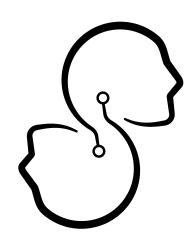
HEADSPACE DYSTOPIAN DREAMS

SEVEN UNIQUE CYBERPUNK SETTINGS

BOSS • CAMERON • CHAGAS • HINDMARCH KOEBEL • MAGRANN • PITRE • SCOBLE







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Dedicated to all the backers of Headspace whose support made this book possible.

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FOREWORD

BY SENDA

"She was the best of us."

With one short line, the group of players at my table coalesces into the beginning of the emotional story for the game we are about to play. The helicopter explodes, taking two of their original team with it; their mission has just taken a turn for the disastrous, but they know they have to push on. There are people relying on them. There are personal reasons they took on this mission and they are determined to finish for Bombshell now too — because she was the best of us. She was the glue that held the team together. Everyone liked Bombshell.

In the midst of the trappings of a cyberpunk setting, which are often cold and impersonal, Mark has effectively taken my players to a place where the thing they care about the most is how their characters feel; who they lost before this game ever started, and how they lost them. Building characters and memories is the basis of the game that I will run for them. All I have to do is take a few notes. This is *Headspace*, a game of evil corporations, rebellion, revenge and regret, and future technology, but most importantly, a game of people, determination, and shared emotional history.

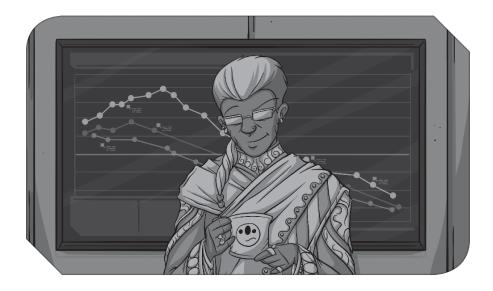
As the host of an actual play podcast, I have run a lot of one shots in my time. Very rarely does someone strike gold the way that Mark has with *Headspace*. *Headspace* is a game of playing people — real people who have emotional baggage — who are desperate enough to share that baggage involuntarily with a crew of others they may or may not trust. It is not just a game you play, but it is a game you feel. If you couldn't tell, I am a big fan of this game.

I am not alone.

Mark's vision of a world of shared consciousness not only captivated me but also the incredibly talented contributors who created the settings you will find in this book. Here are new and exotic locations that reach past the typical chrome and neon, rain soaked streets that we think of when we think of cyberpunk. We are treated to the underwater with the Hieroglyph of the Whale, in future Japan; Antarctica as the new but failed vacation destination; Detroit as the battleground of neo urban farming and habitation; New Zealand, South America. Each of these settings has even more opportunity to ignite your imagination and connect more emotions to your game in a personal sense.

There are so many new adventures in these pages — emotional, epic, and story building experiences waiting to be played. Somewhere in these pages will be the location where you and your group will find your Bombshell, the emotional lynchpin that will make everyone *feel* this game.

SENDA LINAUGH She's a Super Geek Podcast





CHAPTER 1 SETTINGS AN OVERVIEW

UNDERSTANDING HEADSPACE SETTINGS

Each game of *Headspace* uses a **Setting** to tell its story. A Setting represents a distinct region or city of the world to explore, each with its own unique story to tell. Settings serve as the basis for tying the fiction of the Operators to the fiction of the world by connecting the stories of their Skills with the specific Events and Issues that have shaped the Setting.

A Setting provides everything a GM needs to tell a story; it fills out the fiction of the world and region and provides 4 readymade Corporations, each with its own **Corporate Agent** and an initial story hook in the form of a **Corporate Project**.

Settings in *Headspace* are treated as mutually exclusive from one another and don't interact with other Settings. You are making your own version of the Earth. Each setting has a different set of **5 Events**, **5 Issues**, and **5 Corporate Secrets** that have changed the world into the dystopian future it is.

EVENT/ISSUE/CORPORATE SECRET TABLE

The primary building block of each Setting is a series of interconnected **Events**, **Issues**, and **Corporate Secrets** which together provide the basic fiction for the Setting, summarized in a simple table and in the much longer **Setting Background** section.

They are all purposefully simple ideas, allowing the Players and the GM to build on them in Operator Creation and during play to make the fiction as interesting and as evocative as possible.

Events and **Issues** are not mechanically used in creation; they more represent the core building blocks of your particular brand of dystopia. **Corporate Secrets** are used in Headspace Operator Creation to define an Operator's Regrets and Drives (each Operator will have had a direct hand in the secrets of your chosen Setting).

COMPLETE EXAMPLES OF THIS PROCESS ARE IN THE HEADSPACE CORE BOOK OPERATOR CREATION ON PAGE 87.



EVENTS

Each setting is founded on five dystopian Events. Each event depicts a pivotal moment in history that changed the world, region, or city from what we know and will each have long lasting impacts into the Setting's future (see Issues, page 11).

Events are short, evocative statements of fact about the Setting. While they may be related thematically to each other, they should not flow from each other. Events are short and concise and purposefully do not delve into their potential consequences. Events often take the form of technological breakthrough, cultural shifts, physical changes, and economic/political upheaval.

Events can be large and world-changing or small and localized. Either way, they are important within the fiction of this specific Setting. Often the localized events will provide more detail to the location the game is set in.

Most Headspace Settings focus on 1 Worldwide Event, 1 Regional Event, and 3 Local Events.

Some examples of Worldwide Events:

- ♦ The End of Oil
- Orbital Human Colonies
- Pandemics
- Rare Earth Metal Shortage
- Human Mutation

Some examples of Regional Events:

- Pacific Coast Tsunami
- Famine
- Pipeline Leaking Toxins
- Post-tsunami Earthquakes

Some examples of Localized Events:

- Nuclear Reactor Meltdown
- Political Assassination
- the Shanghai Food Riots

ISSUES

Issues all stem from the five Events of the Setting. Issues represent long-lasting effects, consequences, and complications. More often than not, Issues are about how society struggles to cope with the Event. In the dystopian world of *Headspace*, society generally doesn't cope well, but it will be up to the Players to further develop the fiction of the Issues to determine just how dark this future is.

SOME EXAMPLES OF EVENTS THAT LED TO ISSUES:

- Pandemic led to Quarantine Zones.
- Post-tsunami Earthquakes led to Unpredictable Continued Tectonic Activity and worsening conditions in Vancouver.
- Rare Earth Metal Shortage led to a Scavenging Economy.
- Pacific Coast Famine led to Food Riots.
- Massive Tsunami led to Corporate Reclamation Zones.

CORPORATE SECRETS

Corporate Secrets represent dark, clandestine activities of the Setting's Corporations. Corporate Secrets tie each Corporation to a specific Event and/or its Issue. The Corporation is not necessarily responsible for the Event or its Issue, but it did something to satisfy its own Ambitions, likely at the detriment of someone else. Secrets are not common knowledge; at best they are conspiracy and rumour, and only a few know the facts. It would be very bad if the truth of some of these secrets was to ever come to light, something the Corporations are highly motivated to prevent.

Because there are 4-5 Corporations, in some Settings, one will be involved twice, meaning it is likely the biggest Corporation in the Setting, or the most influential, the evilest, etc.

Corporate Secrets are a bit more specific and focused than Events or Issues in order to provide some key details to build the fiction on. Remember that every Operator will have a Regret tied to their involvement in one of these dark happenings.



SOME EXAMPLES OF CORPORATE SECRETS:

- Massive Tsunami Trauma One secured widespread access to secret documents and resources with a "rescue crew".
- Pacific Coast Famine/Food Riots Pacific Security Solutions exacerbated the riots to ensure they were needed for future security contracts.
- Post-tsunami earthquakes 3H Energy may have had a direct hand in the Tsunami through unstable geothermal power experimentations.
- Pandemic/Quarantine Zones Applied Optimism advertises a cure that they know doesn't work.

CORPORATE TABLE

In the near-future dystopia of *Headspace*, most of human civilization is manipulated by a few massive, multi-national corporations. Each setting provides four Corporations, each with its own personality, resources, and agendas.

Corporations are summarized in a simple table. This Corporate Table is mostly used as a quick reference tool for the GM, with each Corporation and its Agent having its own background info.

CORPORATE AGENT

Name

- Role
- Dominant Emotion
- 2 Characteristics

CORPORATE AGENT TEMPLATE

OROSHI MEDTECH

"Meat Is Magic"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Provide quality-of-life improvements for those unable to access CYBERZONE through pharmaceuticals, cybernetics, and psychedelics.

SHADOW MANDATE

Seize control of meatspace entirely and unplug CYBERZONE.

CORPORATE AGENT

Doctor Yashida Setsuko

- ♦ Role: Whitecoat
- Emotion: Ego
- Characteristics: Unscrupulous, Eager

INITIAL PROJECT

Perfect high-speed human cloning.

EXAMPLE CORPORATE TABLE

Each Company is represented by at least one potent NPC called an Agent. Corporate Agents are not the public faces of the Corporation; Agents represent the top-tier operators, spies, business managers, and diplomats. Most often, a Corporate Agent works towards the Initial Project while not betraying the Public Mandate. The Operators will have active—and in many cases, complicated—relationships with the Setting's various Corporate Agents.

Operator Type: (pick one of the Operator types) The Agent is like an Operator, having the same Skills and a comparable level of expertise. See Chapter 6 of the core book).

Dominant Emotion: (one of the five core emotions of Headspace: Rage, Grief, Fear, Need, and Ego) – An Agent's Dominant Emotion represents the Emotion that they most often represent in the fiction.

Two Characteristics: Two descriptive adjectives of the Agent as a quick reference/reminder to the GM.

INITIAL PROJECT:

Projects are corporate plans to change the Setting to align with the Corporation's long-term goals (their Shadow Mandate). Projects are short-term goals (2-4 sessions) that will establish a new dystopian Event in the Setting if the Operators do not stop it.

Projects do not have to work for common goals; Corporations don't play nice with each other, so it's always good to have them at odds.



CHAPTER 2 NEO-TOKYO PLEASURE DOME ULTRA 20XX

By Adam Koebel

Location: Neo-Tokyo Empire / CYBERZONE

Date: Imperial Year 33 / Old World 20XX

BACKGROUND

World War III came on like a sudden storm. There'd been decades of sabre-rattling and threats of secession over water rights, civil issues, and territorial disputes, but nothing that could have heralded the sudden and horrific events of one night. The War was over in a matter of days, come to a crashing conclusion with the detonation of the nuclear weapon reserves of the great powers. So much of the world was laid to rest in a bed of rubble and fire. This was the Big One. The War to End All Wars, For Real This Time.

What was left, in Japan, was the City of Tokyo. Military targets outside the megaplex were wiped clean by attacks from The Russian Kleptarchy and the dirty-bomb scrabbling of the Glorious Unified Korean People's Autocracy. Tokyo survived. Some say by a miracle—it was the divine wind returned. Others say, even now, that the Neo-Tokyo Empire seeded that conflict so as to lay low all those who might stand in her way. Regardless, all that was left was the single shining jewel of the Empire. Tokyo survived. Tokyo survives yet.

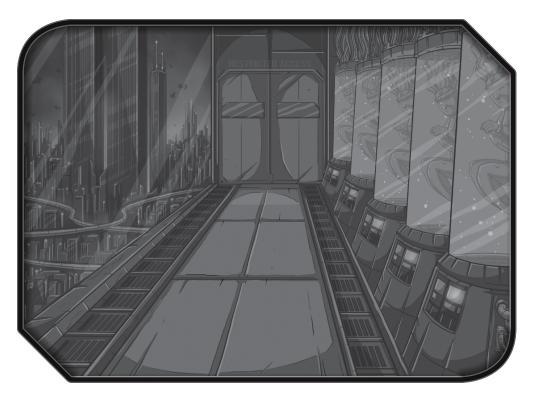
In the years following the war, the new government reinstituted an old tradition: Stage Alpha Sakoku Protocol. The closing of borders. Tokyo for citizens of the new Empire. Walls were built and drones deployed for protection. "Isolation" became the watch-word for survival in this new and ruined world. And it worked. Turning inward, the former Japanese megaplex expanded and became powerful. Other nation-states crumbled around her, but the Empire remained. In the ashes of the old world, she gave birth to the new one.

CYBERZONE was awakened in Imperial Year 16 as a simple shared-consciousness method of computing. It allowed users to link their minds in a computerized gestalt emotion and facilitated instantaneous communication over a great distance. Brilliant Diamond Technologies, creator of CYBERZONE, knew they had done something no corporation had ever

managed before: the conjuring of a whole new state of existence. They began work on CYBERZONE v2.

With the second iteration of CYBERZONE, and the perfection of meatspace simulation, more and more of the population of Neo-Tokyo abandoned the wet, cold misery of meatspace for a complete CYBERZONE life experience. It's estimated that, according to the last official census, 80% of the population of the Empire spends most of their time in CYBERZONE. With new compatibility adaptations on the way, it's estimated that number will rise to 100% within the close of the decade.

This leaves the world outside empty, cold and abandoned. This leaves meatspace to those unfortunates who have, for reasons of choice or compatibility, ignored the new world promised to them in the neon heaven of CYBERZONE. These unfortunates represent a consistent threat to those whose bodies lies slumbering in corporate hotels or, god forbid, in their homes, plugged into CYBERZONE connection terminals, their bodies growing weak and sickly by the day. To protect these people, to keep the meatspace safe, the government of Neo-Tokyo instituted the



Tonarigumi (隣組). Teams of corporate-neutral protectors, linked together by the tech that created CYBERZONE, whose emotions, thoughts, and experiences make them a perfect team. In many ways, the Tonarigumi are seen as the ultimate expression of Imperial heroism; sacrificing the indulgence of CYBERZONE and giving up their individuality for their unit, they're responsible for protecting the Empire's sleeping citizens of the Empire, travelers of the perfect cybernetic dream.

This is the reality that Operators face. A population of slumbering citizens whose desperation to leave the world behind and forge a new one in CYBERZONE leaves them vulnerable and soft, prey to the criminals, the tourists, and the corporations that prowl meatspace. That seek to take advantage of the world that the people of the Empire left behind. The world outside the Empire is larger than the former Japan likes to believe, and the Sakoku Enforcement Agency has become corrupt; bribery allows



undesirable elements to come and go from the Empire as they please. While the Tonarigumi may share goals with agencies like Nikumono Custodial Services (seemingly both desire to keep the meatspace inhabitants of their country safe), every corporation has their own goals. The world sees Neo-Tokyo and, by extension, CYBERZONE, as the last place they can go to find what they're so desperate to find. Safety. Enlightenment. Or

just one more fix, an injection of pure code that'll wash away the taste of ash that the desolation of the last fifty years has left in all their mouths.

Operating in meatspace alongside the Tonarigumi are a number of corporate assets, the government of the Empire itself, and a whole underworld of smugglers, illegal coders, CYBERZONE pirates, and drug runners whose trade often goes unpoliced in the abandoned streets of Neo-Tokyo. Perhaps chief among these operators is Oroshi Medtech, a corporation with ancient roots and rumored ties to Neo-Tokyo's underworld. As the people of Neo-Tokyo left their bodies behind in favour of CYBERZONE, Oroshi filled the gap, plying a trade of body modification, cybernetics, cloning, and drugs (both therapeutic and recreational, legal

and illegal). Their agents seek a total domination of those who remain in meatspace. They provide services to improve and expand what one can do with their meat, offering those trapped in the sometimes-hell of reality a chance to reign over their fellows. The Tonarigumi have clashed with Oroshi agents on a number of occasions, coming toe-to-toe with their genetically-enhanced supersoldiers. Some say that Oroshi is

developing a drugs-and-genetic-tampering alternative to the 'gumi method of mental connection. Their research teams have extensive budgets, massive resources, and a will of steel.

