



SHADOWRUN

FALSE FLAG



A SIXTH WORLD ADVENTURE

FALSE FLARE



DENVER: FALSE FLAG

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DENVER: FALSE FLAG

SIX MONTHS AGO
LOCATION: CLASSIFIED
0447, LOCAL TIME

“Archer Team, in position.”

If Colonel Shane Bennett had been in his meat body, he may have clenched his jaw or exhaled through his nose. But that wouldn't change the fact that Archer Team was two minutes, nine seconds late getting into position. This was still within mission parameters, but barely. Should Archer Team survive, they'd have words about future career opportunities.

Floating in his Matrix command-and-control center, Bennett sent an acknowledgement to Archer Team as he watched the mission chrono tick towards zero hour; only fifty-eight seconds left. Spread out before his chromed Matrix persona were several AR windows linking Bennett to the six teams involved in the operation through linked PI-TAC networks. From there, each window had a sub-window giving POVs from each team member. Two teams, Nemesis and Falcon, were already in motion.

Bennett took a moment to review the mission's progress. All was going to plan. As far as everyone at the target facility knew, it was another boring night. They had no idea their Matrix security was compromised.

In the bright-white virtual command center, AR windows moved around Bennett in perfect synchronicity, like the internals of a Swiss watch. Their black-text information and real-time image feeds reflected off his chrome skin. Some considered his Matrix persona somewhat gaudy, but he appreciated its simplicity.

Every piece in this operation, organic and technological, was working as it was designated to, as *he* designed it to. Precision and timing were the keys to success in any operation. With proper planning, coordination, and operational discipline, any variable could be mitigated.

Reaching casually behind his head, Bennett plucked two orbiting AR windows. Spreading his fingers, the windows enlarged to give a detailed view of Nemesis and Berserker Teams as they approached the target in a pair of recently commandeered APCs.

Bennett smirked. The Aztlans had no idea.

As the APCs reached the gate, Falcon Team reported all security patrols eliminated, and the snipers had eyes on secondary targets. With twenty seconds to go, Static team reported that the target's communications were sleazed, at least for the next eight minutes. After that, there was nothing they could do about the Grid Overwatch Division. With ten seconds left, Nemesis and Berserker rolled in through the main gates unmolested, their forged bona-fides held up to scrutiny. Bennett knew they would—he'd made them.

The mission chrono ticked down to zero, and with that Bennett issued a command to all teams: EXECUTE.

Then, all hell broke loose.

Suppressed shots from Falcon Team took out the watchtower and checkpoint guards in one salvo. With their targets down, the shooters relocated.

Drones and t-birds from Gunrunner Team, circling at high-altitude, dove like dive-bombers. Within seconds, the main power generators and the compound's barracks became bright fireballs.

Rockets and mortars from Archer Team obliterated parked vehicles and aircraft. One overachieving trooper took out a fuel station and an Aztechnology Lobo in one shot. Bennett made note of her.

In the main compound, Nemesis and Berserker Teams burst from their vehicles and gunned down everyone in their path. As Berserker went for the main objective, Nemesis secured exit routes and set up explosive charges at crucial choke-points.

As predicted, enemy commanders tried to rally and counter-attack. But Static Team controlled all communications. They sent false orders and fed bad information, leading those responding into Nemesis' fields of fire.

Bennett watched as his teams systematically eliminated or bottled up their targets. At three minutes, seven seconds, Berserker reached the main objective. Bennett watched the image link as Berserker Three and Four—an ork adept and a troll tank—gutted two enemy troops with their blades as the rest of the team hammered away with assault shotguns. At three minutes eleven seconds, the





main objective, a two by one-half meter cylinder marked: Blue-227-W-0325, was secure.

“Berserker One to Watchtower, primary objective secure. Beginning exfiltration.”

Bennett was pleased. They were a full ten seconds ahead of schedule.

Outside the compound, the other teams finished their primary objectives. Archer Team was already falling back for exfiltration while Falcon took up overwatch for Berserker and Nemesis’ exit. Gunrunner’s drones, weapons empty, had been recalled while the T-birds headed towards the rally points.

Inside the target facility, resistance was stiffening. The compound’s commander, General Armando Diaz, had taken control and organized a counter-attack. Two members of Nemesis Team went down in the initial push to well-placed grenades, but the rest of the team held firm and blunted Diaz’s efforts for the moment.

Bennett watched as Berserker and Nemesis Teams engaged in a running firefight through the facility. They boarded their APCs and made for the gate, which freely opened courtesy of Static Team. Enemy soldiers with rockets aimed at the APCs, but fell to Falcon Team.

The remaining enemy troops wisely remained inside the base.

At exactly seven minutes, Static Team jacked out of the Matrix, relinquishing control of the enemy base and avoiding GOD. Bennett was barely paying attention at this point. The teams were already heading towards their exit-points, and the enemy couldn’t pursue. The mission was over. Berserker would deliver the objective within six hours.

He offered no congratulations. They had performed their task and accomplished their mission. Their compensation was enough. Bennett noted to inquire about Archer Team at a later time; presently, he had other matters to attend to.

Spreading arms wide then collapsing his hands together, Bennett sent all AR windows back into the electronic ether.

He then held his right palm up and touched fingers to his thumb in a quick sequence. He floated in his command center until the white room quickly became black as night. As crypto-programs kicked in, Bennett assumed an attentive position—body ramrod straight, arms at his sides while he waited for his master.

Within ten seconds, two large, draconian eyes appeared, then a large, white scaly face. Bennett bowed his head while his heart skipped a beat.

“Master, the objective is secured. I will take possession of the objective in approximately six hours. Operational security remained intact. No one will know who was responsible.” He didn’t bother with any other details, such as casualty figures, because the master didn’t care.

“Very good, Colonel” the deep draconian voice rumbled. “Once again my faith in you has been well placed. However, there has been a change in plans. The objective will be taken to a different location. I have arranged for its protection; make sure it is delivered safely. Coordinates will be transmitted once this conversation is complete.”

Bennett wondered about the change. Why not bring such a valuable item to Denver as originally planned? But it was not his place to question, just obey.

“Yes, Master. After this task is complete, is there anything else you require of me?”

“No now, but soon. Return to your regular duties. I will contact you when I have need of you.”

And with that, the large eye disappeared, leaving Bennett floating in the darkness. With a mental command the darkness became a less oppressive twilight as Bennett jacked out and opened his meat eyes. His office was dim and it took a while for his eyes to adjust. He rose from his custom chair and removed the life-support connections from his stiff body. Securing his cyberdeck and checking his commlink, he had five hours before meeting with Berserker Team. Quickly, he assembled his gear, including his Zone Defense Force uniform.



Listed below are suggestions that should help the adventure run more smoothly.

STEP ONE: READ THE ADVENTURE

Read through the adventure before introducing it to your group. Being familiar with the adventure lets you see how everything connects. This helps you adapt when your players (inevitably) come up with something not in the adventure.

STEP TWO: ASSESS THE ADVENTURE

Rarely does an adventure go exactly as it's written. Some may want/need more of a challenge while sometimes adjustments for specialized teams (such as all mages) may be needed. Others may switch NPCs for characters with whom the players are more familiar. Assessing the adventure lets you customize it to make it more enjoyable and fit your own gamemastering style.

STEP THREE: KNOW THE CHARACTERS

You should have complete information on each of the player characters prior to the adventure so you can assess their individual (and group) skills, contacts, and abilities. For example, if a scene calls for them to fly a plane and no one has the Pilot Aircraft skill, you may need to tweak the scene. If a character is sidelined for parts of the story because of lack of abilities or skills, consider adding scenes that play to that character's strengths.

GAMEMASTERING THE ADVENTURE

STEP FOUR: TAKE NOTES

Written notes keep things organized and make it easier to present the adventure smoothly and effectively. Taking notes during the adventure, including the things the players do and say, and the choices they make is useful in awarding Karma and handling contacts at the adventure's conclusion. More importantly, the choices made in one game will affect the players' options—and the consequences they face—in the next adventure. Players will sometimes make choices they'll regret, and in the shadows that means there's a good chance those decisions will come back to haunt them.

STEP FIVE: DON'T LET THE DICE RUN THE GAME

Dice rolls are used to determine the outcomes of events in a roleplaying game. However, sometimes these rolls interfere with the story. As gamemaster, you have the authority—and the responsibility—to tweak the dice to enhance the story. As a rule of thumb, don't fudge the die rolls to hurt player characters, but an occasional tweak might help them out (going from death to serious injury for example) or recover the story from a catastrophic run of bad luck.

STEP SIX: DON'T PANIC!!!

You will make mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes. Forget a rule, misread a scene, or forget an important clue—don't worry! You're there is to have fun, which is more important than a flawless performance. When a mistake is made, do your best to straighten things out and move forward.

INTRODUCTION

False Flag is the second of the *Denver Adventures* series for *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*. It gives players the opportunity to experience events in the Denver Front Range Free Zone. The city is on edge after the events mentioned in *Storm Front (Lightning in Denver* chapter) and the previous adventure, *Serrated Edge*.

False Flag is an adaptable adventure; gamemasters can adjust it to suit their player's skills and or team composition. The adventure centers on a false flag operation and unfortunately for the residents of the FRFZ, no one knows who's responsible for what's going on. There are several possible candidates, but the information on whoever's responsible might start a war in the Mile High City.

Players should stop reading now. The rest of *False Flag* is for gamemasters only. It lays out the plots, characters, and secrets in the adventure. Reading beyond this point would reveal major spoilers.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

False Flag uses *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition (SR5)*. However, many of the characters and gear presented are from additional core

SR5 supplements, including (but not limited to): *Chrome Flesh*, *Data Trails*, *Rigger 5*, *Run & Gun*, *Run Faster*, and *Street Grimoire*. Historical information concerning Denver can be found in the *Shadowrun, Fourth Edition (SR4A)* book *Spy Games*, *Sixth World Almanac*, and the transition book *Storm Front*.

ADVENTURE STRUCTURE

In *False Flag*, the players travel to and around Denver to complete specific objectives. The gamemaster can run all objectives or choose only those objectives best suited to the group. They can also add additional objectives to expand this adventure into a full campaign.

MAIN SECTIONS

This book is organized into sections to assist with running the adventure:

- **Preparing to Play:** A plot synopsis, necessary background information, and other useful details and data.
- **Scenarios:** The adventure itself, broken down into individual scenarios/scenes
- **Picking Up the Pieces:** Information about wrapping up the game. This includes and aftermath, money/Karma rewards, and information pertaining legwork.



- **Cast of Shadows:** Profiles of the primary NPCs with whom the player characters will interact during the adventure.

ADVENTURE SCENARIOS

The adventure plays out over a series of sequential scenes. Each scene contains the following subsections:

- **What's Up, Chummer?:** A brief summary of the events in the scene.
- **Tell it to Them Straight:** A text selection that can be read directly to the players or paraphrased when they reach specific points in the scene.
- **Hooks:** This section offers hints on mood for the scenario. It also reminds the gamemaster of twists and hidden information that the player characters may or may not discover.
- **Behind the Scenes:** The mechanics behind each scene, including NPC motivations, secrets, or special instructions/information. Places of interest along with any "grunt" NPCs stats are also found here.
- **Pushing the Envelope:** Suggestions on altering the scene to provide more of a challenge.
- **Debugging:** Suggestions for dealing with any potential problems.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Non-player characters (NPCs) are essential to any adventure. NPCs include allies, enemies, and contacts with whom the player characters interact with. Relevant NPCs have profiles/stats in the *Behind the Scenes* section while major NPCs who appear in multiple scenes are listed in the *Cast of Shadows* section at the end of this book. Gamemasters can tweak NPCs to make them more (or less) challenging opponents (see **Prime Runners**, p. 385, SR5) as needed. NPC groups benefit from Group Edge (p. 380, SR5), while individual NPCs use their own Edge.

BACKGROUND

Simply put, the great dragon Ghostwalker is tired of meta-humanity's drek.

Ever since his emergence through the Watergate Rift in 2061, Ghostwalker has been occupied (some say obsessed) with a series of plans that whose ultimate motives and outcomes are known only to him

Over the past fifteen years, Ghostwalker has re-claimed his previous territory (that is, Denver) and been recognized as the FRFZ's sole authority. He's also mandated the creation of the Zone Defense Force, kicked his hated enemies "the Aztecs" (Aztlán and Aztechnology) out of the FRFZ, created his own network of watchers and informants, rallied (most of) the local spirit population to his banner, brought back his lost love Zebulon (the Spirit of Denver), and fought one of his greatest enemies to a standstill—just to name a few of his accomplishments.

Like any dragon, Ghostwalker is playing a *very* long game, and what happens in Denver hinders or alters many of these

DENVER TIMELINE: IMPORTANT DATES

April 25, 2018. First Treaty of Denver establishes the Front Range Free Zone.

December 24, 2061. Ghostwalker's astral form emerges through the Watergate Rift in DeeCee. It immediately heads towards Denver. Later that day, Ghostwalker in the scaly flesh strikes targets throughout the FRFZ. These targets seem to be random, with no strategic value.

January 27, 2062. Ghostwalker enacts plan to remove Aztlán/Aztechnology from Denver. CAS forces forcibly remove Aztlán military/security assets along with all civilians. The CAS, with Ghostwalker's blessing, subsequently annexes the territory. Ghostwalker officially declares himself as "guardian and protector" over the FRFZ and orders the creation of the Zone Defense Force. Day-to-day operations are left up to the Denver Advisory Council

July 17, 2073. Ghostwalker disappears back into the Watergate Rift.

June 16, 2074. Ghostwalker returns, this time with the free spirit Zebulon.

July 01, 2074. Spirit summoning is declared illegal and an act of treason. Similarly, any act of "espionage" is also labeled as treasonous in the FRFZ.

October 10, 2074. The Dragon's Lair, Ghostwalker's personal Matrix Node, is compromised, exposing many of his secrets briefly on the open Matrix. Ghostwalker blames members of the Denver Data Haven (a.k.a., the Nexus) for the security breach. The ZDF is sent to the Nexus to take all Data Haven members into custody, but most evade capture.

October 2-19, 2074. A series of terrorist attacks begin in the FRFZ, prompting a ZDF crackdown.

October 19, 2074. Alamos 20K attacks The Hub.

November 1, 2074. Ghostwalker and an unknown metahuman reportedly wearing "magical armor" and wielding a "magical sword," openly clash. Aztlán military units seize parts of Englewood, re-establishing a foothold in Denver. Surprisingly, there's little to no response from the ZDF or CAS.

March 18, 2078. The Paladin Medical Group is discovered to be a front for anti-metahuman activity and has been conducting illegal metahuman experimentation within Denver. Several hundred metahumans are sterilized because of these experiments.

plans. Already the interference and influences from outside of the FRFZ have set several plans and operations back years, if not decades. Because of Ghostwalker's preoccupation with these plans of late, many of Ghostwalker's rivals and enemies have equated this with weakness and enacted their own plans. The biggest was when his hated enemies Aztlán and Aztechnology actually re-took a part of *his* city.

The latest fiasco, the incident with Paladin Medical, is just another failure of the Denver Council, and Ghostwalker believes they should have prevented this in the first place. The press is now looking at Denver with a very critical eye, drawing much more attention to the FRFZ than what Ghostwalker wants. The situation is very unacceptable in the wyrm's eyes.





Ghostwalker has decided it's time to take a more direct role in matters concerning his domain and eliminate those who are interfering (or are a threat to) his future plans. It's time to clean house. And with judicious planning, Ghostwalker thinks he has the right plan to take care of his enemies in one fell swoop and use the laws of the lesser races against them.

RUNNING IN DENVER: THE SHORT, SHORT VERSION

POSTS BY: SUNSHINE

Okay, listen up. I've been imbedded in Denver for a while now covering recent events—no, make that collection of cluster frags—but now things have really gone sideways. Ever since Paladin Medical's shenanigans went public, a lot of people are royally slotted off; but more on that later. Right now things are at a near boiling point across the FRFZ. And to be perfectly honest, if you're not already in Denver, I'd suggest staying out. Hell, if you can leave, I'd suggest that too. But then I was stupid enough to stick around when every instinct told me to get out, so who am I to judge? If you're crazy enough to run the Denver shadows right now,

here's an extremely quick primer for you—with emphasis on quick, because I don't know how much longer I have use of my current hidey-hole to compose it.

THE SECTORS

(A.K.A. THE LAY OF THE LAND)

Currently Denver consists of four sectors, not including the chunk of real estate Aztlan re-claimed. Each one is a mini-state with laws, traditions, and societal norms reflecting their parent country, and the sections are separated from each other by high-security walls. To gain (legal) access to each sector, you'll have to use one of the public checkpoints. Hope your ID (real or fake) is up to snuff, or you're gonna have a bad time. But these checkpoints can be avoided if you know the right people or have the right skills.

The CAS Sector is the old downtown section of Denver and is the part of the FRFZ most visited by tourists. It contains a lot of places to see, including Denver's Chinatown as well as several colleges and universities. It was the place to be in terms of business and entertainment until **the Hub** (a mini-sector that's now the de-facto center of the FRFZ) was created. Most of the middle-class neighborhoods went



downhill and watched their residents move to Englewood, but richer areas such as Millionaire's Row still flourish. Lone Star Security has the law enforcement contract for that sector.

The PCC Sector is run more like a corporation rather than a government, which translates into an area that's more organized with cleaner streets and a lower crime rate. All city work here is run on strict time tables to ensure efficiency. Denver's Matrix grid is also maintained here. Currently, Parashield has the security contract for this sector.

The Sioux Sector is the greenest sector in the FRFZ and is known for their eco-friendly practices and large parks. The one blight in this sector is known as Commerce City, which is located in the northern area. A former industrial zone that still houses blue-collar workers, Commerce City is the focus of environmental clean-up projects. Eagle Security handles law enforcement in this sector

The UCAS Sector was originally established as an outlying colony much like Seattle but became a collection of corporate enclaves. Most of this sector is inhabited by corporate citizens who use satellite offices so as to avoid the long commute to the Hub. The UCAS sector also has the dubious honor of housing the *lovely* Aurora Warrens, Denver's version of the Seattle Barrens. Keeping the peace here is Knight Errant Security, although several other Ares subsidiaries such as Wolverine and Hard Corps also have a presence as well.

Englewood is not officially a sector but instead was originally part of the CAS sector up until several months ago when Aztlan took advantage of a freak snowstorm and a timely distraction in the form of a crazy fragger in medieval armor and wielding a glowing sword going mono-y-draco with Ghostwalker, during a series of attacks. When the dust settled, Aztlan regained a foothold in the FRFZ and has since fortified the area. None of the other sector governments made a move or even protested Aztlan's actions, but the biggest surprise was the lack of action—or rather reaction—by the Zone Defense Force or Ghostwalker himself.

IMPORTANT FRFZ LAWS

(A.K.A., THE DOS, THE DON'TS, AND REALLY DON'TS)

Aside from the normal things such as theft, murder, and all that other fun stuff, there're two legal issues specific to Denver that every runner should be aware of.

First, it's illegal to summon spirits without permission from essentially Ghostwalker himself, so good luck on that. A while back the scaly snowflake decreed that spirits are citizens with the same rights as regular flesh-and-blood people. Summoning and or binding a spirit were put on par with kidnapping and enslavement. The associated penalties are, naturally, quite harsh.

Second, all forms of espionage is considered treason within the FRFZ. Unfortunately, no one in the Denver government has bothered to legally define what exactly constitutes espionage. So it's become a catch-all for several kinds of activities. It also means that security forces and the ZDF have a *lot* of latitude when pinning charges on someone. Punishment is swift and certain—being caught will likely earn you a spot on pale-scale's dinner plate, or worse.

THE CURRENT SCENE

(A.K.A., WHAT TO WATCH YOUR SIX FOR)

In my professional journalistic opinion, the current scene is fragged-up to an epic scale, and it wouldn't take much for this place to reach critical mass. After the recent terrorist attacks, Ghostwalker's big fight, and the Aztlan incursion, things went into a very tense peace. Because the second Treaty of Denver had expired, everyone thought that the other sector governments would have let loose the dogs of war, or at least exchanges a few potshots for good measure because of Aztlan. Hell, most here are *still* waiting for a ZDF counter-offensive. Instead, there was nothing.

And then Paladin Medical happened. Suddenly, there was an intense light on Denver, and Ghostwalker in particular. There were the usual cries of outrage and finger-pointing as the sector governments expected riots to break out any time now. There's been some isolated incidents, but the overall silence has been deafening, and it's putting everyone on edge. My shadow sources say that there's a lot of movement behind the scenes, but no one is ready to pull the preverbal trigger on this. Yet.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

False Flag: *Describes covert operations designed to deceive in such a way that the operations appear as though they are being carried out by entities, groups, or nations other than those who actually planned and executed them.*

After the Paladin Medical fiasco (the last straw following the longstanding failure to renegotiate the Treaty of Denver), Ghostwalker decides it's time to enact one of his contingency plans for forcing the other governments out of his domain. The wyrm knows he can't just rampage, crush his enemies under taloned heel, and be done with it (well, he *can*, but it would take a while to repair, and that's a pain). He will have to justify such actions so not to incur the interference of other great dragons and their government/corporate puppets, while also keeping the populace from falling into open rebellion

He's also slightly concerned about his old enemies, Aztechnology, who've re-claimed a portion of the FRFZ. And despite their intrusion and violation of his domain, Ghostwalker knows that the Aztecs are extremely popular in the world of late, having defeated the great dragon SIRRURG in their recent war with an anti-dragon weapon known only as Blue-227.

Instead of a head-on confrontation, Ghostwalker will use misdirection and create a situation where he'll have no choice but to take complete control of Denver—ostensibly for the safety of the people. Ghostwalker tasks his most trusted watcher, Colonel Shane Bennett of the ZDF, with this operation that actually began six months ago when Ghostwalker learned where a sample of Blue-227 was being stored. He ordered Colonel Bennett to retrieve the sample.

The Azzies never knew what hit them.



Fast forward to today, when Ghostwalker orders Bennett to arrange for a fake sample of Blue-227 to be “smuggled” into Denver, after which Bennett will leak a trail of clues for the Aztecs to follow. To get the fake Blue-227 into Denver, Bennett hires expendable shadowrunners to accompany the shipment, which will be transported by T-bird into the FRFZ.

Once the runners make it into Denver, all that’s left to do is hand off the cargo and collect their payment. Except an Aztechnology hit-team crashes the party. After an intense fight, the runners (hopefully) are able to make the hand off.

Unfortunately, they were supposed to be geeked and the Aztecs framed for bringing Blue-227 into Denver. After getting the payment, they’re put up in a safehouse until transportation out of Denver can be arranged. But, Mr. Johnson calls with an offer for additional work they can perform while they’re here.

Mr. Johnson needs some face time with a certain individual who’s ignoring him. So it’s up to the runners to arrange a meeting. Unfortunately, this is another set-up made to look like the runners committed murder of one Iain Lesker, UCAS representative to Denver. And Lone Star just happens to be there to take the runners into custody.

Likely, the runners will either end up being detained Lone Star, on the run, or one and then the other. Either way, they are eventually contacted by the infamous otaku/technomancer Puck. He offers the runners a deal: Help him out on another run, and he’ll get them out of Denver. Or they can take their chances where they are. Of course, Bennett has made arrangements for the runners to die while trying to escape custody—if they somehow escape, they’ll be hunted like dogs.

If they accept the deal, Puck takes them to one of his safehouses and explains the job, which is helping him infiltrate a ZDF facility and access its stand-alone system. Unfortunately, when they begin the run, an emergency meeting is held, adding to the security.

