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# A Look at the Braindance

an article for R. Talsorian Game's Cyberpunk

by Colin Fisk

*The night is cold and uninviting; there's nothing doing in the co-op, so you decide the bar scene might be where things are happening. You slide into your kevleath overcoat and hit the streets in search of action.*

*Six bars and forty euros later you realize it just isn't there. You need something new, but where are you going to find it on a Tuesday night?*

*Just as you choke down the last of whatever fruit drink it was that you ordered, the wirehead at the end of the bar, the one you thought had passed out, rises from her chair, ripping jacks from her plugs, and heads for the door. Sitting on the counter is a black box that had been concealed by her considerable bulk, so you check it out curiously.*

*It looks like a box with two interface jacks coming out of it, plus a slot for a card at the top. When you ask the 'tender what it's for, she shrugs and says, "It's the 'dance."*

*Maybe it's the drinks, or just plain boredom, but something tells you that this is what you've been looking for. With a practised motion, you slide your cash card through the sensor, then jack in.*

*Immediately you're shunted elsewhere. There's a forest surrounding you, and in the distance you hear the shouting of Columbian drug warriors. You move quickly through the foliage, your engorged biceps often brushing against outlaying shrubs as you come to the outer perimeter of the processing plant. Taking a deep breath, you grab the assault shotgun from its place on your back and get ready to rock.*

## What is the Braindance?

The Braindance is similar in nature to the Netrunner's interface in that it allows, via neural transmission, a person to fully and realistically experience an alternate reality. Unlike the interface the Netrunner uses, the perceptions are not created from the user's brain, but rather from the recorded thoughts, memories and physical sensations of another person.

Originally developed as a way of aversion programming for convicted criminals, and later used as a military simulator, the Braindance today is fast becoming the most popular form of entertainment.

Several companies, including DMS, Braindance Inc. and Home Braindance Organization, have many employees whose sole purpose is to go out there and get involved in situations that most normal people only dream of. As they confront these dangers, a technician records the entire ex-

perience and will later edit it for the viewing audience. After all, who wants to feel bored while hero wasted twenty minutes just to get transportation to the airport?

Once a suitable length chip has been compiled and edited, the chips are distributed to various locations for mass production.

These days, the public has three ways to gain access to the Braindance. The first is at an arcade: a multi-level room consisting of private booths in which a person can experience the Braindances which are currently being offered by the distribution services. Also, there are many bars which now have one or two Sony-Matusushita Black Boxes, and subscribe to a distribution service. The third and most expensive way is to buy your own Black Box (about 2500eb at the time of this writing) and rent chips from an arcade or subscribe to a service yourself.

*The processing plant's guards are very relaxed, not expecting anything like the trap you've set. Shotgun in one hand, you thumb the detonator, setting off the first of a series of eight charges. Only when the flames are reaching to the heavens do you actually come out of hiding.*

*The chipped shotgun roars as you confront two guards who are running around aimlessly. The searing heat from the flames is starting to irritate your skin, but you press on, determined to reach your goal.*

*Another pair of guards stands in your way as you reach the entrance to the farmhouse. Recognizing the need for stealth, you approach them from behind and cut their throats. Without a sound you slip into the drug lord's house, knowing he won't be there.*

*You gather the necessary documents but, before you can leave unnoticed, a slender young woman, whom you recognize as the drug lord's girlfriend, comes into the room. Without warning, she grabs your free hand and pulls you to her.*

## History of the Braindance

The Alternate Reality Process, or Braindance as it is popularly called, was invented by Yuriko Sujimoto, a graduate student at the University of California at Santa Cruz in 2007.

Using an extrapolated Moss equation, the basis for neural response translation, and a Netrunner as a base, Sujimoto managed to record her thoughts, emotions and physical sensations into a standard information chip. When she plugged the chip back into the modified cybermodem she was using as recorder, Sujimoto was able to relive what she had recorded in exact detail.

Upon receiving her PhD from Santa Cruz, Sujimoto went to work for the State of California as a researcher in penal reform. It was here that she and Norman Lassimer, a noted

penal psychologist, began to realize the implications of her discovery as it pertains to penal reform.

Psychologists had often discussed the desire and need for criminal reprogramming. Many felt that a criminal had forfeited his or her rights upon breaking the law, and should therefore be subjected to adverse conditioning against the crime they had committed. On December 5, 2002, the Supreme Court, by unanimous vote, approved criminal reconditioning for certain "anti-social" crimes.

The victory was bittersweet, as reconditioning methods were primitive and generally ineffective. That is, until Sujimoto's discovery. With the introduction of the Braindance, psychological reconditioning could be rendered cheaply, effectively removing prisoners from the general population. This last point is what sold the state on the system. By reconditioning prisoners, the state could cut the amount of people who were actually in jail, thus relieving the overcrowded conditions that existed at the time.

In order to achieve the desired effect of the Braindance, Lassimer and Sujimoto had to create a nightmare-like situation in which the offending subject would be placed. They reasoned the aversion would come from the offender experiencing repeated instances of his crime being foiled and severe harm to himself in the attempt.

Though they had no database to work from, as few criminals were filmed while actually committing the crime, the researchers worked undaunted. After several setbacks, Lassimer and Sujimoto managed to convince the California

State Senate to partially fund their project and offer sentence reduction for project volunteers. The final step in convincing the Senate came when Militech offered to help with the funding and offer jobs to those who were released early in exchange for access to market the Braindance machines as a military simulator.

With the combined offer of Militech and the State of California, some "volunteers" became available, but not enough to compile a database, let alone the seven the researchers wished to have. It would not be until March 7th, 2009, when their big break would come.

Harold D. MacLeroy, a convicted mass murderer, was due to be executed by the state when he made an unusual request: if Militech would give compensation to his family, then MacLeroy would allow himself to be killed while recreating one of the scripted crimes of Lassimer and Sujimoto. Once the amount of money was agreed upon and a contract signed, MacLeroy allowed his death to be recorded.

Once the deal was announced, the general public was outraged at the nature of the bargain, though Lassimer, Sujimoto and Militech considered it a critical turning point for their project. Soon after, eight inmates scheduled for execution within the next year made similar agreements with Militech, and their deaths were recorded as well.

Although the initial database was small and the first correctional Braindance ran only a hour and a half, the program was successful. After much experimentation, which also



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resulted in brain death by machine dysfunction for three volunteers, the Braindance was introduced into the San Quentin Correctional Facility.

The first inmate to undergo the Braindance, Gerald Weisenheimer, spent nine hours a day, for one week, living inside the Braindance. Although he admitted the actual experience needed to be lengthened, Weisenheimer announced he would never commit robbery again. When pressed to describe the experience, he would elaborate no further than, "I'm never going to touch another person's money as long as I live."

This first success was a great incentive to the State of California to further fund the program which had drawn flak from all sides of the government until it was proven to work. With increased funding in 2009, combined with a national government contract to produce more machines and tapes, Lassimer and Sujimoto formed Braindance Inc.

Soon after the formation of Braindance Inc., Militech, who had been independently producing its military simulator, announced a joint venture with Diverse Media Systems (DMS) and Braindance Inc. to investigate the production value of Braindance as an entertainment form. Within seven months of the their venture, the first publically accessible Braindance was released.

*The night air feels cool on your bare chest. The dying flames from outside reflect against the naked body of the woman next to you. You wait until her breathing evens out, before you dress and leave. You don't even know her name; it's probably better that way. You take one last look at the now destroyed drug plant before hitting the trail.*

*Two miles from the target, you spot an ambush in the trees. A couple of armed men are waiting to kill anything that moves down the trail. The euphoric feeling you had dissipates as you decide on a course of action.*

*Taking a Willie Pete in one hand, you steady the shotgun with the other, just in case. Pull the pin, count to three and toss. They never know what hits them as the superheated phosphorus covers their ambush position. After a quick detour through the woods, you're back on the trail toward the LZ.*

## Creating a Braindance

The process used to create a Braindance for mass-market release is fairly simple and the set-up is basic: one Braindancer, a video technician, another technician for the neural feeds and the recording box which receives the neural signals. A solo or two to get the Braindancer out of a situation they can't handle would be helpful. After this, it gets a little more complicated.

There are two methods of recording Braindance tapes: scripted and not. The scripted ones are generally less popular as many people suggest they seem to rigid and less spontaneous. The unscripted are usually more exciting since the action is left to the whim of the 'dancer.

Once the Braindancer has compiled enough material to make a one hour Braindance (this means about five hours of raw material), the product is left in the hands of a technician who must then edit the material.

The editing deck is almost as important as the neural reception desk, because it has a switch which allows the technical

editor to view the recorded material, but with the sensory experiences cut off to prevent injury or damage to the editor.

Once the completed Braindance has been edited, it is submitted for approval by both the 'dancer and the corporate marketing team. Assuming the package is approved, the chip is then introduced into a test market where it is viewed and critiqued. If the chip is well-received, then it is released to the open market for the public to enjoy.

*At the LZ it's business as usual. Your pilot soon calls and you leave, as if you were never there. As the AV-8 cruises at 200 feet, you see a glint of sunlight reflecting off metal and a fighter of some type straffes the 8. Cursing, the pilot tries to keep it up, but it's not going to happen.*

*Luck is on your side as the AV hits the water with a bone shattering impact because you're still alive. Bruised and shaken, bout still kicking. First things first-- you jump into the warm water of the Pacific before the sinking craft can take you with it.*

*As you swim for the not too distant shore, you get a glimpse of the US Air Force insignia on the fighter as it makes a pass to check for survivors. Normally being sold out by your country would make you mad, but you're too concerned with the sharks that are heading your way.*

## Practical Uses of the Braindance

Although the two primary functions of the 'dance (entertainment and aversion therapy) have been discussed, there are other uses for this new and exciting process.

One, which was previously mentioned, is the use as a simulator. By collecting a large database, a company could actually train new employees by shunting them into the Braindance. Although their bodies would need to adjust to the skills, the person would already have the knowledge of

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how a job or function is to be performed without the waste of manpower to supervise the training.

Psychologists are already talking about the possibilities of therapy via Braindance. Instead of spending hours on therapeutic conversation, a therapist could have the patient undergo the Braindance for rehabilitation of their problem.

The medical profession is already talking about the potential uses for the Braindance. It has been suggested that the 'dance could be used in place of drugs for anesthesia, thus reducing the danger to the patient. They have also suggested experimenting with the Braindance to see what results it might have on patients who are clinically brain dead or in coma.

Lastly, the space industry has already requested that extremely long Braindance tapes be made for the shuttle journeys to Mars. There has been some research which indicates the mind might start to atrophy after such a long time in hibernation. Now, with the Braindance, the shuttle's passengers can make the journey with their minds occupied and active.

*You lie, gasping for breath, on the sandy beach as the warm waves lap over your exhausted body. And you thought you were in top shape.*

*After a short rest, your survival urge forces you to find cover. Just in time too. At the opposite end of the beach, a jeep appears shooting rooster tails of sand as it races across the now deserted waterfront.*

*You count three men in the jeep as it slides to a halt not twenty feet from your hiding position. Although they are armed with fully automatic weapons, you aren't concerned. After all, they may live here, but you've got the element of surprise.*

## The Braindance Today

As the Braindance becomes a more socially acceptable form of entertainment, there are also dangers which must be realized. As with forms of mass-market entertainment, there is a problem with illegal duplication and distribution of the Braindance chips. There are also many dangers in purchasing these illegal chips.

Although the mass market chips are carefully screened for acts which cause disruption of a person's mental or bodily functions and those that may not be suitable for some are labeled with a warning, home produced Braindances are under no such obligation. There have been many reports of illegally produced tapes in which the recording contains the death of the 'dancer. The bodily shock of dying, even when in recorded form, is enough to stop the heart of a viewer. Needless to say, the Braindance recording industry does not condone such acts.

As previously hinted, the Braindance has only recently become socially acceptable as entertainment. Most of this is due to its origins; after all, who wants to experience the same thing which has been used to punish criminals?

Another common fear that was associated with Braindance was that of subliminal suggestion. When the Braindance became available to the public, there was a rumor that people's personalities were being altered or even overridden by the Braindance.

It was soon discovered that there were several black market chips that were doing just that. The person would jack into the program and find themselves to be a Netrunner whose personality gets overwritten by a lich program. The lich programming was strong enough to actually overwrite the person, even though they were receiving the programming from a source other than the Net.

Despite the negative rumors and illegal chips, the Braindance industry is growing with amazing speed. Although it may be too early to tell for sure, the Braindance may soon surpass the movie as the preferred entertainment choice of this generation.

*Taking the jeep was no problem. The border gate in front of you, now that's going to be difficult.*

*No way to wetback your way across since there are infrared sensors every three feet, not to mention the razor wire at the top of the forty foot high wall. The road is well-guarded. A tank is on one side and a minigun emplacement on the other. You've got no choice.*

*The wagon in front of you has been stopped and the passengers are getting out. Without hesitating, you slam your foot on the accelerator and punch through the gate past the stunned guards and stopped wagon.*

*Although shots are peppering the ground behind you, you've made it home. Once they get a look at your papers they'll understand, but you don't intend to stop.*

## Braindancers as Player Characters

Although the Braindancer is a media star, and it could be argued that they have some of the same crowd control as Rockerboys, the character class of a Braindancer doesn't matter. In effect, they may have any character background that you want, though you should consider how they came to be a Braindancer and why they continue to do it.

Playing a 'dancer as part of a team is no problem as well. If you want to make the 'dancer a central part of the team, then the campaign should focus on him and have the other characters be the support. As described earlier, the Braindancer's team should consist of at least one solo and techie, though a corp to manage finances and a fixer to straighten out bad situations is helpful.

Instead of playing the Braindance actor, it is also possible to play the stories on the Braindance chips. Stats for the persona the true character assumes when he enters the Braindance will vary according to the type of story being told. As a general rule, though, Braindancers should have above average Cool and Reflexes. It would also be advisable to have a high Luck.

When it comes to cyberware, the only thing necessary is a special set of interface plugs which are implanted at the base of the neck. The cost and Humanity loss are the same as normal, but these plugs can't be used for normal applications as they directly tie into your central nervous center and the danger of overload is too great.

*The bar is empty except for the 'tender, who is polishing glasses. You glance at the clock and realize it's been only an hour. The 'tender smiles at you and your face widens to a stupid grin. With a little laugh she goes back to polishing glasses. You grab your coat and head into the night.*

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# Fireball

## *a Cyberpunk 2020 one-on-one adventure*

*by Justin Schmid*

*A tiny red light flashes in the corner of your eye, the gun has locked onto the target. As the man walks to his car, you see his bodyguards looking around, a little nervous. You sigh silently as you switch the safety off. With a touch of the trigger, target number three crashes to the ground. You leap onto your motorcycle and are blocks away before his guards can even react, you're hot, like a fireball.*

## PLAYER'S INFORMATION

Your character has just been contacted by two agents, Bill and Jim, representing Pleasant Dreams Inc. (a small time drug research company), who wish to hire you for a job. They chose you because you're a nobody, yet you're supposedly good at what you do and you have no other connection to the corporation. They offer the promise of a possible \$10,000 for less than a day's work.

The contract goes as follows — your code name for the mission is Fireball, and you must assassinate the four top executives of Buzz Inc. (another small drug company), within five hours of each other, but spacing them by at least three hours. You cannot discuss anything pertaining to the job with anyone except the two agents. Pleasant Inc. is not responsible for any legal matters pertaining to you and this job, including criminal charges, financial debts and medical expenses. You must take a pill every six hours, which will be monitored.

They give you a bottle with the pills that reads "SN; Take one every six hours; guaranteed non-addictive." The drug's effects are described as increasing your reflexes considerably and eliminating the need for sleep.

You will be paid \$2,500 per victim successfully terminated. Half will be delivered after the elimination and the other half upon completion of the entire contract. At the first meeting, Bill and Jim give the character a sheet with two addresses. One is the address of the first victim, and the other is a location to pick up an envelope with two new addresses. The envelope will also contain money — the half due after eliminating a target. A penalty of \$1,000 per victim unsuccessfully terminated will be deducted from the final total.

## WHISPERDEATH

(This pre-generated character was designed for this adventure.)

**ROLE:** Solo

**INT 8; TECH 6; REF 10; COOL 7; LUCK 6; ATT 7;**

**EMP 4; MA 8; BODY 9.**

**SKILLS:** Combat Sense +6, Awareness +5, Handgun +4, Martial Art (Karate) +5, Melee +4, Rifle +6, Submachine gun +4, Stealth +6, Dodge +4, Motorcycle +4, Hide +2, Endurance +2, Shadow +4, Pick Locks +2.

**PERSONALITY:** Solitary, nervous, brilliant, cautious and greedy.

**CYBERWARE:** Sandevistan Speedware, Smartgun Link, Interface Plugs, Cyberoptic: Targeting Scope, Infrared.

**OUTFIT:** Sternmeyer Auto 3 Heavy pistol (3d6 damage) "smart," Militech Ronin Assault Rifle (5d6 damage), 1 extra clip of ammo for each, shoulder holster, Light Armor Jacket, Heavy Leather pants, Credchip Account, Cellular phone, First Aid kit, Code Decryptor, Motorcycle.

**COMMENTS:** Whisperdeath has spent most of his life in the military, mostly in covert operations behind enemy lines. Recently jobs dried up, so he went into temporary retirement, but this new job may be the rebirth of his career. He has \$1000 in his credchip account and a Fixer contact, Trevor.

## GM'S BACKGROUND

This is a one-on-one adventure designed for an experienced Solo character, preferably specializing in assassinations. Using the pre-generated character is advised, but if a player really wants to risk his own character's life, advise him of the danger, but do allow it. This adventure is very fast and dangerous, but is designed to awaken players to that fact that all is never as it seems when dealing with the corporations of Cyberpunk.

This is what is really going on: Pleasant Dreams Inc. and Buzz Inc. are both subsidiaries of Biotechnica. Buzz Inc. is where the odd ball executives of Biotechnica are sent, so this is one of the strangest corporations you'll ever run into. Buzz Inc.'s executives are humanitarians (a few of the last ones left), and have been giving away free medicinal (and hallucinogenic) drugs to public hospitals and the needy. The drugs are owned by Biotechnica, and Biotechnica is taking great losses, so they want Pleasant Dreams Inc. to get rid of the top executives of Buzz Inc. However, they fear getting bad publicity, as Buzz Inc. is very popular with the public. So, they hire a nobody through a subsidiary (Pleasant Dreams Inc.) to do their dirty work for them, while at the same time testing out a new trouble-shooting drug, Fireball.

If the player does not wish to play an assassin, a contract to make Buzz Inc. go under without using violence could be negotiated, with the method being up to the character. Either way, the drug will be used regardless.



# Fireball

Fireball is not the character's code name, but a drug. The character doesn't know that. Pleasant Dreams Inc. invented this new drug to get rid of undesirable operatives by making them self-destructive. In this adventure, they are using the contact form, which dries up after about twenty minutes (the agents coat the notes and envelopes, just as the character arrives). The papers the character receives are all coated with Fireball.

This drug was developed by Pleasant Dreams Inc. to be used on agents that are deemed dangerous to the Corp. should they survive the mission. Now they can simply coat the agent's equipment with Fireball and forget the agent ever existed.

Each dose lasts 1d10+3 hrs. Over that time, the following effects take place:

- 1) REF goes up +2 (or +1 if already using reflex boosting). REF can go up to a max. of 13 with this drug. The character feels this effect as if a burst of fire was ripping through his body.
- 2) Pain effects and need for sleep negated. For the duration of the drug's effects, sleep is not required and pain is not felt. Add +2 to Stun Saves, and the character will not feel tired at all, and is actually unable to rest for long.
- 3) Extreme Paranoia. The character will see cops everywhere, will hear people talking about him all the time, and will be extremely edgy. This results in a great loss in the character's COOL. Every hour the drug is in effect, roll 1d10. On a 1 or 2 (+1 per additional dose), the character loses 1 COOL permanently. For example, a character who has taken three doses of Fireball would roll 1d10, and on a roll of 1 through 5 would lose 1 COOL. Therapy allows the character to regain only half of the lost COOL. When the character reaches a COOL of 1, he loses his mind and becomes suicidal. Every hour thereafter, make an INT check with d10. A failed check means he attempts suicide (and is probably successful). Make a BOD check, -1 every additional attempt to see if he was successful. When the character's CL reaches 0, he makes the check every hour, gets a -5 penalty to his INT for the purpose of this roll, and a -5 penalty to the BOD check.
- 4) During the last hour of the drug, roll versus the character's current COOL. On a failed roll, the character is psychologically addicted to the drug. He will go to any end to get another dose of the drug, forgetting that it may be destroying him. To get off the addiction, he must make a DIFFICULT BODY check, but it only takes 24 hours of withdrawal.
- 5) This drug is an evil one indeed, as it remains in the character's blood stream for 24 hours, even after its normal duration is over. This is designed to incapacitate anyone who tries to get off the addiction. Every two hours for the next 24, roll 1d10. On a roll of 1 or 2, the character loses 1 REF point permanently. This could result in Parkinson's Syndrome if the character's REF reaches 2 or 1. Therapy can heal up to 1d3+1 REF points over six

months for the small fee of \$10000. Also, sleep missed from the use of the drug hits the character only a few minutes after the last dose wears off. Double the amount of sleep missed will be required immediately. Note too that this means the character may not notice the loss of REF until after he wakes up.

