out. Use your imagination to conjure up images and surroundings that evoke the necessary ambiance for your Net session. Some programs, particularly anti-system and anti-personnel ones, will have terrifying icons, designed to intimidate as much as damage. The programs will *seem* real, even if their images are obviously fantastic or whimsical, and can contain real threats. So, when you're describing your player's Net jaunts, let your imagination roam free—but take notes. You want the players to find the same thing when they come back to a specific location. (Unless it's been reprogrammed!)

Remember: In Netspace, nothing is as it seems, but everything is spectacular!

## Dataforts

These are the mainframe systems of the Net, which use a special Virtual Reality program called *Creator* to make them look like huge icons or other constructs. Dataforts are the targets of choice for both Wizards and Netrunners, since it's in these virtual edifices that the ISA and the corps keep most of their secrets. Learning to crack them has cost many an Operator his life.

All dataforts have two values, **Intelligence** and **Defense**, which are given a point value just like cyberdecks, but which are handled slightly differently. When building dataforts, the question is not how much money to spend, but how many points the Referee wants to put into it.

**Intelligence** addresses how smart the datafort's system is, as well as how many nodes it can have. Nodes are much like rooms in a house. A program's FCT can never exceed the datafort's INT, which has an upper limit of 21 (INTs that high are rare, however; you can use 1D6x3 to determine INT randomly). As with cyberdecks, INT also addresses how many programs the datafort can manage within it at once. Unlike a cyberdeck, however, there is no limit within the scope of this game on the number of Utility programs a datafort can run at one time. The only limit is that it can only multitask 1/2 its INT in Attack and Defense programs at any one time for the *entire* datafort. Likewise, assume that a datafort can store as many programs as it needs.

Now you know why Netrunners team up to go against powerful dataforts.

**Defense** addresses how strong the datafort's walls and codegates are. This is used as per the cyberdeck, adding to the DEF roll when someone is trying to breach the datafort or is attacking the system directly (7 is the typical maximum; 10 is the rare ultimate). If your attack is successful on a datafort system, your program performs its Attack function.

Dataforts usually have two types of controllers: AIs or human system operators. Unlike free-roaming Sentient Programs, Datafort AIs are usually built into the operating system of the datafort (min. INT 12) and run automatically, costing no Multitask. They can have personalities and be very devious in the defense of their fort. Human sysops might monitor the datafort as well, using the system as a form of expanded 'deck. Treat them as Netrunners in combat, but they use the datafort's Initiative (see pg. 164).

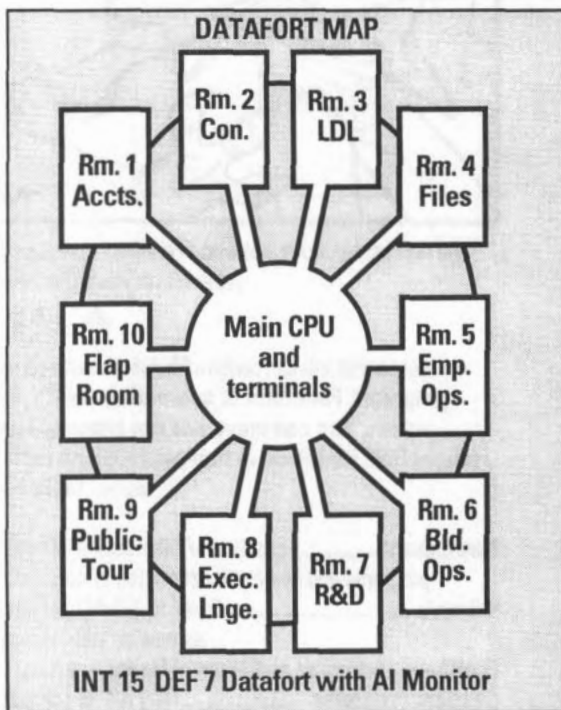
*Gen Player Tip:* It's good to make a Netrun on a datafort during normal business hours, because the datafort will be more preoccupied with serving its internal users than running security checks and guarding sensitive areas. This may reduce the effective INT for multitasking by up to 1D6 points (Ref's call).

### Mapping Dataforts

**Referees:** If you need a solid idea of what your datafort looks like, treat it much like a flow chart, with many boxes protruding from a circle where the CPUs are located (see illustration). These boxes are called nodes, and represent separate work areas for the organization. Tack on as many boxes as you think appropriate, making sure not to exceed the datafort's INT. Then list what is in each of the nodes (see below for an example).

However, if your players are accessing a datafort as a side trip to find some information, or you don't have time to draw one, feel free to roll for some encounters. Remember: You should be roleplaying a Netrun just like you would a barroom brawl or corporate raid in realspace. Datafort and Netspace interiors can look like almost anything, so indulge your imagination; be as colorful as you'd like. And don't feel you have to slow things down with technical details like program stats if they aren't necessary.

### SAMPLE DATAFORT: RAVEN MICROCYB NIGHT CITY



The entire datafort is done out as a high-tech Escher painting, with both floor and ceiling being available to walk on, stairs leading off at odd angles, and chrome gargoyles and ornaments adorning the walls. Floating icons represent utilities, files and controllers. While the overall effect is impressive, it is also very utilitarian. Raven also has fairly powerful software protecting itself. Enter at your own risk.

**ROOM/ROLL DESCRIPTION**

- 1 The Accounts Room.** If during office hours, there are several sysops working here on a massive Bookkeeper program—invoicing customers, processing paychecks, approving expenses, etc. If it's after work, the room is empty save for a wall of file cabinets (datafiles) and a security guard (FCT 6 Sizzler).
- 2 Conference Room.** If during office hours, the room has a 25% chance of being occupied by a dozen "suit" icons, conversing morbidly over some datafile on the table. Can you make a quick excuse as to why you barged in, before they call security? If it's after work, the room is empty.

- 3 LDL Room.** If during office hours, you see couriers diving into this portal or emerging from it, each carrying a datafile under one arm. After hours, the room still has a 25% chance of seeing activity from the link. Does the LDL link up to another corporate site, or a metropolis? Do you want to risk being traced? At all times, there is a 50% chance that a security guard is present (FCT 5 Ferris).
- 4 File Storage.** If during office hours, there are a few hourly workers filing documents for storage, who don't get paid enough to be curious about strangers present. This area is heavily guarded by two programs (FCT 5 Leech, FCT 4 Blaster).
- 5 Employee Operations.** If during office hours, this work area is filled with employees accessing software, editing large documents, sending mail, and performing other work-related tasks. If the character's icon isn't too wild, there's a good chance that no one will stop him/her and ask for I.D. If it's after work, this area will be empty, save for the virtual office spaces, data entry programs, and e-mail boxes.
- 6 Building Operations.** This is where employees or programs can monitor building operations such as security cameras, Virtuality devices, elevator controls, heating and air, lights, alarms, and other controllable devices. There will always be at least one human sysop (with FCT 5 Black Ice and Killer programs) monitoring the cameras and alarms. Another often patrols the datafort and might turn up anywhere.
- 7 Research and Development.** This is THE weirdest node in the place. Here Raven programmers experiment with different environmental software, so you never know what it's going to look like: one day the African plains, the next some bizarre cartoon world for the pre-teen market. This is where you'll find all the new stuff RC is brewing up, which is why a powerful security guard (FCT 7 Ninja) is permanently stationed here.
- 8 Executive Lounge.** This is the most exquisitely rendered room in the entire datafort: Micro-waterfalls, background music, animated wall hangings, and antique furnishings are often staples of an executive lounge. There are even a few "entertainment" programs accessible here. Although the CEO is rarely here, a Leech program (FCT 6) sits ready to pounce on unauthorized personnel.
- 9 Public Access/Tour Area.** Visitors are welcome in this promotional room designed to tout the organization's product or service. Although there are never any guards stationed here, occasionally (10% chance) a visitor will drop in to watch the fancy demos.
- 10 Flap Room/Game Room.** The digital supplement of a water cooler. This is an employee "rec room," filled with very basic game programs. During office hours, there's always some loafer from Tech Support here playing a game or drinking Mondo Coffee. After work hours, the place is deserted.

# CODESLINGERS & CODEGUNS

Virtual Reality—the brave new frontier of combat. Whether it's slugouts with Black Programs designed to threaten a Netrunner, or deadly illusions that endanger the rest of a *Cybergeneration* party, so much of the world of 2027 revolves around the concept of layering computer imagery over reality that the topic really requires its own "combat section."

Welcome to the world of *Codeslingers & Codeguns*, cho.

## COMBAT IN THE NET

Ferocious hounds, lightning bolts, and fearsome digital warriors hurtle through the fabric of the Net at the speed of thought—now *that's* fast. How does a Ref keep up with Net combat, and (more importantly) how can that speed be simulated during real time play to keep the story moving? Here's a system that should keep your action flowing at the speed of light.

Netspace combat occurs in much the same manner as realspace combat, with Initiative, Actions, Attacks, and Damage. The time scale is a bit different: **A Net Combat round is one second long.**

### Detection

You have to see something to attack it and vice versa.

Normally this is not an issue, but Stealth functions are designed to prevent that. Detection functions are designed to see through Stealth functions. If you're running a Stealth function, an **attacking program can roll its FCT+1D10 vs your Stealth program FCT+1D10 to see you.** If it beats your Stealth program it can attack. Otherwise, you can keep going. Netrunners can run Detection programs to detect Stealth-using opponents.

### Initiative

In the Net, it's a case of who has the faster processor, or who can "think" the fastest. Opponents make rolls using the formulas below (the GM rolls for NPCs). Actions occur in order of the highest total to the lowest, ties are handled by mutual consent.

#### NET COMBAT INITIATIVE

- Netrunner** ..... Interface+1/2 Deck INT+1D10
- Wizards** ..... REF+Arcane+1D10
- Dataforts or Sentient Programs** ..... INT or FCT+1D10
- Trode Users** ..... 1D10 (-5 for Keyboarders)



All non-sentient programs and Familiars operate at their system's (or Wizard's) Initiative.

### Actions

Net combatants can perform **Multitask actions** and run **programs, Familiars, or subroutines** which perform actions. **You can move and run programs and/or perform ONE Multitask action per round as indicated on the table below.**

- Netrunners**..... Equal to 1/2 the deck's INT value in programs and Multitask action (round down, min. 1)
- Wizards** ..... Equal to 1/2 INT in Familiars as well as take one action.
- Familiars, Programs and Normal Users** ..... One **Sentient Programs** ..... May run all subroutines
- Dataforts**..... Equal to 1/2 INT in Attack and Defense programs for entire datafort

Multitask actions include **VR creation, opening, reading, copying, and editing files**, as well as **logging on/off**. Cyberdecks and Dataforts may run more than one program per round, up to the Multitask value (less any Multitask action done that same round). **Each program run counts as one action. A Netrunner or Datafort can only switch two programs per round from running mode to storage and vice-versa**, no matter what their Multitask value is (switching programs does not count as an action). Wizards do not have this limitation. Running programs can be marked on the Cyberdeck Datarecord on page 161.

**Example:** An AIMO Netcop (Interface 8, Deck INT 7) is up against a Wizard (INT 6, REF 6, Arcane 5). The Netcop's Initiative is 3 (1/2 his deck's INT)+8 (his Interface skill)+1D10. The

*Wizard's Initiative is 6 (his REF)+5 (his Arcane)+1D10. Looks like it's going to be close. The Netcop can run three programs per round or perform one Multitask action and run two programs (1/2 deck INT, rounded down). The Wizard can run 3 Familiars (1/2 his INT, rounded down) plus perform one other Multitask action (like copying a file, etc.) per round.*

## Attacking

Attacking in Netspace means sending a program out to do its vicious thing against your opponent. Usually, the biggest obstacle is an opponent's defensive program. Or it may be that the program itself is your opponent, in which case it's a clash of code. Net attacks work like hand-to-hand combat, because you're up close and personal to strike, at least in Net terms. And your opponent might have something ready to block or evade your strike—one program outthinking another.

When attacking a program, Familiar, cyberdeck or datafort, the following formulas apply.

### PROGRAM ATTACKS

**Attacking Program's FCT (or AF)+1D10 vs. Opponent's Defense roll:**

Programs ..... FCT+1D10  
 Familiars and Sentient Programs ..... DEF+1D10  
 Dataforts and Cyberdecks ..... DEF+1D10

If the attacker gets the higher number the strike is successful and the program performs its Function. If the defender gets an equal or higher number, the attacker is thwarted but can remain in battle for the next round.

## Anti-Personnel Attacks

Sometimes, the attack is against the person running the Net, not his programs. Note that Netrunners and Wizards have to have a program or Familiar up, and running that can defend them against anti-personnel (and anti-system for the Wizard) attacks. If they don't have a defensive program on line, they take the effect of the attack automatically. Attacks use opposing rolls with the following formulas (depending on who's attacking whom). Ties go to the defender.

### ANTI-PERSONNEL ATTACKS

Dataforts ..... 1/2 INT+Program FCT+1D10  
 Netrunners ..... Interface+Program FCT+1D10  
 Wizards ..... Arcane+Familiar's Subroutine AF+1D10  
 Users ..... Program FCT+1D10

## Protection

A defensive program like Shield, a familiar's Armor subroutine, and others listed on page 159 make the Defense roll for its user. While you can run more than one

## DATAFORT COMBAT

Net combat can happen anywhere in Netspace, but most often it occurs in a datafort, these being the typical targets of Net excursions. Since a datafort is a self-contained system, you've got to get inside it before you can do anything to it. There are two ways of doing this: Go in through an open door (like a codegate or an LDL) or break in with an Intrusion program.

Going in a codegate is naturally best, but difficult to arrange, especially if the owners don't want you there. This is a good time for codes and passwords. Use any inside contacts for this. Or you could access the system from inside, say from a terminal actually within the building that's linked directly into the system.

*This usually requires a little breaking and entering of the physical variety first.*

Otherwise, it's pull out the anti-system programs and blaze away. This kind of attack pits your Intrusion programs directly against the system's DEF: **FCT (or Intrusion AF)+1D10 vs. DEF+1D10**. Your program is either trying to decrypt the codegate or break through a datawall. **You can't attack the system's INT or anything actually inside the datafort until you breach its defenses** (defeat its DEF with an Intrusion Program) and go inside yourself.

*If you try to break in with an Intrusion program, whether you succeed or not, you might alarm the datafort. Roll 1D10. If you're using Tunnler, on 8, 9, or 10, you've alerted the fort.*

*If you've used Decrypter: a 9 or 10 sounds the alarm.*

**Chisel always alerts the occupants.** The fort can send out attack programs that can chase you for one round. If you have an MV or MF higher than 5, you can get away, otherwise they get to attack you for at least one round. Stealth programs (if you have one running) can help you from being spotted, but the fort still knows someone is out there.

Once inside, the Ref will determine what node you enter and you can move around inside the datafort, dealing with the encounters and combat normally. Of course, the use of Stealth programs or Familiars is a good way of minimizing unfriendly meetings. **Note that it takes one round to move from one node to an adjacent node. You must be in the same node as a program to attack it and vice versa, or in the same node with the CPU (or a part of it) if you're attacking the system's INT.**

Defensive program if you have the Multitask for it, each program rolls separately against attacks; they do not add their FCT together on one roll. Some defensive programs are reduced with each use, however (such as Armor and Shield). **Each time one of these are used (whether they succeed or fail), their power (FCT or Armor AF) is reduced by one point.**

**Example:** *Our Netbash continues. The Netcop fires off a FCT 6 Blaster program at the Wizard's Angel Familiar (DEF*

4). The Blaster rolls 1D10+6 (its FCT) versus the Angel's 1D10+4 (its DEF). The Blaster's total is 12 while the Angel's total is 9; the Blaster got through to affect the Familiar.

If the Wizard attacks the Netcop with his Tiger Familiar (Anti-personnel AF 5) against the Netcop's FCT 4 Shield, then it would go like this: Tiger: 5(Arcane)+5(AF)+1D10 versus Netcop: 8(Interface)+4(Shield FCT)+1D10. The respective totals come up 17 and 14; the NetCOP takes the hit. Note also that the Netcop's Shield is now FCT 3.

## Damage

So the program ate through your Shield and smacked you in the face. Read what the program does in the Effect column on page 159. Usually it lists a Damage Class to roll for on the Wounds Table (pg. 152). **For programs, you add the FCT value of the attacking program to the 1D10 roll when determining damage from this table.** Once found, you apply that to the appropriate stat of the character/program/system.

### Anti-Program and Anti-System Damage

Programs treat their FCT as "wounds" to absorb damage from an attacking program strike. If a *Tunneler* with FCT 4 were hit by a *Blaster* for 3 hits, the *Tunneler* would still be in operation (with only one FCT remaining). However, *Tunneler's* chances of defeating the next attack are now seriously diminished.

**Example:** The Angel took an FCT 6 Blaster attack. The GM rolls on the DC 3 row of the Wounds Table and adds the 6 to the D10 roll. The total is 10. That's 5 points of damage. The Angel only had an AF of 5. It derezzes. As per the rules on page 143, the Wizard takes DC 2 damage and rolls 1D10. It's a 5, so he doesn't lose a point of INT.

If your anti-system program outsmarts a datafort or deck, it does its effect to the target system. Sometime this means reducing the system's INT by the appropriate damage amount. Sometimes it means some special effect based on the program's description. Either way, it's gonna hurt.

### Anti-Personnel Damage

This is applied based on the attacking program (see pg. 159). Some attack your brain (INT reduction) while others fry your BODY (Wounds). Read the program description for specifics. **A special note:** 'Trode and keyboard users are immune to most anti-personnel black ice attacks ('trodes and keyboards aren't intimate enough with your nervous system), so they won't suffer from INT or Wound hits. But they might still get freaked out by effective illusions (see pg. 167).

**Example:** Our Netcop got hit by an AF 5 anti-personnel familiar. The description of that subroutine (on page 143) means that the AF 5 does DC 5 damage to the Netcops BODY. Can you say "dead"?

### Anti-System Attacks on Wizards

Wizard can be threatened by both anti-user and anti-system programs. Beware of these anti-system programs and what they can do to you.

**Bomb:** For every two points of the program's FCT, you lose one point of *Arcane*. You can recover these points at the same rate as *normal* people heal (see page 154), as your nanites rebuild your circuitry.

**Atomic Bomb:** For every point rolled on the DC 1 row, you lose one Familiar—permanently. You must reconstruct a new Familiar if you wish to get it back. Also, you take the normal damage for losing a Familiar for each (page 143).

**Tunneler:** No effect.

## Relative Speeds

When you're in combat, spacing rarely matters. Remember that a program really has no "back" or "front," so positioning yourself behind its ICON doesn't make a difference. In a datafort, where ninety percent of your combat is likely to occur, movement only comes into play when you're entering another node, because you might activate another program.

However, movement does play a part if you're in a wide open area of Netspace and you're being pursued by others.

This is when a Wizard can really slide by or crash down, depending on her MOVE stat. Why is that? Because everything else—users, programs, AIs, and even AIMO—has an MV of 5, period. It's the law of the Net. Only this isn't true with Wizards. Here's how you can add a movement modifier to your game without being forced to use a map.

**The Numbers Approach:** Take the Wizard's MOVE stat and use the difference in points from 5 as a modifier to Initiative. If the Wizard has a 7 MOVE, her Initiative is at a bonus of +2 when outside a datafort (the only time MA is strategically useful). If the Wizard has a 3 MOVE, her Initiative is at a penalty of -2. This is particularly effective on the first round of Net combat (representing the ability to close with your opponent). After that, it's up to the Referee to apply.

**The Diceless Approach:** Roleplay it. If the Wizard is faster, she just barely escapes the pack of hungry hound programs on her tail. If she's slower, well, you can imagine what BuReloc would like to do to her ...

# VIRTUALITY COMBAT

There are three ways in which Virtuality intersects reality for a *Cybergeneration* team—Netrunning, Wizardry, and using Virtuality 'trodes. While the former two fit into the normal rules of Net Combat, 'trodes are a special case inasmuch as they can be used by all types of characters. A fusion of the low-powered, removable trode sets of 2020 and the advanced cellular technologies of 2027, the trodes of *Cybergeneration* are much improved over the earlier models. Yet they are still nowhere as efficient as the interface jack/cable link ups used by true Netrunners, because they are limited to inductance contact rather than a direct neural link. Mass produced in bulk, V-trodes are designed solely as receivers, picking up data from any Virtuality transmitter within 1000 feet of their position and stimulating the wearer's nervous system as directed by this data.

Since V-trodes are used by the general public, several safeguards are automatically built into them. An automatic cutoff is used to filter any non-data type transmissions, totally cutting out any physical black ice attacks (you can see the *Hound* but it can't touch you). V-trodes are hardwired at the chip level so that they cannot penetrate the insides of a secured Data-Fortress (you may not see through Data Walls, Code Gates or LDLs). It is also impossible to alter the structure of the V-trode chips to permit Netrunning without destroying the chip itself.

**Note:** Virtuality combat occurs in standard three-second combat rounds, not the one-second Net rounds. This is because V-projections are designed to interact with a normal human's nervous system. If they went too fast, their effect would be lost, so they are slowed down to a more pedestrian speed. This forces Netrunners, Wizards, and AIs to slow down in order to interact with them.

## Initiative

Initiative in Virtuality combat is in order of highest to lowest total score. If two players have the same total, they may take turns or go in order of mutual consent. The formula for determining your Initiative is based on the type of running you're doing:

- AIs & Systems** ..... INT or FCT + 1D10 roll
- Netrunners** ..... Interface+1/2 Deck INT+1D10 roll
- Wizards** ..... REF+ Arcane Skill+1D10 roll
- 'Trode Users** ..... REF+1D10 roll

## Attacks & Defenses

As a Netrunner, AI or system, you may use any or all types of programs as described in the previous Net section. However, as a Wizard, you will create Familiars instead of

Programs. The advantage to this, of course, is that a Familiar can be selectively "tailored" to have various attacks at different FCT values (see pg. 143), unlike a normal Program (which has a set FCT).

**Virtuality 'trode users** cannot create or run *any* Programs or Familiars. However, like 'trode-users in the Net, the automatic cutout built into their 'trodes makes them invulnerable to all physically based black ice, including *Hound, Ferris, Ninja, Jack Lock, Leech, Blade* and *Sizzler*. *Dazzler* might still effect you if you're on trodes.

## The Power of Illusion

While it's true that physical attacks have no effect on V-trode users, there is one type of attack that is almost as deadly. These are **virtual illusions**—transmitted hallucinations that are so real that they can cause insanity, death, or prompt fatal errors in judgment. There are two main types of virtual illusions: *Masked Traps and Tricks*, and *Virtual Attacks*.

### Traps and Tricks

These are virtual illusions used to cover a Realspace hazard: virtual floors covering Realspace tiger pits, Realspace lasers masked by virtuality walls or images. These are only as dangerous as the trap or trick itself, one reason why you may want to have one member of the party enter a potentially hostile area without using V-trodes or glasses.

### Virtual Attacks

Make no mistake: Illusions in Virtuality are as real as the real thing, at least as far as touch, taste, smell, sight and sound go. Knowing that it's not real doesn't make the sensation of having your leg chewed off by a four headed demon any less painful. A well constructed Virtuality illusion can literally drive you insane, or cause a heart failure from the shock, pain and horror. As many an ISA interrogator has found out, virtual torture is just as bad as the real thing, and leaves no marks.

### Illusions in Combat

No matter what the type of attack, the most important thing about a virtual illusion is whether or not the victim is *aware* of its illusory nature. This requires making an INT check (your INT+1D10) against the FCT of the Program (or the Virtual Illusion AF of the Familiar), plus a 1D10 roll. On an equal or higher roll, you are able to see through the nature of the illusion, using your will to edit out the virtual from the real.

Of course, certain factors will make this task easier; it's hard to get around reality when the illusion is patently silly (like a giant doughnut attacking you), or the illusion appears magically from nowhere. These types of illusions are less effective than normal, no matter how well they are



programmed (an unbelievable illusion's FCT is automatically reduced by half). However, a pit suddenly opening up beneath you, or a door opening to reveal an attacker, would be considered a reasonable type of illusion. In all cases, common sense (and the Referee's decision) should prevail.

**Dops. You fail the roll.**

On a failed INT check, you must proceed as though the illusion is real. This means walking out over the hidden pit, batting away the illusionary flames, or trying to take a shot at the virtual Solo that has attacked you. If hit by virtual bullets, you must make Stun/Shock rolls as if really hit; if covered by virtual fire, you must act as though you are actually being damaged by the flames.

Obviously, this is a bit hard to roleplay; we suggest that unless the player actually makes a successful INT check against the illusion, the Referee treat all damages and effects as though they are real and make every effort not to clue the player in. One way to do this is to have the players all make INT checks at the start of the game session, write them all down, and refer to these in secret as a virtual illusion is encountered.

**The Really Bad News**

Assuming you have failed your INT check, you may still need to make one more check against the EFFECTS of the illusion. After all, an illusion of Virtual Vicky will just leave you standing there with a stupid smile on your face. But an illusion (with full tactile and sensory impressions) of having your head ripped off your neck by a huge metal cybenaught has a tremendous psychological impact on all but the most empathy-deadened.

Whenever an illusion involves pain, death, horror, or other negative effects, the victim must make a COOL check (COOL +1D6 vs the illusion's FCT [or AF]+1D10) immediately to avoid serious psychic damage. On a failed roll, he will lose 1D6/2 from his COOL. When his COOL is reduced to 0, he suffers extreme mental or physical damage. Roll 1D10 and check the table below for the result:

Roll	Result
1-2	<b>Personality fragmentation</b> (hear voices, illusions)
3-4	<b>Screaming hysterics</b> (babbling, shaking, terror)
5-6	<b>Phobic</b> (avoid anything that reminds you of the event)
7-8	<b>Traumatic shock</b> (you keep reliving the event)
9	<b>Autism</b> (you totally withdraw from reality)
10	<b>Terror-caused heart attack</b> (roll as DC7 for damage)

To recover from *physical* damage, you'll need to heal normally. To recover from *mental* damage, you must undergo therapy, recovering COOL (and thus sanity) at the rate of 1D6/2 per weekly session. When you have totally recovered your COOL, you are considered to have been cured.

**Defense Strategies**

Obviously, the best way to defend against Virtuality attacks is simple—get rid of your 'trodes. It takes one turn to rip off V-glasses or stick-ons (giving the ice one turn to make an attack). Revolutionaries with implanted trodes or trodes in cyberware are out of luck. The drawback to this is that your opposition may use virtualspace to hide things in; for example, the safe way through a trapped passage may require stepping on the glowing red spaces on the floor—which can only be seen in V-space. A mixed 'trode and Realspace party may be the best solution to this.

Another strategy is always to have a Wizard or Netrunner in the party. This may require that the rest of the group spend a fair amount of time protecting this valuable resource from physical attacks. And there's no guarantee that a single Wizard or deckjock can protect everyone when the going gets nasty.

And then, there's Codeguns.

**Codeguns**

Codeguns are small devices designed to fire a very tightly modulated code pulse at an attacking Virtuality image or Black Program. In many ways, they're like having a Anti-Program Attack program in a box; you shoot the codegun at the image attacking you, and its counter program pulse attempts to tear apart the attacking program. Since most Netrunners and Wizards have a reputation as the "codeslingers" of the Virtual Frontier, many codeguns are, appropriately designed to look something like guns, with butts, stocks and triggers. But codeguns don't *have* to look like guns; they can also be designed to fit under the barrel of a standard handgun, rifle or SMG, or as flashlight-style projectors that can be aimed at an attacking image.

When attacking with a codegun, you must aim the weapon in the direction of the attacking ICON or illusion, treating it as any other Ranged Weapon Attack. The codegun's program latches onto the origination signal of the attacker and attempts to "ride" it back to the source. Once there, a successful hit reduces the attacking program's FCT by a DC1 roll. When the attacking program's FCT has been reduced to 0, the program de-rezzes.

Codeguns have definite limits. Since they are designed to attack *any* type of Net-based attack, they are not particularly powerful, being a general antibiotic rather than a specific "magic bullet." Also, because the coding package is designed to dismantle the target in *pieces*, it usually takes several shots to totally derezz an attacking program (luckily, codeguns are electronic, and can fire once per round hundreds of times [actually 200] before needing a 2-hour recharge from the nearest powerjack). Many parties carry several codeguns and fire en masse whenever black ice or Familiars are encountered.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

RETURNING



CYBERGENERATION

# GETTING CYBER- GENERATED

## PLAYER'S TIPS FOR THE CYBERGENERATION

***The world of Cybergeneration can be a violent, dangerous place. But the Cybergeneration were born into this world, and are perfectly adapted to it. They do more than merely survive; they live their lives to the maximum, laugh at the danger, and ride the Edge farther, faster and better than any Edgerunner alive. They have hopes, goals and plans to do a lot of good along the way.***

### ***And you'd better count on it.***

#### **So you're playing a Cybergeneration character?**

Here's the first thing to remember, cho: *Juves are not miniature adults.* Say it again. In *Cybergeneration*, you are a punk. You don't have power; you don't have weapons. All you have is yourself: smarts, sneakiness, and sheer determination.

As a yoganger, you know that going head on against a CorpSec team is tantamount to suicide. They've got Genius Guns; you've got slingshots. They have AVs; you're probably not even tall enough to reach the control yoke of a spinner.

But as the seven-year-old *Cybergen* character who, when confronted by a CorpSec squad in an abandoned No-Go Zone, said, "Hush! We're playing hide and seek!" discovered, most adults (even in 2027) can't really believe that a seven-year-old could be leading a strike team into a Corporate facility. At least not until he rolls a grenade into the middle of them.

If you're the type that depends on Big Weapons and Equipment to get you by, get ready for a shock. As a *Cybergeneration* yoganger, you're going to need to use your smarts more. You'll use *Genspeak* to discuss plans right in front of your opposition. You'll use *Blend* to make sure you're

overlooked by the guards at the right time, and *Lil' Angel* to fake them out if you're caught in the act. You may even discover that there are real advantages to playing an eight-year-old yoganger, especially if no one realizes she can blow up heads until it's too late.

Your weapons are numbers and subtlety. The best place to hide will be in a school or a shopping mall, where ISA agents would have to interrogate two hundred kids instead of fingering just one. Sometimes, a Hexite tendril in the right part of the lock is better than ripping apart the door and setting off an alarm. Sometimes rearranging the molecules of a critical vehicle part will get rid of your pursuers a lot more easily than a missile launcher. And there's less mess to sweep up afterwards.

For those of you who've wanted to play a "dark future" style game without the oppressive atmosphere and constant violence, *Cybergeneration* may be something of a relief. As a yoganger, you can have fun with your enemies instead of just shooting them. When you're twelve, it's a lot more interesting to humiliate the president of Biotechnica creatively than it is to blow him away. Do it enough, and his boss will probably do you a favor by eliminating him first, before the embarrassment spreads.

Combat is usually more forgiving (many Adversaries are out to capture, not kill you), and you'll have more opportunities to mess with your enemies' minds. After a while, you may even come to look forward to running down an Arasaka "recovery team" with an aeroboard while your Tribal buddies count coup.

Hard-line Edgerunners will also find *Cybergeneration* a change of pace. You may have cyberware and a gun or two, but they aren't your main weapons. Instead, you've got years of skill and experience fighting the Machine, and lots of connections that can give you the kind of clout that the kids lack. You've also got the level temper required to keep these kids from running off right into CorpSec's gun muzzles. That's right: It's up to *you* to keep things from getting out of hand and blowing up in the Revolution's face. See if riding herd on a half-dozen jacked-up adolescents doesn't teach you restraint.

Above all, as one of the *Cybergeneration*, you play hard and you play fun. Sure, your goal may be to overthrow an entire government, but there's no reason why that has to be a grim, oppressive process. BeaverBrats setting off all the fire retardant sprayers in the EBM tower will bring operations to a grinding halt just as fast as any black ops team. And you can still use the building afterwards. Play fast, hard and fun. Evolve or Die.

# NOTES ON BEING A JUVE

Here are a few things to keep in mind as you shape your yoganger's personality.

- CONFIDENCE:** You're not *too* confident about anything. Swaggering and acting confident to your friends is one thing, but when faced with something that would genuinely worry your character, make it show just a little. Just don't let that worry stop your character from actually going through with it—if only to save face.

**Quote:** "I... am... going... to... die."—Saskia, 14, a BoardPunk, while undergoing the gauntlet thrash run for initiation into the Skyhawks Aeroboard Club.
- IMPULSIVENESS:** Okay, so you may not be totally confident, but that won't stop you from leaping before you look. You want to take action *now*, rather than deliberating things to death. You also tend to see yourself as immortal, since death is still a distant issue for you. That doesn't mean that you're a fool, just that you're not inclined to wax too philosophical before punching someone out.