If the players are skilled (or lucky) enough to get the goods, they find out that something big is going on. Apparently fighting among the sector nations has broken out all across Denver as each sector blames the other for striking first. Puck cares little about this, but after sifting through the recovered paydata, he discovers something that the ZDF is going to try to seize the Nexus, better known as the Denver Data Haven. And it’s not just the admins and the staff the ZDF is gunning for, it’s also their dependents.

Puck then contacts the Nexus and relays the information. He then asks the runners to help hold off the ZDF so the Nexus’ dependents can escape. He and Perri, the Nexus’ admin, will make it worth it for them in terms of material, some money, and the gratitude of one of the most powerful data havens on the planet.

Also, Bennett is leading the charge, so there’s some incentive for payback ...



SCENE 1: JUST A SIMPLE JOB

WHAT'S UP, CHUMMER?

The journey of a thousand kilometers begins with a single step. For shadowrunners, that step is it meeting Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson a.k.a. Colonel Shane Bennett, is already working on Ghostwalker's operation. Per this part, Bennett will assemble a team of shadowrunners to escort very important cargo into Denver.

Pretty standard meeting but of course, unbeknownst to the runners, there's more going on here than what they realize.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

You look at your chrono for what feels like the thousandth time as the seconds tick away. Still a few minutes left, but this slag is cutting it a little too close for your comfort. Another minute ticks by and you wonder if you were wrong to trust this to someone else. Maybe you should have taken care of it yourself. The other arrangements were made hours ago, so when the order was given; there was nothing left to do but wait.

That's the hardest part.

As another minute ticks away you're jumpy, convinced that something has gone wrong. You snatch up your commlink, about to make *the call* but you hesitate. It's risky to make the call before the drop-off is complete. What if you distract them at the wrong time and things go sideways? You were assured this would happen on schedule. You wonder if all this planning would be for nothing as every worse-case scenario runs through your head.

Frag it. You're about to hit commcode on your 'link just as an AR window opens in your field of vision.

It's here!

Quickly you allow them access but move your trusty pistol out of sight so not to spook them. Your doorbell goes off followed by a light knock. Looking through the peep-hole, you see them ... and the package.

You open the door, just a bit. No need to get sloppy now.

"Hoi there!" says a young elven woman wearing a large, tomato-shaped hat. "Sorry for taking it down to the wire there, traffic was brutal. Anyway, your total is 22 nuyen."

With a smile on your face, you take the piping-hot pizza from the delivery driver. Already the smells of home-made, premium ingredients, fresh-baked crust from scratch, and *real*

toppings fill your doss. A quick AR transaction later (with sufficient tip), and it's all yours.

Closing the door with your foot, you carry the precious cargo to your kitchen table and pop the box open as your olfactory senses go into overdrive with pizza perfection. Everything is perfect. Cheese, toppings, sauce, and crust are perfectly balanced and proportionate. From your fridge, you pull out a bottle of your favorite brew. Now all you have to do is plop down in front of the trid, queue up your favorite show and...

Then your commlink goes off. It's your fixer.

Your hunger makes you pause, but you know that it's bad business to ignore your main source of income. Sighing, you hit *accept*. An ARO opens to reveal your fixer's smug face.

"Hey, got a line on a hot job and it should be relatively simple. Seems that Johnson needs a shotgun for a courier job. Pay is premium and of course it has to be done sooner than later. So, do want this or not?"

WHEN THE PLAYERS ACCEPT:

"Good! This one's an out-of-town gig, the meet time and coordinates should already be loaded into your 'link. Go here, hop on the chopper—yeah, that's right—and it'll take you to Johnson. Have fun!"

Scanning the info, you realize there's only an hour to get there. Throwing your coat on and grabbing your gear, you stuff a slice down your throat and chug half of the beer.

WHEN THE RUNNERS ARRIVE AT THE HELIPAD:

You arrive at the coordinates and realize that you're literally in the middle of nowhere. It's dead quiet, and a few stars twinkle in the sky. You've met with Johnson in some odd places, but this one's for the record books. It's enough to put you on edge.

It doesn't take long to hear the engine whine of an incoming SKA-008 helo. If not for the red and blue running lights, its sleek black surface would have completely blended with the sky. It circles once but makes no aggressive moves. Touching down, the rotors keep spinning and kick up dust. The chin turret packing a Vindicator machine gun and the door gunners are hard to miss.



From one of the side doors, an athletic human wearing nondescript BDUs and packing an SMG approaches. Everything about him screams merc, or at least paramilitary. His glowing cybereyes quickly size you up. Apparently satisfied, an AR text window opens up in your field of vision. It's from solider-boy and states (not asks) "If you're here to meet with Johnson, get on board."

And with that, he heads back to the waiting chopper.

GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN

While *False Flag* takes place in Denver, the runners don't have to be local. Mr. Johnson/Colonel Bennett has the resources to bring the runners in from wherever he wants, and it's not uncommon to bring in shadowrunners from other locations. If the runners aren't local, the gamemaster can appropriately modify the scene to get the players to the meet. If the players have their own transportation, let them use them. Bennett's guards can be waiting for them when they arrive. The exact location for the meet was left vague to be as accommodating as possible for both gamemaster and players.

WHEN THE RUNNERS ARRIVE AT THE MEET AND SIT DOWN WITH MR. JOHNSON:

The helo ride is brief, as the pilot puts down next to an old auto mechanic's shop that hasn't done business in decades. Old heaps fill the parking lots, while the building has so much rust you wonder if you can get tetanus by mere proximity. As you approach the building, another merc opens the door and follows you all in. You count at least three guards on the ground, two door gunners for the helo, and one rigger/pilot to guard Mr. Johnson.

Oddly enough, no one has tried to disarm you.

The place is filled with the debris one would expect of an abandoned shop. In the middle of the vehicle bay stands a male elf, hands clasped behind his back. His tailored suit says corp, but his ramrod posture says military.

"If it's all the same to you," he says without preamble, his words crisp and precise. "Let's skip the normal pleasantries and get down to business."

WHEN NEGOTIATIONS ARE OVER (AND ASSUMING THE RUNNERS TAKE THE JOB):

"I'm glad we could come to an arrangement. I'll send you all the data you'll need to make contact with Michael Wind-Rider, the smug ... professional you'll be escorting. Included is a commcode to contact me when the job is complete or in case of emergency. He will fill you in on the final details. Now, if you will excuse me, I have another ride coming in. Hector and his team will take you back.

HOOKS

Everything about this meet should scream "top-secret spy drek," from the sleek black helo to the merc guards. The players should realize from the word go that Mr. Johnson

isn't some two-bit criminal thug or wannabe corporate yes-man. This should alert them that they need to bring their A-game and skip any fragging around.

What the runners don't know is that this isn't the real Bennett; it's one of his body-double decoys he uses. Bennett is communicating with him through a secure Matrix link, basically using the poor slag as a puppet by telling him exactly what to say and do in real-time. If the runners do a Matrix Perception test, Computer + Data Processing [Mental] (6), they may notice the link.

Once the runners leave, another SKA-008 arrives. As the guards board that helo, Bennett activates the aircraft's self-destruct, killing everyone so as not to have any witnesses to the meeting. All of his guards were condemned men from Denver who thought they were avoiding a death sentence on various charges (mostly espionage) and being given a chance at redemption. With a mental command, Bennett killed two birds with one stone.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Once the meet begins, Bennett will come right to the job offer. Without giving too much away, he explains that he needs an escort team for an associate who's bringing precious cargo into the Front Range Free Zone. He hopes this trip to be uneventful, but he knows smuggling into Denver is dangerous. Hence the need escorts. Bennett is offering seventeen thousand nuyen plus coverage of medical expenses for injuries obtained during the operation. When the job is done, he'll provide transportation out of Denver.

If the runners want to negotiate, they can make the standard opposed Negotiation + Charisma [Social] Test. Bennett will offer an additional one thousand (maximum five) nuyen for every net hit. However, he will feign acquiescence and give the runners at least an additional three thousand nuyen no matter what the opposed test yields. Bennett will be professional, almost courteous. If the players are suspicious, have them make a standard Judge Intentions (Charisma + Intuition) Test to realize that Bennett gave up on the negotiations a bit *too* easily. This could be the first clue that something's not quite right, but then, that's part of biz.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

This is a basic meet, not designed for any combat (per say) but to establish a mood and tone for the adventure. But if the gamemaster wants to start things out with a bang, then they can have a group of runners who have been pissed off by Bennett in the past come in and make a play for him, taking out his guards in the process. Bennett can offer the runners an additional fee for taking care of the interlopers. Gamemasters can use any of the NPCs in this adventure to make up the second runner team.

DEBUGGING

Unless the players get a case of the stupids, the first part of the scene should go off without a hitch. Bennett's guards



are pros and won't do anything to risk Bennett's anger, and with good reason. Bennett will play nice, even if the runners get stupid. After all, he considers them only a pawn in his game.

NPC GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

BENNETT'S GUARDS

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|--|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 4 | 5 | 4(5) | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3.7 | 3 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 8(9) + 2D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Close Combat skill group 4, Firearms skill group 4, Gunnery 4, Gymnastics 4, Perception 4, Pilot Aircraft 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ flare compensation, image link, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision], wired reflexes 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | SWAT Armor [15] | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5 (7), DV 6P, AP -1, SA, RC —, 15 (c), w/ 30 regular ammo] Yamaha Raiden [Assault Rifle, Acc 8, DV 11P, AP -2, BF/FA, RC 4, 60 (c) w/ 120 rounds regular ammo, silencer/suppressor, smartgun system, sling] Combat knife [Blade, Acc 6, DV 6P, AP -3] | | | | | | | | | |

S-K AEROSPACE SKA-008

Handling 6, Speed 5, Accel 8, Body 16, Armor 18, Pilot 4, Sensors 4, Seats 12, w/ ammo bin, amenities (squatter), anti-theft system 4, drone rack (medium, landing), gun ports (left, right), rigger cocoon, rigger interface, searchlight, secondary manual control, weapon mount (heavy, turret, external, remote control)

SKA-008

Ultimax HMG-2 (turret: chin) [HMG, Acc 5, DV 11P, AP -4, FA, RC -16, 200 (bin), w/ regular rounds, smartgun system]

WHEN IT'S ALL OVER

Bennett watches as his newly hired assets leave the area. So far, things were going more or less as planned; a few variables but nothing that hadn't been accounted for. Now it was time lay out the appropriate breadcrumbs. But first, there was another matter. Disconnecting from the link with his decoy, he activated the SKA-008's internal cameras, making sure everyone was on board. Once the aircraft took off, Bennett removed himself and switched to cold-sim. With a command, the helo exploded in a ball of flame. And as soon as the first one drops off his newest pawns, it will meet a similar fate.

No loose ends, no witnesses.



SCENE 2: HOT POTATO

WHAT'S UP, CHUMMER?

As the opening part of Ghostwalker's operation, Bennett has hired the runners to ride shotgun for Michael Wind-Rider, a veteran troll smuggler and t-bird jock who operates in and around the FRFZ. The job is straightforward: Pick up the package and get it to Denver. Simple in theory, but if it truly was simple, it wouldn't be a shadowrun. After meeting up with Wind-Rider, the runners will embark on a journey zig-zagging through the PCC and Sioux Nation, dodging security patrols and dealing with a few complications along the way. And when they finally (hopefully) make it to Denver, someone will try and pick up the package, just not the ones the runners want.

According to information Bennett purposely leaks, the runners are smuggling the same sample of Blue-227, (the ultra-top-secret anti-dragon weapon developed by Aztlan and Aztechnology used to defeat the great dragon SIRRURG) that was stolen about six months ago from an Aztlan black site. Aztlan is quite keen on getting back their lost superweapon. Unfortunately for them (and maybe the runners), the sample is a fake, a decoy designed to force Aztlan to act. The real sample is still safely hidden in one of Ghostwalker's hordes.

The runners don't seem to realize that they're just pawns in a much larger game, and pawns are expendable

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

According to the paydata supplied by Mr. Johnson, the job involves riding shotgun and providing general assistance to one Michael Wind-Rider, an infamous smuggler and t-bird jock who's got a rep for making the various security forces around Denver look *really* bad.

This should be fun.

Also included in the data-packet provided by Mr. J is a temporary encrypted commcode number to get you in touch with Wind-Rider, who will made pick-up arrangements and provide the job specifics. How nice—someone who will pick you up for a change.

WHEN THE RUNNERS CONTACT WIND-RIDER:

You punch in the commcode into your link and hit send. It rings three times before an AR window opens. All you see is a close up of a rugged troll face and a pair of old-school aviator mirrorshades. "Hoi there, you must be the ones who've gotten suckered into riding shotgun for me. Nah, just kidding with ya, glad to have ya on board. So, before we link up, a quick few things. One, prepare for a three- to four-day trip. I'll have provisions and we'll be able to sleep a bit along the way, you'll understand when we get going, but any gear and personal items you may need is on you. And I hope no one is prone to airsickness. Also, bring whatever toys you want, but all explosives better be safely secured.

"Two, once we get going, I'll go over job specifics with you. I know Mr. Johnson gave us a nice secure commcode, but call me paranoid. There'll be a number of stops along the way, and that's where you slags come in. I need someone to watch my six for me when I'm on the ground and vulnerable.

"Three, as long as you're all professional, we'll get along fine. But on this run, it's my bird, so I'm in charge. Don't like it, you don't have to come. But let's not worry about that, right? We're all pros here. I have a few last-second mods to finish up, so you've got sixteen hours to get any travel arrangements done. So when you're ready, transmit coordinates of where you want to link up. After that, we're flying the unfriendly skies. Oh, and one more thing—make sure the meet location is away from any major buildings or neighborhoods. You'll see why when I get there."

WHEN THE TRAVEL PLANS ARE DONE AND THE RUNNERS ARE AT PICK-UP LOCATION

At the pick-up location, you check your chrono, Wind-Rider is two minutes late. Not a big deal, but it makes you wonder. Then, something in the sky catches your eye. It looks like a small winged drone; no weapons but definitely sensors in the nose. It circles twice, then takes off.

That's when something big screams by overhead at no more than fifty meters off the ground. With afterburners blazing, you watch it climb into the sun. Half a second later, you hear the sonic boom. You're guessing that's Wind-Rider.





No wonder he said to stay away from any buildings; the sonic shockwave could easily take out windows. Circling back, the beast of a t-bird comes to a leisurely, gentle landing twenty meters from your position. Looking like something out of a sci-fi space trid, the rear hatch opens. A troll of Amerind descent with shaved-down horns wearing a bomber-style jacket, grey flight suit, sporting slicked back hair, the familiar pair of mirrored aviator-style mirrorswags down the lowering ramp.

"Hoi there! Nice to finally face-to-face, right? Well, now that we're all chums, meet my newest significant other, if you will. I call her Sundowner II, or just Sunny. And before you ask, I had to retire Sunny I when the Sioux Defense Force tracked me down, and...never mind that now. Like a lot of relationships, it was time to move on. Besides, Sunny II is better fit all around. So let's hurry up, get loaded up and jet outta here. Ya see, I had to frag with a local air patrol on my way in, so let's hurry up before unwanted company arrives."

WHEN THE SUNNY II LANDS AT THE FIRST STOP:

The first leg is over and it's time to give Sunny a drink. As Wind-Rider circles around, you look down at the refueling station. Looking like just a few rusty shacks, it's definably discreet. No one would ever suspect this place as being for t-bird refueling. Wind-Rider does another circle before bringing Sunny down. "Okay, here's the first stop," he says. "Big shack is where the fuel pumps and other equipment is. Just before we touched down, I got a warning indicator on engine number two that I want to check it out. So be a chum and get the refueling stuff ready."

WHEN THE SUNNY II LANDS AT THE SECOND STOP:

"This is odd," Wind-Rider says as you near the second refueling area. "Listen up everyone! I should have contact with Waypoint Control, but I got nothing. Something's wrong, but we don't have the fuel to go anywhere else. We're gonna have to set down, so look sharp!"

WHEN THE SUNNY II LANDS IN DENVER:

"All right people, welcome to the Mile High City, and thank you for flying Sundowner Airlines. Forget about any tray-tables, just get your gear together so we can finish up and get paid," Wind-Rider says with fatigue evident in his voice. Taxiing into the hangar bay, even Sunny seems tired, her hydraulics creek and her engines tick with radiating heat. As you look out beyond the hangar, you notice there's nothing but flat terrain, except for a few cargo containers, around the hangar. At least you'll see anyone coming. Now, time to arrange for the pick-up.

HOOKS

The biggest problem for runs like this are long stretches of boredom punctuated by moments of intense action and/or pure terror. This run should reflect this. This run lasts days and at any given time something bad could happen. Given everything that will happen, by the time the *Sunny* touches down, the runners should be near exhaustion and ready to get this run over with.

BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE SUNDOWNER II:

While the runners make their way to Denver, Bennett has been a busy keeb. A lot hinges on Wind-Rider and the runners making it to Denver, but not everything. As is the case in all of his operations, Bennett has several contingency plans. But no matter what, Bennett needs to get other parts of the operation going. This involves getting other teams into position for their own missions, only some of which depend on *Sundowner II* arriving in Denver.

For Wind-Rider and the runners, Bennett has something special planned. What the runners don't know is that they're carrying a fake Blue-227 sample. Bennett knows that Aztlan will do anything to require that lost sample, so he uses an Aztlan double-agent to leak the information regarding the runner's pending arrival. Bennett knows that Aztlan or Az-technology will try to secure the sample, likely resulting in a battle with his runners.

And it's all part of his plan.

Two ZDF sharpshooters are already in position near the runner's hangar. Once the two sides have sufficiently





WIND-RIDER'S COURSE AND CREWING THE SUNDOWNER II

The package pick-up location is just outside of Reno in the PCC. From there it's a nice, zig-dagging jaunt to the first refueling point or pit stop located outside of Provo. After refueling, Wind-Rider will navigate through the Rocky Mountains to the second pit stop located near Laramie in the Sioux Nation. After departing Laramie, it's more mountain dodging. Wind-Rider then loops around the PCC and Sioux Sectors in Denver to land at Stapleton Airport in the UCAS sector.

So what can the runners do while in the sky? A lot, actually. Fellow riggers can act as co-pilot, gunner, or even take control of the combat/surveillance drones; or take over control of Sunny should Wind-Rider become incapacitated. For hackers, there's a satellite link for Matrix access. And if attacked in flight, magicians can make use of several portals for line of sight to cast spells or go astral from. And last but not least, there're multiple gun ports.

bloodied each other, the sharpshooters will end the battle. Then, at the appropriate time, it will be revealed that Aztlan was attempting to smuggle a weapon specifically designed to target dragons. But the valiant ZDF prevented it from being used. Aztlan will be implicated, as will (to a lesser degree) the UCAS, for "letting" this happen. Meanwhile, Bennett's other operatives across the FRFZ are conducting their own missions.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Once the runners are airborne, Wind-Rider explains the general plan. After picking up the package, they'll navigate a winding course to exploit various weak points and or blind spots in the various security zones/nets between the pick-up location and Denver. Luckily, Wind-Rider knows the region and how the different nations operate. Part of his strategy includes landing at certain points to avoid aerial patrols and satellite sweeps. On the ground, they're vulnerable.

Based on this course, *Sunny II* will have to re-fuel twice. To facilitate this, they'll be stopping at two known pit stops that are maintained by an alliance of Denver-area smugglers. During refueling, they'll be especially vulnerable because



they can't make a rapid escape. If all goes well, then the entire trip should take three to four days. (Note for gamemasters: depending on where the runners are operating out of, extend or shorten this to fit previously established game play)

FIRST LOCATION

PICK UP NEAR RENO (PUEBLO CORPORATE COUNCIL)

Located outside of Reno, the pick-up point looks like a military junkyard. Several derelict US Army Ghost War-era hulks litter the area. When the *Sunny* arrives, they're met by another smuggler, a dwarf named Kirby. Wind-Rider and Kirby go way back. The cargo itself is a nondescript metal container with a Rating 7 maglock/keypad combo approximately two-and-a-half meters long and half a meter wide, weighing approximately 100 kilos. Loading drones load it into *Sunny's* smuggling compartment. Provided no one does anything stupid, the transfer goes off without incident.

FIRST PIT STOP

APPROXIMATELY 30 KM SOUTH OF PROVO, PUEBLO CORPORATE COUNCIL

The first leg of the run should take approximately sixteen to twenty hours, weather and random encounters pending. The runners should be feeling some effects of being cooped up inside of *Sunny*.

Located near the "city" of Provo in the PCC, the pit stop looks like a motley collection of old shacks from the air, and the ground the view isn't any better. Wind-Rider explains that this is part of a chain of secret refueling points maintained by an alliance of smugglers. Each member has a special code that's used to unlock the fuel pumps and the supply sheds as well. The chain is monitored by a decker in Denver for any unauthorized users.

Wind-Rider lands *Sunny* next to the refueling, but there's a possible problem in the starboard engine. So it's up to the runners to go into the shed and bring out the refueling hoses. Any Perception tests to determine/locate any external threats post-landing reveal none in the area, at least on the outside.

In the refueling shack is a large tank of aircraft fuel and a custom refueling drone attached to the tank via large hoses. A small control pad with drone operating instructions (just press "on" and the drone will do all the work) are easily visible on a small workbench about ten meters from the entrance. The shack's floor is dirt, which coats everything, even the deathrattles on the ground.

When the runners enter the shack they'll need to make an opposed Reaction + Intuition [Mental] versus the deathrattle's Sneaking + Agility [Physical] test to see the (first) snake laying between the door and the workbench, hidden in the dirt. Anyone who fails the test is surprised and immediately attacked. As soon as the deathrattle is dealt with, the runners will then hear multiple rattles and realize that the shack is infested with dozens of them.

SIT AND WAIT: LANDING TO AVOID DETECTION AND CROSSING BORDERS

Normally traveling by air from Reno, to Laramie, to Denver would only take only a few hours. The problem here is that the *Sundowner II* can't remain airborne the entire time. To avoid patrols and satellite sweeps, Wind-Rider will have to land multiple times for varying lengths of time (gamemaster's discretion). During these stops, he'll use Sunny's high-tech countermeasures and old-school methods (camouflage tarps, treat Rating 6 thermal dampening and chameleon coating) to hide their location. These waiting periods can be played out or hand-waved as needed.

There'll also be two major border crossings the gamemaster will have to consider. The first is crossing from the PCC into the Sioux Nation heading to Laramie, and then from the Sioux Nation into Denver. Like the waiting periods, these can be hand-waved or played through at the gamemaster's discretion. Should the gamemaster wish to play it out, the runners will have to avoid detection by Sioux and UCAS security networks (radar, sensors, and so on). This can be done in many ways.

The first is a basic catch all opposed test. The runners or Wind-Rider will make a piloting check, Pilot Aircraft + Reaction [Physical] (including all ECM bonuses) versus a base dice pool of 10 (limit 6). This base pool represents the accumulation of enemy electronic detection systems and patrol craft that may catch the runners as they cross the borders.

The second is to use multiple opposed tests. One test is an Electronic Warfare + Logic [Mental] Test versus the previously mentioned dice pool. This means that the runners are jamming their way past the sensors. For added challenge, the gamemaster can also have the runners/Wind-Rider make several Pilot Aircraft + Agility [Physical] opposed tests versus the Perception + Intuition [Mental] of any border patrol drones, aircraft, or riggers in the area. Consider these tests an aerial sneak test. Deckers or technomancers can attempt to hack some of the local areas. Use the Host stats in Scene Five, but increase all stats by one.

DEATHRATTLES (CROTALUS NEX)

Originally thought to be an awakened version of the common rattlesnake, biologists recently learned that *Crotalus Nex* is separate species. Aggressive and territorial, they can be found throughout the southwest areas of North America or desert area. During times of extreme weather, deathrattles seek out shelter in any available structure, be it natural or artificial, and will temporarily come together to form clutches. Exceptionally durable, deathrattles have a mystical toughness along with other abilities/endowments.

