



An adventure for Cyberpunk 2020

By Nick Moseley

The adventure centres around the Corp character. Someone has begun to kill members of the Corporation dealing with a certain deal. At the beginning of the adventure, the Head of Department has just been assassinated by unknown means. The Corporate Police are on the case, obviously, but the Corp PC will also be asked to investigate, due to the sensitive business aspects. As the investigation proceeds, other Corps will die until the PC Corp becomes the next obvious target. At this point the team face a race against time to find the killer and deal with him on their terms, before he finds them. (Nb. When I ran this adventure, the Corp was working for Biotechnica, and the Corporations involved reflect this; however, feel free to change them to suit your players.)

Ideally, the team will consist of three or more members, one of whom must be a Corp. The others can be a mixture, but it is recommended that there is a Solo and a streetwise character for information gathering (Fixer, Nomad or Netrunner) and a Techie would also be useful due to the nature of the killings.

Introduction

The adventure begins with the Corp coming in to work. The office is in a state of agitation.

"You enter the office. Immediately you notice something is wrong... people seem on edge, and eye you nervously. Malcolm Flint, the Department Head, is not at his desk, or anywhere to be seen. Phil, the office junior, spots you from across the room. He hurries over.

"You're to come and see Mr. Crowe straight away, it's extremely urgent," he says."

Pumping Phil for information will not yield anything - he doesn't know what the trouble is, just that it is serious. He will hurry the Corp along to the office of Mr. Crowe, one of the Managing Directors. This will tell the Corp that this is a serious problem indeed. Crowe will welcome the PC in and dismiss Phil.

"You enter Crowe's office. You do not know him well, but he is famous in the Corporation for his business sense and quick thinking. He offers you a chair; you sit." "We have a situation here," he says. You nod. He lights a cigar. "This morning, Malcolm Flint was murdered by unknown parties, for unknown reasons, at his home. Our forensic teams cannot say what killed him, but they speculate that it may be a form of neurotoxin. Although valuables were taken, we do not believe the motive to be theft. The cause of death and mode of entry would suggest a skilled assassin. More worryingly, he had been tortured; so efficiently that the signs were barely visible. This leads us to believe that he was pumped for information about our business." He looks intensely at you."

At this point, the PC will no doubt ask for information. Crowe can volunteer the following:

- The body was found by Flint's wife, who had been sedated in her sleep, presumably by the killer.
- Flint had been tortured by the use of a neurointerface that transmitted pain impulses straight to his brain; very effective.
- The toxin, if it was a toxin, entered the body through unknown means.

- The house's electronic security had been quickly and efficiently breached using very expensive equipment. The security cameras were disabled between 3:27 and 3:58 am.
- None of the neighbours or security teams saw or heard anything.
- No clues have been found by the Corporate Police.

When the question and answer session is over, Crowe will say:

"As you were on his team, and have knowledge of the deals he was working on, as well as experience in this kind of matter, we want you to conduct your own investigation into the murder, and find out what other Corporations are involved. This must be kept as confidential as possible; the Corporation will provide appropriate resources. Success will be very beneficial to your career."

Crowe will provide the PC with a dossier on the case, a car and driver (perhaps another PC) and will also sanction a request for a Company Solo. Other requests are up to the GM, but nothing outlandish. Crowe will soon brusquely request that the PC gets on with it, and contacts the Company if he requires anything else. The time now will be approximately 9:15 am.

Having assembled his team, the PC will have to decide what to do next; he can go through the records of the business deals that Flint was working on, go to see the body, visit the crime scene or speak to the Detective in charge of the case.

Flint was working on three deals at the time of his death. He was working on a joint venture with Petrochem for a new CHOOH₂ plant, with WorldSat on an advertising deal and EBM on the joint development of some cyberware. There is nothing suspicious in the files or on the computer; to pick the mainframe apart will require a company Netrunner and about 5 hours. During this time, the PC's may visit the crime scene and speak to the Officer in charge, Det. Supt. Ross, and Mrs. Flint.

Ross knows little; he has found no clues and will have scant new information for the team. He knows he is out of his depth in terms of corporate affairs, and resents the way that Biotechnica have withheld information from him. He suggests that they look around themselves; the body has gone to Biotechnica's forensics dept., though it is possible for the team to view it there. Ross will grudgingly agree to the PC's interviewing the distressed Mrs. Flint, though she will be unable to provide any information the PC's do not have. A search of Flint's apartment and any questioning of neighbours or security guards yields nothing. Awareness/Notice tests will prove fruitless.