**Quote:** "What are we waiting for?"—Athena, 15, an EcoRaider, right before she jumped the fence into the PetroChem complex.
- PASSIONS AND HOBBIES:** What are your character's most and least favorite things? Does your Yoganger like music? If so, which bands, and how big is her V-music video collection? Does your Yoganger like certain kinds of food, and hate others? What about clothing styles, sports, or V-sims? Does your character have a hobby, or something that he collects or otherwise obsesses about (besides his yogang gig)? Describe it to the Ref and the others in the group that might know about it. Maybe you just like dancing, or shopping, or collecting old flat-vid CDs—whatever floats your boat.

**Quote:** "Shoes! I must have them!"—Felicity Dane-Hilliard, 15, GoldenKid, while shopping at Grandmill's.
- SEX:** Are you romantically interested in other juves yet? Has your character ever been on a date, much less had sex? What was it like? How do you feel about it? Even if you're romantically active, sex is still probably a bit of a tension point, a supposedly "adult" thing that you're exploring. If not, you can roleplay the whole "boys/girls are icky" angle.

**Quote:** "Wow, girls look really weird when they're naked."—Stanley Weisenburger, 11, a TinkerTot, after having walked in on two of his friends who were making out.
- FAMILY:** Who are your parents and how do you feel about them? Are you close, or would you barely recognize each other on the street? If you have siblings, how do you get along with them? Remember, in 2027 siblings aren't necessarily blood relatives—they're just other juves that have been thrown into whatever family unit you were living in (or they were there first... you can argue about it later). How far would you go to get your sibling out of trouble?

**Quote:** "I'LL KILL HIM! No, wait... then who'll I blame everything on?"—Teela, 13, BeaverBrat, upon finding her little brother had gotten into her personal comp.
- DRUGS:** Has your character ever tried any drugs, and if so, are they still being used? While juves generally aren't fond of drugs (blaming them as much of what messed up their parents), some Yogangers, like the Goths, do imitate some of their elders and predecessors. If you're still doing something, how does it affect you and how obvious are you about it?

**Quote:** "My best friend Sid died from drugs. Drugs suck."—Nicola, 14, Goth, mocking a public service announcement while tagging a derm of Blue Lace onto her arm.
- THE CODE:** Every juve knows the Code, but how religiously do you adhere to it? Would you remind others of it if you see them doing something wrong? Would you ostracize a friend if he had badly violated it?

**Quote:** "That was totally corporate, Frag. Put it back, or I'll have to break you."—Jaeger, 16, Streetfighter, upon catching Frag ripping off a cred-chip from a fellow 'Fighter.
- THE WORLD:** How does your character actually feel about the ISA and the world of 2027? What in particular gets you angry about the future you'll inherit if you do nothing? What will end up driving you to fight the Corporations and the government? Is it simply that you're a CyberEvolved, or something more? This is a *really* important question. Think about it and talk it over with your Referee.

**Quote:** "It sure is hard to believe in the benevolence of the CEP after you just watched your friends get blown away by CorpSec goons."—Alex, 16, Vidiot, making an editorial statement on *Badger News*.

# RUNNING CYBER- GENERATION

**Okay, GMs. Back on page 145, you left your players in the middle of a raid. In about six seconds, a whole lot of heavily armed CorpSec thugs are going to crash in the doors and come right down on them. But you've read the combat section and you're going to be ready for it.**

What you might *not* be ready for is what comes *after* the fight. That's because *Cybergeneration* is a real departure from the normal *Cyberpunk*-style game. While it started as a *Cyberpunk* spin-off, it always had an entirely different focus and style, which is why we made it a stand-alone game with this edition. Still, contrasting *Cybergeneration* with its parent game can help illustrate exactly *how* it has diverged from the more familiar "Dark Future" mold.

If you're an experienced *Cyberpunk* (or any other dark future game) Referee, you've probably got the drill down solid. Your players get hired or discover some valuable chunk of newtech. Your players are hired to extract/assassinate some powerful rival. Your players anger some powerful force like Arasaka and have to fight for their miserable lives. By the end of the adventure, the guns have come out, there's a firefight that would intimidate Sam Peckinpah, and the heroes either escape into the smog or rake in the cash. And that's fine, because the essence of *Cyberpunk* is just that: a fine mix of betrayal, professionalism and high-tech weaponry.

But in *Cybergeneration*, the emphasis is on *people*, not hardware. Your players don't have a lot of weapons (they'll be lucky to have a heavy autoweapon among them). If they manage to overpower a CorpSec goon, they may be able to score a "Genius Gun" or two. They won't have lots of money (by now, Mom and Dad or the Agents should have cut off your Golden- and GlitterKids from their private banking access codes). They won't have Contacts, Attack Aerodynes, Big Cyberware or Big Attitudes.

What they'll have will be themselves.

Forget about their CyberEvolved powers. The toughest among them will barely be equal to the tougher of the Edgerunners (an Edger in Powered Armor will still clean their clocks). If they use their new abilities well, they can raise holy havoc, but we predict that most *Cybergen* players will have to learn the hard way. They'll get shot, heal, get captured and escape, and do it all over again. They'll gain and lose lovers, friends and allies. They'll tackle nemeses ranging from the ubiquitous CorpSec goon squads to other bands of renegade CyberEvolved who work for the ISA (or even for themselves).

What we have to do in the next few pages is give you an idea of how a *Cybergeneration* game really runs. The preceding pages were an attempt at that, to put your players into a situation where they were teenage kids shopping in a high-tech mall rather than just roleplayers reading things off a list. Where they were powerless proles against a national police force with the powers of the SS and the weapons to back it, instead of hard-bitten cynics with Rambo-scaled firepower. Each stage of the game so far has been arranged to heighten the paranoia and increase the interaction. Now we've got to depart from the script and tell you how to set up the rest of the play. We've got to get you *Cybergenerated*.

Let's start with the **style**.

## This is not your Father's Cyberpunk®.

*Cybergeneration* style is a lighter, less hopeless style than the usual Dark Future scenario. While it's true that the Incorporated States are a ruthless dictatorship covered with a thin veneer of stylish civilization, by and large, life for the prole in the Street has improved. Crime is no longer rampant (the I.S.A. has interned or killed anyone they even suspected might be a troublemaker). There is enough for everyone to eat (if you don't mind processed yeast by-products and restructured proteins that taste like cardboard). You have a choice of Corporate-sponsored political parties to vote for, and there are plenty of cheaply made, overpriced consumer goods at the local Mallplex.

Getting the picture? *Cybergeneration*'s world is less grundgy, more media-driven, more superficial and more mind-controlled than *Cyberpunk*'s. It's more complacent; the Edgerunners of 2020 have mostly sold out for a limited form of security. Only the *Cybergeneration*, the teenage outcasts of the Carbon Plague, are willing to carry on the fight

against Corporate domination—mostly because they haven't got a choice.

## Teenagers are a young and confused lot...

When we came up with this project, the first question the playtesters asked us was, *Why teenagers and kids?* Simple.

When you're younger, you're still convinced of your own immortality. That means you're willing to *risk* a lot more. You're also a lot more ready to fight for an idealistic belief, as long as you think you have any chance of winning. Unlike the cool, cautious Edgerunners, you'll roleplay a lot more intensely, because when you're sixteen, the entire world seems stacked against you, and the only way to throw off that powerless feeling is to *bust on through*.

As a yoganger, you're a lot more concerned with people than racking up the bucks. You want to be popular; you want friends, lovers, proof that you're competent and adult. You also want your life to mean something more than just a paycheck. Your emotions are closer to the surface; you're more explosive and daring. Things matter intensely to you; as a CyberEvolved, you live fast, hard and desperate, like a 21st century James Dean. In short, you live even closer to the Edge than your Edgerunner parents ever did.

When playing a *Cybergeneration* character, remember that to you *everything* is magnified. You don't just get "involved" with another character in the abstract, supercool way that Edgerunners do; you fall in love, hard and totally, with jealous fights, breaking up and getting back together: the gamut of romantic entanglement. Edgerunners don't get pregnant and have to work out the details; they're cool enough to get their implants and keep 'em updated. Yogangers usually don't have the cash, or in the heat of running from CorpSec, forget to get the renewal implant on time.

Crisis is the order of the day, and soap opera subplots should run throughout *Cybergeneration* adventures just as often as firefights. When you make enemies, you really hate them, and carry grudges to the extreme; you constantly call each other out, compete to score off each other, and never, ever forgive and forget. When you commit to a cause, you'll do anything to make that cause succeed, and woe to the person who betrays your group for anything but the most worthy motives.

In *Cyberpunk*, you're a streetsmart, ice-cold professional who shoots things. In *Cybergeneration*, you're an angry,

emotional, hair-triggered young streetpunk who isn't sure whom to shoot. You have problems, questions, loyalties and emotions instead of guns, cybertech and a lot of cash.

You also have a lot more chances to roleplay. Which is why we do all this in the first place.

## It's the People, Stupid: Rules for Running Cybergeneration

Since *Cybergeneration* is about people, not hardware, your stories will need to revolve more around human situations rather than technical breakthroughs or big weapons. A few basic rules should apply to all your *Cybergeneration* adventures:

### Where technology is important, it is because of its application, not its value.

For example, suppose Biotechnica develops a new cloning process that can replicate things from DNA samples. Edgerunners will steal the process to sell it to the highest bidder. The *CyberEvolved* will steal it to reconstruct extinct or endangered species. Always give your players a way to connect a technological breakthrough with some larger, beneficial outcome.

### People do things for personal reasons, not money.

As an Edgerunner, you might betray someone to a Corp because there was a \$10,000<sup>00</sup> reward. As a yoganger, you might betray someone because he betrayed the Revolution or the Code, or because you wanted him out of the way because you hated him. But you would never do it just for the bucks. As a Referee, it's your job to give your players personal reasons and motivations: childhood enemies, jealous lovers, rivals for leadership, personal insults or family feuds that have been handed down through generations.

### Firepower never solves the problem.

Edgerunners depend on big guns because a bullet can end the life of an immediate threat. Yogangers know that even if you defeat the Agent team that's after you, you still haven't stopped the Corporation behind it. That means you need subtle solutions: wrecking the Corp's stock on the Exchange, wiping out its computer records, getting a friendly ally controlling the Board of Directors. The *Cybergeneration* therefore looks for ways to stop their enemies before they resort to guns, because in the long run, converting Arasaka into a baby-sitting service via a hostile takeover is a lot more permanent than just shooting Saburo.

## SEX IN CYBERGENERATION

Love is a great Plotpath element (see pg. 174), but sex can be serious. Do we at RTG condone teen sex? Does it matter? Face it: If your group has any juves over thirteen years old, chances are sex is going to be on their minds. That doesn't mean they'll be preoccupied with it, but the hormones will be starting to flow, and curiosity is going to be running high. They'll have accessed the medical texts off the Net, so they'll know how it all works (so much for "The Birds and the Bees"). Not that this will make them any more confident about the whole thing. And with the Plotpath cranking, they'll probably be getting involved with other juves of the appropriate sex to stir their juices. But what do they do now?

How you deal with this topic is going to vary from Ref to Ref, and we suggest that you get a solid idea of what your players can handle before you let them go leaping into anything. Not everyone may be comfortable exploring this particular roleplaying experience. Whatever you choose, it should be done with taste and sensitivity.

Well, at least try to keep the snickering down, okay?

First off, a juve's emotions around sex are probably going to be strained. They feel all the drives kicking in, but are unsure what to do about them. Many may be discovering the opposite sex (or whatever) for the first time and still be developing the skills to communicate their feelings. And these feelings are burning fast and fierce, as only a juve's could. These scenes of early attraction are rich with roleplaying potential. The sexual energy should be used to add tension and drama—letting them consummate too soon would be a waste. They should have to explore the whole process of contact and seduction

before letting their characters indulge—assuming that they're willing to take the risk. Sex for a teen can mean a whole new level of emotional involvement that they may not be ready for.

How they deal with each other after the act may change radically, for better or for worse. *These* are the aspects of sex that are best dealt with in roleplaying.

Assuming that your juves choose to take the plunge, there are two practical considerations for them when it comes to sex: disease and pregnancy. AIDS II and a whole lotta other things are waiting for the overanxious teen who practices unsafe sex. The CNMs *may* protect them from these things, but they can't be *sure*. And any girl who's started on her cycle had better be sure that some kind of precautions are taken or be left holding the prenatal care bag. Factor *that* into your campaign. All the usual methods of protection are available, but may be difficult for juves to procure; the local Mallplex drugstore won't usually sell these kinds of things to minors, and the thought of black market birth control pills should send chills down the players' backs. Finding the means to protect themselves during the act can be a subplot all to itself.

And all this doesn't even touch on the whole set of Cyber-Evolved complications: Will the other person find the Tinman's mutations physically disgusting? Will a Scanner's abilities make others avoid intimate contact for fear of revealing too much about themselves? Might Bolters lose control during intimacy and hurt somebody? Can an Alchemist create pheromones to seduce a specific target? If a Tinman can shape his limbs into any form ... the list goes on. Take this only as far as you want to.

As a Referee you should always offer your players other answers than a shootout: access to information, allies on the other side, or an opposing force so overwhelming that only superior brainpower can save the day.

*Look at the greater picture, not the short term solution.*

Edgerunners are concerned with the immediate problem: escaping the black ops team that's after them, getting enough euro to rent a cube. Ideals or principles? Yeah, sure ...

In *Cybergeneration*, goals are more idealistic and broadly based. That means that you're not content to destroy one member of a Corporation; you want to put the entire Corp out of business. You may go on several missions in a row just to line up the parts you'll need to accomplish a long-term goal (for instance, you sneak into a polluting facility to

identify the sludge it's spewing, kidnap the head of a biotech firm and force him to gene-engineer a sludge eater, take over a rival biotech lab to *make* the sludge eater, then infiltrate the site again to pour your sludge eater into the toxic waste). An Edgerunner would just shoot the head of the polluting Corp, who would then be replaced by an even worse scum.

In *Cybergeneration* adventures, there should always be a lot of short-term successes that will allow an even greater success to happen, and that long-term goal should always be visible from the start.

*It's not all Guns, Guns, Guns.*

Heavy-duty weapons are not as much a part of the world of *Cybergeneration*. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, the Gun Bounty of 2023 (in which citizens were paid to turn in their weapons) has reduced much of the available

firepower on the Street. Second, stricter gun control has made it harder for citizens (especially kids) to buy weapons; most guns are now purchased through under-the-table and black-market methods.

The good news is, the ISA isn't packing as much hardware either. Although they are empowered to shoot to kill, ISA Agents and CorpSec troops generally want to bring the Evolved in alive, so they can turn them over to Corporate-controlled research labs and black ops teams. This means that many times your players will be up against taser guns instead of high-powered weapons. This means ISA attacks will also involve nets, tangle guns, dart guns, and tasers rather than autofire weapons.

When running *Cybergeneration*, Referees should make a point of de-emphasizing heavy firepower. Guns in 2027 are harder to get, cost a lot of money, and aren't an everyday thing. Unlike 2020, when every kid had a Polymer One shot, the 2027 scene is much more like America of ten years ago:

Guns can be bought, but are not commonly carried by everyone. Military weapons are very rare and considered illegal by most law enforcement agencies.

### Think Streets of Fire, not Blade Runner.

Remember that your players are teens and subteens in a world where flash is king and media hype the rule. Even more than a typical *Cyberpunk* Edgerunner, *Cybergen* characters depend on style over substance (mostly because that's all they really have).

In *Cybergeneration*, characters have rumbles, not firefights. Advanced weapons are rare and the ultimate levelers. A facedown can make or break a rep a lot faster than a fast gun. The coolest character gets the best bike, the best looking girl, and the most respect. In short, scale your adventures to fit the level that would challenge a 16-year-old streetpunk (beating the local CorpSec commandant, getting the jump on a rival yogang, or thwarting a corporate plot that happens on your turf) as opposed to a mature Edgerunner (who doesn't consider it a challenge unless he and his full-borged buddies can wipe out a major Militech stronghold full of cloned combat-replicants in a battle of epic proportions).

### Never trust anyone over thirty.

One of the best models of a *Cybergeneration* campaign is the nineteen-sixties. A time of revolution and street action, the sixties revolved around a clash of two cultures: a stratified, somewhat hypocritical consumer culture of older, established adults, versus an idealistic and angry counter-culture of young men and women.

In 2027, much of the old Edgerunner generation is cynical, hardened to an environment of constant violence and betrayal. They have little if any morals left, and those they do have are based on sheer survival. To the Edgerunners of 2027, the question isn't whether you'll work for the Corporations, but which Corporation offers the lesser of the evils that are part of the price you pay to live in the Dark Future. To the Old Cyberpunks, there is no longer any hope of change, only a bare chance of making it to the next polluted sunrise.

By contrast, the *Cybergeneration* has hope. Sure, they've been through all the violence and nastiness their parents have. But they've grown up with it; it's hard to depress them any further when they've seen it all before. Their world view is based on changing what exists now, instead of trying to just slow the long slide into oblivion. To the *Generation*, giving up before the might of the Corporations is a sellout. Instead, they choose to confront the enemy and win, just as the student radicals of the '60s chose to confront the unstoppable power of the "military industrial complex" over the Vietnam War.

To the CyberEvolved, there is no Dark Future. There's only a Dark Now—and the chance to overthrow the people who created that Now and replace them with something better.

Where the Edgerunners of 2020 scrambled for a few eurobucks and a temporary advantage against Arasaka, the *Cybergeneration* attacks Arasaka facilities, sabotages Arasaka hardware, and spreads truth campaigns against Arasaka propaganda. A CyberEvolved character would rather die than compromise with the Corps that he or she views as Evil incarnate. While Edgerunners work for money, the *Cybergeneration* works to accomplish ideals—an end to pollution, exposing corporate propaganda, quelling street violence or restoring personal freedoms.

When setting up your *Cybergeneration* adventures, don't hesitate to mine the rich roleplaying strata of the last few decades. Movies about the antiwar movement, books about the student confrontations in the '60s and '70s, and other records of the turbulent past are as close as your nearest library. They say that history repeats itself; what better time to replay the Age of Aquarius than in the Age of the Cyberpunk?

### Subplots and Subterfuge

Some of you may have noticed that a Yoganger's background is a little sparse. Where is all the history? Well, to quote the old song, "These are the Good Old Days."



## DRUGS IN CYBERGENERATION

Every Referee will have his own opinion on this and should explore it as he would like in his campaign. For us, habitual drug use generally destroys people, especially juves. We're not arguing that drugs *can't* be used responsibly; the fact is that in 2027, they *aren't*. In this era, most drugs are slap-dash designer potions that either have nasty side effects or are addictive as hell. The kids have seen all the burn-out cases they've caused in the previous generation. Plus, the ISA often uses subtle "additives" to sedate the populace, and encourages depressants where they will help maintain order. All of this tends to make drugs a lot less cool to juves, and teenage drug use is not as common as it is today. Check out pg. 154 to see just how bad these new drugs can be.

Refs can have a natural control on CyberEvolved drug use: As the Ref wishes, the CNMs could render many drugs ineffective, neutralizing them as they would poisons. So you can deny the characters the thrill of drugs (as well as the negative effects) if you so choose. It's up to you.

Drugs can be good dramatic element in a game, however. Drug use by a player character will usually precipitate a crisis. His stability may slip (assuming he was stable to begin with) and, if he becomes an addict, he may even become a threat to the security of the team. The team might have to deal with his decline into addiction and/or help him through the wracking pain of withdrawals. Or some group could be seeding the neighborhood with a potent narcotic which they use to manipulate and control the user community. Nasty.

*Cybergeneration* characters just haven't lived long enough to have a huge backlog of experiences. This is the period when things are happening to you, when the events that make up an adult Edgerunner's background occur. It's in this time that the real formative things happen: your family status changes, you interact with your siblings as they're being born, you make your first friends and enemies. Maybe you even fall in love for the first time.

Relegating all these critical life events to a few columns on a character sheet is a waste. A smart Referee can use these events to drive a plot, add flavor to an adventure, and give his players those little "bits" that make playing a character worthwhile. To do this, you're going to need something we call the **Plotpath**.

## Plotpath

Plotpath is a flowchart (see page 177) that links events into a loose causal web, then ties each event to a particular player. You'll need to make a photocopy of the Plotpath for each player in your group; make sure that you keep the results hidden from your players as you'll be using Plotpath to generate subplots and twists along the way.

## Themes

Themes are Plotpath *threads* woven through a storyline, usually around a particular character. A theme links all of the activities in a subplot together and gives the entire structure something more than randomness. For example, if the theme of a particular character's life is a Nemesis, you'll want to tie any Lovers, Incidents, Friends or Family Troubles into the existence of the Nemesis: the new girlfriend used to be your nemesis' lover (Love Strikes); your nemesis is the one that put CorpSec on your trail (Incident); your nemesis is threatening your family (Family Troubles); etc.

By using central Themes, a *Cybergeneration* Referee is able to construct the events in a player's life into an ongoing story, instead of a series of random adventures. The player gains a history of these events, and his or her reactions fuel the next logical step. Themes also give the player a sense of how his actions will affect the larger world—a sense of karma, if you will. If, for example, *Romance* is the player's Theme, he can expect that every relationship he encounters will end badly, that each relationship will reflect on the last, and that mistakes made with one lover will always come back to haunt him with the next.

Pick your Themes carefully; make sure they match the player characters in question. A Romance Theme is pretty useless when applied to a MegaViolent who only wants to fight things; better to give him a Nemesis who just barely defeats him time and time again, with each encounter becoming more closely matched. If a player seems to be most concerned with politics and intrigue, the Treachery Theme will work better than the Evil Twin. If he's got a lot of problems, the Evil Twin Theme (which can be expressed as either a literal twin or as an NPC with very similar traits and habits to the player) can enter the player's life to tempt him to stray to the darker side of his personality. Themes, in conjunction with Plotpath, allow a Referee to construct more complex adventures with a realistic edge that allows better roleplaying.

## START HERE

### Start by Making a Connection:

- Make a Friend!
- Make an Enemy!
- Love Strikes!
- Family Trouble!
- Random Incident!

### Your Friend/Enemy/Lover is:

- New Contact
- Old Lover
- Old Friend
- Relative
- Fellow Yoganger
- Yogang Rival
- Edgerunner

# PLOTPATH

**Ref note:** In Plotpath, you do not roll dice. You pick whatever plot complication seems interesting to inflict upon a particular player. When things slow down, pick another one, crossing out previously used complications one by one.

### RANDOM INCIDENT!

- You've attracted the attention of CorpSec.
- You've been noticed by LEDiv.
- Random sweep by BuReloc grabs you or friend.
- You're falsely accused of a crime or betrayal.
- You've got the Military on your trail.
- The Clarkers are after you.
- You've angered a local Boostergang.
- You've honked off the local Triad/Yakuza/Mob boss.
- The Finals are after you.
- Cops think you committed a crime.

### Level of Incident:

- Minor: It blows over in a day or so, and you're not badly harmed.
- Moderate: You take some heat, have to run for a week, but are only slightly harmed.
- Major: A real pursuit, lasting for weeks, with great harm and danger.
- Intense: An all-out manhunt or city-wide effect, lasting for months, with life or death consequences.

### LOVE STRIKES!

- A mysterious secret comes between you.
- *Romeo and Juliet*—Conflicting backgrounds, alliances tear you apart.
- You won him/her from a rival who won't go away.
- You broke up before.
- He/she is captured or killed.
- You are separated.
- You fight constantly.
- An age problem: You're "too young" or "too old."
- Lover has "baggage"—See Friend Table.
- Lover involves you in Incident (see Table).
- You (or Lover) are pregnant.

### Relationship Level:

- First Love
- Tragic Love
- Puppy Love/Crush
- Casual thing
- Mutual Passion
- One-way Obsession
- Self Destructive

### Relationship Outcome:

- Ugly breakup.
- "It's better this way."
- Still friends.
- Bitter enemies.
- Never bother me again!
- Breakup, w/chance to try again later.
- Your love is unstoppable.
- Left for another.
- Everyone reminds you of her/him.
- What did I see in ...?

### MAKE AN ENEMY!

- Caused other to lose face.
- Caused the loss of friend, loved one.
- Humiliated the other.
- Accused the other of a personal flaw.
- Betrayal!
- Spurned lover.
- Mutual dislike.
- Rival Yoganger.
- Rival for position/power.
- Rival for love.

### Level of Antipathy:

- Dislike.
- Mutual hatred.
- Personal Nemesis.
- Backstabber.
- Passive/aggressive.
- Screaming fits.
- Bad-mouthing.
- Guilt-tripping.
- Sabotage.
- Mutual ignoring.

### MAKE A FRIEND!

- Friend teaches you a new Edgerunner skill (Ref's choice) to +2.
- Friend has contacts in high places (ISA, CorpSec, City Hall).
- Friend is in trouble with ISA.
- Friend is secretly in love with you.
- Friend hunted by Law or CorpSec.
- Friend has problem (addiction, mental, obsession).
- Friend involves you in Family Trouble (see Family Table).
- Friend involves you in Incident (see Incident Table).
- Friend's enemy adds you to hit list (See Enemy Table).
- *Cyrano*—your friend wants your help to get the lover he/she wants.
- Friend loans you money (up to 1D10 x \$10<sup>00</sup>).
- Friend involves you in love life (see Lover Table).

### FAMILY TROUBLE!

- Sibling gets the Plague and comes looking for help.
- ISA rounds up your family for collusion with the Revolution.
- Old family feud surfaces; you have new enemies.
- You discover family is part of a conspiracy/crime group, etc.
- Family vanishes mysteriously.
- Parents denounce you.
- Sibling w/Plague is interned by BuReloc.
- Sibling w/Plague held in CorpSec laboratory.
- Family wiped out in ISA raid.
- Family imprisoned by BuReloc.
- Sibling goes over to the ISA as an agent.
- Family rejects you as a "monster."
- Parents join the Finals.
- Parent joins CorpSec or ISA government.



### Common Themes

**Romance:** The player's life revolves around his or her relationships. New and old lovers enter and reenter his/her life, bringing problems, enemies, and strange mental games. The player can expect a string of embittered lovers plotting revenge, secret children born out of wedlock, jealous rivals, kidnappings, past secrets that come back to wreck lives, etc.

**Nemesis:** The player has an enemy: a group or a single foe, dedicated to his/her destruction. The Nemesis will use any means possible to achieve this goal, including harming friends, family and lovers, and sabotaging plans and goals. The Nemesis isn't picky; if you happen to be near the object of his hatred, you may also be caught in the crossfire. The Nemesis should be very hard to get rid of: just a little bit better than the player, and with an uncanny way of escaping what the player is sure will be certain death.

**Family & Friends:** Like Napoleon and Jimmy Carter, the player's family and friends are his biggest problems. Siblings get involved in dangerous schemes; parents are threatened; friends wander off, get the Plague, or are kidnapped. Friends involve the player in stupid plans or their enemies include him on the hit list. The player spends a lot of time bailing people out of trouble, lending money, and trying to make sure it doesn't happen again (without success).

**Treachery & Betrayal:** The player lives in a world where nothing can be trusted: friends change sides, enemies become friends. Like a character in a LeCarré spy novel, the player can never trust anyone; intrigues are constant and deadly. He can keep no loyalties, no morality. He has only himself.

**Evil Twin:** The player has a physical or psychic twin, someone who is similar in attitude and habits—the sort of person who instantly causes him to say, "That reminds me of me..." The Evil Twin, however, walks the dark side, engaging in more risky, dangerous or even evil pursuits. When encountered by the player, the ET tries to sway the player to see things his way ("You know you're just like me... It would only take a small slip for you to do the same thing... How do you know you're the right one?").

These are only a few very obvious types of Themes; you will soon find it's easy to recognize others from movies, books and TV shows. When you link Themes into a solid Plotpath, you'll discover that your players will spend a lot more time actually playing their characters rather than using them as mobile combat platforms in an ongoing firefight.

### Where do we go from here?

Back on page 172, we told you we'd tell you what came after the big firefight. Now that you're familiar with the ideas of *Cybergeneration* style—its Ground Rules, Subplots, Plotpaths and Themes—let's put together what we've learned and chart the next step of your *Cybergeneration* adventure. Once you've done this a few times, you won't even need to ask us—you'll have it wired from the start.

### Six Seconds after It's Over

Your players have just either defeated the CorpSec team or have escaped them (if the players have been captured, we'll deal with that later). They're either on the Street or in the burned-out safehouse. Let's apply **Rule #3: Firepower never solves the problem** to this. First of all, CorpSec isn't stupid. If the incursion team doesn't check in real soon, they'll send a backup. A BIG backup. So your players would be stupid to try and hang around; they would be smart either to get out of the area or to arrange a subterfuge to hold CorpSec off. Hint this to them by having distant sirens and flashing red lights rapidly approach.

### On the Street

Your players should hit the Street running. Your immediate problem is what to do with them. Here's where **People do things for personal reasons not money** comes in. You need to personalize the conflict to come right away. Set a personal Nemesis on the players, such as a DSA commander who just lost his best friend or lover in the raid (see pg. 244 for a possible candidate). Or connect them with another *CGen* group that's fleeing their own safehouse and are en route to join the CyberRevolution. If the party has lost a member to the CorpSec raid, make *sure* they see him/her being carried away by the goons to an ISA torture lab somewhere. In short, engage their emotions, because you won't have bucks to offer instead.

### Next Step: Revolution or Running?

Assuming your players have escaped to the Street, you have two options. You can let them run from place to place looking for a safe place to hide (with CorpSec in hot pursuit).

Or you can introduce them to other members of the CyberEvolved, slowly building up the connections until they've got enough firepower and allies to really tackle their ISA tormentors. Either of these scenarios can work into a long-term campaign, using the ISA and its CorpSec dogs, or any of the other heinous groups we describe in the "Adversaries" section on pgs. 224 through 246.

One thing you don't want to do is let your players wander off separately. Besides seriously messing up your campaign,

separated groups are far too easy for CorpSec or other Adversaries to pick off one by one. If your players start to stray from each other, feel free to hammer them with any Adversary group that looks interesting. *It's a dangerous world out there, children, so make sure we all hold hands and remember where the bus is ...*

## Or They Can Run Away to Join the Revolution

The last and best option. The CyberRevolution is a coalition of the last Edgerunners, the best of the Cybergeneration, and the greatest Cyberpunk heroes of the 2020s. If your players really want to make a change, this will be the best place to start. When they join this team, the going won't be easy, but they'll fight side by side with the Best, with a good chance of beating the Worst. Are they Evolved enough to handle the challenge? That's up to *them*, yoboy.

## Revolutionary Campaign Tips

Now that we've given you lots of stuff on themes and subplots, let's talk about *Cybergeneration* adventures and campaigns. Chapter 8 describes the Revolution, what it wants and how it operates, but let's help you turn this info into a campaign.

A typical Revolutionary cell consists of a group of CyberEvolved from different yogangs and backgrounds who gather at a safehouse or other locale and are given, where practical (GM's choice), an adult Guerrilla as a training officer/chaperone (this can be an NPC or a player character as per pages 212-224). They have to learn to work together, not kill each other, and to use their abilities and skills in order to accomplish missions and tasks for the Revolution, all the while trying to grow up and discover who they are. Not to mention avoiding capture and dissection by the ISA government and many other interested agencies. Easy.

This format should give you as the GM a lot to work with. And you can tailor it to suit your ideas and players by making a few basic decisions. Below we list some questions to ask yourself as you set up your campaign. You don't have to address all of these issues; just the ones that are important to your concept. But as you look these over, you may find a framework forming almost by itself.