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG | M |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|
| | 3 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/9 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 7, Mental 3, Social 4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 13 + 2D6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Exotic Range Weapon (Venom Spit) 3, Perception 6, Sneaking 3, Unarmed Combat 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Qualities | High Pain Tolerance | | | | | | | | | | |
| Critter Powers | Enhanced Senses (Thermographic Vision), Immunity (Toxins), Natural Weapons (Bite), Venom (can be used in conjunction with bite) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Bite [Unarmed Combat, DV 5P, AP -1] Venom [Exotic Ranged Weapon (Spit, 20 meters), DV Power 10, Penetration -3, Effect: agony, nausea, physical damage] | | | | | | | | | | |

PRAIRIE IGASHO

When the Native American Nations formed after the First Treaty of Denver, a lot of Anglos (read: anyone who wasn't Amerind) refused to leave their homes in the former United States areas. And in what some would call irony, they were eventually forced into settlements much like the Native reservations.

Some of these Anglos decided to skip that part and took up nomadic existences. Over decades, their numbers slowly grew. At first these groups of prairie igasho, or wanderers, were considered insignificant and only the Sioux Nation bothered to chase them down. The rest of the other NAN nations saw them as more of a nuisance and a gang rather than a people, but don't tell the igashos that.

The prairie igasho have little in common with groups that may seem similar such as the Roma of Europe, save for their nomadic lifestyle and their codes of loyalty to their kind. They organize into clans that are ruled either by a matriarch or a patriarch. Each clan is known by the surname of the matriarch/patriarch. Most clans range from between ten to thirty members, although some are larger. Clans sometimes travel together in large caravans, while others prefer to stay small and mobile. If there's a grievance between clans, it's settled either by compensation or duels (to first blood or to the death, depending on the grievance).

Most prairie igasho come from Anglo settlements or are on the run from NAN authorities. It's not uncommon for escaped Anglo prisoners to join igasho clans. The clans are mistrustful of anyone who is not one of their own and consider outsiders to be a threat. However, a few clans have been known to befriend or give aid to various other criminal organizations, smugglers, or travelers. Once a clan's friendship is obtained, it is for life. Same thing if you're an enemy. The best way to befriend an igasho is to offer them something they can use to help the clan. Culture-wise, the prairie igashos are often compared to poverty-stricken Appalachia residents or similarly deprived groups.

Experts in scrounging, igashos have the uncanny ability to make use of just about anything and have a knack for jury-rigging. They're also experts at wilderness survival and stealth. Augmentations and modern tech are almost unheard of. A few clans have Awakened members, but most see magic as a tool of the people who cast the, out of civilization in the first place.

The players can formulate whatever plan they want for dealing with the deathrattles, as long as they don't damage the equipment, or worse, detonate the fuel. When the deathrattles are dealt with, there're no problems refueling and departing. Should any of the runners fall prey to the deathrattle's toxin, Wind-Rider has an anti-venom kit on board *Sunny* (four doses, will stabilize/detox, all other damage healed per normal rules).

SECOND PIT STOP

15 KM SOUTHWEST OF LARAMIE (SIOUX NATION)

After some more stop-and-go flying, *Sunny* nears the second refueling station. Known as Waypoint One, this refueling station located near Laramie was once an airport terminal for a proposed regional airport. Construction began in 2031 but was never completed. A single terminal was *mostly* completed but sat for decades abandoned. All records of it were lost in Crash 2.0, but a rigger named Tom Buck and

a few associates rediscovered it and did some renovations. It's now a permanent operation that features a small paved runway, multiple landing pads, several one-room apartments, and a small but sophisticated communication array. The inside is largely hollow with mostly completed floors and hallways. Power is available only in critical areas.

The second leg of the run used more fuel than the first, and *Sunny's* reserves are almost gone. Wind-Rider tells everyone "we're running on fumes." As the *Sunny* approaches, Wind-Rider gets nervous because he can't raise Waypoint One control. A quick Electronic Warfare + Logic [Mental] (2) Test shows there isn't any jamming or atmospheric interference. No one is answering. Still, the runners have no choice but to put down.

During the landing near the north side, Waypoint is completely dark, which is unusual because there're usually some lights on. A standard Matrix perception test, Computer + Intuition [Data Processing] (1), shows there're no Matrix devices active in the area.

Eventually the runners will have to leave *Sunny* to re-fuel, or they may decide to look around. Wind-Rider will defer to the runners on how to secure/investigate the area. No matter what they do, when they disembark, they'll need to make an (audio and visual) Perception + Intuition [Mental] (opposed) Test to notice a group of individuals watching from the terminal's second floor.

The runners can investigate the terminal or try and quickly re-fuel and get out. Or they can wait and see what happens. Whatever they do, eventually they will be confronted by a group of fifteen individuals of different metatypes, but mostly human.

The group of prairie igashos in Waypoint call themselves Clan Roman. They came across Waypoint One a week ago and decided to make it home. So they overpowered the small staff claimed it.

Like the previous stop, the runners can handle this situation however they see fit. There are approximately forty gypsies at Waypoint; twenty-five of them are adults, the rest children. And there are no elderly. The clan is led by Papa Roman, an old sun-worn, solidly built human with a thick salt-and-pepper beard. He'll speak for his clan and tell the runners they have to leave immediately or face the consequences. His words are bold, and he will not let be intimidated easily. (**Note:** Use standard prairie igasho stats below, but increase all skills by one, and add Intimidation 5)

Even with the igasho's numbers, the runners have a firepower advantage as few igashos have firearms. The rest of their weapons are low-tech. At least twenty of the adults would throw their lives away defending their new home in a suicidal frontal assault.

If the runners try a diplomatic approach, they could trade some of their gear and or supplies for the needed fuel (which the igashos can't access anyway). A working firearm with ammo, medicine, survival supplies, etc. would be extremely valuable to them. The runners can try to befriend them as well.

Offering trade to Papa Roman would be a good start, but the runners will have to be careful not to come across as be-



ing deceitful in any way (or fail/glitch on an appropriate social roll). Otherwise, they risk an attack. If any of the runners are of Amerind descent (such as Wind-Rider), they'll receive a situational -3 social modifier for all interactions with the gypsies. If the runners try the diplomatic approach and are successful, they will receive the Roman Clan as new contacts. Conversely, if they fail or resort to violence, they could end up with a vendetta against them.

ENCOUNTER(S) IN THE SKY OR ON THE GROUND (OPTIONAL)

At any time, the runners can encounter various border patrol drones along their travels; especially within Sioux Nation territory. These encounters can be a full out dogfight in the air or action on the ground—or both! Such encounters can be used to ratchet up the tension or be yet another battle to grind the runners down before they reach Denver.

WELCOME TO THE MILE HIGH CITY (FRFZ, UCAS SECTOR, STAPLETON AIRPORT)

Once *Sundowner II* reaches the FRFZ border, the runners will be in the clear, aside from maybe a few token last-second border patrol encounters (gamemaster's discretion). The drop-off is set to take place at a private section of Stapleton Airport in the UCAS Sector. A fifty-by-fifty-meter chain length fence with gate cordons of the area. The terrain surrounding the hangar is completely wide open, with nothing to hide behind except for two rusting belly cans (used to load/offload cargo into aircraft) laying approximately 200 meters from the hangar.

Wind-Rider lands and taxis *Sunny* into the hangar without incident at approximately 0430 local time. All that's needed to be done is for Wind-Rider to arrange for cargo transfer. What they don't realize is that Mr. Johnson knew exactly when they arrived. As soon as they crossed into Denver, an encrypted stealth RFID transmitter began broadcasting. This allowed the ZDF snipers to get into position.

If the players are paranoid enough or think to do a Matrix Perception test, they'll detect the transmitter on a Computer + Data Processing [Mental] (4). If they decide to try and shut it down, they can use an Electronic Warfare + Logic [Mental] (6) Extended Test (if needed). If the runners fail to stop the signal electronically, they'll have to open the cargo container to get to it. This requires a Locksmith + Logic [Mental] (10) extended test, or defeat a barrier rating of 20.

If they open the container for whatever reason, they see a specialized container approximately two meters long marked BLUE-227-0325 along with various other technical writing (mostly warnings *not* to open the container) in Aztlaner Spanish. The container is legit, the contents aren't. The players can do whatever they want with this information.

If the runners now want to bail for whatever reason, that's their prerogative. Wind-Rider will finish the job and makes the call. Until the drop-off, he'll do maintenance checks on *Sunny's* hull. Whatever the runners decide to do and before they

depart, (or at some point) they'll notice a GMC Bulldog step-van moving at high speed toward the gate. Unless stopped, the Bulldog will easily breach it. This however, is only a diversion for two Aztlan agents to attack. Their mission is to kill everyone in sight and retrieve the sample of Blue-227. Both are initiated blood magic users; one a mage, the other an adept. Assisting them is an expendable Aztlan soldier whose job was to drive the van through the gate. If he survives whatever the runner's throw at him, the blood mage will use him as a sacrifice to fuel his powers.

The Aztlaners use misdirection and an improved invisibility spell to get in close. Then, they'll attack with everything they've got. Wind-Rider will immediately try and get back into the Sunny for cover and to employ her weaponry, but a ZDF sniper will take him out before he can.

The ZDF snipers will wait until the battle between the runner's and the Aztlaners is almost over before they act. Their weapons are wirelessly active and a Matrix Perception or a standard Perception + Intuition [Mental] Opposed Test versus the sniper's Sneak + Agility [Physical] (including all gear bonuses) can be used to find them hiding in the "belly cans."

Note: There's always the possibility that the runners will find the sniper's first by whatever means and engage them first. If this happens, simply have the mages show up just before the snipers are taken out. But if the runners are getting beaten by the Aztlan agents, the ZDF snipers will take them down, as they are now the biggest threat. This should also alert the runner's to the sniper's presence, if not their exact location.

Should the runners eliminate all hostiles, they'll likely have to contact Mr. Johnson to let him know that the transfer has been compromised. If they don't and somehow suspect a set-up, Bennett (being the hacker that he is) will contact the runners with a story about hearing that the transfer went south. He will be furious that he wasn't contacted. He'll go over the usual "is the cargo safe" stuff, swear he knows nothing about a set-up, and will argue that the runners were hired for just this kind of situation.

That is, if the runners suspect anything.

The situation is a little suspicious, but it is still in-line with the job specs and as far as the runners know, the snipers (depending on how things pan out) could be working with the Azzies. If the runners believe him, Johnson tells them that he's dispatching an associate to their location to complete the transfer and extract them. He'll use the code-phrase "you came too far for this drek" to ID himself. The runners are also ordered to get their gear and remove any evidence from the hangar. This means destroying the hangar ... and the *Sundowner II*.

Note: If the players want to save *Sunny*, let them *try*. But they'll have to find a place to store her, which won't be easy. Bennett will be adamant about destroying her. Still, if the players can come up with a plausible way, let them. She may come in handy later, but the gamemaster has final discretion.

About fifteen minutes after the call to Johnson/Bennett, a black Ford Econovan rolls up, and an ork male in street clothes steps out with hands raised and gives the code phrase. From there, the runners and the cargo are loaded into the van. Another message from Mr. Johnson says that payment has been



sent and that lodging has been arranged for them (if they want it) until departure arrangements can be made. From there, the ork (a.k.a. Lt. Maddox, one of Bennett's operatives) drops them off at a hotel in the UCAS Sector and takes the cargo with him.

If the runners don't believe Mr. Johnson/Bennett and bail, they're on their own.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

One of the biggest factors for this run will be fatigue. The runners will be in tight quarters for most of the trip and will have to be alert almost the entire time. Imagine the worst family road trip ever, and then add in life-or-death situations and or gunfire. It's recommended that the gamemaster use the fatigue damage rules (p. 172, SR5), at the mild severity level. But if the gamemaster really wants to hamper the players, make the environment severity moderate or even harsh depending on how the situation plays out. And of course, gamemasters should feel free to add any random encounters or adverse weather conditions they desire.

DEBUGGING

Because of the sheer amount of things that'll happen on this run, there's a greater chance of something happening that stops this campaign cold. The best thing a gamemaster can do is be moderate but challenging in their response. The deathrattles should be more of a nuisance than a major threat, and the gypsies are more opportunistic rogues than bloodthirsty fighters. Also, if things are going especially bad for the group, the gamemaster can hand-wave any encounters with any border patrol units, making it more of a potential threat to keep the tension high rather than an actual encounter. And finally, the gamemaster is free to delete or gloss over any of the encounters as they see fit, other than the final one in Denver.

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

MICHAEL WIND-RIDER

(MALE TROLL)

Michael Wind-Rider always wanted to be a pilot, but his size was a detriment. So at fifteen he instead started his smuggling career as a mechanic for quasi-legal aircraft. Three years later he developed an impressive network of contacts and saved enough money to buy his first (large) cargo aircraft. Eventually he moved on to faster and more nimble craft, and eventually purchased and modified his first T-bird, a GMC Banshee he called the *Sundowner*. Unfortunately, *Sunny* was retired by the Sioux Air Force by way of a heat-seeking missile. Now with the new and improved *Sundowner II*, an Evo-Krime Wing, he's back in the air.

A bit of a braggart, Wind-Rider likes to push his aircraft to the max, flying nap-of-the-earth at full throttle and forgetting how large his new t-bird is. But for all his bluster, Wind-Rider is a decent sort and has the skills to back up his talk.

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 8 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2.4 | 4 |
| Condition Monitor | 12/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 9, Mental 7, Social 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 9 + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Matrix Initiative | 10 + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Aeronautics Mechanic 5, Armorer 4, Automatics 4, Automotive Mechanic 4, Blades 3, Electronic Warfare 6, Electronics Group 4, Etiquette 3, First Aid 3, Free Fall 3, Gunnery 6, Gymnastics 2, Heavy Weapons 3, Intimidation 4, Leadership 3, Negotiation 4, Perception 5, Pilot Aircraft 7, Pilot Ground Craft 5, Pistols 4, Sneaking 2, Tracking 4, Unarmed Combat 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| Knowledge Skills | Aerial Combat Maneuvering 4, Aerodynamics 3, Border Patrol Operations: North America 5, Close Air Support Tactics 4, Private Airfield Locations 5, Smuggler Hideouts 6, Smuggler Routes 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Languages | Aztlaner Spanish 3, Dakota 6, English N | | | | | | | | | |
| Qualities | Distinctive Style (aviator mirrorshades), Gearhead, Latest and Greatest, Poor Self Control (Braggart), Sense of Direction, Solid Rep (Smuggler Community), Steely Eyed Wheelman, Vehicle Empathy, Wanted (Border Patrol) | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Cerebral Booster 1, Control Rig 3, Damage Compensators 2, Smartlink | | | | | | | | | |
| RCC | Maser Industrial Electronics [DR 5, data processing 5, firewall 5, noise reduction 3, w/ armor, biofeedback filter] | | | | | | | | | |
| Vehicles | Evo-Krime Wing, Sundowner II (modified) [Handling 5, Speed 7, Accel 6, Body 22, Armor 20, Pilot 6, Sensors 8, Seats 7(6), w/ ammo bin, amenities (squatter), anti-theft system 3, drone rack (medium, landing), ECM 5, gun ports (left, right, rear) life support 2, manual control override, metahuman adjustment (six seats non-troll), missile defense system, PPS (Rating 5), rigger cocoon, rigger interface, searchlight, secondary manual control, signature mask 6, smuggling compartment 3 (shielded), weapon mount (heavy, turret, concealed, remote control), vehicle tag eraser | | | | | | | | | |
| Evo-Krime Wing | Ruhrmetall SF-20 (turret: dorsal) [HMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 12P, AP -4, FA, RC -24, 200 (bin), w/ anti-vehicle rounds, smartgun system] 3 Ruhrmetall SF-20 (gun ports) [HMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 12P, AP -8, FA, RC -24, 100 (belt), w/ anti-vehicle rounds, smartgun system] | | | | | | | | | |
| Drones | Lockheed Optic X-2 [Handling, 4, Speed 4, Accel 3, Body 2, Armor 2, Pilot 3, Sensor 2, w/ clear sight 5, evasion 3, stealth 3] | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | AR gloves, area jammer, armor jacket [12] (w/ chemical protection 4, fire resistance 4, insulation 4), binoculars (Rating 3, w/ image link, vision enhancement 2, vision magnification: electronic), bug scanner (Rating 1), 10x electronic parts, flashlight, helmet (Capacity 2, w/ flare compensation, gas mask, image link, low-light vision), micro-transceiver, Maser Industrial Electronics RCC (w/ armor, biofeedback filter), medkit (Rating 5), satellite link, sim module (modified for hot sim), survival kit, tool kits (aeronautics mechanic, armorer, hardware), Transys Avalon commlink | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Krime Spree [SMG, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP —, FA, RC 8, 32 (c), w/ 100 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (internal), sling, 3 spare clips] Shock glove [Unarmed, Acc 6, DV 8S(e), AP -5, w/ internal battery] | | | | | | | | | |



STANDARD PRAIRIE IGASHO

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 3 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 5, Mental 5, Social 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 7 + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Archery 4, Blades 4, Gymnastics 4, Longarms 3, Outdoors skill group 5, Perception 5, Pistols 4, Sneaking 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Ares Armored Survivalist [8] (w/ fire resistance 4, insulation 4), survival kit | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Marlin 3468SS [Sport Rifle, Acc 4, DV 13P, AP -1, SS, 4 (m), w/ 10 rounds regular ammo] Streetline Special [Hold-out, Acc 4, DV 6P, AP —, SA, RC 3, 6 (c), w/ 10 rounds regular ammo] Light crossbow [Crossbow, Acc 7, DV 5P, AP -1, 4 (m), w/ 4 regular bolts] Medium crossbow [Crossbow, Acc 6, DV 8P, AP -2, 4 (m), w/ 4 barbed bolts] Pole arm [Blade, Reach 3, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP -2] Survival knife [Blade, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP -1] | | | | | | | | | |
| *each individual will have one survival knife and two of the other weapons listed above | | | | | | | | | | |

STANDARD BORDER PATROL RIGGER (HUMAN)

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 4 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 4(5) | 4 | 2 | 2.4 | 2 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 14 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 6, Mental 5(6), Social 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 10 + 1D10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Matrix Initiative | 9 + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Automatics 2, Automotive Mechanic 4, Electronic Warfare 5, Gunnery 6, Longarms 2, Perception 5, Pilot Aircraft 6, Pistols 4, Unarmed Combat 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Cerebral booster 1, control rig 3, damage compensators 2, smartlink | | | | | | | | | |
| RCC | Maser Industrial Electronics [DR 5, Data Processing 5, Firewall 5, Noise Reduction 3, w/ armor, biofeedback filter] | | | | | | | | | |
| Vehicles | GMC Banshee [Handling 7, Speed 9, Accel 5, Body 20, Armor 20, Pilot 6, Sensors 10, Seats 12 w/ medium drone rack (landing) and listed weapons/gear]; Hughes Stallion WK-4 [Handle 5, Speed 6, Accel 5, Body 16, Armor 16, Pilot 4, Sensor 6, Seats 8 w/ medium drone rack (landing) and listed weapons/gear] | | | | | | | | | |
| GMC Banshee | Ruhrmetall SF-20 (turret: chin) [HMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 12P, AP -4, FA, RC -24, 200 (bin), w/ anti-vehicle rounds, smartgun system] Ruhrmetall SF-20 (fixed: nose) [HMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 12P, AP -4, FA, RC -24, 100 (belt), w/ anti-vehicle rounds, smartgun system] | | | | | | | | | |
| Hughes Stallion WK-4 | FN MAG-5 (turret: chin) [MMG, Acc 6, DV 11P, AP -7, FA, RC -16, 200 (bin), w/ APDS rounds, smartgun system] | | | | | | | | | |
| Drones | Lockheed Optic X-2 [Handling, 4, Speed 4, Accel 3, Body 2, Armor 2, Pilot 3, Sensor 2, w/ Clearsight 5, Evasion 3, Stealth 3] | | | | | | | | | |

AZTLAN BLOOD MAGE (HUMAN)

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG | M |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|
| | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 8 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/11 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 14 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 4, Mental 7, Social 8, Astral 8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 8 + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Astral Initiative | 10 + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Assensing 5, Astral Combat 6, Close Combat skill group 4, Conjuring skill group 5, Firearms skill group 5, Perception 5, Sneaking 4, Sorcery skill group 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Initiate Grade | 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Metamagics | Centering, Sacrifice | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spells | Agony, Armor, Bind, Combat Sense, Death Touch, Detect Life, Improved Invisibility, Levitate, Napalm Wall, Physical Barrier, Powerball, Powerbolt, Shadow Blood Rite | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rituals | Blood Rite | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bound Spirits | Blood Spirit (Force 8) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor jacket [12] (w/ fire resistance 4, nonconductivity 4), Athame (Rating 4), Ballistic Mask [2], PULSE Wave commlink, sustaining focus (Manipulation spells, Rating 4) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | HK-227 [SMG, Acc 5, DV 8P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 6, 28 (c), w/ 28 explosive rounds] Savalette Guardian [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 9P, AP -2, SA/BF, RC 5, 12 (c), w/ 12 explosive rounds] Cougar Fineblade Knife, Long Blade [Blade, Acc 7, DV 6P, AP -1] | | | | | | | | | | |

AZTLAN BLOOD ADEPT (ORK)

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG | M |
|----------------------------|--|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|
| | 8 | 5 | 5(7) | 7 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 8 |
| Condition Monitor | 12/11 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 13 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 9(10), Mental 5, Social 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 10(12) + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Athletics skill group 5, Close Combat skill group 7, Firearms skill group 5, Intimidation 4, Perception 5, Stealth skill group 5, Throwing Weapons 3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Qualities | Ambidextrous | | | | | | | | | | |
| Initiate Grade | 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Metamagics | Cannibalize, Power Bleed | | | | | | | | | | |
| Adept Powers | Adrenaline Boost 1, Astral Perception, Berserk, Combat Sense 2, Critical Strike (Blades), Enhanced Accuracy (Blades), Improved Reflexes 2, Rapid Draw, Riposte 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor jacket [12] (w/ chemical protection 4, fire resistance 4, nonconductivity 4, goggles [Rating 2, w/ flare compensation, smartlink], PULSE Wave commlink, Securetech PPP Legs Kit [1] | | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | HK-227X [SMG, Acc 5, DV 8P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC 8, 28 (c), w/ 28 explosive rounds] Savalette Guardian [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 9P, AP -2, SA/BF, RC 5, 12 (c), w/ 12 explosive rounds] Combat axe (Weapon Focus 2) [Blade, Reach 2, Acc 6, DV 13P, AP -4, w/ personalized grip] Cougar Fineblade Knife, long blade [Blade, Acc 7, DV 6P, AP -1] Vibro Sword [Blade, Reach 1, Acc 7, DV 12P, AP -2] | | | | | | | | | | |



ZDF SNIPERS (HUMAN)

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|---|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 3 | 5 | 4(6) | 3 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 4.9 | 3 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 4(5), Mental 5, Social 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 9(11) + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Automatics 4, Gymnastics 4, Longarms 6 (7), Perception 4, Pistols 2, Running 2, Sneaking 5, Unarmed Combat 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ image link, smartlink, vision enhancement 3, vision magnification], reaction enhancers 2, reflex recorder (Longarms), spatial recognizer | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Chameleon Suit [9], concealable holster, Erika Elite commlink | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Ares Desert Strike [Sniper Rifle, Acc 7, DV 13P, AP -8, SA, RC 6, 14 (c), w/ 28 rounds APDS ammo, bi-pod, imaging scope (w/ electric vision magnification, low light vision, smartlink), shock pad, silencer/suppressor, spare clip] Browning Ultra-Power [Heavy Pistol, Acc 6, DV 8P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 10 (c), w/ laser sight | | | | | | | | | |



SCENE 3: A SMALL SACRIFICE

WHAT'S UP, CHUMMER?