If the team wish to see Flint's body, they can. A company Medtech will show it to them; the cause of death is some kind of toxin that attacks the brain, preventing it from sending the electric impulses that trigger breathing, heartbeat etc, causing death, though the forensic team will not know this yet. All they can say is that something stopped his body from functioning, they don't know what.

By this point the team is getting nowhere fast; no information is found on the street, if they try. At 12:34 a call comes in to the Corp PC requesting that he returns to the office - a reason is not given. When they return, another Corp on Flint's team, Palmer, has been found dead, this time in Biotechnica's toilets!

The cause of death is the same, but nobody has infiltrated the building. The next Corp down on the ladder has been taken into custody for his own safety; below him is the PC Corp. If there isn't one already with him, he will have a Solo allocated to him. Again, the Corporate police are at a loss for the MO.

At 1:02, the Netrunner (who is named BlackNite) unearths some information. It seems that Flint may have been dealing in other technology with EBM. He was involved in some sort of covert deal that did not have Biotechnica's backing; a private venture of his. He was working with a contact Fixer called Wiretap. A

Streetwise/Family test (Df15) will provide knowledge of him; he deals in weapons and information, and often works as a go between for covert deals where the two parties do not wish to meet. The Netrunner has no further information as yet, but he will keep the team posted.

The PC's will now wish to find Wiretap. A Streetwise/Family test (Df15) will reveal his whereabouts if they ask in enough bars. He operates from a disused warehouse in the old quarter of town. If the team go down there:

"The warehouse is in an old industrial estate in the Old Quarter. A few hobos hang around, but other than that, the place is deserted. You approach the door. There is nobody to be seen. The building stands alone, and looks at first glance to be disused, but there is a modern electronic lock on the door and light shows faintly at a grimy widow. Someone is at home."

The main door is the only way in, and it is locked. It will take a Df20 test on Electronic Security to open the lock, or the PC's can always knock! In either case they will run into Wiretap's personal bodyguard, Dusk. If they have knocked, then he will inquire about their business. If they have broken in, though, he will be ready for a fight, with his gun drawn. It will take some pretty good fast talk to prevent him from removing them, forcefully if necessary.

DUSK (Solo)

Int 5 Ref 10 Cool 7 Attr 4 Luck 6 MA 7 Body 10 Emp 4 Tech 3

Cybernetics: Cyboptic w/targeting, image enhance, low lite; right cyberarm; skin weave; muscle and bone lace; grafted muscle

Weapons: Smart Colt AMT 2000, monoknife; armour jacket

Skills: Handgun +8, Combat Sense +7, Choi Li Fut +5, Rifle +5, Submachinegun +6, Melee +7, Stealth +4, Awareness/Notice +4, Athletics +5

Dusk is a formidable adversary, and the PC's should not cross him; should they kill him, Wiretap will escape through a secret exit and they will not be able to question him. Should they pass Dusk, though, they will be able to speak to Wiretap, in his office.

WIRETAP

Int 6 Tech 5 Ref 6 Cool 6 Luck 7 Att 4 MA 5 Emp 6 Body 5

Cybernetics: Cyboptic w/targetting, low lite, video record; skin weave; cyberaudio w/amplified hearing, voice stress analyser, phone splice, scrambler

Weapons: Sternmeyer Type 35 autopistol; light armour jacket

Skills: Streetdeal +8, Awareness/Notice +5, Forgery +4, Handgun +5, Brawling +3, Melee +4, Pick Lock +7, Pick Pocket +4, Intimidate +5, Persuasion/Fast Talk +6

"Wiretap sits down at his desk, near the grimy window. He is physically small, though he appears to be quite strong. His hair is cut short and he wears a bulky jacket, more than likely armoured. His eyes dart from one to another of you; he seems very alert. The guard who was at the door takes up position in the corner of the room. Wiretap grins and steeple his fingers. "So, what can I do for you?" he asks."