- **Character Lives:** Are the kids on the run from everyone, including their parents, or do they still live their regular lives in addition to their secret lives as Revolutionaries? What are their families like, and do the relatives know about the kids' transformations?
- **Party Mix:** What mix of yogangs and Evolved would you like to see? Do you want to allot powers or allow them to be generated randomly? At first, we suggest you allot Evolved types to your players to ensure a mix that can work in the campaign you've envisioned.
- **Revolutionary Contacts:** Does the team get mission assignments directly from the Eden Cabal, or do they turn up local stuff on their own? A mixture of both is a good idea. Are they funded by the Revolution or do they have to support themselves via odd jobs and scamming from their parents? Who else in the Revolution do they know?
- **Adults:** Who's their chaperone (if any) and how does he relate to the kids? Does he simply guide them or enforce strict discipline (which would be difficult, probably stupid, and possibly suicidal)?
- **Setting:** Where is the campaign set? How active are ISA forces in their area? What are the local issues and points of conflict? On pages 197-199, we provide Night City as an example locale in which to start a campaign, but you're free to create your own.
- **The Bad Guys:** Who are the people they'll be facing: The DSA? CorpSec? BuReloc? The CDC? Rival Yogangs? Are there specific antagonists and agents they will be pitted against time and again? You could even create layers of enemies through which the team has to work over the course of a campaign.
- **Scenario Types:** What Fronts do you want them to fight on: Media, Ecology, Information, or Politics (see page 201 for more)? Do they seem more inclined to "physical" solutions (i.e., blowing things up) or "soft" solutions (such as subterfuge and mindgames)? The style of war that you want to have them fight should be one they can enjoy. Just keep in mind that stand-up firefights tend to kill kids—fast. *Cybergeneration* works better with interaction and subtlety than bombs and gunplay.
- **Campaign Scope:** What long-term goals are they striving for? How broad a scope do you want for the campaign? Do you want it centered simply around one city, neighborhood, or county, with the group's activities and travels basically limited to that zone? Or do you want them moving across the country, pursuing plots that threaten the entire nation? We strongly recommend staying small, especially in the beginning. These are teenagers, not Edgerunners; one of their strengths is their knowledge of their home turf and how to work it. This can change over the course of a campaign as the nature of the missions grows larger and the stakes get

higher, but this should be *tightly* controlled. Remember that the kids aren't superheroes (even if they think they are) with unlimited funds, weapons, and hardware; if you want that, go play *Cyberpunk*. They *should* be able to make a difference, however, and gradually see the effect spread beyond their immediate environment.

Most of our published adventures have been centered around Night City (Central California). While the juves might travel half way across the state during the course of these scenarios, this part of the state is still considered their turf. And their focus is still on events back home in Night City.

### Adventure Tips

Individual scenarios can vary tremendously, but it's been said that there are three basic types of adventures: **Attacks**, **Defenses**, and **Quests**. And the kind of adventure you're running often determines its goal. Attacks are naturally offensives; the team is actively doing something to hurt the opposition in some manner. Obviously the goal here is to hurt or destroy the enemy in some fashion. Defenses are the opposite: the enemy is on the attack and the team's goal is to survive and avoid or minimize the damage. The Quest is obviously a search for some specific valuable item or goal that is not immediately involved in an Attack or a Defense, often with the enemy in competition for the same item. Combinations of these types are certainly recommended, and we usually do so in our published adventures. Below we give a few examples of *CGen* adventure elements and how you might use them in your own adventures.

**Infiltration** (Attack) of ISA or corporate facilities to sabotage, investigate, or steal something is a common element (hey, *we've* used it enough). Try to help the characters find ways of doing this that don't involve shooting guards and killing innocent employees. The *VirtualFront* supplement has a good example of this: the kids can sneak into an ISA base while hiding inside janitorial remotes, touring the base without having to take out all of the security personnel. This generates both tension as they try to remain hidden and comical moments as they sit in the drones' garbage bins, literally getting dumped on the entire mission. The smart ones shifted through the debris for interesting bits of data.

Which brings up another point: An important facet of *Cybergeneration* plots should be **Information Gathering** (Quest). Information is power in 2027, and the more the Revolution has, the more ability it has to bring down the Machine. Scanning the Net, canvassing the streets, or working the yogang network for info are all valuable tactics

that involve character interaction instead of combat. Keeping their ears peeled and their eyes open should provide as much benefit as major tactical actions. And the kids are in a good position for this: CorpZoners are less closed-lipped around kids, figuring they won't know what it all means or how to use it. The kids should clue into this pretty quickly; they *are* the children of the Information Age, after all. Once they get the info, they need to decide what to do with it (turning it into an Attack or a Defense). Some teams will have the ability to broadcast (like Vidiots). Others may need to route the data to the Eden Cabal for proper utilization. Just remember: The right formula or fact can do more damage in this war than an A-bomb.

The *Cybergeneration* can also build things. **Construction** (usually an indirect Attack) of safehouses, information networks, pirate broadcast stations, even esoteric things like rebuilding a ravaged parkland, all contribute to the cause. In fact, the Revolution is best represented when they're doing something positive like this, as compared to blowing things up. Of course, it can be tougher to make this kind of thing exciting. The trick is to give them interesting obstacles to overcome along the way, like dealing with the neighborhood yogangs to get control of the local park, or "acquiring" that microwave transmitter for your pirate station from the nearby Net54 relay station.

**The Chase** (Attack or Defense, depending on who's chasing whom) is a cool action interval. Here, one of the various groups hunting the CyberEvolved finds the team and the race is on to avoid capture and lose or eliminate their pursuers.

This can also be a great complication for other types of adventures, although you've got to be careful not to let them forget about their primary mission in their haste to dodge pursuit. The Chase is especially effective if the hunters are trying to capture the Changed, making a **Prisoner Breakout** (Attack) adventure a likely sequel to a failed attempt at evasion.

### References

Here's a *short* list of films and books that might also help you get a handle on *CGen* atmosphere.

#### FILMOGRAPHY

*Demolition Man*  
*Max Headroom*  
 1984  
*The Running Man*  
*Hackers*  
*Rollerball*  
*The Secret Life of Alex Mack*  
*Rebel Without a Cause*  
 THX 1138

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Little Heroes*  
*Bad Voltage*  
 1984  
*The Long Run*  
*Shadow Dancing in the USA*  
*Snow Crash*  
*Virtual Light*  
*The Art of War*

# CHAPTER EIGHT



# THE ISA

# WELCOME TO DYSTOPIA

**America in 2027: a nation pulling itself out of a fiscal and socio-political dark age. Unfortunately, the instrument of this resurrection is the Incorporated States of America: a pseudo-fascist state controlled by a corporate cabal which utilizes propaganda, technology and brute force to impose its own rigid form of order on the country.**

Here we give you some greater insight into what exists and why. As you read this chapter, there are a few things you should keep in mind:

**This is a dark future.** Pollution has wracked the global ecology, pushing the biosphere to the brink of total shut-down. Economic collapse has brought down whole continents. Social chaos has ruled the nation for thirty years as the federal and state governments bumbled along helplessly. America fragmented into thousands of squabbling factions, each trying to get a larger bit of a shrinking pie. Millions of poor and homeless now crowd the edges of grimy, decaying cities. The latest disaster, the Carbon Plague, has killed millions and Changed thousands of children, perhaps millions.

Out of this climate of fear, exhaustion and corruption has arisen the ISA.

**This is a high-tech world.** There are cybernetics, telecommunications, advanced microcomputers, bioware, and synthetic versions of anything that you could want. Technology is everywhere, in every household; even the poorest people have TVs (which are always on) and perhaps even a Netbox. Thinking machines smaller than pinheads, weapons that kill on their own and the ever present-buzz of data are part of the fabric of this age.

**It is a world divided, not by politics, but by power.** Or, perhaps it would be more accurate to say that Information and Money *are* Power and that Power *is* Politics in this new country. The new federal government and the Neo-American Corporations control the dataflow, which means they know where the money, the resources, and the truth lie. They use this data control and armed force to build a pyramid of lies and fear that leaves them at the top. Life is polarized between those who've agreed to provide security in exchange for freedom, those who've acquiesced to be their serfs, and those who still struggle to retain some vestige of individuality and justice outside of the system.

Hope you enjoy your stay here.

## 21ST CENTURY SLANG

Other street languages besides Genspeak have grown out of the fragmentation of the country. Here are a few of the terms that form the current street argot.

**AI:** Artificial Intelligence; a computer with full self awareness.

**Booster:** any member of a gang that affects cyberwear, leather clothing and random violence.

**Charf:** to throw up.

**Chilled:** to be cool; to be together.

**Chippin' In:** To cast your lot with a group. To connect with a machine.

**Chombatta (Choomba, Cho):** Neo-Afro American slang for friend, family member.

**CHOOH<sup>2</sup> ("Choo"):** Streetslang for alcohol, as used in vehicle power plants.

**Chromer:** 21st century heavy metal rock fan.

**Corpsicles:** CorpSec agents or troopers.

**Cybered Up:** to get as much cyberwear implanted as possible before you go over the Edge.

**Data (or V-) Term:** a streetcorner information machine, with a normal or V-screen, Net inputs, and keyboard (static grid or otherwise).

**Dead Guys/Zombie Girls:** adults, especially people who work for Corps or the ISA.

**Derezz:** disincorporate, disappear (in computer terms).

**Disk:** record, recording; a laser disk.

**'Dorphs:** Streetslang for synthetic endorphines, designer drugs that limit fatigue and produce a "rush" similar to a second wind.

**Flatline:** to kill. A dead person or thing.

**Genies:** Genius Gun rounds.

**Goboys:** friends.

**Go Kevlar:** to get the Carbon Plague.

**Handle:** a nickname, a working name you are known by. Tag.

**Hydro:** Streetslang for hydrogen fuel, used to power a sizable number of vehicles in the 2000s.

**Input:** girlfriend.

**Juve:** juvenile, teen or pre-teen child.

**Keyboard:** Streetslang for a computer interface with manual keys. Also a terminal.

**Netrun:** to interface with the Net and use it to hack into Dataforts.

**Output:** boyfriend.

**Polymer one-shot:** any cheap plastic pistol, usually in the 5 to 6mm range.

**Posergang:** any group whose members all affect a specific look, style or bodysculpt job.

**Ripperdoc:** surgeon specializing in implanting illegal cyberwear.

**Rockerboy/girl:** a musician or performer who uses his or her art to make political or social statements. Rockerboys are not the same as **rockstars**, who are usually "owned" by recording medicorps and are apolitical.

**Samurai:** a corporate assassin or mercenary, hired to protect corporation property or make strikes against corporate enemies.

**Slammit On:** to get violent; to attack someone without reason.

**The Street:** Any urban place that's not corp-owned, the Outside.

**Square:** turf, homeground.

**Solo:** old-time specialist cybersoldier or mercenary.

# TIMELINE FOR THE INCORPORATED STATES OF AMERICA

**WARNING: PLAYERS SHOULD NOT READ THIS TIMELINE.** It's time we let you the Referee in on how the Dark Future got that way. What follows are some of the events that led to this fascist state, but certain facts (delineated in bold letters) are NOT disseminated to the public. In general, the ISA government and the Neo-American corporations try to portray themselves in the history files as the saviors of America from social collapse and European corporate exploitation. And they control the information and education systems. Feel free to choose whatever you want from the following to give as background to your players or to reveal to them during the course of the campaign. If they buy their own copy and read it anyway, feel free to make up some new secrets; there are plenty in this world to go around. **NOTE: Adult Characters and NPCs will know more of the real scoop than the kids; they lived through it, after all.**

**1996:** The Collapse of the United States: Weakened by losses in the World Stock Crash of 1994, overwhelmed by unemployment, homelessness and corruption, many city and state governments collapse or go bankrupt. Thirteen high-ranking U.S. politicians, including the president and vice president, tragically die **or are killed in a variety of "incidents."** Beheaded, burdened by a staggering deficit and snarled in the machinations of its own bureaucracy, the U.S. government is totally ineffective. Many small businesses are swept away, as only megacorporations and multinationals are large enough to weather the troubles intact. Unemployment soars as the value of the U.S. dollar plummets.

The Nomad Riots: By the end of the year, one in four Americans are homeless. Hundreds of thousands riot for living space throughout the U.S., as nomad packs spring up on the West Coast and spread rapidly throughout the nation. Boostergangs begin to appear in urban areas. The Constitution is suspended, and martial law is established by the Secretary of Defense, Jonathan Seward.

**The European Economic Community (EEC) provides a stable home for multinational corporations who use the Collapse as an opportunity to move into Third World countries as well as establish puppet offices in the floundering U.S.**

**1997:** Mideast Meltdown: Tensions in the Middle East escalate into a nuclear exchange. Iran, Iraq, Libya, Chad and the United Arab Emirates are reduced to radioactive slag. The world oil supply drops by half.

Amid the domestic chaos, Wyoming becomes a socialist state, and Hawaii is declared a military preserve.

The European Space Agency (ESA) manages to establish a Tycho/Luna colony.

**1998:** The Drought of '98 reduces most of the Midwest to parched grasslands. **Between agribusiness corps and drought, the family farm all but disappears. Corporations buy up North Dakota land in the disaster's wake.** A 10.5 earthquake shatters Los Angeles, as the ocean inundates 35% of the city. An estimated 65,000 are killed. Neo-Luddites are re-established in western Kentucky. Over the next ten years, the "Luds" are responsible for bombings of airports, factories, freeways and mass transit terminals.

The Hermes spaceplane is released by the ESA.

**1999:** Federal Weapons Statute established allowing personal firearms widespread distribution. Many people arm themselves in the face of chaos and social breakdown, but this gunslinger attitude only contributes to the decline. Texas declares its independence from the U.S.

Millennium cults begin to appear, predicting an apocalypse on Jan. 1, 2000. Thousands migrate to isolated communes and temples to "await the end."

The Tycho colony massdriver is constructed to provide raw materials for orbital platforms.

**2000:** Millennium cults run amok on Jan. 1st in an orgy of suicide and violence, most destroy themselves.

Massive firestorms, collectively called "the Brushfire", rage over the Northwestern U.S., destroying millions of acres of farm and grassland.

The Wasting Plague hits U.S. and Europe, killing hundreds of thousands. Legal measures are instituted that severely restrict the rights of those with infectious diseases.

The Senate is forced to recognize Texas as a "Free State." Alaska soon becomes a Free State as well.

Construction of the Crystal Palace space station is begun in low orbit.

**2001:** The framework of the Global Computer Net is firmly in place with construction of the WorldSat network. Computer systems around the world are linked via a vast telecommunications grid.



Domestically, martial law continues. The U.S. legal process is streamlined to handle the number of arrests currently being sent through the system.

**2002:**

**The Food Crash:** T mutated plant virus wipes out Canadian and Soviet crops. U.S. agribusiness crops survive due to new biological counteragent. **U.S.S.R. accuses U.S.**

**of biological warfare.**

California joins Alaska and Texas, becoming a Free State. The Copernicus/Luna colony is established by the U.S.

**2003:**

**The Second Central American Conflict: (the first being in 1992):** The U.S. invades Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela. The war is a disaster that costs thousands of American lives. **It is later revealed to have been largely engineered by the National Security Council and the CIA.** During the conflict, some soldiers are equipped with experimental cyberware to enhance their combat effectiveness.

Nevada becomes a Free State and the state of New Jersey goes bankrupt as domestic unrest continues.

**2004:**

**The First Corporate War:** Twelve multinational corporations, including European Business Systems & Orbital Air, battle for control of Trans-World Air.

**Armed raids, computer sabotage, and terrorist tactics characterize the conflict.**

The CIA and NSA are purged after being linked to a series of independent and questionable activities, including the 2nd CAW. Both organizations are gutted. The military then helps re-establish some semblance of federal control in the United States. The State of Emergency continues.

The first cloned tissue is grown in vitro. Microsutures and sterilizer fields become some of the first of a wave of high-tech medical breakthroughs.

**2005:**

The Cybermodem invented. Direct neural interface with computers becomes possible. **EBM Solos attack the Tokyo office of Kenjiri Technologies, killing eighteen. End of the First Corp War.**

**Operation Big Stick:** U.S. military destroys the Mantonga Corp as an example to others.

The state of Connecticut goes bankrupt.

**2006:**

Cybernetic implants come into common usage by First World elite military units. **Corporations start to follow suit with their in-house security forces.**

The base plan for workshacks is developed by Mitsubishi/Korydanshu. Low Orbit colonization begins in earnest.

**2007:**

**The Second Corporate War:** A number of firms, including Petrochem, dispute control of oil fields in the South China Sea. **Some governments actively support both sides in the conflict.**

The state of North Dakota is incorporated by a consortium of agribusinesses **after a program of buyouts, tax leveraging and outright graft. While supposedly a democratic process, the government is really a consortium of corporations which runs itself like an executive board.** It is to become the pattern of development for many states over the next twenty years.

**2008:**

**The First Orbital War:** U.S. assault on Soviet weapons platform MIR XIII, and the Eurospace agency intervenes. An orbital war breaks out between the "Euros" and the "Yanks", until the ESA Tycho colony massdriver drops a rock on Colorado Springs. An uneasy peace is reached.

First U.S. elections since martial law declared in Aug. 1996. **The U.S. civilian government undergoes "reorganization."** State governments demand autonomy almost to the point of balkanization as federal power wanes. Street violence, rampant poverty and extreme income stratification characterize the post-Collapse society. The country will teeter at the edge of anarchy for the next ten years.

**2009:**

**Corporations begin to methodically and ruthlessly eradicate mob rule in many U.S. cities. Corporate security forces gain greater autonomy of action as state forces prove ineffectual.**

**Abortive takeover attempt by U.S. "terrorist group" of Crystal Palace construction.** The ESA discovers that it is a **Defense Intelligence Agency plot** and drops a twelve ton rock off of Washington as a warning.

**2010:**

The Second Central American Conflict ends. Thousands of disillusioned and hardwired veterans come home to a country racked by violence and economic upheaval. Food riots in Denver kill 52. **Corporate consolidation of power continues. Network 54 now controls 62% of all media broadcasting in the U.S.**

The ESA begins work on the O'Neill One orbital colony.

**2011:**

Despite social and fiscal chaos, technology is made continually more accessible to the public. Cybernetics and direct neural machine interfacing become common



fashion and style elements of American culture. Many people voluntarily have portions of their bodies replaced with cybernetic equivalents and enhancements. Net traffic continues to grow as direct neural processors and cybermodems become more common.

The Crystal Palace is completed, and the ESA now has a permanent hold in the high orbital zone. Construction of L-3 and L-4 colonies begins as an ESA/Soviet mission reaches Mars.

**2012:** A mysterious plague kills more than 1,700 in Chicago. The city is quarantined and blockaded for an indefinite period.

Northern California (NorCal) separates from Southern California and forms its own state. **Rockerboy Johnny Silverhand's concert riot in Night City, NorCal, kills 18 and wounds 51 in an assault on the Arasaka Complex. Programmer Alt Cunningham's mind is transferred into the Net by her own creation, the Soullkiller Program.**

First viable nanotech developed by both Euro and Japanese corps.

**2013:** The Netwatch cyberspace police organization established by joint U.S./Eurotheatre treaty to monitor "criminal" activity in the Net. First Net patrols are sent out to watch for "cyberspace crime."

The first true artificial intelligence is developed at Microtech's Sunnyvale, NorCal, facility.

**2014:**

The Ihara-Grubb transformation algorithms redesign the Net into a virtual reality matrix. User traffic explodes as Net access becomes easier and more entertaining.

The "Metal Wars" begin in Night City as gangs battle for turf. Other cities also face hordes of well armed, cyber-enhanced thugs establishing urban territories. Local attempts at control vary in effectiveness. **Cybersoldiers are hired by corporations and others to bolster their use of force as a standard tool of business.**

**The Cyberpunk Movement:** Simultaneously, a counter-movement starts, made up of a coalition of ex-cybersoldiers, Net operators, media performers, and Nomads, all dedicated to fighting the growing corporate control of money, material and, most importantly, information. They call themselves *Cyberpunks*.

Utah becomes a Free State.

**2015:**

The presence of hundreds of out-of-work cybersoldiers leads to the rise of international cyber-mercenaries. Lithuania hires cyber-mercs to repel invasions by Latvian nationals.

The first basic nanotech is marketed commercially.

**2016:**

**The Third Corporate War is fought entirely in the Net, as rival corps attack each other's Datafortresses. Hundreds of bystanders are killed by collateral damage.**

The O'Neill One Orbital Colony is completed.

**2017:**

The U.S. economy gradually stabilizes with strategically placed (and minimal) federal intervention.

**The Cyberpunk movement is in full swing, but corporate power continues to grow. Anarchistic and paranoid by nature, the Cyberpunks are too disorganized to keep the multinationals from acting with total authority across the face of the world. State governments try to exert more local control over corporate activities, but with little success. Many are bought out. Most of the public is apathetic or, due to corp propaganda, view the Cyberpunks as dangerous criminals.**

**The first self-aware human clone is created, but dies after a few weeks.**

**2018:**

Brushfire wars erupt in Eastern Europe. The EEC supports some factions while trying to keep the wars from spreading. Eventually, they co-opt many Central European corporations and retool them for the space industry.

**President Blair begins to flex federal power again, starting with a committee to monitor corporate activity. Blair falls ill and dies later this year and VP Elizabeth Kress is sworn in. She continues to pursue Blair's policies.**

Unmanned ESA mission is launched to Jupiter as the L-4 orbital colony is completed.

**2019:**

**Cyberpunk Johnny Silverhand is almost killed in a Biotechnica assassination. Seven months later, he comes out of hiding and releases Clone Wars.**

EBM office at Balsam, N.C. has dispute with head office in Europe. The first serious friction between the multinationals and their U.S. offices begins. Many protest that they are supposedly being sacrificed in favor of the EEC's development of space. Their concerns get no response.

**President Kress consolidates a faction in the Senate to provide a permanent watch committee limiting corporate powers and investigating abuses.**

The Orbital colony at L-5 revolts. In response, the ESA places the L-4 colony under martial law. The NASA Mars mission arrives in Mars orbit.

**2020:**

Agribusiness concerns incorporate South Dakota, following the plan set in North Dakota.

**Rache Bartmoss, Cyberpunk Netrunner, is killed, but soon afterwards his posthumous memoirs, Rache Bartmoss' Guide to the Net, are released. They reveal his state of semi-suspended animation.**

Pro-Corporate Republican Gerald Hastings elected to presidency after a massive, corporate-backed media cam-

paign against incumbent Kress. The Pro-Corporate movement gains momentum. **The Senate corporate watch committee is disbanded.**

The second ESA/Sov Mars mission arrives at its destination.

**2021:**

The Council for Economic Prosperity is created in September by the executive branch as an advisory group. David Whindam of Biotechnica is Chairman, and initial membership consists of twenty corporate representatives. **The CEP first oversees the corporate purchase of Connecticut.** Corporations and the military alike work on rebuilding the state. The Neo-Progressive American Citizens' Party forms, throwing the corporate hat into the political arena.

**Second American Revolution:** Starting with the domestic offices of Euro Business Machines, American offices nationalize themselves, declaring themselves independent of their European parent corps. Hastings has the military support their bid for autonomy, and an economic war with the EEC ensues. Europe boycotts the U.S. and the U.S. strengthens its links to Japan and the Pacific Rim. **A propaganda war erupts between the two and the U.S. erects an "electronic curtain", banning unauthorized transmissions from EEC satellites and other sources. USAF sat-killers establish control of U.S. orbital space.**

After several Euro Netrunners attempt to crash the U.S. Netgrid, it is declared a national resource, partially isolated from the global network, and placed under martial law. Euro-Netwatch runners are banned and the U.S.-based AIM Overwatch is installed. **The Neo-American Corporations pool their reduced security forces and form the Corporate Security Service (CorpSec), which now works with all the local corps as well as the federal government.**

Agribusiness concerns incorporate Montana.

Now in competition with the ESA, U.S. space efforts are accelerated. NASA's Chryse Base is completed on Mars.

**2022:**

The Corporate Rebuilding of America gets underway. Carried with the media tide, twenty-three states elect corporate party governors, as well as many senators to Congress. Federal power backs business as they move to purchase and rebuild the countryside. Corporate buyouts of urban combat zones begin, with teams moving in to bulldoze and rebuild. **The current residents are forcibly displaced, which often results in firefights.**

Agribusiness concerns incorporate Nebraska. Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio are reformed as cooperative incorporated states, **reaching a compromise which most remaining independents view as nothing short of selling out.**

Automated factories are built in Mars orbit. O'Neill Two declares independence resulting in the "O'Neill War." ESA/Sov Isidis Base completed.

**2023:**

Gerald Hastings, in an unprecedented party shift, is selected as the Neo-Progressive American Citizens' Party candidate. Dave Whindam is chosen for his running mate.

Hastings wins the Presidential election, **burying the opposition beneath a massive tidal wave of media hype, advertising blitz tactics, and infomercial tainment spots. Accusations of vote fraud fill the underground press.**

Hastings repeals the Federal Weapons Statue and enacts the Gun Bounty. The government and corps offer cash rewards to anyone turning in illegal weapons (most weapons are now declared illegal). As police and CorpSec patrols grow in number and visibility, the general public cooperates with disarmament. **Cyberpunks, Nomads and other fringe elements continue to hold out, but pressure begins to drive them underground.** Overall employment increases, **if at minimal wage levels. New Jersey is purchased by the CEP and incorporated.** The Bureau of Relocation and Housing Security Services is formed from its CEP nucleus to aid in the "handling" of indigents and squatters. **Their tactics quickly turn draconian as they round up whole neighborhoods and haul them off for "re-education."**

NASA begins regular Mars flights as a manned NASA Jupiter probe, the DSS *Pathfinder*, leaves for the outer solar system.

**2024:**

In January, Hastings is sworn in for his second term. **After a failed assassination attempt at the ceremony, CorpSec and the FBI round up several prominent politicians, activists, and CEOs. The underground press terms them "political prisoners."**

In March, Hastings dies when the presidential aerodyne is hit with a missile. VP Dave Whindam is sworn in as president. **More political arrests by both the police and CorpSec are made in the wake of the assassination. A Federal Law Enforcement Division (LEDiv) investigation into the assassination is terminated at Whindam's order.** Whindam establishes the CEP as an executive department with full powers. **Corporate/federal interests are cemented. Laws allowing greater corporate freedom of action as well as greater control of employees' lives start passing Congress. Membership in a Neo-Progressive political party becomes a "recommended" prerequisite for many jobs.**

As the CEP machine gathers momentum, **more states fall into incorporated status. Corporations gain more and more control over their employees' lives, and supply housing, special schools for the children, and off-work activities, all carefully segregated by job and status classifications.** Public opinion supports these moves as they promise employment and apparent economic security. In September, Whindam and the new Congress rename the U.S. the Incorporated States of America, and the ISA is born.

Janice Grubb begins to experiment with the Virtuality Net interface. Net ICON transmitters the size of matchbooks are developed as Raven Microcyb develops new Net-view glasses.

**2025:**

The new federal government builds a popular power base **with the CEP wielding executive power right alongside the president.** BuReloc and CorpSec activities escalate as "vocational training camps" are established across the country and thousands of the unemployed or homeless are shipped into them, **never to leave. LEDiv begins an investigation into BuReloc methods.**

In May, LEDiv suffers a major purge as most of its top officials are linked to "drug-related corruption" **and many are "shot while resisting arrest."** The CEP gives many LEDiv duties to CorpSec, which is then made part of the Dept. of Justice. **The BuReloc investigations are terminated.** Corporate police now patrol CorpZones instead of standard cops.

**The FoxRun Incident occurs on Dec. 19th: An aerodyne carrying a corporate intrusion team crashes in Night City. It is later believed by some to be the source of the nanotech virus known as the Carbon Plague.**

The *Pathfinder* arrives in Jupiter space in August as the ESA places three deep space explorer craft into service.

Langley Microsystems develops static grid. V-trodes are first marketed.

**2026:**

In January, a pathological disease tentatively named "Genetic Metabolic Disruption Syndrome" starts spreading. Victims are left as half-dissolved mounds of flesh and a carbon compound called Hexite. By February, cases show up in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, El Paso, Richmond, and New York City. GMDS (nicknamed the Carbon Plague) is declared a threat to national security, and the CDC is brought in. Over the next month the disease moves across the country and into Canada and Mexico. Fatalities are numbered in the thousands. The National Guard is mobilized.

In a panic, most of the world stops travel to and from the ISA, but by May, cases appear in Western Europe, Japan, and Central America. The orbital colonies cut off all traffic to and from Earth. This severely strains the EEC's economy as they have leveraged heavily on orbital development. Denial of orbital resources combined with an impending epidemic pushes the EEC to the edge of their own Collapse. **ISA corps and agencies work to surreptitiously tip them over that edge.**

It is noted that some children seem to have survived activation of the Carbon Plague. After time, some seem to demonstrate unusual and inhuman abilities. ISA authorities start having these children "detained for medical observation." **Many appear to die while under the ISA's care.**

By June, martial law is declared by the ISA. Whindam assures that freedoms will be restored as soon as the infection



has been contained. California (both North and South) and Nevada are brought back under federal jurisdiction. Texas declares itself an independent republic, and quickly proposes an alliance with the ISA which halts a military attempt at forcible reintegration. Alaska resists less successfully as Petrochem and other corporations increase their presence in the state.

In August, the Carbon Plague is discovered to be nanotech-based. The CDC determines that the contagion rate is almost certain, but that the gestation period is indeterminate. Computer models project that the nanites might be found in some quantity everywhere on Earth. The orbital colonies are soon reporting plague cases, but maintain their quarantine.

The ISA passes the Emergency Powers Act in September, allowing the president (and thus the CEP) full authority to send military forces wherever necessary without Congressional approval. The CDC declares plague survivors to be disease carriers and threats to the national health. A campaign of persecution begins against these "CyberEvolved" children as media propaganda is manufactured, state bounties are posted, and police actions are mobilized. Both corporate and government groups start actively hunting the kids: Some for research, others for containment and elimination.

The Domestic Security Agency discovers the existence of the Eden Cabal, a group of former Cyberpunks

who are sheltering CyberEvolved children and training them in anti-ISA tactics. Active elimination of this organization is begun. Johnny Silverhand is reportedly killed by an ISA hitteam while preparing his next album called *Tomorrow's Children*.

**2027:** Plague panic slowly stabilizes along with the fatality rate, but corporate and federal groups continue to use the situation to exert more and more control. A state of paranoia is maintained that allows the authorities to rationalize any action "in the interest of public health." The State of Emergency is maintained. Efforts to round up potential plague carriers are intensified.

The Carbon Plague has killed about 5% of the global adult population by this time. It is estimated that between 5% and 20% of the juvenile population of the Incorporated States has been Evolved.

Eden Cabal activities escalate as the number of CyberEvolved children grows. A low-key civil war begins with the Guerrillas and CyberEvolved on one side and the ISA authorities on the other. After several ISA-backed attempts on his life, Solo Morgan Blackhand kills CorpSec's director and assorted staff in Washington, D.C., then disappears.

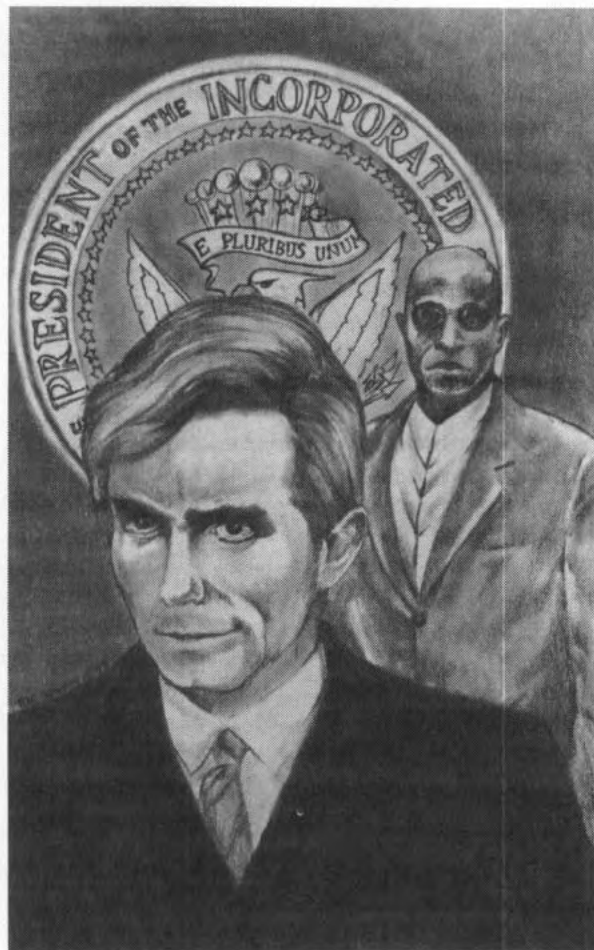
JUNE, 2027: The Present

# THE ISA

The ISA, as it says in all the screamsheets, recognizes the partnership between business and government while still encouraging community participation and control, thus combining the best of corporate culture and democracy. It represents a change from the older administrations which have driven the U.S. into Third World Nation status. The ISA is the beginning of a New America, with American corporations leading the way.