Companion organizations exist in parallel to the Tonarigumi, operations like Nikumono Custodial Services or the Delicious Future Nutritional Assistance Corporation. Ostensibly charged with the same mandate, to protect the bodies and health of the citizens of Neo-Tokyo, these corporations have their own agenda and operate outside government control. Nikumono offers private protection services to those who can afford them, overlapping the services of the Tonarigumi and often coming in direct conflict with them over protocol and behaviour. When the better-armed, better-funded and unusually well-connected agents of Nikumono can get to a crime scene faster or apprehend a criminal more quickly, the Tonarigumi lose face. This has proven to be a slippery slope, and more and more of the Empire's elite give their protection over to Nikumono. While CYBERZONE is a place of utterly sublime purity and beauty, the minds who dwell within it are still meat. The more of that meat that Nikumono controls, the more power they have over CYBERZONE.

That meat, too, needs nourishment. The Delicious Future Nutritional Assistance Corporation exists to fulfill that need. They both operate a nutrient program for those whose bodies require it and run the largest meatspace food conglomerate in the Empire. Their divisions are constantly creating new, more perfect supplements and offering those who cannot escape to CYBERZONE a chance to taste new, exciting, gene-spliced foodstuffs in their hundreds of Great Chef Calorie Supply Centers. Competition is always an issue; the huge supply of space often tempts citizens who cannot afford what Delicious Future has on offer to create their own illegal calories in underground farms or to tend livestock that has not been gene-tailored. These citizens find themselves on the business end of Great Chef Matsuhara's Illegal Calorie Defense Squads, leading to

penalization under harsh corporate profit protection laws.



Hovering over Neo-Tokyo are the great saviours of Brilliant Diamond Technologies, who gave hope to the dying and gave a new world to those lost in the ruins of the old one. A corporation whose military background is shadowed in mystery and whose agents infiltrate every aspect of Imperial society. The architects of CYBERZONE are, to some, the ultimate salvation of humanity itself. To others, they are the gatekeepers of a paradise of lies; they're a false promise that will lead only to the perfect imprisonment of human consciousness. Rumors about the corporation abound; their board of directors has been compromised by an Artificial Intelligence. They're really the fore-runners of an alien species come to rid the earth of human minds. They were the ones that started World War III. What matters, now, on the streets and in the homes of Neo-Tokyo is that Brilliant Diamond has changed the course of human evolution. They are a force that cannot be denied.

In the face of this inevitable change, the Tonarigumi stand in the shadows, operators struggling to maintain a world all-but-forgotten. They walk among the desperate, among the rebellious, among thieves and foreign agents. They do what must be done to protect the citizens of Neo-Tokyo from all the harm in the world. They straddle the line between meatspace isolation and the ultimate consciousness collaboration of CYBERZONE, alone save for each other. Bound to one another's hearts and minds for a single goal. They are the martyrs of the age, but every Tonarigumi Operator has asked themselves, at least once in their career, whether it's all worth it. If Brilliant Diamond is right and the meat is a burden to be shed, what glory is left for the custodians of this last and horrible human graveyard? CYBERZONE and its oblivion of the self calls out to everyone, clear and impossible to ignore.

GEOGRAPHY -

Once, Tokyo was the greatest city in the country of Japan. Now, it is Japan. After the bombs began to fall, the government called all citizens to the newly-built arcologies of Tokyo. When the war was over and they learned no-one had won, there was nothing left to do but hold the citizens close and become something new. Now, the Neo-Tokyo Empire stretches across much of the mid-eastern coast of Honshu. Once a glittering city full of neon and sound, Tokyo is oddly quiet. Most of her citizens have retreated into stasis, their bodies slumbering in huge coffin-arcologies while their consciousness expands into the brilliant perfection that is CYBERZONE. The city is, in many ways, falling apart. Guarded from the dangers of the outside world by automated protector units and the few brave souls of the Tonarigumi, those who still live in their bodies find the city mostly abandoned, cold and quiet. Advertisement drones project ads for CYBERZONE induction clinics, food paste supply depots, and the drugs and entertainment still left to those who are Incompatible with the Thousand Heavenly Delights of CYBERZONE. Neo-Tokyo is a strange graveyard, populated by animals and those unfortunate ghosts still bound to their bodies, not allowed to pass on to cybernetic bliss.

The city itself is a maze of concrete and neon. In many places, the streets are cracked and flooded as old infrastructure falls to nature's grasp. Parks and zoos are overgrown and wildlife wanders many of the streets of the Empire. Flooding is a massive problem in the Chiba area, where many Incompatibles live on flotillas or houseboats. Inland, the terrain is drier, with more densely populated areas still resembling their pre-war glory. The Empire is a matryoshka: cities within a city, where corporations and communities continue to operate. What remains are the Hotels, perfect and shining over all. Glowing buildings maintained by their own

nuclear power supplies, these places serve to house and feed the bodies of those who have ascended, the inhabitants of CYBERZONE. Until Brilliant Diamond finds a way to free humanity from their bodies, these arcologies preserve the flesh while the mind is set free. They serve as a reminder, a lighthouse (or a grim warning) to the inhabitants of the city. CYBERZONE looms over everything, here.

Closer to the Hotels, there is prosperity and light; corporations pursue their meatspace endeavours in parallel with what occurs in CYBERZONE. Here, the Tonarigumi operate to protect those few who are unwilling or unable to visit CYBERZONE, and those who—by some miracle—have found their way into the Neo-Tokyo Empire from the burned out remnants of some other country-remnant. Beyond the Hotels, it might be hard to tell Neo-Tokyo apart from the rest of the ruined world. Cults, gangs, corporations, and warlords all operate there with only the limited authority of the Tonarigumi to get in their way.

It's always night in Neo-Tokyo. It's just a matter of how dark.

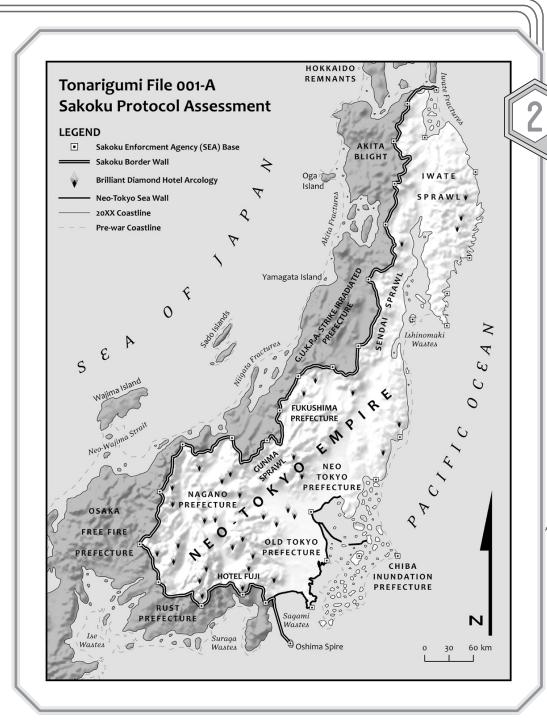
CORPORATE & AGENT BACKGROUNDS

BRILLIANT DIAMOND TECHNOLOGIES



Founded originally as a military defense company researching artificial intelligence systems for the Japanese government, Brilliant Diamond came into its true power after the war, during the post-Sakoku Revival prosperity the Neo-Toyko government afforded. Brilliant Diamond turned their minds then to their true purpose: a new world. The old one had been damaged beyond repair; nuclear weapons had led the world into a dark age, and Brilliant Diamond found heaven among the ashes. When CYBERZONE was activated, it was only a matter of months before government-mandated Compatibility Testing began. Now, it is estimated some 700 million souls

spend every moment of their lives in CYBERZONE. Brilliant Diamond took what remained of the world and gave the Neo-Tokyo Empire a living heaven. Now, their primary mandate is to maintain and upgrade that heaven. To create a more nuanced and powerful experience for those who dwell within CYBERZONE and to reduce Incompatibility to zero. Eventually, it is believed, Brilliant Diamond will engineer a perfect transfer system, and humanity will abandon meatspace entirely. For now, Brilliant





Diamond is the most powerful corporation in Neo-Tokyo, managing several dozen sub-corporations that range from infrastructure management to entertainment programming. There are those who oppose Brilliant Diamond's goals, those who believe that human evolution is inherently tied to the human body. It is against this opposition that Brilliant Diamond most often struggles. The news often reports vandalism and outright destruction of Brilliant Diamond assets by extremist pro-body activists. Brilliant Diamond believes that, eventually, even these opponents will come to recognize that the time for flesh and earth has ended and that humanity's future lies among the digital waves of CYBERZONE.

BRILLIANT DIAMOND CORPORATE AGENT: YAMADA YOSHIRO

One of the agents tasked with maintaining Brilliant Diamond's connection with the obsolete world of flesh is **Meatspace Operations Sub-Administrator**, **Yamada Yoshiro**. Yamada has been with Meatspace Ops for three years, after a tragic accident in CYBERZONE rendered him Incompatible. He is a driven and loyal agent, who operates a number of teams responsible for facility security and counter-espionage. Yamada has been reprimanded a number of times for his unusually aggressive techniques and willingness to operate outside Standard Corporate Protocols, but he's still considered a valuable asset by his superiors. Yamada struggles with his separation from CYBERZONE, and while he was cleared by a number of psychological assessments, he has recently become addicted to Gold Star #9, an engineered mycotoxin that simulates some of the effects of CYBERZONE interface. If he is not rendered Compatible soon, Yamada may fall deeper and deeper into his addiction, becoming a liability to Brilliant Diamond, if not an outright danger.



DELICIOUS FUTURE NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE CORPORATION

Part of what made the Sakoku Revival Protocols so necessary for the survival of Neo-Tokyo was that food was in such limited supply. Prior to World War III, the food supply problems of the globe at large had become a thing of the past. Easy to obtain and easier still to engineer, perfect proteins and super-grains were being developed at an astronomical rate. When the bombs fell and the genetic access codes to the crops that had kept a world fed were lost, food

shortage became a dangerously immediate problem. The Empress herself created the National Food Assistance Program, which would evolve over time into what all Neo-Tokyo citizens know as the Delicious Future Nutritional Assistance Corporation. There are none who occupy meatspace here who don't recognize the smiling face of Great Chef Matsuhara; his cartoonish glowing face and fatherly demeanor shines down from bill-boards and adver-drones all over the Empire. Delicious Future controls nearly the entire food supply chain of Neo-Tokyo, though their franchise restaurants and free food-paste tap installations are not the only operating face of the company. Delicious Future employs teams of experts whose primary job is to crack down on "Illegal Calories"—vegetables grown in rainy rooftop gardens or in mushroom farms in abandoned train stations. All food in the Empire must follow the Three Methods of Safety: purity, origin, and legality. Delicious Future is responsible for maintaining these methods and is permitted to do so with any force necessary.

The irony, however, is that with most of Delicious Future's corporate board reside in CYBERZONE. With more becoming Compatible with each passing year, the weight of maintaining caloric abundance becomes ever-more difficult for those who remain. Desperate times have called for desperate measures, and Delicious Future has been finding ways to smuggle illegal gene-strains from outside the Empire into their labs.

DELICIOUS FUTURE CORPORATE AGENT: MATSUOKA DAISUKE

Sous-Chef Level Gamma, Matsuoka Daisuke, is a part of the team who believes that the perfect calorie is just around the corner. A rarity among citizens, he manages both an office in meatspace, in the World Tragedy Memorial Building and maintains a powerful presence in CYBERZONE. Matsuoka is a rising star at Delicious Future, and his obsession to development and health is second to none. Many believe that he is on track to take over as Sous Chef to the Great Chef himself, but when asked about his ambitions, Matsuoka has been universally humble. Recently, he was part of a team that held a dinner in Great Chef Matsuhara's Personal Favourite Caloric Rejuvenation Facility where a number of powerful government officials and corporate board members were fed with the best that Delicious Future has to offer.

Matsuoka maintains close ties with a number of double-agents and planted agents among the Sakoku Revival Protocols Board of Enforcement, and he has been leveraging his connections (and no small amount of his annual bribery budget) to pursue a project related to the smuggling in and reverse-engineering of a strain of low-energy-requirement rice from Thailand. Whether Matsuoka will successfully engineer a safe strain or his experiment will end in his shameful exposure remains to be seen.





NIKUMONO CUSTODIAL SERVICES

Our consciousness is immortal. The soul is a beautiful pulse of electron-light that can never truly be destroyed. Not so for the body. Not so for the meat prisons that we are, for the time being, still anchored to. These soft things of skin and bone need constant protection: from decay, from accidents, from the depredations of those unfortunates whose Incompatibility has driven them to murder those who were able to ascend into the heavenly realm of CYBERZONE. Nikumono Custodial Ser-

vices exists to serve and protect those who have ascended. They are bodyguards in the most literal sense, and they provide a wide variety of services to those whose bodies are vulnerable while they travel CYBER-ZONE in search of enlightenment.

Nikumono operates alongside the Tonarigumi, but they're separate from that organization. While the Tonarigumi have a mandate from the Imperial Government to serve and protect all citizens of the Empire who live in meatspace, Nikumono Custodial is a private organization contracted specifically to manage the security and safety of only the most prestigious clientele. They are guns for hire, yojimbo to the slumbering elite.

Primarily, Nikumono provides physical protection. These services include providing secure facilities (ranging from security support to existing homes and offices all the way to bunkers designed to be utterly impenetrable) or providing human or drone bodyguard personnel. In addition, sub-corporations of Nikumono, such as Nikumono Beautiful Forever, serve more unusual purposes: grooming, massage, and more. If you want your meat to be the very best and most protected it can be, Nikumono is the corporation that will take care of you.

Nikumono Custodial Services employs many former members of military or police forces. One such employee is Captain Sato Masako. Captain Sato is a former member of the Tonarigumi who joined Nikumono five years ago. Sato is an aggressive agent, trained in urban combat who spent much of her career in the Tonarigumi dealing with border control breaches. She's logged more hours outside the Neo-Tokyo Empire than anyone else in her division, and she's developed the odd habit of collecting trinkets from the outside world. But her fearless demeanor hides a woman conflicted. She sees the effect that CYBERZONE has had on the Neo-Tokyo Empire-in effect, absorbing and repurposing its best citizens. She doesn't buy into the dream of Brilliant Diamond and the rapture they propose. To this end, she's been leveraging her influence over the Tonarigumi to leave a number of crucial Brilliant Diamond facilities open to attack. Sato truly believes in the mission of Nikumono Custodial Services; the protection of Neo-Tokyo's citizens is paramount to her, but she keeps her charges safe. Not until they do not need their bodies any longer, but until they realize that they must inevitably return to them.