Because the runners didn't have the good grace to die, Bennett is forced to modify his plans. But he realizes that he can still use them to help eliminate an annoying thorn in Ghostwalker's side.

The new plan is for Mr. Johnson to hire the runners for a small job while they're in Denver. Unlike the smuggling run, this one isn't as complicated. According to Mr. Johnson, he needs to have a face-to-face with an uncooperative individual, and he wants the runners to bring this individual to him.

This is, of course, another set-up. When the runners arrive, they find their target and his bodyguards dead. They also may not know that their target was in fact one Iain Lesker, UCAS representative on the Denver Council, who was visiting a house of ill repute. As soon as the runners realize what's happened, Lone Star Security is already busting down the door to arrest them for murder.

What happens next depends on how the runners react. If all or some of them are arrested at this point, they'll need to escape or be rescued. If they completely avoid capture, their faces are soon plastered all over Denver as wanted criminals. There'll be a massive manhunt and no way for them to get out of the FRFZ without serious help.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

A few hours after the Charlie-Foxtrot at Stapleton, you're chilling at a pretty decent hotel in the UCAS sector courtesy of Mr. Johnson. It's not the Hilton, but the beds are clean, the water is hot, and room service is roach-free. At about ten in the morning, your commlinks go off with a message from Mr. Johnson. It reads: "Will take time to secure travel plans. Impressed with your performance and have a small job that can be done while travel arrangements being made, a simple snatch and grab. If interested in earning some more cred, contact me by 2030 hours. -Mr. Johnson."

Hmmm. There're pros and cons here. But Mr. Johnson has been pretty solid with you so far. Either way, you've about ten hours to decide—and the room's been paid for ...

AFTER BENNETT LEARNS ABOUT THE DROP OFF:

Bennett once again stood in blackness before his master's Matrix visage to give him an operational update. He was not completely satisfied with the results, but sometimes one has to adapt. Bennett just hoped his master agreed.

"Master, the first phase of the operation has been completed. While it did not transpire completely as planned, the net results are the same."

Ghostwalker's eyes narrowed "Explain."

Bennett took a breath. "The shadowrunners hired for the feint were more resourceful than anticipated. They survived the assault against the Aztecs and my operatives. However, operational security is still intact. As it turns out, this may be an opportunity. I can use these shadowrunners to accomplish objective 004. Even with these turn of events, the overall timetable is unaffected. We are still on schedule, and the other teams have been deployed. We should start to see results in less than twelve hours."

"Very well. Proceed." Ghostwalker closed his eyes, and his image vanished.

IF THE RUNNERS DECIDE TO MEET WITH MR. JOHNSON:

Mr. Johnson/Bennett tells you to meet him in the hotel's lounge on the second floor at 2300 hours. Featuring a long bar at the end of the room with a few tables in the middle with booths along the sides, it's the kind of place where hotel guests go for cheap (watered-down) drinks when they don't feel like venturing too far from their rooms.

The lounge is only about half full with an assortment of business travelers looking for a quick nightcap and middle-aged family types who just want some private time to have a drink without the kids. Seated near the bar is the ork who helped you at Stapleton. He nods to you over a beer and inclines his head toward a corner booth. In the indicated booth is Mr. Johnson, looking impeccable as ever in his business suit.

As you approach, he nods as you all fill into the spacious booth. Holding up a hand to forestall any conversation,



he pulls out a small area jammer and activates it. “There, now we may talk freely,” he says as he sips a glass of spring water. “I am glad to see you survived the events at Stapleton. To be frank, I am quite impressed. I know you may be eager to depart, but please hear me out. There is a certain individual I need to have a conversation with, but he has decided to ignore all my calls. So I need you all to arrange a meeting for me. Now, you know I won’t give much more info on the job until we have come to terms. I can tell you it won’t be easy, since the target is a person of some means and will have competent protection. And there will be some additional provisions for the job you’ll have to keep in mind. So with that said, what do you think?”

HOOKS

The first part of this scene should feel like its business as usual, unless something has happened to make the runners wary of Mr. Johnson. If not, they shouldn’t have any reason not to trust him, other than the normal runner paranoia. However, once the runners get to Lesker’s location, then all bets are off and the runners are free to curse Mr. Johnson as much as they want.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Bennett considers the runners loose ends that need to be tied up, especially since the next phase of the operation is starting in less than thirty hours. Fortunately for the runners, Bennett decides to use them instead of killing them outright. In an odd way, this decision gives the runners a fighting chance.

This scene could start any number of ways depending on what exactly happened in the previous scene at Stapleton Airport. Everything up until now is under the assumption that the runners *don’t* suspect they’ve been played. If something else has happened, the gamemaster should adapt as needed.

IF THE RUNNERS SUSPECT A SET-UP OR ULTIMATELY DECIDE TO DECLINE MR. JOHNSON’S OFFER:

Things are still relatively calm in Denver, so they can try and find their own way out of the FRFZ. If they’re packing heavy weapons and or Restricted/Forbidden gear, then travel options may be limited but not necessarily impossible. To keep the story going, the gamemaster should urge the runners to use their contacts to make a connection in Denver with a coyote, another rigger, or someone who can forge temporary IDs. But before any of these plans can be put into action, the runners will learn (by whatever appropriate means) that they’re all “persons of interest” concerning the assassination of UCAS representative Iain Lesker. Their faces and known SINS (real and or fake) are plastered throughout the FRFZ. All security agencies, private and government, are on high alert for these so-called terrorists.

At the gamemaster’s discretion, Bennett has Lt. Maddox tail them, and he alerts local security forces

*(depending on which sector the runners are in) to their presence. From there, the local security force will attempt to take the runners into custody (see: **Lone Star/Law Enforcement Response** below for details); then go to **Scene Four** from here.*

IF THE RUNNERS TAKE MR. JOHNSON UP ON HIS JOB OFFER:

The original offer for the job is ten thousand nuyen but will go as high as fifteen thousand with a successful Negotiation + Charisma [Social] Opposed Test (one thousand per net hit, up to five). As he has done before, Mr. Johnson will fake some acquiescence and automatically go to thirteen thousand nuyen to help ensure quick agreement if he feels it will help move things along.

Once terms are reached, Mr. Johnson again provides pertinent information on the job. The target is known as Gerald Jones, a freelance defense contractor currently working for the UCAS government. Johnson knows that Mr. Jones has a standing appointment at certain brothel located in Millionaire’s Row (in the CAS sector) every Tuesday at 2130 while he’s in Denver. And tomorrow night just happens to be Tuesday. The plan is to snatch Mr. Jones and bring him to Mr. Johnson so they can finally have their meeting.

Of course, they’ll have to deal with both the brothel’s security and Mr. Jones’ bodyguards. Also, Lone Star is never too far away. The only catch is that this job must be done very quietly. Mr. Johnson hints that he has business associates and dealings in that area and wants to keep those relationships intact at all costs. This means no heavy ordnance, no major property damage, and if any killing has to be done, keep it quiet. Otherwise, the runners can accomplish this however they wish.

THE BROTHEL: MADAM CASSANDRA’S HOUSE OF LEISURE

Madam Cassandra’s House of Leisure is one of Millionaire’s Row’s open secrets. Located in a plush three-story mansion, it features a style that harkens back to a refined era of southern hospitality. Kink and drink are the only vices allowed, and all the workers (male and female) are drug-free. Hard drugs, BTLs, and personality overrides are forbidden. Madam Cassandra believes in an old-fashioned approach to her business. Because of this, along with Madam Cassandra’s reputation for strict client confidentiality, her business has thrived. Clients see her place as more of a social club (with benefits) than a brothel. Many of Denver’s rich and powerful frequent the House of Leisure, including “Mr. Jones” who believes he has fallen in love with “Mary,” one of the House’s most popular working girls.

Security is tight but is geared more toward keeping the unwanted out more than dealing with internal problems. Most clients don’t start trouble for fear of being blacklisted or blackmailed. Anyone can partake of the House’s amenities and services, but if a guest doesn’t act appropriately (i.e., look rich or connected) or have the proper funds, they’ll be



WHAT ABOUT THE RIGGER?

A disadvantage of being an out-of-town rigger is that you are often far away from your personal vehicles. Mr. Johnson understands this and will put the runners in touch with a local mechanic/chop-shop manager in the PCC sector (an extremely hairy human male named Chuy with long brown hair and a beard) who loans the runners their choice of three different vehicles and drones for this job. Each vehicle will be unique with different capabilities, so the team must choose wisely. As for drones, they can pick whatever they want, provided the vehicle they select can store them.

As part of his plan, Bennett instructs the Chuy to install a special receiving module into the vehicle's level 4 anti-theft systems. This device will allow the vehicle to receive a self-destruct code from anywhere in the FRFZ, exactly like the SKA-008 in Scene One. If any of the players do a full diagnostic—make it an Automotive Mechanic/Hardware/Software + Logic [Mental] (5) Test—at any point before the code is sent, they'll find the module. An Automotive Mechanic + Logic [Mental] (4) Test can remove the thumb-sized module. Once the signal is sent, the security system will alert the rigger that the security self-destruct is activating. The rigger can block the signal with an Electronic Warfare + Logic [Mental] (4) test, with appropriate equipment. But the player only gets one chance.

AVAILABLE VEHICLES

GMC Escalade [Handling 3/3, Speed 4, Accel 3, Body 16, Armor 13, Pilot 4, Sensors 4, Seats 6 (optional metahuman adjustment), w/ anti-theft 4, chameleon coating, ECM 3, landing drone racks (mini, 2 medium, small), life support 1, PPS 5, retrains unit, rigger cocoon, rigger interface, run flat tires, secondary manual controls, signature mask 3]

Mitsubishi Nightsky [Handling 5/4, Speed 5, Accel 2, Body 15, Armor 17, Pilot 3, Sensors 7, Seats 8 (optional metahuman adjustment), w/ anti-theft 4, ammo bin, landing drone racks (mini and medium), life support 2, PPS 3, rigger cocoon, rigger interface, run flat tires, signature mask 6, weapon mount (standard: assault rifle, concealed, turret, remote)]

Ares HVAR [Assault Rifle, Acc 7, DV 9P, AP -1, SA/BF/FA, RC -15, 200 (c), w/ explosive ammo]

Rolls Royce Phaeton [Handling 6/4, Speed 6/4, Accel 3, Body 16, Armor 15, Pilot 3, Sensors 8, Seats 8 (optional metahuman adjustment), w/ ammo bin, anti-theft 4, ECM 6, life support 2, rigger cocoon, rigger interface, signature masking 6, weapon mount (heavy: LMG, concealed, turret, remote), weapon mount (standard: assault rifle, fixed: forward, internal)]

Ares HVAR [Assault Rifle, Acc 7, DV 8P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC -15, 50 (c), w/ anti-vehicle rounds]

SA Nemesis [LMG, Acc 7, DV 9P, AP -2, BF/FA, RC -15, 200 (belt), w/ anti-vehicle rounds]

AVAILABLE DRONES

S-B Microskimmers (micro) [Handling 3, Speed 3, Accel 1, Body 0, Armor 0, Pilot 3, Sensors 3, w/ Clearsight 3, Evasion 3, Stealth 3]

Condor LDS-23 (mini) [Handling 2, Speed 1R, Accel 1, Body 1, Armor 0, Pilot 2, Sensors 4, w/ Clearsight 5, Evasion 5, Stealth 3]

Horizon Flying Eye (small) [Handling 4, Speed 3, Accel 2, Body 1, Armor 0, Pilot 3, Sensors 3, w/ Clearsight 5, Evasion 5, Stealth 4]

Lockheed X-2 (small) [Handling 4, Speed 4, Accel 3, Body 2, Armor 2, Pilot 3, Sensors 3, w/ Clearsight 5, Evasion 3, Stealth 2]

G-M Doberman (medium tracked) [Handling 5, Speed 3, Accel 1, Body 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensors 3, w/ Electronic Warfare 4, Evasion 2, Maneuver 4, Stealth 3, Targeting (HK-227) 4]

HK-227 [SMG, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP -4, SA/BF/FA, RC -6, 28 (c), w/ APDS rounds]

MCT Rotodrone (medium flying) [Handling 4, Speed 2, Accel 4, Body 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensors 3, w/ Clearsight 1, Electronic Warfare 2, Evasion 2, Maneuver 4, Stealth 3, Targeting (HK-227) 4]

HK-227 [SMG, Acc 7, DV 7P, AP -4, SA/BF/FA, RC -6, 28 (c), w/ APDS rounds]

asked to leave. Gamemasters can have the runners make Etiquette + Charisma [Social] Tests as necessary.

Foot patrols are constant. There are at least six guards on duty at all times, including one at the front gate. Security is led by former Lone Star Sergeant known only as Higgins. Several Lone Star regional command officers (and Higgins' buddies) are also frequent clients. That means there is always at least one patrol car nearby with an average three-minute response time.

A security spider is also used during business hours to protect all electronic and security systems, including the cameras. Yes, there's a reason people behave at Madam Casandra's.

THE TACTICAL SITUATION

The runners are free to concoct whatever plan they want to snag Mr. Jones/Lesker. All they have to do is deal with the

House's and Jones' security. The House security officers use Stick-n-Shock ammo along with tasers and stun dongles. Jones' officers use appropriate ammo and won't hesitate to shoot to kill if needed.

Also, the runners are heading into a trap.

Bennett already has two agents in place. The first is the House's security spider. He'll be waiting for any incursions and will actually aid the runners in taking over the system, doing just enough to make it look good and let the runners succeed. When the runners finally enter Mary's room on the third floor, they find that one of Jones' guards (Bennett's second agent on a suicide mission) has already eliminated the other guards, along with Mary and Jones.

Depending on the situation, the runners will either see it happen in real time before they get there (if they can get a drone in or tap the camera feed for example) or see the aftermath as the guard finishes. The bodyguard will either shoot himself in the head or a cranial bomb will activate



(should he be subdued and or goes unconscious). He will not be taken alive.

Also, what the runners don't know is that the security spider is recording everything using a back-up, stand-alone system. Even if the runners don't make entry into Mary's room, the spider will send footage to Bennett who'll easily doctor the footage implicating the runners in the assassination. Unless the runners make a knowledge test to realize who Lesker is (or discover it during legwork), the fact that all of his guards have UCAS Secret Service badges, should be a big clue of how fragged they are. They should realize at this point that they've been thoroughly set up as alarms sound (via the spider) and patrons and staff start running out screaming.

LONE STAR/LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE

To put a few more candles on this drek-cake, just as the runners are leaving, six Lone Star cruisers roar up and come to a screeching halt in front of the House and set up a perimeter as patrons and staff flee. That was a short three minutes.

If the runners flee, Lone Star will doggedly pursue them, using every cop in the sector if necessary. They'll use non-lethal force at first, unless the runners start resisting. If the runners attempt to hole up in the mansion, eventually a High-Threat Response Team (or six) using gas, magic, and whatever else may be necessary will respond. If any of the runners are rendered unconscious, they'll be arrested. If the runners try to go out in a blaze of glory, Lone Star will oblige. However, Lone Star negotiators will try to get the runners to surrender first in a standoff situation.

WHEN THE DREK HITS THE FAN

This is where things get interesting. If the runners surrender or are arrested, they'll be taken to a nearby Lone Star substation. If some (or by some miracle all) of the runners escape, they'll get a cryptic message on their link(s) stating: "If you want to get out of Denver alive (with your friends), be at Sam's No 3 at Parker and Havana in ten minutes. -A friend. *'What fools these mortals be.'*"

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

No real need to push anything here; Bennett has pretty much hosed the runners quite nicely. Although it should be mentioned that Lone Star will not give up until all of the runners are in custody because a major political figure was murdered on their watch. And after losing the contract in Seattle, it would be a serious blow to the company if they fail.

DEBUGGING

No matter what the runners do, they'll one way or another be implicated in Iain Lesker's murder. The trick for the gamemaster is to balance Lone Star's (and the rest of the law in the FRFZ) response. With every security agency gunning for them, it may feel like they can't win. And most runners know that getting caught by the Star (or any law) is usually a fate

worse than death. So, some players may try to go out in a blaze of glory. The gamemaster will have to let the players know that being arrested is not the end or that they've failed and it's game over. This can be accomplished in a number of ways, but one of the best (and easiest) could be a mysterious comm-text maybe telling them to stand down, that another opportunity for freedom is coming they just have to be patient, or something similar.

But if the gamemaster can come up with another way for the runners to continue on, so be it!

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

HOUSE OF LEISURE SECURITY GUARD

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|---|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 4 | 4 | 4(6) | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5.2 | 2 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 7(9) + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Clubs 4, Gymnastics 2, Perception 4, Pistols 5, Unarmed Combat 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Reaction enhancers 2, smartlink | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor Vest [9], common denominator element commlink | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 7, DV 6S(e), AP -5, SA, 15 (c), w/ 15 Stick-n-Shock rounds] Stun Dongle [Club, Reach 1, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP -5] | | | | | | | | | |

HOUSE OF LEISURE SECURITY SPIDER

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 6(7) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 4, Mental 7(8), Social 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 8 + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Matrix Initiative | 12 + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Cracking skill group 7, Electronics skill group 5, Perception 4, Pistols 3, Unarmed Combat 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Attention co-processor, cerebral booster 1, cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ image link, low-light vision, smartlink, vision enhancement 1, vision magnification], datajack | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor vest [9], Fairlight Caliban commlink, programs (Baby Monitor, Biofeedback Filter, Edit, Exploit, Hammer, Lockdown, Nuke-from-Orbit, Smoke-and-Mirrors, Stealth, Toolbox, Wrapper), Shiawase Cyber-5 cyberdeck [Device Rating 5, Atts 5, 8, 8, 6, Programs 5, w/ sim module (modified for hot-sim)] | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Browning Ultra-Power [Heavy Pistol, Acc 6, DV 8P, AP -1, SA, RC 2, 10 (c), w/ 20 rounds regular ammo, laser sight, 1 spare clip] | | | | | | | | | |



HOUSE OF LEISURE MATRIX HOST

| Rating | Attack | Sleaze | Data Proc. | Firewall |
|----------------------------|---|--------|------------|----------|
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Installed IC | Blaster, Marker, Patrol, Probe, Tar Baby, Track | | | |
| Slaved Devices | N/A | | | |
| Spiders | see above | | | |
| Sculpting | Old-time southern parlor, IC looks like various types of employees. Various paintings on the wall represent trid cameras throughout the house. | | | |
| Security Procedures | Patrol IC running at all times. If intruder detected, host will alert security spider. Host will use IC in this order: Tar Baby, Marker, Track. If any of those fail, or intruder tries to compromise system (edit files or access cameras) and is not successful, Blaster IC will be deployed. | | | |

LONE STAR BEAT COP

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|--|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| 4 | 4 | 4(6) | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5.2 | 2 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 12 | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 6 | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 7(9) + 1D6 | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Automatics 5, Clubs 4, Gymnastics 2, Longarms 5, Perception 4, Pistols 5, Unarmed Combat 3 | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | reaction enhancers 2, smartlink | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor jacket [12], containment manacles, Hermes Ikon commlink, magemask, metal restraints, micro-transceiver, mystic restraints (cuffs, Rating 3), 10 plastic restraints | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP -5, SS, 4 (m), w/ 10 taser darts] Franchi SPAS-24 [Shotgun, Acc 6, DV 12P, AP -1, SA/BF, RC 5, 10 (c), w/ 20 rounds regular ammo, shock pad, sling] Extendable Baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP -] | | | | | | | | |

LONE STAR HTR

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|--|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| 4 | 4 | 4(6) | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5.2 | 3 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 18 | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 6 | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 7(9) + 1D6 | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Automatics 6, Clubs 5, Gymnastics 3, Longarms 6, Perception 5, Pistols 6, Unarmed Combat 4 | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Reaction enhancers 2, smartlink | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Containment manacles, Hermes Ikon commlink, magemask, metal restraints, micro-transceiver, mystic restraints (cuffs, Rating 3), 10 plastic restraints, subvocal microphone, SWAT armor [15], SWAT helmet [3] | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP -5, SS, 4 (m), w/ 10 taser darts] FN HAR [Assault Rifle, Acc 7, DV 11P, AP -3, SA/BF/FA, RC 6, 35 (c), w/ 70 explosive rounds, foregrip, smartgun system (external), sling, spare clip] Extendable Baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP -] | | | | | | | | |

WHEN BENNETT LEARNS ABOUT THE INCIDENT AT THE HOUSE OF LEISURE:

Colonel Shane Bennett, floating in his command center, flicked an ARO away. It should only be a matter of time before those shadowrunners are taken care of, either before or after they are taken into custody. And if they manage to avoid the dragnet, there are others who would love to earn some cred tracking them down. But that was another matter. The first seeds of chaos were sown, and the other teams he'd placed across the FRFZ were already prosecuting their targets. Soon, Denver would be in complete chaos, and his master would have all the justification needed to remove all outside interference from the FRFZ. Taking care of some enemies was only a bonus.



SCENE 4: INTO THE FIRE

WHAT'S UP, CHUMMER?

Things have definitely gone sideways for the runners, and there's now no doubt that they've been set up by Mr. Johnson. The runners are either in Lone Star custody, on the run but hunted by just about every law enforcement agency in the FRFZ, or a mix of both. No matter what their exact situation is, the runners should realize that they're thoroughly fragged. However, there's a bit of hope. It seems that they have a guardian angel (or demon, depending on who you ask) of sorts who's noticed what is going on in Denver and needs help righting some of the current wrongs. This angel thinks that he and the wayward runners can help each other with their current predicaments. There may just be the little matter of convincing the runners to sign on and or get them out of Lone Star custody. Should be simple enough. Though extra complications have a way of popping up when Puck is involved.

Yep, that's right, *that* Puck.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

As the old saying goes, things have definitely gone out of the frying pan and into the fire. Mr. Johnson has fragged you seven ways to Sunday, which likely was his plan all along. You'd to give him what he's got coming, but right now, you have more immediate problems to deal with.

FOR RUNNERS TAKEN INTO LONE STAR CUSTODY:

The ride to the Lone Star substation is pretty much what one would expect it to be, except that it was short. And that the Star coppers, other than the initial take-down, haven't laid a hand on you. Every runner has heard the stories about the Star and their love of all things police brutality. You were half expecting a few stops along the way for some impromptu enhanced interrogations, but nothing doing.

In fact, the entire trip only took about fifteen minutes.

As the doors to the paddy wagon open, several Star officers—more than a few with weapons ready—begin hauling you out and quickly usher you into the substation. Substation? You would think that assassinating a major Denver political figure would have earned you much better

accommodations than this. But as you're ushered through, you see that the substation is in barely controlled chaos. Command officers are busy shouting orders as uniforms run from place to place. You even see a few HRT officers running towards squad cars.

What in the frag is going on?

The booking process is rushed, they seemed more interested in just making sure all weapons, 'ware, magic, and the like were all rendered inert. They take a few AR shots, give you a quick booking number, then unceremoniously dump you all in different holding cells. The only clue you get to what's going on is when an officer looks back at you as the holding cell closes and says "Don't get comfortable. As soon as UCAS FBI gets here you're their problem. We have enough to deal with as is."

Wonder what that means.

TO ANY RUNNERS IN CUSTODY, AFTER THE DETECTIVES ARE DONE PLAYING "BAD COP, WORSE COP."