At target #2's note pick-up and at #4's, Bill and Jim (the agents) appear and use a Medscanner to make sure the character has been taking Fireball. If the character manages to keep away from the drug (by using gloves or cyberlimbs to pick it up, etc.) then Bill and Jim will not be pleased. They may ask the character to take another drug (still Fireball, but described as an improvement over SN) by injection, or failing this, jump the character and inject it forcibly. They will inform the character that he will die should he abandon the mission.

## SN PILLS

If Fireball is the drug that the character is getting, what's SN? Sweet Nothing. Really! That's what the initials stand for. The agents will of course tell the character that it stands for Sleep Not, but who ever trusted agents? These little pills do absolutely nothing, but taste good. A little checking with Trevor (the character's Fixer contact) will tell him that SN was sold as a hallucinogenic drug in 1998, but it was all a scam, the pills do nothing. If the character gets suspicious and doesn't take the pill, yet feels the effects of Fireball, don't worry — this was designed to be a clue to the character that all is not as it seems (little does he know!).

## BUZZ INCORPORATED

This corporation was founded in 2011 for research into minor drugs, apparently looking into aphrodisiacs. In 2018, the company was bought out by Biotechnica, the whole staff was fired, and its research facilities used by other Biotechnica divisions. Now this subsidiary serves two purposes — first as a safe place for the more eccentric executives of Biotechnica, and also as a headquarters for inventory taking in Night City.

Unfortunately, the generous members of Buzz Inc. have decided to give away large portions of their inventories to hospitals and the general public. This is unfortunate, because when Biotechnica found out, they decided to wipe out the company. The public adores Buzz Inc. and will surely riot and seek out the person(s) who destroyed this corporation, with the intent to kill.

## PLEASANT DREAMS INC.

This company was founded in 2017 as a research company interested in hallucinogens. In 2019, before they could even release Hash II: The Return, Biotechnica bought it out and fired the whole staff (deja vu!) and made it into a research division looking into "trouble-shooting drugs," i.e. drugs which end troubles, such as people Biotechnica doesn't like. Not a nice corporation. Their big project now is Fireball, the

drug, not the character. The general public knows the corp as “that old hallucination company.” Not much was publicized about the take-over.

## THE MISSION

The two agents tell the character to go to 6740 High St. tomorrow at six for the first target’s description and location. He has about eight hours to do whatever. He is advised to get a good sleep. It turns out to be an abandoned apartment. The lock is broken, and inside the character finds a note, which reads as Target #1 below in Player’s Notes.

At the address that the character is supposed to go to after the assassination, there is an envelope with \$2,500 and a note about the next target. At the second and fourth pick-up, the two agents are there with a Medscanner which can detect traces of the drug to make sure you’ve been taking it, and to see that all is going well. The notes and envelopes are coated with Fireball.

Should the character confront the agents about why the SN pill alone does nothing, while something is still giving the described effects, the agents will explain that the SN pills actually are just sugar pills, and that the character is taking the drug “Fireball” through contact with the envelopes and notes. They will further explain that this was done to deceive anyone who was watching the character. If someone saw the character take the pills and then the effects of the drug, that person might want the drug for himself, so they would try to steal the pills, not the notes or envelopes. Simple counter-espionage. Reasonable answer, but a lie. Note that at no time will they describe the “bad” side-effects of Fireball.

As to why the character is going insane, they only answer, “We are not responsible for your state of mind. If you feel you are unable to complete your contract due to personal problems, we will be forced to take back all payment and inform other potential employers of your status. Is this the case?” Needless to say, the character will back off. If worse comes to worse, they open fire with Heavy Pistols and inject a couple mega-doses of Fireball.

## PLAYER’S NOTES

These are the notes that the character gets. There are whole physical descriptions given of the targets, but they would be lengthy and unnecessary here. For every hour of search, on a 6 to 10 on d10, the character finds the target (except when they’re home, in which case they are easy to find).

- 1) Target #1: Casey Xilo: 159 8th Ave.; 1 Security; Poor. Small apartment w/ vending booth. Unsuspecting, trusting. Goto 971 7th Ave. after.
- 2) Target #2: Gabrielle Thistle: 1454 21st Ave.; 4 Security; Home-body. She works on her computer 90% of the time. Goto 1337 22nd Ave. after.
- 3) Target #3: Henry Smith: 1610 18th Ave.; 4 Security; Eccentric. Home is in warehouse. Caution is advised. Goto 1777 14th Ave. after.

- 4) Target #4: Merry Nicks: 324 West Hill Drive; 8 Security; Addict. Lives in lavish house while using people to support his drug habit. Top executive. Can be found buying drugs in Combat Zone. Goto 330 8th Ave. after. Merry is final target.

## TREVOR

Trevor is a Fixer with a Streetdeal score of +7. Trevor knows that Buzz Inc. has been giving free medical drugs to needy hospitals and cheap hallucinogens on street corners. He has heard that Fireball is a new project of Pleasant Inc., but nothing else. He knows that Pleasant Dreams Inc. is a trouble-shooting corp. He also knows that Buzz Inc. and Pleasant Dreams Inc. are subsidiaries of Biotechnica. A fee of \$100 is required for each piece of info.

## GM NOTES ON VICTIMS

The maps of these target’s homes are not needed, just make it up as you go along. Buzz Inc. is not a major corporation and these executives do not live in the suburbs like most Corporates, because they like living in the City.

- 1) Casey, in charge of distribution, is an average looking guy who could blend into almost any crowd on the streets. He doesn’t look like an executive, especially when found in his booth. On his street, he has a small armored booth where he hands out hallucinogens and medicinal drugs for very, very low prices. He doesn’t give them to everyone, just people he feels need them. He’s known all over this district, and everyone loves him. The armored booth is simply for protection from outsiders. The security guard stays across the street and is bored most of the time. Casey’s apartment is very easy to break into, and has only five rooms. Casey is armed with a Medium Pistol and wears a Med. Armor Jacket. He has an H&K MPK-9 at his apartment.
- 2) Gabrielle, in charge of finances, is actually a generous young woman who works hard to keep needy hospitals well stocked in various medicinal drugs. She is in charge of finances and the general paper work. She’s not a netrunner, but has tried it out a bit. Her house is well secured, and she is very calm, being a dangerous adversary. She rarely goes out due to the amount of work she has. Gabrielle has an H&K MP-2013 in her room and a kevlar vest.
- 3) Henry, in charge of security, rarely leaves his warehouse, which is good. He’s a little worse than eccentric, perhaps a psychopath. He fought in the Central American conflict, and now it’s taken over his life. The warehouse he lives in is actually empty, but holo-projectors are hidden all over, making the whole interior look like a huge jungle. Walls silently move about, lending some cover for those who can tell where they are. There are stairs leading up to a small room containing the controls for the equipment. Henry drops a few flares all over, making sure that

infrared or thermograph cameras don't work. Meanwhile, he and his security move silently to ambush the character. Henry carries a Militech Ronin assault rifle and a Budgetarms Auto 3 handgun. He wears a flack vest.

- 4) Merry is the head of Buzz Inc. He is also the final target. His home is a huge mansion with a 2m high chain fence all around, topped off by razor wire. His security patrols the grounds using infrared sensors. Simply put, getting in is impossible. When he does leave (in an armored car with 50% of his security), he heads for the Combat Zone. He is addicted to Synthcoke, but does not go down to buy the drugs (he gets all he needs through the corp). Sometimes, though, he goes down to personally distribute some of the more expensive medicinal drugs. These drugs would include those used to heal terminal diseases. Killing him would be bad; boosters love him, all boosters. Merry carries a Dai Lung Streetmaster, and all the bullets are coated with Blue Glass. He wears a heavy armor jacket.

## TARGET STATS

NAME	IN	RF	CL	TC	LK	AT	EM	MA	BT
CASEY	10	8	4	10	8	5	8	9	4
	Cyberoptic w/thermograph								
GABRIELLE	10	10	8	10	2	10	8	8	4
	Cyberaudio w/ phone, scrambler								
HENRY	6	10	10	5	5	8	4	6	8
	+2 Reflex ; motion detector.								
MERRY	10	7	9	8	9	7	7	7	5
	Cyberaudio w/ phone, recorder, bug detector; Cyberoptic w/ thermograph & dartgun.								

IN:INT; RF:REF; CL:COOL; TC:TECH; LK:LUCK;  
AT:ATTR; EM:EMP; BT:BOD.

## SECURITY

The security guards who surround the Buzz executives are plain and boring. Their stats are all average (5 to 6) and their skills are +4 in combat related skills and +0 to +2 in non-combat skills. They all have cyberaudio with Radio Splices to communicate. They are a little paranoid, growing more so as executives drop all around them. They carry Minami 10's and Dai Lung Streetmasters, and wear light armor jackets with heavy leather pants.

## HELP!

The character is hopelessly trapped by the corporation and will die by his own hands dishonorably. Wrong! The character can escape, and in some cases, even make a profit. It is unavoidable that the character gets at least 1 dose of Fireball, and this is enough to wreck the character badly. However, the

character should be able survive. If the character is really stuck, and does not know what is going on, Trevor might ask for a lump sum and then give all the information he has. Note that Trevor has contacts with most illegal and legal drug dealers, knows which rehab centers are best, etc.

The character could try to develop an antidote to the drug, but this would require a fresh sample of Fireball. Even with this, a difficulty of 40 is set for making the antidote, with a minimum of two weeks work. Selling the drug could get the character up to \$20,000 if he approaches the proper people.

What about Pleasant Inc. or more importantly, Biotechnica? They will not be happy if an agent involved in a very touchy matter picks up and leaves. Especially if he injures any of their agents (other than those they want injured). Biotechnica is prepared for this however. If the character goes to the media with the story, Biotechnica will deny it and present files showing the character is insane.

If the character runs, 4 teams of three agents, all armed with Heavy SMGs and Med. Armor Jackets, hit the streets asking around for the character. In a week or two, they'll find him. If the teams cannot locate the character, a worldwide APB goes out stating that he is Cyberpsycho and took out a stadium of people. Needless to say, he will not be popular wherever he goes.

Hiding is the best bet for the character. The teams will go out, but if the character seeks refuge in a Sanctuary (a special building dedicated to keeping people safe for a price) or the equivalent, he will be safe. The only problem is that these Sanctuaries cost a lot and Biotechnica will only give up after one year. A new face when returning to the public world is advised.

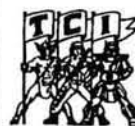
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# The World of Future Darkness™

by Deirdre Brooks

“Rippers. Vampires. Skin grafts. Sometimes I think we’ve got a population explosion of Werewolves on our hands . . .”

—Lt. Strawberry Morressey, NCPD

Cyberpunk and Gothic-punk are a natural crossbreed; the Vampire naturally slips into the mean streets of 2020 with a vengeance. There are many themes that are common in both games: humanity and the loss of it, alienation, and a feeling of fighting the inevitable. Is there really much difference between a Netrunner, a pair of Solos, and a Medtech out to make money and flout the corporations and a group of Anarchs attempting to destroy the Establishment?

The times are changing. In the old days, you only had to worry about the other Kindred and the occasional ambitious Witch Hunter. Now, you not only have the Elders and Anarchs hunting you for your Blood, but you also have the Megacorps and Edgerunners to worry about. With the addition of Cybernetics, the humans are no longer the pushovers they’ve been over the centuries. Technological advances are now being placed *in* the body, providing many humans with the ability to match Kindred in physical combat. Modern weaponry has also reached a peak; a Kindred with 5 dice in Firearms and a Perception of 5 will not stand up well to a Cyberpunk with 5 dice in Firearms, a Perception of 5, and a Smartgun Link.

As if all this wasn’t bad enough, many of the youngest Anarchs were Embraced with Cyberware. They have not only Disciplines, but also Cybernetic boosts. Who wants to meet a pissed-off Brujah Solo with Reflex Boost, Muscle & Bone Lace, a Smartgun Link, *and* Potence and Celerity in a dark Combat Zone alley?

On the other hand, Cyber won’t stop Dominate.

---

## THE MASQUERADE IN 2020

“You don’t understand; the Masquerade will be outdated inside the next thirty years. Technology has advanced to the point that nearly anyone who cares to spend the cash can identify Kindred. We must be prepared for the inevitable exposure of our ‘lifestyle.’

*“The Canaille possess the means to destroy us now! What will they have in five years? Ten? Twenty? Adapt, die, or get the hell out of the way.”*

—Margali, 4th Generation Ravnos, in a letter to the Camarilla, 1994

With changing times come changing customs. When anyone who has the cash can afford to buy hearing boosts that can pick up a heartbeat or the lack of it, or perhaps a set of Thermographics that allow sight reading of skin temperature, the Kindred’s life becomes that much riskier. Many Elders simply don’t deal with mortals on any kind of basis. They stay in their Elysium, as always, and leave the humans for their retainers to deal with. Some Ancillae are so fortunate as to be able to take this stance in relation to mortals. Most Ancillae and Neonates do not. A Childe has the benefit of his Sire’s resources, but only until he is released by his Sire.

This leaves the Neonates and many Ancillae in the same position they've always held: at the bottom of the heap and going down fast. The ability to simulate normal heartbeat, breathing, and temperature is much valued in this strata.

Unfortunately, this doesn't always do the trick. How do you deal with the olfactory boosts? Masquerade doesn't simulate odor. Add to this that even those with an extremely high Humanity can't fool a person with Image Enhancement, Thermographics, or Sound Editing as often as they would like.

This means that the Cyberpunk strata—Edgerunners, Gangs, and the like—are, to some extent, aware that there is something unusual out there. More than a few even know *what*. Many of the executives in the Megacorps are quite aware that something is out there. While most of them are pawns of Ventrué, Giovanni, Tremere, or Magi, not all will be. The precise extent to which this is known is up to the Storyteller. The basic idea in any event should be that, like everything else in the world, the Masquerade is fraying to tatters rapidly. Very rapidly—by 2024—2025 at the latest; in the playtest Chronicle it fell apart in 2021. Against this backdrop you have the Elders, trying to maintain the Traditions against all odds; the Anarchs, who are simply not concerned; and the Lupines, whose packs form some of the Nomad gangs responsible for hit-and-run terrorist attacks on many Corp installations.

When the Masquerade finally falls to tattered pieces, the Elders will throw the younger generations to

the wolves to save their own Vitae. If the Neonates are careful, they will be capable of surviving this assault of paranoid religions, jealous millionaires, and open warfare from the Inquisition.

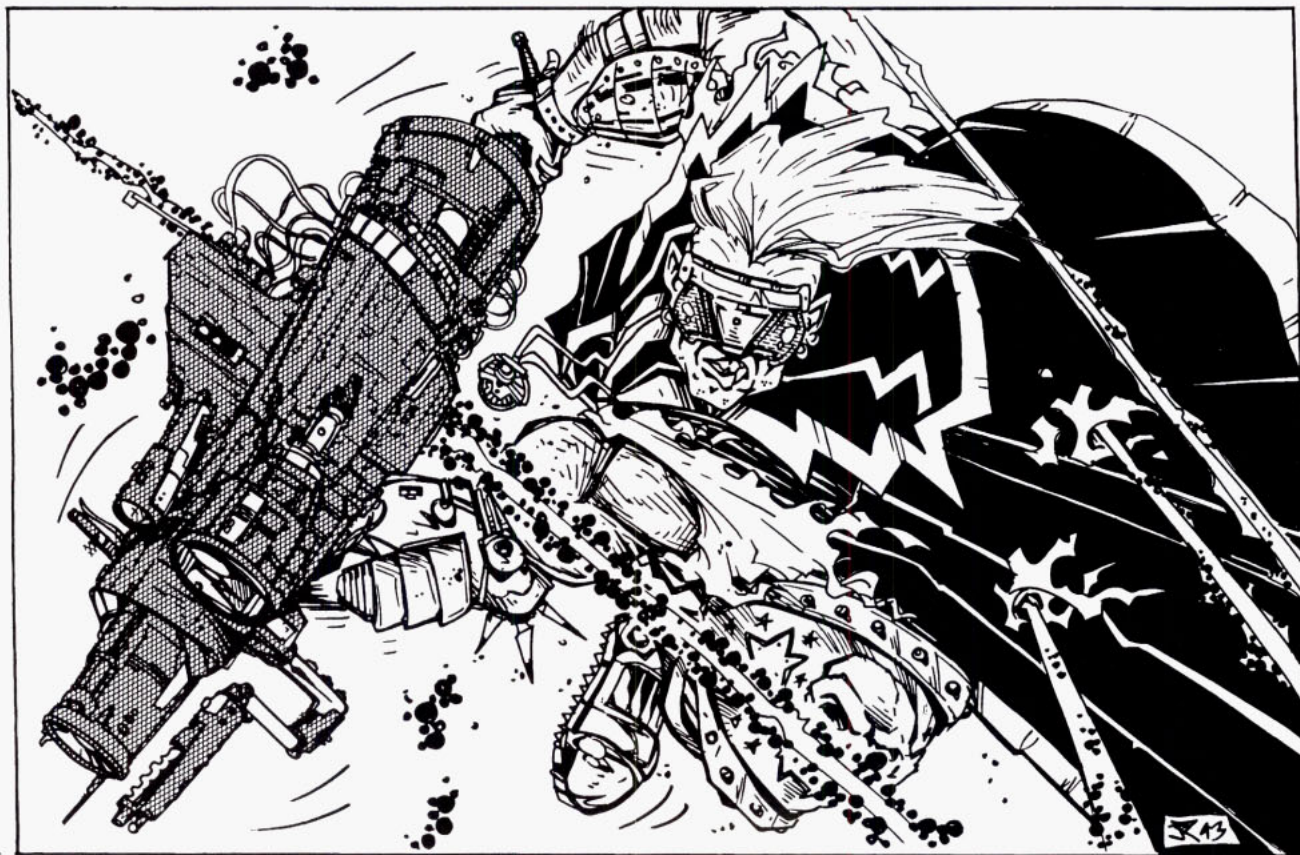
## VAMPIRIC SOCIETY IN CYBERPUNK 2020

You know I'm going to lose  
And gambling's for fools  
But that's the way I like it baby  
I don't wanna live forever  
... And don't forget the Joker!  
—Motörhead, "Ace of Spades"

### THE CAMARILLA:

The last major Conclave was held in Venice in 2009. The Inner Circle decided at that time to enforce harsher restrictions on the Neonates and Anarchs to keep them under control and lessen the risk to the Masquerade. It was also decided to bring North America under tighter control, specifically the West Coast. The advent of cybernetic enhancements has many of the Elders worried about their future.

One major effect this meeting had, although it was unknown to the Camarilla at the time, was the formation of a new faction. This faction is primarily composed of Brujah Individualists, Gangrel, Malkavians, Nosferatu, and Toreador. They call themselves the



"Children of Carthagos." Their ultimate goal is to bring about a world in which Kindred can live openly and freely. Since that time they have been working their way into the Anarch and Camarilla power structure.

The Camarilla has become aware of this group and executes any it finds for breaching the Masquerade. Blood Hunts have been declared on suspicion of membership. Many of the Anarchs view humans as their cattle and see the Children as hopeless idealists.

### **ASSAMITE:**

The Assamites have more business now than they have had in centuries. Many possess contacts with the Megacorps; this is in fact their major source of monetary income. On the other hand, with the constant increase in tensions between the Elders and the Anarchs, there is rich business to be had for elder Vitae.

### **BRUJAH:**

The modern world has even more place for rebels than the late 20th century. Iconoclasts are found leading street gangs, and a few are at the cutting edge of music. You won't find them on major labels, however. The Idealists are losing support for their tactics; with the world changing so fast, the Iconoclasts insist there is no time to plan ahead so far. The Individualists are gaining the most ground; most of them can be found in music or as street ops, although a few can be found pulling strings on the few Corps they could get into without attracting Ventrue or Giovanni interest.

### **FOLLOWERS OF SET:**

The Followers of Set are rising rapidly. Their Clan's wares are bought and sold nearly everywhere. In fact, some pride themselves on purchasing these items or services. Many can be found dealing the latest and greatest in designer drugs, running the nastier gangs, and otherwise being frustratingly annoying, but always from behind the scenes and in the shadows.

