

The Longevity trilogy 2

Retro-virus - the Longevity Trilogy part II

Part II of the Longevity trilogy kicks off right where part I finishes. Like part I, it should only take a session or two to complete. It is essential that the infected player(s) (preferably including the corp) are in Biotechnica's lab, striving for a cure at the beginning of this episode.

Antidote Hunt

As the characters hunt the antidote, the company is hard at work tracking them down. However, inter-departmental relations being what they are, it will probably take a while for security to track them down.

The following tables and percentiles I used when we played this. Take or leave them as you see fit. In our game, security busted in just as Happyjack found the cure. He was alone, against four armed and trained soldiers. He immediately ducked down behind the bench, then leapt up with both his pistols drawn, firing hard. He managed to take them all out, but it was definitely a close thing. His crunchy carapace (Bugout exotic package) definitely paid off.

Security have a cumulative 5% chance per hour of locating the PC(s) in the lab. The infected PC(s) must roll a percentile every hour, with a cumulative 10% chance of losing 1 point from a random attribute. Note that if/when this occurs, the chance resets to zero. I worked out the cure as follows:

D10 roll, once an hour:

1 Negative effect - D3 points from a random attribute.

2-7 Nothing

8-9 D6 roll:

1-4 Drug which slows the effect (must be taken every couple of hours, but half chance of further attribute reduction)

5-6 Drug which halts the effect (must be taken hourly. If not taken, base chance of next attribute reduction begins at 30% and will reduce D3 attributes by 1 point each.)

0 Cure!

Note, in my game, the security was internal, so less dangerous, and worked out as (number of PCs present) plus three. They were equipped with medium submachineguns, and flack vests.

An Encounter at the Hacienda

One hour after the group are reunited (or out of the Biotechnica lab, as appropriate), the Corp's mobile rings. The voice on the other end says, simply "Do you want employment? High risk, High reward, short term." If the answer is no, the person hangs up, and you'll have to find another way of getting the PCs into this adventure. If the answer is yes, the voice replies "Be at the Hacienda, conference room 3, in two hours." And hangs up.

Meanwhile, the PCs download the latest screamsheets - times are interesting in the docks area, and if the PCs have a single brain cell between them, they can probably work out that they have infected the guards.

Naturally, the PCs aren't going to be allowed to stroll into the Hacienda armed to the teeth. In fact, if they're armed at all, make sure security hassle the hell out of 'em till they turn over their weapons.

Conference room three has traditional furnishings - grey walls and carpet, massive black table dominating the room, and surrounded by black chairs. Seated in the chair at the table's far end is an old man. On either side, and behind him are three burly men in cheap suits, which fail to mask the distinctive bulges of submachineguns. (Make sure the PCs ponder how the guards got these into the Casino - this is one powerful son of a bitch!) The old man instructs the PCs to sit down, then, once they are seated, he speaks. (Have the corp make a Stock Market roll against 25. Success indicates that this man is Leon Kronsky, one of Biotechnica's Board of Directors, a professional recluse, and a man with his fingers in more pies than most believe exist.) He says

"Now, I trust you have seen the news? The events in the docks are what I am particularly referring to. It seems that your disease has caused many problems, to myself, above all others. I need you to go into the Harbour Police headquarters and extract (one of (if your PCs infected several))the officer you infected. I am prepared to pay 300,000 euro dollars for this service, are you interested?" He will pause just long enough for a single trace of assent, then continue, "I will provide you with an Armadillo (Chromebook 3 - if this isn't available, just any moderately armoured, but unarmed van) and up to 10,000 euro of equipment. Just tell my men what you need, and they will get it. When you have the target, bring it, in the van to the casino's carpark, blue level, section 5. Good day." At this, he ups and leaves, supported by one of his guards. The other two remain with the PCs to find out what they want. The guards phone in every request, and once all decisions are made, one of them leaves to collect the stuff, while the other monitors the PCs. It takes a couple of hours for the guard to return with the equipment, then the two of them lead the PCs down to blue level, section 5, which is deserted apart from the Armadillo, in spite of the fact that all the surrounding sections are crammed to capacity.

Ref note: Kronsky wants an infected person because it has occurred to him that it might be possible to mould the nanites to more benevolent pursuits, and a live subject makes it much more easy to test. He is operating under the assumption that once the extractee is brought in, and the plans explained to them, they won't hesitate to consent - not much of a choice, death or perfection. He wants the nanites adjusted for his own purposes - he's old, and very ill, but doesn't want to die just yet.

Into the Fray

Travelling into the docks is like being a cow nonchalantly strolling into an abattoir. All hell has broken loose. *Again, you can take or leave these tables as you see fit. If you take them, roll at every block the PCs travel through.*

Encounter type:

D10 roll: D6 roll:

1-3 Legal forces: roll on table 2 1-3 Patrol

4-6 Dockers: roll on table 3 4-6 roll for a second group, the two groups are

7-9 Corporate: roll on table 4 settling their differences with bullets.

0 No encounter

Table 2:

D10 roll:

1-4 Harbour Police - 5 well armed and equipped troops trying to keep the peace - they will ask first, shoot later, and try not to shoot to kill.