There's a knock on the door of the interrogation room, and a uniformed officer comes in. He leans over and whispers to Det. Montoya, who then swears under her breath. She looks over to Det. Ennison and says "Stop all questions. Their attorney has arrived and has black-level clearance."

Ennison sneers and mutters something about needing just five more minutes, then looks at Montoya. "Well, doesn't matter even if the Corporate Court sent someone to rep for them. Soon, the UCAS is gonna send all of their alphabet agencies in, and they'll be a lot less friendly than we were" he says. Then he looks you in the eye. "You shoulda confessed, then we could have at least kept ya alive." He waves dismissively. "Your funeral."

The detectives leave, and five minutes later, the rest of the team members are brought into the interrogation room. Two minutes after that, a skinny human wearing a crisp business suit and sporting the whitest hair you've ever seen sits down.

"Hello. My name is Robin Goodfellow, and I represent—well that's not important at the moment." He steepled his index fingers. A heartbeat later, you hear several pops as various listening and recording devices in the room suddenly





burn out. “Now that we can talk openly for the next few minutes, I’ll come right to the point, because time is short. I represent interests who are directly opposed to the persons who’ve put you in this predicament. I can arrange for your release and even make sure you avoid a pesky criminal SIN, but my services come with a price: the assistance in another matter that if successful, will stick it to the same Mr. Johnson who was, until recently, your employer. Now, I understand any reluctance at this point, but consider this: It’s either deal with me, deal with the UCAS government, or deal with the officers who, I have it on good authority, were hired by your former Mr. Johnson to take you out in your cells. No doubt while you were ‘trying to escape.’ The choice is yours.”

TO ANY RUNNERS WHO AVOIDED LONE STAR CUSTODY (AND DECIDE TO FOLLOW UP ON THE MESSAGE):

This is not the place to be anymore. Everywhere you go in this damn sector, your face is plastered on every AR or Matrix feed on the grid. Seems that Mr. Jones was really Iain Lesker, the UCAS representative to Denver. Frag. Already the news outlets are going crazy with half-baked news stories and conspiracy theories. Of course, the UCAS is slotted beyond belief. But according to the various news feeds, it seems that Lesker wasn’t the only slag targeted. Someone tried to take out Carl Three-Stepper, the newly appointed Sioux representative, with a bomb. He survived but is listed in critical condition with only a fifty-fifty chance to see another sunrise. Also in the cross hairs was General Franklin Eckhart, commander of CAS military forces in Denver. Apparently a group of “terrorists” attacked him at his own home, but the old war-horse reportedly took three of his attackers with him. And supposedly, several corporate citizens have come up missing, but the corps aren’t releasing any details.

Also, several military installations have been hit in the PCC, Sioux Nation, and the CAS. The only official word on those attacks are: “No comment.” Rumors are even flying that the Denver grid has been infected somehow.

Right now, everyone is on edge, thinking this is the first wave of something big, and everyone is suspicious of everyone else. Militaries are scrambling but aren’t really

doing anything other than circling the wagons. There are reports of violence breaking out in various sectors, and all security agencies are calling everyone available armed employee into service.

Of course, Ghostwalker hasn’t said a fragging thing. Although his voice, Daniel Whitebird, issued a statement saying that pale scales (not his words) has received some “disturbing information” but will only act on it when it has been thoroughly evaluated.

Either no one knows what’s going on, or they aren’t telling

You make it to Sam’s No 3, a diner located at Parker and Havana, with a few minutes to spare. The place is mostly empty except for a waitress cleaning the counter and a cook doing final clean-up in back, even though the place’s AR sign indicates that they’re hours away from closing. In fact, the only other person in the place is a lanky human wearing a faux leather jacket and with spiky white hair, reading a battered hardcover version of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. He doesn’t even look up as he says “Have a seat. If you’re hungry, I’d recommend the stuffed burrito. Very tasty, very filling.”

As you sit down, he lowers the book just enough to reveal his eyes. “So, I hear that you’ve gotten into a spot of trouble. I happen to know who got you into this mess, and it would please me to no end to help you, if for no other reason than it would stick it to him. Conveniently, I happen to find myself in need of assistance on some particular matters, so I can’t be completely altruistic. In short, help me and I’ll help get you out of Denver free and clear. Now, I understand any hesitation—I’d be suspicious, too. But I’m not boasting when I say I can get the hounds off your back, at least for a while, and deal with any records of you ever being here. And all you have to do is help me get some information, information that would be used to seriously frag with Mr. Johnson. So what do you say? In, or out in the cold facing the dogs?”

ADD THIS TO PUCK’S DISCOURSE IF SOME OF THE RUNNERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED:

“Oh, I haven’t forgotten about your friends. If you agree to my deal, we’ll need their assistance as well. And I can get them out of custody as well, free and clear without any pesky criminal SINs. But I will need your help”





HOOKS

The general mood of this scene can be summed up in one word: tension. The runners are in deep, and they should be reminded of this at every turn, be it by the cops that have them custody, or by the AR news spam that's being broadcast all over the Denver grid. Things should be so tense that the offer from Puck should seem like a godsend.

The hit and frame-job on the runners was one of many separate attacks Bennett launched as part of the operation's next phase. Those targeted were either those who Ghost-walker considered a threat to this or future plans, or those whose death could be used to further his own ends. The finger-pointing and accusations have already begun as various bits of (planted) evidence suggests that the CAS, UCAS, the PCC, and of course the Aztanners *all* had some part to play (or took advantage of) the recent chaos.

And of course, all this data has been conveniently leaked to the press.

This has caused a lot of mistrust between the sector nations who're of course denying any such involvement. Already military forces are mobilizing, and investigative/intelligence agencies are scrambling to find answers. Various security services throughout the FRFZ are also hitting the streets in force in an effort to prevent any more rioting and violence.

And the people of Denver fear that the other shoe may finally be dropping.

As for the runners, they have their own problems. They need to find their way out of either Denver (if they eluded capture) and or to break out of Lone Star custody. Bennett is well aware of the runner's status. Those who are at large can expect another shadow team (use any previous NPC stat blocks as needed) to be put on their trail with orders to terminate on sight. Those who are in custody can expect that Lone Star officers turned by Bennett will at some point within the next six hours attempt to kill them in their cells while making it look like an escape attempt. No matter the situation, the runners need to leave soon.

BEHIND THE SCENES

This scene is not necessarily designed for heavy combat but rather is an opportunity for the players to catch their breath a bit and get in some quality role-playing. For those at the diner, the gamemaster can have fun with Puck trying convincing the runners to help him and being all arrogant and snarky. And understandably, they may be a bit apprehensive after what's already happened. Play it out however the situation calls for.

As for any players at the Lone Star station, after being booked, each runner will in turn be interviewed by Lone Star Detectives L. Montoya and C. Ennison. They will try and get a confession out of the runners, using every cop trick in the book. They'll play *good cop*, *bad cop* or even *bad cop, worse cop*. Another tactic they'll employ is the "rat" strategy (the classic prisoner's dilemma). Tell the suspect that their accomplices are already "spilling their guts" or "ratting you out," and they

MIMURA



need to get their side of the story, or they'll face the lion's share of the charges. Or, in true Lone Star fashion, Ennison could vent his frustrations with some good old-fashioned police brutality. Gamemasters are encouraged to get creative.

There's also the possibility that the players will be able to make their own escape without Puck's help and go to ground, especially if they're local to Denver. This is also an acceptable course of action for the story. If the runners are successful, then Puck will make contact with them sometime later. If the runner fails to escape on their own and aren't killed in the process, simply have Puck make his entrance as previously described but instead of offering to get them out of Denver, he'll then offer them either payment and or a favor in which he'll eradicate any records of their arrest, including any pesky criminal SINs.

Should the runners in custody accept Puck's offer (whatever their situation), he'll use his abilities to get the runners apparently transferred into UCAS/FBI custody (Puck and or any at-large runner would pose as agents with appropriate clothes, gear, and IDs), along with their gear as evidence. This would also include any vehicles and/or drones that weren't somehow destroyed. The gamemaster should feel free to have Puck and any associates ham this up with the Lone Star officers. And with everything that's happening, the Lone Star station commanders will be happy to get rid of the runners because they don't want to deal with any more UCAS bulldrek.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

One word: jailbreak. If the gamemaster wants to have another big fight, then Puck's offer will be slightly different. Instead of getting them out, he says he can arrange for certain conditions and opportunities to present themselves which will aid, not guarantee, in the runner's escape. This can include everything from security systems from going offline, to suddenly having access to the evidence locker where their gear is. Of course, there is little Puck can do about the officers themselves; that will be for the runners to take care of. And if some of the runners are not in custody, that's another advantage.

DEBUGGING

So many things can go wrong in this scene. First, the players may attempt something stupid while in Lone Star custody and get themselves geeked. Second, those who weren't in custody could try to get out with little support and get caught—worse. If the gamemaster ramps the tension up too high, either of these situations may end up happening. It will be very important for the gamemaster to communicate the dangers and the potential danger from Puck's intervention early on. As already stated, this scene is geared more for role playing and continuation of the adventure, not necessarily for another heavy combat situation.

LONE STAR SUBSTATION, PHYSICAL AND MATRIX SECURITY

Because Lone Star has been put on alert, all available officers will be mobilized soon after the runners arrive. This means that at the substation where the runners are being held will be manned by a minimum of staff. There will be one desk/watch sergeant out front, one officer monitoring the security cameras, one lieutenant in the back coordinating his officers as best he can (and keeping his neck safe), and Detectives Ennison and Montoya interviewing the runners or working on their reports. Actually, they'll stay just long enough at the station to dump the runners on someone else so they can get into the action.

All locks are Rating 5 maglocks and are keyed to the individual officer's company-issued commlink to allow for ease of access. Sensitive areas such as the cells and the evidence locker can only be accessed by command officers, detectives, or the assigned duty officer. These have Rating 6 maglocks with biometric readers. And in case anyone has any crazy ideas, the building itself has a Barrier Rating of 25, which increases to Rating 30 in the cell area.

Matrix security is routed through Lone Star's Central Station. As such, there is a spider watching the system, but they are not onsite. All locks and building systems can be controlled through the Matrix, but there is a failsafe switch that can be used to manually lock down and cut off the station from the Matrix. This can be done by a manual switch in the lieutenant's office, or at the watch sergeant's desk, or by a special code from the lieutenant's and sergeant's commlinks.

Also, every room in the station has at least one trideo camera in it, except for the lieutenant's office, restrooms, and shower area in the locker rooms. There are also external cameras that focus on each of the station's doors.

| Rating | Attack | Sleaze | Data Proc. | Firewall |
|----------------------------|--|--------|------------|----------|
| 6 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 7 |
| Installed IC | Binder, Blaster, Marker, Patrol, Probe, Sparky, Tar Baby, Track | | | |
| Slaved Devices | N/A | | | |
| Spiders | Use House of Leisure Spider from Scene 3 | | | |
| Sculpting | Looks like a combination of an Old-West saloon and police station with cowboys as IC walking about. Binder is a lasso, Blaster a six-shooter, Marker is a branding iron, Patrol is a bunch of cowpokes walking around, Probe is a gambler who says "Call!" Sparky is a shotgun, Tarbaby is a cowboy spitting some chewing tobacco on intruders, Track is a posse riding after you. | | | |
| Security Procedures | Patrol IC running at all times. If intruder detected, host will alert security spider. Host will use IC in this order: Tar Baby, Marker, Track. If any of those fail, or intruder tries to compromise system (edit files for example) and is not successful, Blaster and Sparky IC will be deployed. | | | |



GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

DETECTIVE C. ENNISON

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| 5 | 4 | 4(6) | 4 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 5.2 | 2 |
| Condition Monitor | 11/10 | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 9 | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 6, Mental 6, Social 6 | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 7(9) + 1D6 | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Clubs 4, Gymnastics 2, Intimidation 6, Longarms 5, Perception 4, Pistols 5, Unarmed Combat 4 | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Reaction enhancers 2, smartlink | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor vest [9], containment manacles, Hermes Ikon commlink, magemask, metal restraints, micro-transceiver, mystic restraints (cuffs, Rating 3), 10 plastic restraints | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP -5, SS, 4 (m), w/ 10 taser darts] Extendable Baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP -] | | | | | | | | |

DETECTIVE L. MONTOYA

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| 4 | 4 | 4(6) | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5.2 | 2 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 9 | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 5(6), Mental 7, Social 8 | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 7(9) + 1D6 | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Clubs 6, Gymnastics 3, Longarms 5, Perception 6, Pistols 6, Unarmed Combat 3 | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | reaction enhancers 2, smartlink | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor vest [9], containment manacles, Hermes Ikon commlink, magemask, metal restraints, micro-transceiver, mystic restraints (cuffs, Rating 3), 10 plastic restraints | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP -5, SS, 4 (m), w/ 10 taser darts] Extendable Baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP -] | | | | | | | | |

LONE STAR LIEUTENANT/WATCH SERGEANT

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|--|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| 4 | 4 | 4(6) | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 5.2 | 2 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 12 | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 6 | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 7(9) + 1D6 | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Clubs 5, Gymnastics 4, Longarms 6, Perception 4, Pistols 6, Unarmed Combat 3 | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Reaction enhancers 2, smartlink | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor jacket [12], containment manacles, Hermes Ikon commlink, magemask, metal restraints, micro-transceiver, mystic restraints (cuffs, Rating 3), 10 plastic restraints | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP -5, SS, 4 (m), w/ 10 taser darts] Franchi SPAS-24 [Shotgun, Acc 6, DV 12P, AP -1, SA/BF, RC 5, 10 (c), w/ 20 rounds regular ammo, shock pad, sling] Extendable baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP -] | | | | | | | | |



SCENE 5: EMERGENCY SESSIONS

WHAT'S UP, CHUMMER?

The runners have a choice to make. They can try to get out of Denver on their own accord. In that case, good luck. Or they can agree to help Puck with his run in exchange for his assistance. Should the runners decide to take Puck up on his offer, he'll clue the runners in on what is going on while laying out the run's details.

At his safehouse in the Aurora Warrens, Puck explains that he's convinced that most of the current problems can be laid right at Ghostwalker's scaly feet. All he needs is proof—solid evidence, not just the rumors he's heard and theories he has. That's what he needs the runners for. His plan is an on-site data steal at a ZDF base at the Ramsay Building. It just so happens that there'll be an emergency meeting between most of the government and military leaders in Denver to figure out what is going on and how to deal with it without going to war with each other. No worries, Puck has forged IDs and uniforms that'll allow them to fit right in.

Of course there's a fly in the ointment, and it's this: Colonel Bennett will be there as well, and he's planning on using the meeting to pull off a data-steal of his own.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

With the unpleasantness of the past few hours—or days—behind you for the time being, Puck gives you directions to his safehouse in the Aurora Warrens that manages to avoid some of the more aggravating traffic impediments such as sector checkpoints and roadblocks. As you reach the Warrens, you wonder how this could be considered safe. Puck assures you that no one will mess with you while you're with him. Still, you wonder again what you got yourself into when you reach the so-called safehouse.

What used to be a duplex has completely collapsed in on itself, and now it's just a pile of old bits of metal and wood that look old enough to have been around before the Treaty of Denver. A garage next door looks a bit better—at least it's standing.

You enter the safehouse through a side door that leads into the basement. While the above-ground structure looks like something stepped on it, the basement is completely intact and is in remarkable shape. Looking like it was converted into a separate apartment long ago, it boasts furniture that's well-worn but surprisingly comfortable. A modern entertain-

ment system and Matrix uplink are also present, and there's even a full refrigerator.

"It's not much, but I call it home, at least when I'm in Denver," Puck says, plopping down into an easy chair as the sound system comes on at low volume, seemingly of its own free will. Johnny Banger's voice belts out a cover version of some song called "Ace of Spades."

"Now, sit down and take a load off or grab a couple of cold ones from the fridge. But get comfy, because we have some business to discuss."

HOOKS

Depending on what skills any runners in attendance has, this scene could be a somewhat standard B and E while watching over the hackers, or it could be a chaotic cluster frag of near-epic proportions as they dive into the Matrix with Puck.

The tension from the previous scene should be amped up. Bennett has been a busy spook and has set the next phase of the operation into motion. In conjunction with a lot of fabricated and planted evidence, most of the sector governments will be pointing fingers at each other, some accusing the others of starting this whole thing or at the very least taking advantage of the situation. Some are suspicious that Ghostwalker has something to do with this, but as far as the plan goes, that is okay. The idea at this stage is to cause chaos and keep everyone off balance while Ghostwalker and Bennett get everything into position.

But now Bennett is looking to up the ante. Ghostwalker calls an emergency meeting with all sector representatives and regional military leaders. The official reason is to try to hammer things out and to avoid an all-out war in the Front Range Free Zone.

But in reality there are ulterior motives.

Ghostwalker, through his voice Nicholas Whitebird is planning on dropping the metaphorical bomb that someone tried to smuggle Blue-227 into Denver, no doubt with the express intent of trying to assassinate *him*. This is where Ghostwalker pulls the trigger and takes the first step to kick the sector nations out of Denver. He'll tell them all of them that he'll be merciful by giving them a small grace period to remove themselves from the Front Range Free Zone without bloodshed. The threat will be unspoken and implied, but clear.



For Bennett, he's planning on using the meeting not only as an opportunity to plant more red herrings, misinformation, and fabricated evidence to back up Ghostwalker's words, but he's looking to obtain vital communication codes from all the sector military leaders during the meeting. These codes will be useful in upcoming phases of the operation. It's a hack of a lifetime, but there's one thing that Bennett wasn't expecting: Puck and the runners being on site.

But when the runners execute their plan, they will also notice something strange. Bennett will seem to be in two places at once: engaging Puck and the team's hacker inside the building's node and leading the MPs against the intruders. As part of his plan, Bennett has another body-double at the meeting. This will give him plausible deniability with the other leaders and reps. Bennett is in constant contact with the double, telling his doppelganger exactly what to say.

BEHIND THE SCENES

While the runners are catching their breaths at Puck's safe-house, he fills them in on what's been going on, as far as he knows it. He informs them that "Mr. Johnson" is actually Colonel Shane Bennett of the UCAS' Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) assigned to the Zone Defense Force and pretty much the de facto head of the ZDF's intelligence services. He's also Ghostwalker's number one watcher and go-to doer of dirty deeds in Denver, unbeknownst to the UCAS and the rest of the ZDF. Puck explains that Bennett first got his attention several months ago when led the efforts to scour the Matrix and delete all data that was liberated from Ghostwalker's private node and posted on the Matrix for all to see for at least six hours. Pale Scale placed the blame for that little cluster-frag right at the feet of the Denver Data Haven, a.k.a. the Nexus. Bennett later led the ZDF operation to try to take Nexus operators into custody and shut the data haven down. Bennett, who's an elite decker in his own right, has been doing the white wyrm's dirty work ever since. His specialty is data manipulation and forgery (big shocker there). He's also extremely good at planning and executing covert operations. Puck says he made it a point to keep an eye on Bennett because he knows that Ghostwalker wants control of the Nexus, among other things in Denver, and Bennett will likely spearhead any such plans.

Kind of like the drek that's currently been going down.

Unfortunately Puck doesn't have any proof—yet. But he's got good intel that there is a file labeled "VH-5151" that'll have all the proof he needs. And that's where the runners come in. There's a standalone system at one of the ZDF's administrative stations at the Ramsay Building in the Hub. The old office building is actually the ZDF's intelligence clearing house. Puck says that if he can get access to that system, he's sure he can find what he needs. He just needs help getting in, along with someone to watch his back.

To sweeten the deal, Puck tells the runners that he can get uniforms and fake credentials to get them past security and into the building's secure areas. From there they'll just have to deal with the guards and operators, get into the secure work area, and then give him enough time to find the data.

If all goes well, they should be in and out without anyone knowing. Once that's done, he'll arrange to get the players out of Denver.

Again, the job is pretty simple. Too bad Puck has no idea about the emergency meeting.

TARGET LOCATION: THE RAMSAY BUILDING, THE HUB

The Ramsay Building is a re-purposed office building that now serves as a joint-operations base as well as the central intelligence and administrative HQ for the Zone Defense Force. Because the ZDF consists of units from different FRFZ sector nations, the Ramsay Building was selected and re-tasked in 2065 to serve as a physical central location where different units could coordinate together. While each sector government has their own office where they conduct sector-specific business, the rest of the building is common-use space, as those regularly stationed here are considered to be ZDF, not of the military of their parent nations.

In the event that Denver should be attacked or during a time of crisis (like now), the Ramsay Building is designed as one of three auxiliary command centers in the FRFZ. From here, all three buildings can be linked up or act independently to coordinate responses to military attacks and or mass causality incidents from the Threat Response Room. Security there is understandably tight. All visitors must be cleared with security, and only then if prior arrangements have been made. Those with proper credentials can enter unobstructed, but everyone entering has their ID and bona fides checked before entry is allowed.

Physical security consists of Rating 7 maglocks on all internal doors. Cameras monitor the outside. Those with proper IDs need but broadcast their ID, and they will be allowed into all rooms their clearance allows. Security clearance is designated by color. *Green* is general access for all low-level ranks and minor NCOs and civilian staff. *Blue* access is for senior NCO's and junior officers. *Red* access is for senior officers or those with top-secret clearance. This also includes senior duty/watch officers/NCOs/senior civilian contractors in restricted areas such as the Matrix/Communications center. *Black* is for top commanders or the highest-ranking civilians.

Grey is reserved for MPs and allows them complete physical access to all areas of the building for security sweeps, but not to designated terminals and or information. MP's are also the only ones allowed to have arms/weapons on their person while inside the buildings. In cases of emergency, however, each office and room is equipped with special mini-armories that allow quick access to defensive weaponry. Response to any threats or security breaches—physical, magical, or Matrix—are coordinated from the Matrix/Communications room or MatComm. There are no less than nine MPs (two regular MPs in the security office, two performing foot patrols, and the rest at designated static stations at the lobby, MatComm room, armory, and the Threat Response Room), two security spiders, and one magician, on duty at all times. Foot patrols inside and outside the building are standard, and there are a



few security drones that are randomly deployed for security sweeps outside.

The building itself also has special security features just in case the Matrix systems are compromised; see the stats for the MatComm node in this scene's **Grunts and Moving Targets**. In back, there are four military vehicles for general use and defense. During times of crisis, the number of security personnel may be increased as determined by the post commander Colonel Shane Bennett.

Yeah, this is Bennett's work station.

ENTERING THE RAMSAY BUILDING AND SYSTEM (PUCK'S PLAN):

Puck has spent the last few weeks securing both proper bona fides and security IDs as well as uniforms that will pass muster. He was originally planning on hiring some local runners, but things sort of fell into place with the current runners. The plan is to literally walk into the Ramsay Building with false orders, access the system, get the data, and get out. At least, that's what he's got so far. The rest of the plan is, as he will say, "a work in progress." As such, it will be up to the runners to do any legwork and recon beforehand.

The main objective is to get access to MatComm so that Puck can directly access the standalone record system with a data tap. This also means physically subduing the spiders and magician on duty without raising an alarm. If an alarm is sounded, the building will go into lockdown, and only those with grey or black clearance will be able to move about the building. If there are any deckers or technomancers (especially the latter), Puck will ask them to assist and watch his back as he rummages through the standalone node. The rest of the runners are to make sure nothing happens to them and secure a way out.

ONCE THE RUN BEGINS:

Shortly after the runners arrive or at some point during the run, the emergency meeting begins as military officers, civilian reps, from around Denver arrive, along with their security details. About fifteen minutes after the leaders arrive, none other than Nicholas Whitebird, Ghostwalker's voice, arrives with his own security detail. They immediately head to the Threat Response Room and the doors are sealed. Security also increases as MPs and security agents also post near every door in the building. If the players are watching the security camera's they'll also notice that Colonel Bennett is also on site.