Which is all a load of drek: Resource distribution is far from even, and the democratic elements have been reduced to media-blitz campaigns to brainwashed masses, followed by imaginary counts of wired-in votes. Even the name, the *Incorporated States of America*, isn't really accurate: The federal government isn't a corporate structure, per se. In fact, the system's arrangement is basically what it's been since 2000, which itself was simply a streamlined version of the government of the twentieth century. The main difference is a shift in the concentration of control into the Executive branch. The Senate is all that remains of the Legislative branch, with two out of every three State Representatives corporate-sponsored. The Supreme Court has been stacked by previous pro-corporate administrations. Entire state senates are literally owned by business conglomerates since the bankrupt state governments have been bought out and "incorporated." Not a pretty picture.

While the ISA still gives lip service to democratic procedures and structures, the Neo-American corporations have formed an alliance that is codified and empowered in the Council of Economic Prosperity. Once an "advisory board", the CEP has expanded its influence rapidly over the last six years. It now acts as both a forum and a political power bloc, granting influence and prestige to the corporations at a level that was never attainable before. The twenty-six primary members are elected from the major corporations in the ISA, including Militech, Petrochem, EBM America and Arasaka, but it has literally dozens of subcommittees involved in various programs as well. While officially only an executive council, this body has become THE single most powerful element in the ISA next to the president himself. And since President Whindam and the CEP have yet to conflict on anything, the issue is probably moot. The CEP acts with the president's will and has effectively vetoed bills from Congress, issued "executive mandates" which equate to laws, and installed its own organizations



within the governmental structure (CorpSec and BuReloc being notable examples). Another source of corporate power is the Neo-Progressive corporate political parties which most people have to join before they can get work.

All this, combined with the pervasive media and a president that is from their ranks, has allowed these new American companies to implement a reign of corporate feudalism such as the world has never seen before.

The presidency has regained tremendous power under recent administrations. In particular, domestic control has grown radically with the increase in the executive bureaucracy and the CEP. The president's role as chief of the Armed Forces has been instrumental during the formation of the ISA as well, as the Army has been the tool of many an executive decision. And the Emergency Powers Act of 2026 (in response to the Carbon Plague) allows the president to send the military wherever he deems necessary, without any Congressional approval. The Constitution hasn't just been trodden on; it has been bulldozed under.

The current president, David Whindam, was Chairman of the CEP for two years before assuming office. Before that, he was a junior V.P. at No Ahme Caldwell after having left Biotechnica. Needless to say, his interests and goals parallel those of the CEP almost exactly. He is intelligent, shrewd, ruthless, and an expert propagandist. His staff shares and maintains his vision of placing America in the hands of the people who truly understand power: the corporates. He has no intention of allowing the election coming in '28 to jeopardize his position, and will use the State of Emergency engendered by the Carbon Plague to postpone any such event until his power is totally secure.

All this places the corporations in a unique position. They now have legal leave to restrict the rights of their employees to the point of oppression, dictating political party membership, lifestyles and even leisure activities. The fact that the corps have taken this direction might seem somewhat surprising; that kind of control normally places a lot of responsibility and cost on the corps' shoulders as well. But post-Collapse society is something of a blank slate, with little in the way of unions, environmental protection agencies, or consumer protection groups to limit industry's interests. So they've chosen to mold this emerging society, both to guarantee that these things never come back, but also to engineer a closed system where the corps provide *everything* America wants, and can dictate what those wants are. Their control of the federal government means that they can avoid a lot of the burdens of such power, and even get federal funding along the way.

So what does all this mean to America? It means that the real power now resides with the Presidency and the CEP which, in turn, work for the Neo-American corporations. The government is no longer the monitor of the corps; now it's their partner. If they need something done, it gets done, perhaps with the public's tax dollars paying for it. Atrocities can be explained away, covered up, or, if necessary, made legal. Government-supported business projects scour the land for resources with no concern for the environment. Gun controls and draconian laws are stripping the people of their ability to fight back while ubiquitous corporate management of their lives is draining their will to do so. The CEP has a good chunk of the public eating out of their hands, either from cultural indoctrination or the need for a paycheck. BuReloc can move through a district and cull out any people it feels are disruptive, falsifying data as needed. CorpSec slithers like a snake through the corporate city sectors, quietly demanding obedience, or it stands like a falcon on the CEP's shoulder, ready to pounce on any target.

## THE NEW AMERICA

So what is this incorporated nation like? Well, compared to the conflict and destruction of the previous thirty years, it looks surprisingly good. Corporate living areas now stretch across the cities, turning them into the equivalent of giant conapt/shopping malls. Older, run-down urban sectors are being bought up, bulldozed and rebuilt with corporate and federal sponsorship. The roving Boostergangs and Nomad packs of the previous decades are being rounded up or eliminated. Street violence is waning as police presence grows by twenty-fold. New factories are springing up and jobs are being created. Goods and technology seem to be flowing out to the public in an unprecedented stream as the cycle of consumerism is once more established. True, many sacrifices have been required of the public to allow the corporations to pursue this reconstruction of the nation. In return, the corps, with the help of the government, have seen to the needs of the people, providing housing and urban zones in which employees may enjoy the fruits of twenty-first century industry, safe from the violence which seems still to dominate the outer sectors. Soon these will be "revitalized" as well, swept clean of the anarchists and terrorists who continue to undermine the current March of Progress. Stability and prosperity seem to be just around the corner.

Or are they? Oh, the new factories and mallplexes are real enough; there are more jobs, and the average person *is* safer from random violence than before, but none of this is as benevolent as it appears. The New America is split between the new corporate world (the CorpZones) and the tattered remnants of the free society that fell during the Collapse (the Outside). The CorpZones are like a slice of Nazi Germany: orderly, quiet, paranoid and oppressive, living under the iron fist of CorpSec. The Outside is like a high-tech urban Depression scene, full of desperation, black market squalor and potential violence.

## The CorpZones

They're in every city, rising like gleaming plastic fungi from the corpse of the urban landscape. They're the new home for America. They're the **CorpZones**: sprawling neighborhoods and arcology-like structures built over the bones of the old cities and often over the bodies of the previous residents. The public face of the Neo-American corporations is unified, and they now cooperate to provide for their workers, sharing the costs of building and maintaining these residential/commercial areas. Since they are sponsored by corporate consortiums, CorpZones can house employees of many local companies, all bundled together

under the protective umbrella of corporate security. The 'Zones look clean and livable, but they're structured to separate the employees into distinct "classes," limit communication, and allow active monitoring and control of the everyday life of their occupants. Children are indoctrinated in company-run schools and youth programs, while the parents slowly learn to think of them as corporate property, not their own flesh and blood. It all harkens back to the "company towns" of the last century, just with a more sophisticated facade.

### Life in the CorpZones

Your job determines how you live here. Accommodations vary from spartan dormitories for single men and women, to modest apartments for lower income families, to elaborate condo cubes for the corporate climbers. Lower class workers are assigned to dormitory-style arrangements with other workers in the same job class. Technical workers and middle managers are given better, if basic, living cubes about the size of small studio apartments. Condominiums are a privilege of the Executive class, with the size and luxury level being a convenient measure of your status within the corporate structure. Employees with families are given larger space allotments based on the number of offspring. The rent and utilities are automatically subtracted from an employee's wages before his paychit is downloaded. While usually simple and utilitarian, these accommodations are often the best these people have seen in years, and represent a real step up in their lifestyles.

At a cost. Since they are corporate-built and supplied, the CorpZones live under corporate law, enforced by CorpSec or other private police forces. Security can enter any home for searches or investigations. (Hey, it's all *their* property, right?) Lack of cooperation can result in termination of your job and arrest for breach of your employment contract (see "Law and Order" below). Monitoring of phone and computer transmissions as well as internal surveillance are all part of CorpSec's efforts to ensure the "tranquility" of CorpZone life. Even in the Executive apartments, you can't be truly sure what might be behind your bathroom mirror or attached to your phone line. This is supplemented by a subtle mindset that has CorpZone neighbors even watching each other for signs of "unpatriotic" behavior; unpatriotic being anything that threatens the integrity of the CorpZone.

Of course, the upper levels of the Executive class do live in incredible luxury, literally above the crowds in their penthouses and upper-level condominiums. They have full access to company resources, with almost every convenience and comfort 21st century technology can supply. Like Information Age lords, they control the lives of their employees and reap the products of their labor. But each exec also has to watch his back to ensure his position as well; upper-level infighting can still be vicious. Many execs even have their

own bodyguards, not trusting CorpSec to have their best interests at heart. Even here, security is often an illusion.

Surrounding the CorpZones, at the edge of the cities, are the factories. While microfactories now provide many smaller custom-made consumer items right at the point of purchase, large products and raw materials are still processed in huge production plants. Since the ISA has cut itself off from almost half of the world's economy (Europe and Africa), domestic production has had to fill in a lot of gaps. This pleases the Neo-American Corps no end, and they've taken every opportunity to build fast and cheap factories to meet the supposed demand. But because they were built to solve short-term problems, these plants are immensely inefficient, pollute terribly, and waste valuable resources. Despite automation and computerization, conditions in these facilities are can be very dangerous as well; almost all safeguards were minimized in the supposed rush to get the plants up and running. Of course, this fact isn't advertised, and applicants for jobs are abundant. Which allows the corps to continue to see the workers as simple parts in the machine: expendable and easy to replace.

While the jobs may be more plentiful, most wages are relatively low: Another supposed necessity to allow the rebuilding process. A non-technical worker's pay will support the average person at just above poverty level, meaning that both spouses have to work in most families just to stay afloat. The corps use this to encourage them to live in corporate housing, send their kids to corporate schools, and shop at corporate stores, since they get discounts and credit there. This obviously demonstrates the company's affection for its employees and willingness to support them—along with driving outside competitors out

### THE COUNTRYSIDE

These essays focus on the urban areas of the ISA, these being the most populous and most active, but there are still large tracts of countryside between the cities. What's happening there?

Well, the small town just about died off during the Collapse as plague and famine rocked the country. For a time, the rural landscape seemed the preserve of the Nomad bands, large pseudo-families of displaced people roving the countryside in caravans, looking for temporary work and supplies. Sometimes they used guns and knives to get them. But the corporations have been continually buying up these devalued tracts, turning them into fenced-off agribusiness farms and mining reserves. BuReloc has waged a full-scale war against the Nomads as well, destroying outright those that it cannot contain in camps. There *are* still places out there untouched by the hand of the CEP—but not many.



of business. The company also supplements pay with "loyalty bonuses", these being pay-offs to those workers who demonstrate the most rigorous attention to company policy and interests. Pay rates naturally increase as your status in the company rises, but not until you reach the lower Executive levels does it start to approximate even the middle class standard of living of the last century.

Life in the corp sectors is a well orchestrated routine of overwork, communal obligations and brain-draining media. While safe from most of the violence of the streets, the residents face a paranoid culture where each is subtly competing against the others for approval and privileges from the parent corporations. Work weeks are long, usually six ten-hour days, and downtime is often occupied with 'Zone community activities. Since membership in a Neo-Progressive Political Party (and allowing a proxy vote) is a prerequisite for corp employment, there is always a lot of Party work to do too. ("The Neo-Progressives: Good for Business and America!")

Cable service is supplied to every conapt for free, with 500 channels worth of corporate pap and subliminals available at the touch of a remote. This guarantees that the public sees what the ISA wants them to see, rather than trying to set up their own satellite dishes (which are restricted).

Outside of the home, ubiquitous Mallplexes provide

glittering islands of plastic-coated consumerism amid the tightly patrolled neighborhoods, beckoning kids and adults alike to participate in the glorious process of capitalism. A myriad of goods are available to suck up whatever disposable income a family may have.

Corporate kids go to corporate schools, which offer a fairly advanced curriculum—along with heavy doses of corp cultural ideals and regimentation. The companies encourage parents to leave their children in corporate care, where they're groomed to take their parents' places as cogs in the Machine. Youth programs and homework try to eat up most of the kids' free time ("*Idle minds and hands are the Devil's playground . . .*"), but if they can avoid the siren calls of the

Tube and the Mall, they get the chance to do their yogang gigs. In fact, dodging the class monitors and 'Zone security has been the early training of many a CyberRevolutionary.

Still, many will say that no matter how dull or restrictive CorpZone life might be, it's better than what they had in the chaos of the Collapse. But they've bought into a new kind of feudalism, with the corporate elite perpetuating their own power and passing it on to their kin, while the working masses stay that way. Sometimes the cost of security can be everything that makes life worth living.

## The Outside

Outside the CorpZones, there are large urban areas that are still recovering from the Collapse. The best might be neighborhoods that have been just successful enough to survive on local business and sentimentality. The worst consist of blasted blocks of buildings, run down sleep-coffin banks and rat-ridden shanty towns too valueless to warrant corporate attention. The CorpZoners refer to these areas collectively as the **Outside**. Here are those who have not been fully integrated into the new plan for America: the independents, the SIN-less, the unemployed and the dispossessed. With no one to count on but each other, they've learned to band together, trying to build lives in the shadows of the corps—at least until the authorities come to get them.

As in the CorpZones, the standard of living Outside varies tremendously, ranging from median to abject poverty. There is far less stability than in the 'Zones; life here is full of risk.

Most people do such menial jobs for the corps that they don't rate corporate housing, while others have refused it. The rest get by with odd jobs, small, unobtrusive businesses, and favors among themselves. Some businesses are run by the gangs, and you've often got to be ready to cut deals to get what you need. Whom you know here can be as important as how much money you have. Barter is as



common a form of exchange as money, because it can't be traced, and these people know that the Machine is still watching them. Any deal might turn into a CorpSec trap, and everyone dodges into the shadows as the roaming police AVs patrol overhead. Some heavy guns and cyberware are still around, and there might even be the occasional gunfight, but it's all kept well hidden. Any sign of illegal arms would give CorpSec an excuse for hammering down on an entire sector—hard.

The Outside is the natural site for CyberRevolutionary operations. This is where many Edgerunners went to ground in the last decade, and it's the easiest place to find locales safe from corp monitors. Unfortunately, the authorities have clued into this, so they've stepped up operations in the Outside sectors with Plague-carrier hunts and anti-Revolutionary strikes. And they can get away with even more here in the "lawless Outside" than they do in the CorpZones.

Despite all this, many Outsider communities are close knit, with resources shared where possible, and a united front given to the Corpscicles when they come sniffing around. This Us-against-Them mentality has given the Outside what little cohesiveness it has, and many of the CyberEvolved have sought refuge here for just that reason. It's a grim life, but at least they can call themselves free ... as long as they don't say it too loudly.

### Under the Shadow of BuReloc

The Bureau of Relocation is a sword constantly hanging over the heads of the Outsiders. Eventually, some corp will take an interest in a Outside sector, selecting it for "revitalization." And that's when the armored BuReloc trucks move in, rounding up the residents and hauling them off to one of their "re-education" camps. The mediacorps depict all of this as a humane, important procedure, designed to help these people who have chosen not to help themselves. The broadcasts are backed by subliminal comparisons of the indigents to rats, roaches and other types of urban vermin. After all, every proper fascist state needs its scapegoats ...

BuReloc has concentration camps scattered throughout the Incorporated States. Although they're called "re-education and relocation areas", their security's painfully tight. In the name of safety, all detainees' weapons are confiscated and cyber-enhancements disabled. Barbed wire and watchtowers are emplaced "to protect the detainees against roving bands of marauders" which, in fact, have been mostly wiped out. Each detainee is given a subcutaneous transmitter called a Ward which allows the camp security to locate him within a 25-kilometer radius. Since all inmates in the camps are now considered wards of the state, removal of

the device is considered a felony, not to mention being very painful and possibly lethal. Prisoners are periodically organized into labor parties which are sent out to work on local corporate projects as "vocational training exercises." Any attempt to leave the work area might result in a "work-related death" via a guard's rifle round.

The camp administrators maintain order in another novel fashion: the Relaxation Suites. These simple booths use 'trode sets which directly affect the pleasure centers. The ensuing pleasure buzz can make sex feel like a bad dream. Inmates earn time in the booths for good behavior and hard work, anything from five minutes to an hour at a session. At the end of each session a sleep suggestion is encoded into the stimulation and the inmate passes out. They can then be carried back to their barracks without resistance. This system works surprisingly well, and many inmates have been psychologically addicted to the point that they no longer wish to leave the camps.

Even these measures could not quell the panic as the Carbon Plague ran through the detainees' ranks. Mass killings and other brutal measures were instigated by BuReloc, and the military was called into several camps that threatened to be overrun by the prisoners. Only now are things settling down again. But the deaths have not been forgotten, and a new air of anger and fear pervades the camps as this pressure cooker continues to simmer.

### Law and Order

CorpSec is the law on corporate property, which is where forty percent of the population now lives. They patrol the CorpZones twenty-four hours a day to guarantee the residents' safety, but also to ensure compliance with corporate guidelines. They can go into any building, home, or office and search or question as they see fit. No one who signed their contract is immune—except the execs giving the orders, of course. CorpSec is far more concerned with security than justice. Of course, it's made very clear that the corporation's security comes before that of its employees'. CorpSec arrests are still be tried through the regular courts, but as part of the Department of Justice, CorpSec has considerable influence on the outcome of the trials. And it's amazing just how many criminals are shot while fleeing the scene of a crime ...

Local police forces are still holding the line against everyday crime, but much of the population is now working and living on corporate property, out of their jurisdiction. This leaves them often patrolling Outside, not the best of beats. The new gun laws have cleared the streets of a lot of heavy

hardware, but danger is still out there, and cops are not well loved by Outsiders. Funding *has* increased as federal programs add to the local budgets, but that comes with a load of federal guidelines, some of which have become positively savage. Local police often find themselves escorting BuReloc and CorpSec operations, something that even the most hardened street veteran finds tough to stomach. Most cops are still trying to uphold the law and see to justice. Unfortunately these days, those two things seem to be moving in different directions.

The court system has remained largely unchanged from the harsh system instituted in 2000 during martial law. Crimes have been broken down into five "Priority" levels, with Five being the least serious and Priority One being crimes which generally *require* the death penalty. If you are accused of a serious crime, your rights are considered less important than resolving the case quickly and efficiently. Jury trials are a thing of the past; all cases are held before one or more judges (human or AI). If you are lucky and can afford it, you may even be able to get an attorney. Sentences are harsh and appeals few. If you've earned the spite of a corporation, they'll make sure that you get a judge they control. And if you're CyberEvolved, don't even count on seeing a trial. In other words, justice isn't very just anymore.

If all else fails, the government can always call in the military. This is something the CyberRevolution wants to avoid at all costs; the ISA military has become one of the best equipped and trained forces in the world. They aren't sent in to capture either, being willing to level whole city blocks to get a single sniper. Fortunately, Whindam is hesitant to use them as well, preferring to beef up DSA, CorpSec and BuReloc hardware to the point of making them paramilitary forces in their own right. The CEP and the president have more control over these organizations and would rather keep the military establishment in the dark with regards to many of their activities.

### The Gun Bounty

This ordinance was designed to clear the streets of the heavy weapons which had proliferated in the private sector since the 1990s. By the 2010s, even grenade and rocket launchers could be found in the hands of street mercenaries. One of the first orders of business for the Hastings administration was to rein in this urban arms race. The Gun Bounty was first aimed at heavy weapons, making them illegal for private ownership and offering rewards for their impoundment. As this tactic proved successful, the coverage of the bill was broadened to include assault weapons, all fully-automatic weapons, and eventually even mono-edged weapons.

Currently, the *only* weapons which are legal for private possession are non-automatic shotguns, semi-automatic and bolt-action rifles, pistols (both semi-automatic and revolvers) and knives under 15cm in length. Pistols are scheduled for prohibition within the next year. Although many heavy weapons are still in hiding in the private sector, particularly Outside, the cops and CorpSec are unrelenting in their pursuit of any illegal weapons, warrants optional.

### The Neo-American Corporations

At the heart of the New America are the corporations themselves. While these entities have been shaping the nation for over one hundred and fifty years, it is only recently that they have actually united to dictate policy outright. Previously, these corps more often worked against each other. No, let's be specific: they were at war. Armed raids, espionage, and sabotage were common business practices throughout the earlier part of the century and fueled a lot of the violence of that era (not that you'll find *that* taught in CorpZone schools).

The Council for Economic Prosperity provided an opportunity to seize control—but only if the corps could work together.

While it took some arm-twisting and deal-making, all twenty-six megacorps agreed to form a united front with the CEP as their mouthpiece. This quickly proved an effective tactic, and the CEP managed to gain significant influence in the Hastings administration. When, through their machinations, Whindam came to power, the sovereignty of the corps was assured.

While they are currently united in the CEP, the corps are still separate entities, with many of their own resources and goals. Not every corporation is necessarily malevolent either, some companies really do want to help the people. *They* just don't have the lion's share of the power right now. Using those differences to drive wedges in between them may be the key to disrupting the CEP and bringing down the ISA ...

Here we profile six of the most prominent corporations in the ISA. For each, we give the primary type of product it handles (in the most general sense), where it has regional offices (so you can know where to hit them), primary stockholder (so you can know on whom to put pressure), how many employees and equipment the company has (so you know what they can hit you back with, besides massive CorpSec troops), and a bit of historical background. These are merely examples; the Ref should feel free to create new ones to fit his campaign.

## ARASAKA

*Corporate security, corporate police and various suboperations.*

- **Headquarters:** Tokyo.
- **Regional Offices:** Singapore, Hong Kong, Osaka, Kyoto, Bangkok, Baghdad, Sydney, London, Hamburg, Paris, Madrid, Rome, Geneva, Helsinki, The Hague, Rio de Janeiro, Montreal, New York, Washington, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Honolulu. Suboffices throughout the world.

- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Saburo Arasaka, Tokyo, holding 18.9% of total shares.

- **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
1,500,000	140,000	9,000

**Background:** Arasaka has long had top standing in the field of corporate security. If you want it protected, these are the people to speak to. They maintain the largest armed force of any corporation—troops that are the best trained and hardest in the business, and that will follow their client's orders second only to Arasaka's. To the Arasaka corporation, they are loyal to the point of death. While many of their troops are hired out internationally, Arasaka forces now make up the core of the Corporate Security Service (CorpSec), the national corporate police which formed after the Second American Revolution. Under the leadership of Saburo Arasaka, Arasaka Corp was a major supporter of the 2nd AR and used the opportunity to establish itself heavily in the structure of the nation. Whether it really has the best interests of the ISA at heart or not is a matter of great concern both within and without the Whindam administration.

**Equipment and Resources:** Dispersed among Arasaka's offices are 300 AV assault vehicles, 325 spinners, 250 VTOL aircraft, thirteen corporate jets and twenty Boeing C-25 heavy cargo jets. Arasaka's wealth gives it access to almost all levels of military technology on fairly short notice.

Arasaka has a secret training facility in Hokkaido, where it trains its security troops and an new R&D site on Honshu.

## MILITECH

*Arms manufacturing and distribution, mercenaries.*

- **Headquarters:** Washington, D.C.
- **Regional Offices:** New York, Miami, Chicago, Montreal, London, Rome, Zurich, Night City, Washington, Los Angeles, Toronto, Tokyo, Beijing, Hong Kong.

- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Gen. Donald Lundee, USMC (ret.), Annapolis, Maryland, holding 16% of total shares.

- **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
450,000	135,000	3,500

**Background:** MTI is the world's largest producer and seller of military weapons of all kinds, from revolvers to tanks to jet fighters. MTI is a major military supplier to the ISA, and the ISA, in turn, is MTI's largest customer. MTI will deal worldwide with anyone who has money. MTI's mercenary forces and in-house supply of weaponry make it the most militarily powerful company in the world, if not the most powerful economically. As one of the first members on the CEP, Militech was a prime mover in the Second American Revolution, supplying troops and hardware to many U.S. branch offices to fend off armed Eurocorp reprisals. Col. Dundee still has his seat on the CEP. His goddaughter and close associate, Anastasia Lucessi, is a Director in the Domestic Security Agency. Currently, much of MTI's forces are integrated into CorpSec side by side with Arasaka forces, something that has been the cause for friction in the past and may be again in the future.

**Equipment and Resources:** Dispersed among its offices and mercenary forces as needed are 250 AV urban assault vehicles, 150 spinners, 225 various VTOL aircraft, thirty corporate jets and twenty Boeing C-25 heavy cargo aircraft. Naturally, MTI has access to large amounts of the best military technology available. MTI maintains secret training camps in Utah, the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California, and Florida.

## EUROBUSINESS MACHINES CORPORATION AMERICA

*Multi-role computer and electronics manufacturer.*

- **Headquarters:** Richmond, VA
- **Regional Offices:** Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, Chicago, Kansas City, New York, Hong Kong.

- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Kathleen Higgins, Richmond, VA, holding 22.2% of the new shares.

- **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
500,000	3,000	1,200

**Background:** In the late 1990's, EBM, already the largest computer and high-tech manufacturer in the world, and one of the most significant corporations in existence, pulled off the greatest free-market hostile takeover in history. Led by master corporate raider Dr. Kurt Muller, this maneuver caused the merger of EBM with many other prominent computer companies around the world, consolidating EBM's already fearsome market power. But by 2021, EBM's support of orbital development had left many of its American offices dying on the vine. That year Kathleen Higgins led the main U.S. office in Richmond in a massive, semi-legal movement to separate from the parent company, which resulted in direct U.S. military intervention on the behalf of the U.S. branch offices. And so the 2nd AR was begun. Now, EBMA is the leading domestic information technologies corporation and is working to displace its parent company internationally in the next few years. To do that, they've embarked on an extensive program of expansion and construction within the ISA.

**Equipment and Resources:** As one of the first true Neo American corps, EBMA primarily uses CorpSec for its security needs, although it does have a small private force available as noted above. EBMA maintains three small orbital research facilities with about one hundred and twenty researchers and staff.



## PETROCHEM

**Petrochemical products and agribusiness. World's largest CHOOH<sup>2</sup> producer.**

- **Headquarters:** Dallas, Texas.
- **Regional Offices:** New York, Washington, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco, Tokyo, London, Hong Kong, Rome. Oil fields in Canada, Texas, Alaska, California and Antarctica. Agricultural areas in California and the Midwest and Southeast.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Angus Youngblood, Joy Springs, North Dakota, holding 30.1% of total shares.

• **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
320,000	15,000	3,200

**Background:** Petrochem Industries keeps the world running, literally. They are the world's largest producer of CHOOH<sup>2</sup>, and control millions of acres of arable land across the ISA.

This land is used to grow the genetically altered wheat that is used to make CHOOH<sup>2</sup>. (Surplus grain is shipped across the world as food.) Petrochem is also one of the largest remaining oil producers, with all remaining fossil fuels used to make plastics and other synthetics. The management of Petrochem is a tense situation: While Angus Youngblood is the major stockholder, the CEO, Trenton Parker, still wields considerable power. And, while they both agreed to Petrochem's involvement in the ISA, they are at odds on just about everything else. This internal struggle has been held in check so far, but odds are in favor of Youngblood's ousting Parker in a violent manner any day now.

**Equipment and Resources:** Petrochem has vast interests to protect, and is thus fiercely armed, in addition to its rather generous use of CorpSec resources. Dispersed among their major offices, oil fields and agricultural areas are 150 AVs, 100 spinners, fifty VTOL aircraft, eleven Boeing C-25 heavy cargo jets and fifteen corporate jets. They also have a large orbital research facility that is well protected, physically and electronically.

## network news 54

**Nationwide broadcasting service.**

- **Headquarters:** New York.
- **Regional Offices:** Atlanta, Chicago, New Orleans, Dallas, Indianapolis, Denver, Arizona, Portland, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Detroit, Washington, with subsidiary stations in most major cities.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Edwin R. Dreyer Foundation, under control of Michelle Dreyer. Located at Fifty Pines Ranch, near Santa Fe, New Mexico. The estate controls 26.5% of all shares.

• **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
120,000	500	1200

**Background:** Network News 54 is more than a single network, representing a whole swath of networks which now dominate 200 broadcast bands across the country. Accordingly, no matter what channel you turn on, there's a 40% chance that you're watching Net 54, even if you don't realize it. Despite its name, Net 54 offers many diversions in addition to news.

Every regional office offers a slightly different schedule to its district, with syndicated series, non prime-time movies, local news programs and all sorts of corporate-sponsored propaganda. Net 54 has been a partner in the ISA since the beginning. In many ways, Net 54 is one of the worst of the megacorps, since its product is beamed into almost every household nationwide and few people understand how influential it is.

**Equipment and Resources:** Network News 54 owns 68 AVs and 60 spinners, used as mobile news-gathering and broadcasting facilities. Net 54 also owns 40 helicopters for weather and traffic reporting at each of the network offices, as well as for shuttling company executives, and ten corporate jets and twelve VTOL aircraft. It uses CorpSec to protect its field reporters and offices.

## CONAG

**Food and agricultural products.**

- **Headquarters:** Kansas City, MO.
- **Regional Offices:** San Francisco, Washington, Chicago, Denver, Vancouver, Melbourne, Brasilia, Honolulu.
- **Name and Location of Major Shareholder:** Liana Miller, San Francisco, NorCal, with 19.2% of the shares.

• **Employees:**

Worldwide	Troops	Covert
200,000	1200	500

**Background:** One of the oldest Megacorps, Consolidated Agriculture was founded in 1930 from three feed production facilities. Its current interests go far beyond simple farming, however. They are now the largest producer of food products in the nation, perhaps the world, owning land in the ISA, Canada, Australia, Indonesia, and Brazil. Their products include processed meat, kibble, plants and seafood, and even some of the new vegetables being gene-engineered for high efficiency in high orbit. ConAg has had a seat on the CEP since its inception, and the food corp certainly aided in the 2nd AR, but since then, it has kept a fairly low profile. It's certainly enlarged its domestic holdings, but it hasn't indulged in the sort of rapine expansion that others have. Its CEO Barry Swiftsure—always known as an *aggressive* businessman—has many wondering what ConAg must have up its sleeve ...

**Equipment and Resources:** ConAg uses CorpSec security for most of its ISA holdings. Out-country, however, it supplies its own coverage—with some help from Militech. Each office has a VTOL aircraft, a private jet, two helicopters, two AV urban assault vehicles, and six spinners. Because of its influence, ConAg can call upon many of the other corps for information, resources and support in time of crisis. They also have over one thousand covert agents secretly acting throughout the ISA (as compared to the five hundred listed above, which is what the rest of the corps know).

# A TIME AND PLACE— NIGHT CITY: 2027

## OVERVIEW

Name: Night City • Founded: 1994 • Pop: 5,100,000

Night City is a moderately sized city located in Northern California (NorCal) along the west coast of the United States. It has a population of about five million in the greater Night City area, with the majority living in sprawling suburbs to the southwest. The city itself lies on a large, man-made bay, surrounded by several small subcities and suburban communities (Westbrook, Heywood, Pacifica, South Night City). Its businesses include technical, light industry, trade, and electronics.

Once a corporate center struggling with corruption, violence and decay, Night City has been chosen as a prime subject for the "New America Project" instituted by the ISA government. As a result it is the focus of several federal and corporate organizations which hope to turn the metropolis into a model city for the newly incorporated state.

—Rand MacNally Travel Guide, May, 2027

## History

Before 1994, Night City was merely a clutter of unincorporated suburban sprawl between San Francisco and Los Angeles. During the Collapse, an enterprising land developer named Richard Night bought up the majority of what was later to become the Corporate Center and City Center areas. He proposed to start a new, safe, clean corporate city, free of crime and urban blight. By offering lucrative tax packages to several major corporations (PetroChem, for example, had established drilling rights off the coast), he was able to establish a strong economic base as well as an instant population of corporate employees.

As planned, Night City was a clean, open community with rapid transit and safe streets. Unfortunately, Night's plan went awry. Four years after initial construction, a coalition of powerful gang bosses murdered Night and took over the Night City project. Between selling contracts to their cronies, setting up drug and extortion rackets, and generally inviting the scum of the Collapse into the area, the gangs managed to turn a relatively clean, modern city into an embattled war zone. Crime, drugs, prostitution, random violence and cybernetic terrorism soon became the rule of law. By 2005, the name Night City had taken on a grim and deadly new meaning.

**The Corporate Takeover:** By 2009, the Corps decided they'd had enough. In lightning strikes, covert Solo squads eliminated most of the gang leaders and established a Corporation-controlled City Council. The newly elected Council, faced with chaos in the city, deputized Corporate security forces and allowed them full authority within the city limits. The Corporate and City Centers were cleaned out and restored to their pristine state. In many ways, this was *the* prototypical corporate action that would be repeated many times in cities across the nation during the 'teens and 'twenties.