Wiretap will not give up the information the players need easily. Money will loosen his tongue, but if he thinks that the players are not being straight with him he will be difficult, and if they persist then he will ask them to leave. He will not be easily intimidated, and this tactic will also make him clam up. 500 eb will give the PC's some information: a rival corporation (he will not specify) has developed a new weapon system for assassinations. There is only one in existence, and Flint got hold of it through an industrial spy. Wiretap was acting as his go-between for the sale of the technology for an outrageous sum; if the PC's tell him that Flint has been murdered, he will look worried and will suggest that someone has taken it from him, and killed Flint to erase the evidence. If they tell him of the murder of Palmer, he looks very worried indeed; he speaks with Dusk outside (to tell him to prepare a "little trip") and then suggests that whoever has the weapon is now using it to kill all those near Flint to make sure that nobody knows of its existence. Wiretap has no knowledge of how the weapon works, or what it looks like.

The team will no doubt attempt to pump him further, but will not get the chance. An Awareness/Notice test (Df20) will notice a brief flash of red on Wiretap's head; seconds later the window is shattered as a bullet crashes through, killing him.

"The window shatters spectacularly; Wiretap slumps across his desk, a pool of blood spreading rapidly. The guard grabs an assault rifle from the wall rack and rushes outside; you hear gunfire and the whine of an AV engine. Following him to the door, you are just in time to see the AV crashing down about 100 metres away, smoke pouring from the engine. Dusk is changing the magazine on the rifle, and figures begin to emerge from the car. A bullet hits Dusk; he drops to the floor, unmoving. The figures, two of them, begin to fire in your direction and you duck back into the doorway."

The PC's must act quickly to prevent the escape of the assassins. The stats below are as a guide only; if you are playing with a party who are particularly combat hardened, then feel free to increase their stats. Likewise, if you have a party of novices or weaker characters, then lower them as you see fit.

THUGS (2) (Solos)

Int 5 Ref 10 Cool 5 MA 6 Body 8

Cybernetics: Cyberoptic w/targetting, IR, anti - dazzle; rippers

Weapons: Thug #1 - Sternmeyer Type 35 autopistol, light armour jacket, kevlar pants

Thug #2 - H&K MPK - 9 medium submachinegun, light armour jacket, kevlar pants

Skills: Combat Sense +8, Handgun +7, Submachinegun +7, Melee +5, Brawling +5

The thugs are disorientated by the crash, and are more preoccupied with getting away than a firefight, but to escape to the main road they have to pass closer to the warehouse. There are a couple of old oil drums by the warehouse door the PC's could use for cover. The running thugs will be about 25 metres away by the time the PC's emerge from the doorway, and running hard, taking snap shots as they go. The submachinegun thug will be firing three round bursts at the PC's as covering fire. It will take the assassins three turns to reach the road; if they do so, they will pass out of sight and the players will have to pursue them (or let them get away, if they wish.)

Should the PC's kill their assailants, they will find no insignia or other distinguishing marks on the bodies; a Thug who has been stunned will not be able to spill the beans either:

"The thug opens his eyes weakly. He opens his mouth to speak, but doesn't get the chance; a small but deadly explosion tears his chest open, destroying his heart. Blood spurts in all directions... you drop the body hurriedly. He will not be able to tell you anything."

Dusk is still alive; he was only stunned. The characters may pump him for information; he knows of the deal, but little specific detail. He is unsure of what to do next, so a Df20 test in Persuasion/Fast Talk will get him to join the group. If money is offered, then the test is only Df15. If Dusk does not join the group, then he will help them pull some information from Wiretap's computer. This tells them that EBM were going to send a representative to collect the merchandise from Wiretap at the docks, at midnight that night. A Tech test (Df10) will reveal that a silent alarm program has been tripped: someone has accessed Wiretap's personal files from an external source in the last half hour. Thus it can be assumed that the team is behind the bad guys. The main section of the warehouse contains nothing of interest, just a few empty crates. Wiretap keeps his merchandise elsewhere; and Dusk isn't telling.

The driver of the AV is dead; Dusk saw to that with a fluke head shot. Like the others, he wears no insignia. An Awareness/Notice test (Df15) will observe a spare armour jacket and sunglasses; the vehicle may have had more than three occupants (this means that the sniper is still at large.) A Df20 test will spot a piece of paper in the footwell; it is very small, and all that can be read is "...aka". From this, the team may conclude that Arasaka are the bad guys here, though this is incorrect. If you wish, you may try to get the team paranoid by pushing this assumption!