If the runners gain control of MatComm (and avoid detection doing it), they'll have no problem maintaining their cover, as everyone will report to their main duty stations. They can even, if they think about it, tap into the cameras in the Threat Response Room and become flies on the wall to eavesdrop. Unfortunately, all they will hear are various government officials and military leaders arguing, bickering, demanding answers, and accusing each other of duplicity.

Once they have control of MatComm, Puck and the runner team's hacker will begin their search into the standalone grid. Treat this as any other Matrix grid/node, though it has

the option of being physically disconnected from the Matrix when not being used to coordinate emergency responses. As Puck and the team's hacker start looking for certain files, they may accidentally run across Bennett, who is also in the records area as his agents are planning the various false data in various files. But Bennett himself is busy using the MatComm matrix relay to sleaze his way into the commlinks of those in the meeting. Normally all participants would "go dark" for something like this, but considering what happened to Iain Lesker, some are choosing to attend via the Matrix. And Bennett is using this to his advantage as he uses a covert data tap from his office.

THE FIGHT IS ON— ENEMY TACTICS:

Once Puck and the team's hacker make it into the record's section, they'll run into Bennett who's attempting to plant false information. If Puck and the team's hacker try to hide from Bennett, then Bennett can be alerted by either 1) the intruders being spotted by patrol IC, or 2) the intruders failing to detect the code Bennett previously imbedded in certain files. This code will immediately red flag the file as being accessed as soon as it's interacted with and alert Bennett.

Should Bennett be alerted, this will initiate a full-out Matrix brawl. Bennett will immediately try to re-take control of the system by attacking the intruders. Depending on the situation, Puck will either instruct the team hacker to stall Bennett while he obtains the files, or vice versa. A standard Matrix Perception test will help locate the VH-5150 file. All other Matrix actions to download or copy the file apply.

For the rest of the team, as soon as Bennett learns of the intrusion, he also alerts Lt. Maddox, who leads the post MPs to re-take MatComm. **Note:** Only the post MPs and personnel will go after the runners. Personal security agents will only engage if the runners directly threaten their principals. The Alert also disrupts the meeting, as security moves to protect their principals and evacuate. It is up to the gamemaster's discretion as to whether these security agents try to hold in place, attempt to evacuate, or a mix of both. No matter what happens, the runners will have to enact their escape plan, or come up with one on the fly.

In the host, Bennett will fight with everything he has, using every dirty trick he can think of. He was not expecting this incursion, and it will damage his ego because he failed to account for it in his plan. To him, this is a personal affront. As such he will go until *almost* the very end. If it looks like he'll be overwhelmed or defeated, he'll jack out of the Matrix, risking dumpshock if necessary. If he is forced to retreat, he will subsequently stop at nothing to find those who did this to him. If he's taken out, then so be it—the runners will have earned their accomplishment.

For the runners in MatComm, the MP's will attempt a Dynamic Entry: Chuck and Charge maneuver (see *Run and Gun*, p. 100) with flash-bang grenades. But the runners will also notice something else: Colonel Bennett is with the MPs, in the flesh. If the runners want to geek the body double and think they've finally gotten even with Mr. Johnson, go ahead



and let them. It'll be a great set-up for the next scene, if the runners make it out.

Once Puck and the runners get what they came for and egress from the Ramsay Building, Puck immediately begins sifting through the data. After about ten minutes, he goes pale and then instructs the runners to divert from the Aurora safehouse and head toward another location.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

The easiest way to amp things up in this scene is simple: just add more MPs and turn this into a grinder. Also, in the host, Bennett could call for reinforcements, and another ZDF hacker could respond. On top of that, the MPs are professional soldiers, and they will use small-unit tactics to engage the runners in an attempt to re-take MatComm. And if the MPs go down, the other ZDF on-site staff could also attempt to stop the runners. Gamemasters shouldn't be afraid to use combat maneuvers. Also, should the battle spill outside, MPs can remember the military vehicles (and their machine guns) parked outside.

And speaking of those military vehicles, if the runners manage to get in and out, or even take out the opposition a bit *too* easily, then the gamemaster has the option of starting up a chase scene. The MPs, with a clear mandate to stop the intruders, will pursue the runners in their vehicles. In addition, their old friends Lone Star could be called in to either help with the pursuit, or cordon off certain areas in an attempt to box in or corral the fleeing runners. Should Bennett survive the encounter with Puck and the team's hacker and is able to continue (he will have a back-up deck in his office if needed), he will pursue via the Matrix, attempting to hack either the runner's transportation, weapons, drones, gear, or augmentations. He'll be royally slotted off at being digitally bested and will consider the runners his own personal Moby Dick.

DEBUGGING

The biggest problem the runners will face here besides the Matrix dangers is being pinned down inside of MatComm. There aren't many MPs on duty, but they won't be pushovers and will call for reinforcements if needed. As such, the gamemaster is encouraged to point out this possibility to the players if they do any legwork.

The gamemaster should also encourage the players to have some kind of exit strategy and to take precautions against a possible bottleneck situation. But while the soldiers are professionals, they aren't fanatics who will fight to the death. If they realize that they've lost the initiative or too many of their number have become wounded, they will pull back, if for no other reason than to re-group or regain a better position to counterattack. That could be the opening the players may need.

The gamemaster should also consider that this was not necessarily meant to be a long, protracted fight but as a means to get the paydata and set up for the next scene. However, it is the shadows, and things will sometimes fall where they may.

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

BASIC ZDF MP/SOLIDER/ PERSONAL SECURITY GUARD

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|---|--|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 4 | 4 | 4(6) | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5.2 | 3 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 12 (MP), 9 (soldier/personal security) | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 7(9) + 2D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Automatics 6, Clubs 5, Gymnastics 3, Longarms 6, Perception 5, Pistols 6, Unarmed Combat 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Boosted reflexes, smartlink | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor jacket [12]*, Armor Vest [9], containment manacles*, Hermes Ikon commlink, magemask*, metal restraints*, micro-transceiver, mystic restraints (cuffs, Rating 3)*, 10 plastic restraints* | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP -5, SS, 4 (m), w/ 10 taser darts] HK-227 [SMG, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP -, SA/BF/FA, RC 7, 28 (c), w/ 56 regular rounds, spare clip, sling] Extendable Baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP -] Flash-Bang Grenade x2 [Grenade, Acc 10, DV 10S, 10m R, AP -4]* | | | | | | | | | |
| *Note: Only MPs have these items | | | | | | | | | | |

ZDF MAGICIAN

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG | M |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|
| | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 4 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/11 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 9 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 5, Mental 6, Social 7, Astral 7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 10 + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Astral Initiative | 12 + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Banishing 4, Binding 3, Clubs 2, Counterspelling 4, Perception 6, Spellcasting 6, Summoning 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spells | Analyze Truth, Armor, Clairvoyance, Detect Individual, Flamethrower, Heal, Physical Barrier, Stealth | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor vest [9], Hermes Ikon commlink | | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] Extendable Baton [Club, Reach 1, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP -] | | | | | | | | | | |



ZDF SECURITY SPIDER

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 6(7) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 4, Mental 7(8), Social 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 8 + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Matrix Initiative | 12 + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Cracking skill group 7, Electronics skill group 5, Etiquette 3, Perception 4, Pistols 3, Unarmed Combat 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Attention co-processor, cerebral booster 1, cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ image link, low-light vision, smartlink, vision enhancement 1, vision magnification], datajack | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor vest [9], Fairlight Caliban commlink, programs (Baby Monitor, Biofeedback Filter, Edit, Exploit, Hammer, Lockdown, Nuke-from-Orbit, Smoke-and-Mirrors, Stealth, Toolbox, Wrapper), Shiawase Cyber-5 cyberdeck [Device Rating 5, Atts 5, 8, 8, 6, Programs 5, w/ sim module (modified for hot-sim)] | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] | | | | | | | | | |

RAMSAY BUILDING HOST

| | Rating | Attack | Sleaze | Data Proc. | Firewall |
|----------------------------|--|--------|--------|------------|----------|
| | 7 | 6 | 6 | 14 | 8 |
| Installed IC | Binder, Blaster, Marker, Patrol, Probe, Sparky, Tar Baby, Track | | | | |
| Slaved Devices | N/A | | | | |
| Spiders | See above | | | | |
| Sculpting | Looks like a modern barracks, complete with foot lockers, weapons lockers, with soldiers/warriors from several historical periods milling about. Binder is ninja who blows corrosive dust. Blaster is a US Army WWII era infantry trooper shooting his M-1. Marker is late twentieth century SF trooper with a smart-bomb laser designator. Patrol is a bunch of modern MPs. Probe is a salty USMC drill-sergeant from Vietnam asking "What is your malfunction?" Sparky is a French cannon team from the Napoleonic War. Tarbaby is a British Redcoat trying to put manacles on you. Track is group of Huns running/riding after you. | | | | |
| Security Procedures | Patrol IC running at all times. If intruder detected, host will alert security spider. Host will use IC in order: Tar Baby, Marker, Track. If any of those fail, or if intruder tries to compromise system (edit files for example) and is not successful, Blaster and Sparky IC will be deployed. | | | | |



SCENE 6: FIGHT & FLIGHT

SPECIAL NEWS REPORT: KCND, CHANNEL 7 NEWS (A SUBSIDIARY OF HORIZON)

<BEGIN VISUAL FEED/BEGIN AUDIO/ENABLE>

Greetings Denver, this is Trish Trumbull of Channel 7 news with a breaking news report. We have received word from the Front Range Free Zone Liaison Office that Ghostwalker is about to give speech concerning the recent incidents and tensions happening in Den ... I'm sorry, we now take you live to Ghostwalker himself.

<PAN IN: GHOSTWALKER IN HUMAN FORM>

To the people of the Front Range Free Zone, I address you directly, not the so-called "leaders" of the various sectors. Two days ago, an attempted assassination was aimed at me. The first part of this attempt involved the smuggling in a particular compound known only by its designation Blue-227. This is the very same bio-weapon that Aztlan and their corporate masters in Aztechnology used to fell the great dragon Surrurg in their recent war. I remain primarily indifferent to Surrurg's fate, but the weapon involved is worth my attention.

Operatives of the Zone Defense Force intercepted this weapon before it could be used, and they subsequently eliminated all those involved with the smuggling operation. This was followed by a detailed search for any and all individuals associated with this plot. While this investigation was underway, terrorist organizations embedded in my city enacted a campaign of massacre and slaughter across the Front Range Free Zone. Death and destruction came in their wake. As part of this wave of attacks, the terrorists attempted an attack on a Zone

Defense Force operations center to plant false information and steal classified intelligence, hoping to disrupt vital defense and emergency services during this crisis. This is intolerable.

This is not an act with a single guilty party. This is a wave of crime and terrorism permitted by the governments who claim to govern parts of the city—a claim weakened by the fact that there is no treaty in force.

Their failures, combined with their lack of legal status, means their time in my city is over. I am tired of your meddling, I am tired of your plots, your political intrigue, and your incompetence. I trusted you to administer this city, and this is how my kindness and leniency is repaid. For the sake and safety of the people of the Front Range Free Zone, I am now doing what I should have done when I first returned.

All officials and representatives of the nations managing sector governments are hereby ordered to vacate the Front Range Free Zone within one month, without incident, starting immediately. This includes any and all military and security forces. Any citizens who wish to remain are welcome, but in doing so you will swear complete fealty to me. Those who will not must leave. To keep vital city services active, I will soon be meeting with various corporate representatives to discuss plans of action.

To the intruding Aztlaners, do not think I have forgotten about you or overlooked your treachery. You will have one week to complete a full evacuation. These terms are not negotiable. There will be no mercy to those who disobey.

<END TRANSMISSION>





WHAT'S UP, CHUMMER?

This is where the drek hits the fan. Approximately forty-five minutes after the runners leave the Ramsay Building, Ghostwalker gives a speech telling the sector governments to get the hell out of his domain. Of course, there are those in Denver who don't take the news very well. Open fighting has broken out in multiple locations across the FRFZ. And in a turn of events that the sector governments didn't expect, a large percent of their military personnel and civilian support staff have thrown their lot in with Ghostwalker.

The Zone Defense Force, meanwhile, has become a separate military force for Ghostwalker and has gone into action trying to quell the various fighting and restore peace. At least that's the official story. In actuality, ZDF Task Forces have targeted several of Ghostwalker's key enemies or those considered a threat. After reviewing the data obtained from the Ramsay Building, Puck discovers to his personal horror that one such task force is targeting the Denver Data Haven. Apparently, Ghostwalker is looking to settle the score and take complete control of the local Matrix grid. And based on what happened the last time the ZDF tried this, Puck vowed never to let it happen again.

He then contacts Perri, one of the admins and de facto leader of the Nexus, to warn her of the impending operation set to begin in approximately ten hours. One bit of good news is that the Nexus has been preparing for just such a contingency and are (somewhat) ready. But there's no way to completely evacuate and cover their tracks within the time.

A bold and desperate plan is enacted with the Nexus calling in markers from various shadow and mercenary contacts from all over Denver and the region. They'll need to delay the ZDF task force. Knowing that the Nexus will need all the help they can get, Perri asks the runners to assist.

TELL IT TO THEM STRAIGHT

It's been about fifteen minutes since the run at the Ramsay Building, and as soon as you egressed, Puck delved back into the Matrix to review the liberated paydata. He's been eerily still ever since, but suddenly his eyes fly open, and he almost jumps out of his seat.

"Get off this road and start heading toward ..." he says, reaching over and physically punching in the coordinates into

the vehicle's GPS. "Just get there ASAP, and don't expect a particularly warm welcome. I'll explain once we get there. But I have some calls to make." He then dives back into the Matrix.

The coordinates indicated are for an old military hospital on East 17th Place in the CAS Sector near the UCAS border. As you get close, the surrounding area looks like it's two steps from being a ghost town, most of the buildings and businesses boarded up and or falling apart.

With his eyes still closed, Puck simply says to go around to the back loading area and be ready for that not-so-warm welcome. Half a heartbeat after you pull up, the bay door opens up revealing three figures, a troll carrying a Barrett 122 like it was an assault rifle, a dwarf packing a Ballista rocket launcher, and a female human wearing worn street clothing and a look of sheer murder in her eyes.

"Puck, I told you *not* to come here. So you and your chummers better put that thing in reverse or I let *my* chums here scratch their itchy trigger fingers."

Puck muscled his way into the front seat and poked his head out the window. "Perri, if you would have just let me finish what I tried to tell you earlier—and that was a very rude disconnection, considering I'm trying to save your ungrateful backside—then we could have avoided this unnecessary drama. Which would be good, since time is not on our side!"

Without so much as blinking Perri simply says "Thirty seconds, go." For added emphasis the troll brought his Barrett up and over the dwarf's shoulder, the Ballista swung into firing position.,

Puck hissed through his teeth before he began "I found evidence that Ghostwalker is planning on sending a ZDF task force after the Nexus within the next six hours, led by his golden boy Bennett. You have to get out of here *now!*"

Perri was still stone-faced.

"Gee, Perri, and here I thought the correct response would have been something akin to 'Thanks Puck for sticking your neck out to help us. We'll get on that right away!' but no ... nothing? Are you so petty to let what happened a months ago blind you to an immense ..."

Perri then held a hand up and shushed Puck as she craned her head to the side. Her two escorts exchanged sideways glances but kept their weapons trained. Cursing under her breath, she turned to the side and looked at Puck and pointing at the vehicle "Get your ride in here now and you and your friends follow me—leaving weapons behind! I don't





trust you, Puck, never will, but Kludge just sent some flash traffic that may convince me you're telling the truth *this time*."

With the vehicle parked, Perri leads you deeper into the hospital. Despite the outward appearance, it looks like extensive renovations have been done; you pass several patient rooms that have been converted into *very* small apartments as the occupants wearily watch you pass by. Eventually you come to what used to be a large office and now serves as a sort of command center. A holo-projector in the corner is showing the local Horizon news feed, with Ghostwalker in his human form front and center; the sound muted.

"This happened during our conversation outside. Let me play it back" Perri says as Ghostwalker's speech ominously echoes in the room for all to hear. As they watch, Perri gets another alert via her commlink and swears. "Damn! They've shut down the grid! We're now Matrix-dark except for local PANs. She spins to look Puck straight in the eyes. "Tell me what you've got, all of it!"

HOOKS

Bennett and his task force are assigned to secure the Nexus facility by any means necessary. Ghostwalker has a personal

disdain for the Nexus, and he also knows that they will be a significant threat to all of his future plans. That means they must be either secured or eliminated.

Bennett and his task force will be using (some) mil-spec weapons, armor, vehicles, and tactics. If they can capture any persons, data, or equipment, that is acceptable. If they have to kill every single person here, that's just as good. According to Bennett's intelligence, this is where the remnants of the Denver Data Haven took up shop after the last ZDF raid.

Too bad the ZDF's intelligence is wrong—well, mostly. The admins of the Nexus knew that a single central location was too vulnerable, so they divided the physical Data Haven among three separate, hidden locations throughout the FRFZ. This particular location, the former Fitzsimmons Army Hospital, is known as the Beta site. It has no more or less valuable data than the Alpha and Gamma sites, but it is the home of most of the Nexus' dependents and those who have joined up along the way. In other words, most are civilians who can't defend themselves. Some of them have severe illnesses and/or injuries, and moving them out will take time they don't really have.

But Bennett's operation isn't the only one enacted. Across the FRFZ, units of the ZDF loyal to Ghostwalker (for various



reasons) are securing vital supplies and communication lines, fortifying their positions, and separating from their *former* parent nations in a sweeping bout of military betrayal. Other task forces are prosecuting other priority targets as well as engaging the CAS, PCC, Sioux Nation, and the UCAS in small skirmishes across the FRFZ, although preliminary reports suggest that the PCC and Sioux Nation are barely offering any resistance and have taken up purely defensive positions. None of the sector nations have yet (key word there) to fully mobilize their forces and counterattack, but all bases are on high alert and fortifying, presumably waiting for further orders. The biggest fighting is in Englewood, where ZDF forces are actively engaging Aztlan forces and giving no quarter.

Tension has been replaced by outright fear, and in some cases widespread panic, as the sector governments are enacting various response plans. Unfortunately, most of those don't entail protecting civilian property. Already criminal elements are on the move, and violence is breaking out across Denver. Security forces such as Lone Star, Knight Errant, and Eagle are pushed to the breaking point.

The only groups in Denver not getting involved in the violence are the spirits. They are unusually quiet and curiously absent.

Also, when the battle starts, to add to the tension, the gamemaster should hype up the fact that this is a full-on battle. There can be lulls of relative inactivity punctuated with moments of pure chaos and carnage as ZDF troops and Nexus defenders slug it out with all they have. Bullets, heavy ordnance, and even spells could come from every direction while overhead, drones and aircraft battle it out. Buildings can be blown apart all while enemy hackers try and brick enemy 'ware and gear. The fog of war is one of the few things runners have on their side to stay alive.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Right after hearing Ghostwalker's ultimatum, Perri contacts fellow Nexus admin Captain Kludge and tells him that Beta site is initiating the Exodus Protocol and that he should call in all available markers listed in the "*Oh Drek*" file. She then looks to her escorts, the dwarf and troll, and tells them to start getting things ready.

Perri then turns to face Puck, who then lays out everything he has learned about Bennett and Ghostwalker's plans, then freely (albeit grudgingly) admits that the file was heavily encrypted, and even with his considerable skills he will need time to gain full access. He was lucky to even get the info about Bennett and his task force.

With that settled, Perri turns to the runners. She asks them that if they would help defend a bunch of defenseless people. If the runners balk or start throwing around not-entirely-inaccurate words like "suicide mission," Perri smirks and motions for the runners to follow her into the armory. There the runners see the cornucopia of weapons and gear (see **Toys Provided by the Nexus** sidebar, p. 42). Perry says that the Nexus got these "through a friend of a friend who's in tight with an armorer shop called Tactical Concepts. They gave them the wiz hook-up in gear and hot-rodded weaponry." She'll also

say to the runners that while the Nexus may not be able to pay them right away, if they help they'll have friends for life. And having friends in one of the biggest data havens in the world is no small matter. That, and they get to keep the gear they use. Oh, and yeah, there's the matter of sticking it to that dragon-hoop-licker Bennett.

If the runners decide they've had enough (especially if they have serious injuries at this point), Perri will understand and wish them well. Puck will be visibly pissed but will understand that a deal is a deal, and he will help get them out of Denver. It may take a few days, weeks, or even months, but it will happen—and the runners will get a chance to see Denver change.

THE TACTICAL SITUATION: DEFENDERS

Simply put, this is urban warfare at its finest and ugliest. This will not be a grand sweeping battle, but a down-and-dirty street fight where success is measured in meters and rooms, not kilometers or even buildings. The fighting will sometimes be up-close and personal. The area surrounding the hospital is full of abandoned and semi-abandoned buildings. Perfect places to set up ambushes or obstacles. They're also great places to get pinned down.

According to Puck's data, the ZDF assault is set to start approximately four hours from the moment when he and the runners arrive. Perri estimates that it will take at least five to six hours for a full evacuation.

The runners will be only a part of Beta site's overall defenses. Perri has called in markers to several groups of friendly shadowrunners, mercenaries, and other allied individuals to assist. Most will be able to make it on time, but some groups may be late to the party.

Note: Because of the large amounts of allies that show, there're no stats for them. The gamemaster is free to use any characters, NPCs, and so on from other campaigns, or even make completely new ones up. They can even use this as an opportunity to plant seeds or hooks for future campaigns.

The evacuation will have two parts. The most critical evacuees will be airlifted via friendly aircraft (several local smugglers and riggers will assist) until the ZDF assault starts or if the skies become too hazardous. The rest will evacuate through the emergency escape tunnels in the basement. These tunnels lead to a staging area where they can be transported to the Alpha and Gamma sites.

The first part of the defenders' general strategy is to create ambushes, sniper nests, booby traps, overlapping kill-zones, and other obstacles to whittle or slow down the ZDF while the hospital is evacuated. Even with their own mil-spec weapons and gear, however, the defenders will be out-gunned and out-numbered. The chances of taking out the entire task force are slim. But this is not a fight to the death. This is a delaying action through hit-and-run and harassment tactics.

Thanks to the Alpha and Gamma sites, temporary access to the Denver Grid has been restored, but it won't last long as GOD will be coming down hard. This means the runners will have full use of wireless bonuses, along with the normal drawbacks.



TOYS PROVIDED BY THE NEXUS

As part of their deal with Tactical Concepts, the Denver Data Haven has assembled a sizable armory of high-end weaponry. For players, this means that they get to pick one weapon, as long as they have the skill to use it, with a rating of 24F and below with at least two clips/reloads, or one belt/drum of their choice of ammo. They're also allowed to pick, for free, any two additional weapon mods or accessories they want (except for personalized grip). All weapons also come with a free sling if the player wants it.

If the players are satisfied with their current loadout, they can get all of their ammo topped off and five extra clips/reloads of their ammo of choice (which can be mixed types). This includes mini-grenades. Laser weapons are unavailable—sorry.

Thrown grenades and/or explosives (gamemaster's discretion, up to four per player) are available as well. Specialty gear such as nets, climbing gear, grapple guns, etc. are also available on request.

Upgrades in armor are also offered in addition to weapons. For

those who want them, SWAT armor is made available with chemical resistance 3, fire resistance 3, nonconductivity 3, and a drag handle. Players can also choose to use a SWAT helmet (no upgrades) or a ballistic shield. Normal encumbrance rules apply.