OROSHI MEDTECH

Not everyone believes the promise of ultimate enlightenment will come from CYBERZONE. There are those in the Neo-Tokyo Empire who believe that the old ways, the ways of the flesh, are best. That to live in a body and to move through the world, damaged though it may be, is the best that humanity can hope for. Perfection of the form, mastery of the body, that is true enlightenment. Oroshi Medtech



believes in that dream. The dream of perfect human genetic manipulation. The dream of replicable, stable cloning processes. The shine of a beautiful new cybernetic limb. These are things that Oroshi promises to the world. Not all of Neo-Tokyo's citizens have chosen to give up their bodies and join CYBERZONE. Some stay by necessity, the Incompatibles, damaged or broken, or those whose psyche-profiles do not accept the programming of CYBERZONE. Some stay by choice. Oroshi accepts each and every one. Driven by a desire to make meatspace as beautiful as the promise of CYBERZONE, Oroshi engineers all kinds of biological and chemical wonders. Drugs that expand and accelerate the mind, and medical treat-



ment to extend human life decades beyond what genetics would allow. Manipulation of genes, the erasure of disease—all these things and more come from the hands of Oroshi Medtech. It's said that Oroshi is collecting a catalogue of human genetic material, and that somewhere in Chiba, they have a cloning facility creating a new people that will come forth when the current generation dies of old age, falls to a new disease, or simply succumbs to CYBERZONE. If the cybernetic rapture takes away the citizens of Neo-Tokyo, Oroshi will be there to replace them.

OROSHI CORPORATE AGENT: DOCTOR YASHIDA SETSUKO

Part of the team whose research has allowed for stable human cloning, **Doctor Yashida Setsuko** is a meaningful asset to Oroshi Medtech. Based out of Chiba, Doctor Yashida operates a facility known as The Nursery, which employs dozens of geneticists, cloning technicians, and scientists, as well as psychologists and specialists in education. It is in this facility that the hopes of the new future Oroshi believes in will come to fruition or fall to dust. Yashida herself is a CYBERZONE expatriate; she did much of her initial research into fast-track consciousness development inside the strange spheres of that place before being recruited by Oroshi. Like many who have left CYBERZONE behind, Yashida dreams of its neon grids. Unlike most, Yashida's pride means she'd sooner die than turn her back and return to CYBERZONE. Now, all that she can see is the future ahead, a future of meat where Oroshi maintains utter control.

EVENTS, ISSUES AND SECRETS

EVENTS	ISSUES	SECRETS
World War III	Nuclear exchanges caused total chaos and destruction outside Japan.	Brilliant Diamond CYBERZONE technology was drafted from WWIII artificial intelligence technology.
The Sakoku Revival Protocols Enacted	Neo-Tokyo Imperial Borders are closed to all traffic in or out.	Delicious Future has agents in the Sakoku Enforcement Agency allowing illegal genestrains of foodstuff into Neo-Tokyo.
CYBERZONE goes online	The rich, powerful, and influential abandon physical space.	Brilliant Diamond isn't in control of CYBERZONE. There is an algorithm of unknown origin in place driving its progress.
Tonarigumi formed to protect Neo-Tokyo meatspace	Protectors of the "nikumono" are tasked with preserving Neo-Tokyo's reality.	Nikumono Custodial has double-agents throughout the Tonarigumi, choosing which missions to undertake and where to focus their energy.
CYBERZONE access protocols compromised	Rumors spread of unfiltered access to CYBERZONE.	Oroshi is developing a pathogen that removes Compatibility, even from those already in CYBERZONE.

THE CORPORATIONS

OROSHI MEDTECH

"Meat Is Magic"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Provide quality-of-life improvements for those unable to access CYBERZONE through pharmaceuticals, cybernetics, and psychedelics.

SHADOW MANDATE

Seize control of meatspace entirely and unplug CYBERZONE

CORPORATE AGENT

Doctor Yashida Setsuko

- Role: Whitecoat
- Emotion: Ego
- Characteristics:
 Unscrupulous, Eager

INITIAL PROJECT

Perfect high-speed human cloning.

NIKUMONO CUSTODIAL SERVICES

"Protection for Every Body"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Provide paid maintenance and protective services to people whose bodies have been abandoned for primary existence in CYBERZONE.

SHADOW MANDATE

Gain a stranglehold on the rich, famous, and influential by holding their bodies ransom.

CORPORATE AGENT

Captain Sato Masako

- Role: Ronin
- Emotion: Fear
- Characteristics: Protective, Impulsive

INITIAL PROJECT

Infiltrate and co-opt the Tonarigumi.





2

DELICIOUS FUTURE NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE CORPORATION

"The Future Is Delicious"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Feed all citizens of Neo-Tokyo.

SHADOW MANDATE

Control the food supply of Neo-Tokyo.

CORPORATE AGENT

Sous-Chef Level Gamma, Matsuoka Daisuke

Role: Tech

♦ Emotion: Need

Characteristics:
 Obsessive, Compassionate

INITIAL PROJECT

Create 100% efficient food paste and delivery system.



BRILLIANT DIAMOND TECHNOLOGIES

"TRANSACT. TRANSGRESS.
TRANSFORM."

PUBLIC MANDATE

Manage, protect, and expand the capabilities of CYBERZONE.

SHADOW MANDATE

Absorb all human consciousness into CYBERZONE.

CORPORATE AGENT

Meatspace Operations Administrator, Yamada Yoshiro

Role: Handler

Emotion: Grief

 Characteristics: Reckless, Disdainful

INITIAL PROJECT

Overcome Incompatibility in human psyche-profiles.





CHAPTER 3 HIEROGLYPH OF THE WHALE

by Emily Care Boss

Location: Beryl Sector of the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone, Former

Soleri Arcology

Date: 2087

BACKGROUND

Global warming was ignored until it was no longer a theory but a fact of life. Of change and death in the world. The oceans swelled and soured, bones and exoskeletons melting in the acidified soup humanity made. By 2032, the polar ice caps melted, leaving but a rime of frost clinging to Antarctica. Shorelines receded. Coastal cities were flooded, devastated, and abandoned. Fulfilling basic survival urges, humanity sought to fight, to flee. Simmering territorial disputes exploded into full-blown wars. Nations merged. Corporations expanded beyond the nations' abilities to regulate and monitor. Mass space travel—formerly considered a distant pipe dream—became an urgent priority. And then in 2049, the world population—long fearing the civilization-destabilizing limit of fossil fuel exploration referred to as Peak Oil—instead hit Peak Copper.

Predicted for many years, the loss of land to sea expansion brought the full exploitation of technological metals careening in sooner than ever imagined by the direst Cassandra futurists. Copper, cobalt, neodymium, europium—the basic building blocks of engineering and telecommunications—were squandered and became fiercely scarce due to the explosive uptick in their use. Mineral chasms yawning in Chinese and Tanzanian mining towns guttered out. The boom ended as soon as the ore was depleted, leaving bloated communities to deal with both the radioactive slag pools left behind and the bottom falling out of their employment pool. Galium and indium, necessary for solar power, were in short supply. Platinum, nickel, and cobalt, the metals responsible for powering the coms and cyberimplants that life and society now hinged on, were scrapped and recycled to the nth degree. Even worse, all of these materials would be vital for the realization of space exploration and colonization. Humanity's best hope would be to escape the flooding dungeon Earth had become. New sources were needed.

Jump to 2054, to Beryl Sector of the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone, and the first sub-oceanic mining fields. This seafloor region, running from south of the Baja archipelago west to the former sites of Hawaii and the Palmyra Atoll, contains some of the richest deposits of metals and minerals in the world's oceans. Exploration had been delayed for nearly a century due to the intervention of the International Seabed Authority (ISA).

Though unsupported by the United States of America and other countries, the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) had formed ISA in the late 20th century to safeguard the seafloor as the "common heritage of humankind." The ISA declared Clarion-Clipperton and other potential mining regions off-limits for full-scale exploration due to uncertainty about impacts on fragile biotic communities. Major world powers spent decades contesting this ruling. Then in 2051, ISA was dissolved amid corruption scandals.

Following its collapse, the Global Oceanic Pact (GIOPact) was formed. In the face of market runs like the Gallium price spikes of 2049 and the depletion of unexplored copper reserves, concerns about biodiversity were outbalanced. Preservation of deep water habitats as mitigation for mining was adopted, through the creation of ocean floor reserves far from the sites of highest polymetallic nodule concentration.



Through the GIOPact agreement, proprietary contracts were parceled out, and corps waiting to tap the rare earth metals at the ocean's floor jumped at the chance. Technologies developed for just this purpose paved the way for the Clarion-Clipperton to become the center of an explosion of mining and ultra-luxury tourism. A win-win situation for all—except for the deep sea flora and fauna, that is. But getting humanity beyond Earth was a goal nations and corporations could rally behind.

Táneo Exploración gained the lion share of the contracts. Operating from Mexico, close to the Beryl Sector of the Fracture Zone, they were



poised to capture and process nodules most efficiently for a desperate world. Táneo led the way with abyssal-encounter suit technology and sub-ocean vehicles (subhicular for short) developed by their subsidiary Corazón. The name Soleri Arcology was chosen for this mining settlement to symbolize the human push out into the planets. From the ocean floor to the Solar System.

Early mining sallies were successful. Initial surveys brought back fleeting sightings of strange polymorphous squids or something stranger, but later surveys never found any evidence of them. The materials were plentiful, the extraction relatively easy, since deposits were located at the surface of the ocean floor. And the metals found--magnesium, copper, cobalt, nickel, gallium, indium, and more—were desperately needed for comscreen technology, implants, and solar sail automata, which began to drive the new system-wide transport lanes. The trick was to withstand the obliterating conditions found in the deepest reaches of the ocean floor: pressures of nearly 16,000 pounds per square inch, endless night, freezing cold, and decompression sickness.

Táneo's equipment made it possible to extract the minerals, but the stresses on the human body and psyche caused countless delays and setbacks. Maintaining equipment required withdrawing it to one of their shallow epipelagic bases a mere 150 m (500 feet) deep, for repair. Invector, a biogen firm that had frequently collaborated with Corazón, came with answers to these issues: cetacean adaptation.

Cetaceans naturally dive to mid-ocean, bathypelagic depths of 1,200 m (4,000 feet). The depths of the Clarion-Clipperton Fracture Zone are more than three times this. Invector, working with whales and dolphins for search and rescue and military uses, saw the opportunity in the initials failures in Beryl Sector. Training facilities were established and expanded to include genetic labs at quasi-deep stations, glimmering like a string of pearls at



bathypelagic depths of 2,400 m to 4,000 m (8,000 to 13,000 feet). Invector worked with Corazón to create sub-oceanic breathing and breeding bubbles which along with gene therapy allowed worker cetaceans to remain at abyssal depths far longer than in nature.

The riches of the ocean floor and the technical innovations fed upon one another, leading to the development of light-reactive aluminums, pressure resistant synthglass, and microalloy materials used in abyssal encounter suits. Each technology created to aid mining was found to have consumer applications. GIOPact was petitioned for resort rights by China's premier entertainment conglomerate, Chìdào. The sprawling Blue Deep Victory Resort was the result. Hydrothermic shafts were begun to provide long-term cheap heat and energy for the entertainment and mining compounds. Portable nuclear reactors and nanofission plants

were brought in to power the drills. Dolphins were repurposed as tour guides and were trained to provide spectacle for the ultra-rich who could afford to escape the energy shortages, unemployment crises, and infrastructure disasters that came with the rising waters.



Experimentation on the cetaceans focused mostly on smaller species: Tursiops, dolphins and porpoises, and Orcinus, the orca killer whales. One lineage of larger whales, Physeter sperm whales, were pressed into service due to their innate deep-breathing abilities. Using shock collars to keep them within Soleri Arcology bounds, the researchers working on the whales were given full discretion to improve them for the work. Breath capability was bred for, followed by increased resilience under long-term, low-light conditions. Of, and massive strength and reinforcement to bear the transport chains needed to tow ore from abyssal levels up to shallow processing stations. Trainers worked closely with the cetaceans.

Unknown to the Soleri population at large, unanticipated changes started happening: behavioral adaptations cascaded into cognitive shifts. Some noted physiological changes to sonar, but researchers at Invector kept this under wraps. Disguising the increasing willfulness and awareness of the cetaceans, they moved into cyberimplants networked with the electroshock collars; these allowed the miners to direct the sea mammals quickly and precisely. The Tursiops reacted so well to the intelligence enhancements that—at the highest level of security clearance—research continued on. Special breeding pens were created for enhanced offspring. These offspring were given tasks that required delicacy, higher performance, and independence. Tight bonds formed between researchers and cetaceans; in some cases, psylinks were innovated which created reso-

nance between them and greater communication potentials. With this greater level of control, production—powered by the cetaceans—soared. Underwater performances gained intricacy and became must-see shows for the world elite. All seemed golden for Deep Blue. Minerals started flowing to the surface, and boom times arrived.

8pm local time, 27 March 2059. The first report was of the sperm whale shift refusing their traces. Tursiops were sighted swirling outside the viewing parks. Guests gathered, thinking it was a surprise performance.

Before training personnel could be scrambled, the orcas had battered the equipment hangars where shock collars and staffs were stored. The revolt had begun between shifts, when workers and resort-goers were typically engaged in the mid-evening meal, late mining shifts were just to begin, and a small number of humans were attending to cetaceans at the various stations.

Next, the smashing of Blue Deep Victory corporate quarters and View Park Temperance (which they overlooked). Despite electroshock blasts, the last sperm whales returning from deliveries of ore smashed themselves and their barges into the massive synthglass ceiling of the park enclosure. Strangely, survivors report hearing repetitive impacts against the glass before the whales and their burdens. For the first time, hull integrity was breached. The second highest burst of human casualties happened immediately. Five whales died, killed by base defenses. Later analysis indicated that this attack was in large part intended as a distraction for the evacuation of the breeding pens. With the exception of the two pods closest to the human habitations, these were emptied while humans were reacting to the whales' attack and working on their own evacuation.



Polyoceanus Deci was signaled, and they moved in quickly when it became clear that this was beyond the abilities of the miners and bioengineer trainers. They covered human transports from attack by orcas and sperm whales. The attack also coincided with a state session from Pacific Nations and Corp leaders, which became isolated from the main resort complex. A daring rescue was led by Jan Parker—who was later decorated for

his efforts. Polyoceanus teams led recovery of mining equipment and capture of cetaceans.

The base was thought to have been secured, when several captured orcas broke free and headed towards the mining facility. Their goal was determined too late, after they rammed the nanofission generator used to power the drills that were preparing the way for geothermal energy. All beings caught in the quarter-mile blast radius were killed.

Soleri Arcology was fully evacuated and quarantined for radiation hazard. Polyoceanus was contracted to sweep for survivors in full rad-protective gear and specially-lined ships provided by Táneo. They found strange markings along the ridge nearest to the breathing bubbles. Repetitive but with no logic that has been discovered, they are colloquially known as whale hieroglyphs. Some reports of cetacean hunts by Polyoceanus were circulated but no proof could ever be found. All contracts were suspended, and the base was put on ice until mining could be resumed safely when radiation levels dropped.

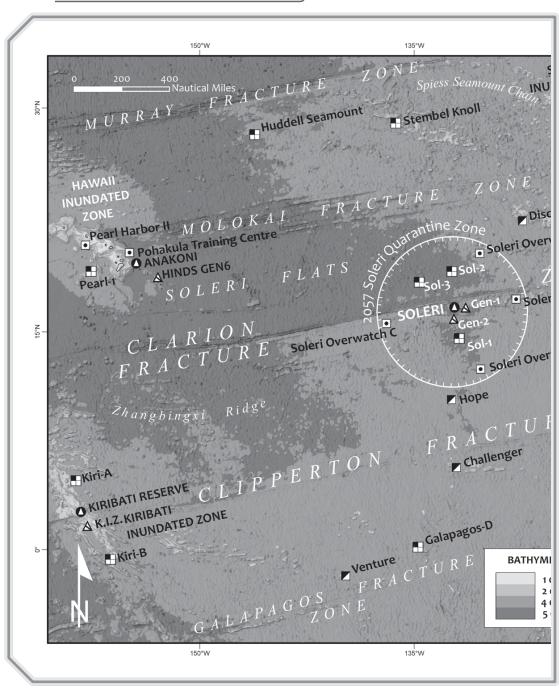
The year is now 2087, thirty-three years after the cetacean uprising. After decades of silence, a signal has emerged from Beryl Zone. Individuals identifying themselves as human survivors call for a rescue. Plans are underway for reclaiming Soleri Arcology in just three years. It's a PR nightmare. Unrescued victims? And what cans of worms would their stories open? Stories that had been set to bed by official inquiries and thousand-page reports over the decades.