### **GANGREL:**

Travel has become much more difficult in the last thirty years. Most Gangrel find a Nomad family to run with, occasionally the Ravnos's caravans. If they run with a human pack, they don't do so for very long. In the city they stay to themselves, maintaining their loner image, often becoming Solos or Medics.

### **GIOVANNI:**

This Clan still continues to operate from the family stronghold in Venice, reaching out to gain control of as much of the wealth they can manage to grab. In the last few decades, they have come into indirect conflict with the Ventrue numerous times. The Camarilla is beginning to see them as a greater danger than ever before as their plans bloom.

### **MALKAVIAN:**

Members of this Clan still congregate where madness and insanity are common. Naturally, this means they could be *anywhere* in most modern American cities.

### **NOSFERATU:**

The Nosferatu remain separated from Mortal and Kindred society for the most part, although their information network has expanded to even greater levels. Members of this Clan are likely to know *anything* about *anyone*.

### **RAVNOS:**

The American members of this Clan travel about as Nomads, wandering from city to city, trying to find what enjoyment they can in their particular form of unlife.

### **TOREADOR:**

This Clan continues to be a powerful influence in the Camarilla. Several influential Toreador own several Entertainment Corps specializing in every medium available in the world of 2020.

### **TREMERE:**

Many of the Tremere have puppets in the middle to upper levels of several Corps, including those controlled by Ventrue and Giovanni. The Tremere are still interested in gaining influence in the mortal world, and the balance of power is shifting from national governments to Megacorporations. During the last pilgrimage to Transylvania to meet with Tremere, it was noticed that he was behaving strangely.

### **VENTRUE:**

The Ventrue possess much influence since many of the more powerful shareholders in many corporations are in their pockets. Money, favors, Dominate, and Blood Bonds ensure their status in the human world. Ever wonder why cybernetics are unpopular in Europe?

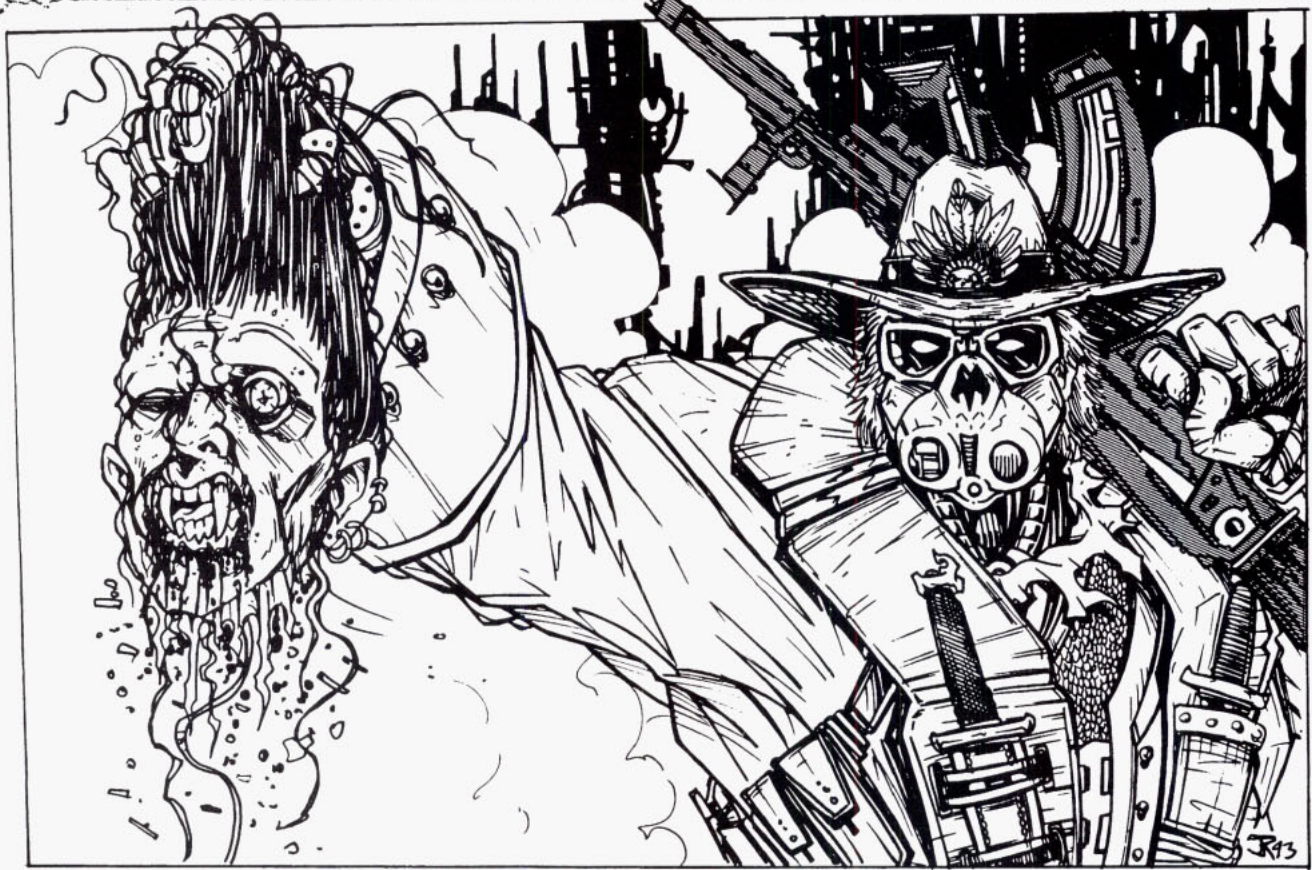
### **CAITIFF:**

In a time when individuality is becoming a rare resource, the Caitiff are having even more difficulty keeping theirs. Many are currently found in gangs or simply trying to survive on their own or in small groups. Quite a few have joined Anarch or Sabbat packs in the last few years.

### **INCONNU:**

These Kindred are even more strict about noninterference than ever before. They have also become even more ferocious in enforcing it. In latter years, fewer Kindred have been accepted into the Inconnu. Perhaps the members of this group have completely lost





interest in bringing new members into the fold, or are they focusing their efforts on the Tremere?

### **SABBAT:**

The Sabbat have continued to expand operations across the continent, taking control of a few cities to the south and west of their primary holdings. Several packs now operate as Nomads, traveling from city to city. Those who have taken to violent action are generally considered dangerous Boostergangs and are occasionally hunted by Cyberpsycho squads.

## **OTHER GROUPS**

### **MAGI:**

Those who become involved in human politics are ruthless about using their abilities to gain influence over those they consider major players. So long as it doesn't risk *their* Masquerade, they will use all of the powers at their disposal.

While it might be nice to think that the Corps will discover and control the Magi, remember that the Order of Hermes has been around for over a thousand years. These are not amateurs; they may not fully understand firearms, but, really, what is the difference between a hail of bullets and a ball of fire? The condition of the corpse, Choomba. Remember that.

Most Magi, however, consider themselves above such manipulations. At least those of the Order of Hermes.

### **MUMMIES:**

These immortals have changed little, no more than necessary to adjust to the modern world. Perhaps a few of them have taken to adding Cyberware to their bodies. It is unlikely more than a few of them would, however.

### **SPIRITS:**

Stories about ghosts haunting mainframes, while not common, are being circulated through the Net.

### **WEREWOLVES:**

Several packs of Garou now wander the country with Nomad Families, nearly always Relatives, often making "terrorist" attacks upon Corporate installations. They generally spend enough time in a city to resupply and no more.

### **VAMPIRE HUNTERS:**

The Society of Leopold currently has the ear of the Pope, along with enough evidence to prove that Vampires exist. The hunters associated are now more of a paramilitary organization. Expect them all to possess any cybernetic enhancements they can get, specifically anything that will put them on fairly even footing with an enraged Garou or a Frenzying Vampire.

The FBI Special Affairs division has had its funding reduced and has nearly ground to a halt. The

current director, William T. Burroughs, suspects Vampire interference and is working through shadier channels to locate the precise source of the interference; specifically, he is hiring Edgerunners.

The NSA is currently split into three factions and only one is aware of it. The Sabbat and Camarilla each control one of the factions, with the third working to locate the Vampires behind the first two. It is generally engaged in TSSI-level internecine warfare.

The Center for Disease Control has not discovered the cause for the mysterious spread of AIDS. Petrondon, the Nosferatu Justicar, called a Conclave in Atlanta in 1994 with the intent to solve the problem. Currently, a small group of Vampires are responsible for insuring that CDC research into the problem goes nowhere. Unfortunately, this manipulation will not last much longer.

The Arcanum is still studying the supernatural in every form in which they can find it. Jonathan Kelvin, the former head of the American Order, disappeared from the Georgetown Chapter House in 1993. The only clue was found by the Psychometrists in the order: there were traces of an ancient, powerful presence having been in his room the night he disappeared. The man who replaced him is Thomas Yardley, who is becoming bored and frustrated with the restrictions placed on his fieldwork.

## CYBERPUNKS

Waiting for the revolution  
New clear vision - Genocide  
Computerize God - It's the new religion  
Program the brain - Not the heartbeat  
—Black Sabbath, “Computer God”

In the modern age technology takes a larger and larger space in the lives of Kindred and Kine alike. Considering the speed at which it advances, the ability to deal with such technology is a prized ability. Thus, the Clan known as the Cyberpunks.

This Bloodline was created by the Netrunner known as Eryn and the Ravnos known as Margali in 2016. It took a little over two years to perfect it, with a few false starts along the way.

The Bloodline is currently confined to Night City and all of its members are Anarchs. They are not well known to Carlo or Helen.

They can be a frightening presence, taking control of technological devices, causing malfunctions and misfires. Those who encounter them in a hostile manner rarely wish to do so again.

**Appearance:** Cyberpunks can look like anyone, naturally. There is a tendency toward the cutting-edge look among the members, however.

**Haven:** Anything from a heavily defended basement in an abandoned building to a high tech heaven in which you could find any gadget you can conceive.

**Background:** Cyberpunks generally come from the Edgerunner strata with Solos, Techies, and Netrunners especially common. Age before death can be anywhere, but should range between sixteen and thirty. The Bloodline is so new that none should be older than four years. Avant Garde is a common demeanor.

**Character Creation:** For Solos, Physical Attributes are primary; for Netrunners and Techies, Mental Attributes are ascendant. In any event Skills or Talents are primary.

**Weakness:** Cyberpunks tend to use technology where Disciplines might work better. If a Cyberpunk begins relying upon Disciplines (other than the specials for Bloodline) more often than technology, assess a Willpower cost.

**Disciplines:** Celerity, Potence, Technica.

**Quote:** “Dead meat? Choomba, you ain’t fast enough to shoot before I make you ‘dead meat.’ Chill it.”

## TECHNICA

Technica is the Cyberpunks’ special relationship with technology. With this power, they can understand machines much more fully, or even speak with them—an absolute necessity in the modern world.

### LEVEL 1 (INTERFACE)

This ability allows the Kindred to interface with any piece of equipment designed for this that she can touch: Smartguns, Dataterms, Vehicles, and Cyberdecks. A touch on the device or on an interface cord is all that is necessary. However, the touch must be maintained; if contact is lost, control is lost.

### LEVEL 2 (TECHNICAL TOUCH)

With this ability, the Kindred can roll his Perception + Appropriate Ability (Target number 6) to gain an understanding about a device. While maintaining this ability he can use, repair, or modify the device, rolling a number of dice equal to his successes if he does not already have the necessary skill needed to do whatever he wants.

### LEVEL 3 (EMPOWER DEVICE)

The Kindred can now draw energy from the differentials in the air to power equipment she is touching. With this level, she can run a flashlight without batteries or a cyberdeck without a power source. Use of this ability requires the expenditure of 1 Willpower point.

### LEVEL 4 (REMOTE TOUCH)

At this level the Kindred can use all of the above abilities upon any technological item within 100 feet.

### LEVEL 5 (SPIRITUS EX MACHINA)

Now the Kindred can speak directly with the machine. He merely needs to touch it to become

capable of conversing with it. If the machine is an AI, the Kindred can speak to it normally. Otherwise, the Kindred speaks to the "Spirit" of the object, as per Wooden Tongues power (*Player's Guide*, p. 88), but using the chart below to determine amount of information gained. Roll vs. Charisma + Appropriate Ability. (These can quite reasonably be the Net Spiders found in *Werewolf*.)

- 1 success General ideas can come across.
- 2 successes Simple sentences.
- 3 successes Basic communication with responses to straightforward questions.
- 4 successes Complete communication is possible.
- 5 successes As four, but the machine will not mislead the character.

## LEVEL 6 (GHOST IN THE MACHINE)

The Cyberpunk can send her life force into any machine, inhabiting it. She has absolute control over the device. Her body, however, is motionless as if in Torpor, and the character will be unaware of what is occurring around her body unless she is near death or the machine has a sensor that can monitor it. She can only leave the machine to reenter her body or enter another machine.

There are no Cyberpunks above Seventh Generation.

## CYBERWARE

Hard as iron  
Sharp as steel  
Stop for no man  
You better beg and kneel  
—Judas Priest, "Hard as Iron"

Cyberware is what makes the genre different. You don't play *Cyberpunk* just to shoot people; you play *Cyberpunk* to shoot people with your smarchipped Minami 10 Submachinegun and shoot *first* with your Kerenzikov Reflex Boosts. Meat doesn't cut it on the streets, Choomba. If you have the Euro, buy the toys. It'll save your worthless butt someday. Besides, the chrome looks so cryo!

One of the ideas that *Vampire: The Masquerade* and *Cyberpunk 2020* have in common is the concept of diminishing Humanity. In *Vampire*, you can lose it to various heinous acts. In *Cyberpunk*, you lose Humanity to Cyberware. The normal Kindred is always in danger of losing Humanity due to Frenzies and Röttschreck. With the advent of cyberware and its affect on the psyche, the flame of Humanitas burns even lower, the Beast edging closer to the surface. Yes, a Vampire can become even more powerful than other Vampires, let alone Solos with these devices, but think of the price!

Humanity Cost works much as it does in *Cyberpunk 2020*. The primary difference is that it

works against Humanity in *CyberFang*. Both Empathy from *Cyberpunk* and Humanity from the *Storyteller* system are based on a 0—10 range. Don't forget to multiply your base Humanity by ten to get your Humanity Index. If a Garou has Cyberware (Luna knows why; it would prevent the change), use Gnosis instead. If a Mummy, use Ba.

For those who do not wish to use six-sided dice in their *Vampire* Chronicles, you can determine how many ten-sided dice to roll for loss by adding up the total number of d6s, multiplying by 3, and dividing by 5. Keep the remainder as a plus. Example: Erik has 9d6 loss from Cyberware. He multiplies 9 by 3, getting 27, then divides that by 5, getting 5.4, or 5 with a remainder of 2. He rolls 5d10+2 to determine cost. Do not add fixed-cost items into this total.

## CYBERWARE IN KINDRED BODIES:

Cyberware will generally be present in those Cainites who were Embraced within the last fifteen years. Most people in the modern world have, at the minimum, a pair of interface plugs and a neuralware processor.

These guidelines are written with the assumption that the Cybernetic implants will work in a Vampiric body.

If you wish Elder Kindred to be capable of getting Cyberware, here is a little Ritual we cooked up. Note that this would only be found at the very best of clinics, such as those described in *Eurosource*. A Cainite with Contact level 4 or 5 could know someone who could get her into such a clinic.

## AWAKENING THE FLESH (LEVEL 4 THAUMATURGY RITUAL)

This two-hour ritual allows surgical modifications to be performed upon the Kindred's body. To begin, the caster must expend three points of his own Blood in a circle around the patient and a piece of amber must be placed under the patient's tongue. When the surgery is over, the Kindred heals the damage done to her, making a Wits+Medicine roll to avoid healing the modified areas. If she fails, the Cyberware is healed out of the body. Each botch means she also takes one level of Aggravated wounds. Once she is finished spending Blood (all wound boxes are unfilled), the Cyberware or biosculpt is permanent.

The Magi also have a version of this Ritual, although it does not require Blood Points. Neither Tremere nor Magi accept money as payment for this sort of work; they accept favors.

### EFFECTS:

Cyberware that enhances Strength and Stamina—namely, any *Cyberpunk* BOD boost—adds one half its normal level to the stats. This is because *Vampire* has a 1—5 range while *Cyberpunk* has a 2—10 range.

Reflex Boosters act as Celerity of that level. Kerenzikov 2 is effectively Celerity 2 without the blood

cost. Subtract one from the level of the Boost to determine what to add to Dexterity.

Movement Allowance boosts add to Dexterity for the purposes of determining running speed and to Strength for leaping ability.

Cyberware that interfaces with the nervous system continues to work normally. This includes anything that works through a Neural Processor as well as several of the Implants. Anything that works on principles of human biochemistry does *not* work, however.

Organ replacements do not work at all. T-Maxx Livers, Sport Hearts, and the like have no use in a Vampiric body. A Decentralized Heart needs more discussion; any Kindred with such a thing could be considered unshakable. This is not true. Such a Cainite *could* be staked so long as the locations of the pumps are known; only one pump need be staked. It is difficult to locate, like a misplaced heart.

Armor implants such as Subdermal Armor and Skinweave simply add to the Soak Dice. One die for each four SP should be sufficient.

## CYBERWARE AND DISCIPLINES

### AUSPEX:

Auspex will not enhance the acuity of Cyberoptics or Cyberaudio. It will improve the sense of touch,

smell, or taste, even with the presence of boosters, since the actual sensing organ is not replaced.

Aura Perception will work as normal so long as the Lick possesses usable eyes, either Cyberoptic or meat.

### CELERITY:

With the above rules, a Neonate could start with Sandevistan with a Boostmaster, all three dots in Celerity, *and* fourteen Freebie points on two more dots in Celerity. This will give him an effective Celerity of 9 with negligible loss of Humanitas.

This will leave the Vampire in the same position relative to humans he had before—faster than they are. What does the Storyteller do in this situation? Let the Lick get away with it and waste him *anyway*. That's the Cyberpunk way, remember?

### DOMINATE:

The presence of Cyberoptics does not interfere with the use of this ability. Dominate cannot, however, interfere with cybernetic memory in the subject. This includes Wetdrives, Eidetic Chips, A/V recording, and other similar devices. A human who has been dominated by a Lick and happens to look back in her Eidetic Chip might notice something unusual lurking in there.

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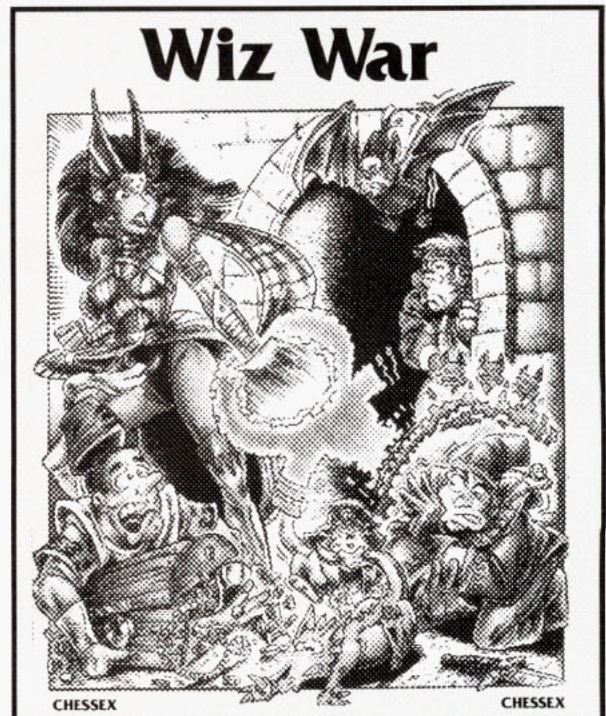
## Wiz War™



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## FORTITUDE & POTENCE:

Fortitude and Potence can provide some interesting results when combined with cybernetic limbs and Bioware. Fortitude will work with any part of the body that is still natural. It will not improve the survivability of a cybernetic limb. Potence works similarly; it will work fine with Grafted Muscle or Muscle & Bone Lace, but does not apply to the strength of a Cyberarm.

## PROTEAN:

Possessing Cyberware makes use of this ability more difficult than normal. If Cyberoptics are present, Gleam of Red Eyes costs one Blood Point to activate. If Cyberhands or arms are present, the price to activate Claws of the Wolf is two Blood Points. This can be spent at the rate of one point on each of two turns.

Shadow of the Beast costs two Blood Points and takes three turns if both are paid in one turn, or six turns otherwise. Six Blood Points allow a one-turn change. Form of Mist is treated much the same.

## VAMPIRES IN THE NET

### (OR ANYONE ELSE, FOR THAT MATTER)

Netrunning is a new form of interactive conflict and uses slightly different rules than normal combat. Nearly all tests involve computer skill.