5-6 City Cops - a couple of cops in an AV3, "keeping the peace" if they see any weaponry not in the hands of the military or the Corps, they shoot to kill (yes, they shoot to kill Harbour Cops - they've heard that the Harbour Cops are spreading a nano-plague, and it's a good excuse to settle their rivalry.

7 City Cops - 2 Enforcer full conversion borgs. These guys are good guy cops - out to keep the peace, ask first shoot later, and never shoot to kill "Thank you for not smoking" all that stuff.

8-9 Military - 10 soldiers, armed with assault rifles, heavy armour, one bazooka guy, and a kick ass attitude.

0 Military - Two soldiers in either a Hummer or an armed GEB Duster, depending on how far from the water the PCs are. Unless they are in a fight, they will not shoot, just stop the PCs (and anyone else) and check them for weapons - they're taking peacekeeping seriously.

Table 3:

D10 roll:

1-5 2D10 Stevedores/sailors, armed with knives, handguns, the occasional submachine gun, looking for any kind of trouble. Note, if there are fifteen or more, a D3 of them will be Exo-loader Power Armour, with metal plates welded on - PA punknaughts!

6-9 Truckers, complete with Big Rigs, D3 trucks, travelling slowly, making full use of their big guns on anyone who looks like they might be in anyway official.

0 50+ rioting, looting dock workers. Not really interested in fighting (unless they're in a conflict), but happy to delay and hassle the PCs - bundling on and climbing over the Armadillo, smashing stuff on it, rocking it back and forth.

Table 4:

D10 roll, and Ref must decide whether the force is Arasaka, Biotechnica, or Militech:

1-5 "Peacekeepers" - 10 soldiers well armed and armoured, firing on anyone who doesn't look official, or anyone who is holding up their business ie the Harbour Police.

6-9 Spot Check - 2 PAs (Can't be Biotechnica) either Arasaka Standard Bs or Militech Commandos, trying to check everyone passing. They want official credentials, destinations, valid reasons for going wherever. They will fight only if they must, but always take combat seriously. Deadly serious. (Note, if you get a conflict, and roll this as one side, re-roll)

0 PA Combat team - 5-10 (D6+4) PAs of appropriate corp's model (Biotechnica will be using Boris's but with only half as many PAs) shooting to kill, EVERYTHING!

Harbour Police HQ

The Harbour Police HQ is in the building equivalent of full urban lockdown mode - armour plating covers every surface (SP20) including entrances. There are 6 turrets protruding from upper levels, each carrying a 7.62 Machinegun, and a gunner wearing a Doorgunners vest and a nylon helmet. These guys only shoot when shot at, and anyone approaching will be asked (ie yelled at) to state their business. Answers not satisfactory will be told to leave, and given a five count. Then they will open fire (not a threat but a promise). If the PCs give a clever answer, make 'em do an empathy roll against 12, success denoting the Cops belief in their story. They believe it easy enough, because they're tired, and looking for any possible hopeful prospect.

In my game, May, the solo, and Rita, the Medtech, approached, claiming to be Medics, to take the infected Cop away for treatment. And there was I, already for bloodbath, as the PCs shoot their way in. But no, the PCs ruse worked. They wrapped the woman up in MetalGear (to avoid contact, and therefore, infection) and took her out to the waiting Armadillo)

One little side note. If the PCs try to go faster than 40 or 50 km/h, make their lives hell. If they try to ram down a PA (as my group did) have it break their axle - you try calling out a mechanic in the middle of the night in the middle of a war zone!

Payoff

The way Kronskey figures, if he can kill the PCs, he gets what he wants for free. So he has a nice big ambush set up. If the PCs win, he will pay them, though.

Blue level section 5 is totally deserted, as is much of all the surrounding sections, so no matter where they park the nearest car is over 50 metres away. Awareness 25+ will reveal the ambush, but so will common sense.

When all the PCs are out of the van, One guy in a suit (all are solos, at beginner level (ie all skills at 4, and all stats are 8) for every PC will pop up from behind cars. They are well spread out, surrounding the van. They are equipped with Militech Ronin Light Assaults, their suits provide SP8 to all locations except head, and they have SP12 skinweave. Their tactics are simple. They each target a different PC, and in the first and second combat rounds fire three round bursts, and in the third and subsequent rounds, go full auto (reloading and firing in the same round from round four onwards). They will fight on until only one is left alive, who will flee.

My group had sedated and cured the Cop woman (though Kronskey didn't know she was cured until it was too late, and getting retribution on the characters would have raised too much attention). When they got to the ambush sight, the Solo, May, realised it was an ambush almost immediately, and her awareness roll confirmed it. So she sent Happyjack out first, well aware his carapace would absorb almost any impact. He strolled around, approaching the nearest cars, but (bad awareness) noticed nothing, so out came everyone else. Up pop the guards, one pretty much next to Happyjack, stunning Happyjack in the first round. The resulting combat was almost farcical - people from either side being stunned and dropping to the ground, leaping up later, being stunned again, and so on. My group survived, though Bear, one of the nomads, was dead for the better part of two minutes. However, the battle went on and on, in a stalemate, until Rita went back into the van and revived the cop, giving her a shotgun. The extra combatant made all the difference. Within two rounds of that the battle was over, and Rita re-tranqed the woman.