Communications from the survivors are brief. While not accounting for their presence, they report further scouting of the mineral beds and promise untapped riches in newly explored sub-oceanic troughs. A team is assembled by stake holders to verify their presence and identity, discover their intentions, and see if this new wealth is real or just a trick. Corporate leaders promise to open the depths once more to humanity, as their doorway to the planets.

GEOGRAPHY

The former undersea arcology is a ruin—heaped glass, shattered metal, splintered calcium deposit growths (bones) in the tangled mess left behind from the uprise of the cetaceans.

The site was chosen for its richness in minerals, wealth of sea life and vegetation, and beauty for sculpted landscape on the ocean floor. A central ridge shaped the outlines of the compound. At its peak, a beacon crowned the telecommunications and travel control headquarters, welcoming in travelers and directing traffic as tourists, mining vessels, and research crafts made their way to the arcology. The red stone of the ridge rippled out into several other enormous ledges: three plateaus, each housing a hotel and viewing park on top. Each plateau was riddled with tunnels, passages, and cavernous halls used for celebrations, vehicle maintenance and building, and exercise sanctuaries for the populace. To allow easy access between the great hotels, chutes were utilized. They were made from light-reactive aluminum alloys that gave their passengers the feeling of being shunted through the open water.



120°W

135°W

The viewing parks were built as massive domes, dotted with chemolites that mimicked the undersea life. Lights under the dome shifted over an 18-hour cycle, rising and falling in intensity and changing in hue and timbre to resemble light falling through leaves in summer, bleak blue-white light in winter, and rosy-hued, long-shadowed light in the fall for those from temperate climes, with steady rough-golden sunlight year round for those from the equator, and one small park, with lingering twilights and longer darks for those from the poles. Each cycle was rounded out by six hours of darkness. But even in darkness, the park's lanes were equipped with red marker lights and emergency spotlights to deter crime.

Surrounding the shelf were the cetacean grounds, where Invector, the biocorp which bred intelligent dolphins and orcas, laid claim to a fourth plateau. Here, human workers were housed in their own, unique dwelllings, with plentiful ports venting out into the ocean. Lights poured out of these buildings 'round the clock, allowing the humans to train and work with successive shifts of cetaceans to bring in the massive chunks of pre-made building or plasti-alloy synthglass that formed the park domes and settlement viewing windows. The cetaceans themselves were constrained by shock collars that would activate if the creatures wandered too far from the central hub in Invector Corp HQ. The cetaceans had shadow-side communities where they bred, fed on pumped-out fish and feed, and had enormous oxygen bubble-coves where they would "surface" to breathe.

The mining facilities were the most extensive of all the human works. Radiating out from the central settlement, they were worked by human crews chewing away at the stone in beetle crafts which exuded chemicals and extracted ore with grabber arms, which they used to place it into the massive, buoyant barges pulled by orca and sperm whales.

CORPORATE & AGENT BACKGROUNDS

TÁNEO EXPLORACIÓN

Táneo Exploración S.A. de C.V. is a multi-national conglomerate based in Mexico City, Mexico. With holdings in Chile, Peru, and throughout South America, they are a prime source of the world's copper supply. Striving to keep up with Chinese and central African competitors, they lobbied for contracts and innovated technology to exploit the ocean floor. Accessing new supplies let them capture



a share of opening markets even before Peak Copper was hit. Mining beneath the ocean has unique challenges that are answered by technology. Their subsidiary Corazón developed engineering sub-ocean crafts, personal encounter suits, and robotic articulation necessary to allow operation of equipment and extraction of elements at 4,000 m (13,000 feet) deep and 60,000 pounds of pressure. Poaching the top minds from robotics labs all over the world, Corazón was formed by Florencia Diaz Espinoza, a brilliant nanomaterials researcher and automaton innovator who began her career in industrial equipment design. Diaz Espinoza's team worked in secret and became nameless leaders of the motohicular fields. Consumer products like the Zip Hydropod, responsive safetyglass raiments, and personal security cinctures made Táneo billions. They then invested this fortune into crafting better mining equipment.

With Corazón's inventions, Táneo became the leader in ocean floor exploration. They became the de facto supplier for their competitors and have been subject to lawsuits alleging that equipment sold to outside groups is substandard. It's an acknowledged fact that Táneo operates a fleet of high-tech subs second only to Indonesia's commercial and passenger fleet. None match their performance at mid-ocean depth, and few others can produce equipment that can withstand the pressures found at the ocean floor. The only obstacle to their development was the International Seabed Authority, which crumbled under corruption charges in the late 2040s. No connection could be found to Táneo, but the fortune of the company was made by those scandals.



TÁNEO CORPORATE AGENT: PAZ KABANDE MORENO

Paz Kabande Moreno has been a roustabout for Táneo for 15 years. Traveling to all corners of the world, in every hazardous condition. Her knowledge and scrupulous attention to detail have saved her life and those of her crew countless times. A trouble shooter called in for the worst of situations, Paz was not surprised when the call came for her to inspect the remains of the Soleri Arcology for recoverable equipment and to assess it for future exploration. Paz has heard the stories of the uprising and knows more than many do about the genetic manipulation Táneo implemented on mining station personnel as well as the labor animals. Paz has taken part in several rounds of experimental gene therapy herself, which has brought her to the attention of important people in the company. She believes that a good outcome on this mission will give her control over a sector of her own, a fleet of the subhicular crafts she now commands, and a full regional staff (instead of the hand-picked crew she now works with). The challenges will be great, but she's ready for it.



INVECTOR BIOGEN

Part of the mid-21st century biogen boom, Invector (then known as Idade) first specialized in harvesting and incorporating gene characteristics from sea life and amphibians for human gene therapy. They had great success with cosmetic applications (jellyfish lend a sheen and luminescence to human skin), but they were subject to a massive class-action lawsuit when regeneration experiments based on starfish went horribly wrong. Idade folded and transferred all its assets to Invector. Their mission was to

use tools of genetic manipulation on animals to see how they could be molded to serve humanity better.

Working with Corazón, mining conglomerate Táneo Exploración's research branch, was a natural fit. Invector had been modifying dolphin intelligence to be more receptive to human control, so they got the contract when consultants were brought in to provide animal power for mining efforts at Soleri Arcology. The team leader, Signe Olofsson, made unexpected breakthroughs in both adapting the cetaceans to deep ocean conditions and in raising the bar for human/sea mammal communication.

Olofsson assigned herself directly to Soleri Arcology. The opportunities as well as the hazards meant that she must be on site to oversee the

rigor of the program. Her immediate superior, Carlo Rossignolli, was assigned to make sure that the station turned a profit. Signe's program was immensely successful. The whales' and dolphins' body cavities were adapted to withstand two to three times the depths they lived in naturally. Successive generations grew stronger and more well-suited, with natural mutations like light-active skin demarcations processing sunlight for needed vitamins at much higher rates over shorter durations.

INVECTOR CORPORATE AGENT: SIGNE OLOFSSON

The key figure in cetacean adaptation is **Signe Olofsson**. Head of the biomedicine research lab at Stanford University, she was wooed into the corporate world by Invector. Wanting a legitimate face for their research after the Idade Starfish Eterne debacle. Regrowing limbs with fractal-like duplication of digits properly horrified the public. Olofsson's record made her the ideal choice to lead the new path for Invector: "Making Life Better, Safely."

Olofsson's commitment to work verges on obsessive. She worked with each cohort of cetaceans personally and eventually handed off the genetic manipulation to others for mining adaptation and communication specialization. A third-generation orca, Ben Sang Kitraon, became her constant companion and guard. Conflicting reports say this orca was involved in the uprising, with one side saying that they defended humans and others saying that they attacked Invector Corporate. Either way, Kitraon was reported killed in the initial conflicts.

Signe survived the cetacean mutiny and left with the rest of the human contingent, but she's been working to return ever since.

CHÌDÀO CORPORATION GLOBAL

As the seas rose, the world's population also rose precipitously. Nearly two-thirds of the largest cities were on coastlines or major rivers. Homes were lost, as along



with the resorts and play-palaces of the super wealthy. Chìdào Corporation anticipated much of this loss; they decided to short their losses by investing in mobile resort platforms and by innovating in massive bubbleplexes for new population centers like Guilin and Daqing as they arose. Their predictive marketing team were the ones to arrive at the idea of creating a recreational center at Soleri Arcology. With increased crowding in all the nations of the world, time and space far from the masses of humanity was forecast to bring in a premium.

Blue Deep Victory was christened in 2054 with a simulgram of trained cetacean and human encounter-suit-clad swimmers in a choreographed underwater show broadcast worldwide. Showcasing human luminescence innovated by Invector, the massive global audience for the ribbon-cutting sparked a brief but heady lumiglow injection craze among the world's youth.

Using the alloy synthglass and light-reactive aluminum used in their bubbleplexes, Chìdào negotiated research contracts to use Blue Deep as a proving ground for intrasystem arcologies. A tap hole was driven in the mining sectors intended to harness geothermal and chemoresistance for energy and heat for the hotel complex as well as mining crew quarters—though it was never completed due to the uprising. Tunnels were dug for concourse between the complexes, with guards stationed to keep non-cleared mining staff from mixing with the cream of international archnobility, corporate elite, and entertainment celebrities who enjoyed the pleasures of Blue Deep Victory. The Chìdào employees surveying the ruins for re-establishment were the first to receive signals from the self-identified "survivors." They suppressed the transmissions for months, and they've only now announced them after private interception of signals made an announcement necessary. They are sponsoring the mission to find and rescue survivors—or whatever may be needed.

CHÌDÀO CORPORATE AGENT: NUWA TAN

Nuwa Tan's official position is Vice Manager in Charge of Public Interface. She was one of the architects of Blue Deep Victory, and her career was deeply damaged when the mission went south. But her quick thinking saved lives during the disaster, calling in Polyoceanus for rescue and recovery of guests. She has managed to hang onto her place in the company, if not her position. Nuwa is socially adept and has a personal charisma that has opened doors throughout her career.

Since then she has climbed back up the ladder, and though her current role seems more superficial than in the past, she has an inward-facing role of top importance. She is in charge now of the sea-to-space initiative that is due to be rolled out in the coming decade. After Soleri failed, they had several other resorts succeed—at much shallower depths, and not linked with mining facilties. Nuwa believes that Soleri is the true key to their success in space since it has many of the attributes that system colonists will encounter: partnering with mineral excavation, isolation, darkness, and limited resources. These uncontrolled survivors threaten all of that. Her mission is to assess the station for re-establishment and rescue the survivors, but also to frame their stories to reflect well on Chìdào at any cost.

POLYOCEANUS DECI CORPS

Polyoceanus Deci Corps is one of the four top amphibious security fleets worldwide. An offshoot of the former United States Marine Corps, this

company was founded in 2039 when the US and Mexico merged, and the majority of the overlapping and labyrinthine layers of US military were consolidated and coordinated with the Ejército Mexicano and Armada de México, the Mexican Army and Naval forces, respectively. The Marine corps was terminated, Marines were retired en masse, and Polyoceanus was born.



The mission of Polyoceanus is defense of world citizens from the unprecedented threats generated by world political and economic tumult arising from global climate change. In 2043, their force detected a manufactured island being built off the coast of Brazil. A multinational conglomerate force was gathering to invade Rio in a coordinated meatzone/wetspace invasion. It was due to the warning given by Polyoceanus that the Brazilian Naval forces were able to repel the physical invaders.

From the Brazil mission, they gained a reputation in the southern hemisphere as a guardian of the seas. This helped squash rumors of their inhuman behavior toward natural disaster refugees during the loss of the Antarctic ice sheets in 2032 and implosion of The Netherlands dike complexes in 2033. Their force was one of three patrolling the ocean above Beryl Zone during the cetacean uprising, and their efforts were applauded for swiftness and heroism. However, during the GIOPact hearings following the uprising, it was insinuated that the security protocols enacted by Polyoceanus were woefully inadequate. Bareth Wong, chief legal counsel for Polyoceanus, undermined the credibility of those making these allegations and cleared the corp of all charges. And despite protests by animal rights activists saying that the defense measures used by Polyoceanus amounted to genocide, no counts of war crimes were ever leveled against them.

POLYOCEANUS CORPORATE AGENT: JAN PARKER, TEAM LEADER

Polyoceanus employs many former military officers, such as Team Leader Jan Parker, a former Major in the Joint Mexican/US Army Special Forces. Parker's experience infiltrating secessionist cells and anti-immigrant militias has been invaluable to Polyoceanus. During the cetacean



uprising, Parker was assigned to secure the safe passage of high-level guests of the resort, and his team was responsible for finding an isolated group of political officials. It is Parker's personal feeling that the experiments at Soleri Arcology were a mistake and that the uprising was inevitable. Unofficial orders to wipe out the cetaceans were communicated to Parker and several others at his level. To his understanding they were carried out, but the end of the conflict, culminating in the destruction of the nanofission reactor on site came so quickly that Parker was left with doubts. Could the cetaceans have created the disaster to cover the escape of their comrades? Are the accounts that the orcas didn't physically ram the generator before it exploded true? The humans have never had a full understanding of how many sea mammals were involved. Parker has standing orders to return once radiation levels have lessened, to ascertain if any of the adapted animals survived and if the traits have entered into the general population. His orders are to leave no genetic trace of the experiments, and he's grappled with the implications of this genocide order many nights. But make no mistake, he expects to complete his task one day.

TIMELINE

2032: Ice sheets melt

2033: Loss of the Netherlands

2039: U.S./Mexico merger

2049: Peak Copper, gallium spikes

2051: International Seabed Authority ruined

2054: Soleri Arcology christened

2059: Cetacean uprising

2087: Mission to Soleri Arcology ruins (Present Day)

EVENTS, ISSUES, AND SECRETS

EVENTS	ISSUES	SECRETS
Loss of Antarctic Ice Sheet in 2032 and Rise of Ocean Levels	Devastation in major coastal cities worldwide and mass migrations	Rumors of Polyoceanus Deci involvement in abuse and disappearance of natural disaster refugees
Deep sea mining contracts awarded	Sprint for space travel and colonization triggers Peak Copper in 2049, forcing mineral excavation in formerly protected areas	Táneo Exploracion, which lands primary mining contracts, was involved in scandals that brought down a strict regulatory body, the International Seabed Authority
Soleri Arcology christened in 2054	Deep sea technology and genetic manipulation of cetaceans makes ocean floor mining and resorts possible at the cost of ecological devastation	It is a trade secret that Invector is using bioware to harness the will of modified cetaceans, but knowledge of human- cetacean mind interface and a secret contract with Táneo to practice gene therapy on human miners is strictly classified.
Uprising of the Cetaceans 2059	Scientists and activists claim adaptation techniques call for creation of protections for sapient species	Invector experiments inadvertently develop a strain of cetaceans with enhanced sonar abilities with limited telekinetic powers
Survivors signal surface 2087	Soleri has been declared off limits. Whose responsibility is the rescue of survivors and can development be continued?	Chìdào covered up messages sent by survivors to suppress any chance of incriminating information leaking out

THE CORPORATIONS

TÁNEO EXPLORACIÓN S.A. DE C.V

"From Ocean to Sun"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Responsibly harvest rare metals from the ocean depths to allow humans to populate the solar system.