By now it is probably about 3:30 pm. A call comes in "requesting" the team to return to the Biotechnica offices for a progress report. As they drive back, have one of the characters (randomly select one, including Dusk, if he is still with the party) and make an Awareness/Notice test at Df20. If this fails, make another one before the journey ends. If the test succeeds, the PC will notice that they are being followed by a car with a darkened windscreen. If the other players turn around to look, then the car will stop following them as they realise that they are rumbled. A quick thermograph reading will be possible on a Reflexes test (NO Combat Sense bonuses) of Df15 or more, and will reveal two or three occupants in the car. The PC who noticed the tail must then take a Streetwise test at Df15. A success indicates that there is something niggling at the back of the player's mind about the tail. An Intelligence test at Df15 will allow the player to remember that the jumpiness of those following, the efficiency of the tail, and their style of car all suggest that the followers were working for the local Arasaka division; the PC may or may not choose to share this information with the group. The team will not be able to follow the car due to traffic.

In any case, the team returns to the Biotechnica building. Crowe wants to see them for a status report, and tells the team that O' Connor, the Corp in custody, has just died in the same way as the others. This leaves the player Corp next in line. However, the body had something lodged in the skin of the right palm; it is the killer, a microscopic flying needle, which delivers the toxin. It has malfunctioned, and is dormant. However, the Techs do not know this; it appears to be simply some small metal splinter. The Techs wish to study it more closely, but they need more equipment that will be delivered within the next two hours. Until then, Crowe has the splinter locked away.

The Netrunner has come up with some new information for the group, but he cannot make much sense of it. The information refers to a "device" developed at a small independent cybernetics lab, SuperNova Technologies, by one Prof. Shamberg; it seems that the design was bought up by a corporation, but doesn't say which... BlackNite will have to search deeper for that information. Make an Interface test for BlackNite; his Int is 8 and his Interface skill is 9. This is a Df20 test. A successful roll will reveal that the prototype was bought up by Arasaka, along with the patents and all the plans. The lab was destroyed in "unusual circumstances" the following week, and Shamberg disappeared. Police reports suggest that he is still at large on the streets. There are no details on the weapon itself in Flint's files. Crowe wants the team to find the murderers and the weapon and bring them to him for questioning.

The PC's may want to visit the site of SuperNova Technologies' lab. If they do, they will find it is just a building site. The company went bust after the lab was destroyed, and all the surviving staff went to other Corporations or disappeared. They can attempt to find Shamberg; this is a difficult test, requiring a Streetwise roll at Df20. Finding Shamberg is the key, so you may want to let the players have another go at finding him later, or have the Fixer, FireMan, approach them with the information (for a price) when he hears of their interest. If they find him, he is living in a hideout downtown.

"The block is very old, and can only be a short step from being condemned. Shamberg is supposed to live in room number 26, on the first floor. Small children, playing in the street, eye you suspiciously. Nobody else can be seen; most of the other buildings nearby are empty or condemned, avoided even by the squatters."

Shamberg will not open his door if he sees some huge Solo at the door. He may open it for a smooth - talking Corp (Fast Talk/Persuasion test at Df15). If not, he will make a break for it out of the window and down the fire escape unless someone is stationed there. Fortunately, he is old, so will not run far, and may well be caught.

SHAMBERG (Techie)

Int 9 Ref 4 Tech 9 Cool 3 Attr 4 Luck 5 MA 3 Body 3 Emp 6

Cyberware: Cyberoptic

Weapons: Federated Arms X-9mm

Skills: Jury Rig +8, Handgun +2, Basic Tech +9, Cybertech +8, Teaching +5, Education +7, Electronics +8, Weaponsmith +4

"Shamberg is a tall man, but not well built; he is aged about 60, and looks very tired. He seems resigned to his fate. "Do it, then... kill me. Don't torture me like this," he wails. His room is disordered; several electronic devices are dismantled on the floor, and empty fast food wrappers litter the place."