For magic users who choose any weapons, 10 drams of regents will be offered, courtesy of a friendly local talislegger.

Riggers that don't choose a weapon and do not have (or have lost) their RCC and or drones can select a Maser Industrial Electronics RCC with two free programs and either: five small drones, three medium drones, or two heavy drones. Or any combination, at the gamemaster's discretion of, one heavy drone with 1-3 small drones or two medium drones. These drones are also allowed one weapon pertinent to the drone type, with up to nine ratings to distribute among desired autosofts.

For deckers, they are given the option upgrade of one level to any programs already stored in their deck, or up to three additional programs to keep in data storage.

As part of the overall defensive plan, the runners will be assigned a position where their unique skills can be maximized. What this means is that the runners or the gamemaster is free to put them wherever they can do the most damage. Their job is to stop as many ZDF troops as possible by any means necessary. Or the gamemaster can decide that the runners get a special job, such as locate and eliminate the enemy mobile command center.

The second part of the strategy is to eventually collapse toward the hospital and withdraw once the evacuation is sufficiently complete. Some units will enter into the hospital itself, hopefully drawing in ZDF troops. Once the evacuation is complete, the hospital will be destroyed with demolition charges hidden in the walls. Those who do not evacuate through the hospital will be able to use their own (or a supplied vehicle) and egress on their own.

Those who survive will meet at a rally point ten kilometers away from the hospital.

THE TACTICAL SITUATION: ZDF

Led by Colonel Bennett, ZDF Task Force 16 (TF-16) is charged with securing the Denver Data Haven or removing it as a threat to Ghostwalker. Being a military unit, they will employ far more traditional military tactics than the Nexus defenders. In the initial attack, TF-16 will send in aerial drones to scout the area and attack any visible communication stations/locations (as it turns out, there aren't any) or targets of opportunity such as evacuating aircraft or vehicles. They will also set up jamming in the area, but Nexus hackers at the Alpha and Gamma sites will deal with that. The gamemaster is free to use or hand-wave this as needed.

Once the aerial recon is complete, the drones will fall back and to act as rapid response, attacking targets as they are

discovered. Infantry fire teams will then move forward, supported by armored vehicles if needed. Each team consists of six soldiers; four are regular infantry (with one sergeant commanding), one grenadier or designated marksman, and one combat mage (who doubles as a medic) or drone rigger. Note: The drone will accompany the fire teams, all riggers will be back at the command vehicle. Also, the mage will not use spirits, per FRFZ law, and will only use spells or astral perception/projection.

They will engage any enemies at range whenever they can, using any and all available cover. They will also employ small unit tactics/maneuvers as needed. They will not engage in any open charges. They will also not rush in to engage in hand-to-hand; that is a last resort tactic *only*. These soldiers are also loyal but not fanatical. If faced with overwhelming firepower, a sniper, or other tactical disadvantage, the ZDF soldiers will pull back to regroup and try again. They will also take care of their wounded by either treating or evacuating them from the engagement as needed. If faced with an obstacle or booby-trap/explosive device, if they first try to divert around. If that is not possible, then they will try to defuse or remove. If they encounter a sniper, they will try to locate and then call in for air support or use their designated marksman to counter-snipe.

Colonel Bennett, after the debacle at the Ramsay Building, didn't have the option of leading TF-16 from his virtual command center. This time he's in the field, if not the front lines. Located a kilometer away to the south, Bennett and three other hackers and four riggers are operating from a mobile command vehicle. They have no idea about the evacuation tunnels. So they think they have all the time they need, believing that the delusional defenders are on a desperate suicide mission. Bennett generally does not directly command the fire teams; he monitors them, keeping the lines of



communication clear and focusing more on Matrix action than anything else.

How exactly TF-16 operates is up to the gamemaster. Bennett is competent, but his confidence is rattled. That means that he or any of the field commanders can be as smart or as stupid, brave or cowardly as needed. Also, there are sixteen armored troop carriers for TF-16 use. Two of these vehicles will protect the command vehicle while the others deploy as needed or ordered. The troop transports will stay out of the combat zone, except to deliver more troops/reinforcements as needed. There are also four aerial combat drones on stand-by, and two aerial observation/spotter drones available.

Should the command center be eliminated, a senior NCO already in the field will take command and report back to base, requesting reinforcements but continuing on-mission. For the Nexus defenders, this means that the ZDF can be delayed, but ultimately not stopped. Any known enemy combatants attempting to leave the area will be targeted.

SPECIFICS FOR THE RUNNERS

However the gamemaster decides to run the overall battle, at some point it's recommended that the runners start losing contact with the other Nexus teams over the course of the battle to represent the attrition of battle. At some point, it's also recommended that the runners are the only team that survives the battle, either by escaping through the tunnels (Perri will be the last one out so she can detonate the charges) or if they escape by vehicle. When the ranks are thin, Bennett will order a final push, sending in at least three fire-teams with hardened mil-spec armor to breach the hospital. In that scenario, close-quarters fighting will break out in the hospital.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

This is the end, the final fight. As such, there is really nothing more that can be thrown into the mix, nor is it time to hold back. But if the gamemaster needs to increase the challenge, they can make the troops determined fighters who use small-unit tactics but will not easily fall into traps or ambushes.

Also, TF-16 is not on a clock; they feel they can be as patient as they need to be. And if the runners decide to escape the battle zone by vehicle, the ZDF will pursue, either by vehicle or drone.

DEBUGGING

The gamemaster is free to determine the flow of battle as they see fit. They can hand-wave and just describe how the battle progresses or if so inclined, roll it out (which would involve a lot of rolls and complication). But one thing should be clear; this is a very bloody, very dirty battle. By the time the runners are done, assuming they survive, they should know they've been in a battle. But if the runners are having a hard time wrapping their heads around the chaos of battle or think there's no way they can win, remind them of a few things: 1) That this is not about "winning"; it's about delaying



the ZDF. 2) The ZDF has to play by certain rules of engagement, such as no using spirits. The Nexus defenders, not so much. Encourage them to fight dirty. 3) If needed, have them do something that is important but keeps them away from the main fighting. The previous example of taking out the command center/Bennett is one such idea.

It's up to the gamemaster to determine when either side is victorious. The attackers may win if they defeat all the defenders and take the hospital before Perri can destroy it. The Defenders can win if they can hold the attackers back long enough. If the gamemaster is having problems determining how long the battle should go, a rule of thumb is to create a time limit. For example, the defenders have to hold out of X amount of combat turns.

GRUNTS AND MOVING TARGETS

ZDF INFANTRY

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4.8 | 3 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 15/18* | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 7 + 2D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Automatics 6, Clubs 5, Gymnastics 3, Longarms 6, Perception 5, Pistols 6, Thrown Weapons 4, Unarmed Combat 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Boosted reflexes, smartlink | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Hardened Mil-Spec Armor (light) [15], SWAT Armor [15], SWAT Helmet [3] | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] FN HAR [Assault Rifle, Acc 7, DV 11P, AP -3, SA/BF/FA, RC 6, 35 (c), w/ 70 explosive rounds, foregrip, smartgun system (external), sling, spare clip] Flash-Bang Grenade x2 [Grenade, Acc 10, DV 10S, AP -4, 10m] High-Explosive Grenade x2 [Grenade, Acc, DV 16P, AP -2, -2/m] Combat Knife [Blade, Acc 6, DV 6P, AP -3] | | | | | | | | | |

*Note: One out of every four fire teams (one without magicians) will be issued Hardened Mil-Spec Armor (light). The rest will be issued SWAT gear.

ZDF RIGGERS

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 4 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 4(5) | 4 | 2 | 2.4 | 2 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 14 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 6, Mental 5(6), Social 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 10 + 1D10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Matrix Initiative | 9 + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Automatics 2, Electronic Warfare 5, Gunnery 6, Hardware 3, Heavy Weapons 2, Longarms 2, Perception 5, Pilot Aircraft 4, Pilot Ground Craft 5, Pistols 4, Unarmed Combat 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Cerebral booster 1, control rig 3, damage compensators 2, smartlink | | | | | | | | | |
| RCC | Maser Industrial Electronics [DR 5, Data Processing 5, Firewall 5, Noise Reduction 3, w/ armor, biofeedback filter] | | | | | | | | | |
| Drones | 2 Condor LDS-23 (medium) [Handling, 2, Speed 0R, Accel 1, Body 1, Armor 2, Pilot 2, Sensor 4, w/ clearsight 5, evasion 3, stealth 4] 2 Lockheed Optic X-2 (medium) [Handling, 4, Speed 4, Accel 3, Body 2, Armor 2, Pilot 3, Sensor 2, w/ clearsight 5, evasion 3, stealth 3] 10 S-B Microskimmer (small) [Handling, 3, Speed 3, Accel 1, Body 0, Armor 0, Pilot 3, Sensor 3, w/ clearsight 5, evasion 3, stealth 3] 2 Steel Lynx (large) [Handling, 5, Speed 4, Accel 2, Body 6, Armor 12, Pilot 3, Sensor 3, w/ clearsight 5, evasion 3, maneuvering 3, targeting (HMG) 3] Ruhrmetall SF-20 (turret) [HMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 12P, AP -4, FA, RC -24, 100 (belt), w/ regular rounds, smartgun system] | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor Jacket [12], Maser Industrial Electronics RCC (w/ Armor, Biofeedback Filter), medkit (Rating 5), satellite link, sim module (modified for hot sim), Transys Avalon commlink | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] | | | | | | | | | |

ZDF HACKER

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 6(7) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 12 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 4, Mental 7, Social 7 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 8 + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Matrix Initiative | 12 + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Cracking skill group 7, Electronics skill group 5, Perception 4, Pistols 3, Unarmed Combat 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Attention co-processor, cerebral booster 1, cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ image link, low-light vision, smartlink, vision enhancement 1, vision magnification], datajack | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Armor jacket [9], Fairlight Caliban commlink, programs (Baby Monitor, Biofeedback Filter, Edit, Exploit, Hammer, Lockdown, Nuke-from-Orbit, Smoke-and-Mirrors, Stealth, Toolbox, Wrapper), Shiawase Cyber-5 cyberdeck [Device Rating 5, Atts 5, 8, 8, 6, Programs 5, w/ sim module (modified for hot-sim)], satellite link | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] | | | | | | | | | |



ZDF MAGICIAN

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG | M |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|
| | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 5 |
| Condition Monitor | 10/11 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 15 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 5, Mental 6, Social 7, Astral 7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 10 + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Astral Initiative | 12 + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Banishing 4, Counterspelling 4, Perception 6, Spellcasting 6, Summoning 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spells | Armor, Detect Enemy, Detox, Deflection, Flamethrower, Heal, Powerball, Powerbolt, Physical Barrier, Stealth | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Hermes Ikon commlink, SWAT armor [15], SWAT helmet [3] | | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Government 2066 [Heavy Pistol, Acc 8, DV 7P, AP -1, SA, RC 3, 14 (c), w/ 42 rounds regular ammo, smartgun system (external), 2 spare clips] | | | | | | | | | | |

DODGE GENERAL

(COMMAND VEHICLE)

Command section [Handling 3/3, Speed 4, Accel 1, Body 20, Armor 16, Pilot 5, Sensors 7, Seats 10, w/ ammo bin, anti-theft system 3, 2 drone racks (large), additional entry/exit port (roof hatch), ECCM 3, life support 2, PPS (Rating 4), retrains unit, rigger cocoon 3, rigger interface, searchlight, secondary manual control, weapon mount (heavy, turret, external, remote control), vehicle tag eraser

DODGE GENERAL

Ruhrmetall SF-20 (turret: top) [HMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 12P, AP -4, FA, RC -24, 200 (bin), w/ regular rounds, smartgun system]

Trailer section [Handling 3/3, Speed 4, Accel 1, Body 20, Armor 16, Pilot 5, Sensors 7, Seats 10, w/ anti-theft system 3, 4 drone racks (medium), drone rack (micro), drone workshop, ECCM 3, life support 2, PPS (Rating 4), retrains unit, rigger cocoon 3, rigger interface, searchlight, special equipment (generator)

RUHRMETALL WOLF II (COMBAT VEHICLE)

Troop Transport version [Handling 3/3, Speed 3, Accel 2, Body 24, Armor 12, Pilot 2, Sensors 2, Seats 6/16, w/ ammo bin, amenities (squatter), anti-theft system 3, ECM 5, enviroseal, gun ports (left, right, rear) life support 2, manual control override, metahuman adjustment (six seats non-troll), missile defense system, PPS (Rating 5), rigger interface, searchlight, secondary manual control, runflat tires, weapon mount (heavy, turret, internal visibility, remote control)

WOLF II

Ruhrmetall SF-20 (turret: top) [HMG, Acc 5 (7), DV 12P, AP -4, FA, RC -24, 200 (bin), w/ anti-vehicle rounds, smartgun system]



AFTERMATH

PICKING UP THE PIECES

IT'S A WRAP!

As soon as the evacuees are clear, Perri detonates the hospital. The explosion blows the bottom three floors outward, the rest comes crashing down. No one is sure of how many ZDF soldiers were caught in the blast zone, but the tunnel's secrecy was maintained.

The runners meet up with Perri and Puck at the rally point, and it appears they were the only ones who survived. Perri looks conflicted but relieved while Puck is guarded. She thanks them for their help and says they saved a lot of lives today. If asked about any possible survivors, Perri is unsure about specifics. She says it's possible some had to find alternate means out of the battle zone, but she'll find out; she owes any survivors that much.

To conclude any business, Perri tells them to keep the gear and weapons they borrowed. She also gives them ten thousand nuyen each. It's a small token, but they've more than earned it. She also gives the runners access and passwords to the Data Haven as promised. Perri says that if they ever need help, let her know.

After some good-byes, she then takes charge of the transportation detail to get the dependents to the new Beta site (located at the old National Center for Atmospheric Research near old Boulder, but she leaves that part out). Considering everything that's going on, they'll need the Nexus at peak efficiency to combat whatever pale-scale is doing. But if the runners want to come with, they're more than welcome.

CURRENT STATE OF THE FRFZ

Most of the military action in the FRFZ ended approximately thirty hours after it began, although small skirmishes by individual military/security units continue sporadically. The heaviest of the fighting occurred in Englewood, where the ZDF "liberated" the people from the Aztlaners. Most Aztlan soldiers were killed or captured by ZDF forces; only a few escaped. Reports from captured Aztlan officers indicate they were completely caught off guard, specifically by the acts of sabotage (physical and Matrix) that crippled their

command and communication abilities. It was a blow from which they couldn't recover. All Aztlan civilians, sympathizers, and allies in Englewood have been placed in temporary camps, pending processing, which includes all possible nefarious definitions of the term.

Englewood is now a blasted-out wasteland, suffering over seventy percent damage to all buildings. Casualty numbers from Englewood are still being tallied. Denver residents and civilians deemed loyal and safe are taken to temporary housing and given the choice of staying in the FRFZ or leaving.

The other sectors have developed a siege mentality. Military and security forces have sectioned off and fortified key strategic areas to defend and prevent them from being seized by the Zone Defense Force.

Condemnation of Ghostwalker's actions by the CAS and the UCAS was swift and vocal. Presidents McMalkin and Colloton, in a rare joint statement, declared Ghostwalker's actions to be a blatant declaration of war and said they will not be tolerated. However, no specifics were given but the UCAS's Joint Task Force: Seattle has been put on full alert and the CAS's 325th and 341st Mechanized Armor Corps have begun to assemble at mobile forward operating bases near Austin.

The NAN response has been described as "underwhelming." The PCC and Sioux Nation have likewise issued condemning statements against Ghostwalker and the ZDF, but their language had none of the CAS/UCAS' fire and anger. Both the PCC military and the Sioux Defense Force have begun to mobilize troops, but again nothing like the CAS and UCAS. Current rumors suggest that the Tribal Council has decided that Denver may be more trouble than it's worth, and they may simply comply with Ghostwalker's wishes.

Most strange is Aztlan's response, which has amounted to a "no comment" by the Aztlan government.

The rest of the world's reaction has been mixed. Those countries with notable anti-dragon leanings have condemned Ghostwalker's actions, but for the most part, the rest of the world is apathetic.

In the corporate world, stocks across the board took a brief dive, anticipating a major upheaval in the FRFZ. But when corporate interests were only temporarily disrupted, stocks rose to previous levels. The CAS and UCAS have petitioned the UN for assistance, but the Corporate Court has





ruled the situation in Denver as a “national, not corporate, affair, which does not fit within the Court’s mandate.” Ghostwalker has kept to his word, though. Two days after the attack on Englewood, he met with representatives from the Big Ten (minus Aztechnology of course) to discuss various deals and incentives for the citizens of Denver.

Ghostwalker himself has also offered the citizens of Denver various incentives to remain in Denver, including slashed tax rates and small business start-up programs as well as “residency bonuses” for simply staying. Many critics have called it nothing more than trying to make a “beautiful prison.”

The opinions of Denver’s citizens vary. Some have already decided to get out of the FRFZ, preferring not to get caught in whatever crossfire is coming. Some are holding out that their respective governments will do ... something to protect them, while a growing number are actually considering Ghostwalker’s offer. But with the clock ticking on Ghostwalker’s ultimatum, mostly everyone is waiting to see what will happen next.

AWARDING KARMA

Karma represents the universe’s reward for hard work and a job well done. At the end of a *Shadowrun* adventure, Karma is awarded to each player character for the part they played. Just surviving deserves some Karma, and accomplishing specific goals earns more. It’s rare for any player character to earn every point of Karma available. Karma can also be lost as well.

Notes the gamemaster makes during the adventure on player characters’ performance are the best resource for as-suring Karma points are awarded accurately and fairly.

Award Karma points for exceptional roleplaying, humor, or heroics—anything that improves the game experience deserves to be rewarded. By the same token, don’t be afraid to subtract Karma from player characters who detract from the game experience, are particularly foolhardy, or make out-of-character choices/actions. In *False Flag*, bonus Karma is also awarded for every genuine local contact the player characters develop during the adventure. Gamemasters do not need to share this—or any other Karma requisites—with their players. Playing the adventure as presented, without informing the players of what actions will result in a Karma

award or deduction, keeps the players from second-guessing themselves (and the gamemaster) during the game. This makes for a more enjoyable adventure experience.

Generally, Karma is awarded at the end of the adventure. But gamemasters are free to award a point of Karma during the game to reward a particularly impressive feat, exceptional roleplaying, or even a particularly brilliant in-character joke. Don’t be afraid to award Notoriety points—which can follow the player characters back home from Manhattan. Notoriety points are earned through things such as causing excessive damage and or fatalities (1-3), failing to honor a debt (1), betraying/abusing a trusted contact (1), betraying Mr. Johnson (1), getting caught reselling data pertaining to the run (1) or failing to do precisely what Mr. Johnson requested (1). Okay, those last few may not be the best examples in regards to *this* particular adventure ...

TEAM KARMA

- Defeating the other shadowrunner team at the meet with Mr. Johnson: 1
- Successfully dealing with the deathrattle nest and obtaining the aircraft fuel: 1
- Using stealth, guile, or negotiation to avoid combat with the Prairie Igasho: 1
- Successfully obtaining the fuel at Waypoint Station: 1
- Thinking outside of the box or doing something outside their comfort zone: 1
- Defeating the Aztlan agents and the ZDF snipers: 1-2
- Gaining entry into Mary’s room at the House of Leisure: 1
- Successfully aiding Puck in retrieving the data from the ZDF or protecting Puck during the data steal: 1
- Surviving the battle against the Zone Defense Force: 1-2
- Surviving/dealing with anything the gamemaster throws at the players as part of any *Pushing the Envelope*: 1 per event

BONUS KARMA

- 1 per each contact gained



INDIVIDUAL KARMA

- Surviving 3
- Good roleplaying 1-3
- Guts/Bravery 1
- Pushing the storyline along 1

LEGWORX

AWARDING CONTACTS

Many of the contacts that are presented in *False Flag* are specific to the Denver region. However, if the players and the gamemaster like the setting and wish to set their campaign in Denver, the contacts they have made will prove helpful and can be used in the future. During the course of the adventure, the players may come into contact with other NPCs that were not part of the published adventure. Gamemasters are encouraged to use and grant contacts to the players as they see fit. Possible contacts listed below:

- Puck, technomancer/troublemaker (Connection 6, Loyalty 3)
- Perri, decker/Denver Data Haven admin (Connection 7, Loyalty 3)
- Roman, Prairie Igasho tribe (Connection 2, Loyalty 2)

LEGWORX

As the runners go through the adventure, they'll have numerous opportunities for research. This section gives some results for legwork the runners may attempt. Research can involve the Matrix, checking with contacts, or any other method the runner team devises. Gamemasters are free to disseminate this information however they see fit.

CONTACTS

The shadowrunners (if not local), and by extension their regular contacts, may not be familiar with the FRFZ. Apply a +2 threshold modifier for any rolls that a regular contact makes in regards to information that is not within their field of expertise. A fixer in Seattle, for example, may have trouble finding information on the House of Leisure; a local contact, particularly a face, businessman, or joy boy/girl, might be more appropriate. If the players are seeking information from a contact with the relevant Knowledge skill, roll for the contact; the number of hits determines the amount of information the contact knows. Of course, a contact may choose not to share everything they know with the player character—depending on how much nuyen the runners are willing to invest. Alternatively, a contact may ask around on the player characters' behalf. To do this, roll the contact's Connection Rating + Charisma [Social]. Treat this as an Extended Test with one-hour intervals. Add up the cumulative hits to determine how much relevant/useful information he or she is able to obtain from these second-

ary contacts. Once you have determined the net hits achieved for any contact, refer to the Contacts Table below.

SEARCHING THE MATRIX

Player characters may elect to search for information themselves by scouring the various data havens and informational dumpsites throughout the Matrix. In this case, have the player character perform a Computer + Logic [Mental] extended test. The player will only be able to roll 6 tests total. After this, any data not uncovered is simply too obscure or well-hidden in the Matrix for that player to find. Note that not everything is available on the Matrix. Gamemasters may decide what data is reasonably available on the Matrix, what data can only be found in secured nodes, and what data simply isn't available at all.