SHADOW MANDATE

Monopolize access to deep ocean and in-system mining operations through development of proprietary technology.

CORPORATE AGENT

Paz Kabande Moreno (Mexico)

Role: TechEmotion: EGO

 Characteristics: Rigorous, Ambitious

INITIAL PROJECT

Search and salvage equipment from Soleri Arcology.

INVECTOR BIOGEN

"Making Life Better, Safely"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Provide genetic enhancements to update breeding programs to support humanity's colonization efforts.

SHADOW MANDATE

Utilize physical and mental coercion methods to provide needed labor.

CORPORATE AGENT

Signe Olafsson (Sweden)

♦ Role: Whitecoat

Emotion: GRIFF

Characteristics:
 Idealistic, Relentless

INITIAL PROJECT

Find survivors—human and cetacean— of the Blue Deep disaster.





CHÌDÀO CORPORATION GLOBAL

"Priceless Memories"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Provide ultralux getaways in unique, secure settings.

SHADOW MANDATE

Establish state-of-the-art technology for use in human trans-earth residential arcologies.

CORPORATE AGENT

Nuwa Tan (Malaysia)

Role: Handler

♦ Emotion: DESIRE

 Characteristics: Friendly, Calculating

INITIAL PROJECT

Contain communications from survivors and frame story to reflect well on Chidào.

POLYOCEANUS DECI CORPS

"Peace, Freedom, Prosperity"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Ensure the safety of civilian reclamation of Soleri Arcology.

SHADOW MANDATE

Kill any surviving adapted cetaceans and cover up any evidence of the action

CORPORATE AGENT

Team Leader Jan Parker (The Netherlands)

Role: Ronin

Emotion: GRIEF

Characteristics:
 Forceful, Confident

INITIAL PROJECT

Eradicate the base and all adapted cetaceans.







CHAPTER 4 ARTIFICE & ICE

By Will Hindmarch

Location: The Arctic Circle

Date: January, 2054

With thanks to Tobias Buckell for Arctic Rising

BACKGROUND

The hottest spot in a hundred miles, in any direction, is the tip of your cigarette. You tell people you took up smoking so you'd always have a lighter on hand—the ability to make fire. That might've been true once. Hard to remember.

Lungs are easy enough to repair. If you've got the funds. (You don't.) Or if you've got insurance. (You don't.) Reversing the effects of nicotine and smoke would've been easy if things had panned out for you here, at the top of the world. Like they were supposed to. They never did, though. Of course they never did.



Now, if you want to remember sunny days and tropical beaches, you borrow the memories from somebody else. It's how a lot of people manage temporary escapes up here. Real escapes—from corporate contracts, from mortgages, from southern warrants, from the arctic itself—are just too costly. And "costly" can mean a lot of things.

We swallowed the lure back when and came to the arctic when the ice had melted enough to let ships through with ease. New ports and fuel depots and cheap real estate and the promise of North Atlantic cooperation were supposed to mean nations coming together to hone and tame a new frontier on Earth. Build a city from scratch, get in early, get rich. Watch the last glaciers melt through floor-to-ceiling windows as you lounge on sensibly sleek Scandinavian furniture. Might see a whale; we've still got whales up here.

Artificial islands and undersea habitats got built, sure, but most of them never saw buyers or renters. Most people don't want months-long nights, it turns out. Most people weren't willing to be settlers. Most ships don't bother stopping. All that's up here now are investments—money frozen in the form of crisp, new condos—and half an infrastructure.

We built a new tomorrow in the melt and nobody showed up. Those who did? Half of them left already. Those of us who stayed? We might have nowhere else to go. Or we're intent on squeezing the condos and the fake island and nation-states and the corporations until it all turns back into money. Until we get our futures back.

In the meantime, you might as well smoke 'em if you got 'em. Chances are good that it's not the cigarettes that'll kill you, anyway.

GEOGRAPHY

It's cold. Even with the icebergs melting and the greenhouse effect at work, this place is frigid in the winter. It's always felt to me like the top of the planet sticks off the globe a bit, into the big-sky openness of outer space, where the sunlight's raw and the interstellar vacuum sucks all the heat away. We see the Milky Way up here, through the borealis.

So, yeah, it's often beautiful here. Barren, but beautifully so. The closest land mass is the northeastern edge of Greenland. It used to be a national park—the biggest in the world back when—but that didn't last. Money's a hell of a drug.

Greenland is still a starkly beautiful place—always starkly beautiful—but the national park isn't a park anymore. Since the dissolution of Denmark and Greenland, a lot of it is private land, a lot of it in public purgatory. I mean, it belongs to someone, but it's not clear to whom. Can't have land that doesn't belong to someone, after all.

Lots of it got scraped away and gathered up as loose rocks, boulders, shale and dross, for the artificial island where the corporations keep their headquarters. Where the condos are rooted. Where the undersea bubble-city huddles around the anchored core, like the fat part of a fake berg. All that Greenland rock didn't make the island, but they used to "dress" the island—make it look like a real, natural patch of harsh land in the frozen north.

It's always seemed to me like you could tell. Some writer or other once said the artificial island—Artland, Artieland, Capland, call it what you will—looked too sculpted to be real, "like it had never eroded, but had been piled up like geology in reverse." I don't know. The snow falls on it the same as Greenland and Iceland. It isn't that it doesn't erode, it's that it all doesn't look the same age to me. Like it eroded at different speeds. Worst of all, where the rain and snowmelt have washed away a lot of the gravel—or where the parking lots never got finished—you can see the rugged, unpolished concrete and I-beams underneath so much of it. Beneath that, somewhere, are long legs and ballast tanks, reminding us that we live on what might as well be the best-dressed oil rig on the planet.

We have two towns here. On the Canada side, there's Brightown, home to the local offices for Oceanix and Green Surf. A few of the condo towers look ready to lease, on the outside, but half of them are barren inside. The rest of the town has the same chain-link fences, concrete barricades, low profile that I've come to expect from corporate offices north of the tropics. At night, the town is bright, colorful, and empty. It's either serene or boring, depending on who's asking.

Meanwhile, closer to Scandinavia, there's Ljómandi, local headquarters for Tower Shield and Nexen. Everything there looks like some kind of stylish, elite hotel that you admire but never see anyone stay at. You could cut yourself on Ljómandi, it's so sharp-edged and shiny. That's where all the bars and discos were meant to be. Two actually opened, to sell off all the liquor imported for a restaurant scene that never started. When ships do visit Capland for food or supplies, they do it here.

Both towns on the island resemble parts of Reykjavik, with their colorful houses and corrugated roofs, but they both look like they were designed by algorithm. Hell, maybe they were. These are places designed from the top down, in the worst way. Orderly, yes. Predictable, always. They'd be cold at any latitude, but up here, they just add cold to cold.

You know the design principle about paving footpaths? Instead of building fine circuits of neat grids for human pedestrians, look for the paths

that people take on their own. Then pave those. They didn't do that in Artland. The ground is crisscrossed all over by footpaths across gravel and dead parks. Walk on the sidewalk, we know you're from out of town. Walk on the street. Not enough cars to hit you, so don't sweat it.

CORPORATE & AGENT BACKGROUNDS

OCEANIX UNLIMITED

Oceanix Unlimited didn't melt the pole, didn't destroy the glaciers, didn't poison the ocean—but all of that is why they exist and how they got rich.

In the beginning, Oceanix Unlimited was a mid-tier supplier of oceanic industrial equipment like habitats, subs, drills, and rigs, started by Ballard West, a conservative Christian evangelist from Texas. The company entered its second



phase, and the top tier, after it merged with the futuristic design and manufacturing endeavor created by Canadian industrialist Michael Mercer-Witt, who realized that the earthly need to clean up the oceans could be breathtakingly profitable if privatized properly.

Progress, rather than accomplishment, is what fuels commerce in the eyes of Oceanix. The oceans might never be clean—meaning the market for Oceanix developments might never be exhausted—but as long there's work to be done, Oceanix is there to profit.

That combination of actual work and profit-seeking got Oceanix stuck in the quagmire at the North Pole. This was the first big project of a new phase for the company: to create opportunities for themselves and then meet them for cash. Oceanix lobbyists and litigators kept the United Nations and local governments tangled up in disputes while the marketing department swayed public interest in an Oceanix-led development at the top of the world. They would build condos, gas stations, underwater hotels, and the fastest wifi in a marketplace that they could control. The people who came for cheap, exo-tourist-style living would become a community and, more importantly, a potential workforce and customer base for Oceanix products.

What a disaster. Actual sales and immigration to Brightown and Ljómandi were about 22% of projections. Half those people have already left, leaving the communities almost totally empty.



The Oceanix coffers are drying up. The buildings and machines they made are almost impossible to resell. It's hard to move condos and bubble-hotels to more fashionable climates. The company's embarrassed and starving.

This is when they get dangerous.

OCEANIX UNLIMITED CORPORATE AGENT: LEA NOH

Lea Noh almost went to work for the government in her home country of South Korea, like her parents before her. "Patriotism is important," she says over an iced coffee in the glittery lobby café of Oceanix offices in Brightown, "but the oceans are more important. I can do more good for them at an international operation like Oceanix—and with the money I make here, I can reach more people."

She looks relaxed (and just like the picture on her nametag). Talking with her, it's easy to think she's too young to be in charge of operators all over Oceanix's Northern Hemisphere network of aquatic habitats and laboratories. At 33, she's the youngest "executive operative" in Oceanix's peculiar pod-based organization, but don't call her an executive. In her words, "I feel like executives lead from the rear, from their offices. Which can be valuable. I lead from the middle, from within my team, so we can move in any direction with ease. Stay nimble."

Behind her designer eyeglasses and beneath her functional bob dwells one of the sharpest minds in a multinational business that got rich by being sharper than its rivals. Is an executive office in her future? "I'm not ready to give up field work and trips to the habs and network cells, yet." She looks out the windows, across Capland's harbor, toward a weeks-long sunset. "Maybe someday."



NEXEN

The European genetics titan, Nexen, makes a lot more than patents. You've eaten their products, whether you know it or not. They custom-build crops for their customers and clients—and everyone is either one or the other on this planet.

The failure of Oceanix at the pole created a rare opportunity for Nexen. The empty settlements of Brightown and Ljómandi make it easy to get lab space and housing for engineers while also providing secrecy and security in a big way. It's easy to spot people who aren't supposed to be there at a Nexen facility on the artificial island where everyone knows each other. There are lots of empty rooms ready to be turned into cold

Whatever Nexen's forthcoming endeavors may be, the pole has become their secret lab. They could be fighting disease (or refining it), strengthening custom crops (making them better interact with Nexen-brand pesticides), redefining fishery farming (or patenting new species). Nexen saw an opportunity in the snowmelt and business parks of the pole, and they took it.

The dirty secret—this time—is that the curse of the artificial island might be real. Power instability and employee turnover plague the lab sites. No one's happy on Capland. Nexen's development projects have been slow and underperforming in costly ways. To shake things up, they've promoted from within a few potential next-generation talents and given them a secret task: make Nexen North profitable within one year. The alternative is a shutdown, and a shutdown needs a scapegoat.

NEXEN CORPORATE AGENT: MARGOT TENNANT

Nexen's internal contests and milestone competitions, meant to gamify the company's meritocratic hierarchy, have been notoriously difficult to replicate at other firms. Whatever it is about Nexen's company culture, it seems to thrive on friendly competition. "I wanted this post," says Nexen North's **Margot Tennant**, who earned herself a promotion out of anonymous lab work into the company's prestigious Futures Division by winning an internal design competition. (She combined GMOs to create hypothetical, shelf-ready greens suitable for the arctic biome.) "I saw a way to get to this post, a few years ahead of schedule, so I made it happen." She shrugs. "Now I'm here."

Tennant, whose coworkers have called her "wonderfully severe" in previous interviews, is part of a Capland team that designs and reverse-engineers the GMOs and pharmaceutical products of rivals—all from state-of-the-art Nexen facilities in a turnkey city that's ready to take off at the North Pole: Ljómandi. "I don't get bored," she says. "Never have. There's always the outdoors to play with."

Growing up in India, the daughter of a London-born banker and a Nexen ecologist from Goa, Tennant used to catch bugs and play in the dirt, but she's just as home at fashionable fundraisers as she is in the field. "We had a very green home," she says, nodding. "I think, as we better harness the power of sequencing and cut-and-paste DNA tech, that separation between the indoors and the outdoors can sort of fade." After checking a text on her mobile, she clarifies: "We can live in tandem

with nature better, just as we live with dogs and cats. Domesticate the wilderness until we're comfortable with it indoors with us. Just got to show it who's boss."



TOWER SHIELD & SWORD

Location, location, location. Tower Shield & Sword—a lean and secretive paramilitary security company with offices worldwide—saw how to make money in Capland and chose their moment perfectly. When Oceanix's investments grew weak and weary, Tower Shield & Sword swept in to open an installation on the artificial island.

Officially, they provide protection and oversight for oceangoing vessels within the Arctic Circle. And they do. Tower Shield's boats and ships are all over the place. They're the de facto police force and security operators

for Oceanix and Nexen, augmenting their internal security forces.

None of that is what makes Capland lucrative for the company. Those are break-even endeavors. Not even the training base, harbor, and airfield built just for Tower Shield is their real purpose at the pole.

From Capland, Tower Shield can deliver troops and aircraft anywhere in the Northern Hemisphere faster than any of the competition. Their signal-interception service is booming. They can scan and confiscate (or not) cargo throughout the Arctic Ocean. And when a rogue Russian attack submarine went missing on its way to the Circle, it was Tower Shield who briefed NATO and the UN—because they had the most intel on the situation.

Is it a conspiracy theory to say that Tower Shield had that intel because they watched it happen? Is it breathless rhetoric to say that the missing sub and its weapons of mass destruction have been good for business at Tower Shield? Does it sound crazy to suggest that the longer the rogue sub is out there, the wider Tower Shield's reach grows as it monitors the situation and keeps us safe from harm?

Earlier this month, analysts predicted that this will be Tower Shield & Sword's most profitable year. Ever.

TOWER SHIELD & SWORD SECURITY CORPORATE AGENT: LAQUINNE BURKE

When LaQuinne Burke walks into a room, eyes widen. People mistake her for a movie star, sometimes, albeit one they can't exactly place. Was she the towering African American woman in that romantic comedy last spring? No. The action hero in the summer blockbuster? Also no. She's not in show business. Not officially. She works in the front lines of PR for the corporate security firm, Tower Shield & Sword. She's been the face of their operations at the top of the world, the tip of their spear, since she was discovered by internal talent scouts (in HR). She'd been serving on the security detail of a financial officer in Brazil. Now she breaks good news and bad in the frozen north as easily as she used to break wrists.

She used to be a US Marine. She can kill you. She knows she can kill you. She radiates an easy swagger and casual confidence, too. But somehow, like the hum of a transformer brimming with juice, you can almost feel it coming off of her. She knows how to kill you, and she knows you can tell.

"But don't let that fool you," she jokes. "I'm a lot of fun, so I probably won't."

GREEN SURF

A social-media CEO left his billions to a foundation dedicated to saving the planet for the CEO's



grandchildren. That foundation still exists, technically, but most of the money is now in the hands of a private company devoted to—some say "obsessed with"—developing green tech and dismantling the opposition: Green Surf.