Initiative is Wits + Computer. Multiple actions are possible, and a Cyberdeck adds its speed as extra actions.

Combat works much like Melee, except that you roll your Intelligence + Computer against the opponent's Intelligence + Computer, with the Program Strength added as automatic successes. The target number is always a six. In Combat, successes over the foe's successes count as damage dice. The loser gets Soak Dice equal to his Wits. Protection Programs can be used to slow down an attack. Add the Program Strength to Soak Dice.

A computer system has three dots of Intelligence for each two CPUs present, and always possesses five dots in Computer.

When engaged in tests against programs, roll Computer + Program Strength against System Intelligence + Program Strength. This is used for Evasion/Stealth, Detection, Intrusion, or Decryption.

## STARTING CYBERWARE

### RESOURCES

This is a revision for the Resources Background as supplied in *Vampire: The Masquerade*. Instead of starting wealthy, you simply start with cash. If you were Embraced after the advent of Cyberware, you can even buy some. Consider it a survival choice.

*	2,000 eb
**	5,000 eb
***	10,000 eb

***	20,000 eb
****	50,000 eb

All you new Licks feeling down?

What do you do when . . .

*Two thirds of the Solos on the street have Thermo graphic Imaging?*

Learn Masquerade, Choomba.

*You were Embraced before Cyberware?*

Pick up Celerity. A lot of it. All you can find.

*The guns are bigger than you?*

Buy even bigger guns.

*Everyone you fight is stronger/faster/tougher than you?*

Burn blood. If you win, you can have their Vitae.

If you lose, it doesn't matter.

Remember, the tech is there for *everybody* to use.

Just because you're Kindred doesn't mean you have to be stupid.

## CYBERWARE LIST

If a piece of Cyberware is not mentioned, assume no changes from *Cyberpunk*. Most of the Cyberware from *Cyberpunk 2020*, *Interface Magazine*, *Chromebook 1*, and *Chromebook 2* is listed here.

### FASHIONWARE

Biomonitor -2 to TN for resisting drugs, poisons, and torture. These don't do a lot for Kindred, other than to tell them that they really *are* dead.

Neuralware Processor does not change

Kerenzikov +1 Celerity/Level,  
+1 Dexterity at Level 2

Speedware +3 Celerity,  
+2 Dexterity for 5  
combat rounds

Tactile Boost -3 on TN relating to touch

Olfactory Boost -3 on TN relating to smell

Pain Editor Ignore wound penalties  
due to injury

Vehicle Link -2 on TN with vehicle

Smartgun Link -2 on TN with weapon

Machine/Tech Link -2 on TN with equipment

Reflex Chips Comes in Level 1- Talents  
or Skills

Memory Chips As above - Knowledges

Boostmaster Adds +1 Celerity and  
+1 Dexterity to the efficacy  
of any Boosterware package.

### IMPLANTS

Adrenal Booster\* +1 Celerity and Dexterity for  
1d10/2 + 2 rounds, 3x/day

Subdermal Armor +4 Soak Dice

Forked Tongue +1 die to Social tests

Decentral Heart\*~ +1 Soak Die

Sport Heart\*+ +1 Strength, +1 Stamina (not  
for soak), -1 Soak Dice,  
+1 Meter max run

Overdrive Heart\* +2 Strength, +2 Stamina (not for soak), -2 Soak Dice, +2 Meters max run

T-Maxx Cyberliver\* -2 TN for resisting drugs, poisons, and alcohol

Gyro-Stabilizer -2 TN for resisting Spacesickness, +1 die in Athletics for purposes of Zero-G Maneuvers

Gang Jazzler Target makes Stamina + Fortitude roll vs. an 8. If failed, she is immobilized for 2—11 minutes. If nothing over a 6 was rolled, she is dead. Kindred simply take one Aggravated wound.

\*If Kindred had this before the Embrace, it no longer operates.

+If a Kindred possesses this, he is considered to have a normal heartbeat.

~A Kindred with this only needs to be staked through one pump.

## BIOWARE

Grafted Muscle Lvl 1: +1 Strength, Lvl 2: +1 Stamina

Muscle & Bone Lace +1 Strength, +1 Stamina

Skinweave +3 Soak Dice

Enhanced Antibodies Reduce healing time by one line on the chart on page 191

Toxin Binders

Nanosurgeons

Lifesaver Skinweave

Anti-Plague Nano

European Biotech Body Reflex MA

of Vampire: Second Edition.

-4 to TN to resist drugs or poisons

Humans heal in one half the normal time with these.

As per Enhanced Antibodies. If the patient is down to -7 to -9 Wound levels, she is in no danger of dying unless subjected to rough treatment.

-3 TN to resist diseases. Kindred do not benefit from Nanotech in the blood.

+1 Strength, +1 Stamina  
+1 Dexterity (not Celerity)  
+2 to Dexterity for running,  
+2 to Strength for leaping

## CYBERWEAPONS

Scratchers Damage: Strength +1

Implanted Fangs Damage: Strength +1

Rippers Damage: Strength +2

Wolvers Damage: Strength +3

Big Ripps Damage: Strength +4

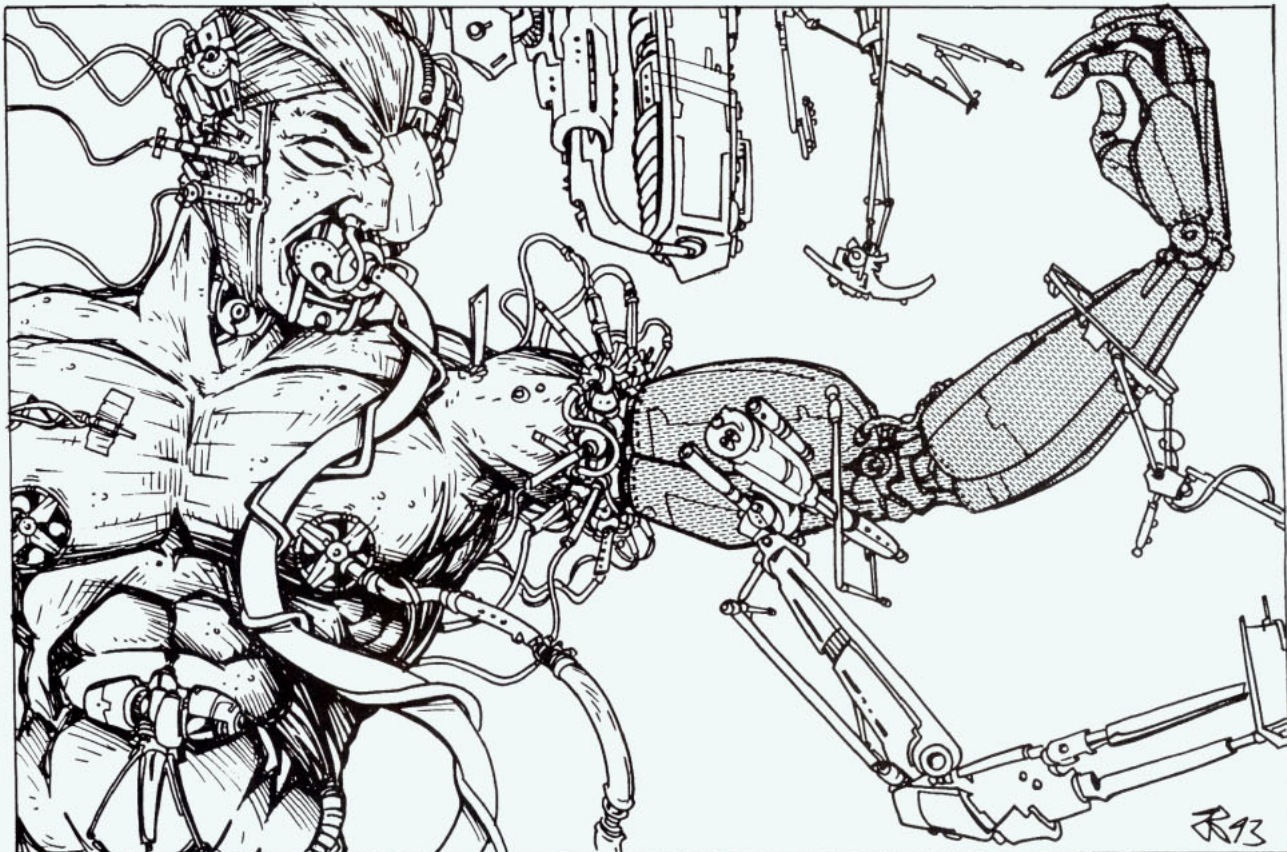
Big Knucks Damage: Strength +1

Slice N' Dice Damage: 8 (armor only provides 1 Soak Die)

Cybersnake Damage: 4

Cyberoptic No change

Image Enhancement -3 to Sight-based TN



Targeting Scope	-1 TN to Smartgun attacks
Dodgeball	After observation it adds +1 die to skill
Cyberaudio	No change
Amplified Hearing	-1 to Hearing-based TN
Voice Stress	-2 to TN for Empathy or Interrogation
Sound Editing	-2 to TN to hear one conversation

Body Plating	ExoArmor
Cowl	+8 Soak Dice, 5 extra DP
Faceplate	
Torso Plate	

**LIMBS**

Cyberarm	4 damage boxes, 4 Soak Dice
Cyberleg	4 damage boxes, 4 Soak Dice
Hydraulic Rams	6 damage boxes, 6 Soak Dice, Triple Potence
Thickened Myomar	5 damage boxes, 5 Soak Dice, Double Potence
Reinforced Joints	+1 damage box, +1 Soak Die
Armor	+4 Soak Dice
Flashbulb	Automatically blinds those with operating Auspex 1, in addition to then usual affects
Orbital Crystal Arm	12 damage boxes, 12 Soak Dice
Winch	If the user has any level of Potence and/or Fortitude, he may make full use of this item.
Speeding Bullet	Increases movement speed by +5 meters

A Cyberarm is bought for a specific strength, generally that of the recipient. Lower-strength arms can be purchased without difficulty. Arms stronger than the user can cause injury to the user.

A Cyberarm is considered to have one point of Potence for punching and two points for crushing.

Hands & Feet	No change
Independent Hand	Potence 1 for crushing purposes
Hammerhand	Damage: Strength + 4
Buzz Hand	Damage: Strength + 5
Spike Hand	Damage: Strength +3
Talon Foot	Damage: Strength +3
Spike Heel Foot	Damage: Strength +4
Cutting Torch	Damage: 2 Aggravated/turn, TN 9 to resist
CyberWeapons	Built into Cyberlimb
MM Launcher	Damage: 8
2 Shot Laser	Damage: 6
Linear Frames	Implanted Exoskeleton
Sigma	Strength: 6
Beta	Strength: 7
Omega	Strength: 8

Note: Regardless of Cyborg's Strength, the Frame overrides it.

**CHIPS**

Memory Compression	Allows 3 Abilities to be placed on one chip. All at 1, naturally.
Maximum Lover	Add +1 die to all Seduction tests.
Stress Chip	Add +1 to Willpower and +1 to Humanity.
Adrenalin/Endorphin Surge	In addition to the benefits as explained in <b>Chromebook</b> , this chip can be used to create an Adrenalin Surge that provides +1 to Stamina for purposes of Soak Rolls and Attribute tests. If a Kindred triggers the Adrenalin Surge, she flies into a Rage Frenzy.
Fish N' Chips	Will work for Kindred. It can be used to limit the amount of blood a Kindred will drink before feeling sated. This can be used to limit a Lick to, say, 3 Blood Points. Nasty.
Visual Recognition Chips	Provides 1 extra die to tests involving the specific field covered by the chip.

Task levels convert as follows:

Cyberpunk	Task Vampire	TN
Easy		3
Average		5
Difficult		7
Very Difficult		9



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# WHITE WOLF

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## IN THIS ISSUE:

MAGE: THE ASCENSION

PENDRAGON

THE WORLD OF FUTURE  
DARKNESS

## REVIEWS:

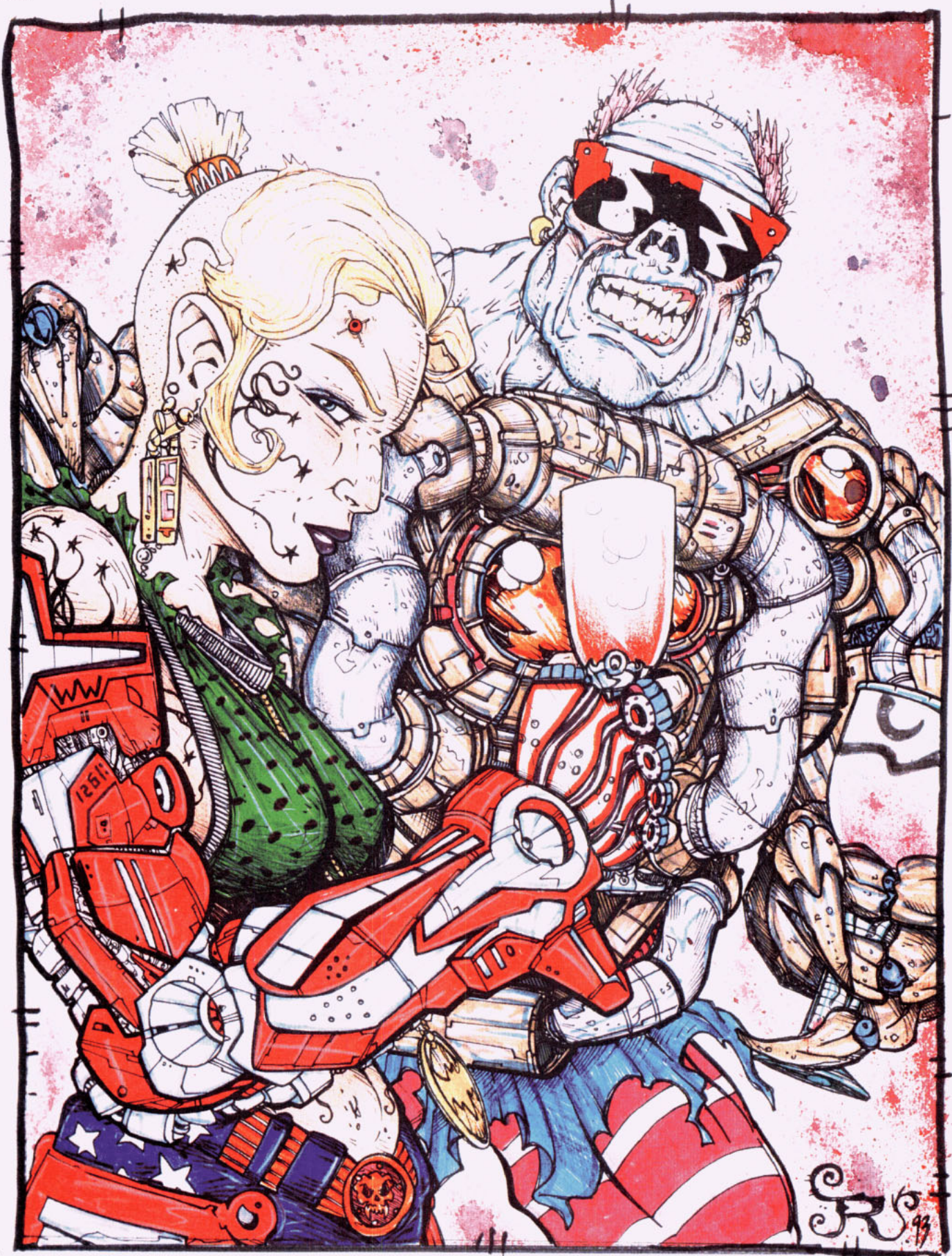
UNDERGROUND

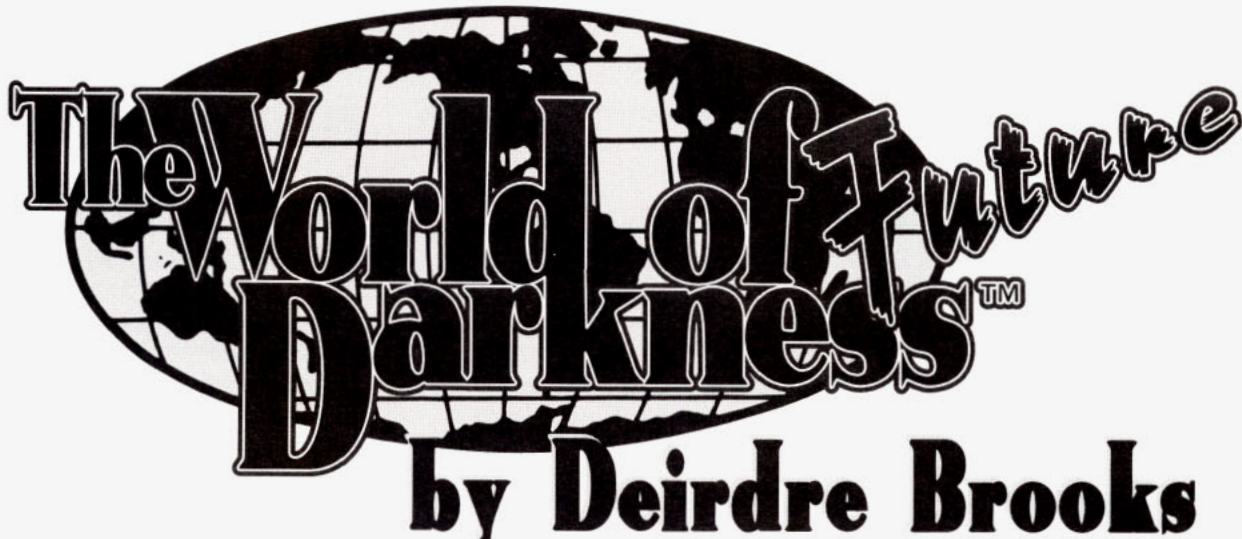

EARTHDAWN

THE MASQUERADE









# The World of Future Darkness™

by Deirdre Brooks

*Through a shattered city  
Watched by laser eyes  
Overhead the night squad glides  
The decaying paradise*

*Automatic sniper  
With computer sights  
Scans the bleak horizon  
For its victim of the night  
- Judas Priest, Blood Red Skies*

## Chronicles in Night City

---

Night City is a natural location for a Chronicle. This city has it all: wealth, power, corruption, poverty and desperation. The system of Haves and Have Nots has become so entrenched that those outside are simultaneously at an advantage and a disadvantage. For those inside the system, everything comes easy. The corporations sponsor their employees from the cradle to the grave; medical care, housing and transportation are all available from the Corps.

For those on the outside, it's much rougher. Boosters are everywhere. It's difficult to walk down the street without being a witness or a victim to crime. Walking across the city can be a Story unto itself.

The advantage comes from the skills of those on the outside. The Cyberpunk, or Edgerunner, possesses many abilities that the Corps can use. Even better, these resources don't have any official connections to them. They hire these people for a pittance and send them on their jobs. If they don't come back, plausible deniability is the standard way of looking at things.

The division between the Anarchs and the Camarilla is extremely marked in this city; there is a

physical separation between Downtown and the Combat Zone. Edgerunning is quite a valid occupation for young Anarchs.

### THEME

---

The overall Theme for such a Chronicle should include three basic concepts:

Life is fast— The world is moving at hypersonic speeds. The Kindred and Kine both have difficulty keeping up, let alone staying on the Edge. If you think they have had too much time to breath freely, drop something else on them. Don't let them slow down long enough to think.

Life is lonely — The characters have only themselves and their friends to rely on. The Elders don't care if they live or die as long as the Masquerade stays in place. The Corps don't care. Just don't leave any evidence leading back to them. If anyone does notice you, it's probably because they see an easy profit. This can be anything from spare organ and cyber parts to the bounty on your head.

Life is cheap—The players must feel as if the only value their lives have is what they attach to it.

## **MOOD**

Chaos reigns. Events occur constantly, sometimes for no apparent reason. Play up the unpredictability and problems of a big city in 2020. Remember, this is the future, and it ain't pretty. Every chance you get, show the players the darker side of the city: the latest Voodoo Boy killing, the last hostile takeover, or the occasional gunfight (which takes place every 10 minutes if you live in the Combat Zone).

These are desperate times. The world is ending, and humanity is plunging the Earth into a mire of pollution and destruction. What can a few people do, especially when they're having a hard time just *surviving*?

## **BACKGROUND**

There is an excellent sourcebook for Night City published by (naturally) R. Talsorian Games. This background will give you an idea on how to integrate the maneuverings of the Kindred into the game.

## **HISTORY**

When Richard Night's project began attracting corporate attention and funding, it also gained the attention of more than a few Kindred. Several of those involved felt that if this could work, they would have a city free of Anarch troubles and other similar difficulties.

The Ventrue and Giovanni were the primary movers behind several of the Megacorps, although the Tremere were not far behind. The Toreadors spotted the possibility of a new artistic community, and many of them moved in.