Game Over. +300,000 eurodollars.

Appendix 1



Truth of the Night

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Docks in Disarray

Shock shutdown throws business into chaos

At 3am this morning, the harbour was closed for a six hour takeover, as control was handed over to the military. Whilst the reasons for this closure are unclear at this stage, several problems are emerging as a result. The Harbour Police have been usurped by military forces, which has raised panic in some quarters. The general sentiment in the docklands is that, while not everyone gets along with the NCHP, everyone knows what to expect, and that Harbourmaster Mahan Jones goes to great lengths to ensure that his men are both incorruptible and fair. There are no such promises with the military. Indeed, many fear that the military will employ totalitarian force.

The second major problem is that the corporations have stated that they will not be paying any Stevedores for the period of the changeover. Strike action is threatened. A potentially dangerous combination - Stevedores striking under the military's nose.

7am Update The dockworkers' strike, which began in earnest an hour ago, has erupted into violence. The bay is illuminated with orange strips of tracer fire, as military Avs and helicopters are deployed to deal with the violent mob of unpaid Stevedores. They appear to be setting cargoes alight, as well as firing upon the soldiers caught in the area. At this stage, dozens of fatalities are reported, but the actual numbers are still at this time unknown.

8am Update Even as the battle rages across the dockland, this reporter has discovered that the military have stepped in to cover for the NCHP. It appears that the NCHP headquarters have been quarantined, at Mahan Jones's order. His call for this quarantine was fully supported by Ebunike Mbole, the Mayor, but the precise reasons for this quarantine are yet to be revealed.

8.08am Update Transcript of interview with Mahan Jones, via vid-phone.

Christie Andrews: Mahan Jones, why are the Harbour Police quarantined?

Mahan Jones: Miss Andrews, a full press report will be released in due course, good da-

CA: You couldn't just give us a quick idea, maybe just to ease the tensions in the docks, help remove the fears of the people of Night City?

MJ: Well, it was believed that a contagion may have entered our offices, but there is no certainty as yet. This blockade is merely a safety measure, and I assure you, that as soon as we receive the green light, we will be back on the beat.

CA: Is there any truth to the rumour that your men have been infected by a corporate bioplague?

MJ: No comment he disconnects.

8.13am Update The War in the Bay has just escalated. Hundreds of Corporate troops have flooded the area, allegedly to protect their own respective corporations' interests, but from where I'm sitting, it looks like they're capitalising on the opportunity to engage one another. At this point in time, the largest deployed force, is Biotechnica, with troops, Power Armour, Avs and helicopters, all raining fire on almost anyone and anything. Arasaka entered the fray just moments ago, with legions of Riot 8s loaded with troops, Petrochem and Militech have also entered the field. The Big Boys have taken their war to the streets. At this stage, confirmed fatalities are as follows: Dockworkers 138 Soldiers 42 Corp. Troops (assorted) 12.

BodyLotto

Today's BodyLotto numbers (recorded at 8am) are: Pacifica 3, Little Italy 8, Heywood 1, CZ sectors e3-f7 41, Studio City 3 and, the big one, the docks 121.

All BodyLotto numbers are confirmed deaths, and are in no way representative of the actual number of fatalities. Areas for inclusion in the draw are selected at random by computer, which is open for inspection at any time, for a small service fee.



The Daily Tabloid

A collection of truths, updated hourly

And that was our first lie.

9am, San Morro Bay.

Night City's Dockland ravaged by a war, the like of which has never been seen on US soil before. Maybe.

One thing is for sure, the corps got there too quick to just be protecting their cargoes. Let's face it, we all know how heavily they protect the lightest of cargoes, so think about the sheer overkill in corporate security for vehicles that not only carry tens of thousands of tons of their precious properties, but also are exposed to milspec pirates! If they just wanted to protect their cargoes they wouldn't need any extra manpower, their crews alone are more than apt to deal with a bunch of angry cutlass wielding dockers!

No, the truth, my friends, is, as always, in these darkest of times, far more sinister. Something is afoot, and odds on, it ain't pleasant. My guess is bioplague. Somehow, some flunky, kneejerk, corp idiot infected a harbour cop, with some tailored virus. The only question is: Who is the guilty party? Now normally, I'd just point to the Wheel and tell you to take your pick. But not today my friends. No, this war is purely for the big boys. We're talking Saburo, Lundee, Niccolo, maybe Ellen, but definitely, somewhere in the picture, as always, will be Alvarez. Naturally, I went straight to Alvarez's boys, but someone's paid top dollar(I mean top - approx. 4billion) to keep this info private. But what I can tell you is that there are more Biotechnica people there than at a poisons R us convention, and they were all over the place like a rash before Saburo's lapdogs knew there was anything going down. My guess is either they screwed up big time, orPetrochem did, and the Big B is out for all it can get.

Now Remember, Trust No-one.

And that includes me.