Shrewd investments and lucrative developments in new technologies have made Green Surf both a strong company and a force for positive change in the marketplace. They pick winners, at least in those areas.

Green Surf's rivals and detractors, however, will tell you that Green Surf also funds eco-terrorism, engages in clandestine operations against corporations it deems "dangerous to the natural world," and supports radical agendas in governments throughout the globe. Are they wrong? "The planet is too big to let fail," the Green Surf marketing department famously advertised.

"But you're not," say Green Surf's enemies. Yet, like a weed in a manicured lawn, Green Surf refuses to go away.

In the arctic, Green Surf's agenda may have taken on an oddly personal dimension. Once again highlighting just how small the pond is at the top of the world—and the top of the corporate world—two of the



prime movers in Capland are siblings with opposite views. This might be a carefully arranged situation by Green Surf meant to help them define the narrative in the north, or it might be a purely tactical decision. Green Surf sees corporations as groups of like-minded people, after all, and the way to change groups is to affect the people.

It could backfire. Green Surf's operative might appear to be picking a fight with family, instead of fighting for the rights of the planet. But if Nexen takes the bait? That's blood in the water for media coverage and rival corporations alike. News coverage of Capland's struggles that go beyond empty storefronts and rogue submarines help Green Surf's visibility and hurt Nexen's secrecy. They help Green Surf by hurting Nexen: the company's whole purpose is to dismantle the Nexens of the world.

GREEN SURF CORPORATE AGENT: ARJUN TENNANT

Arjun Tennant shrugs off his pinstriped jacket, and with it his corporate mystique. Now he looks more like the guerilla eco-activist he's reputed to be: an old-fashioned undercut hairstyle reveals faded tattoos down the back of his neck and full-color sleeves of ink on each arm. Fish scales and feathers seem to be the big motifs. "Yeah, if I'd planned it from the beginning, I might have put some of these in different spots," he admits. "I don't regret any of my ink, but some of it ended up in weird spots just because that's where there's room." He goes to take a sip of the local liquor—straight vodka—then halts with a chuckle. "Well, okay. I regret one of my tattoos, maybe. I get one everywhere I go. I try to. The longer I'm there, the more I get."

Where did his most regrettable tattoo come from? "India. It was my first tattoo, actually. It's on my leg. My sister and I both got them, after our father died." He shakes his head. Arjun Tennant's father was a British banker and Arjun's sister, Margot Tennant, combined the family businesses—numbers and science—into a high-powered position at Nexen.

Arjun went in a different direction. He's been called an eco-terrorist by corporate spokespeople throughout the world and was famously banned from New Zealand following a protest campaign he designed to combat pharmaceutical companies. He may be the first person charged with "acts of eco-espionage" if he sets foot in the country again. "Grinding up a whole ecosystem isn't okay, even if you pretend to do it with mortar and pestle," he argues. "What good is a medicine that runs out because you chew up the only forest that has its ingredients in it? That kind of scarcity is manufactured and unnecessary. Make pills, heal people, that's all fine. But what pill can you take to survive the destruction of the planet?"

EVENTS, ISSUES, AND SECRETS

EVENTS	ISSUES	SECRETS
Climatic Collapse	Unchecked Expansionism	The inability of international governments to catch up with "free market expansion" in the polar north was engineered by corporate lobbyists and lawyers from Oceanix and others.
Governmental Reformation	Corporate Authoritarianism	"Governmental Dissolution" is more like it. As bordering governments unraveled under the pressures of mass emigration, corporate authority replaced governmental rule in the region, spearheaded by Nexen.
Economic "Thaw"	Rampant Theft and Salvage	The financial and transit potential of the polar north failed to reward the level of investments made in the area; it became cheaper to leave equipment there than to relocate it, Green Surf says.
De Facto Coup	Law Enforcement Run Amok	The mid-tier personnel of the security corp meant to police the region usurped control from their executives and now oversee Capland as de facto warlords—at least until the money runs out for Tower Shield & Sword.
Potential Terrorist Attack	Refugee Crisis	Fear of a missing submarine gives Tower Shield & Sword leverage over the populace and keeps the region's money flowing to them as protection money.



THE CORPORATIONS

OCEANIX UNLIMITED

"Building Better Oceans"

PUBLIC MANDATE

The oceans that feed us need our care and protection—we're doctors for the waters.

SHADOW MANDATE

No place is free of oceanic influence. Whoever controls the oceans can control the markets.

Let it be us.

CORPORATE AGENT

Lea Noh

- ♦ Role: Handler
- Emotion: Need
- Characteristics: Brilliant,
 Cautious

INITIAL PROJECT

Diminish real-estate and construction costs in preparation for an aquatic habitat boom.

NEXEN

"Here for the next generation."

PUBLIC MANDATE

To undo the damage we've done, we must work smarter and harder to re-engineer the planet.

SHADOW MANDATE

Patents are a great way to make money, to fund change. Genetic engineering is a great way to change the world, profitably.

CORPORATE AGENT

Margot Tennant

- Role: Tech
- Emotion: Ego
- Characteristics: Confident Buthless

INITIAL PROJECT

Strengthen corporate control by highlighting or driving government ineptitude.





TOWER SHIELD & SWORD

"Worthy Security"

PUBLIC MANDATE

You deserve to be safe from bad guys.

SHADOW MANDATE

Security is lucrative when people see that danger is everywhere. Peace isn't profitable.

CORPORATE AGENT

LaQuinne Burke

- Role: Ronin
- ♦ Emotion: Ego
- Characteristics: Bold, Friendly

INITIAL PROJECT

Promote and maintain the mystery of the rogue submarine for as long as possible.

GREEN SURF

"This is our last and only planet."

PUBLIC MANDATE

We have all been bad guys, as far as the Earth is concerned.
We owe it to Earth to fix it.

SHADOW MANDATE

The needs of the whole outweigh the needs of the few. If people get hurt to save the planet, that's how it is.

CORPORATE AGENT

Arjun Tennant

- Role: Infiltrator
- Emotion: Fear
- Characteristics: Driven, Reckless

INITIAL PROJECT

Reveal malfeasance in a way that sparks worldwide action on eco issues.







CHAPTER FIVE NEW MOTOR CITY

By Kira Magrann

Location: The old city of Detroit

Date: 2065

BACKGROUND

The architectural carcasses of old "Rust Belt" Detroit still haunt these neon streets; art deco theatres and car manufacturing plants are preserved in spectacular ruin amidst fields of urban wasteland. Not far from these relics are the shiny new skyscrapers and lush urban farms that mark the renaissance of Detroit's industrial waste. The skyscrapers are an extension of the downtown business districts, now bustling with new money from the tech startups that moved in from Silicon Valley. They call this area the Silicon Belt, a shinier take on the diaspora of the Rust Belt it used to be not 50 years ago. The Silicon Belt is a giant portion of the downtown, circled by highways, filled with condos, skyscrapers, green spaces, bars, and nightclubs, all accessible by the hyper-rail: part of the experimental new mobility the city is now famous for. Just beyond this area are many of the urban farms, employing both vertical and horizontal technology to most efficiently make use of urban space. With their focus mostly on seasonal greens, fish, and hydroponics, the farms see a lot of success in local markets. The urban farmland provides ultra-local paleo-genetic hybrids bioengineered to mimic natural foods from the turn of the century. Restauranteurs love marketing to the European tourists who come to go urban spelunking, promising farm-to-table foods from only a few blocks away. Much of this urban farm space used to be residential, filled with reconstructed houses and empty lots after the housing collapse in the early 2000's. At first, it was a revolutionary way to use the space



and for Detroiters to be entrepreneurs in their own backyards. Then Agricum, the big farm company in the city, started stepping in more and more, strong-arming the smaller businesses with levies and quality control laws. The famous eight-mile mark still represents the divide between the downtown and the suburbs, but a huge class or race divide no longer remains on this side

of town. On the other side of the urban farms is where people are still fighting to prevent their homes from being "greenified", pushed out by the farming industry. Every year, more and more people move further south,

where the new projects are. The new way to delineate the projects from the downtown is to see how far the hyper-rail will go into them.

The industry of New Motor City is a temple built to speed: fast cars, fast music, fast fame. Ever since XO Velocity combined the old tech of Ford and the newer tech of Tesla to create their greener, cheaper vehicles, New Motor City has entered a new renaissance. Many people hailed it as the second coming of the motor city of the past, and



America had a new name in vehicle design and clean energy. All the people who had been left out in the wind were getting jobs at these new factories. Part of the new mobility movement is being able to customize the design of nearly every part of the car with billions of options. While high-tech machinery could do a lot of the heavy lifting with construction, there were always fiddly bits and details that needed a human touch. Customer service became a huge part of the car industry... these weren't just cars anymore; they were Personal Transportation Vehicles (PTVs). People could use these for getting around the city, country, etc., and then public transportation within the city on a system of lite rails



based on magnet science could move people about without the worry of taking up space. Most older cars quickly went out of style because people simply couldn't afford the oil to keep them up anymore. Despite attempts at fracking in the US, we couldn't provide enough to last, and the Middle East was quick to raise prices on us. Older cars were recycled and used in various architectural projects throughout the US.

Detroit Techno has made a comeback and massive local Street Burns draw latex- and dayglow-clad ravers who race for pink slips and dance like it's 1995. Super-customized retro-fit PTVs are showcased every night of the week, at locations that constantly move around. Street Burns are a combination of drugged-out, Burning Man creatives making art installations and old street races that used to rely heavily on tricked-out engines and nitrous boosts. It's not just about the race anymore, it's about the performance, and people come out to watch them like they're local concerts. As long as the drugs are natural and bio-stamped, they're legal. There's usually a ton of businesses who thrive off of these events: pop-up vendors, fashion designers, natural drug aficionados, and Live-Eye all haunt these events, milking the culture for all its worth. LiveEye in

particular mines these events for new voices to lead their reality series based in the New Motor City. They mostly showcase teenagers and their exploration and discovery in the Street Burn scene. The series has brought a



huge spotlight on the city worldwide, bringing in tourists, businesses, and credits. It now rivals Chicago in the Midwest in its cultural boom. It almost never benefits the stars though, because aside from fame and a paycheck during the time they're on air, they're created and destroyed in a matter of weeks. LiveEye reassures that people need to see something new, and they seem right; ratings are always higher with new "characters".

Music technology has become such a big deal, with people utilizing the old-tech philosophy with new sounds. Mixing boards are accessible and streamlined; they're about as prolific as the iPods of old. The Detroit Techno sound that put it on the map in the 90s has been revitalized, and it's really reaching people across the globe. There's a hope in the lyrics and an innovation in the sound that echoes the feeling New Motor City wants to project unto the world. Even this old, corrupt, dying place can rise from the ashes. What it doesn't talk about are all the people who are still stuck in an equivalent urban sprawl this industry has created. These voices go to smaller places, the old clubs on the outlying sections of the city, where those most affected by being pushed out by the new big money are. Events held in backyards around bonfires and cement blocks,



with loosely rigged wired sound systems of the past. It's here that the sound of the real New Motor City is heard.

There's a distinct disparity between the downtown revival and the neighborhood sprawl, and beneath the success of the new tech and a renaissance of culture, the people grow restless. The real culture in Detroit comes from a promise of honest work that originally brought people into the city during the first car boom that Ford created in the mid-1900s. Both black and white workers were welcome, in an unprecedented number-compared to other cities at that time, when racial discrimination was still huge. Although as a country the US has made huge strides since that time concerning civil rights, there are still the echoes of those racial tensions from over 100 years ago. It's evident in the segregated sections of New Motor City. The South Side still represents a huge part of the poor population of the city, people who aren't protected by legislature and are still being pushed out by big money. The fancy new railways, in white ultra-light steel and neon turquoise float over a jungle of empty warehouses, old trees, and abandoned houses that are indicative of these neighborhoods. Despite their roughness, and sometimes the inherent danger of some of the gangs that organize on these streets, there's real community here. If you know the right person, you can get the best street BBQ here still, and people in the community try to take care of local parks, schools, and gardens on their own time. The same innovation that the downtown represents can also be seen here. And it's often stolen from here. Culture always comes from the street, and this is the ultimate street, people pirating and creating their own cyber nets within the large one that blankets the city.



NuSafe has been working for decades to keep what happens in New Motor City staying in New Motor City. Building their early security nets after what China innovated in the early 2000s, NuSafe has figured out how to keep an area secure without it being completely closed off. Media gets out and gets in, but they can curate it down to the

millisecond, catching any press, communication, or image that could "endanger the important work done here for America". Everyone kind of knows it's bullshit, and more than a little big brother, but they're not breaking any constitutional rights, and they've got dozens of lawyers to tell you why that's true. They've got a lot of control in the city, creating the stories that are being told here before people realize they're being duped. The cleverest part of their marketing campaigns is that most of what they say is true, so it's really hard to determine the overall falseness of the information they provide. Half broadcast company, half security net, they own innovation in the New Motor City.

GEOGRAPHY

There are a few geographically important areas in New Motor City. First among them are the XO Velocity towers downtown. They're the tallest skyscrapers, highlighted by beautiful art deco neon spires that can be seen all the way from the belt. It has XO's corporate headquarters and other offices in addition to housing a PTV playground beneath, kind of like a mall of customizable vehicles and culture. This is where you get the branded shit and meet the big names in PTV design.

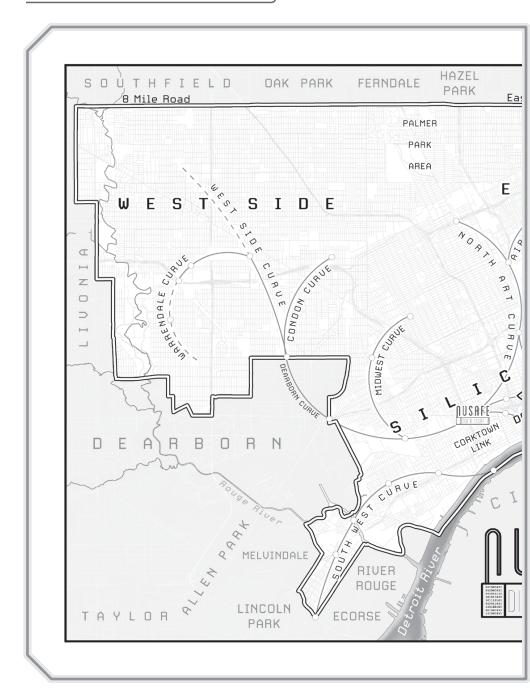
The Greenhouse Kitchen and Brewery resides downtown nearest to the urban farms. It's a popular tourist location. The art museum regained its old glory and now showcases an impressive contemporary collection to rival the Getty in LA. Street Burn Combustion Crewe is the group to follow for the best pop-up festivals, and they can be found in any location large enough to host a stage and a race (sometimes, that could even be a garage or underground sewers connecting to old warehouses). The most beautiful view in town is at the peak of the hyper-rail near the Canadian border, with a small hub where tourists can eat, sleep, shop, and enjoy the incredible view of New Motor City. Rubber Records is the hub of techno, famous for rapper Sange and DJ Phatkitten who started the company and brought it to legendary status. It's located in the South Side despite many attempts to try and relocate it.