By 1995, Night was secured by the Giovanni Clan and quickly became one of their ghouls. The Ventrue soon discovered this and began financing attempts on his life to remove him. In 1998, an Assamite succeeded where so many others failed.

Over the next seven years, the struggles for power were chaotic as various Cainites maneuvered their pawns into position. Some only had them die, others lost them to opposing Clans. As if this were not enough, several Anarchs moved in to take advantage of the prime new feeding grounds.

At the end of this period, the Mob and their Kindred 'leader', the Brujah Consigliere Guido Salvatore, effectively ruled Night City. Crime escalated. The Sabbat even made an attempt to gain control during this time and failed miserably against the organization of the Mafia.

After four years of Kindred and Mortal violence, the Ventrue and Giovanni moved in and destroyed the Mob's power base. Make no mistake, the two Clans had no intentions to cement an alliance. They were simply responding to what they considered to be an untenable situation. Guido Salvatore was slain in his haven by a squad of highly trained ghouls sent by Carlo Giovanni. Since that time, no Cainite has moved in to take control of the Mob, although Don Caravelli is probably planning some special surprise for the near future.

At the end of the war, the Corporations cooperated in setting up a city government. The Ventrue set up a Mayor, and the Giovanni, by their own agreement, did not interfere openly. The Anarchs survived mostly unscathed, mostly due to their retreat into the Combat Zone six years earlier.

## **CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS**

The Ventrue and the Giovanni have maintained their open competition on the Megacorp front, although they have been fighting a secret war for several years now. This condition could easily devolve into open warfare, devastating Night City. The Anarchs maintain their control of the Combat Zone, although this is contested more by the mortal gangs than the other Clans, most of whom have no interest in such a hellhole. The

mortal society is a powder keg. The homeless and disenfranchised continually suffer abuse and neglect from the government and the Megacorps.

## **PLACES OF INTEREST**

### **Metal Church**

The Metal Church is a chain of Nightclubs based in San Francisco that started in 1992 as a Gothic Venue. It became a popular place for Blood Dolls and others of similar persuasions. The first few were actually built in old Catholic churches, although most of the newer ones have been built specifically to be clubs, and all of them have bulletproof "stained glass" windows.

Each club follows a specific pattern:

The main floor is a dance floor with a stage where the pulpit would normally be and a bar along the two other sides of the room. All sorts of bands have performed on this level, although they tend not to be at the extreme edge of hardcore.

The basement is always devoted to hardcore, punk, 'real' rap and other styles along those lines.

In the upper floors, there is always a room with a view of the main dance floor. This room is highly soundproofed and large enough to host a good sized party. It is the private domain of Kindred in all cases, and is referred to as 'Mount Olympus.' This is always declared as neutral ground, and this rule is enforced heavily.

Other attractions in the club always include a five-star restaurant and topless or nude dancers of either sex, as well as a quiet lounge of various sorts. These are always separate from the dance areas. Some of the clubs also have extensive gambling arrangements.

Any attached buildings are usually turned into hotels. Some are also used as brothels.

About one-fourth of the bouncers at any given location are trained in anti-Kindred tactics and weapons. All of these are ghouls. They are also well-trained enough

to avoid giving away the Masquerade.

Each Metal Church is named after a demon from the Catholic records. For example, the Metal Church of Glasyabolus was the first in Portland Oregon. The Metal Church of Ashtoreth in San Francisco serves as headquarters.

No one is really certain about who owns the Metal Churches, but most Kindred are convinced a Cainite is behind the idea.

### Metal Church of Asmodeus, Night City

The Metal Church of Asmodeus pretty much fits the above description. The manager, Donna Curtis, is a ghoul sustained by Sixth Generation blood. She started by managing the Metal Church in Orlando in 1995, but was moved here to avoid suspicion about her unaging nature. She is very careful to avoid most of the Kindred in the city, although she knows several of them by face and a few by name.

This branch was opened in 2001 after much fanfare and has only recently become a part of the Combat Zone. Some find this worrisome, but it is a safer place than most, even on the 'wrong' side of the line. The change has made it more popular with Anarchs, although many of the other Kindred still frequent it.

## KINDRED OF NIGHT CITY

To wish and make it so  
To feel the power growing  
stronger- blessed by the Dark.  
And when the candle fades,  
You can say it was a  
Joke you played.  
So you must let me go... No!  
— Too Late, Black Sabbath

The Kindred Society consists of about 95 Vampires, nearly double what the Camarilla prefers. Most of these are Anarchs created from members of gangs like the Blood Razors or Slaughterhouse to fight as cannon fodder in the interminable wars in the Combat Zone. Less than half of the total is accounted

for by the Camarilla Clans.

The Tremere have a small Chantry here. The Ventrue control several Megacorps, as do the Giovanni. A few are contested even now. The Toreador can be found in such places as the Bodukkan Center for the Performing Arts, in addition to mingling amidst the hot new Rockers pushing the newest waves in music. Few Gangrel have the city as a permanent home, generally preferring to travel even more often than the previous century. If cities were untenable then, they are sheer hell now. Brujah and Nosferatu are the primary inhabitants in the Combat Zone. Malkavians can be found nearly anywhere. In fact, the Bozos are rumored to be led by a particularly sadistic Kook.

As for the independents, the Combat Zone is home to a Ravnos Methuselah, although few in the city know this. The Setites are behind the Voodoo Boys; this worries those who know.

Below are stats on a few Kindred and personality sketches on several more.

### Bradley Wilkins

Bradley was born in England in the mid-nineteenth century and lived a fairly conventional middle class English life until the late 1880s. He then became interested in occult studies, primarily magic. He joined a small society of "mages" called The Velvet Night, where he worked for several years to earn



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initiation into the Inner Circle, and the favor of the founder, Sebastian Meredith. Sebastian was quite a scandal in London at the time, making outrageous and unprovable claims about the supernatural to the public in general, either through newspapers or by word of mouth.

In 1895, Bradley gained what he wanted and found an even greater surprise. The initiation was fairly standard for the occult societies of the day, although it was memorable to him. He arrived at his home that morning filled with elation.

The next evening, Sebastian invited him to his own quarters and gave him an initiation he never expected. When it was over, he was in awe at what he had become. The wonder didn't wear off, even after the trip to Vienna to see the Elders. Over the next few years, he involved himself a little in the feuds of the Clans on the Isles until circumstances forced his hand.

Prince Mithras was attempting to purge all the Tremere he could find. While his attempts were not successful as often as he liked, he did find The Velvet Night and destroyed nearly all of them. Bradley escaped to a long unused backup haven, where he found a note. "You should simply leave the Isle, never to return. Consider this a promise. Signed, Mithras"

From England, he arranged to ship a trunk across the Atlantic to Atlanta, where he arranged to meet the head of the Chantry there. The next several decades were fairly uneventful until the late 1990s, when he was offered the opportunity to open a Chantry of his own in a new city. It seemed that the Ventrue and the Giovanni were moving into it, and they needed watching.

Since arriving, he has heard rumors that a Ravnos Elder wanted by the Elders in Vienna may be in the city. He has devoted a sizable amount of his resources toward locating her. If he ever succeeds in turning her over to the Inner Circle, Bradley is certain he will receive a great reward for his service to the Clan.

**Sire:** Sebastian Meredith

**Nature:** Plotter

**Demeanor:** Confidant

**Generation:** Eighth

**Embrace:** 1895

**Apparent Age:** Late forties

**Physical:** Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

**Talents:** Acting 3, Alertness 3, Dodge 2, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Drive 2, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Melee 2

**Knowledge:** Bureaucracy 2, Computer 3, Investigation 3, Linguistics 4, Occult 5, Science 2

**Disciplines:** Auspex 4, Celerity 1, Dominate 4, Fortitude 1, Presence 2, Thaumaturgy 5 (Movement of Mind 3, Lure of Flame 3, Path of Conjuring 4). He possesses any Rituals the Storyteller feels he needs.

**Background:** Contacts 5, Influence 2, Resources 3, Status 2, Status (Tremere) 4

**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self Control 4, Courage 3

**Humanity:** 6

**Willpower:** 8

**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 15/3

**Image:** He appears to be a rather conservative middle aged man, often seeming rather kindly. He usually dresses in old-fashioned styles and is often seen with a pipe.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are the primary Tremere in Night City, so you must keep abreast of all the ongoing plots by the various factions. Do anything you must to stay ahead. Around others, you are polite. Even when threatening or blackmailing another Kindred, you always comport yourself properly.

**Haven:** A house in Westwood

**Influence:** He has influence over several members of the City Council, as well as the police. There are also several gangs oriented toward the occult serving as informants for Bradley.

### Carlo Giovanni

Carlo Giovanni was moving up rapidly in the family business, making himself respected in the

business community of New York and spending his off-hours practicing the art of Necromancy. When he was born, he was chosen to join the Vampiric side of the family in Immortality. He was quite aware of this plan and looked forward to the change with a bit of eagerness. He was fascinated the idea of how death would feel. In 1947, he was Embraced by his great-grandfather, Mario.

After spending a few years in Venice learning how to deal with his new form, he went out into the business world again, this time in command of large amounts of resources. His acute business sense managed to garner immense rewards for the family as well as himself. When Richard Night began his project, he saw the chance to gain control of an entire city before those idiots from the Camarilla could grab it. He immediately Dominated Richard to give Giovanni interests precedence over the interests of other groups.

Unfortunately, the Ventrue were also quick to take advantage of this opportunity and had already arrived before the Giovanni. In their opening moves, the Giovanni only succeeded in removing a few pawns.

The chaos in the city, from heavily armed squads of trained mortals to rampaging Sabbat and Anarchs, drove Carlo Giovanni and his people out of Night City until the dust had settled. As the situation calmed enough for a



return, Helen of the Ventrué approached him for a temporary truce, offering to help remove the Mob. He agreed to it, and their combined resources destroyed them.

Now, he is planning to break the deadlock of power that exists between his Clan and the Ventrué. It's only a matter of time...

**Clan:** Giovanni

**Sire:** Mario Giovanni

**Nature:** Plotter

**Demeanor:** Caregiver

**Generation:** Seventh

**Embrace:** 1947

**Apparent Age:** 43

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 6, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

**Talents:** Acting 3, Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Empathy 1, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Subterfuge 6

**Skills:** Drive 2, Etiquette 4, Firearms 2

**Knowledges:** Bureaucracy 5, Finance 5, Investigation 2, Law 3, Linguistics 2, Occult 5, Politics 4

**Disciplines:** Auspex 3, Celerity 1, Dominate 5, Fortitude 1, Necromancy 5, Potence 1, Presence 3

**Background:** Contacts 5, Fame 3, Status (Giovanni) 5, Herd 5, Influence 3, Resources 5,

**Virtues:** Conscience 1, Self Control 5, Courage 3

**Humanity:** 5

**Willpower:** 9

**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 20/5

**Merits & Flaws:** Corporate Ties, Political Ties

**Image:** A tall, friendly, middle aged Italian businessman. Dresses in conservative black three piece suits.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Always be personable, even with those you dislike. It's easier to work with a possible friend than a potential enemy, even if you are not the one who is considering friendship.

**Haven:** EBM Building in Corporate Plaza.

**Influence:** Carlo effectively controls, through the Clan, Euro Business Machines, Petrochem and World News Services in Night City. Two of these three were among the first to put money into Richard Night's coffers.

## Chucko (Charlie Hubbin)

Chucko, as his friends called him, was a Bozo on the edge. He'd joined the gang because he liked playing practical jokes, even if a few of his jokes were more than a little sadistic. He never seriously hurt anyone, however.



This probably would have lasted until he died or left the gang, save for the fact that one of his better jokes gained the attention of Danny Covington. Danny was a Malkavian who saw a psychotic soul waiting to bloom, and he was just the Kook to water it.

After several weeks of covertly and eventually overtly tormenting Chucko, he finally embraced him, using his powers of Dominate and Presence to make the Change all the more terrifying. Then he set him loose to remake the Bozos in his own image.

His first action was to drive a Corporate Tech crazy and bring him in as the new leader.

**Sire:** Danny Covington

**Nature:** Visionary

**Demeanor:** Jester

**Generation:** Eleventh

**Embrace:** 2019

**Apparent Age:** 17

**Physical:** Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 1, Manipulation

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4, Appearance 1

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Talents:** Brawl 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 2, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Firearms 2, Melee 3, Security 3, Stealth 3

**Knowledges:** Investigation 1, Occult 1

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1, Celerity 1, Dominate 2, Obfuscate 2

**Background:** Contacts 2, Fame 2, Herd 4, Influence 1, Retainer 1, Resources 2

**Virtues:** Conscience 1, Self Control 2, Courage 2

**Humanity:** 4

**Willpower:** 6

**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 12/1

**Derangement:** Sadism

**Merits & Flaws:** None

**Image:** White skin, bulbous red nose, colorful clothing, big floppy shoes.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You're a clown, but you aren't a nice clown. Think of Pennywise in *It*. You want to bring about the greatest, most sadistic practical jokes you can with the help of the Bozos.

**Haven:** Apartment with painted-over windows in the Artist colony.

**Influence:** He has influence over the Bozos, including the Great Bozo.

### Jeremiah duBois, "Cobra"

Cobra was born in New Orleans in the late 20th century. He grew up in a poor family in which even eating was a doubtful proposition at times. To supplement his family's

income, he took to dealing drugs.

Over time, he began to take a special pleasure in dealing to those who considered themselves to be superior. He especially loved to hook whites on the stuff he sold. It was not difficult for the local Setites to notice him. He was one of *their* customers.

He was approached by his usual supplier one evening and invited to take part in a Voudoun ceremony. Being naturally curious, and also more than a bit inspired by the Setite's Presence, he went along.

At the height of this ritual, he was Embraced into the Followers of Set. The next evening, his education began. He was a apt student of their methods and very enthusiastic. He had just made it big time, or least he saw it that way.

He used some of the money he was getting in his operations to help his family along. He was still loyal to them, despite the Temple's influence. His superiors did not take notice; as long as he did not tell them of his nature, they did not mind what he did. It is easier to destroy loyalty than create it.

When Night City was completed, he and several others left to take advantage of this new opportunity. They laughingly called it a "Land of Milk and Honey". They immediately began normal Setite operations which lasted for several years.

Now, Cobra is the Lick behind the Voodoo boys, a situation he considers uproariously funny. A bunch of middle American white boys are playing with Voudoun...

**Sire:** Achmed al Sutekh

**Nature:** Bravo

**Demeanor:** Conniver

**Generation:** Tenth

**Embrace:** 1987

**Apparent Age:** Eighteen

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

**Social:** Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

**Talents:** Acting 3, Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Drive 2, Firearms 3, Melee

3, Security 4, Stealth 4

**Knowledges:** Finance 2, Investigation 3, Occult 3

**Disciplines:** Celerity 2, Dominate 3, Obfuscate 3, Presence 3, Serpentis 4

**Background:** Contacts 5, Herd 5, Influence 1, Resources 3, Retainers 2, Status (Setites) 3

**Virtues:** Conscience 0, Self Control 2, Courage 2

**Humanity:** 3

**Willpower:** 7

**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 13/1

**Image:** A young well-dressed man in the height of fashion. Always armed with at least a pistol.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You'd prefer not to deal with anyone but your victims directly. Of course, anyone can suddenly become your victim at any moment. When you do appear, there are always at least two Voodoo boys nearby to cover you.

**Haven:** Small apartment in University neighborhood.

**Influence:** Primarily with the Voodoo Boys, although he also has some contacts in other gangs, most notably the Wild Things.

### Cynthia Razor, "Sin"

Several years ago, Sin was one of the hottest rockers in Night City. She and her band had it all. They were on a one way ladder to success. Her music spoke eloquently about the human race plunging into a downward spiral and the destruction wrought by the Corporations that no one wanted to fix. Her protests were so strong that she attracted the attention of an Individualist Brujah, Trevor Miles. He began attending her shows and soon began dating her. The two would spend hours over several nights arguing politics and philosophy.

One night, Trevor asked her if she would care to live forever to make both the message and the messenger immortal. The idea didn't shock her too badly and she accepted. Unfortunately, however, Taliaferro had seen this starting and hoped to resolve a feud between himself and Trevor by demonstrating Trevor's inability to follow the laws.

Helen did not appreciate Trevor's actions. He had attempted





Control 3, Courage 3

Humanity: 7

Willpower: 6

Blood Pool/Max per Turn: 14/2

Merits & Flaws: Unbondable (3)

**Image:** Tall auburn haired woman wearing the violent and sexy styles of Chromatic rock. When she enters a room, she owns it. She almost never smiles.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You're hot, but only so you can get your message out to those who need to hear it. Don't make yourself irritating; you're charismatic, not pushy. If you can't convince with words, convince with actions.

**Haven:** Currently in Taliaferro's Penthouse in Westwood. If she escapes, she will move into the Combat Zone.

**Influence:** Her influence only extends over her fans, but she can incite them to riot if necessary.

### Helen Matthews

Helen was the daughter of an American Rail Baron in the late 1800s. She spent much of her time enjoying herself and looking for a husband. She did find the sort of



to create Progeny without her permission, so she sentenced him to be Blood Bound to her. Taliaferro was rewarded with permission to make a Neonate.

He chose Sin and blood bonded her to him—or so he thought.

Over the last three months since her Embrace, Sin has been trying to work out an escape. She has already been caught twice, each time rewarded with draughts of Taliaferro's blood.

**Sire:** Taliaferro

**Nature:** Architect

**Demeanor:** Bon Vivant

**Generation:** Ninth

**Embrace:** 2019

**Apparent Age:** 19

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

**Social:** Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 5

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Talents:** Acting 3, Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Leadership 4, Streetwise 2

**Skills:** Drive 2, Firearms 2, Music 4

**Knowledges:** Computer 1, Investigation 3

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1, Celerity 1, Presence 3

**Background:** Allies 2, Contacts 3, Fame 2, Herd 3 (Her Allies are her bandmates, her Contacts are fixers and her Herd consists of her fans.)

**Virtues:** Conscience 3, Self

man she was looking for: extremely wealthy, not very intelligent, easily manipulated and very handsome. A year after she married Henry Matthews, her father died. She was his only living descendant, so she and her husband inherited his wealth. Helen used her influence over Henry to control the money.

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Jefferson McIntyre met her in the early 1890s, and was impressed by her confidence and poise. He was not fooled by the front she and Henry put to the world. After making her into his Ghoul for several years, he decided she could be very valuable to the Clan and Embraced her. Afterward, she used both her father's and Henry's business connections to set up a network of information and control in the business community, which she managed to maintain through the breakup of the Rail Empires and the Depression.

In the early 1990s, with life decidedly uncomfortable in her home town (New York), she attempted to gain control of Richard Night's 'Night City' project. Unfortunately, the Giovanni moved too fast.

Now that the wars for control are mostly over, she is trying to decide how, exactly, to throw the Giovanni out. She has taken the position of Princess, refusing to call herself Prince.

**Clan:** Ventrué  
**Sire:** Jefferson McIntyre  
**Nature:** Director  
**Demeanor:** Autocrat  
**Generation:** Seventh  
**Embrace:** 1895  
**Apparent Age:** Mid 20s  
**Physical:** Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3  
**Social:** Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5  
**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 5  
**Talents:** Acting 4, Empathy 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 5, Subterfuge 3  
**Skills:** Drive 2, Etiquette 5, Music 2, Stealth 2  
**Knowledges:** Bureaucracy 3, Computer 2, Finance 4, Law 2, Linguistics 1, Politics 5  
**Disciplines:** Auspex 2, Celerity 3, Dominate 5, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 2, Presence 5  
**Background:** Allies 1, Contacts 5, Herd 5, Influence 3, Resources 5, Status (Camarilla) 5, Status (Ventrué) 4  
**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self Control 3, Courage 4  
**Humanity:** 6

**Willpower:** 9  
**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 20/5  
**Merits & Flaws:** Corporate Ties, Intolerance (Sexist men)  
**Image:** A tall, willowy blonde with deep green eyes.  
**Roleplaying Hints:** Remain reserved. Don't let your true feelings, whatever they may be, cloud your judgment. You are the Princess of Night City and therefore must be obeyed in all matters. Even that supercilious Giovanni will be brought down soon.  
**Haven:** A mansion in Westbrook.  
**Influence:** As Princess of Night City, she is the pre-eminent Kindred acknowledged by the Camarilla. She also possesses control over Arasaka, Microtech and Network News 54. She does possess moderate, although not complete, control over Raven Microcybernetics and Orbital Air.

### Margali the Wanderer, "Cassandra" or "Cassie"

Margali was born a *long* time ago. Depending on when you ask her, she will say anything from 6000 BC to 555 AD. No one who knows her is certain of her true age. There are references to her that date back as far as 1252 BC, but when those are brought up she claims that others have used the name in the past.