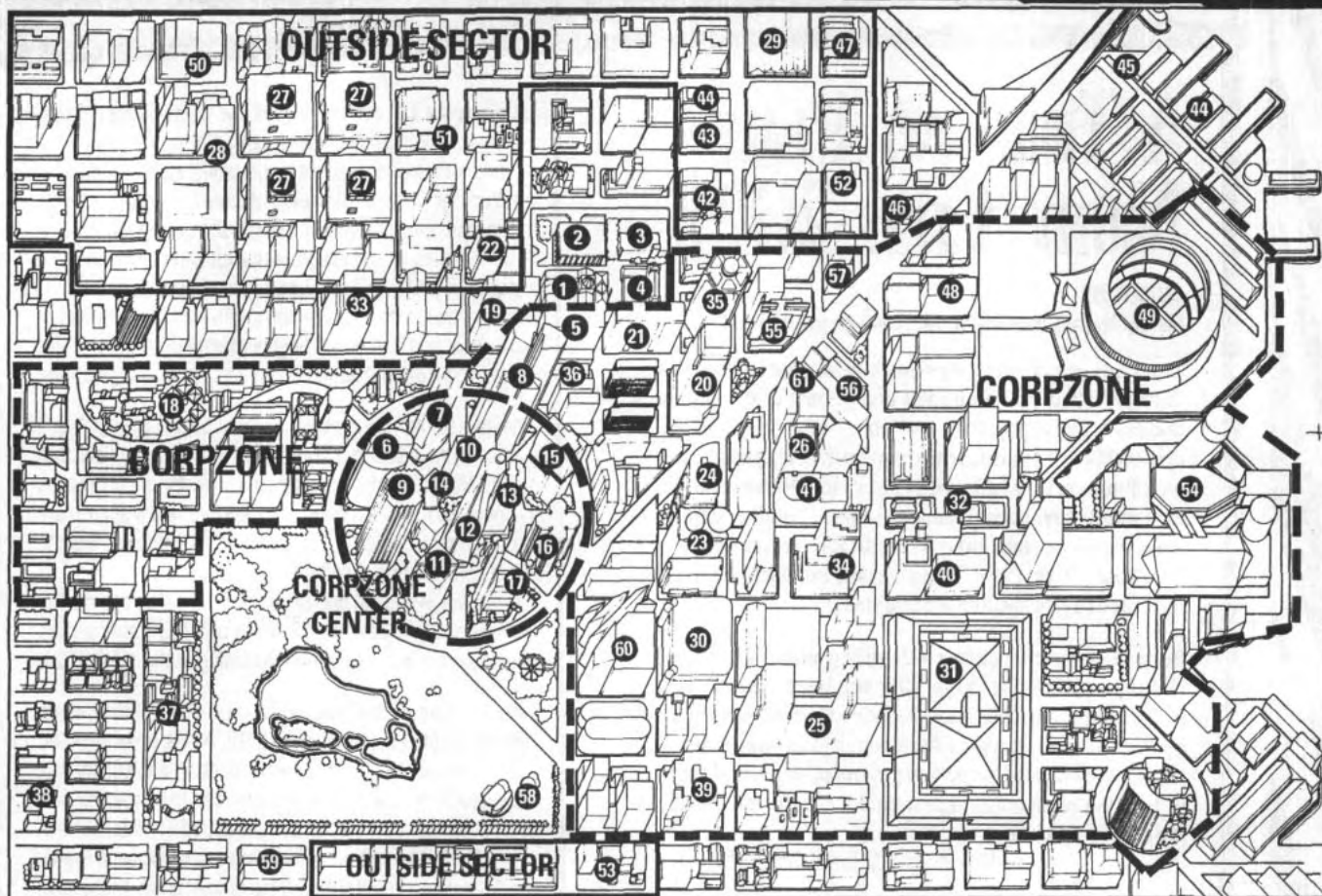
While violence and corruption were still prevalent in Night City, they were now corporate-sponsored and controlled. As a result, Night City also became the center for the Cyberpunk Movement, as many independent operators set up shop in the shadow of the mega-corps, some to feed off of them, others to fight them. It was also the site of one of the most famous riots of that era, when Johnny Silverhand led a mob against the Ararsaka complex in 2012. Many of these activists were slowly driven underground with the coming of the ISA in 2024.

**The Coming of the Plague:** The first cases of the Carbon Plague erupted in Night City in 2026. As the breadth of the epidemic became apparent, chaos ruled (supposedly engendered by inadequate quarantines). This gave the new federal government the perfect excuse to pull the Free State of NorCal back into the fold. As the Incorporated States reasserted their authority during the time of crisis, many local officials and politicians found themselves either ousted or overruled by new federal operatives. Local corporations supported these activities with resources, security troops and money, quickly replacing any displaced official with their own representatives. By the time the crisis stabilized, Night City—and NorCal—were fully under ISA jurisdiction.

## The Present

Night City today is a city in transition. With the coming of the ISA, the corporations' 2009 take-over bid finally looks to be reaching its ultimate realization. As part of the "New America Project", the city has become the model for the reshaping of the state, and new construction and urban renewal projects have sprung up like weeds, often displacing the current residents. Which means that BuReloc and CorpSec are both making their presence felt throughout the area as well. Mallplexes are spreading over the old "Combat Zones" of the city, and the old street culture is being crushed under the bulldozers of progress. As the supposed origin point of the Carbon Plague, it has also drawn the attention of the Center for Disease Control and the Domestic Security Agency, who hunt the CyberEvolved here with vigor.

Night City is a focal point for the ISA's efforts to reintegrate California, so it's also a key site for the CyberRevolution. If



## CENTRAL NIGHT CITY LOCALES

Following are some of the major attractions and possibilities of Night City.

- 1 City Hall
- 2 City Library
- 3 City Museum
- 4 Hall of Justice
- 5 Marcini's: A large, expensive department store where you can find almost any luxury item.
- 6 Raven Microcyb
- 7 Microtech Offices
- 8 Arasaka Tower
- 9 Eurobusiness Machines America
- 10 Petrochem Offices
- 11 Network News 54 offices
- 12 Plaza Business Tower (96 stories of assorted businesses)
- 13 West City Tower (88 stories of assorted businesses)
- 14 Infocomp Offices
- 15 Militech Offices (formerly World News Service)
- 16 United Aerospace Airlines (formerly Orbital Air)
- 17 Merrill, Asukaga & Finch
- 18 Westhill Gardens and luxury homes for the corp elite
- 19 1st Night CityBank
- 20 Worldbank (formerly Euro-Worldbank)
- 21 Grandmill's: A large, expensive department store serving the corporate crowd. Go with your credstick full.
- 22 Totentanz: A dance hall/bar housed on the top floor of an old skyscraper in Outside, this bar is well known for a place to find Yogangs. Once a major Boostergang hangout, the 'Tanz has toned down its image, but is still a rough and intense place.
- 23 WorldSat Communications Building
- 24 Hotel Hamilton: A fairly modern hotel, known for its excellent security.
- 25 Highcourt Plaza Hotel: A very classy hotel featuring glass elevators, excellent service, and a 1920s decor.
- 26 Trauma Team™ Emergency Medical Services Offices
- 27 Industrial parks, mostly run-down. Some house squatters and other displaced Outsiders.
- 28 The Old Italy and Northside districts form a major part of the Outside sector in central Night City. Caution is advised in these districts.
- 29 The Upper Eastside Sector, also considered Outside.
- 30 City Medical Center: Also the main CDC offices and research department in Night City.
- 31 The Whindam Arcology: This 'plex was hurriedly built in the last two years over an entire set of downtown blocks. Contains a mall and houses almost 5,000 CorpZone employees. Showcase of the corporate era, featuring high-tech conveniences coupled with tight security.
- 32 The Old Downtown District, now renovated and incorporated into the new CorpZone, full of corp apartments and shops. It's often seen as an annex of the Whindam Arcology. High CorpSec presence
- 33 Rainbow Nights: Rainbow Nights is more of a dance club than a bar. Its main attraction is a big dance floor that is almost always crowded. Every night there is a live band, usually a bunch of no-names. Sometimes the medicorps test new bands here, rarely with success.
- 34 Medical Technologies (a body bank)
- 35 City Police Precinct #1
- 36 Night City CorpSec Offices
- 37 Night City University District (the University is currently up for sale; bidders include Arasaka and EBMA)
- 38 Carriage St. Book and Coffee House: Eclectic bookstore secretly dealing in books and datafiles banned by the ISA. Count on finding Revolutionaries here.
- 39 City Police Precinct #3
- 40 West City Bank
- 41 PetroChem Medical Center: A corp-owned clinic now serving the Whindam Arcology.
- 42 Café Chrome: A favorite Rocker hangout, complete with 50s retro decor and jukebox. Yogangers welcome until 9:00 p.m.
- 43 MetalStorm: A serious Chromer bar, currently under sanction by CorpSec.
- 44 East Marina warehouses and piers. A gray zone between Outside and the CorpZone—a lot happens in the Black Market here. Some contain illegal operations, sometimes with CorpSec's knowledge.
- 45 The Pilot House: A coffee bar that often doubles as a meeting point for CyberRevolutionaries. Yogangers welcome (except MegaViolents). Ask for Hutch.
- 46 Medicross Preservation: An illicit body bank, not too particular about I.D.s or death certificates.
- 47 The Slammer: Once a popular arena/bar, this place was closed down by the police in 2026. The owner, Suds Joliet, joined the Revolution and still has operations working out of the back of the building.
- 48 Camden Court: High security condos favored by Corps. Rent is \$3,200/month.
- 49 McCartney Field Stadium: Main concert venue and home of the Night City Rangers, the local football team.
- 50 City Police Precinct #2
- 51 The Uptown Mall: Run down, but cool for yogangers to hang out in.
- 52 CiNémaXUS: A theater that caters to yoganger tastes.
- 53 Lower Park Project scheduled for "revitalization"
- 54 New Harbor Shopping Mall: a center for CorpZone and juve life. Includes three virtual arcades that are almost always crowded with low-key yogangers.
- 55 Grand Illusion (dance club)
- 56 The Afterlife: This three-room bar (the Ante-Chamber, the Crypt, and Hades) is a favorite among Goths. Occasionally used as a Revolutionary contact point.
- 57 Night City Fire Station #1
- 58 Lake Park Bandstand: A current gathering place for many Yogangs, particularly at night.
- 59 Night City Fire Station #2
- 60 Bodukkan Performance Center
- 61 The Twilight Zone Video and Virtual Arcade: A major juve joint.

**NOTE: Most of these locations also have corresponding Netspace coordinates and dataforts.**

the feds can be defeated here, their efforts throughout the state will be compromised. Edgerunners are resurfacing as Guerrillas at the behest of the Eden Cabal to help the growing number of CyberEvolved children who are seeking shelter in the city. It all adds up to a powder keg as the factions of the new era gather here for a face off.

**The Zones on the Map:** The map on the previous page shows CorpZones (designated by the dotted line) and Outside Sectors (designated by the solid line). Anything inbetween are Edge Zones. Technically Outside Sectors, these are often heavily patrolled by CorpSec to form a "buffer" between the CorpZones and the "anarchy" of the Outside. Most of the suburbs are already been incorporated.

## Particulars

### Political

Night City is currently run jointly by the Mayor, Mbole Ebunike, and an ISA Supervisor, Leonard Wills. Ebunike has been a long-time corporate puppet and aided the ISA takeover in 2026 (thus guaranteeing himself a third term as mayor). Wills is new, sent in to oversee the implementation of the New America Project. While Wills is supposedly only an advisor, Mayor Ebunike has no illusions about Wills' real position and will follow any of his "suggestions" to the letter.

### Public Services

**Hospitals:** There are two public hospitals (City Medical Center; Crisis Medical Center) in the Central Night City area, as well as another seven in the Greater Night City Area. There are at least four other private medical centers in the City as well, mostly catering to bodybanking and biosculpture work.

**Information:** City information is provided for a nominal fee (50¢/min) via V- or Dataterm (about 50% of the terminals have converted to Virtuality). Terms are located on the corners of most (60%) city streets, and can be used to access information, computer services, fax-mail and Net input.

**Law Enforcement:** Although most of Night City has been brought under Corporate control (these areas are known as the CorpZones), pockets of urban blight still infest the Northside, Little Italy and Lake Park districts. Crime in these Outside Zones is kept in check by brutal security sweeps and constant surveillance. The South City is still a seedy ruin of cheap tract housing, spreading into an area so blighted it was once known as the Combat Zone before the Gun Bounty removed automatic weapons from the streets. This area is scheduled for corporate "revitalization" following a systematic set of BuReloc sweeps.

There are actually *two* police forces in Night City. The NC Police are well trained but ill-equipped (and many are on the corporate take). Most of the few incorruptible officers are in C-SWAT, whose original task was to take down psychotic cyborgs. C-SWAT's main job is now supporting BuReloc on "hot" operations.

The CorpZones that now make up 45% of the downtown area are heavily patrolled by CorpSec, whose officers have full authority on corporate property—and often off of it as well. CorpSec Spinners and AVs are constantly seen on patrol sweeps over Outside sectors as well, and NCPD has strict orders from the Mayor's office to cooperate with them on any investigations.

## Transportation

**Public Transportation:** The Night City Transit Corporation (NCTC) provides for bus service on most major city thoroughfares. Light lev-rail transport is provided by NCART (Night City Area Rapid Transit Corporation), a wholly-owned subsidiary of PetroChem.

**Night City Metro:** The local airport, handling both domestic and international (primarily Pac Rim) flights. Night City is on the hourly San Francisco to L.A. commuter run, as well as daily flights to New York, Chicago, Atlanta and Washington.

Passengers are advised to allow at least two hours for DSA security clearance procedures for any interstate or international flights. Suborbital flights to Japan and Korea are available by taking the LA commuter flight, then transferring via United Air maglev train to the Mojave Spaceport.

**Freeways:** Night City is on State Highway 828, which runs east to connect to I-5. Ground transit to San Francisco is about 2 hours; to L.A. about 6 hours.

## WELCOME TO NIGHT CITY

Night City is a post-modern urban environment, complete with CorpZones, Outside Sectors and plenty of conflict. It's provided to give you a feel for the America of the 21st century, full of decay, corruption, new growth and corporate fascism. It's a city that has arisen from the ashes of the Collapse only to be caught up in the struggle for the hearts and minds of the nation as the ISA government assumes power.

You should feel free to change Night City to fit your campaign. Sometimes it's best when you use a city that the players are somewhat familiar with; the recognition of street names and places juxtaposed with Yogangs and hovering assault vehicles will make the 21st century even stranger than fiction. We've used Night City in a bunch of *Cyberpunk* products over the years, so there is a wealth of additional material available that can be updated to 2027 specs. The main thing is to make Night City *yours*, so you can make your players see it, smell it, and feel it.



# CHAPTER NINE



# REVOLUTION

# CYBER- REVOLUTION

## Never Surrender

**2027. The corporations stand with their velvet-shod jackboots on the throat of Incorporated America. The Cyberpunk Revolution is over, and the Edgerunners are the losers. But not all of the Cyberpunks have given up. Some have taken the battle back to the Street, to act as the mentors and teachers of a new generation of Cyberwarriors.**

**Morgan Blackhand**, the greatest of all Solos, the master of combat and black ops, is now a fugitive fighting a one-man war against the ISA's endless legions of Agents, and is training Tinmen and Bolters into an unstoppable Solo cadre. **Alt**

**Cunningham**, once the greatest programmer of the Cybertech Age, is now encoded in the matrix of her own Soullkiller black ICE—the teacher of Wizards and guardian goddess of Virtuality.

**Rache Bartmoss**, half-dead, half-alive, lies locked in deep cyber-freeze, his superchilled brain running the rails of the Net at lightspeed, revealing the secrets of the ISA for CyberEvolved assault teams to ferret out. And **Johnny Silverhand**, rock and roll megagod, murdered twice, twice risen, now leads Scanners through the ways of the Rockerboy, where emotion can become a force for revolution.

Four of the greatest Cyberpunks ever to put on the 'shades. They have never given up. They will never surrender. They are the core of the **CyberRevolution**.

## CyberRevolution

The CyberRevolution is a band of Edgerunners, *Cyberpunk* heroes and radical yogangers committed to the destruction of the ISA and its henchmen. Using a combination of street-smarts, advanced technology and CyberEvolved powers, the Revolution battles the ISA in a number of critical areas, known as **Fronts**, with the goal of breaking Corporate power over these aspects of *Cybergeneration* America. The goals of the Revolution are ambitious, sure. But it beats the hell out of giving into the insidious mind control the ISA wants to subject us all to. Joining the Revolution requires commitment, nerve, and a willingness to live on the Edge for a cause. It often starts with a single V-code given to a possible recruit. But it always leads to fighting a cyberpunk war on many, many Fronts.

### EcoFront

America hasn't all been reduced to a blackened wasteland. There are still big chunks of wilderness out there—Corporate controlled parks for only the elite, rain forest "resource zones" strictly controlled by biological companies, and wildlands that are privately owned or just too remote to be worth exploiting—yet. EcoFront leads the fight to keep Corporate interests out of the remaining wildlands, to restore destroyed habitats and clone lost species. Whether it's sabotage, research or just plain blockade actions, EcoFront is one of the most visible and committed groups of the Revolution.

### FreeFront

This is the battlefield of the politically active. The members of this Front want to overthrow the Corporate-dominated political structure, to remove Corporate candidates and restore free elections. FreeFront members work to expose ISA plots, destroy BuReloc camps, and thwart CorpSec roundups.

### MediaFront

*The Media is the Message*, and no one believes it more than the members of MediaFront. Whether it's taking control of the airwaves to broadcast alternative entertainment programs, news programs without propaganda, or creating media events that expose and educate people about what's really going on in America, MediaFront is there.

### VirtualFront

*Space isn't the Final Frontier—Reality is!* True to its motto, VirtualFront fights to keep control of the technologies of Virtuality, to keep it from being turned into an ISA brain-washing tool, and to make sure that the Net and V-space remain a free forum for information and ideas. They are the descendants of the rebel "hackers" of the 20th century, battling real-time for the frontiers of Cyberspace with rogue bulletin boards, information exchanges and high-tech data wars against the ISA's Netwatch goons.

### What does the Revolution want?

Their manifesto is more than just "Bring Down The ISA!", even if that *is* a major part of it. Like its predecessor, the original American Revolution, this Revolution wants a new society based on equality for *all* sentient: a true coalition of organic, electronic, and CyberEvolved life forms. But to break it down, here's their order of business:

- 1. Create a popular front movement to overthrow the ISA government as represented by President Whindam and the CEP.** This is the aspect of the

movement that most people are currently involved in and it's the trickiest to promote. After years of chaos, most citizens are more afraid of the anarchy that would result from a revolution than of anything the ISA might do now.

The key is to show them that it's only a matter of time before they feel the boot heel of the state on *their* necks.

**2. Help re-establish a true democracy using the original Constitution as the primary guideline.** Rather than fall into chaos once again, the Eden Cabal realizes that a new government must be established as quickly as possible. They feel that the Constitution, despite its age, is still the best foundation around. Suffrage would be granted to any mature U.S. citizen, be it AI, CyberEvolved, or normal human. The idea would be for a true electronic democracy, with an elected legislative body empowered mainly to suggest and implement policies, which are always open to public referendum and veto via Net ballot. It may not be the most efficient form around, but at least it's fair. And the technology is in place already; it would simply be a matter of implementation.

**3. End further damage to the planet's biosphere and support methods for repairing what damage has already been incurred.** As the moniker, Eden Cabal, suggests, the environment is a primary concern, since any further degradation could quickly result in the Earth becoming uninhabitable. Alternate production methods and energy sources would be researched and implemented. Again, much of the technology already exists, it just waits to be used.

**4. Encourage economic growth and the restructuring of corporate power into purely business venues.** While economic prosperity is necessary to any state, the Eden Cabal is not willing to sacrifice the above two goals in order to achieve it. They have no wish to nationalize industries or socialize the government. At the same time, they feel that the government is designed to protect the people against abuses of power from any quarter, be it business or politics.

Okay, many of them know that all this may seem a little ambitious, but you've got to have a dream before you can make it a reality. And America in 2027 has given up too many of its dreams already.

### Not Fighting the Good Fight

The Revolution is trying to avoid extreme violence. Not because they have a distaste for it; most of these people were expert at destroying things before the Cybergeneration was even born. No, instead the Revolution realizes some very important facts:

1. Violent tactics usually won't achieve the goal they want, which is to educate and convince the people of the need to stop the ISA. They are trying to turn this into a *popular* rebellion, so the hearts and minds of the public must be the first targets. You don't win those by blowing up factories or slaughtering police officers.

2. If any innocents are injured—by *either* side—the Revolution gets the blame. Casualties can be hard to contain (when the bullets are flying, it's hard to tell who's an innocent worker and who's a CorpSec agent). Also, ISA retribution tends to involve a LOT of collateral damage, which they will promptly blame on the Revolution.

3. Despite the expertise of the old Edgerunners and the startling abilities of the CyberEvolved, the ISA out-guns the Revolution—big time. CorpSec, BuReloc and the DSA have formed a domestic military force that rivals the old *Schutzstaffel* in fanaticism, training and milspec hardware. Add to that the fact that the *real* military could be called in by the president at the drop of a hat, and you have serious motivation to avoid excessive combat.

All that being said, these people will use whatever means are necessary to defend themselves. And if force *is* the only way to solve a problem—well, so be it; they aren't here to fool around. In addition, ISA operatives don't hesitate to use force to apprehend or eliminate their enemies. Oh, let's be honest: Most of them *insist* on it. So, like it or not, violence is a part of Guerrilla life.

### Tactics of Choice But there *are* alternative methods.

**Broadcasting:** For better or worse, the media, which now includes the Net, Virtuality, and the braindance as well as TV and radio, is the most influential element in twenty-first century society. And while the state uses it to keep the masses docile and apathetic, the Revolution can use it to awaken and educate—which they do with a vengeance.

Running pirate stations, getting inside information and uncensored stories, and beaming the truth across the airwaves are all practiced tactics here.

**Information Handling:** The Net has been placed under martial law, and all data passes through ISA hands before it goes public. Guerilla Netrunners, Wizards, and others all fight to open the Net back up, allowing the free flow of information wherever possible. Data raids, both physical and icon oriented, are a common mission in this arena. Once the info is obtained, then it can be disseminated through the Cabal and out to the public.

**Sabotage:** Things like disabling BuReloc "vocational training camps", hayduking corporate construction zones, or taking out a local AIM Overwatch com center help slow down the progress of the Machine while at the same time demonstrating what *can* be done. **Note:** These should be surgical strikes with collateral damage kept to a minimum. Info handling often melds with Sabotage as information systems become the most likely targets for strikes. Something as simple as planting a flaw in the dataplans of the new Genius Gun rounds or rerouting a BuReloc prisoner mag-lev train could save hundreds of lives without harming a soul.

**Reclamation:** In its rapacious stampede to "rebuild America", the Machine has stripped much of the remaining wilderness and confiscated a great deal of public land. Efforts here focus on taking this territory back, to revitalize forest and wildlands that have been worked to death by the agricorps, to reclaim parkland that has been co-opted by the corps. Sometimes it's as simple as stealing a new strain of pollution-resistant grass from Genetech so you can distribute it to various environmental groups for free. Or it could be as costly as a lengthy legal battle to wrest ownership of an old state park from PetroChem to avoid its "development." These operations can be fairly high profile, meaning added risk and danger, but the rewards can be great.

New fronts and activities are opening up all the time. Anything is worthwhile that works to bring the crimes of the ISA to public notice and minimizes the damage the government is doing.

**Structure**

The Eden Cabal is a necessarily loose organization. Guerrillas and Yogangers don't lend themselves well to regimentation or rigid discipline (ask any school teacher how well the average class of 14-year-olds reacts to authority).

The "typical" Eden Cabal cell is a group of CyberEvolved refugees who've been assigned one or more adult

"instructors" to watchdog and train them. In other words, seasoned supervisors to keep them from getting themselves killed right out of the gate. If no adult is available, a V-sim AI may be assigned to the group. Rache has prepared a number of AI copies of himself with this in mind, not that this isn't a mixed blessing. Cells consisting entirely of adults or other "normals" are also possible, but with the influx of CyberEvolved to the Cause, the Changed have become a common and vital element of the Revolution.

The cell usually has access codes for one or two secure Net nodes where information, funding, and assignments can be exchanged. If they need it, the Cabal tries to route them to a prepared safehouse or someplace they can use as an operational HQ. The group can sometimes call upon local Eden Cabal sympathizers for supplies and support as well, as long as they're careful who they deal with. The Cabal uses the Net extensively for communication and monitoring of operations. This allows for a very dispersed chain of command, but it also means that control of this medium is of strategic importance. Guerilla Netrunners and Wizards are constantly going up against AIM Overwatch sysops who try to enforce the ISA's martial law in Virtualspace.

The cells operate largely on their own, however, receiving missions via Netlink and using the yogang and Guerrilla networks as necessary. This approach leaves the specifics of a mission up to the local operatives who know the area best. Cells are only directly linked to other cells on the largest of operations, where they need more resources than one group can muster. This doesn't mean that adjacent groups don't tend to find each other, communicate, and work together; yogang cooperation is one of the key strengths of the Revolution. They're just careful not to share *too* much information. That way the loss of one cell doesn't allow CorpSec to get info on the entire network. At the worst, one or two Net nodes and some local contacts will be lost. The rest can still carry on the fight.



# ALT CUNNINGHAM [CODENAME: GAIA]

"I am here for you. No matter where you are, no matter what it will take to reach you, know that I'm here."

Fifteen years have passed since that fateful day when programmer Altiera Cunningham's soul was ripped out of her body and doomed to an intangible existence within the Net. Fifteen years since Saburo Arasaka's agents kidnapped her to gain access to the deadly black ice program called *Soulkiller*, an infernal creation that was used to condemn Alt to life as two hundred million lines of code travelling from system to system.

But Alt has not been sleeping. With the twenty million dollars she took from the Arasaka mainframe deposited in a blind account, the resourceful programmer began to plan her escape. She had money. She had all the time in the Net. She began to make plans.

With her original body (now a mindless husk) safely deposited into cold sleep by her unsuspecting lover, Johnny Silverhand, Alt set up a small, highly secret research corporation through her now huge web of dummy investment accounts. Over the next nine years, she directed her employees to study the most advanced techniques in cloning technologies (including stolen data on Biotechnica's failed cloning attempts in 2019), with an eye towards replicating her frozen body. Getting access to her cell tissues was child's play to someone who could run freely through almost any





# MISTER JOHN SILVERHAND [CODENAME: THE MYSTIC]

"There is no greater  
Power than the Power  
withi n yourself. "

From his first stage persona as the enigmatic leader of the hit band *Samurai*, to his current incarnation as a leader of the CyberRevolution, Johnny Silverhand has always been a mystery. What is known about him only adds to the confusion: possibly born Robert John Linder sometime in the 1980's, alternately the son of an Apple Computer programmer or a studio guitarist working the San Francisco club scene, Linder's family is rumored to have been killed during the Collapse. Scattered records show he joined the United States Marine Corps (some records say U.S. Army) in 2004, training as a "cybergrunt" soldier in the Special Operations Branch. It is now assumed, thanks to Silverhand's participation in the Amnesty of 2009, that "Linder" either went AWOL from Nicaragua, or was assumed missing in action early on in the War. But it is equally possible that the man known as Johnny Silverhand only *assumed* the identity (and dogtags) of Robert Linder and may have been someone else all along.

Taking the handle "Johnny Silverhand" after the trademark chrome cyberarm he adopted in 2005, Linder embarked on a long and colorful career as a rockerboy.

With his first band, *Samurai*, he penned many of the anthems of the early 2000s, including the "cyberpunk anthem" *Metal Soul*. In 2007 *Samurai* broke up, with Silverhand and rhythm guitarist Kerry Eurodyne pursuing separate courses, culminating in the legendary tracks *Chippin' In* and *Never Fade Away*.



For a while, Silverhand was content to remain a superficial party rocker, rarely penning anything of social consequence. Then, in 2019, lightning struck in the form of a botched Biotechnica-sponsored assassination. What is commonly believed is that Silverhand emerged from "hiding" nearly a year later to release *Clone Wars*, a highly political concept album detailing the abuses and dangers of human genetic tampering.

The truth (known only to a few in the CyberRevolution) is far more startling. The assassination was only *partially* botched; his body nearly torn in half by the bomb that ripped his AV-7 apart, Johnny Silverhand lay near death in a cryotank for nearly a month before his heavily guarded hiding place was located by Alt<sup>1</sup> Cunningham. The matrix-bound Alt<sup>1</sup> sent her recently decanted clone, Alt<sup>2</sup> Cunningham, to meet with Silverhand's startled bodyguards. Her offer—to upload Silverhand's engrams to the Net via the Soullkiller program, then download them into a suitable force-cloned body. With the evidence of her own cloned body to compare to the frozen one Johnny still maintained in storage after all these years, the Silverhand retinue was convinced, and allowed Alt<sup>2</sup> to transport the cryofrozen Silverhand to Alt<sup>1</sup>'s secret cloning facility. With this final gift to the lover who had preserved her memory (and body), Alt<sup>1</sup> left to wander Wilderspace, eventually coming to rest in the abandoned arcology mainframe called the *Ghost Town*.

Eight months later, Johnny Silverhand appeared at a press conference to release the long-delayed *Clone Wars* album.

He knew he'd been put in a cloned body, and the fact added a special poignancy to his work—some call it Silverhand's best to date. Unaware that Alt had actually uploaded his engram, downloaded a *copy* to the clone, and datastored the original, Johnny<sup>2</sup> Silverhand was a subtly changed man. Having looked death in the face and returned to tell about it, he became a more political, committed Rocker. His next four albums (*Ring of Fire* in 2021, *Surrendered Gold* in 2022, *MediaGods* in 2023 and *Street Armageddon* in 2024) covered the gamut of the political spectrum, focusing eventually on the rise of the Incorporated States of America and its draconian policies.

In 2026, enraged by the ISAs campaign to "control" the CyberEvolved, Johnny Silverhand began a monumental new work called *Tomorrow's Child*, exposing the horror of the Incorporated Government's inhumane program.

The album was nearly completed when Silverhand's luck ran out, and an ISA team murdered the rocker using an advanced AI-remote assassination device.

Once again, Alt<sup>1</sup> Cunningham stepped in. Once again, a Silverhand clone was forcegrown from the frozen tissues of his original body. Lacking a fresh engram to work from, Alt<sup>1</sup> was forced to uncompress the original and download it into the clone with a seven-year memory gap. This time, she had to tell Johnny<sup>3</sup> the truth: that the Silverhand he'd become was actually a third generation copy. And that if he was willing to accept the idea, he could be practically immortal.

She also asked for his help as a leader in the fledgling CyberRevolution. She got it.

He calls himself *Mister John Silverhand*, maybe to distinguish that he's a changed man: older, wiser, more cunning. He is the teacher of Scanners, young Rockers and Rads who want to know how to reach the hearts and minds of America. He shows them how to craft a song, set up a rally, organize around a cause, spin the media circus. He is the consummate Rocker. And he'll keep coming back as long as the ISA keeps killing him.

<b>TEMPLATE</b>		John <sup>3</sup> Silverhand			
<b>INT</b>	7	<b>REF</b>	9	<b>COOL</b>	10
<b>TECH</b>	5	<b>MOVE</b>	7	<b>LUCK</b>	9
<b>BODY</b>	7	<b>EMP</b>	7	<b>ATT</b>	9
<b>S.ABILITY</b>		Spotlight			12
<b>AWARENESS</b>	9	<b>ATHLETICS</b>	9	<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	8
<b>DRIVING</b>	8	<b>INTERACTION</b>	9	<b>PILOTING</b>	7
<b>RANGED WEAPONS</b>	8	<b>TEACHING</b>	6	<b>PER. APP.</b>	8
<b>H-T-H COMBAT</b>	6	<b>PERFORM (COOL)</b>	13	<b>STEALTH</b>	5
L L L L S S S C C C M M M M M M M M M M		GEAR: Chrome cyberarm w/Med. Handgun, 2 Cyberoptics w/IR, Sand.Boost, Med. SMG, Guitar, Med. Armor			
<b>BTM</b>	-2	<b>HITS</b>	7		



# MORGAN BLACKHAND

## [CODENAME: THE HAMMER]

"I can't remember how many people I've killed. Sometimes I think I'll just change my name to Clint Eastwood."