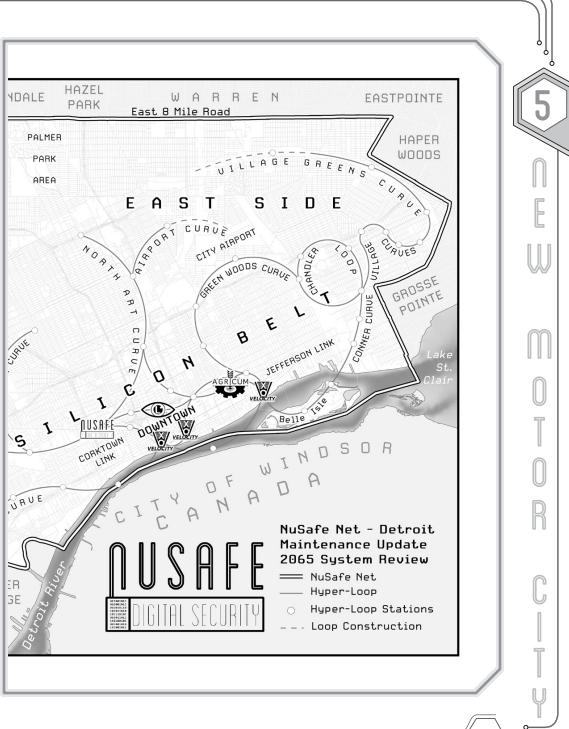
The NuSafe net doesn't extend out into the suburbs and draws a perfect line around the city limits, traceable even simple mobile devices. The Chain is a series of warehouses from the past 20 years of failed new industry that XO Velocity abandoned. These are a favorite for urban spelunkers and photographers and graffiti artists.











CORPORATE & AGENT BACKGROUNDS



AGRICUM

Agricum is the inventor of vertical farming technology. They're credited with the latest in nutrients and fertilizers needed to sustain the crops of the future. Created here in the technological hub of New Motor City, these technologies not only supply the local region with all natural foods but also provide jobs for city inhabitants. Agricum believes that even the most industrial of soils can be remade into something beautiful. They're going to keep the city "clean and green". But their real agenda is pretty nasty, since

they're more or less waging a class war against smaller urban farmers and low-income residents that live on the property they want to farm. They've recently begun purposefully leaking fertilizer into these areas, fertilizer that is super harmful to humans but not so much soil or crops. Externally, they seem very concerned with making the everyday person healthy and growing superb crops, but that's all just part of their marketing plan. Agricum is trying to edge its way into owning as much property in New Motor City as possible in order to make the most profit per square inch. They don't care at all about the people who live in the city. Their motto is "Keeping New Motor City Green".

AGRICUM CORPORATE AGENT: SHARON BRUBAKER

Sharon Brubaker is the head of Quality Control for the company, a position that requires her to not only have an intimate knowledge of the merchandise Agricum creates but also be the face of the company on the street. When there's an issue with vertical farm scaffolding breaking down, fertilizers accidentally killing crops, or farm border disputes, she's the one to deal with it. She's a serious hardass, and she has no problem prioritizing her fortune over the lives of the people who are being destroyed by Agricum. Sharon would probably die before she worked for another company. This is, after all, her family legacy. With great responsibility comes great anxiety, though. She's plagued by sleepless nights, nervousness about making the right moves, and stress that never ends. It's bound to lead to mistakes one day.

NUSAFE

NuSafe is an expert in experimental technology and has been ever since it moved from Silicon Valley to New Motor City. They brought with them their best and brightest, and they're innovators in all kinds of household technology, espe-



cially when it comes to cybersecurity. They build personal Wi-Fi chips that are located in the devices people carry with them every day. Of course, this tech expands exponentially when applied to larger security systems, like the ones that surround New Motor City. Impenetrable to even some of the spytech the US government now deployings, these webs of security are in place to protect the tech company's corporate secrets. It's a matter of keeping the latest tech under wraps, and that means keeping experimental areas invisible, especially to governments who would seek to regulate their activities. Their motto is "The Future of Personal Security".

NUSAFE CORPORATE AGENT: TAMIKA JENKINS

Tamika Jenkins is the Director of Operations at NuSafe and has been for some time. She's currently the lead on the new personal security tech line, and she believes strongly in its mission. A longtime supporter of the head developer of the hardware, it's not just the technology she's behind, but the message. Tamika truly thinks that people don't know how dangerous cyberhackers can be, and that this technology is really just for their own best interests. A wolf-among-sheep attitude, she'll crack any eggs to make an omelet and sacrifice anything that stands in the way of completing her goal.

LIVEEYE

LiveEye is well known for its livestream of constant real-life coverage. Born from the reality TV of the turn of the 21st century, this brand of media is all about the illusion of



reality. More real than reality, or extra reality, as it's come to be called, highlights the intimate feelings of the real-life people involved in ways that old media never could. You can link up with them, see what they see, hear what they hear, and it's from a quickly moving, first-person narrative that makes use of micro cameras placed on the subjects' skin. This perspective replaced the confessional room style of old, but it's controversial because the people watching can have very serious emo-



tional reactions to what they're watching. People love it and love to hate it. There's a lot of criticism on how quickly stars are used up and passed on for new people. But, it keeps things entertaining. Their motto is "On the Pulse of the Community".

LIVEEYE CORPORATE AGENT: KIM HALL

Kim Hall, Media Relations, would ruin anyone's life in order to get a good story. She's greedy and manipulative, and she's out on the front lines recruiting new kids every night to get in front of her camera. She'll bribe them with a pittance and make ten times that much off of their stories. She actually goes for sad, controversial stories most often, sometimes putting people in the spotlight when they should remain hidden. Pushing people past their limits is her deal, so if someone seems vulnerable, she'll jump on it. A few people that Kim has worked with in the past have committed suicide, been targeted by lawyers, had exorbitant fines placed on them, created turf gang wars, been blacklisted by corps for money, etc. Of course, because LiveEye controls what people see, nobody knows these truths.



XO VELOCITY

XO Velocity pioneered what most of the US and many parts of the developed world use today in order to get around: PTVs and electrically-powered vehicles. They combined the innovative technology of Tesla and Ford to make something new and accessible to everyone. XO protects its patents closely, though, because they don't want just anyone 3D-printing their designs. For the most part, much of New Motor City's enterprises

are behind them since they bring so much prosperity to the city. But they're haunted by two dark secrets. The credit for the design of the PTVs doesn't lie with the current CEO; they were actually made by Devon Bell, one of their lower level factory workers who turned out to be a genius. They stole his design without a second thought, and since there's no unions in place, there's been no restitution. The second secret is that the demand for the PTVs is so large sometimes they don't properly test the new products before they go out. Updates to these vehicles are downloadable, but often full of bugs, leading to some disastrous results. People have died after the newest releases, but XO is keeping it quiet, blaming it on the drivers as often as possible. Their motto is "Innovators in New Mobility".

XO VELOCITY CORPORATE AGENT: CHRIS TRAKKER

Chris Trakker, Sr. Designer at XO Velocity, has the unfortunate position of being a creative in a corporate environment. It's not that he doesn't care about the corrupt shit that's happening at his company; it's just that he's more terrified of losing his job than doing the right thing. He's overworked, tasked with creating new designs weekly, and he has little patience for most human interaction. Chris has heard about the past drama with Devon and has some sympathy for the man, since Chris is in a similar position now as he was then. He's convinced the same thing won't happen to him, though. Trakker lets designs slide out on the regular that he doesn't follow up on after the fact, and he believes what he doesn't see in safety testing can't hurt him. Ultimately, it's the company's responsibility, not his, right?







EVENTS, ISSUES, AND SECRETS —

EVENTS	ISSUES	SECRETS
New fertilizer runoff poisons residential area water, killing hundreds	People in poor residential areas forced to move	Agricum did this intentionally to make more money out of crops from high risk neighborhoods.
Extreme CIO security "net" put in place around the city to prevent tech leaks	Stuff that should be getting out isn't, a la China	NuSafe is developing unethical biotech implants to keep humans "safer", but it's actually mind control.
Popular local rapper killed in gang warfare	Civil rights protests lead to police incited riots	LiveEye assassinated the rapper and incited a gang war just for the story.
The new Silicon Valley – tech migration from LA	Tech versus Blue Collar (unions lawfully disbanded)	XO Velocity's biggest tech breakthrough was created by a blue collar worker local to New Motor City, not Silicon Valley, and they want to keep this under wraps.
First electric racing cars	New Motor City becomes the nationwide home of vehicle innovation	PTV culture is the focus of New Motor City, and in order to keep up with demand, they're releasing vehicles that don't meet safety standards. People are dying in accidents.

THE CORPORATIONS

AGRICUM

"Keeping New Motor City Green"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Support urban farmers in their mission to provide fresh, local, and free-range groceries in a farm-to-table philosophy

SHADOW MANDATE

Push out local, lower-income residents and small urban farmers in order to "cleanse the city".

CORPORATE AGENT

Sharon Brubaker

- Role: Handler
- ♦ Emotion: Fear
- Characteristics: Nervous, Loyal

INITIAL PROJECT

Sign two resistant urban farms

NUSAFE

"The Future of Digital Security"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Protect New Motor City's borders from cyber pirates who would steal company secrets

SHADOW MANDATE

Create a secure site to cover for the unethical experimentation they're doing with human brains for their personal security

CORPORATE AGENT

Tamika Jenkins

- Role: Tech
- Emotion: Ego
- Characteristics: Immoral, Tenacious

INITIAL PROJECT

Maintain stranglehold on the city's outgoing communications











XO VELOCITY

"Innovators in New Mobility"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Make the hottest new cars accessible in stylish, practical luxury

SHADOW MANDATE

Monopolize the PTV industry based on hard-to-make vehicles and prevent people from 3D-printing or DIYing their own vehicles

CORPORATE AGENT

Chris Trakker

- Role: Tech
- ♦ Emotion: Need
- Characteristics: Impatient. Malleable

INITIAL PROJECT

Utilize local racers for global campaign to sell newest PTV model

LIVEEYE

"On the pulse of the community"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Get the hottest new shit on camera before anybody else does

SHADOW MANDATE

Control what stories air, in order to manipulate public opinion for profit

CORPORATE AGENT

Kim Hall

- Role: Handler
- Emotion: Grief
- Characteristics: Ruthless, Greedy

INITIAL PROJECT

Pick the new "it girl" for their street reality documentary series





CHAPTER 6 PARAISO AMAZONIA

By Encho Chagas

Location: Amazonia, South America

Date: 2075

Rising sea levels caused the coast of South America to sink, while far inland, rising temperatures turned most rural areas into endless deserts. The continent hungers, while the elite squander the rest of the planet's natural resources.

For the past 40 years, many corporations gathered to create the only safe leisure place in the world, the Paraiso Amazonia Pleasure Resort. Covering an area larger than most countries, the Amazon forest is now a controlled environment, secured by huge domes of glass and metal. Beaches have been artificially created around the new Amazon Sea, maintaining Brazil's tourism-based activities. New cities have been created to house the large influx of incoming immigrants, but at exorbitant prices. Old local residents were evicted to the slums in the surrounding areas. With government support and the national army in charge of security, Paraiso Amazonia keeps its population numbers steady, secures its borders, and strictly monitors all tourism.

The resort inhabitants live a quiet and peaceful life, rarely being bothered by dissidents. They enjoy and consume the world's last resources, while the majority of the South American population suffer in slums all over the continent. But the Headspace technology imposes a serious threat to the corporations, who are not yet prepared to deal with Operators despite their corporate arsenal and army personnel.

Your team could be the first group of Headspace Operators to take action in Paraiso Amazonia. Each of you have many reasons to fight the corporations. They could be foreign Operators secretly hired by an executive to sabotage a rival Corporation, or rich inhabitants working on a coup. The most likely motivation is that they're outsiders, slumborns trying to free and share the abundant resources held by a few, possibly even working for the crime syndicate. Whatever the reasons, a Cell of Operators in the slums is a rare thing. Your technology won't be the best, a few models older, probably stolen or poorly assembled by resistance hackers. Unless it's delivered by wealthy hands with strings attached.

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BACKGROUND

The construction of the Paraiso Amazonia facilities started long before the global disasters. It began at the turn of the century with the construction of the Belo Monte hydroelectric power plant, a controversial project the largest corporations in Brazil pressured the government into. There were riots in major cities all over the country; riots that were met with brutal force. Then came the announcement that shocked the world, plans for an opulent pleasure resort in the middle of the Amazon rain forest.



International authorities started discussions to halt the construction. Two major companies were behind the enterprise: PetroCorp, an energy company focused on oil harvesting, and Orleans Bragança, a construction company run by descendants of the former Brazilian

imperial family, still interested in re-establishing their old government. To soothe international pressure, both companies negotiated land and business opportunities in Amazonia to foreign companies that would keep the construction of Paraiso Amazonia underway. That policy not only guaranteed the success of their plans but also greatly increased its extension.



During the following decades, global warmth started to melt Earth's polar ice caps, raising the level of sea water all over the globe and endangering wild environments. Brazil was devastated, its major coastal cities submerged and its tourism industry destroyed. Paraiso Amazonia became Brazilians' only refuge, and the country's congress approved the building of new cities and artificial beaches, lying along the new coast of what was the Amazon river, now an inland saltwater sea. Moving to the region was prohibitively expensive for most, so only the richest families were able to do so. As the situation worsened everywhere in the world, Paraiso Amazonia flourished, becoming larger and wealthier.

To contain illegal migration, the army set up a large perimeter that stretched throughout the two largest Brazilian states, Amazonia and Para. Their forests offered cover the military's ruthless actions. The number of deaths is unknown, but experts estimate the loss of life in the millions. As people couldn't get in, many settlements sprang up in the surrounding area. Eventually, even Amazonia residents faced eviction. Small villages and cities were evacuated and rebuilt to house the new rich dwellers and tourists. As the conditions all over the continent worsened and most of the vegetation were turned into deserts, high temperatures made it impossible to live elsewhere. People from many

countries gathered and gathered during the following decades outside the resort's perimeter, creating the largest slums in the world.

SEIBUTSU TECHNOLOGY

To ensure the survival of the wild environment, huge domes were constructed around

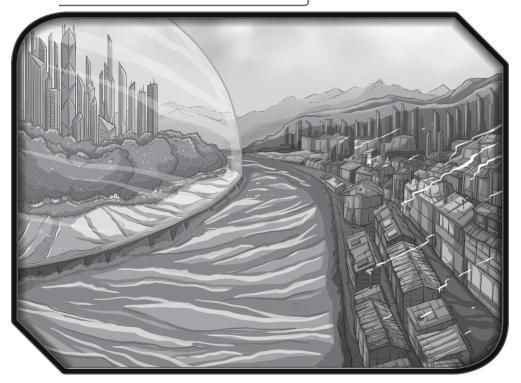
major areas to keep weather conditions stable. Seibutsu, a NeoTokyo corporation with unique patents, brought new technologies, like better garbage recycling and new bioengineered vegetation adapted to withstand its new life within the domes. The wild fauna was almost entirely replaced by lobotomised animals, opening up the possibility of tourists looking for the "full wild-life" experience without the danger of being attacked.



In the past decades, the slums were violent. Skirmishes erupted between drug lords vying for power and control over criminal enterprises, especially over the underground routes to the resort. Just a few of these tunnels exist, created from the inside by smugglers. Although drug consumption is huge among the slums' populations, the real money comes from rich tourists looking for "fun" in wild, hedonistic parties. All of these factors led to the creation of the largest crime syndicate South America has ever seen: The Satans. Many legends exist about their rise to power, but all agree that it

was fast, violent... and suspicious. Their weaponry was far too advanced for a bunch of nobodies, even well-trained nobodies like the Satans. The thing is, since they rose to power, drugs, weapons, and anything illegal are much more common inside Paraiso Amazonia, despite the amazing border security.