She travels the world, sometimes alone, sometimes with companions. She has contact with all of her progeny, who are, for the

most part, fairly loyal to her. Those who have killed her Childer have suffered greatly afterward. Wherever she travels, she does so with seeming impunity. Her travels through Lupine controlled territory are legendary.

Always a musician, she used to play the harp, but now she is always seen with a guitar of one sort or other. She's as likely to appear with a vintage black Les Paul as with a modern axe with laser pickups.

She seems unable to resist walking in human culture. In a world where most Cainites of her age and Generation hide behind closed doors and steel walls, she stands on center stage.

She has quite a history of theft, including the entire contents of two Tremere Chantries. She would have emptied just one, but it was missing a tome she needed for her research into Thaumaturgy. The Tremere do want their property returned.

What she keeps in her Haven is mostly up to the Storyteller, but it does include many unique pieces of art, some thought to be forever lost. There should be a small set of personal effects, unusual enchanted items and anything else she might have stolen over the ages. Occasionally she will drop one of these items onto the market.

In recent years (well, recent for *her* anyway) she has discovered that the Masquerade has fallen apart in relation to the various national governments. She has tried to warn the Camarilla that they will be in serious danger if they don't clean up their act soon. Unfortunately, those statues are too wise to listen to some crazy Gypsy.

Actually, she's telling them because she knows they will not listen to her. After all, they *are* in need of a rude awakening.

Currently, she gives her name as Cassie or Cassandra and is posing as a neonate Caitiff.

**Clan:** Ravnos  
**Sire:** Sharilla  
**Nature:** Jester  
**Demeanor:** Avant Garde  
**Generation:** Fifth  
**Embrace:** Unknown



**Apparent Age:** Late teens  
**Physical:** Strength 4, Dexterity 7, Stamina 6  
**Social:** Charisma 6, Manipulation 5, Appearance 6  
**Mental:** Perception 6, Intelligence 6, Wits 7  
**Talents:** Acting 5, Alertness 5, Artistic Expression 4, Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Empathy 5, Intimidation 4, Leadership 5, Music 5, Streetwise 5, Subterfuge 5  
**Skills:** Animal Ken 5, Drive 4, Etiquette 5, Firearms 4, Melee 5, Music 5, Repair 3, Security 4, Stealth 5, Survival 5.  
**Knowledges:** City Knowledge 4, Bureaucracy 3, Computer 3, Faerie Lore 3, Finance 4, Investigation 5, Kindred Lore 5, Law 4, Linguistics 5, Lupine Lore 5, Magus Lore 4, Medicine 3, Mummy Lore 3, Occult 5, Politics 3, Science 3, Speed Reading 5, Spirit Lore 2  
**Disciplines:** Animalism 6, Auspex 5, Celerity 5, Chimerstry 7, Dominate 4, Fortitude 6, Obfuscate 6, Potence 3, Presence 6, Protean 5, Quietus 1, Technica 1 (from issue #36), Thaumaturgy 5 (Movement of Mind 5, Conjuring 5, Neptune's Might 5, Weather 5)  
**Rituals:** These should be whatever the Storyteller feels is appropriate. She does, however, possess one ritual that she uses regularly. The Level Three Ritual, Vitriolic Vitae, takes one half-hour to complete and requires her to drink a small amount of a powerful acid, taking one aggravated wound in the process. This causes her blood to become poisonous to other Kindred until the next Sunset. Any who drink her blood take three levels of normal wounds per blood point taken and the blood point is destroyed in the process.  
**Background:** Allies 5, Contacts 5, Fame 3, Herd 5, Influence 5, Status (Ravnos) 5, Resources 5  
**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self Control 2, Courage 3  
**Humanity:** 6  
**Willpower:** 10  
**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 40/8  
**Merits & Flaws:** Light Sleeper, Charmed Life, Tremere Enmity  
**Notes:** Her higher level Animalism allows her to befriend animals with unearthly ease. Her 2 extra levels of

Chimerstry allow her to use the first three levels at no cost in Willpower and maintain them if she is within a mile of their location. She can also create an illusion anywhere she can visualize, the difficulty depending on her familiarity with the area. Her extra level of Obfuscate allows her to conceal the Ravnos aura with a Humanity roll (difficulty 8). The Presence of 6 gives her the ability to cause people around her to believe what they are seeing is perfectly normal. Roll her Manipulation + Subterfuge against an 8. The number of successes determines how strongly the on-lookers deny what they see, from one Success (a double take) to five Successes (going on about their business, blithely.)

Her guitar was actually enchanted for her by a Mage. She wanted an instrument that could transform into any other sort of stringed instrument, and that is what she has now. It is also her favorite harp.

**Image:** A young, pale, dark-haired, dark-eyed woman with the light of mischief dancing about her (sometimes literally). Currently her hair is dyed light brown. Through the use of cosmetics, her skin has a light tan.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Pose as a Lick younger than you actually are. MUCH younger. You are playful at heart and feel a bit of pity for other Kindred. There is so much to see and do in the world, and what do they do? They spend eternity fighting their Jyhad! Your way may be frivolous, but at least you are alive.

When you are around other Kindred, you tend to use your Disciplines, especially Chimerstry, fairly freely. You don't forget your role, however. If you are acting as if you are far less powerful than you truly are, you will exhibit far less power than you actually have.

Never tell a lie. Most people who know you for what you are won't believe you anyway. If you do not wish anyone to know something, don't mention it, even if asked directly.

**Haven:** Abandoned building in Combat Zone. Filled with the latest in high-tech security systems and

Thaumaturgical defenses to keep the unwary out.

**Influence:** Margali has her fingers in every Corporation and Government present on the continent of North America, as well as a few other land masses. She generally uses it to keep her information on the world up to date. She is also quite aware of who owns whom in the Corps.

Her favorite use of her influence is to set up massive disinformation chains and other equally fun dirty tricks.

### "Shark"

Melissa grew up on the street. She has no memory of her life anywhere else, only the time she spent surviving the streets. She feels this is what has made her extremely deadly.

For as long as she could remember, the Megacorps were the Enemy. Every part of them fell into this category, from the tall buildings in the center of Downtown to the



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suits that wandered in the unsafe areas. She especially liked dealing with them: they had money, and if you asked right (say, with a gun), they would give it to you. When she saved enough money, she bought herself some cybernetic enhancements.

A few street-op jobs rolled in; she got more money and bought more metal. She still hated the Megacorps, but had no hopes of stopping them.

One night, she was with some friends at a rundown bar in the Combat Zone, talking about the need to destroy the Corps and the total inability to do so that she perceived. This went on long into the early morning.

As she was leaving, a voice filtered out of the shadows. "What if you had eternity to fight them?" She turned, her pistol already in her hand, but no one was there. "Don't shoot, I'm offering you a way to fight back."

The speaker turned out to be a Brujah who was impressed by Shark's desires and dreams. By morning, Shark was also a Brujah. Raven, her Sire, stayed with her for a year before moving on to other places. Her pack was wandering as a group of Nomads. Shark wanted to stay in Night City.

Shark would like nothing better than to either drive Carlo and Helen out of Night City or kill

them. She is currently working on the Anarchs, attempting to get them to work together to topple the stranglehold the Camarilla and the Megacorps have on the city.

She has also told two of her human friends about her condition. They have not passed the word to others, but this action could (and would!) cause Princess to call a Blood Hunt on her, although such a hunt would probably not extend far into the Zone.

**Sire:** Raven

**Nature:** Visionary

**Demeanor:** Rebel

**Generation:** Ninth

**Embrace:** 2015

**Apparent Age:** Early 20s

**Physical:** Strength 3(4), Dexterity 4(5), Stamina 3(4)

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

**Talents:** Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Leadership 4, Streetwise 5

**Skills:** Drive 3, Firearms 4, Melee 4, Repair 2, Security 4, Stealth 3, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Computer 2, Investigation 3, Linguistics 1, Medicine 1

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1, Celerity 3(5), Potence 2, Presence 3

**Background:** Status (Anarch) 3, Allies 2, Contacts 4, Fame 2, Herd 3, Resources 1

**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self Control 4, Courage 4

**Humanity:** 6

**Willpower:** 9

**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 14/2

**Notes:** She has the following pieces of Cyberware: Neuralware Processor, Kerenzikov 2, Muscle & Bone Lace, Smartgun Link, one pair of Interface Jacks, Sharkgrin Special and Skinweave.

**Image:** A tall, lean, muscular woman of feral beauty (even if the beauty was from a Biosculpt parlor).

**Roleplaying Hints:** Treat other Anarchs as equals unless they get out of hand. If they do, give them a chance to calm down, then explain why they should not misbehave. You want to see both the

Megacorps and the Camarilla out of the city.

**Haven:** Well-defended building in the Combat Zone.

**Influence:** Plenty among the Anarchs and some of the street types. Very little anywhere else.

## David Taliaferro "Tolliver"

David was born in Atlanta, Georgia, although he grew up in New Orleans. By the age of ten, he was taking piano lessons from a well known pianist in the area, Andrew Stone. His natural talent was formidable, and, in Andrew's opinion, should not be wasted. His tendency to lose his temper was simply an "artist's mercurial moods."

As the years passed, Andrew and David maintained a strong friendship, until Andrew finally offered the gift of immortality to his student. David accepted and lived the next few years in wonder at his new state. He would play for hours simply to listen to the music. Andrew was extremely pleased with his student, and was eventually throwing parties simply to show off his talent.

Then Andrew found another highly talented student to cultivate and starting spending less time with David. After less than a year of this, David's bad temper got the better of him, and he attacked his Sire, driving him into Torpor and drinking his blood. With the dust



that had been Andrew in his hands, the power of Andrew's blood flowing through his veins and the sudden knowledge that the other Kindred in New Orleans would not be happy at this turn of affairs, David moved west.

He moved to Night City, as it seemed to be a fairly safe place for someone of his sort. Since his arrival, he has managed to offend at least half of the Primogen. The other half encourage his behavior.

**Sire:** Andrew Stone

**Nature:** Director

**Demeanor:** Bon Vivant

**Generation:** Eighth

**Embrace:** 1968

**Apparent Age:** Mid 20s

**Physical:** Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

**Talents:** Acting 2, Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Empathy 2, Leadership 3, Subterfuge 4

**Skills:** Drive 3, Etiquette 3, Firearms 3, Music 6

**Knowledges:** Computer 2, Linguistics 2, Occult 3, Politics 3

**Disciplines:** Auspex 5, Celerity 3, Dominate 3, Fortitude 1, Presence 4

**Background:** Herd 5, Influence 2, Status (Clan Toreador) 3, Resources 5, Retainers 5, Status 2

**Virtues:** Conscience 3, Self Control 2, Courage 3

**Humanity:** 6

**Willpower:** 7

**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 15/3

**Image:** A young man dressed in the latest styles, often playing with a pair of worry-beads. He moves as if he owns everything in sight.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You have the tiger by the tail, and he can't bite you. While you don't push this feeling onto others, if they can't figure it out on their own, they are obviously inferior. You separate the world into two classes: artists and non-artists. Race, color, age, none of it makes a difference if they can create.

**Haven:** Mansion in Westwood.

**Influence:** David has plenty of

Influence over the artistic community in Night City, but he has very little anywhere else.

## OTHER NOTABLES

**Arnold:** The eldest Noseratu in the city. He probably knows more about the goings on in the city than either Helen or Carlo. He is always willing to talk to those who would listen, but only about day to day events. He will only bring up the information he has if he feels he has a good reason for it. Arnold is a Ninth Generation Kindred Embraced in 1947 and a W.W.II Veteran.

**Eryn:** The Caitiff Netrunner who, with the help of Margali, worked out Technica. She is a certified genius. Eryn was embraced in 2014 and is Seventh Generation.

## STORY IDEAS

—The characters see a Bozo drinking blood from an Upright Citizen of Night City. Should they pursue the matter, he is human. If they follow him, he takes a twisting route to the Artist Colony and then vanishes. Chucko has been giving him blood and telling him he is a vampire. He can't stand drinking much blood, but he tries anyway. This could eventually lead the characters to Chucko.

—Some of the characters are taking a walk through Lake Park when they hear a howl. When they look, they see a Lupine bearing down upon them in wolf form. Is it the night of the full moon? Nope. It's the 23rd of the month. The characters have stumbled across a Glass Walker Revel (generally kept very covert in this area) and the Glass Walkers do not like it. (Details on the Glass Walker Tribe are in *Werewolf: the Apocalypse*).

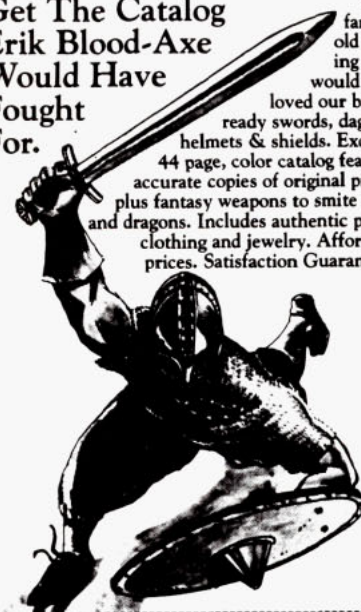
—A new drug is circulating on the streets. It causes euphoria and hallucinations the first few times you take it, but as the concentration builds, it creates a psychotic frame of mind. What effect does this have on the characters? Their

Herd is taking the drug, which means the characters could be getting some soon. The effect is a penalty on Frenzy rolls, eventually requiring a check for Frenzy at the slightest provocation. It turns out the drug is an experimental substance dropped into Night City's drug supply by Biotechnica.

—If the characters are Anarchs, a personable Italian gentlemen (Carlo Giovanni) requests their aid in doing something about a small problem of his. It seems that a valued possession of his is being transported under guard by a group of Licks out of the city. He would like the characters to track it down the Licks get out of town.

—If the characters are members of the Camarilla, they are approached by one of Helen's Brood with the request that they accompany a package to San Francisco. Transport provided. If they do this, the Princess will owe them a favor. What the package is, and why Helen and Carlo are interested in it, is up to the Storyteller. 🐾

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# The World of Future Darkness™

## by Deirdre Brooks

This is a story intended for Kindred, preferably anarchists, who dwell in the futuristic Night City. The story begins when the characters become embroiled in a feud between two powerful Kindred while attempting to rescue a vampire who is being held against her will by one of these two.

Initially, this story will seem like a simple strike against a Toreador ancilla. Tension should build rapidly, as this is a short story. As with any other story, do not allow this one to devolve into a shooting match. Rather, keep the players on a knife's edge throughout. This may be difficult, as there are plenty of opportunities for combat, some of them against unfavorable odds.

---

### How to Run This Story

This story should take place over a period of one week, and should take two game sessions to complete. The last session should occur after one or two chapters or short stories take place in the regular flow of things. The first part should take only a single session, and should motivate the player Cainites to attack the Toreador.

The feuding vampires are the Toreador Taliaferro and the Tremere Bradley Wilkins. Taliaferro recently Embraced a Rocker by the name of Cynthia Razor and is currently holding her against her will. He rarely allows her out of his sight, and has already fed her his blood more than three times. Bradley arranges Taliaferro's demise simply to see how well the anarchists he has selected can operate in a tight situation. Afterward he hopes to blackmail or coerce the players into working as his private hit team.

The characters should not be given any clues that the raid and rescue are unusual in any way. When they are notified by Bradley of their imminent "employment," they should realize they were set up. What they do with that information is up to them, but Bradley possesses compromising information, so they should do *something*.

If they do agree to work with him, he will give them the task of investigating a Lick who lives and operates in the Combat Zone. There, they meet a pair of Licks who feel that Bradley needs a good laugh.

At the end of the story, Wilkins decides that the characters are too dangerous to retain, so he arranges their

deaths. At least, he attempts to do so. Unfortunately, he may succeed.

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### The Plot

**Scene One:** A typical night out for anarchists. One of the players receives a message at a favored hangout. It is assumed that the characters already know each other; if they do not, it is suggested that they be introduced before this story is told. Except for a brief encounter with a small group of Boosters, nothing untoward happens to the group.

**Scene Two:** If the anarchists are adventurous at all, they will snap up the bait and set up an assault on poor Taliaferro, who is hardly blameless. If they plan it properly, they can attack Taliaferro and Cynthia as they leave the Metal Church. The scene should end with Taliaferro dead, injured or in torpor, but out of the way for the moment and Cynthia in the hands of the anarchists. This should be the last scene for two or three sessions. The Storyteller should run other plotlines before introducing the next scene.

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**Scene Three:** The intrepid Licks who braved the powers of the Toreador awaken in their lairs. A note is pinned to each character's wall. (This does not happen to characters who use Earth Meld to find impromptu havens.) The note explains that the author is aware of the characters' crimes and wishes to speak with them regarding "necessary tasks." If the characters do nothing, the scene ends.

**Scene Four:** The anarchs either agree or refuse to perform the task assigned them by their unknown patron. Either way, they are intercepted by a pair of Ravnos with a body in the trunk of their car. If they refused the task, the two Ravnos will try to convince them to follow a set of instructions involving their blackmailer. If they are in the process of performing the task, the Ravnos will offer to help. Nonetheless, the true quarry is nowhere to be found. She has little patience with the reckless young.

**Scene Five:** The first problem arises when a Solo decides to liberate the characters of their spoils. If they avoid this problem, the characters may either deliver the booty they received from the Ravnos, or try to inform Wilkins that there is a problem. Either way, after leaving the arranged meeting place, they will be ambushed by a group of Boosters and a firebomb will be detonated in the building.

## What Is Really Going On

The characters are first involved in a minor feud between Taliaferro and Wilkins. This is simply a test by Wilkins to see how competent and efficient the characters are. If they work out, he will then use them to determine whether the infamous Margali the Wanderer is indeed in Night City. If she is, and he can prove it, his status in the clan will rise sharply. The Tremere have been looking for her for about two centuries, seeking to regain the chantries she stole from them in Germany.

Margali, however, is quite aware of Wilkins and his little plot. She hopes to draw him into greater and more absurd acts in his attempts to find her. She then plans to steal the contents of his chantry, hopefully leaving Wilkins so indebted to others via prestation that his influence is negated. Margali's childe, Tasha, has arrived in Night City with her two progeny to aid in this mission. She has no intention of causing the Final Deaths of the anarchs Wilkins is using, but will not extend any special protection to them. That would tip her hand.

Cynthia managed to write a note begging rescue and slip it to a Kindred at one of Taliaferro's parties. This transpired about a week before the story starts. The note made its way to Wilkins. From him, it got to the characters. It is, in fact, what set his plan in motion.

## Theme

Freedom and slavery are the themes of this adventure. The Cainites are given the decision to free a caged Lick. In so doing, they unknowingly give another the means to enslave them. However, they never lose their freedom to say no, depending on their bravery.

Taliaferro is a slave to his passions. He doesn't really

love Cynthia, but likes to have her around so he can show her beauty to others. Her musical talent and free will are equally superfluous in his eyes.

Bradley Wilkins, like most of the Tremere, is a slave to the desires of his clan. He believes that command of a chantry grants him more freedom, but it simply binds his chains tighter. He hopes to make the characters slaves, but only enslaves himself.

The Ravnos are free. They do not have any real obligations save to their mother or "grandmother," both of whom behave as if they were freedom personified. Where other vampires of their age are chained by their needs, they throw off the chains of age. Perhaps this freedom is simply another form of slavery?

## Mood

The mood should aid in revealing the theme of this story. Have it start with a lighthearted feeling — the anarchs go out and trash one of the Establishment, and rescue the lovely lady. This should change to paranoia and possibly frustration or anger as they realize that someone has gained power over their unives.

From there the mood of the story can shift to resignation as they accept Wilkins' terms, or exultation as they throw his threats in his face and go on with their unives.

The story should end on a paranoid note, after the characters are attacked by Boosters and nearly bombed.

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## Scene One: Fun & Games in Night City

The brood is together, wandering the streets of Night City in search of some action, a little *vitæ*, or perhaps a rendezvous. Send an encounter or two in the characters' direction, using the encounter charts from *Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0* or the *Night City Sourcebook* as inspiration if necessary.

At least once, the brood should encounter a group of Boosters, preferably when some of the characters are feeding. There should be one Booster for each Lick in the group. This encounter need not devolve into a brawl or firefight; simply use it to see how the characters react to potentially dangerous situations.

## Messenger in The Dark of Night

Sometime afterward, while in a nightclub they frequent, one of the brood will be approached by a human with an envelope. The human is male and seemingly average in nearly every respect. He has brown hair, brown eyes, a light tan to his skin, and wears a subdued corporate suit. He gives no hint as to whether he knows who or what the characters are. He simply hands the envelope to the chosen victim and attempts to leave.