A war-worn veteran of the Second Central American Conflict, Morgan Blackhand first became a Solo by accident, not design. Returning home in 2009 to the ruins of his native Brooklyn, the hulking cybergrunt found himself protecting his next-door neighbor from an abusive and violent ex-husband. The incident ended with Morgan killing the homicidal maniac and earning a local rep as a protector of the weak.

Morgan's good guy image lasted until a dustdown with a marauding BoosterLord gained him the attention of a Militech recruiter. To Morgan's pragmatic mind, working as a corporate "Solo" wasn't much different than being in the service: the guys Upstairs told you where to go and whom to protect (or shoot). By 2013, Blackhand was known throughout the brotherhood of Solos as a professional equal to the best Europe could offer; it was during this time that he adopted the black turtleneck, suit, trenchcoat, and close-cropped hair that became his trademarks.

In time, Blackhand graduated from bodyguard and extraction work to tactical operations and strategic threat management. Although his abilities in these areas were exceptional, his reputation as a hard-nosed, no-nonsense boss willing to pick up a Minami and join his ops in the field earned him an even wider reputation





# RACHE BARTMOSS [CODENAME: GHOSTLORD]

"Running diaper-toting little pukes through Netspace on a dataraid! It's amazing what boredom can drive you to!"

Since the first moment he could talk, Rache Bartmoss has been getting into *someone's* face. Parents. Teachers. Employers. Other 'Runners. Governments. Entire nations. If there was a target out there trying to tell him what to do, Rache Bartmoss unerringly aimed for it like a homing missile.

Rache Bartmoss is a genuine legend; he's busted into the toughest systems on earth and lived to brag about it. His programming rivals even Alt Cunningham's, and she's recognized to be the best ever. Most of the major dodges in Netrunning are his innovations, as are most of the hairiest stories: He's fought AIM Overwatch head to head and ten to one; explored the farthest regions of cyberspace; and has even (he claims) talked to the aliens who kidnapped Elvis, created the Carbon Plague, and taught the secrets of pyramid power to the Atlanteans.

Of course, over thirty years of determined Netbanging has also made Rache not a little schizoid. Even his best friend, Spider Murphy, has serious doubts about the sanity of anyone who stayed jacked in through the entire I-G Transformation of the Net in 2017, and then slammed his head against the wall for an hour afterwards because it was *so frackin' beautiful!*

Rache's last facedown was only two semantic degrees short of fatal; nailed by a particularly nasty type of black ice that placed his heart into continual fibrilla-





# STAYING ON THE EDGE

**Maybe the other Edgerunners have given up. But not you, choomba. You're still willing to carry the hardware and do the Iwo Jima flag thing side by side with these young squeebs with the supercyber stuff. Somebody's gotta tell them what life's really like on the Street. And that's why you're a Guerrilla.**

So you don't want to play a kid. You don't have to be a juveganger to still rock and revolt. Not every Edgerunner caved in when the Government rolled over and became Corporate. A lot buried their heavy hardware out in the backyard, or covered the panzer with a camo net and hid out in the badlands. You bided your time until a new bunch of tough kids rose up from the Street, looking for seasoned vets to show them the ropes.

As a Guerrilla, you're running an old Cyberpunk revolutionary with a new Edge: that of a mentor figure running herd on a bunch of juvepunks. You've got the advantages you can only gain from age: experience, skills and a lot of street smarts. Whether you're a Solo coaching juve

Tinmen on black ops tactics, or a Netcowboy showing those cocky Wizards how to really program a virtual, Guerrillas have a purpose regular Edgerunners lack. You're not working for mere money or power. You just want your country back, and you're willing to go to the wall to accomplish it.

**Remember:** As a Guerrilla, you've probably had to lay everything on the line already; you've ditched your cushy corporate job, liquidated your euro in the 'face bank, and taken your act on the road. Maybe the kids you're running with are your own, but unlike the Edge (pg. 233), you've decided to move beyond just saving them from CorpSec;



you want to make real Edgerunners out of them. You're working for the Revolution directly, leading CyberEvolved teams on missions for Rache, Johnny or Alt. Or helping Morgan Blackhand to forge a revolutionary army out of a bunch of wet-nosed punks who wouldn't know a submachinegun from a Polymer One Shot. Either way, your edge in experience has gained you the respect of the little thugs; once you whipped one or two with your rusty (but still combat-trained) skills, you had 'em eating out of your hand. Or at least that's what they want you to think.

The good news is, no matter how tough it gets, no matter how dumb those fraggin' kids act, you'll still be in the game, kickin' cybernetic butt and taking names.

## Old Dogs. New Tricks

**BIG NOTE:** It is *always* up to the Gamemaster whether or not to allow adult Edgerunner Player Characters into their campaign. They are an *optional* Player Character type. Got it? Good.

Obviously, there are going to be adults involved in the Revolution along with the cyberkids. But the Ref should be careful about bringing adult player characters into the game. We recommend a *maximum* of two for any group of player CyberEvolved. These should be the supervisors, but NOT the commanders for the cell. The Edgerunners should be there to provide expertise and a steadying hand for the more impulsive and dynamic juves— not to try to make them into little soldiers.

This may prove a real challenge to your players (especially if they're old *Cyberpunks*). The Edgerunners shouldn't dominate the game with their skills and their firepower. In the ISA, the kids should be able to be as effective as anything the Edgerunners are used to. This is a good opportunity to show how the subtler skills of *Lil' Angel*, *Genspeak* and *Blend* can make the juves potent agents when the Edgerunners may stand out like a sore thumbs. In

many ways, the Edgerunners can learn how to fight this war right along side the juves. Not that they'll admit to it ...

### Adult Guerrillas

The steps in creating an adult character in *Cybergeneration* are pretty much the same as creating a Yoganger:

#### 1. Choose Your "Gang"

In this case, your gang is automatically "Edgerunner". This gives you the Experience Ability and the choice of one of four different skills as your Special Ability. The choice of the Special Ability is fairly important, since it goes a long way toward defining the type of Edgerunner your character once was and how he still operates. Carefully read the descriptions of each of the Special Abilities in the Adult Skills section and as well as the kind of Edgerunner they usually belong to before choosing. You are what you know.

#### 2. Distribute Your Stats

Take 75 points and distribute them among your character's Stats as per the juve rules on page 77. The upper limit on adult stats is 10, not 8, and you can only go over 10 with cybernetics. Note that some of the CyberRevolutionaries listed before seem to break these rules. That's 'cause they're the best of the best, chombatta. *You're still working on it.*

#### 3. Pick Your Skills

Take 80 points and distribute them among your Experience, Special Ability, and General Skills (pg. 216). As with Stats, the maximum skill level is 10 for adults, not 8. Remember: Adult skills are more effective than Yogang skills and the kids are at 1/2 skill value when going up against adults with opposing skills.

#### 4. Outfit Your Character

Choose up to five cybernetic enhancements from the Cyberware section (page 219). If you want, you can exchange cybernetic enhancements for cash at the rate of \$1000 per enhancement. Then you buy up to \$8000 (plus any cash from trading in cyberware) worth of equipment from the Mall or from the Edgerunner Equipment Section (pg. 222).

#### 5. Generate your Lifepath

You've got a character, now you need a life. Hit the **Lifepath** (pg. 223) to help you flesh out your character and give you all sorts of skeletons for the GM to drag out of your closet.

### Adult Skills

Adult skills are divided into two types: Special Abilities (below) and General Skills (pg. 216).

### Edgerunner Types & Special Ability Skills

Special Ability Skills are the Edgerunners' equivalent of the *Cybergeneration's* Yogang and Evolved Skills. They're usually specific to a single type of Edgerunner. Here we try to give you outlines on both the Edgerunner types and their typical Special Abilities. If you want more detail or other Edgerunner types, see *Cyberpunk*.

#### Edgerunner Special Ability: EXPERIENCE

All Edgerunners have this INT-based skill to one degree or another and it represents your biggest advantage over the *Cybergeneration*—experience. You've met a lot of people, friends and enemies, over your long career. You know a lot of secrets and have lots of connections. With *Experience*, you might just know something about another character (maybe you worked together once), might be owed a favor, or could borrow something important. The older and more skilled the Edgerunner, the more people he knows and the more markers he can call in.

**Game Use:** *Experience* shows the network of NPCs which you have to use as resources. In a given situation, you may get to use your *Experience* to determine whether or not you have a connection which can help you. The Referee determines the difficulty based on the circumstances. If successful, an NPC has effectively been created; now that connection can be fleshed out and made a consistent part of the world. In this way you can create a chain of NPC "connections" to which you have access for info or help. Of course, these people may have their own agendas as well, and their help doesn't always come for free ...

#### SOLOS

The early 21st century was a violent time. You made your living by being able to protect—or destroy—anyone for the right amount of money. You were one of the elite, the **Solos**: cybersoldiers for hire who had their bodies "modified" to a razor's edge in order to make a living and stay alive in this intense shoot-first-and-screw-the-questions-later environment. You had Hamburg-wired reflexes, a cyberarm with a built-in Militech .44 automag, and Ziess-Nikon eyes with auto-targeting and image magnification. Sometimes it seemed as if you were all turning yourselves into machines in a weird type of cybernetic Darwinism. Only the smartest, most wired, heaviest gunned and least human would be left standing. For a time, your raw combination of cybernetics, firepower and sheer attitude was *the* popular image of the term "Cyberpunk."

And because you were one of the best, you survived long enough to outlive your time. The ISA feds gave you a choice: Join up or have your cyberware yanked and be programmed for a nice, safe, dull, factory job. You grabbed

your kit, withdrew your funds from your accounts and bought yourself a new name, a new face, and a new life, ones the Icemen couldn't trace. But after a few years of lying low and watching the country slide into the corporate maw, the call for revolution came from Blackhand himself.

You thought, well, if this was the world your kind helped build, maybe you had a duty to help change it.

### Roleplaying a Solo

You're a battle-hardened, nearly burnt-out veteran of the cyberwars. Violence doesn't scare you; you use it as a tool. You're comfortable in a firefight, but you also know how to use attitude to *avoid* combat. Making the other guy think that you don't give a damn can win more facedowns than a heavy handgun. And sometimes you really *don't* care.

Morgan Blackhand is a good example of a hardened Solo. But different Solos had different styles; some were hot-shot gunslingers while others were martial art gurus. What kind of combat did you specialize in: hand-to-hand, monoknives, handguns, rifles, or maybe demolitions? Were you flashy and dramatic or grim and competent? Whatever you once were, years of combat and hiding have taught you more restraint than you thought possible. Now if you can just teach it to these kids . . .

### Solo Special Ability: COMBAT SENSE

**Game Use:** *Combat Sense* is based on your Edgerunner training and professionalism in tactical situations. It allows you to perceive danger, notice traps, and have an almost unearthly ability to avoid harm. Your *Combat Sense* level acts as a bonus on both your *Awareness* skill and your Initiative in the meatworld. See "Saturday Night Skuffle" (pg. 149) for more.

## NETRUNNERS

When the Cyberpunk Movement was still in full swing, the Global Computer Net was *the* forum for information exchange—and theft. Like the early hackers, you and your fellow **Netrunners** were the daring cowboys of the grid. You used your jacked-up neural processors and hot-wired cybermodems to fly through the Net, ransacking corporate dataforts for incriminating or valuable data to sell or expose. Instead of trying to achieve physical perfection, you honed your minds and reflexes to the nanosecond scale required to rampage in the virtual world against deadly black ICE programs and vicious system operators. If the Solos were the image of Cyberpunk, you were its neurally-interfaced, brain-blasting, mind-twisting *reality*.

Like the Solos, you were considered 'way too dangerous to remain in operation once the ISA came to power. The Net itself was placed under martial law, and you were hunted

down by government and corporate sysops. Your ability to run rampant through Netspace was all but crushed. So you went low-profile and learned caution, but you didn't jack out. Sure, it was tougher than before, with tighter security and rabid sysops more numerous than ever. But that just meant your new software got proper field tests. Then you started meeting other 'runners zipping around c-space: sizzlin' newbies who were naturals at 'running, but weren't very smart. You saw a lot of them die at the hands of AIMO sysops.

They were Wizards. And they were hunted too.

Now you help them fly the Net, teaching them what you know and showing them the tricks that have kept you alive this long. "Information wants to be free," Rache says. Well, you and your new young friends are going to go blow open some doors.

### Roleplaying a Netrunner

To you Netspace is at least as real and as important as the meatworld, but that's okay, because in 2027, that's pretty much true. You live to find better ways to interface with this new medium, whether it's software, hardware, or pure technique. You love to ride the electronic edge, redefining perception, reality and intelligence through technology. Now if you can just remember to drop back into meatspace long enough to eat.

Rache Bartmoss is often considered the ultimate Netrunner, but you each have your own style. Some are silent Net ninjas, while others are unabashed showmen who revel in the malleability of virtualspace. You might specialize in datafort intrusions, subtle Net monitoring, or even Net graffiti work. Are you a reclusive technophile, living totally in Netspace in place of real life, or are you a slick data pirate, working the Net to finance your meatworld activities? Whatever you are, you're a seasoned veteran of cyberspace, with the experience and the programs to make up for reflexes that might just now be starting to slow with age.

When choosing your skills, first read the Net section carefully (pages 155-168) so you know how it all works. Definitely get a good *Information Systems* skill, and a strong *Awareness* is never a bad idea either.

### Netrunner Special Ability: INTERFACE

**Game Use:** *Interface* reflects your ability to manipulate programs and perform most functions within the Net; in many ways, it's an adult version of *Arcane*. It's usually added to your INT stat for a lot of Net activities, and determines your Initiative and Defensive abilities therein. See the section on "Doing Things in the Net" (pg. 155) for more.

## TECHIES

Technology is a major defining factor of the 21st Century. Complex machines became essential for day-to-day living, even on the street. So you choose to join a class of Edgerunner who made the repair and modification of technology their stock and trade: the **Techies**. You submerged yourself in the world of pizo-electric myomers, terabyte units, and neural interface processors. If it walked, rolled, hovered, computed, or went bang, you were the one to fix it. You lived to tinker and loved getting paid for it. You could give Cyberpunks that special Edge, tuning their hardware to the finest tolerances and modifying tech to fit their needs. There was no machine too complex, no modification too demanding, no cyberware too bizarre for you to handle—for the right price, of course.

With the ISA came licensing, taxes, and rigid controls on all you free-wheeling technical artists. The corporations tried to recruit many of you; they wanted you working for them or not working at all. Those of you who wouldn't sell out found it impossible to get the proper permits to ply your art. Some took odd jobs in the shadow market, while others went underground. Then the Plague hit and things got even bleaker, with police patrols and kid-hunting CorpSec troopers driving you deeper into obscurity. That's when you decided you'd had enough. You used your contacts in the Edgerunner grapevine to reach the Revolution. It's time to throw a monkeywrench into the corps' gears, and if anyone knows where to put it, it's you.

### Roleplaying a Techie

Face it: You're a grown-up TinkerTot, and this new era of technophilia is definitely your gig. You want to know how everything works and are convinced that you can find a way of making it better. You love to tinker, disassembling and rebuilding items constantly, and there are always plenty of things around to tinker with. You may have a specialty, being into computer hardware and focussing on *Security* and *Electronics/Cyber Tech* (a "chip surgeon"). Or you may be more of a mechanic-type, crawling under automobiles and spinners, practicing *Basic Tech* and *Aero Tech* more than the really esoteric stuff. Or you may be one of those rare remaining weaponsmiths, using your *Milspec Tech* training to provide custom armaments to the Revolution.

Your people skills sometimes suffered from your preoccupation with machines, but that never really bothered you. In fact, you probably preferred machines to people; they were a lot more dependable and predictable. But now you've been given a group of kids to look after, and are finding that working on a fluid-dynamics supercomputer would be simple in comparison.

### Techie Special Ability: JURY RIG

**Game Use:** As a Techie, your Special Ability is *Jury Rig*. You can temporarily repair or alter any machine for 1D6 turns per level of skill. This is not a permanent repair and the device will break down after the elapsed time. You can also do just about anything a TinkerTot can do with his *Kitbash* skill (see pg. 66).

## MEDIA/ROCKERBOY

You always understood how powerful the media was in this electronic, information-laden age, and chose it as your tool for revolution, communication and expression. You became a **Media**, or even a **Rockerboy**: They are two faces of the same communications-based coin: one focusing on reporting the facts, the other on influencing through emotion and artistic interpretation. Your Rockerboy performances would pack auditoriums, music clubs, or homeless shelters with flocks of people looking for some emotional respite and inspiration amid the confusion and chaos of the times. As a Media, you would risk your life to investigate and broadcast scathing exposés of corporate or governmental abuse, believing that the people deserved to know the truth. Throughout the chaos of the early 21st century, your kind provided the voice for the nation's conscience and soul.

But somewhere you failed; the Cyberpunk Movement floundered and fell, buried under corporate muscle, money and lies. Now the mediacorps shape the truth into whatever form suits them, and they don't like rogue reporters, artists, or musicians broadcasting anything else. The airwaves and studios are monitored by the Media Council, and everyone had better check with it on what the *official* truth is before broadcasting anything—or risk cancellation by a CorpSec Strike Team. So most of you sold out and now spew "human interest" pablum and government-screened propaganda at the masses. But you can't just sit by and watch as BuReloc hauls away sick children and the homeless. You've got to make one more try at waking the public up so they can smell the burning soya-caf.

### Roleplaying a Media

You're one of the last true newsmen left, whether as the gruff and cynical newspaper reporter, the energetic and daring field reporter, or the confident and charismatic anchorman. You might even work for the mighty mediacorps—on the surface. But when you get the chance, you go for the *real* stories. You're driven to find the truth, on digging through the lies, false fronts and rhetoric until you get to the facts. And the danger can be pretty addictive too. Once you've got the story, you send it out, be it by radio, TV, E-mail, or V-term, because you know the power of the broadcast word.



But you've also learned to be careful. The ISA is good at guarding it's secrets, and even better at eliminating those who look for them. Hooking up with the Revolution just seemed natural, since you both want to get at and send out the truth. And you've discovered that wherever these CyberEvolved kids go, there's *news* to be found.

### Roleplaying a Rockerboy

Whether you wail onstage with a neural synthesizer or pour out your heart in tone poems in a small, smoky club, you're a Rockerboy. You're the Voice of Rebellion, always questioning authority with attitude and energy, just like the Who, Bob Dylan, or Johnny Silverhand. You know how to reach down into your soul and pull out the words and the music—the Message—and make the people feel it deep, where it counts. As an artist, you've lived with *passion*, which might mean you've been intensely self-destructive or just intensely contemplative. For a while, you may have even had contracts with the mediacorps, living the good life before the censorship and the politics got to be more important than the Message.

Since then you've lived from gig to gig, CD to CD, spreading your songs and hoping your audiences would wake up to the truth. And then the CyberEvolved came: kids who knew the truth because they were living it. Helping them and the Revolution just seemed the natural thing to do. Someday the corps may catch up to you, silencing your voice for good, but until then you keep on playing.

Hey, it's better to burn out than to fade away ...

### Media/Rockerboy Special Ability: SPOTLIGHT

**Game Use:** *Spotlight* represents your ability to convince people that your cause/report/song is real and important—even important enough to act upon. It's sort of a combination of artistic expression, oratory, and charisma that allows you to get an audience to believe and maybe even follow you. You add *Spotlight* to your COOL (if you're the Rockerboy type) or to your INT (if you're the Media type). This ability does require that you have a way of reaching your audience, be it through an electronic medium or just a good, loud voice at a gathering.

Your Rockerboy might be able to get a crowd to follow him in a riot or to charge a police line (Very Difficult for a mob up to *Spotlight* x200 in size) or sway a similar audience on an emotional level about a topic (Average to Difficult). It also allows you a fan following which might prove useful.

Your Media might be able to get public opinion (Difficult) or even powerful people (Very Difficult) to take his information seriously enough to act upon it. (Of course, this may not always be a good thing). As a measure of his notoriety, a Media's *Spotlight* might be used to gain access to certain places (called the *60 Minutes Magic*).

### General Skills

These reflect the fact that the adults usually have broader and better training than the Cybergeneration. As with Yoganger skills, these are often "macro skills" which represent areas of expertise instead of just a single skill. Many also have IP mods for Experience purposes (see pg. 149). Each is listed under the stat that it is most *commonly* combined with for a skill check.

### ADULT SKILL MASTER LIST

#### Special Abilities

Combat Sense	Interface	Jury Rig
Spotlight	Experience	

#### General Skills

#### Chip Cost/Level(see pg. 220)

#### ATT Skills

Personal Appearance	100
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#### BODY Skills

Physical Prowess

#### COOL Skills

Resist Interrogation

Streetwise

#### EMP Skills

Interaction

Leadership

#### INT Skills

Awareness/Notice

Education and General Knowledge

Expert: Specialty	200 for most
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Information Systems

Sciences: Specialty	200 for most
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Survival/Tracking

200

Teaching

#### REF Skills

Athletics

Driving

150

Hand-to-Hand Combat

500 (restricted)

Heavy Weapons

700 (illegal)

Melee

200

Piloting

300

Ranged Weapons

700 (restricted)

Stealth

#### TECH Skills

Aerotech

350

Basic Tech

200

Electronics/CyberTech

400

First Aid

150

I.D. Tech

400 (illegal)

Milspec Tech

500 (illegal)

Security Tech

300 (restricted)

Sleight of Hand/Pick Pocket

400 (illegal)

**ATTRACTIVENESS Skills**

**Personal Appearance [ATT]:** You are always "together," and you know it. You know the right clothes to wear, the proper grooming, hair styling, etc., to maximize your physical attractiveness, and how to look cool even in a spacesuit. This skill allows you to increase your Attractiveness, and thus your chances of successful relationships or interactions.

**BODY Skills**

**Physical Prowess [BODY] (2):** You've put yourself through a rigorous physical regime to get the most out of your BODY. You've practiced the art of bending bars, crushing objects, ripping phone books apart and other useful parlor tricks. At +2 you can crush cans, rip thin books in half, and bend thin rods. At +8, no phonebook is safe, you can bend thin rebar, and snap handcuffs. At +10, you can bend prison bars, rip up the Gutenberg Bible, and dent car fenders with one blow. It also means you have a fair endurance and can add this skill to your BODY whenever you must continue to be active after a long period without food, sleep, or water.

**COOL Skills**

**Resist Interrogation:** This represents training you've received that allows you to resist torture and other, subtler, forms of interrogation. Resistance checks can be made against truth serums, hypnosis, or the good, old-fashioned dental drill (Youch!). You match your ability against your interrogator's skill. While this ability is as old as human conduct, with the increasing intensity of DSA and CorpSec activities, the Guerrillas have rediscovered the need to train their operatives in it. Don't say we didn't warn you.

**Streetwise [COOL]:** The knowledge of the "seamy" side of life—where to get illegal and contraband things, how to talk to the criminal element, and avoiding bad situations in bad neighborhoods. With a *Streetwise* of +2 or better, you can get "hot" items, score drugs, etc. A *Streetwise* of +5 would allow you to arrange a murder contract, know a few mobsters who might owe you favors, and be able to call on muscle when you need it. At +8 or better, you could become a major crimelord yourself and skip the middlemen. You also know how to use your COOL to get what you want; using *Streetwise* checks against your opponent's COOL to intimidate him into compliance.

**EMPATHY Skills**

**Leadership [EMP]:** You know how to lead and convince people to follow you. A leader with a skill of +2 can manage a small office successfully and be respected for it. A leader with a skill of +4 or better can lead a small band of troops into battle and not get backshot. A leader with a skill of +7

or better can lead the entire Gamelon Empire into battle and look good doing it. James Kirk of *Star Trek* has a Leadership of +11, but you never will.

**Interaction [EMP] (2):** You know how to interact with people in a variety of social settings, to sense their emotional moods and to persuade them into doing what you need. You can sense lies and have some empathy with others, which may even allow you to influence a person romantically. (In certain cases, Referees may want to average this skill with a player's Attractiveness to get a more realistic outcome.)

**INTELLIGENCE Skills**

**Awareness/Notice [INT]:** You have learned the art of being a "trained observer," allowing you to notice or be aware of clues, shadows and other events.

**Education and General Knowledge [INT]:** A very important skill, this is the equivalent of your basic public school education, allowing you to know how to read, write, use basic math, and know enough history to get by. In effect, it is your *Schoolin'*. A level of +1 is a basic grade school education. A skill of +2 is equal to a high school equivalency. A Knowledge Skill of +3 is equal to a college education; +4 or higher is equal to a Masters or Doctorate. At +7, you are an extremely well educated person, and are asked to play Trivial Pursuit a lot. At +9 and above, you are one of those people who knows a lot about everything (and maybe has the good sense to keep his mouth shut).

**Expert (Specialty) [INT]:** You are an expert on one specific subject, such as rare postage stamps, obscure weapons, a foreign language, etc. If the specialty chosen is knowledge of a foreign tongue, then at +2, you can "get by" with speaking the language. At +3, you can actually read a written form of it. At +6 and above, you are fairly fluent, although no native will be fooled by your ability. At +8 and above, you speak and read the language like a native.

**Information Systems [INT] (2):** Your skill for programming computers and using databases and other compiled information sources to find facts. It also includes a basic knowledge of the geography of the Net, its lore and history, and knowledge of important computer systems. See the section on the Net for more (pg. 155).

**Survival/Tracking [INT] (2):** The required skill for knowing how to survive in the wilds. Knowledge includes how to set traps, forage for wood, track game, build shelters and make fires. It also measures how good you are at shadowing and following people. The corollary of this is that you know how to lose pursuers, cover tracks and

### THE SCIENCES

Each of these INT-based skills represents knowledge in a specific scientific field of study. Note that the descriptions indicate *equivalent* levels of education. You don't have to have a college *Education* skill level to have a *Chemistry* of +4 skill. There are many ways of picking up this knowledge in 21st-century society, including chip training, tutors, or V-sim training.

**Biology/Zoology:** General knowledge of animals, plants, and other biological systems. At level +3, you know most types of common animals, plants. At +5, you know not only well known animals, but also about many exotics and endangered species. At +6, you have a general understanding of genetics, cellular biology, etc. At +8, you are knowledgeable on almost all animals, know their habits well, and have a +1 advantage to any Survival Skills (you know where to find the game). At +10, you can perform most bio-lab procedures, including gene mapping and splicing.

**Chemistry/Pharmaceuticals:** The required skill for mixing chemicals and creating various compounds. A level +2 Chemistry is equal to high school chemistry training. A level +4 is equal to a trained pharmacist or college-level chemist. A +8 is a trained laboratory chemist.

**Geology:** A functional knowledge of rocks, minerals and geologic structures. At +3, you can identify most common rocks and minerals. At +6, you have the equivalent of a college degree in Geology and can identify minerals and geological structures with ease. At +8, you can teach geology in high school.

**History:** The knowledge of facts and figures of past events. In game play, this might be used to determine if a character is familiar with a particular clue related to a past event. At +2, you have the equivalent of a grade school history education. At +6, you would have the equivalent of a college grasp on the subject. At +8, you could teach history in high school. At +9, you may have written a few of the most oft-used texts on a particular historical personage or epoch.

**Physics:** The ability to calculate physical principles, such as gas pressures, mechanical energies, etc.

**Sociology:** An understanding of the patterns and histories of human cultures, with an eye toward mass psychology. This can be a very useful skill in terms of interpreting the role of propaganda, media, and other information-based tech on the current culture.

otherwise evade people on your trail. This aspect of the skill can be used in urban or wilderness areas.

**Teaching [INT]:** You have learned to impart knowledge to someone else (if you don't think this is a skill, you ought to try it sometime). You may not teach any skill unless you have a higher skill level than the student. The Referee is the final arbiter of how long it takes to teach a skill. At a Teaching Skill of +3 or better, you can professionally teach students up to High School. At +6, you know enough to be a college professor (if you wanted). At +9 or greater, you are recognized by others in the field as good enough to guest lecture at MIT or Cal Tech; your texts on the subject are quoted as the major references, and you might have a TV show on the equivalent of the PBS channel.

### REFLEX Skills

**Athletics [REF]:** Similar to *Jock Stuff*, this skill is required for accurate throwing, climbing, and balancing. It combines the basic elements of any high-school level sports program.

**Driving [REF]:** You know how to pilot all ground vehicles like motorcycles, cars, trucks, tanks and hovercraft. You can also handle powered boats at a -2 to this skill.

**Hand-to-Hand [REF] (2):** This skill covers any type of fighting style using hands, feet, or specialized "martial arts." **You also get a bonus to your die roll on the Wounds Table on page 152 equal to your level of skill for each H-t-H attack you inflict.** For example, a master with a +10 *H-t-H* would add 10 to his 1D10 roll to determine damage done on the table. This skill is also used to dodge attacks and escape grapples and holds. Plus, each Edgerunner with *Hand-to-Hand Combat* is allowed to select *one* key attack (as in the StreetFighter's *Kata* skill), gaining +2 to Hit with this move. This attack may be a *kick, throw, strike, or hold*.

**Heavy Weapons [REF]:** You know how to use grenade launchers, autocannon, mortars, heavy machine guns, missiles and rocket launchers.

**Melee [REF]:** You have been trained to use knives, axes, clubs and other hand to hand weapons in combat. Includes the mastery of swords, rapiers and monoblades. Note: When using non-ranged cyberweapons such as rippers, scratchers, slice n' dices, cyberbeasts, and battlegloves, characters must use this skill.

**Piloting [REF] (2):** In *Cybergeneration*, this is the general skill of controlling most types of common Corporate aircraft including Rotorcraft and Vectored Thrust Aerodynes (AVs and Spinners).

**Ranged Weapons [REF] (2):** You can effectively use non-genius personal ranged weapons of any type, including bows, handguns, SMGs, rifles, and cyberware types.

**Stealth [REF] (2):** You are trained in hiding in shadows, moving silently, evading guards, etc.

#### TECHNICAL Skills

**Aero Tech [TECH] (3):** The required skill for repairing fixed or rotorwing aircraft, including Ospreys, jets, helicopters and light aircraft. It is also required for repairing all ducted fan aerodyne and spinner vehicles.

**Basic Tech [TECH] (2):** This macroskill gives you the required skills for building or repairing simple mechanical and electrical devices, such as car engines, television sets, etc. With a Basic Tech Skill of +3 or better, you can fix minor car problems, repair basic wiring, etc. A Basic Tech Skill of +6 or better can repair stereos and TVs, rebuild an engine, etc. A Basic Tech Skill of +9 or better can build a simple computer from scratch, put together a race car engine, and maintain any kind of industrial machinery. However, you do not have enough specialized knowledge to apply it to complex things such as aircraft (just like Mr. Goodwrench doesn't know how to build and service an F-16).

**Electronics/Cyber Tech [TECH] (2):** This specialty means you have the training to maintain, repair and modify electronic instruments such as computers, personal electronics hardware, electronic security systems, cameras and monitors as well as for designing and repairing cyberdecks. In addition, you have the knowledge to repair and maintain cyberware.

**First Aid [TECH]:** This basic paramedic skill allows you to bind wounds, stop bleeding, and revive a stunned patient (see "Healing and Getting Better" on pg. 154 for details).

**Security Tech [TECH] (2):** You know how to install or counter electronic eyes, electronic locks, bugs and tracers, security cameras, pressure plates, etc. You need this skill in order to pick locks and break into sealed containers and rooms. At +2, you can jimmy most simple locks. At level +4, you can jimmy or install most apartment locks and security cams. At +6, you can override most corporate office locks and traps. At +9, you can enter most high security areas with impunity.

**I.D. Tech [TECH] (2):** This macroskill lets you assume new identities. You can disguise yourself to resemble someone else, whether real or fictitious. You understand elements of both makeup and acting, although not in quite the same

way as an actor. It also means you know how to copy and create false documents and identifications, in both the electronic medium and hardcopy. This skill may also be applied to the detection of same; if you can fake it, you can usually tell a fake as well.

**Sleight of Hand Artist/Pick Pocket [TECH]:** The required skill for picking pockets without being noticed, as well as for "shoplifting" small items. For ideas on levels of ability, see Security Tech, above. It also means you can do small tricks of legerdemain or visual "magic" which might entertain or distract your victims.

**Milspec Tech [TECH] (2):** You are trained in the repair and use of military technology. You can repair and maintain weapons of all types. At level +2, you can do repairs and field stripping. At level +6, you can repair all types of weapons and make simple modifications. At level +8, you can design your own weapons and program a microfactory to make them. As part of your military engineering training, you know how to use explosives, such as the best explosives to use for which jobs, how to set timers and detonators, and how much explosive to use to accomplish a desired result.

## Cyberware: The Gift That Keeps on Giving

While the Cybergeneration can't have cyberware (their growing bodies reject it in ugly ways, and only an idiot risks permanent deformity), adults are under no such restriction.