Shamberg will explain the weapons system to the team if paid or intimidated; it is a tiny flying device that injects the subject with a neurotoxin and then can return to the controller. It is capable of negotiating most electronic security, doors, windows etc, and can kill someone very easily without being detected. The device was bought up by Arasaka (the team may already know this.) When they blew up the lab, Shamberg went on the run. He does not know about the toxin, it was developed separately. He does not have an antidote. The device works in two parts, a control unit and the nanofly itself. There is only one nanofly in existence, as far as Shamberg knows. He believes that nobody except himself has the skills to produce a new one, even with the plans. The players must now realise that the splinter taken out of O' Connor's hand is the nanofly, and that they have the only one at Biotechnica's headquarters... or do they? If they wish to phone in the news, they will have to go outside as Shamberg does not have a phone and the reception is too poor for a cellular due to his electronic equipment.

Around this point (outside Shamberg's flat), they will be attacked. An Awareness/Notice test (Df20) will spot the laser sight before a bullet hits. Roll a D10; 1-2 means it hits a passer by; 3-4 it hits a PC in the leg for 4D6 damage; 5-6 it blows a chunk in a wall; 7-8 it hits the PCs' car; and 9-10 it shatters a streetlight. Whatever happens, a call comes in to the Corp almost immediately, either through his own cellphone, or if he hasn't got one, through a conveniently placed public phone.

"The voice is computer disguised; it delivers a short message. "We know you have the device. Meet us at the arranged meeting site at the arranged time tonight and return it. That last shot was a warning. Next time it will not be." You hear the call terminate." The call was well scrambled and cannot be traced.

The team must now decide what to do with Shamborg; he will beg to go with them for his own safety. Phoning in the information to Crowe will result in an order to bring Shamborg back with them. During the call, Crowe will ask for the security on the device to be stepped up... unfortunately, both the device and Phil the office boy are missing...! Crowe wants Shamborg brought in, and Phil and the device found and erased. He wants photographic evidence.

The team will now head back to Biotechnica, but however, they will be ambushed. They will find that the car will no longer respond to inputs; it is being operated by remote. Any tech - oriented members of the team will know that to do this requires extremely expensive equipment. The team cannot escape as the car is going too fast to jump out and the doors are locked. By all means let them attempt to stop the car by pulling wires etc, and making Tech tests, so it does not seem that the story is out of their control, but they will not be successful. They arrive in a back street somewhere, to find themselves surrounded by four of the biggest Solos they have ever seen. They are dressed in the all - black uniforms of Arasaka.

SOLOS

Int 6 Ref 10/12 Tech 5 Cool 9 Attr 4 Luck 5 MA 7 Body 10

Cybernetics: Cyberoptic w/targetting, anti dazzle, low lite; cyberarms w/popup Sternmeyer Type 35; Cyberlegs; Grafted Muscle; Skin Weave; Subdermal Armour; Rippers

Weapons: Solo #1 and Solo #2 - H&K MPK - 11 Heavy Submachineguns

Solo #3 Arasaka Rapid Assault 12 Automatic Shotgun

Solo #4 - FN-RAL Heavy Assault Rifle

All with flack pants and heavy armour jackets, monoknives

Skills: Combat Sense +10, Awareness/Notice +8, Handgun +9, Karate +7, Melee +8, Weapons Tech +4, Rifle +6, Athletics +7, Submachinegun +7, Stealth +5

These Solos are very hard indeed and the team should be steered well away from starting a fight. A smaller man emerges from the shadows. "Do not try and run or fight, gentlemen; you won't get far. I wish to talk to you on a matter very important to the Arasaka Corporation." He addresses the Corporate. "My name is Mr. Lam. I represent the Arasaka Corporation. I believe you have possession of an item of nanotechnology that is ours..."

MR. LAM (Corporate)

Int 9 Ref 9 Tech 5 Cool 9 Attr 6 Luck 7 MA 6 Body 6 Emp 8

Cybernetics: Cyberoptic; cyberaudio w/phone, amplifier, scrambler; skin weave

Weapons: Militech Arms Avenger medium pistol; monoknife; smart suit w/kevlar lining

Skills: Resources +10, Awareness/Notice +8, Human Perception +7, Education +5, Library Search +8, Social +8, Persuasion +7, Stock Market +8, Wardrobe & Style +7, Personal Grooming +7