COLONEL SHANE BENNETT

Contacts to Ask: Denver shadowrunners, mercenaries, military, deckers, intelligence-types

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|--|
| 0 | 0 | Wasn't he on that, you know, war movie? |
| 1 | 1 | UCAS officer, currently assigned to the Zone Defense Force |
| 2 | 3 | Is a part of military intelligence and is a known skilled decker, goes by handle of "Chrome King." |
| 3 | — | Is rumored to do a lot of black ops. |
| 4 | 6 | Not very popular with the troops, treats just about everyone else as being beneath him. Rumors suggest he likes to use blackmail and intimidation to recruit new operatives. |
| 5 | — | Rumors say he's very loyal to Ghostwalker rather than the UCAS. |

LIEUTENANT JAMES MADDOX

Contacts to Ask: Denver shadowrunners, mercenaries, military, intelligence types

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|---|
| 0 | 0 | Sounds like some sailor. |
| 1 | 1 | UCAS Officer, currently assigned to the Zone Defense Force, works as an MP. |
| 2 | 3 | Is seen a lot in more the seedier parts of Denver, no one is sure exactly why. Could be doing shadowruns on the side. Former UCAS Special Forces. |
| 3 | — | Is known to do a lot of errands for his CO, Colonel Bennett. |



| | | |
|---|---|--|
| 4 | 6 | Rumors say he is the buffer between the troops and Colonel Bennett. He's also rumored to be Bennett's favorite support operative |
| 5 | — | Rumors say he helps Colonel Bennett with his black ops. |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| 4 | 6 | Lone Star command officers are loyal customers, and they keep an eye on the place. |
| 5 | — | Several local government officials from all over the FRFZ like to also frequent the place. |

RAMSAY BUILDING

Contacts to Ask: Denver locals, shadowrunners, city engineers, cab drivers, military-types

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|--|
| 0 | 0 | That's the strip club, right? |
| 1 | 1 | ZDF administrative office located in the Hub. |
| 2 | 3 | It's also an auxiliary emergency post operated under the auspices of the ZDF that can be activated in times of emergency to act as a Command and Control Center. Each of the nation sectors has an office there. Commanding Officer there is Colonel Bennett |
| 3 | — | Is rumored to be an "intelligence data store and clearing house." Small staff, but high security. |
| 4 | 6 | Rumors suggest Bennett uses the building as his own private HQ for his off-the-books work. |
| 5 | — | Rumors say Bennett has modified the building's node as his personal Matrix playground |

MADAM CASSANDRA'S HOUSE OF LEISURE

Contacts to Ask: CAS Sector locals, cab drivers, joy boy/girls, local bartenders

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|--|
| 0 | 0 | Sounds like an XXX BTL. |
| 1 | 1 | High-end brothel located in the middle of Millionaire's Row in the CAS Sector. |
| 2 | 3 | Known as the "best open secret" in Denver. Lots of rich, powerful, and high-society types frequent the place. It's almost a status symbol to go there. |
| 3 | — | All of the workers there are clean, no BTLs, personafix chips, or hard drugs allowed. Everything here is (mostly) natural. And the clients want it that way. |

PUCK

Contacts to Ask: Hackers, shadowrunners, neo-anarchists

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|---|
| 0 | 0 | That's from that Shakes-beer guy right? |
| 1 | 1 | An elite hacker. Everyone assumes he's a technomancer, but no one is exactly sure. |
| 2 | 3 | Is somewhat of a Matrix pariah; people don't seem to trust him. |
| 3 | — | Has been searching the deeper "plains" of the Matrix and the Resonance in recent months looking for something. |
| 4 | 6 | Rumors suggest he was at the Renraku Arcology during the shutdown. |
| 5 | — | Was once one of the "Banded," a part of the mad AI Deus' elite. He helped the AI torture people during the arcology shutdown. |

PERRI

Contacts to Ask: Denver shadowrunners, hackers, tech-heads, Denver hooders

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|--|
| 0 | 0 | Thrust? |
| 1 | 1 | Elite hacker—decker, to be precise. |
| 2 | 3 | She is one of the admins of the Denver Data Haven, also known as the Nexus. |
| 3 | — | Is rumored to be on Ghostwalker's hit list, along with the rest of the Nexus. |
| 4 | 6 | After the ZDF took several members of the Nexus into custody last year, rumors suggest she and the other Nexus members have been working on several contingency plans to make sure that never happens again. |
| 5 | — | She's the daughter of the legendary hacker FastJack |



DENVER DATA HAVEN/THE NEXUS

Contacts to Ask: Shadowrunners, hackers, information brokers

| Contacts | Matrix Search | Information |
|----------|---------------|--|
| 0 | 0 | I was at that club just last week! |
| 1 | 1 | One of the biggest shadow data havens in the world. Access is limited unless someone from the Nexus vouches for you or you're invited. |
| 2 | 3 | Used to be located at the old US Air Force Academy, until the ZDF decided to pay a visit after Ghostwalker's private node was hacked. After that, the Nexus diversified and went even more underground. A lot of technomancers were also taken into custody during that event. |
| 3 | — | Is rumored to now be spread out among three different locations. Technomancers, hackers, and their dependents often seek refuge with the Nexus. |
| 4 | 6 | Each of the Nexus physical locations are armed to the gills with mil-spec weapons and gear. |
| 5 | — | Rumor's suggest they are waging, or getting ready to wage, their own little cyber-war against Ghostwalker |

CAST OF SHADOWS

COLONEL SHANE BENNETT ("CHROME KING")

Originally a Colonel in the DIA, Bennett was an expert in regular and matrix counter-intelligence. His preferred methods were to set traps and then use back-traces to catch the perpetrators. As he rose in the ranks, he also displayed a talent for planning and executing operations. He was assigned to Denver in 2059 and got Ghostwalker's attention in 2064 when he successfully penetrated the Dragon's Lair Matrix node. Instead of having Bennett eliminated, Ghostwalker recruited him.

His Matrix persona is simple yet flashy. He looks like an elven warrior with long flowing white hair and a normal face, but the rest of his body is covered in a shiny chrome with a chrome crown on his head.

Bennett is best described as self-centered, bordering on sociopathy with a distinct appetite for power. He considers everyone around him as tools (some worth more than others) to be used or obstacles to be destroyed. His preferred

methods to recruit new agents are blackmail coupled with some kind of fear. Bennett has no problem destroying lives or killing to get what he wants. The only true loyalty he has is to Ghostwalker, and that loyalty is born out of a delicate balance between his hunger for power and fear.

| B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|--|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|------|-----|
| 4 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 6(7) | 5 | 5 | 3.85 | 4 |
| Condition Monitor | | 10/11 | | | | | | | |
| Armor | | 10 | | | | | | | |
| Limits | | Physical 5, Mental 8, Social 7 | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | | 10 + 2D6 | | | | | | | |
| Matrix Initiative | | 13 + 3D6 | | | | | | | |
| Skills | | Acting skill group 4, Athletics skill group 3, Close Combat skill group 4, Cracking skill group 8, Electronics skill group 5, Etiquette 5, Firearms skill group 4, Forgery 8, Free Fall 3, Gunnery 2, Intimidation 5, Leadership 5, Negotiation 5, Outdoors skill group 3, Perception 6, Pilot Aircraft 2, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pilot Watercraft 2, Stealth skill group 3, Throwing Weapons 3 | | | | | | | |
| Knowledge Skills | | Counter-Intelligence Operations 6, Intelligence Operations 7, Logistics 6, Matrix Theory 8, Matrix Security Protocols 7, Military Tactics 5, Military Theory 4, Small Unit Tactics 4 | | | | | | | |
| Languages | | Aztlaner Spanish 4, Dakota 4, English N, German 4, Lakota 4 | | | | | | | |
| Qualities | | Bad Rep, Codeslinger: Edit File, Data Anomaly, Fade to Black, Latest and Greatest, Lightweight, Overclocker, Photographic Memory, SINner (National: UCAS), Superhuman Psychosis | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | | Boosted reflexes, cerebral booster 1, datajack, mnemonic enhancer 1, neuro-retention amplification, orthoskin 1, sleep regulator, smartlink, trauma damper 1 | | | | | | | |
| Gear* | | AR gloves, armor vest [9] (w/ Chemical Protection (3), Fire Resistance (3), Nonconductivity (3), concealed quick-draw holster, Fairlight Caliban commlink, Fairlight Excalibur cyberdeck [Device Rating 5, Atts 5, 8, 8, 6, Programs 6 (Baby Monitor, Biofeedback, Biofeedback Filter, Edit, Lockdown, Tantrum), w/ biomonitor, multidimensional coprocessor, sim module (modified for hot-sim)], glasses [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, image link, vision magnification (electronic)], micro-transceiver, programs (Cat's Paw, Decryption, Fork, Hammer, Nuke-from-Orbit, Paintjob, Smoke-and-Mirrors), satellite link | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | | Ares Crusader II [Machine Pistol, Acc 8, DV 9P, AP -1, SA/BF, RC 4, 40 (c), w/ 80 EX-Explosive rounds, gas-vent system 2, personalized grip, spare clip] Combat knife [Blade, Acc 6, DV 5P, AP -3] Shock glove [Unarmed, Acc 5, DV 8S(e), AP -5] | | | | | | | |
| *Note: Personal gear only; can be assigned other armor, gear, or weapons by ZDF | | | | | | | | | |

LIEUTENANT JAMES MADDOX

At one point, Maddox was just another UCAS grunt looking to get a free ride. An expert at keeping his head down, Maddox was considered reliable by his superiors if not un-



remarkable. Eventually assigned to the motor pool, he drew the job of driving around one (then) Major Bennett. When they got in the crossfire of shadowrunners and Lone Star, Maddox impressed Bennett by taking out the runner team's street samurai with a well-placed gunshot. Maddox was then given officer status and promoted to lieutenant. He's been Bennett's number one errand boy, troubleshooter, and bodyguard ever since. For his part, Maddox likes his new job because he gets to bend the rules and do a lot of fun stuff.

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG |
|---|---|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|
| | 6 | 4 | 3(5) | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2.9 | 3 |
| Condition Monitor | 11/10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 15 | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 7, Mental 6, Social 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 7(9) + 3D6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Close Combat skill group 5, Etiquette 3, Firearms skill group 6, First Aid 3, Gunnery 3, Gymnastics 6, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Outdoors skill group 4, Perception 5, Pilot Aircraft 2, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Running 3, Stealth skill group 4, Throwing Weapons 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| Knowledge Skills | Counter-Intelligence Operations 4, Intelligence Operations 4, Military Tactics 4, Small Unit Tactics 4, Surveillance Tactics 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| Qualities | Acrobatic Defender, Consummate Professional, Guts, High Pain Tolerance 1, SINner (National, UCAS), Will to Live 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Augmentations | Bone lacing (Titanium), cyberears [Rating 2, w/ audio enhancement 2, damper, select sound filter 2, sound link, spatial recognizer], cybereyes [Rating 2, w/ image link, low-light vision, smartlink, thermographic vision], synaptic booster 2 | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear* | Armor jacket [12] (w/ chemical protection 2, concealable holster, drag handle, fire resistance 3, nonconductivity 2), Erika Elite commlink, medkit (Rating 3), subvocal microphone | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt America L36 [Light Pistol, Acc 9, DV 7P, AP -4, SA, 11 (c), w/ 22 APDS rounds, silencer/suppressor, smartgun system (external), spare clip] Sap [Club, Acc 5, DV 7P, AP -] Victorinox Memory Blade Knife [Blade, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP -2] | | | | | | | | | |
| *Note: Personal gear only; can be assigned additional armor, gear, or weapons by ZDF | | | | | | | | | | |

PUCK

Puck is ... complicated. Considered a bit of a pariah in both the shadowrunning and matrix crowds, Puck is a gifted technomancer who was first introduced to the Matrix by way of being an otaku. And while most technomancers feel that the Matrix is more "real" than the meat-world, Puck takes this to extremes. He feels that the Matrix should be free, not restricted and controlled. This deep love/hate of the Matrix (love of the Matrix, hatred of how it has been used, mostly), coupled with his desire to see it become free, has caused him to throw in with some very bad people and do some very bad things, such as help the AI Deus with the Renraku Arcology shut-down and later help launch the Jorgunmand virus that caused

Crash 2.0. But despite all of this and the regret he feels, Puck is unapologetic. Instead he just does what he can to get by, hiding behind a mask of arrogance and bravado.

Puck came to Denver several months ago and is rumored to have caused a lot of damage and problems in the FRFZ, including messing with the Denver Data Haven. But when he was confronted about it by Perri and other runners, he said that he wasn't trying to do damage, but to wake everyone up and warn them about Ghostwalker's plans. However, not too many believed him so he was forced to stay in Denver and wait for the right moment when he and his allies can make their move. Puck has also gotten a bit more serious about things. While still mostly a pacifist, he's recently learned some additional combat skills and undergone his first submersion.

(**Note:** These represent the skills Puck will show/use during this adventure, they are *not* necessarily the sum total of his abilities.)

| | B | A | R | S | W | L | I | C | ESS | EDG | RES |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|-----|
| | 2 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 7 |
| Condition Monitor | 9/11 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Armor | 13 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Limits | Physical 4, Mental 7, Social 7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical Initiative | 10 + 1D6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Matrix Initiative | 10 + 4D6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Skills | Automatics 1, Blades 4 (Knives +2), Con 5, Cracking skill group 9, Cyberotechnology 4, Electronics skill group 7, Etiquette 5 (Matrix +2), First Aid 2, Gymnastics 4, Locksmith 4, Perception 6, Pilot Ground Craft 1, Pistols 4, Running 3, Sneaking 1, Tasking skill group 7, Unarmed Combat 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Knowledge Skills | Artificial Intelligences 6, Combat Biking Leagues 4, Computer History 4, Matrix Architecture 6, Matrix Groups 5, Matrix Programs 6, Matrix Security Procedures 5, Matrix Theory 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Languages | Aztlaner Spanish 3, English N, French 3, Japanese 5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Qualities | Bad Rep, Codeslinger (Hack on the Fly), Otaku to Techomancer, Pacifist (avoids violence), Paranoia, Photographic Memory | | | | | | | | | | |
| Living Persona | Attack 4, Data Processing 5, Device Rating 7, Sleaze 5, Firewall 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Complex Forms | Cleaner, Diffusion of Attack, Diffusion of Firewall, IC Tray, Misread Marks, Pulse Storm, Puppeteer, Redundancy, Resonance Spike, Resonance Veil, Static Bomb, Static Veil, Stitches, Tattletale, Transcendent Grid | | | | | | | | | | |
| Submersion Grade | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Echoes | Sleepwalker | | | | | | | | | | |
| Registered Sprites | Crack Sprite (Level 6, Tasks 4), Data Sprite (Level 7, Tasks 3), Fault Sprite (Level 7, Tasks 3), Machine Sprite (Level 6, Task 3) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gear | Area jammer (Rating 4), armor jacket [12] (w/ concealable holster, electrochromic modification, nonconductivity 2, shock weave, thermal dampening 3), concealed quick-draw holster, 5 Jazz doses, maglock passkey (Rating 5), 2 medkits (Rating 3), Monocle [Rating 3, w/ flare compensation, low light vision, vision magnification (electronic)], 4 psyche doses, Securetech PPP legs kit [1], 4 stim patches (Rating 4), 4 trauma patches | | | | | | | | | | |
| Weapons | Colt Agent Special [Light Pistol, Acc 6, DV 8S, AP +1, SA, RC 2, 8 (c), w/ 30 gel rounds, laser sight, 2 Spare Clips] Remington Roomsweeper [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 5S(e), AP -5, SA, RC 2, 8 (m), w/ 50 stick-n-shock rounds, laser sight] Combat Knife [Blade, Acc 6, DV 5P, AP -3] | | | | | | | | | | |



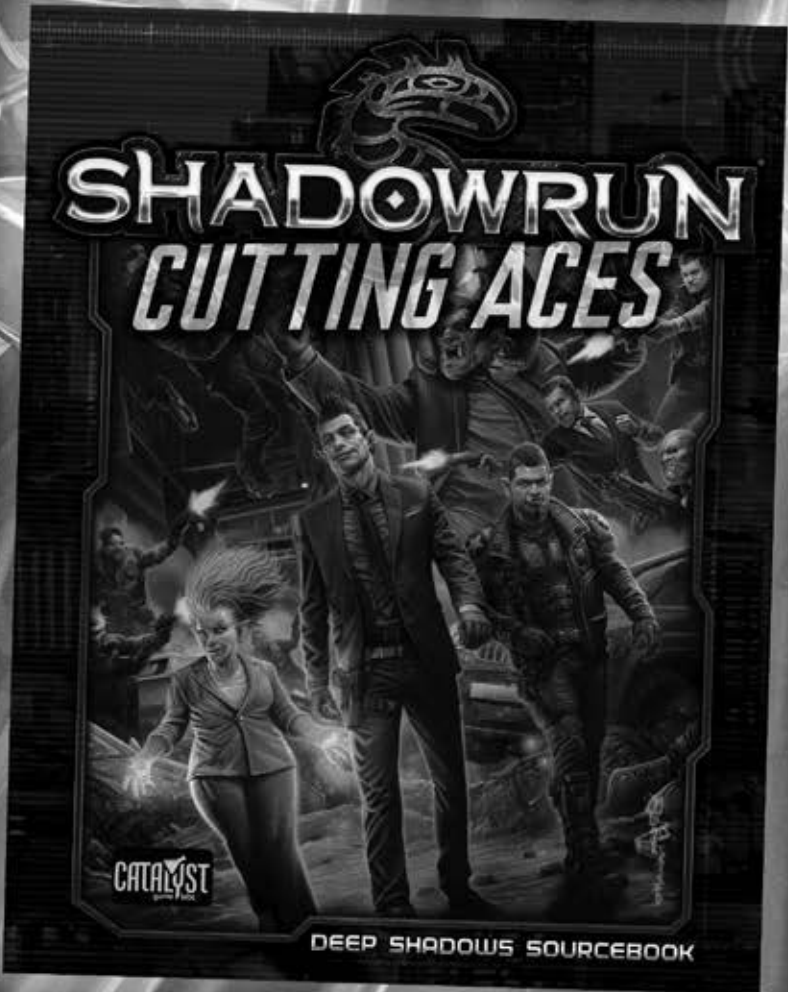
CUTTING ACES

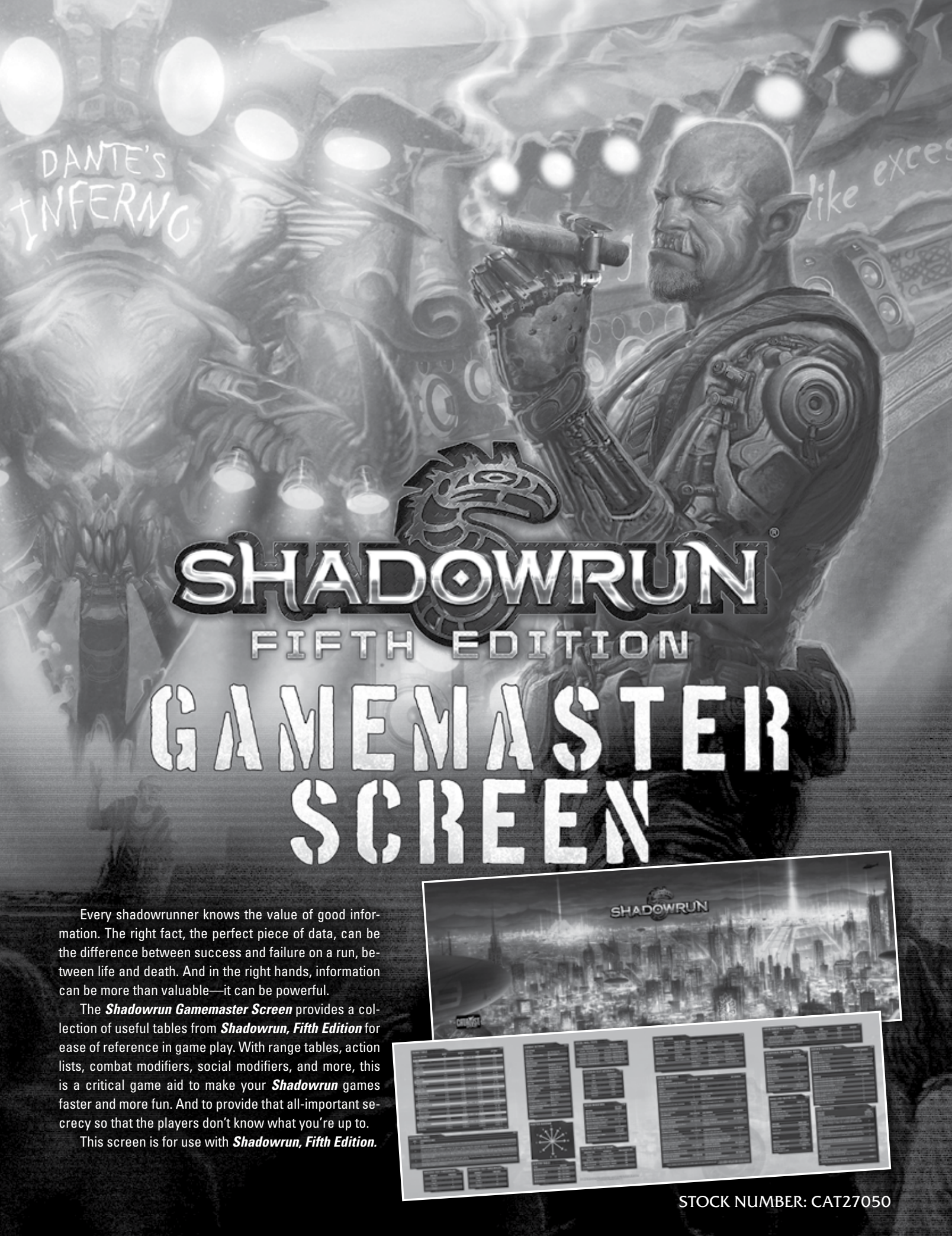
HIT YOUR MARKS!

The hotel bartender who slips you a guest's room number because he thinks it will help him get lucky. The security guard who lets a team into a top-secret facility because he thinks he's pitching in on covert-ops training. The business suit who drops ten thousand nuyen on a project because he thinks it'll earn him fifty thousand.

Marks, all of them, and the Sixth World is full of them. Yeah, blasting your way into a well-guarded facility is fun, but talking your way in, smooth and subtle, might be more rewarding. Almost every kind of shadowrun involves at least a little con artistry, and some of them are full-on long cons. That means you need to sharpen your con game. With tips, plot updates, spells, gear, and more to improve characters' con abilities, **Cutting Aces** gives players the swagger and skills they need to swindle the world. It also includes information on one of the Sixth World's hottest spots for running a con—Constantinople, City of the World's Desire.

Cuttings Aces is for use with **Shadowrun, Fifth Edition**, and it also contains plot information, story ideas, and characters that can be used with **Shadowrun: Anarchy** with slight adjustments of character stats.





SHADOWRUN

FIFTH EDITION

GAMEMASTER SCREEN

Every shadowrunner knows the value of good information. The right fact, the perfect piece of data, can be the difference between success and failure on a run, between life and death. And in the right hands, information can be more than valuable—it can be powerful.

The *Shadowrun Gamemaster Screen* provides a collection of useful tables from *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* for ease of reference in game play. With range tables, action lists, combat modifiers, social modifiers, and more, this is a critical game aid to make your *Shadowrun* games faster and more fun. And to provide that all-important secrecy so that the players don't know what you're up to.

This screen is for use with *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*.



STOCK NUMBER: CAT27050

SHADOWRUN

GEAR CARDS

The right gun, the right vehicle, or the right piece of equipment can be the difference between life and death. *Shadowrun Gear Cards* provide quick reference to 55 different pieces of gear. Containing game stats and illustrations of guns, vehicles, drones, and more, these cards will help keep the game moving and make sure characters have what they need to come out on top.

STOCK NUMBER: CAT27500

SPELL CARDS

Everyone in the Sixth World wants to geek the mage first. Your job is to make sure that won't happen by being faster, deadlier, and more powerful than they are. *Shadowrun Spell Cards* make spellcasting faster and easier, with easy-to-reference game statistics for 55 different spells. Grab a pack and use it to call down a whole hellstorm of mana when you need it most!

STOCK NUMBER: CAT27502





F10



THE ANGRY GAZE

The ruling powers of Sixth World sprawls are content to let the little people of their cities engage in all sorts of shenanigans and scheming so long as it doesn't affect their master plans. But when the chaos gets too out of hand—or the little people start acting too arrogant—then those powers turn their angry gaze to the people they would rather ignore, and the everyday chaos of life erupts into something worse, and considerably more dangerous.

Recent attacks on the Paladin Medical Health Center in the Aurora Warrens have drawn the attention of some of Denver's powers, and they're not going to ignore the situation. They're also not going to just send in the police, because that's not how things are done—instead, they will launch schemes of their own, with the opportunity to create chaos that makes the previous wildness seem like a sunny day in the Rockies.

False Flag is the second in the series of *Denver Adventures* for *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*. Whether played alone or as part of a larger campaign with the first adventure, it will test players' resources, creativity, and skill, while moving them toward the dramatic plot developments ahead.



SHADOWRUN
FIFTH EDITION

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