In fact, many indulged in the cyber-wave of the 2010s, where everyone had bits of their bodies surgically removed and replaced by high-tech machinery. That fad has gone out of vogue, as the ISA has no wish to have wired-up civilians running around challenging the authorities. As with guns, most cyberware is now government-controlled, and any who own it are supposed to register with said government. This ensures that any cyborg not already working for the ISA can be tracked and identified quickly and efficiently.

This puts you Edgerunners in an awkward position: The cyberware that once gave you the Edge now puts you right in the ISA spotlight. Highly visible "enhancements" such as cyberlimbs and body plating may result in considerable police or CorpSec attention. Many of you have opted for Synth-skin coverings on any cyberware, and others have simply had your more blatant and illegal items removed and your flesh pieces (which were kept in cryo-storage) reattached. The rule here is:

**If you've got it, don't flaunt it.**

The list below describes the most common types of 'ware used by Edgerunners, Agents, CorpZoners, and CorpSec troopers. It's by no means a comprehensive list; this is a fairly streamlined system, suitable for the more roleplaying based style of *Cybergeneration*. A more elaborate look at cybertech can be found in the *Cyberpunk 2020* rulebook and its *Chromebook* supplements. Prices are not listed; it is assumed that these characters have either had their cyberware paid for by their organizations, or have managed to purchase the cyberware at a time previous to the start of the game. If the GM wishes, he can allow you to have more than five initial cyber-options, but that is up to him.

Normally, excessive cyberware can result in *cyberpsychosis*: fragmentation of the personality due to too much metal bonded to the meat. It is assumed here that any therapy needed has already been taken care of during the past several years of downtime to ensure your Edgerunner's rationality. You shouldn't be able to blame your actions on your cyberware.

### Basic Cyberware

This cyberware is fairly common in the ISA. In fact, many people must get one or more of these enhancements simply to perform their jobs.

While there is no stigma attached to this tech, it is becoming less popular as non-invasive interface technology (such as V-trodes) becomes more powerful and available.

**Neural Processor.** This is a "switchbox" implanted in the lower spine, and is used to interpret signals between the central nervous system to the cyberware. It is required before almost any other kind of cyberware can be attached, and therefore automatically present on anyone with same. Since it's mandatory, it does not count towards the five cyberware options the character can select.

**Interface Plugs & Nodes:** Direct cybernetic link-up plugs originally designed for use with cables. In 2027, these cables have been replaced with transmitter "nodes," tiny radio transmitters that jack into the plug, while a corresponding node jacks into the device. Everyone's nodes have their own specific frequencies, and ranges are not longer

than 1.5 meters. Some people still prefer cables for their reliability and resistance to jamming. Nodes or cables are required for linking to a cybermodem for Netrunning, or for connecting to a vehicle or other cyberlinked machine.

**Chipware Socket:** A small socket used for inserting chipware: bio-plastic circuit chips that have been imprinted with information or even skills that can then be accessed by the user via his neural processor. A chip can contain memory (MRAM chips), which provides information on a specific subject, acting as the appropriate INT skill at levels from +1 to +4. They may also contain physical skills (APTR chips), which act as the appropriate REF or TECH skills at levels from +1 to +3. The catch for both of these is that they replace any level you may have of your own in that area. In other words, if you have a *H-t-H Combat* +3 skill, and use a +2 *H-t-H Combat* APTR chip, you would only use the chip's +2 skill level plus your REF in combat, as it overrides your own learning with the chip's. A chipware socket can hold up to ten chips of various types, but you may only "run" as many as your current INT stat at a time. The Adult Master Skill List (pg. 216) shows what skills are available on chip, their cost per level, and their legality. This option only gives you the socket, chips must be purchased separately with cash.

**Cyberaudio:** Augmented hearing system. In 2027, almost all cyberaudio units come with a cellular phone link, radio link (one mile radius), amplified hearing (+1 to sound-related Awareness checks), a digital recorder (with one hour of storage), and level damper (compensates automatically for loud noises).

**Cyberoptics:** Microcameras hardwired into the optic nerve. Can look like normal eyes, cameras, or any other variation (e.g., visors). In 2027, almost all cyberoptics come standard with the following options: infrared/lowlight vision for dim or near darkness, anti-dazzle protection against harsh sunlight, flares or strobes, a full Virtuality link, and a 20-image digital camera which can download to any digital media device. Most Agent and CorpSec optics also have an



internal targeting scope that reads range to target, provides a reticule for aligning weapons, and flashes a "ready signal" when a target is acquired (+1 to all Smartgun/Genius Gun attacks). Edgerunner cyberoptics may also have this last option, but they then require registration (see "Restricted Cyberware" below).

**Nanosurgeons/Enhanced Antibodies:** These microscopic machines are injected into the bloodstream, programmed to repair the body's systems and protect against disease. They effectively double your healing rate. No, they won't protect you from the Carbon Plague.

### Restricted Cyberware

This tech isn't illegal, but it does require you to register with the local authorities for "identification" purposes. It also involves the implantation of a subdermal tracking device so the authorities can monitor you even more closely. In other words, they won't force you to remove this stuff, but it marks you as someone to be watched. It's rumored that these tracers might contain explosives or make it easier for Genius rounds to zero in on you. Failure to register can result in arrest, a fine of up to \$2000, and possible removal of the restricted item. Don't count on them supplying any replacement. Unless otherwise noted, assume it requires a Difficult *Awareness* check to spot any disguised cyberware. If the searcher is performing a detailed examination (like a simple body search) lower this by one level.

**Advanced Muscle & Bone Lace:** Nano-cybernetic enhanced bones and muscles. The result is an increase of +3 to the character's Body Type stat, both in strength and the ability to absorb physical damage. This enhancement cannot be detected unless a special examination is made.

**Cyberlimbs (arms and legs):** Cybernetic limbs, which can look real or artificial. Cyberarms never get tired, can do Damage Class (DC) 4 crushing damage, and DC 3 punching damage. Any one cyberweapon listed below can be installed inside a cyberarm, but that's illegal, of course. Cyberlegs do DC 4 kicking damage, and can make 6-meter jumps and 8-meter leaps. Both types can take 7 structural damage points before being incapacitated, 10 SDP before being destroyed. Each choice of this option allows the selection of two cyberlimbs (or only one if the player so desires). Cyberlimbs can be armored to AR 6, but they are then immediately obvious as artificial.

**Cybermodem, built-in:** This is a standard cellular cybermodem (see page 96) which can be installed instead of a cyberweapon in a cyberlimb. It does not affect cyberlimb concealment.

**Linear Frame:** This is an implanted exoskeleton which greatly enhances the wearer's strength. It allows the user a

BODY of 16 for strength, lifting (lift 800 kg) and hitting purposes but not for Wounds or Stun Saves. It is Easy to spot.

**Reflex Boosters:** Wiring which increases neural response times, allowing superhuman speeds. Choose one type: Kerenzikov boosterware is always activated and gives a +2 to Initiative Rolls. Sandevistan speedware gives a temporary 5-turn boost (+3 to Initiative). Characters must wait one turn before boost kicks in. These are not obvious unless used, and even then, it can be mistaken simply for good reactions.

**Scratchers:** Implanted fingernails of incredibly sharp carbo-glas (DC 3 per hand damage).

**Skin Weave:** Subdermal mesh woven by nanomachines through the skin (gives an overall AR 2). Treated skin has a distinctive leathery feel which is not visible but is obvious to the touch.

**Smartgun Node-Link:** The predecessor to Genius Guns, smartguns use sonic or laser projectors to lock on target, responding to mental signals or cyberoptic scopes. This unit consists of an interface node for the gun and another for the user's interface plug. Smartguns are very accurate (+2 to any firearms attack). The only obvious element here would be the smartgun attachment to the weapon itself. This option equips each of your *initial* weapons with smartlinks. Any additional weapons cost three times as much to be smartlinked.

**Tool Hand:** A cyberhand which has a variety of built-in tools, including pliers, wire-cutters, screwdrivers, soldering iron, and circuit tester. The edge of the hand can be used as a hammer as well. This is handy (sic) for many Tech-based skills, including *Security Tech*.

### Illegal Cyberware

This is stuff the government and corps just don't want you to have (unless you work for them, of course). Police or CorpSec will arrest—or maybe just shoot—any unauthorized person found with these enhancements. Even if they do not prosecute or fine, they will require the removal of the illegal cyberware before the subject can be released. And the removal process is not gentle . . .

**Body Plating:** Heavy ballistic plastic plates bonded to your skin, making you look rather obviously like a cyborg but providing AR 7 protection. Don't walk around in the daylight or you'll find your butt in the slammer.

**Cyberarm Pop-up Gun:** Gun action mounted in a compartment in a cyberarm. New clips are inserted into the top of the compartment. Standard Agent/CorpSec pop-ups

are rated as Heavy Pistols or SMGs for men, Medium Pistols for women. These weapons make the involved cyberlimb Average to spot.

**Cyberarm Genius Gun:** 2027 version of the Pop-Up, firing "Genies:" Super-smart homing bullets. Due to size of the rounds, each clip carries only three rounds. Ammo is tough to buy on the market, however, and is NOT cheap. For more about Genius Guns, see page 150.

**Rippers:** Long, sharp metal claws mounted in the upper fingers (DC 4 per hand damage) of either meat or cyber hands. Can be extended by clawing the hand in a catlike fashion. Rippers are considered Edged weapons for AP purposes.

**Slice n' Dice:** Monomolecular wire mounted in one finger, with weighted fingertip. Will cut through almost any organic material and most plastics. Can be used as a garrotte, cutter or whip. Damage is Class 4; armor counts only at 1/3 value.

**Subdermal Armor:** This is a mesh/ballistic plastic armor (AR 5) inserted under the skin.

**Wolvers:** Longer, stronger versions of rippers, installed in the lower arm above the wrist. DC5 (AP) damage per hand.

**CYBERWARE REPAIR**

If your Edgerunner's 'ware gets fried (by an EM Pulse or whatever), the Revolution will usually send you to a trusted Techie for repairs, covered by the Eden Cabal. If you want something done yourself, plan on paying at least \$1000-\$2000 for any full replacements and \$200-\$800 labor (not counting any surgery needed). Take care of yourself, chombatta.

**Edgerunner Equipment**

Everything in the "Reconnaissance" section is available for purchase. But while your Guerrilla can surf the malls right along with the kids, your connections sometimes allow you access to stuff you won't find on the Virtual Shopping Channel.

**Netrunning Tech:** Netrunners *automatically* get a 10 point modular deck to design (Max INT 9, Max DEF 7). Your Netrunner can then buy Attack and Defense software that most people can't, at bargain basement prices no less. Cost is \$200 per FCT point on Attack and Defense software (max FCT 6 for both) for your initial outfitting. After that, you pay market rates.

**Heavy Weapons:** While **Hot'za** has some pretty nifty toys, the really BIG guns are hard to get in the ISA. But some Edgerunners may have squirreled one or two away before the Gun Bounty scooped them up. Of course, these are illegal as sin. You can only have ONE heavy weapon per Edgerunner. Here are two examples:

**20mm Very Heavy Rifle • Cost: \$3000**  
**HVY • 0 • N • R • DC 10 • 8 • 1 • ST**

Requires a BODY of 10 or higher to fire from the shoulder or you must use the bipod. Weights 18 kg.  
**Reloads: \$200/clip**

**MiniGrenade Launcher • Cost: \$800**  
**HVY • 0 • N • P • Per Shell • 16 • 2 • ST**  
**Frag Shell: DC 5 for 5m diam. \$25 ea**  
**HEP Shell: DC 7 (AP) \$35 ea**  
**Smoke/Gas: 5m diam. \$15 ea**

**False IDs:** Many Edgerunners have had to cover their tracks in the last seven years. This means that your Edgerunner may have set up alternate identities for himself to keep CorpSec off his back. Each new identity costs \$2000 and includes appropriate I.D., historical documentation and SIN card.

**Vehicle Armor:** Edgerunners are used to the idea of being shot at and like to protect themselves as well as possible. You can have your vehicle reinforced with carbon composite armor up to AR 10 for \$250 per point (\$125/point for motorcycles).

**CYBERWARE MASTER LIST**

Equipment	Notes
<b>Basic Cyberware</b>	
Neural Processor .....	basic 'ware
Interface Plugs & Nodes .....	basic 'ware
Chipware Socket .....	holds 10 chips
Cyberaudio .....	radio, com, +1 to hearing <i>Awareness</i>
Cyberoptics .....	camera, IR, Low-lite, Targeting
Nanosurgeons .....	X2 healing rate
<b>Restricted Cyberware</b>	
Advanced Muscle & Bone Lace .....	+3 BODY
Cyberlimbs .....	1 option space each
Cybermodem (built-in) .....	cyberlimb mount
Linear Frame .....	BODY 16
Reflex Boosters .....	+3 or +2 Initiative
Scratchers .....	DC 3 claws
Skin Weave .....	invisible AR 2 armor
Smartgun Node-link .....	+2 to smartgun attack
Tool Hand .....	TECH-useful
<b>Illegal Cyberware</b>	
Body Plating .....	obvious AR 7 armor
Cyberarm Pop-Up Gun .....	SMG, hvy or med pistol
Cyberarm Genius Gun .....	Expensive
Rippers .....	DC 4 (AP) claws
Slice n' Dice .....	DC 4 (AP) monowire
Subdermal Armor .....	less obvious AR 5 armor
Wolvers .....	DC 5 (AP) blades

# EDGERUNNER LIFEPATH

In this step, you get the chance to give your Edgerunner a life: That is, the life that he's lived up to this point. This page contains a series of tables much like the **Plotpath**. However, instead of describing what's *going* to happen, these describe what you've *already* been through in your eventful life. You can either go through the Lifepath by rolling dice on each of the tables, or, with the permission of your Ref, you can choose selections from each (effectively building your life). These should be noted on the back of your character sheet. Once done, events, enemies and friends can be fleshed out by both you and the Referee. That way he can spring them on you ... err, integrate them into play at the appropriate time.

## PREVIOUS EMPLOYER

Choose or roll 1D10:

- 1-3 Corporation
- 4-5 An independant business
- 6-7 The Shadow Market
- 8 Organized crime
- 9-10 You were an independant operator.

Go to **CURRENT JOB STATUS**

## CURRENT JOB STATUS

Choose or roll 1D6:

- 1-2 Quit previous employment, on your own
- 3-4 Still employed, uses job as cover
- 5 Fired from previous job, looking for work
- 6 Left last job under violent circumstances, now on the run

Go to **LIFE EVENTS**

## LIFE EVENTS

Roll 2D6+25 for your age. For each year over 20, roll 1D10 once on the following chart and go to the appropriate table.

- 1-3 **The Good with the Bad**
- 4-6 **Friends and Enemies**
- 7-8 **Love and War**
- 9-10 **Nothing Happened That Year**

## LOVE AND WAR

Roll 1D10:

- 1-3 Happy Love Affair (go back to **Life Events**)
- 4-7 **A Love Affair with Teeth** (see below)
- 8-10 Fast Affairs and Hot Dates (go back to **Life Events**)

## A LOVE AFFAIR WITH TEETH

Choose or roll 1D10:

- 1 Your lover's friends/family would use any means to get rid of you.
- 2 You fight constantly.
- 3 You had a child! Roll for sex: EVEN=Male, ODD=Female. Note the year it was born for age.
- 4 One of you is "messing around."
- 5 Lover died in accident/committed suicide/killed in a fight.
- 6 Lover mysteriously vanished/was kidnapped
- 7 It just didn't work out—in a hard way.
- 8 You got married! Any further **Love and War** rolls refer to your marriage (which might lead to divorce!).
- 9 Lover was imprisoned/exiled/went insane.
- 10 Rival cut you out of the action.

Go to **LIFE EVENTS**

## THE GOOD WITH THE BAD

Roll 1D10:

- 1 **Financial loss or debt:** Roll 1D10x100. You have lost this much in dollars. If you can't pay this now, you have a debt to pay, in cash—or blood.
- 2 **Make a powerful connection in city government.** Roll 1D10. 1-4, it's in the Police Dept. 5-7, it's in the District Attorney's Office. 8-10, it's in the Mayor's Office.
- 3 **Imprisonment:** You have been in prison, or possibly held hostage (your choice). Roll 1D10 for length of imprisonment in months.
- 4 **Big score on job or deal!** Roll 1D10x100 for amount in Dollars.
- 5 **Accident or injury:** You were in some kind of terrible accident or took some nasty wounds. Roll 1D10. 1-4, you were terribly disfigured and must subtract -5 from your ATT. 5-6, you were hospitalized for 1D10 months that year. 7-8, you have lost 1D10 months of memory of that year. 9-10, you constantly relive nightmares (8 in 10 chance each night) of the incident and wake up screaming.
- 6 **Powerful Corporate exec** owes you one favor.
- 7 **Lover, friend or relative killed:** You lost someone you really cared about. 1-5, he died accidentally. 6-8, he was murdered by unknown parties. 9-10, he was murdered and you know who did it. You just need the proof.
- 8 **Make a friend on the police force.** A good-hearted cop funnels information to you. You may use him for inside information at a level of +2 *Streetwise* on any police related situation.
- 9 **Hunted by the Law/Corps:** You are hunted by the law or a corporation (your choice) for things you may or may not have done. Roll 1D10. 1-3, only a couple of local cops or a local firm wants you. 4-6, it's the entire local force or a statewide corp. 7-8, it's the State Police or Militia or a national corp. 9-10, it's the LE Div or perhaps the DSA, or CorpSec.
- 10 **Local crimelord likes you.** You can call upon him for 1 *minor* favor a month. But don't push it.

Go To **LIFE EVENTS**

## FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

Roll 1D10 on the table below. You can add one to the roll if your EMP is 7 or higher. Then roll 1D10 to determine sex of the person: **EVEN = Male** **ODD = Female**

- 1 **Enemy:** Bitter ex-friend or lover
- 2 **Enemy:** Relative
- 3 **Enemy:** Partner or co-worker
- 4 **Enemy:** Corporate exec
- 5 **Enemy:** Government official
- 6 **Friend:** Like a brother/sister to you
- 7 **Friend:** Partner or co-worker
- 8 **Friend:** Old lover (choose which one)
- 9 **Friend:** Old enemy (choose which one)
- 10 **Friend:** Met through a common interest

Go to **LIFE EVENTS**

## HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT MOST PEOPLE?

Choose or roll 1D10:

- 1-2 Neutral
- 3 I like almost everyone.
- 4 No one understands me.
- 5 People are stupid sheep who need to be led.
- 6 Every person is a valuable individual.
- 7 Each person must earn my respect. No free rides.
- 8 People are generally untrustworthy. Be careful whom you depend on.
- 9 No one's going to hurt me again.
- 10 People are wonderful.

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

Choose or roll 1D10:

- 1 Shy and secretive
- 2 Rebellious, antisocial, violent
- 3 Arrogant, proud and aloof
- 4 Moody, rash and headstrong
- 5 Picky, fussy and nervous
- 6 Stable and serious
- 7 Silly and fluffheaded
- 8 Sneaky and deceptive
- 9 Intellectual and detached
- 10 Friendly and outgoing

## PERSON YOU VALUE MOST

Choose or roll one:

- 1 Child
- 2 Brother or sister
- 3 Lover
- 4 Friend
- 5 Yourself
- 6 Pet
- 7 Teacher or mentor
- 8 Public figure
- 9 Personal hero
- 10 No one

## WHAT DO YOU VALUE MOST?

Choose or roll 1D10:

- 1 Money
- 2 Honor
- 3 Your word
- 4 Honesty
- 5 Knowledge
- 6 Vengeance
- 7 Love
- 8 Power
- 9 Having a good time
- 10 Friendship

YOUR HEAD



# CYBERPUNK GENERATION EDGERUNNER SHEET

• Your "Handle"

• Your Cyberware


Sex	Age	Wt.	Ht.
-----	-----	-----	-----

• Your Description


• Sp. Ability

• Experience

• Your Stats

INT	REF	COOL	
TECH	MOVE	LUCK	
BODY	EMP	ATT	

• Your Wounds (Cyberpunk & Cybergeneration)

L	L	L	S	S	S	S	C	C	C	C	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	
Cybernet BIM		DHTS																					

• General Skills (Mark with an X if it's a chipped skill)

Personal App	Melee		
Phy. Prowess	Piloting		
Resist Torture	Ranged Weapons		
Streetwise	Stealth		
Interaction	Aero Tech		
Leadership	Basic Tech		
Awareness/Notice	Elec/Cyber Tech		
Ed/Gen Know.	First Aid		
Information Sys	ID. Tech		
Teaching	Milspec Tech		
Survival/Tracking	Security Tech		
Athletics	Soft/Pick Pocket		
Driving			
H-t-H Combat			
Heavy Weapons			

• Your Equipment


# CHAPTER TEN



# ADVERSARIES

"YOU ARE THE CYBEREVOLVED;  
THE CHANGED.  
AND CHANGE COMES  
ONLY WITH PAIN.  
IT TOOK AN ASTEROID  
TO SMASH THE REIGN OF  
THE DINOSAUR.  
WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO  
SMASH THE REIGN OF  
THE CORPORATE STATE?"



# WHO'S AFTER YOU?

Despite the Gun Bounty, the high police presence and the corporate security zones, the ISA is a *dangerous* place, *especially* if you're a CyberEvolved. There's a full-blown propaganda campaign being generated by the government designed to turn the populace against the Changed, to make the public see them as plague carriers and dangerous mutants. The airwaves and Net are full of CDC reports on how CyberEvolved have killed their own parents, destroyed public property and endangered the lives of thousands. Some of it's even true; some Changed kids have gone berserk, using their new powers to wreak revenge on those who've wronged them before. Bounties have been posted and rewards for information leading to the apprehension of "contaminators" are common knowledge. Add to this the war against the CyberRevolution, with CorpSec and every other federal agency trying to snuff out this proto-rebellion, and you've got enough to keep the kids jumping for some time.

Here are brief outlines for some of the major groups interested in the CyberEvolved and the CyberRevolution. Each has a slightly different agenda for the Evolved: Some want to kill them, some to capture them, and others to help them, even if the kids don't want their help. Use them to add variety to your plots; it can get rather boring if your kids are just facing CorpSec goons all the time. Refer to the Adversary templates at the end of this chapter for quick NPC stats for these groups, but the best NPCs should be custom-designed to fit your stories.

**Remember:** Not every member of a group will deal with it the same way. Some may not adhere rigorously to the group philosophy or others may interpret it in entirely different ways. In other words, try to avoid falling into bald stereotypes with these people. A sympathetic BuReloc trooper can go miles toward reminding the players that the people aren't necessarily evil, the organizations are.

# THE DOMESTIC SECURITY AGENCY

**"Don't tell me that the Changed are just children. I have fought them, and I say that they are abominations ... but useful abominations."**

**—Anastasia Lucessi, Agent Chief,  
ISA Domestic Security Agency**

The ISA Domestic Security Agency started simply as part of the Corporate Security Agency (CorpSec, see pg. 231), but the success of its Undercover Operations Division soon made it a major tool of the CEP. While still used as a part of the corporate police force, with jurisdiction covering all corporate property (which now encompasses almost 40% of the country), they now have other divisions to handle specialized investigations and other tasks. Their cases cover all matters directly involving corporate interests and procedures. They can, and often do, remove police from an investigation and take it over for themselves.

ISA Agents are known for their cold, disdainful manner and are commonly known on the Street by a variety of derogatory nicknames, such as "Corpsicles." But ISA Agents always have the best equipment and tech available; their equivalent of SWAT can bring out milspec Powered Armor suits, attack AVs, or even tanks. Worse, their intelligence operatives are among the best in a very competitive business. They also have another ace up their sleeves: **The Raptors**—CyberEvolved children who have been coerced or convinced to use their talents to help the Agency hunt down their brethren.

The ISA Domestic Security Agency is definitely the single greatest threat to the Changed, since they have the resources and the subtlety to go where BuReloc or the military can't. Very scary people.

# ARASAKA

**The Black Dragon of the East rears its ugly head everywhere. And, as usual, the great minds at Arasaka are slightly more visionary than those of most of the other corporations.**

Saburo Arasaka, still miraculously holding on at 108 (much to the annoyance of his son Kei), realizes that with the Change that is being wrought among the children, the corporate agenda should not be to try to stop or control the disease, but to gain control of the children themselves. He views the Carbon Plague as a giant tsunami, and if he and his corporation play their cards right, the wave will carry them forward to a golden future, instead of washing over them and crushing them beneath its inexorable might.

Saburo has heard that the affected children have unusual abilities, powers beyond even those obtained by the most advanced hardware available. This means that if they are properly indoctrinated, they will be the finest and least expensive Arasaka operatives ever obtained. Ten years from now, were Arasaka to field an army of adults with these powers, the corporation would be unstoppable.

To this end, Arasaka is attempting to abduct as many affected children as possible, preferably kids who have had a hard time and would therefore be more susceptible to the lures of a corporate-controlled "harmonious family" situation. The Arasaka corporation has already built (in an incredibly short time) a new facility at their secure R&D site in northern Honshu to house these children, complete with corporate parent figures carefully screened and trained for maximum appeal. With this facility, Arasaka hopes to make itself the generous corporate parents and family of a new wave of CyberEvolved children, and then give them the training and indoctrination they need to become the vanguard of Arasaka's future domination.

To this end, the Arasaka field operatives monitor all developments across the world. Through CorpSec, they



know when a raid is going down, where the trouble spots are, and what the latest developments in the plague may be. Through the ISA they have access to a lot of information on American children, which allows them to target the lower income and underprivileged children. (Arasaka will almost never abduct a GlitterKid or GoldenKid unless the psychoanalysis lab can find an excellent reason.)

In an abduction, Arasaka generally waits until another faction is pursuing or has captured the child, allowing them to drop in like saviors and spirit the child away from pursuit. (This works particularly well with their CorpSec contacts.) This is just the first step in their planned campaign to make themselves out to be the child's friend. To further their ability to relate to the children, all Arasaka operatives are trained in the latest streetslang and subculture.

This claim-jumping tactic is, of course, of extreme annoyance to everyone, but as Arasaka takes pains to cover its tracks and camouflages its abduction vans as any of a number of things from derelict vehicles to television mobile units, no one has yet clued in to the depth of Arasaka's involvement.

Of all the forces pursuing the Evolved, Arasaka is perhaps the most dangerous, because they know the kids, they know what the kids really want, and they play on this knowledge to coax the kids to cooperate willingly.

# BURELOC

**The dark arm of the government, BuReloc is the most visible, most pervasive, and most common of the pursuit forces arrayed against the children of tomorrow.**

The first of the CEP's creations, the Bureau of Relocation was established as part of the Department of Health and Human Resources. Of course, the "resources" that they were designed to relocate were squatters and indigents who had set up life where the corporations wanted to build. This federal bureau would sweep in and round up any and all, shipping them off to internment camps for "Vocational Training", i.e., unpaid work gangs. With the coming of the Carbon Plague, BuReloc has been given a new set of targets: the Evolved.

They are not the most powerful (that honor perhaps belongs with Arasaka), nor are they the most motivated (that goes to the Guerrillas), but they are everywhere, and their resources are effectively limitless. They also have the advantage of being THE law, which few of the other forces can truly stake claim to. BuReloc's attitude is that the children are dangerous and, for the public safety, must be eliminated as menaces. Publicly, this means removing them from public life and quarantining them. It just so happens that in real life the infected children are quarantined in a crematorium.

BuReloc's approach is founded on the landmark case of *Stoe v. Nevada*, wherein those with infectious diseases were found to be in violation of the civil rights of future victims. In other words, whereas before a person with an infectious disease could be charged with attempted murder for deliberately infecting someone, they could now be charged with negligent homicide just for walking the street where others could pick up their disease. (This, in turn, led to the so-called Three Strikes Law where proven incorrigibles could be summarily executed to prevent potential assaults on future victims, but most kids don't evade the grasp of BuReloc enough for this to be a consideration.)

BuReloc's goal is to capture as many infected children as possible as quickly as possible, and export them to quarantine centers. Their tools are speed, surprise, fear, and the backing of the Incorporated States government. They are ruthless, efficient and remorseless.

BuReloc prefers to capture kids alive because it makes them look less bad, but if a kid puts up enough fight, they are legally empowered to kill the kid under the above-cited laws and associated statutes. Similarly,

BuReloc can pacify ("gun down" has such ugly connotations) anyone who interferes with the execution of their duties—all for the public good, of course.

BuReloc's goals are simply the elimination of the threat. They take the kids, consolidate them in one place, and kill them all. They have no pity, no remorse, and no reason to think that anything other than what they are doing will be the salvation of the uninfected children of the planet. The BuReloc personnel are thoroughly indoctrinated and brainwashed, and have regular psychological exams to ensure that their *personal feelings remain in line with official doctrine*. Part of this psychology is to make them feel that they have a special understanding of the situation, that the general public simply can't see that what they are doing is right. This gives the BuReloc personnel the camaraderie of the maligned savior, which keeps their ranks close and their people loyal to the cause.

This doesn't mean that they don't feel for the kids; it's just that they consider the state of actual infection to be too late for the children themselves. They consider the kids to be unfortunate victims, the walking dead, who, if allowed to live, would only infect others and bring them to their terrible state. BuReloc doesn't tell its front-line troopers that kids can survive the Carbon Plague; *that would be bad for morale.*



# CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL

**The CDC is made up of some of the few idealists left in the government. Their goal is to isolate the disease and find a cure as soon as possible. They are hampered in this effort by the interference of other factions—corporate, private, and government—most notably BuReloc, who has access to all the information the CDC has.**

Of the governmental agencies, the CDC is the least heartless. They view the children as unfortunate victims of a terrible disease, and they work around the clock to try to isolate the virus and help the children. So far, nothing they have done has worked, although they have discovered that children can survive the plague, and thereafter appear to develop an immunity. The government and corporations have squelched this information, waiting until the disease itself has been isolated. The CDC itself is not concerned about leaking such information, so the word has started to hit the street.

The CDC endeavors to get not only the infected, but also some children suspected of having been infected, who are then put under observation. The CDC has a lot of data about the later stages of the disease, and is working on finding out more about the early stages. Since the disease can be survived, and in fact has been demonstrated to be typically non-fatal to children, the CDC has also managed to acquire some "undesirables" from BuReloc (its "sister" bureau within the Dept. of Health) for vector testing.

While many might bridle at this as inhumane, the CDC is pulling these kids out of relocation camps and providing them with decent food and shelter and a small stipend until they are sixteen. In exchange for a more stable future with some vague sort of hope, the kids get infected and the CDC studies the early stages and experiments on infection vectors. It's painful, but at least the CDC workers are compassionate.

Since BuReloc is everywhere, the CDC has a hard time getting kids to study. BuReloc would rather just kill them all. Normally the CDC gets involved as a shadowy background figure behind the efforts of the Axis, the Plague Survivor's Alliance, the police, or some other group of similar public-service bent. The CDC provides the equipment and finances, and the group provides the extraction. What this means is that the extraction will look like the work of some fringe group, but the CDC is actually pulling the strings. You never know who might really be behind any kidnaping. Could be the CDC. Of course, it could be Arasaka, as well.

At times the CDC will even use their access to government records and information to set up an extraction from another arm of the government or a corporation. They've never been caught doing this—yet. Even so, their unconventional approach is known to the rest of those in power. As a result of their maverick approach, the CDC has been taking a lot of heat from the government, and they may soon find themselves shut down or purged.

# CDC+

## CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL

## CORPSEC

**There are a lot of corporations out trying to grab the CyberEvolved, and CorpSec is their favorite tool, primarily because if one corporation doesn't abuse CorpSec for its own ends, all the others will.**

While the Corporate Security Agency is not as omnipresent as BuReloc, it still permeates the country, with jurisdiction over all corporate land in the ISA, which is quite a lot considering the mallplexes, arcologies and company towns where most people live. CorpSec's prestige did take a blow when the Domestic Security Agency, its top investigative branch, was given its own place in the Justice Dept. alongside CorpSec itself. Now CorpSec supplies the best of the "troopers" on the Street: elite and effective personnel, authorized and equipped to operate in lieu of military or police support.

Each corporation has its own pet CorpSec units—official teams of the unified force carefully filled with loyalists and agents on the payroll to augment its own security forces. And, thanks to the ISA, CorpSec teams have the right to go wherever they want, even into your bedroom closet, to find whatever they want—like children.

CorpSec teams are ruthless, and shoot those who interfere with their investigations. Once CorpSec agents have the kids in custody, they turn them over to the parent organization. What is done with them there varies from corporation to corporation, but it is never pleasant.