Lam will explain that Arasaka bought up the system as it represented a danger to their business. If any Corporation could use such a system, then it would make Arasaka redundant. It was subsequently stolen from them by a rogue employee, who passed it on to Flint. It was stolen from Flint by Militech, who plan to use it to kill high ranking corporates, including, they believe, Saburo Arasaka himself. The Biotechnica killings have

been used as a kind of "testing ground" for the device. At the moment, Militech have the control unit, Phil has the nanofly itself, and Arasaka have the plans. Militech need the nanofly back to blackmail the plans out of Arasaka. Arasaka understandably want the system back. Mr. Lam offers the team 2000 eb each to make the drop with Militech (who it will now be realised has been doing the murders, and made the call to the PC Corp) so that Arasaka can destroy the control unit. Lam has knowledge of Phil, who has taken up residence with a somewhat mercenary Fixer named Tangent. He wants Phil killed, and the nanofly destroyed also. He will provide photographic evidence of this to satisfy Crowe. The team should realise that they can complete the mission given to them by Biotechnica and turn in a tidy profit. Lam does not want Biotechnica to know of Arasaka's involvement, hence his approach to the team. If the team refuse, Lam will have them killed. If they report to their superiors, or attempt to double cross him, he will have them killed. There is no way out for them really. They must make the drop. Arasaka also want Shamberg; resigned to his fate, he agrees to go with them without fuss.

Getting the nanofly from Phil should not be too hard as Lam gives them the number of Tangent who has Phil in his custody, and has sportingly sold him out to Arasaka and the team. Tangent has him holed up at a lockup downtown. It is a simple matter to meet up with Tangent, go there and kill Phil. Tangent himself does not know why Phil has a price on his head, and cares less. He is not a threat to the secrecy of the mission and knows better than to ask. He will take ONE of the PC's to the hideout on the pretext of their being a potential buyer for the device.

TANGENT (Fixer)

Int 8 Ref 10 Tech 6 Cool 8 Attr 4 Body 8 Emp 6

Cyberware: Skin weave, cyberoptic, speedware, smartgun link

Equipment: Light armour jacket, nylon helmet, Smart Sternmeyer Type 35, sawn - off 10 guage shotgun, monoknife

Skills: Streetdeal +8, Intimidate +4, Persuasion/Fast Talk +6, Awareness/Notice +5, Handgun +8, Karate +4, Melee +4

PHIL (Civilian)

Int 6 Ref 4 Tech 6 Cool 3 Attr 7 Body 4 Emp 8

Cyberware: None

Equipment: Nothing of note

Skills: See above!

Phil is easily intimidated; he does not really know what the nanofly is, he just took it because he'd heard it was a sought after item. His mistake. He will offer to sell it for 3,000 eb, and will eagerly produce it for inspection. Such naivety does not go unpunished on the harsh streets of 2020. He has no weapons, no combat skills, and, if a gun is produced, will turn into a gibbering wreck. Have the player kill him anyway they choose, but preferably quietly... Tangent, who will wait outside, will deal with the body. Phil learns the hard way not to mess with the big boys. The players now have the nanofly; they just need to meet the Militech agents so that they can have Arasaka eliminate them and get the control unit destroyed.

THE DROP

The team meets up at the site at midnight. The Militech representatives will arrive. There is a negotiator, and four Basic Goons (page 197 of the Cyberpunk book.)

NEGOTIATOR (Corporate)

Int 7 Ref 7 Tech 4 Cool 6 Attr 6 Luck 5 MA 6 Body 7 Emp 7

Cybernetics: Skin Weave; Cyberaudio

Weapons: Sternmeyer Type 35, monoknife

Skills: Resources +8, Awareness/Notice +6, Human Perception +6, Education +5, Library Search +4, Social +6, Persuasion +7, Stock Market +6, Wardrobe & Style +5, Personal Grooming +6

The Negotiator requires the Corp PC to walk to a midpoint between the two groups (they are about 15 metres apart), place the specimen jar containing the nanofly on the floor, and walk away. They are told to stay where they are while the "merchandise" is checked with the control unit. When this is done, the Militech staff will open fire on the PC's. Fight one round of combat, then:

"Just as you are preparing your next action, the (remaining) Militech employees crumple to the floor dead in a hail of gunfire that leaves you completely unscathed. Mr. Lam emerges from the shadows. He checks the nanofly. One of the Solos checks the control unit lying by the dead negotiator. Another Solo appears from the shadows with a vacant looking Shamberg. Lam points out the control device and nanofly on the ground. "Remember what you've been told, Professor," he says. "When I give you the signal, you make your performance." Shamberg nods absently. He appears to be heavily drugged. Shamberg is led to one side. Lam gestures to you to stand clear. He makes a quick motion. This appears to galvanise Shamberg. He runs up, grabs the equipment from the floor. "This is mine! You can't have it!" He wails. "Try and stop him," Lam advises you. Confused, you vaguely tell Shamberg to put the weapon down. Wild eyed, he backs away, mumbling. Suddenly, he pulls a thermal grenade from his jacket, and activates it. You dive for cover, and there is an shattering explosion. Lam steps into view, dusting his suit. "Well done, gentlemen. Your accounts will be credited with the money I promised. Arasaka does not go back on its word, though if you breathe a word of our involvement in this, you will all be dead within two hours. Shamberg was another loose end that had to be tied. Wait here, and we will bring you the photographic evidence you require." The Solos stand mute guard over you for about 45 minutes, then Lam returns. He gives you a video camera, and leaves without a word, taking the Solos with him."

The camera contains a exceptionally well edited tape of the night's events, showing Militech's double cross, and the gunfight, that the players appear to win unaided... one of them is always out of shot, so it can be claimed that they were the one doing the filming. Shamberg appears to grab the weapon in the aftermath of the firefight; the players seem to try and stop him, but he destroys it in an apparent fit of psychosis. Arasaka are never seen on the tape; they have done a good job! This will be sufficient evidence for Crowe to close the file; the killings will not restart, and without the weapon, Militech will not try to mess with Arasaka again! The bodies are picked up by a trauma team not long after, and sold to various body banks, removing the last of the evidence. Shamberg and his weapon are scattered to the four winds, and the players are 2000 eb each better off. Everyone is happy... for now.

HOW TO PLAY THE NPC'S

A brief guide to playing the NPC's: their characters and what motivates them. BlackNite, Dusk, Tangent and Mr. Lam make good "stock" NPC's that can be used in other adventures if you wish, to save you having to make up your own.

CROWE: A hard businessman, but old and perhaps not as technologically up to date as he thinks he is. A bullish, hardheaded character.

PHIL: Young, naive, and weak. Play him as a largely guileless innocent in over his head.

BLACKNITE: Arrogant, but very smart. Likes to show how clever he is, and always exaggerates the amount of work he has had to do to get information.

DUSK: A man of action, not words. Not too bright, but as hard as nails. Unimpressed by almost everyone and everything.

WIRETAP: Cocky, but smart. Knows the players need his help, and likes to be as obtuse as he can. The knowledge that Flint and Palmer have been killed makes him a lot less glib, however.

SHAMBERG: Old, frail, and more than a little unstable, play the rogue professor as a man with a desperate urge to hold on to all he has left, ie his life. The appearance of Arasaka makes him accept defeat, however.

TANGENT: An old, trusted character of mine that I like to use as an NPC if I GM a session. Tangent is a total mercenary, in it for the money and nothing else. He only looks after number one, and everyone else can go to hell for all he cares. However, he is very street smart, and knows when to keep his mouth shut. Exactly the wrong person for Phil to go to for help...

MR. LAM: Arasaka's local Mr. Fixit, Lam gets things done. He is utterly loyal to his Corporation, and utterly ruthless (as can be seen by the fate of Shamberg.) Play him as relaxed, confident, but with a hard edge that suggests those who mess with him are generally short - lived.

SO...

That's about it. Feel free to change details here and there to suit your players. When our group ran this adventure, it didn't go according to my plans, and this is a heavily revised version based on that session that should hopefully iron out a few kinks. However, never underestimate the ability of your players to screw up your storyline! Don't be afraid to improvise. If you run this adventure, I'd like to hear from you; you can reach me via Dave Gilbert, whose E-mail address is on these pages somewhere. I'll be in the US from August to December, and hence won't be back at Staffordshire University till January, but Dave can send me your comments by E-mail while I'm abroad. From January, feel free to mail me at: mg253269@cr10m.staffs.ac.uk.

Good luck!

Contact Nick at the University of South Dakota at nmoseley@sunflowr.usd.edu