If a character uses Aura Perception on the man, the power reveals a lavender aura mixed with light blue. Using Dominate to make the man reveal who sent him is likewise fruitless; he has no memory of that. Imbibing the man's blood places the drinking character one step on the road to Blood Bond with Wilkins.

The envelope contains a single piece of paper. A note is written on the paper, and a few drops of blood are splashed upon it. It says:



Help me, I can't take it here any longer! Tolliver won't let me out of his sight and I can't get to the phone. Please help!  
Cyn Razor  
(Ends with an address in Westwood)

If The Spirit's Touch is used on the envelope, the character gets the impression of the delivery man. If The Spirit's Touch is used on the paper, however, the character receives a mental image of a dark-eyed, black-haired woman. Streaks of blood course down her face from her eyes. She is writing furiously and looking over her shoulder. There are strong impressions of rage, terror, grief and frustration. The woman is of course, Cyn Razor.

There is also a business card and a chip with two pictures in it. The card is black with red lettering, and has a cellular number. Auspex reveals nothing; it is simply a business card. The pictures are of Taliaferro and Cyn Razor and are labeled as such. Give the characters all of this in writing, as there is no pronunciation guide to Taliaferro's name, and this could cause confusion because Cynthia did not spell the name correctly.

If the characters call the number, they receive a recording. The voice is urbane, male, unaccented, and articulates every word perfectly.

*"Thank you for calling. It is good to know that the Beast has not driven all compassion from your stilled hearts. This young lady does not deserve the hand that fate dealt her. Also, you might be interested to know that Taliaferro is of the Eighth Generation and highly influential among the Camarilla Toreador in the city.*

*"He, his bodyguards — two — and Cynthia will be leaving the Metal Church in approximately two hours. If you rush, you can catch them just in time. His car is a dark blue Mercedes-Benz. The license plate number is 4XLX 334. You have pictures of both of them. Good luck, and rest assured this venture will prove profitable."*

## Characters

The only characters about whom the characters need concern themselves are the Boosters. Each Booster has (natural) Physical Attributes of 3, Social Attributes of 1 and Mental Attributes of 2, except for Wits, which is 3. Each Booster has the Abilities of Alertness, Brawl, Intimidation, Streetwise, Firearms and Melee at 3 each.

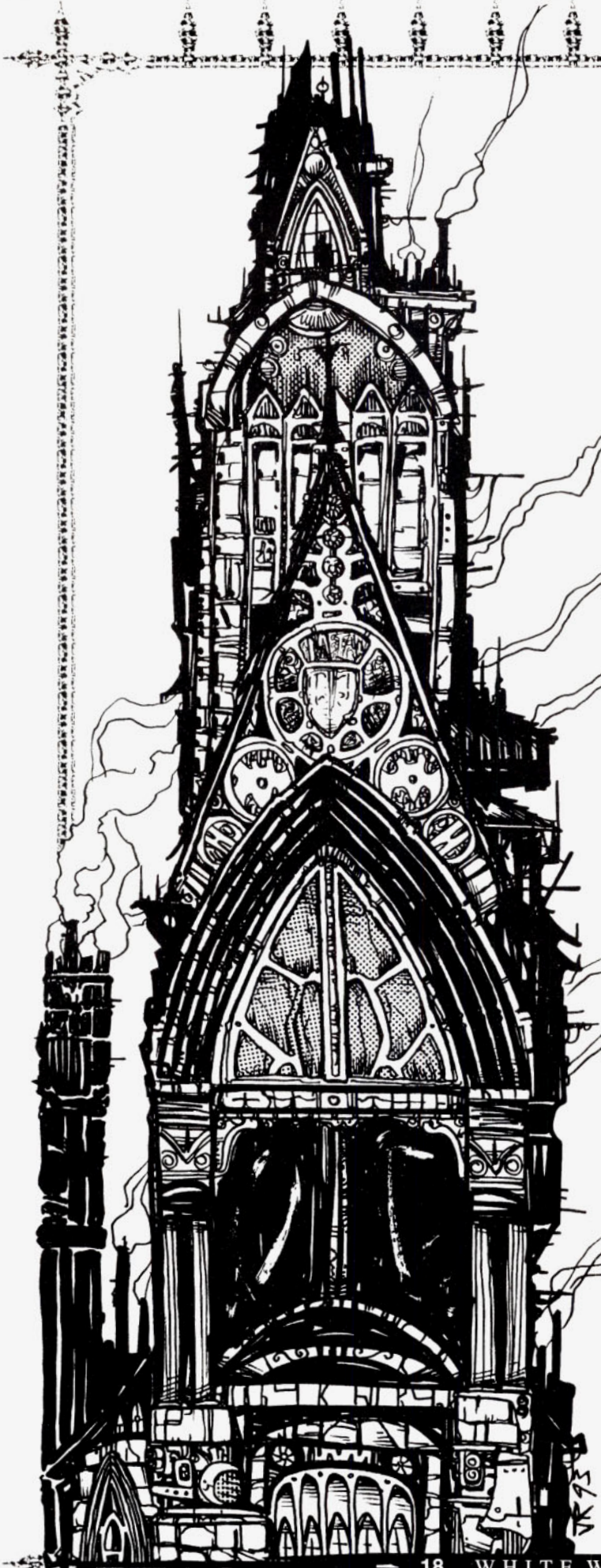
Their cyberware is simply Kerenzikov 2, Grafted Muscle 2, and Wolver. This adds one to each Physical Attribute, making them 4s, and gives them three actions a turn.

Characters can use Obfuscate, Presence, Dominate or a variety of other Disciplines to abbreviate this encounter. Proper use of Intimidation or other Social Traits can achieve the same effect.

## Scene Two: Going to Church

The Metal Church is a Gothic-style nightclub on the edge of the Combat Zone — the safe side, that is. It is described in the second installment. The anarchs can arrive at any time they wish. The doorman will wave them in without charging cover. (This is the establishment's normal





practice when receiving Kindred.) He is immune to Dominate and will call for security if any noticeable Disciplines are used on him. The Church's security staff are heavily cyborged and well trained in anti-Kindred tactics. They have submachine guns with incendiary ammunition. They first ask the characters to leave. If the vampires refuse, the security staff attempt to eject them forcibly. If the characters persist, the bouncers begin shooting to injure, and then finally switch to incendiary ammo.

Taliaferro and Cynthia are in the private lounge upstairs, along with a young dark-haired woman and Taliaferro's ghoul bodyguards. Taliaferro is engaged in political business with another Toreador while Cyn watches the band and the dance floor below. The woman is with Taliaferro. Two other Kindred also frequent the lounge. One of these is Helen's line into Network News 54; the other is simply a Caitiff looking for a safe place to stay. The lounge is neutral ground for any Cainite who wishes to go there.

The two men are Taliaferro's ghoul bodyguards, Dallas and Marco. The woman is simply someone Taliaferro picked up earlier. He intends to drink a bit from her and drop her off downtown before heading home.

If the characters start a fight there, they have three turns to incapacitate Taliaferro and the other Toreador. The Ventrue simply exits, while the Caitiff finds a nice solid bit of furniture behind which to await the end of the fight.

At the end of the three turns, two bouncers arrive to deal with the problem. As above, they are well trained and equipped with anti-Kindred weapons. They will attempt to stake those responsible for the fight. They are fully aware of who started the fight.

Taliaferro has to cross the main floor to leave the building, and it is thus possible to ambush him and Cynthia somewhere down there. Such a tactic is less likely to draw attention from the bouncers, depending on how noisily the characters dispatch Taliaferro. If they are quiet and efficient, the bouncers may never notice. If they are noisy, give the characters four turns to get him before bouncers arrive. Note that Cyn will not cooperate unless they make it clear they are trying to rescue her.

The last option is to wait outside, near Taliaferro's car. Taliaferro's driver is inside the club, enjoying the main floor's attractions, so he won't be a problem until Taliaferro and Cyn arrive. The characters could even break into his car and wait within. The last requires a Wits + Security roll (difficulty 8; extended action; six successes necessary). If the attempt takes longer than three turns, the car's active defenses activate. Each character within two meters of the car takes three separate five-dice attacks from flechettes. If they are wearing armor, double the soak dice provided.

If they successfully deactivate the security systems, they may enter the car. It is a full-sized limousine with all the amenities of such. There is plenty of space for an intrepid vampire or three to wait in ambush.

## The Characters

Taliaferro and Cyn Razor are detailed in the previous article. The Metal Church Security and Taliaferro's bodyguards are detailed below.

## Finding the Wandering Gypsy

The Endless Road is known to hang around Metalstorm quite often, and is under the protection of the Roadies, a Chromer gang that adopted The Road as 'their' band. If they see anyone hassling the band, they *will* interfere harshly.

Unfortunately, the band is out of town for the night. Even the week, possibly. It seems The Road took a gig down in Los Angeles at the Whiskey-a-Go-Go. Good for the bad; bad for the characters. No one at Metalstorm knows the band's whereabouts; the band didn't say anything before leaving.

## Notes

This is a fairly straightforward scene. Complications appear only if the characters decide to trace their "employer," or perhaps manage to find the band and look them up. They must then deal with angry Roadies, security at the Whiskey, and a Methuselah Ravnos. Most Kindred would rather face a horde of frenzied Sabbat.

If they decide to hunt down Bradley, they could start by describing the man seen with Auspex, or perhaps hiring a netrunner to track down the phone number. It does lead to someone: another netrunner. Because Bradley's representatives (er, underlings) contact him often, watching the netrunner may eventually lead the characters to Bradley. Don't make unlife easy for them in this case either. Bradley is also a formidable foe.

## Scene Four: Trick or Treat

The characters presumably scour the clubs of the city seeking the whereabouts of Cassandra. As the scene begins, they are at the third nightclub, and no one knows where the band is. The shadows are deep, thrown into sharp relief by the bright streetlights. Suddenly, the characters catch a hint of movement and a flash of red eyes a short distance down the street. Their target steps out of a distant doorway and onto the street.

After fighting their way through the crowds to the spot, they find nothing there. Then a voice croaks "Nevermore!" and they hear the sounds of flapping wings. Looking up, they see a large black raven flying away from them.

A block down the street, a silk handkerchief falls in front of one of the characters. If he picks it up, it is simply a red silk handkerchief. Any attempt to rip it or otherwise damage it results in its disappearance.

"Good evening, my friends," a smooth voice intones from the opposite alley. A handsome, dark-haired young man steps out of the shadows. "You seem to be looking for something." Aura Perception indicates nothing. The man apparently does not have one.

If the characters attack the figure, it disappears in a swirling cloak. (It doesn't matter that the figure has none; it still appears that way.)

If they instead decide to talk, the man disappears in a swirling cloak, and a twin dances across the street toward them, miraculously missing traffic. "Good day, I am Carlos. You are looking for Cassandra, yes?" He kisses the hands of any women present and shakes the hands of the men. His

movements have a mocking grace to them.

If the characters admit that they seek Cassandra, Carlos responds, "Ah, of course. Come with me." He refuses to speak further of the subject, simply ignoring any reference to it and instead praising the variety of Night City's inhabitants. After a brief walk he stops at a parked limousine and opens its doors for everyone. "Lovely, isn't it? I thought so. As did the previous owner. Poor man; still, the exercise should do him some good."

In the driver's seat is a ravishing, dark-haired woman, who starts the limo as soon as everyone climbs in. She heads for the freeway. One of the characters, looking down at the plush upholstery, finds a white handkerchief with the letters "C.G." monogrammed on one corner. (As in "Carlo Giovanni," but don't tell the characters this. It isn't his handkerchief, though.) Carlos still refuses to discuss business, instead soliloquizing about the cars on the road.

## I'm Sorry, You're Mistaken

Once the limo reaches the freeway, the woman turns on the autopilot and climbs into the back seat. She is also a Lick, but has a pair of cords running from a set of plugs to the car.

Carlos introduces the woman. "This, everyone, is Elena, the vision of loveliness that desired your attention for this short drive."

The woman smiles at them, showing perfect, even teeth. "You're being used, you see. Naturally, you already knew that. You have been sent to track down a chrome rocker by the name of Cassandra, yes?" After awaiting the characters' agreement or denial, she goes on. "I thought so. We want to help you turn everything around on the one responsible for your troubles."

Elena then explains, using a small dosage of Awe (Presence 1) as she does so, that she has Cassandra in her possession and that the characters may have her to deliver to their employer. If a character becomes suspicious, write a note to the player explaining that the woman seems perfectly trustworthy.

Elena pulls over; Carlos leads them to the trunk and opens it, revealing the woman from their picture. A stake has been driven through her heart. Carlos hands the woman over, wishes the characters luck, and the two Ravnos drive away, leaving the characters standing there with a staked vampire.

If the characters ask the Ravnos why they are doing this, they explain some part of their plot.

"We wish to find this person who is looking for Cassandra, so we're sending a decoy. All you have to do is report to your employer and tell him you have the girl. He will naturally wish to have her delivered to him. So, you arrange that too. Do not worry about her, she will be fine."

If, at any time, the characters become offended by the Ravnos and their behavior, the Ravnos will use all the resources at their disposal to attempt to calm them down. They are, after all, on the same side — for the time being.

## Notes

'Tasha is Margali's progeny, and appears nearly identical to her sire. Many years ago, Margali used 'Tasha as a daylight double and eventually gave her the Embrace. The stake through her heart is actually a very high-grade

imitation wood and has no effect on her mobility. 'Tasha has swallowed a Bloodstone that has been soaked in Elena's blood. This allows Elena to keep track of her location.

'Tasha also knows the ritual "Vitriolic Vitae." Anyone who tries to drink her blood instead suffers three normal wounds per Blood Point taken.

The plan is simple; Carlos, Elena and 'Tasha wish to find Bradley's chantry and thereby gain access to anything unusual, important or simply interesting. The characters are simply part of the Ravnos' plan to get in.

Here is the information on Elena, Carlos and 'Tasha;

## Natasha "Tasha"

Two and a half centuries ago, a young woman was working the streets of Rome, making dishonest gold in any way she could imagine. She saw a woman who set off all of her instincts, telling her that she was looking at a true artist. She followed this woman for a full half hour before she noticed that the woman was her virtual twin.

This realization stopped her for but a moment, but in that moment the woman disappeared. 'Tasha walked a bit farther, wondering, when she turned a corner and met the woman face to face. "You are exactly what I need, 'Tasha dear. Come along." Thus began the most exciting time of Natasha's life, and it hasn't ended yet.

**Sire:** Margali

**Nature:** Competitor

**Demeanor:** Plotter

**Generation:** 5th

**Embrace:** 1765

**Apparent Age:** Late teens

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 6

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

**Talents:** Acting 3, Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Leadership 3, Streetwise 5, Subterfuge 4

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Drive 3, Melee 3, Music 2, Security 4, Stealth 3, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Bureaucracy 2, Finance 4, Investigation 4, Law 2, Linguistics 3, Occult 2, Politics 3

**Disciplines:** Animalism 3, Auspex 3, Celerity 2, Chimerstry 5, Dominate 1, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 2, Presence 3, Protean 5, Thaumaturgy 3 (Movement of Mind 3)

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 5, Herd 3, Influence 3, Resources 5, Mentor 5, Ravnos Prestige 4

**Virtues:** Conscience 5, Self-Control 3, Courage 3

**Humanity:** 6

**Willpower:** 9

**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 40/8

**Image:** A young, pale, dark-haired, dark eyed woman filled with mischief. Her mannerisms are virtually identical to Margali's.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are Margali's twin, and you behave as if you're Margali. If someone disbelieves you, use Chimerstry to fake some of her abilities. You like to arrange grand thefts, but you like to plan them out, which is the primary difference between you and Margali; she prefers improvisation.

**Haven:** Travels the West Coast.

**Influence:** Her Influence extends through the media community in the California Free States. She generally uses it to gain information.

## Elena

Elena never knew her parents; she was passed from foster home to foster home until she was 16, when she left Washington State on Greyhound for Los Angeles. By this time she had been in 35 homes and had served four stints in Juvenile Detention. This was, of course, enough for her.

In L.A., she stepped off the bus and was picked up by a pimp almost immediately. For the next month she worked the streets while trying to figure a way out of her predicament. She tried running out on the pimp once, but his muscle boys caught her and gave her several bruises.

Elena was still recovering from the beating when 'Tasha appeared. Elena was attracted to this woman, and wanted to follow her to the ends of the earth, even though she knew that the pimp would have her killed if she disappeared again. Her death at the woman's hands was a sensual pleasure, her awakening and hunger frightening, but she followed regardless.

The woman took her to the pimp, and he was Elena's first kill.

Then, Natasha smiled warmly at her. "You are of my blood. Such mistreatment is a crime to be punished." Now, nothing could convince her to leave 'Tasha.

**Sire:** Natasha

**Nature:** Child

**Demeanor:** Deviant

**Generation:** 6th

**Embrace:** 1976

**Apparent Age:** Late teens

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

**Talents:** Acting 1, Alertness 5, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Drive 3, Firearms 2, Security 3, Stealth 4, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Investigation 3, Linguistics 1, Occult 2

**Disciplines:** Animalism 2, Auspex 1, Celerity 2, Chimerstry 4, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 2, Presence 1

**Backgrounds:** Mentor 3

**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self-Control 3, Courage 3

**Humanity:** 7

**Willpower:** 8

**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 30/6

**Image:** A young, dark-haired beauty with haunted eyes. She dresses much like the modern youth of Night City.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You're self assured and confident as long as 'Tasha is nearby, otherwise you begin to worry and fidget. You try to cover it up with typical Ravnos bravado, but you're not always successful.

**Haven:** Travels up and down the West Coast.

**Influence:** None.

## Carlos

Carlos lived with a group of modern Gypsies. His band traveled across North America in automobiles, campers and pickups. They stopped in cities to earn money, make contacts and the like, but always moved on again.

Every few years, the Twins would appear. They were two of the oldest of the Blood on this continent, and they always had stories of places and things they had seen or

stolen. They never stayed long, though the Gypsies loved them. When Carlos had just turned 20, one of the Twins arrived in his encampment. This vampire, 'Tasha, approached him and offered to take him down her endless road.

He accepted, and they left less than a week later. Since that night, Carlos has visited his family only occasionally over the next years. Carlos does not mind. He never had so much fun when he was alive!

**Sire:** Natasha  
**Nature:** Gallant  
**Demeanor:** Jester  
**Generation:** 6th  
**Embrace:** 1969  
**Apparent Age:** Early 20s  
**Physical:** Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4  
**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3  
**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4  
**Talents:** Acting 3, Alertness 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Streetwise 4  
**Skills:** Animal Ken 3, Drive 2, Firearms 3, Melee 2, Music 2, Security 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2  
**Knowledges:** Investigation 3, Law 2, Linguistics 1, Occult 3  
**Disciplines:** Animalism 2, Celerity 4, Chimerstry 5, Dominate 1, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 4, Potence 2, Presence 3, Protean 2  
**Backgrounds:** Mentor 3  
**Virtues:** Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 4  
**Humanity:** 7  
**Willpower:** 10  
**Blood Pool/Max per Turn:** 30/6

**Image:** A tall, dashing handsome young man. Carlos dresses in the flashiest styles available, unless he's being surreptitious, in which case he dresses in more subdued attire. A subtle fragrance reminiscent of crushed rose petals always seems to surround him.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Be a gentleman at all times; kiss the hands of the ladies, shake the hands of the men, always speak eloquently and occasionally bombastically. You always make everything look like grand theatre. The overall purpose in your life is to have fun.

**Haven:** Travels up and down the West Coast.

**Influence:** None.

## Scene Five:

### Welcome to the Bear Trap

If the characters remember their instructions, they will call Bradley and report they have Cassandra. If they're true anarchists, they'll go along with the Ravnos game. If not, they may choose to pass along the information about the Ravnos.

Before they leave for the warehouse and the meeting, however, a lone human woman steps up to them, sparing a glance at the staked body. "Scuse me chooms, I b'lieve ya got m' package." She gives them a disconcerting smile to display a Sharkgrin Special. She is short but muscular, and carries a submachine gun.

### Barracuda

The Solo, Barracuda, has been keeping track of the Kindred through a dropped bug. She is curious about their job, and sees the opportunity to make some quick cash. She doesn't believe in the supernatural, and certainly not in vampires. She does, however, believe in Minami-10 Smart submachine guns.

She will begin by using intimidation to get the characters to hand the body over. If



they do not respond, she will fire a single frag grenade into their midst and cut loose with the submachine gun. If she can sufficiently disorient the Kindred, she will then grab the staked body and leave.

On the other hand, with eight years of experience as a Solo, she is neither suicidal nor stupid. If the odds turn against her, she will attempt to E&E (Evade & Escape) out of there. She will then wait and watch while deciding whether to try again.

The characters can follow her if they so desire. She is expecting it, however. She has a motorcycle nearby waiting to carry her away with the body.