CorpSec shares access to the "Raptors" with the ISA Agents. Some of these Evolved kids help CorpSec because they truly believe in the corporate dream, or because they think they are helping their friends—CorpSec has a cure, right?—and some for the sheer joy of chasing other children. No one likes a Raptor. CorpSec agents don't like them. Other kids don't like them. Even the execs don't like them, because they don't truly understand them, and what the corporations don't understand, they fear. Nevertheless, the corporations have always been good at winning loyalty, and it's not that tough to win the heart of a vulnerable, idealistic kid.

## COPS

**While the government has sold out to the corporations, the average beat cop still tries to serve and protect the public. Is there still room for such idealists in 2027? They like to think so.**

Unfortunately, this puts some good-intentioned people in a place where they have to serve the dictates of the less conscientious people in power. The problem facing the cops these days is that the kids are disrupting the peace, although through no fault of their own, and the job of the police force is to keep the peace. There's nothing like seeing a kid double over in the middle of the street and vomit up a stream of silvery lunch to disrupt the cheerful veneer that covers life in 2027. Watching the stuff congeal into a shiny pseudopod and reach back into the kid's panting mouth is even worse. Whether a public menace, a threat to public health, children in need of medical assistance, or just an unwanted disruption, the result is the same—send the police to round them up.

So what do the police do with the kids? They do what their boss tells them to do. If the city council says all infected kids must be transferred to BuReloc, over they go. If they must be delivered to the NoAhme Caldewell labs for, uh, disease control studies, over they go. Fortunately, the corporations don't flagrantly violate the law in front of the noses of the police. Even when all the paperwork is in order, the police generally pursue the apprehension and delivery of children with somewhat less enthusiasm than do corporate or private pursuers. The exception, of course, are those municipalities that have had problems with violent nanotech-enhanced juvegangs. In these cities the police are noticeably less tolerant and compassionate.

Overall, though, the police are not a bad group to get chased by, for the simple reason that they don't like turning kids over to people they don't trust. In other words, if they don't give you a chance to escape, it ought to be pretty easy for you to make one.



## LEDIV

**The National Law Enforcement Division is rarely seen in pursuit of a child with the plague, but when it happens, it's very very bad.**


LEDiv officers are easily the peers of the best in the corporate world, and they have access to everything the government knows, which, ultimately, is quite a lot. It's just that outside of the LEDiv, the government workers have problems putting it all together.

LEDiv usually gets called in when there are other sinister interests involved. Should, say, Arasaka have pulled a few too many snatches in one city, you can bet LEDiv will be hot on the trail, perhaps even setting up deliberate infections for the trapping of the Arasaka team.

Sometimes LEDiv gets involved with pursuing a KidKiller gang. Or sometimes they get called in for reasons beyond the understanding of anyone who lacks a Top Secret clearance from the government. Whatever the cause, they have their reasons, they have the tools, and, with the backing of the government, they can do whatever they want and there's nothing you can do about it. They move with a cold grace and an economy of motion, and they have no interests other than their own.

Just hope you're not on their list for some arcane reason.

INCORPORATED  
STATES OF  
AMERICA  
LAW  
ENFORCE-  
MENT  
DIVISION



## THE MILITARY

**The ISA has made sure that the military has been kept insulated from the corporate infighting that pervades the government, and the military, in turn, has helped the government to keep them in ignorance. After all, it's a lot easier being a soldier when you're not aware of the sort of vermin running the whole show.**

This insulation goes both ways, however, for the military has found that the corporate-dominated government leaks like a sieve as far as intelligence is concerned. The military itself is very tight, in part because it's filled with people who want nothing to do with the corporate world.

Although most of those in the armed forces are well adjusted people, there are those warmongers within the military who have their own agenda with the CyberEvolved. They are conducting their own tests with the kids, some in an effort to isolate the virus and reproduce a more lethal form of it as a bioweapon, while others are testing the viability of forcing an infection in an adult to make him a supersoldier. These military operations are always very covert and rival Arasaka for speed, ability, and technical know-how. They are usually manned by some elite forces sworn to secrecy and trained to a monoblade's edge.

Because these people see the world in the black and white of weapons and defenses, they tend to look on the Changed as either tools to be exploited or else collateral damage to be ignored. They are not fun people to be chased by. Fortunately, they exhibit the greatest interest in children with new, previously-unheard-of mutations, so most Evolved kids are beneath their interest most of the time.

## THE EDGE

**Although the corporations have by and large won the Cyberpunk Revolution, the cyberpunks themselves have not rolled over and died. Even those who, feeling the onset of age and the timeless pull of procreation, hid their guns in the closet and begin punching clocks instead of corporate guards have not truly sold out.**

While the general public rejoices in the new-found corporate prosperity, the cyberpunks, the true Edgerunners, see the dark future for what it really is. And though they are a little older, a little slower, and have kids, most of the cyberpunks still hate the corporations they work for.

When the Carbon Plague swept the nation's youth, the children of the cyberpunks were affected as well. As they have with all children, the corporations and government put their heavy hand in. This, my friends, is what set off the latent cyberpunk psyche which has lain dormant these seven years.

Parental instinct and street-honed reflexes came together as never before. The old hands oiled their guns, dusted off the armorjacks, and ran through the martial arts forms a few times to work out the stiffness. Then they left the corporate flat, stepping over the slowly cooling corpses of the corporate guards, with the infected child dragging behind, gripped firmly in a cyberhand.

These returning cyberpunks have formed what they call the Edge, which is an attempt to return to the street culture of the early part of the decade. The Edge is made up of cyberpunks who have abandoned their corporate prosperity for the sake of their children. They take these kids and teach them everything they know about survival on the street, to help them stay out of the corporate clutches.

In the face of corporate aggression against the children, the Edge has been able to reform the

webwork of support that used to define the Street. They move quickly in response to any grapevine word of an afflicted child or corporate movement. They will help extricate former comrades and their kids from any situation, risking their lives constantly for the sake of the children. This means, of course, that the Edge almost never comes after BeaverBrats, GoldenKids, or others toward the upper end of the social spectrum—Edgerunners never advanced far in the corporate world, so they don't have many connections among the managerial set. They do, however, go after GlitterKids, because often these are the offspring of or have connections to the Edgerunners.

The Edge treats the kids very well, if a bit roughly. After all, most of the people in the Edge had poor parents, if any, and surrendered the kids to corporate nannies rather than learn the difficult task of parenting themselves. They tend to consider kids to be half-pint adults rather than children. Nevertheless, although rough and abrasive, they have an honesty which their children can sense on an instinctive level, and although their metal hands are cold, they also carry the weight of power and authority. In a lot of ways, the kids understand the members of the Edge; they, too, are misfits and restless rebels.

The agenda of the Edge does not go much further than pulling the kids out. This is a symptom of why the Cyberpunk Revolution lost against the corporations: The goals of the cyberpunks were generally short-sighted. The individual cyberpunk concerned himself with survival, and, beyond that, with bringing a corporation down. They knew they wanted change, but they weren't sure exactly what they wanted in its place. This sort of vague idealism has led to the Edge, and to a recreation of the Street culture, but the Edge has no goals beyond pulling the kids out of the corporate clutches. They know they want the kids to be free, but they don't know what they want the kids to do with their freedom.

Usually, they end up trying to get the kids involved in the same sort of things they did: gun-running, drug-smuggling, data piracy, sabotage. It's what they know. And now that many of them have actually spent time with their kids for the first time, they are loath to let them go.

# CLARKERS

**One should never underestimate the gullibility of the human species, especially when it is aligned with hopeless idealism. This is particularly true with respect to the Clarkers.**

Clarker is a blanket term applied to a wide variety of strange pseudo-religious groups which have abruptly sprung up everywhere. The term is taken from the name of Arthur C. Clarke, author of *Childhood's End*, a story from the previous century wherein children around the world simultaneously evolve into an advanced life form. The term is derogatory, implying that the Clarker takes a fantasy and believes it to be real. It's also derogatory in that it lumps all Clarkers into one bucket, a generalization which all Clarkers find offensive; after all, they're right, and the others are just loonies.

Clarkers come in all varieties, ranging from slightly off-beat visionaries to downright spiritual hacks, but they all share one central premise. The Carbon Plague, whether it be an actual plague or an act of God or an evolutionary imperative, is a Good Thing. An obvious corollary to this is that the Clarkers themselves will help further the Carbon Plague in any way possible. Human Dawn, for example, has a name patterned after the popular vidshow. They are convinced that the children are evolving per natural laws. They claim that the theory of evolution has never explained sudden radical shifts in gene coding, and that we are privileged to witness the sudden birth of a new species, *Homo sapiens cambiarus*. In their opinion, evolution must not, and in fact can not, be stopped.

Thus the Clarkers work to foil anything and everything that seeks to prevent the children from growing as they want. Human Dawn is, in effect, a group of terrorist extremists. They actively hunt down and kill BuReloc personnel. They look for and destroy BuReloc camps. They ruthlessly kill anyone who stands in their way. Most importantly, they find the children, spirit them away to safety, and fill them with their doctrine. The

adult members of Human Dawn are even more devoted to their work. They firmly believe that the human race as we have known it these past few thousand years is obsolete. They know their time is through, so they don't care if they die as long as their death furthers evolution in some way. In fact, were Human Dawn able to do so, they would wipe out the entire species of unchanged humans in a flash. Fortunately for us, however, they do not have tactical nuclear devices. They do, however, have kids whom they've educated to believe they are the wave of the future and are therefore entitled under the Survival of the Fittest to wreak havoc on the obsolete humans.

The Living Advent Church is another example of a Clarker group. Through a very creative interpretation (i.e., rewriting) of the Bible and other holy works, they have proven (that is, found or generated enough rickety evidence to support their wild claim) that the children are the Coming of God incarnate, which is the only way their damaged brains can make sense of the apparent miracles the kids can pull off. To this end, members will deliberately expose their kids to the Change (or as they see it, to the glory of God). Naturally, "God" invariably obliges these faithful, and their children get massively ill as "God purges them of sin."

Obviously, desperate religious fanatics like these have nothing to do with real religion, and are dangerous to an extreme. They kill unbelievers in the blink of an eye, and spirit away as many children as they can to worship them and tell them that they are God incarnate. This does very little good to the developing young minds, but the believers write off any tantrums or punishments the spoiled children inflict on them as the will of God. The net result is a church run by spoiled children and staffed by fanatics — a bad combination indeed.

Whatever the actual doctrine, you can readily see that Clarkers are a problem for all. Fortunately, they are strange enough that they only attract those whose sanity is already in question; were they able to attract stable and intelligent people, society would be turned on its ear.

# FINAL QUARANTINE

**This is a parents' group, and the nearest thing to a secret society in the post-modern world. Final Quarantine is not particularly organized, but it is frighteningly widespread.**

The adherents of Final Quarantine believe that, with the plague spreading out of control, the only way to save the future generations of mankind is to quickly and decisively eliminate all contaminated children, thereby hopefully stopping the spread of the plague before it gets everyone. It's a harsh, cruel choice, but one which the parents feel they have no other choice but to make.

As mentioned, Final Quarantine is not really organized, and in fact the name itself is only rarely used. It was coined by a corporate executive who, writing a report, needed a label to apply to this mentality. The group is made up of member parents who talk to other parents. They voice their concerns, share insight and facts, and gauge the other parents' feeling about the plague. They hope to find other parents as concerned about the health of their children as they themselves are. This being done, the member slowly debates alternative plans of action until the parent is convinced that the corporations and the government aren't doing enough, especially with the activities of strange groups like the Clarkers. The only solution is the immediate and final quarantine of afflicted youth; it's the only way to save your children.

It's a damn hard decision for any parent to make, but ultimately it hinges on two unspoken concepts: "better them than me" and "it's too late once they're affected; it's really a mercy killing." A strange byproduct of this mentality is that once an adherent of the Final Quarantine has actually killed someone else's plague-ridden kid, he'll never change his mind again; to do so

would be tantamount to admitting that you murdered children, and that's something that no parent can come to grips with. It is these members who are the most compelling advocates of Final Quarantine, and the ones who garner the greatest number of new recruits (thereby distributing their suppressed guilt among as many new members as possible). Such members have even been known to kill one of their own children to save the rest.

The biggest problem that Final Quarantine presents to the Evolved is that you never know who they'll be. Anyone could be a member. Anyone from the BuReloc man to the liquor store owner who slips you a few brews, to the vet, to your next door neighbor who coaches your little league, to your baby-sitter — even your parents themselves, which is the worst nightmare for any kid.

Even if a parent cannot be convinced that the Final Quarantine is the only choice for the safety of the future, members will still keep in close contact. In fact, those who do not believe as they do are considered to be weak links, and the members will do everything they can to stay close to these people and project the image of concerned, friendly neighbors—so that when one of their kids does get sick, these parents will let their compassionate neighbors know, giving the Final Quarantine a chance to act before it's too late.



# THE PLAGUE SURVIVOR'S ALLIANCE

**The PSA is a political grassroots movement the like of which has not been seen for a long time. In fact, there haven't been any grassroots movements around at all for the last six years or so.**

The PSA is founded on the tenet that those afflicted with the plague still have civil rights and should be treated as victims, not monsters. This, of course, is the sort of thinking that allowed AIDS, AIDS II and the Wasting Plague to spread as widely as they did, but the advocates seem to ignore this fact.

Of course, the PSA has found that the child survivors of the Carbon Plague have some, shall we say, unsettling tendencies. Nevertheless, they claim, these should be overlooked. They are not worthy of bias or prejudice, and with proper training, the Evolved can be easily integrated into society.

Naturally, the PSA hates the members of Final Quarantine to the ends of the Earth. That wouldn't be so bad, but the PSA is thoroughly infiltrated by advocates of Final Quarantine. On the other hand, the PSA is better organized than the Finals, and they have actually set up a sort of underground railroad. They grab kids, spirit them away, teach them to ignore their CyberEvolved abilities, and try to reintegrate them into society in a different city as adopted children or distant relatives.

The PSA prefers to work with whole families, whom they will help move as a whole once the afflicted child has recovered. Sometimes it's not necessary for a family to move, however; if no one outside the PSA

knew the kid got sick, then the PSA just whisks the child off to safety for a short while on the pretense of a ski trip or something and everything's fine.

Although the PSA primarily works with member families or friends of same, they will also try to kidnap ("take into protective custody") complete strangers whom they know to have the Plague. These kids are usually snatched from police stations or government or corporate transfer stations.

The PSA is made up of good-hearted people. Because they are decent and caring, they often lack the experience or ruthlessness to be able to pull off a clean abduction of an unwitting victim, but they are determined at least to try.

Of all the groups, the PSA is perhaps the least violent, simply because it is made up of people who have never really run the streets and who have learned everything they know about fighting from watching combat sports and reading detective fiction. This is also certainly where they got their false bravado.

The strangest fact about the PSA is that none of its members has been affected by the Carbon Plague. Some Changed children are involved, sure, but the adults run the show, and the Plague is always fatal to adults. This is the ultimate fallacy of the PSA, which has prevented the corporations or the government from taking them seriously as a political movement.

# Plague Survivor's ALLIANCE

# SKILLS & CYBERWARE FOR THE BAD GUYS

## Adversary Types

The **Adversaries** are the people your *Cybergeneration* players are going to be going up against, encountering and thwarting (or being thwarted by) on a daily basis. But who are these guys? In *Cybergeneration*, there are five kinds of Adversaries (or Bad Guys) you'll be facing: Agents, CorpSec, Corpzoners, Netcops and Edgerunners.

**Agents** are the covert operatives of the Corporations and the ISA. They are most like the ubiquitous "Men in Black" that make up the CIA, KBG and other secret organizations worldwide. In training, they are like the Edgerunner Solos: dedicated killers, spies and black ops masters. Arasaka, the Domestic Security Agency, CDC and LEDiv are all examples of Agents in action.

**CorpSec** are the stormtroopers of the *Cybergeneration* world. Usually heavily armed and armored, they aren't subtle, just nasty. Unlike the Agents, who rely on their skills and training, CorpSec relies on manpower and high-tech weapons like Genius Guns and panzers. They are very, very bad news. CorpSec and the Army are the elite in this category; BuReloc and Cops can also be considered low-level versions, but with fewer powers and hardware.

**Corpzoners** are the powerful and shadowy figures who run things behind the scenes: Corporates with more power than the Illuminati, who tell the Agents and CorpSec what to do. Corpzoners aren't combat monsters, but don't underestimate them. Even an old wolf like Saburo Arasaka still has lots of long, sharp teeth.

**Netcops** represent the various sysops and electronic wardens that patrol the ISA Net. They prowl this electronic wonderland ostensibly making it safe for the Netgoing public. In fact, they are authorized to brainwipe anyone they

feel is "suspicious" or "a threat to national security." Like the hired gunslingers of the Old West, they stalk the Net, ready to blaze away with powerful anti-system and anti-personnel software at the drop of a virtual hat. AIM Overwatch is an example of this type of adversary.

**Edgerunners** are the old Cyberpunks (NPC Edgerunners). They're a bit older, a lot wiser, and a lot more cautious. They play both sides of the fence: Some are allied with CorpSec and the Agents; others are part of the various renegade groups like the Clarkers and the PSA. This is where the adult leaders of the CyberRevolution also come in.

They're also not necessarily all Adversaries in the traditional sense. But when you're sixteen and *CyberEvolved*, *everyone* over twenty seems to be the enemy.

## Adversary Templates

We give you a set of pregenerated NPC templates starting on page 240. These can be rapidly filled out and customized in minor ways to speed up preparation time. We rate each template as Average, Good, and Exceptional for four kinds of Adversary and list one example for the fifth. This will give you thirteen different templates to work from.

## Skills

As with Edgerunner skills, Adversary skills are divided into two types: **Special Abilities** and **General Skills**.

### Special Ability Skills

**Special Ability Skills** work just like Edgerunner Special Abilities (see pg. 213). They are usually specific to a single type of Adversary, and there are two Abilities not typically open to Player Edgerunners. The NPC Edgerunners we list here have not been given Special Abilities. Select the Special Ability based on the Edgerunner type you need and write it in next to the *Experience* listing.

**Authority (CorpSec):** The ability to intimidate or control others through a position as a lawman; the ability to question suspects, arrest wrongdoers, detain prisoners, confiscate and/or enter private property. Authority is applied to the COOL stat.

**Resources (Corpzoner):** This INT-based skill represents the Corporate's ability to command corporation resources. It is used as a persuasion skill, based on the scale of resources requested. This could include bodyguards, weapons, vehicles, buildings, money, etc. Obviously, the more powerful the Corporate, the more he can call upon at any one time.

**Combat Sense (Agents):** See pg. 214.

**Interface (Netcops):** See pg. 214.

**Experience (Edgerunner):** See pg. 213.

### General Skills

Adversaries have access to all the Edgerunner General Skills listed on pages 216-222. The most commonly used ones are already listed on the Adversaries template.

## Bad Guy Cyberware

Your Adversaries can have any of the cyberware listed on pages 219 to 222, regardless of the legality. (Hey, they work for the people who *make* the laws!)

In addition, a few agents have had their bodies fully replaced by cyberware, leaving nothing but the brain and a minimal biosystem riding in a totally robotic frame. These guys are amazingly tough and fast, but they can also be pretty unstable; ripping away that much of your body tends to take your humanity with it. The ISA doesn't use these Agents often, but when they do, the cyberkids face a terrible Adversary that is both strong *and* smart (think *the Terminator* with a human brain). A typical **full-body cyborg conversion** can have the following features:

- Fully cybernetic body with an overall AR of 8 and a BODY of 14 for strength purposes (these replace the natural BODY stat). This means it can lift 560 kg, take 20 hits before becoming inoperable, and do DC 6 crushing and kicking and DC 5 punching. The body also has a wired REF of 12 and a MOVE of 10.
- Full cyberoptic and cybervision suite with all the standard and optional features, plus a Chipware socket and Smartgun link.
- A Pop-up gun in one arm and a Wolverine in the other. Spaces in the legs are open for options.

## Capture Gear

While the bad guys have all sorts of serious weapons, we'd rather that you didn't overuse them. Many of these Adversaries want to capture the CyberEvolved unharmed for study and recruitment (particularly the CDC, Arasaka and the DSA). So they've also got a variety of non-lethal hardware to aid them in "bringing 'em back alive." Here are a few examples:

- **PSI Stundart Pistol:** A handweapon that fires low-velocity .45 rounds that hit and release an electrical charge that stuns like a taser. The charge ignores armor of AR 2 or less.

**P • 0 • J • C • STUN at -2 • 6 • 2 • VR**

- **Avante Needlegun:** An air-powered pistol firing needles coated with any appropriate drug or poison (see pg. 152-154 for rules on drugs and poisons).

**P • 0 • P • P • Per Drug • 15 • 2 • ST**

- **Webgun:** This rifle launches a spiderweb-like net deployed by four weights fired in a conical pattern. Once hit, the target must make *both* a Very Difficult BODY *and* a REF check or be entangled (1/2 REF, 0 MOVE). If only one check succeeds, the target is still entangled but can get free in 10-REF minutes. The net can be cut by edged weapons. Range limit is 40 meters. It can also fire a Taser Net which can Stun in addition to entangling.

**RIF • +2 • N • P • Entangle • 1 • 1 • ST**

Note that the DSA and CorpSec have learned that EMP Pulse Rifles (page 100) make great stunners on Wizards and Scanners and have used them for this trick on more than one occasion.

## Heavy Weapons and Hardware

Okay, okay, we know that we said that *Cybergeneration* wasn't about Big Guns and such. We've included this section for completeness sake, since we don't know where your campaign might take you. And note that we put it in the Adversaries section; this stuff is *not* intended for your players. Refs should not allow the kids to get hold of this equipment. Besides, most will have palm pattern ID locks, etc. to prevent unauthorized use, requiring a Very Difficult *Arcane* skill check to break. Booby-trapped weapons wouldn't be unknown either.

While the streets *are* generally safer after the Gun Bounty, the dark side that is the government and the cops now control all the heavy weapons. Normally, the bad guys will only be armed with personal weapons like those from Hot 'Za or, at best, Genius Guns. CorpSec and the other police forces won't think of the kids as much of a threat, so they won't pull the heavy stuff out unless they expect *serious* resistance (like having already faced kids with heavy firepower).

These are known as "hot" operations.

If the kids (or worse, their Edgerunner chaperones) start trying to defeat the enemy with pure firepower, this stuff should impress the players with the understanding that they can *never* out-gun the ISA and must find other methods. It can also be useful for "herding"

the players. When confronted with this kind of hardware, running in the opposite direction is often the only sane alternative; you can use that to motivate the players to go in certain directions. This can be extremely useful when they've started down a plot path that you're not prepared to deal with and want to redirect them back onto your main plot. It can also be useful in "prisoner" scenarios in which you want to capture the players in order to get them into a specific situation. A squad of powered armor with Webguns backed up by combat AVs might easily convince the players to come quietly and look for a better chance to escape later on (but you'd *better* give them that chance or you'll be abusing your power). This tactic can easily be over-used; save it for when you really need it.

• **8mm Machinegun:** A full-auto support weapon  
HVY • 0 • N • R • DC 9 • 100 • 10 • VR

• **20mm Heavy Rifle:** See pg. 222

**Militech Laser Cannon:** A large man-carried laser with a 45 DC level battery. Fires as a Cap Laser (pg. 152).  
RIF • 0 • N • R • DC 3-9 (AP) • 1 • 2 • ST

• **40mm Grenade Launcher:** Man-carried  
HVY • +1 • L • R • Frag: (DC 9, 5m rad.) or Gas • 8 • 1 • VR

**Militech RPG-C:** A man-carried rocket launcher  
HVY • -1 • N • R • DC 11 • 1 • 1 • VR

• **Militech Ranger:** A military spec Powered Armor Suit consisting of a cybernetic exoskeletal frame

layered with heavy armor and combined with an extensive sensor suite. While large, heavy, and anything but sleathy, it is a fearsome opponent. It has the following features:

- It can lift 1600 kg and carry 480 kg as well as do DC 9 Punching, DC 10 Kicking and DC 10 Crushing. It has an overall AR of 17, 20 SDP, a MOVE of 9, and full life support for eight hours. A penetrating hit rolls 1D6: On 1-3 the suit takes the damage, on 4-6 the wearer takes it.

- A full IR, Low-Lite sensor/HUD suite which allows for +3 to *Awareness Notice* rolls and a +2 to hit with suit weapons; it also has full comm with a 20km range. Suit is IR baffled (-4 to detect via infrared sighting) and has ECM (-30% for Genius rounds).

- A heavy Wolverine built into the right arm (DC 9 AP), an 8mm machinegun in the left arm, and it hand-carries either an RPG-C with 40 rounds or a belt-fed 30mm Cannon (WA +1, DC 13) with 50 rounds. If it's on a capture mission, it might carry a heavy Webgun instead (WA+3, Taser Net Stun Shock roll -4 to save) with ten reloads.

- **Hummingbird Remote:** A hover remote used by CorpSec for hunting "wanted felons." It has AR 3, SDP 7 and a MV of 25 (50kph). It carries a painting laser for guiding in remote missiles (40% to hit) plus a Med SMG for "defense." It can operate 10 km from its main controller, but that can be extended via relays.

## Vehicles

- **NAM 2027 Sentry:** This patrol car is commonly used by both the police and BuReloc. It has AR 3, SDP 23, a top speed of 160 kph, a standard police comm suite, and space for four "passengers" in back. Some models also have gas and grenade cannisters along the side panels to discourage rioters ... or BoardPunks.

- **Serrato Spinner:** A police spinner commonly used by ISA organizations. It has AR 6, SDP 24, and a top speed of 352 KPH. It mounts an 8mm MG and a heavy laser (WA +2, DC 8 AP). It can carry four passengers and two prisoners.

- **Arasaka Riot 8:** This wheeled Armored Personnel Carrier is used by CorpSec and BuReloc on "hot" ops. It has AR 8, SDP 70, and a top speed of 150 kph. It

















# CYBERPUNK® TO CYBERGENERATION™

## Bringing Them In From the Cold

Any standard *Cyberpunk* character can be shifted into a *Cybergeneration* Guerrilla character; generate the character as in the 2020 rules and give him/her an extra 10 points for Pickup Skills for use in *Cybergeneration* games only. Or take any existing character and do the same; this is a great way to breathe new life into an old *Cyberpunk* character that you've played into the ground in previous games; seven more years of **Lifepath Events**, a few kids (substitute *Have a Child* for *Financial Loss* on the *Disaster Strikes!* Table and watch what happens!) and a few more good/bad breaks can really change a persona, giving it depth and background far beyond the everyday cyberjock.

## Weapons, Armor and Vehicles

*Cyberpunk* weapons can be converted to "Saturday Night Skuffle" (and vice versa) from the following chart (drop any additive less than +5; go up one level for any additive increment of 5). Note that Heavy Weapons (DC 10 and above) are *really* deadly in this game, more so than in *Cyberpunk*. You have been warned.

DC 1 = 1D6/3	DC 8 = 6D6
DC 2 = 1D6/2	DC 9 = 7D6
DC 3 = 1D6	DC 10 = 8D6-6D10
DC 4 = 2D6	DC 11 = 7D10
DC 5 = 3D6	DC 12 = 8D10
DC 6 = 4D6	DC 13 = 9D10
DC 7 = 5D6	DC 14 = More than 9D10

*Cyberpunk* armor SP can be translated from the following chart. Note that some approximations for interim values may be required.

Type of Armor (SP rating)	AR Value
Leather Armor (4-8SP) .....	1 points
Soft Armor (9-13SP) .....	2 Points
Light Armor (14-17SP) .....	3 points
Medium Armor (18-19SP) .....	5 points
Heavy Armor (20-24SP) .....	6 points
Hard Armors, Metal Gear®, Helmets (25SP) .....	7 points
Light Vehicle Armor (40SP) .....	12 points
Med. Powered Armor (55SP) .....	17 points
Hvy. Powered Armor (70SP) .....	22 points
Med. Military Vehicle Armor (80SP) .....	25 points

*Cyberpunk* vehicles and objects divide their SDP by three (round up) to determine the point of inoperability. Damage of twice that number results in total destruction.

## Skills

*Cyberpunk* skills work normally in *Cybergeneration*. Most of these skills are represented in the Edgerunner section (pgs. 213-219), but some have been combined into macroskills for ease of handling. The *Cyberpunk* equivalents are as follows:

- Spotlight:** Charismatic Leadership and Credibility.
- Personal Appearance:** Personal Grooming and Wardrobe and Style.
- Physical Prowess:** Strength Feat and Endurance.
- Streetwise:** Streetwise and Intimidate.
- Interaction:** Human Perception, Fast Talk, and Seduction.
- Information Systems:** Library Search, Programming, and System Knowledge.
- Survival/Tracking:** Wilderness Survival and Shadow/Track.
- Hand-to-Hand Combat:** Martial Arts and Brawling.
- Pilot:** Pilot Gyro, Helo, Fixed Wing, and Vectored Thrust.
- Ranged Weapons:** Archery, Handgun, SMG, Rifle.
- Aero Tech:** Aero Tech, Gyro Tech and AV Tech.
- Electronics/Cybertech:** Electronic Tech, Cybertech, Cyberdeck Design.
- I.D. Tech:** Forgery and Disguise.
- Milspec Tech:** Weaponsmith and Demolitions.
- Security Tech:** Electronic Security and Pick Lock.

## Netrunning

Program FCT is equivalent to program STR in *Cyberpunk*. Familiars translate much the same, with subroutine AFs being function STRs and DEF being defensive STR. Sentient Programs are new; treat them as powerful, unpredictable Familiars. We took out program sizes to streamline book keeping. Datafort and Cyberdeck INT translates directly and DEF is equal to Datawall STR (codegates are assumed to be the same rating).

The *Cybergeneration* Netrunning system is simplified and adjusted from the *Cyberpunk* system. Direct translations from one to the other may prove tricky. 2027 cyberdecks operate somewhat differently than 2020 'decks, being able to multitask and not needing *Demon* programs. Dataforts are handled very basically, intended more for dramatics than technical specifications. While it's possible to bring equipment across from one to the other, we recommend caution. Use whichever system you're most comfortable with: *Cyberpunk's* is more technical and flexible, *Cybergeneration's* faster and more dramatic.

The main rule is to have fun, whatever system you're using.



# EDEN DREAM

Now you know how it all began. Now let me tell you about how it ends. Alt gathers them together, at the end of the day. They sit or spawl in a loose circle around her flowing, multi-shifting skirts. There are small, nervous Wizards with their bizarre retinues of Familiars; tall, serious Tinmen with liquid metal bodies like statues; clever Bolters tossing lightning balls between cupped palms. Thoughtful Alchemists shape the ground around them into curious forms—statues, animals, favorite toys—and the Scanners spread minds and thoughts all around in a soft, silent peace.

Then Alt begins to speak. Quietly. Patiently, reciting the lesson they must all remember and must never forget.

*"I almost remember a time, a long time ago. It was a good time, when the water was crystal all the way to the gold sandy bottom, and multicolored fish flitted and darted between emerald reeds. Bright birds flickered through the tall, leafy trees, and animals—furry, scaly and skinned—ran through tall grass in the bright summer light. There was enough for everyone to eat. And the sky was very, very blue.*

*"We didn't have any weapons then, because we didn't need them. We gave up the threats and the anger; because we finally all understood each other. We were willing to share everything, because we could have anything we wanted.*

*"Our parents have forgotten. They can't remember this place, this time. But we can. This is the way it used to be. That is the way it will be. That is the way we can make it become.*

*"It is up to us to take Mankind back. Because we can remember. Because we can hope. Because we can.*

*"Because we understand the Eden Dream."*

Do they? Do they really? I wonder. I wait. I watch.

# MY PARENTS BECAME CYBERPUNKS AND ALL THEY LEFT ME WAS THIS DARK FUTURE...

# 2027.

**T**he Cyberpunk movement is dead, crushed beneath the jackboots of the *Incorporated States of America*; a tyrannical techno-government that rules through media, money and unstoppable cybernetic might.

But a new force has taken to the Street to carry on the battle their parents lost. Raised on danger and deception, forged in the fires of a mysterious nanotech plague that has ravaged the 21st century, this handful of angry juvegangsters now wield incredible powers that defy both science and cybertech.

They are the **CYBERGENERATION**.

The ISA wants them under its thumb—or dead. But these kids have other plans. And they know that the *real* Revolution has just begun...

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# CYBER GENERATION



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CP 3252  
ISBN # 0-93729-74-9



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