'Tasha isn't extremely concerned, except by the grenade — it could have damaged her severely. If she is taken by this human, she will simply wait for a good moment. She will then use Obfuscate to become invisible, float away via Mist Form, and ensure the characters find her body soon. If 'Tasha isn't capable of getting away from Barracuda on her own, remember that Elena is constantly aware of her location. Either way, the Ravnos will arrange for the body to get back into the characters' hands.

Barracuda will be extremely curious about where the body went. On the other hand, for about 10K Euro she'll be willing to forget the whole thing. (Try to get the players to believe *that* one.) Actually, Barracuda will figure that the whole thing was a setup with an actress faking the staking. She won't have time to find out the body is cold (she doesn't have thermographic optics after all) before the "body" walks away anyway. Stil, she'll make 10,000 Euro off the characters if she can.

**Nature:** Cavalier

**Demeanor:** Survivor

**Motive:** Mercenary

**Method:** Manipulative/Heavy Firepower

**Age:** 24

**Physical:** Strength 3(5), Dexterity 5(7), Stamina 3(5)

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Intimidation 4, Streetwise 3

**Skills:** Drive 2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 5, Melee 4, Security 3, Stealth 3

**Knowledges:** Computer 3, Law 1, Medicine 1

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Contacts 3, Resources 1

**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

**Humanity:** 4

**Willpower:** 9

**Cyberware:** Neural Processor, Kerenzikov 2, Boostmaster, Muscle & Bone Lace, Grafted Muscle 2, Smartgun Link, 2 pairs Interface Plugs, Nanosurgeons, Chipware Socket, Pain Editor, Vehicle Link, Sharkgrin Special, Big Ripples (Left Hand), Cyberoptics with Low Lite, Anti-Dazzle, Times Square Plus Marquee and Targeting Scope, Cyberaudio with Level Damper, 2 MU wetdrive, Skinweave (three dice soak), Body Plating (three extra dice for soak on chest/back area), Skull Plating (three extra dice for soak on head area), Cyberarm — right arm — with Big Ripples, Thickened Myomer, Reinforced Joints and a two-shot Grenade Launcher. Hand is a thief's special toolhand (thumb to

little finger in order: micro-light, lockpick, electronic probes, micro-welder, tear gas spray).

**Merits & Flaws:** Iron Will (4), Danger Sense (2), Unbondable (3), Crack Driver (1)

**Image:** A short, muscular woman in a leather jacket and denim jeans. She carries a Smartchipped Minami 10.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are bad. You are nasty, and you are tougher and meaner than anything else out on the street. When you want something the current owner does not wish to give you, intimidate the hell out of him. If that doesn't work, shoot him, *then* take it.

**Influence:** None outside the Combat Zone.

## If They Play the Game

The man who answers the phone has a cultured, precise accent. He will agree to meet the characters in one hour, at an old warehouse at the edge of the Combat Zone. It should not be difficult getting the body there. Any Boosters, *et al.* who attempt to jump the characters will mysteriously run away screaming.

The warehouse is a large, mostly empty building, with more than a fair share of squatters living inside. There is a small armored van parked just inside the sliding doors. Three cyberghouls are lounging around it. As the characters approach the van, a short, wiry man climbs out. His aura is pale, and is a mixture of violet and black. The guards all have light blue auras.

"You have the package?" His accent is late-20th-century American, and his voice is not the one from the phone. If the players hand "Cassandra" over, he thanks them, gives them a startling amount of cash, orders the three ghouls into the van and leaves. If the characters question him, he simply smiles coldly and opens the door. "Take your complaints to the boss."

Sitting on a seat farther back is a distinguished gentleman dressed in styles far from today's norm. The smell of tobacco is strong, but not unpleasant, in the air about him. He smiles at them. "Hello, I trust you recognize *my* voice?" He sounds like the man with whom they spoke on the phone. If the characters leave "Cassandra" with him, he and his entourage will leave and nothing further will happen. He will arrange for payment; one favor owed by him, as well as about 50K Euro. (Note: This man is a Tremere, but he is not Wilkins.)

The Storyteller should make an Auspex roll (difficulty 6) for each character that stays in the warehouse after the van departs. Any number of successes indicates that the character senses immediate danger. More than two successes indicates that the danger is in the warehouse office, and that another danger is arriving from outside. If any of the characters look in the office, they find a napalm bomb with a radio detonator. Simply turning off the receiver will prevent its detonation.

Shortly after "Wilkins'" departure, a dozen boosters armed with clubs, rippers, wolvers and two cyberarm-mounted flamers attack the warehouse. These Boosters were sent by Wilkins to destroy the characters before they could lead the Ravnos to him. Use the statistics from Scene One for the Boosters. They are, incidentally, members of the Iron Sights gang.

Three turns after the fight starts, the warehouse

explodes into flames as the napalm bomb in the office detonates.

## If They Spill the Story

If the characters inform their employer of the Ravnos plot, the Tremere's voice becomes concerned. "I see. This is very interesting. Why don't we meet in person and discuss this situation. Bring Cassandra, or whomever she is, along with you." He sounds a bit annoyed and worried. He has good reason to be; very few want to displease the Ravnos.

He will arrange a meeting in the same warehouse as before, but there is a complication. Tasha manages to slip away in the excitement (even if there is none).

The van, ghouls and vampire are all waiting, just as in the previous scene. When the characters approach the van, a distinguished, handsome, middle-aged gentleman steps out to greet them. He will naturally be disappointed by the lack of a body, but will not be too upset at them for losing her. He will get the entire story from the characters, and then leave.

After he leaves, the events as described above happen in the same order.

## Aftermath

Any of several events can provide a logical follow-up to this story. If the characters tried to double-cross the Ravnos, they now have some rather strange en-

emies. The Ravnos won't attempt to kill them unless the characters overreact strongly, but they will make unlife a living hell for them.

If they helped double-cross Wilkins, he will eventually seek revenge, which could lead to future stories. He will not try to arrange a Blood Hunt; it's silly to call one upon inhabitants of the Combat Zone in any event. He will, however, attempt to arrange their deaths. This should not prove too difficult, considering he knows where the characters' havens are. If they're smart, they'll move.

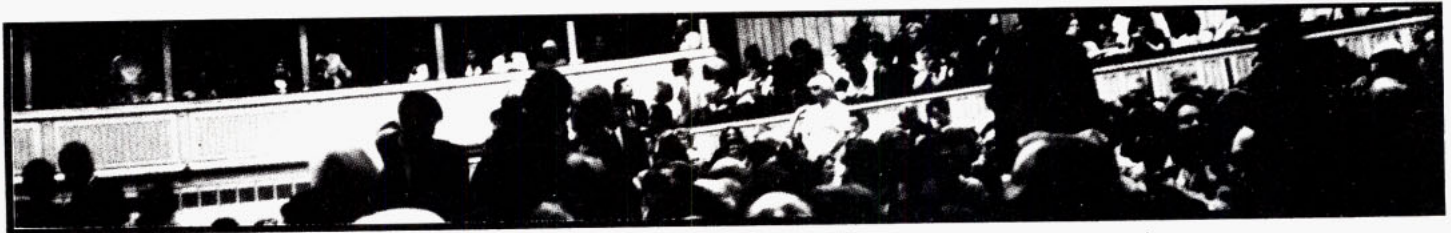
If the characters started a fight inside the Metal Church, they are still welcome inside the club, but will be carefully watched for some time.

Helen is going to be curious about what happened to Taliaferro. She is aware of Wilkins' antipathy toward the Toreador, and will watch him closely, but will find nothing. If the fight was started inside the Metal Church, however, she will know what happened to him and who did it. She won't call a Blood Hunt on the characters, but she will give her minions orders to capture and stake the characters should the minions encounter them.

Regardless of the result, Barracuda is not going to believe she encountered the supernatural. She'll dismiss the "walking corpse" as a publicity stunt or a simple joke.

Overall, it's just another week in Night City. 🐾

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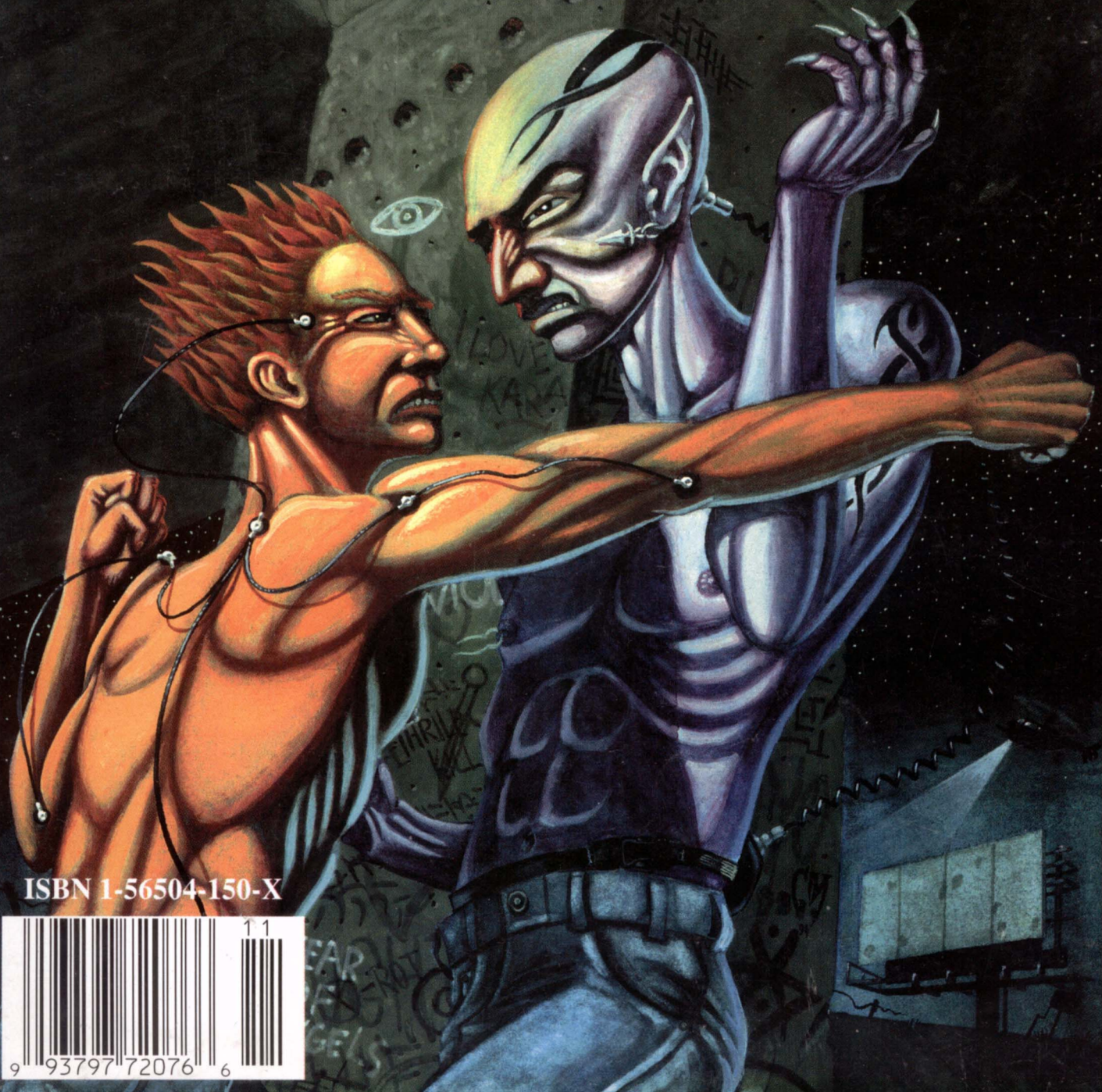
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# THE KILLING ARTS

BY  
DAVID PERRY

*Are all characters in the world of **Cyberpunk 2020** completely jacked up? Are they all walking computer implants? Certainly not, and we offer a new character class, the Martial Artist, as proof. If you like what you see here, look for more martial arts stuff in the new **Pac Rim Sourcebook**.*

## THE MARTIAL ARTIST IN CYBERPUNK 2020

Some people seem to blunder through their lives, finding their paths by accident. Not me. I knew what I wanted to be from the age of seven.

I broke into my big brother's bedroom and "borrowed" some of his video chips. One of them was an antique: a Bruce Lee martial arts video.

I was hooked from the start. The grace, the majesty, the sheer power of his moves captivated me. I pestered my parents until they paid for martial arts lessons and have dedicated myself to them ever since.

Before long I learned that my skills were in demand. It seemed that employers looked for approaches to problems that were more subtle than those offered by the average chromed-to-the-max street ronin. The

work pays the bills and supplies me with opportunities to test my skills against a variety of opponents.

Do I ever have doubts about my path?

Never! Cybernetics and firearms may offer the easier, less demanding path, but for that very reason their users are lazy and unfocused. Their dependence on technology weakens their spirits and dulls their minds. After all, in my time I've faced street ronin, nomads and boosters, and I'm the one standing here now. Draw your own conclusions.

### **SPECIAL ABILITY: MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING**

The martial artist's special skill is Martial Arts Training. The skill represents years of intensive training and complete dedication. It provides skills beyond



JAMES  
DALY  
1994  
©

those learned by other character classes with traditional, peripheral training in the Martial Arts skill.

## ADVANTAGES

Martial Arts Training adds the level of the skill to the user's Initiative when making martial arts moves, be they hand-to-hand or melee weapon attacks. The skill does not apply if the martial artist is using a gun or non-martial arts form of attack.

A character with Martial Arts Training adds his level in the skill to any damage inflicted with one traditional melee weapon that she has had particularly intensive training with.

For example, Bruce has Martial Arts Training at level 6. When he learned Melee he specialized in nunchaku, which do 3D6 damage. In combat, Bruce inflicts 3D6 + Body Damage modifier + 6 damage with his nunchaku.

Remember, the weapon specialized in must be a traditional melee weapon (e.g., sword, knife, sai, club). It's difficult to imagine a legitimate martial arts teacher passing on the finer techniques of a chainsaw.

## DISADVANTAGES

Characters with Martial Arts Training frown upon the use of guns, considering them crude. However, all but the most fanatical recognize the occasional need for firearms in the modern world. Any they do carry are small and concealable — weapons that don't encumber them, as the smartlinked assault rifle and assault cannon encumbers the average street ronin.

Because characters with Martial Arts Training hone their bodies and minds to perfect harmony, they are much more sensitive to corruption of the body than are average people. Thus, maximum Humanity loss is suffered from the implantation of any cyberware.

For example, if a piece of cyberware imposes a 3D6 Humanity loss, don't bother rolling. The character with Martial Arts Training automatically loses 18 Humanity points.

Not even European cyberware clinics can reduce or prevent this Humanity loss.

## CAREER SKILLS

### Martial Arts Training

Endurance  
Intimidate  
Awareness/Notice  
Hide/Evade  
Martial Arts (Primary)  
Martial Arts (Secondary)  
Melee  
Athletics  
Dodge and Escape

## IN YOUR GAME

Obviously players can create characters with Martial Arts Training, but how do you, the Gamemaster, introduce such NPCs to your campaign?

Perhaps the easiest way is to justify possession of the skill with NPCs' careers. Following are a few careers that lend themselves to such training.

## BODYGUARD

Bodyguards are usually required to remain inconspicuous, so the average full-on 'borg doesn't fit the bill.

Because bodyguards' fights are usually up close and personal, Martial Arts Training is a popular skill choice. Indeed, the skill allows bodyguards the ability to remove threatening individuals without killing them, which can save clients a lot of bad publicity.

Arasaka, in particular, favors bodyguards with Martial Arts Training for jobs with high-visibility figures, such as media stars and rockers.

## FIGHTER

Fighters with Martial Arts Training can be high-profile professionals or lowly gladiators fighting in illegal pits. Legitimate professionals might even fight in national championships before the eyes of millions, earning thousands in sponsorship and advertising (and those fighters may in turn require bodyguards).

Illegitimate gladiators might fight illegal blood matches in Night City's sleaziest bars. Their opponents could range from gangers to solos to cyberanimals.

## MEDIA STAR

People have always been fascinated with masters of the martial arts — from Bruce Lee to Jackie Chan. In this modern age of technology, people no longer need to watch the action; they can become a part of it thanks to Braindance technology.

A martial arts media star requires a security team (solos and nomads), a technical staff (techies), researchers (netrunners) and a director (media).

Although the media star seems well protected, a rival media corp might want to convert her to its side and sends in agents to "coerce" the character to do just that. The media star's backers aren't likely to let their pawn go.

## CORPORATE BLACK OPS AGENT

Many corporations consider martial artists a better bet than solos in black ops. Agents with Martial Arts Training usually have a more subtle approach; their refusal to use heavy weapons or cyberware makes it much easier for them to infiltrate buildings. The martial artist's lack of cyberware also means a corporation can be confident that it won't lose its investment to cyberpsychosis.

Corporate black ops agents can assist characters on a job or be deadly enemies waiting within a compound.

## GANGER

Unable to afford expensive cyberware and automatic weapons, many gangs rely on members with Martial Arts Training for the skills to survive on the street.

Characters can originate from such gangs. They might also have to deal with a gang and may expect a simple mission, but learn some humility the hard way. Or gangs of martial artists might go to war, and the characters might find themselves caught in the middle.

## NEW MARTIAL ARTS STYLES

Because characters with Martial Arts Training are thoroughly versed in the art of combat, they may learn diverse fighting styles. Here are some specific ones that you can add to your *Cyberpunk 2020* game:

### JUJITSU

This is a no-holds-barred style of martial arts that uses locks, holds and trips to defeat and disarm opponents.

Jujitsu is popular among edge-runners, as many of its moves are designed to counter and disarm gun and knife attacks.

Jujitsu (2): Block +3, Dodge +2, Throw +2, Hold +4, Choke +3, Sweep +2

### SHAOLIN KUNG-FU

The original version of Kung-Fu was developed in the Shaolin temples of China and taught by monks until their slaughter in the 17th century. Fortunately, their arts survived them.

This style relies on extremely powerful kicks and strikes.

Shaolin Kung-Fu (2): Strike +3, Kick +3, Block +2, Sweep +3

### WING CHUNG

Wing Chung is a popular martial arts style known for its lightning-fast and powerful hand strikes. Wing Chung strikes can be delivered at extremely close range, hampering other styles' longer-reaching hand and kick attacks.

Wing Chung (3): Strike +4, Kick +2, Block +3, Dodge +1, Sweep +1, Hold +2

### TAI CHI

As much a way of developing balance and strength as a martial arts style, Tai Chi is a very graceful form that uses blocks, kicks and punches.

Tai Chi (1): Strike +2, Kick +1, Block +3, Dodge +3

## SAMPLE MARTIAL ARTIST

Here's an indication of how the Martial Arts Training skill can be applied in character creation. After all, what would an article on the martial arts be without a tribute to the ultimate in artists? Ninjas might be restricted to NPCs, unless your campaign is truly high powered.



## NINJA

INT: 8  
REF: 10  
TECH: 6  
COOL: 9  
ATTR: 5  
LUCK: 4  
MA: 7  
BODY: 9  
EMP: 6

**Skills:** Martial Arts Training 9, Kung-Fu 9, Akido 7, Awareness/Notice 8, Social 6, Electronic Security 7, Archery 6, Athletics 7, Fencing 8, Submachine Gun 5, Stealth 9, Disguise 7, Melee 8, Pick Lock 8, Expert: Poisons 7

**Cyberware:** None

**Gear:** Armored clothes (SP 16 everywhere; -1 to REF; absorbs heat, -2 to all Awareness/Notice rolls to spot the wearer with infrared); MonoKatanna; Shuriken (usually poisoned); poisons; mini flash grenades; mace sprayer (up the sleeve); goggles with low-light, thermographic and antidazzle filters; H&K MP-2013 with laser sight and AP bullets; caltrops; ear plugs with sound amplifiers (equivalent to Amplified Hearing)

**Background:** Even in 2020 the ninja is the ultimate assassin. Combining the best of the old ways with

the advantages of modern technology, the ninja has carved a place for herself in the 21st century, without compromising tradition.


Constant competition between corporations provides ninjas with vast opportunities for employment as spies, couriers and assassins. Loyal to no one corporation, ninjas and their clans accept employment with anyone who knows how to contact them and can pay their fees.

Relying as much on cunning, misdirection, disguise and stealth as on combat skills, the ninja may appear from nowhere or surprisingly impersonate someone close to her target. Regardless of how a ninja's mission is executed, it's virtually assured of success.

Ninjas should be portrayed as lone assassins and masters of disguise, not as they are in many martial arts films wherein dozens of them line up to be defeated by a single hero.

Characters should only encounter one ninja in any story, and that should almost always be one too many.

**Quote:** "Why do you hesitate? You have your guns and your cyberware. My body isn't augmented at all. How can you lose? Consider that question when you wake up in the hospital!"

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# STUDIO

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