PetroCorp and Orleans Bragança are consumed with their economic and operational strategies, with the main concern being how much profit they can make without destroying popular opinion of them. It is said that Orleans has been preparing for a government coup for years, but high-ranking officials within the company tow the line and publicly deny it. They even find support among many slumborns, hoping that a monarchy could remove corporations from power. Then their country could return to its real inhabitants... although that might not include slumborns. Seibutsu Technology is rarely present on discussions about the future of Paraiso Amazonia, but they have authority over areas where their technology is needed, like most of the wild environment domes. but Seibutsu always has a convenient document that proves they have authorization for their activities. Seibutsu prioritizes science over moral or political decisions, regularly crossing lines established by the other corporations or governments.



GEOGRAPHY

THE COMPLEX

The Paraiso Amazonia complex is divided into facilities spread over almost 4000km. It starts in Colombia and Peru, at the sources of the old Amazon River and extends to the tidal estuary at the Atlantic Sea where the large island of Marajo now lies completely submerged. The site of the large capital of Manaus is now the center of the Amazon Sea, measuring 750km at its widest. In 2075, the "sea" should probably be called a lake: it has low water flow and desalination provided by the corporations. People still call it a sea due to social acceptance and the many artificial beaches it has. The Amazon Sea retains one of the main characteristics of its predecessor river: two different colours divide it in half. On the north side, you have the dark Colombian waters of the Black River, on the south, the muddy Peruvian waters from the Solimões River. This difference defines the activities that take place on each side. Many beaches and leisure facilities dot the northern side. While the south side has a multitude of domes with controlled natural environments that offer the "Wild Experience", the north was designed for those with more adventurous spirits or the desire to live among nature.

East of Santarem City, the Amazon Sea remembers its past as a river and starts flowing downstream through a narrow pass for 600 more kilometres until emptying into the Atlantic Ocean. Although the river is narrower, its shortest crossing still measures 64km, and occurs at the Belo Monte Dams almost 300km from the river's end at the ocean.

The Amazon Sea has many tributaries that feed it, their sources now heavily guarded and protected by more and more controlled environment domes. Regular patrol boats maintain the waterways, and outposts have been constructed every 150km along larger tributaries to provide rapid responses to terrorism and illegal immigration. Bordering countries offer small versions of domed environments, but they have nothing near the luxury and splendor of the Brazilian Paraiso Amazonia.

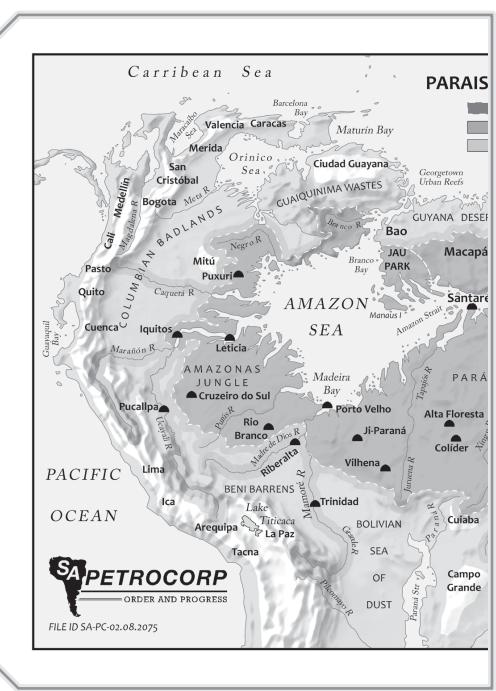
The main energy source for many of the domes in Paraiso Amazonia is still the Belo Monte Hydropower plant, an engineering marvel, as it's been continuously updated since its construction at the beginning of the century. The old dam is actually underwater, after a failed attempt to use it in reverse when the sea level rose. The plant now controls the bidirectional flow of both freshwater and seawater at the Amazon Sea's mouth. Various dams slow most of the water flow, redirecting it to turbines when tidal forces surpass their capabilities.

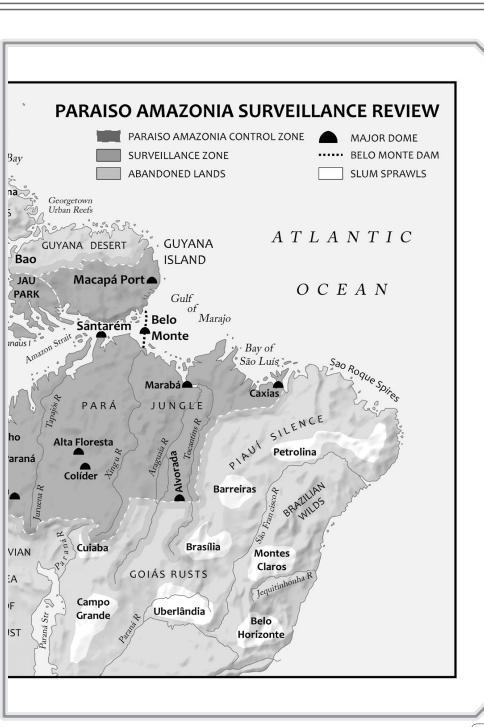
Because of the major importance of the Dams area, this is the most guarded place in the Complex. It now houses multiple governmental buildings, including the Presidential Palace, Congress, and several military headquarters. What remains of the city of Macapa, by the north side of the old river's mouth, is a port city where plant workers, government, and members of the military live. No tourists are allowed, but many foreign ships dock for the purposes of cargo delivery, civilian transfer to smaller boats heading upriver, and refueling. This is also the center of immigration control.

Wilderness domes vary a lot in size and technology level. During the 40s and 50s, the domes built were huge, with the largest one at Santarem: an 8.5km wide dome, 1.2km tall at its center. These domes required support pillars and had outposts on top for cleaning and maintenance teams. Santarem still has a "turn of the century" metropolitan look and feel to it, but it's very different from most larger cities in the world. The poorest people here are actually wealthier than most people in the country, although it's commonplace for illegal immigrants to land. Santarem is also a hub of most black market deals.

For the past 15 years, domes have been fully automated, and many even cover beaches and large ocean areas. By the northwestern bay of the Amazon Sea, the jewel of Paraiso sits: Jau Park, a series of 32 intercon-

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nected, mid-sized domes (1 to 5km wide each) that cover what might be considered a natural park... except it's not wild or natural. Trees are all genetically manipulated to repel undesired parasites, and fauna are bio-engineered. Beaches look all-natural and clean and offer artificial waves, diving areas, and nautical sports. Everything is secured and in a controlled environment, supported by top-of-the-line air filtering and sun/shade control. Only Pointers (the 0.01% wealthiest people in the world) can afford to live in such opulence.

THE OUTSKIRTS

Not every city is covered by a dome, and these suffer from severe pollution and carcinogenic UV radiation. Non-transgenic vegetation only survives near the rivers, and the majority of the forests have a greenish yellow color to them. They're in rapid decline, heavily deforested during the slums' construction. The northern border, in Guianas and Venezuela, is especially bare. A few groups of out-dwellers have taken some action in what is left of it, but border security guards have responded aggressively to these attempts. Between the domes and the cities are few interesting places—mostly artificial landscapes to cover view from people at sea or surrounding bullet train lines. Officially, you can't wander around outside of the domes. If you need to travel, you'll need to use public transportation or a personal boat. Even with a boat, don't even try traveling up any of the source tributaries. Open water requires that you have a driving/boating license, and they are not cheap.

Drones and surveillance cameras patrol the wild inside Paraiso Amazonia and up to 50km beyond its borders. The patrols have less than stellar surveillance tech near the domes and where private boats roam, and most immigrants have taken advantage of this.

THE SLUMS

Endless, monochromatic slums. Every mountain, no matter how high, is clear of ramshackle communities. The poorest ones are on the north border, starting at French Guiana and going northwest through Venezuela and all the way into Ecuador. Almost none of the old forest's vegetation is left; the trees were used to build houses and clear way for more buildings. Skyscrapers are rare, but some denser urban clusters do try to reach the skies. Many construct their houses on top of others, creating layers of habitation. In Boa Vista, a cluster located just north of Jau Park, the constructions are so high and chaotic that you can't find streets or even the original ground. Some houses only have top or bottom entrances, and a lot have been constructed underground. Drones looking for wanted criminals are a regular sight, so most people cover their roofs or walk around through other houses and constructions.

Then there are the Vaults, heavily guarded by the Satans, the crime syndicate that maintains peace around the slums. The Vaults were once shelters built by the government to protect and take care of refugees from the floods. Now they have been turned into free commerce areas, especially for Paraiso Amazonia's black market. Pointers spend a lot of money to visit a Vault, and the Satans make sure they get there and back safely. The Vaults are also famous for their parties, like the Carnival parade. Many of them attract even more attention than the celebrations that take place inside the resort, although border security tends to have increased activities during these events. It's been a big sticking point between the Satans and other corporations in the past few years. So far, the corps have trod lightly, for fear of consequences.

EVERYWHERE ELSE

At the south frontier and beyond things go a bit post-apocalyptic. There are expanses of open fields where nothing can grow. Deserts divide one slum clusters from the next, and each raises their own defences. Most of them identify themselves by where they came from before traveling north to Amazonia. For example, the Sao Paolo cluster is located where the city of Porto Velho was, at Paraiso's southwestern border. Rio-dwellers, or cariocas, tried to stablish themselves at the Maraba region, but they were expelled by locals in the Satan's drug wars of '63, in which they finally achieved supremacy against the other drug lords. Old cities still exist, but their structure doesn't really differ from the slums. The government now only takes care of the northern region and only shows up when it's time to collect taxes.

Recently, the army started taking an aggressive posture towards close neighbours that host rivers feeding Paraiso's water supply. Officially, the army is accusing them of not adequately following safety procedures, which of course endangers the resort's environment. But most people know that's just a load of crap. Their real agenda is to control an even larger area and expand the resort, harvesting natural resources while they still last. These attempts at expansion have drawn the attention of the Satans. They don't take kindly to the corporations muscling in on their turf.

CORPORATE & AGENT BACKGROUNDS

The Corporations that hold Paraiso Amazonia together are known as the Conglomerate. Officially, each takes care of their own part in this robust ecosystem, but they always bend contracts and activities to further their individual goals.

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PETROCORP

PetroCorp used to be the Brazilian state's oil company, one of the largest oil companies in the world, growing to dominate South America's energy business. All direc-

tors and high-ranking employees are also government personnel. A small council knows the reality behind the resort's natural resources: they're vanishing. Quickly. And there's nothing anyone can do about it. They're taking a more aggressive stance against neighbouring countries, fighting for resources and expansion.

Their usual competition is Orleans Bagrança Construction, but with their resources running low, they might take their chances against the Satans and raid nearby unexplored areas to expand Paraiso Amazonia. Petro-Corp is also behind the huge contract with Seibutsu, although they're doing all they can to undermine the deal secretly and decrease Seibutsu's ability to contribute, especially in mind-conditioning research. The Satans' activities crossed the borders despite enhancements in security, so the only solution was to open negotiations and close some deals. Now, the Satans are treated as another corporation for diplomacy and commercial purposes, but most of the populace considers them organized criminals.

FAMOUS NPC: CARLOS ROUSSEF, FINANCIAL MOGUL

Roussef is a ruthless businessman, known for always taking the upper hand in closed deals. His family used to occupy high seats in the government, but his father, Inacio Roussef, taught him how to influence politics from the shadows. Rich, powerful, with some very dark secrets buried all around the Resort. He's pragmatic and eager to move problems out of his way quickly, even if that means forming dark alliances.

ORLEANS BRAGANÇA CONSTRUCTION



This, the largest construction corporation in South America, is owned by descendants of the original Brazilian imperial family and is the sole building contractor for (overpriced) governmental projects for decades. Dethroned for almost three centuries, they've never been this close to absolute power: they own the majority of built-up area in the resort, and they're very popular among the Pointers. It's a matter of time until they make their final move to take over Paraiso Amazonia.

OBC sees PetroCorp as their main enemy, but they keep a close eye on Seibutsu. Seibutsu seems to ignore them and their political struggle for power, but it's a well known secret that they're very interested in the resort's resources... and that makes them dangerous. The Satans have been a resourceful ally for many years, especially in low-profile manoeuvres. Orleans Bragança executives absolutely hate getting their hands dirty.

FAMOUS NPC: MONIQUE TASSO DE SAXE-COBURGO E BRAGANÇA, THE IMPERIAL PRINCESS

Monique's first in the line of succession. If Brazil would return to a monarchy, that is. But now is a time where only the wealthy actually matter and Monique is a friendlier figure than current presidency staff. Present in most social events and very popular in Paraiso Amazonia, it seems most inhabitants are expecting to see her on a throne in the near future. The princess is known for some bold popularity moves, like hosting fundraising parties in the slums, but she would never be able to do it safely without the full support of the Satans. In reality, she couldn't care less for the poor, but she knows popular support can help her take over Paraiso Amazonia.

SEIBUTSU TECHNOLOGY

Seibutsu was invited into Paraiso Amazonia for their unique work in bioengineering. As one of the last strongholds of wildlife, the Amazon and its surrounding areas provide a great opportunity for research and technological development.



But Seibutsu's intentions are much darker than what they publicly admit to: they're working on the human mind and ways to enthral and control human beings.

PetroCorp has a longstanding contract that restricts most of Seibutsu's activities that would fall outside their public mandate, but OBC might help them circumvent that problem. They currently have no direct conflict with the Satans, but they keep an eye out on the Satans' infiltration operations and drug smuggling. There have been some secret deals regarding human research inside the slums.



SEIBUTSU TECHNOLOGY CORPORATE AGENT: LEAD RESEARCHER LIGIA YAMADA

Yamada is a nisei, born in Brazil to Japanese parents, and a major influence for Seibutsu's arrival in Paraiso Amazonia. They started with PetroCorp creating designs for the first domes. A cold, methodical and ingenious scientist, they're currently one of the greatest names in neurotech. They're obsessed with Headspace technology, specifically with designing new uses for it.



THE SATANS

The crime syndicate that runs most slums might have sufficient manpower to take over all of Paraiso Amazonia, but are not organized enough to wage this war. Their forces are spread throughout the whole continent. They're not officially considered a corporation, but their leader, Madam Satan, takes part in many decisions that could affect them even outside the resort. Madam is constantly seen walking around the corridors of corporations' buildings and is feared even among the powerful Pointers.

PetroCorp maintains close talks with Madam in regards to border activities, but in the streets you could say they're pretty much at war. It's dangerous to walk anywhere in the slums wearing a Petro logo. The Satans and Orleans' executives have a good working relationship, mostly because of joint enterprises that nominally help life in the slums. Seibutsu is seen by the Satans as just a novice in the struggle for power in Paraiso Amazonia.

Arguably the most feared person in the whole continent, the Madam Satan used to be a male prostitute in the slums during her teenage years. She became a great leader for those in peril. By first empowering poor people, and later going to arms to take over crime all over the slums, the transgender leader now has connections inside the Resort, connections she uses to harass and intimidate the corporations.

THE SATANS CORPORATE AGENT: LITTLE ZED

Little Zed was born in the slums and has been a part of the crime business as long as he can remember. There was never another option for him. The speed with which moving through the tight corners and alleys and crossing surveyed resort areas unnoticed quickly set him apart of the other agents for the Satans. He's usually working directly for Madam Satan. Even though he is already a young adult, his small size still fit his nickname.

EVENTS, ISSUES, AND SECRETS

EVENTS	ISSUES	SECRETS
The Repossession	Government orders the removal of the civilian population from Amazonia ecoregion	Petrocorp and OBC secretly participated in the eviction process, silently destroying protester groups.
Favela Civil War	War for resources and control at the Resort's outskirts	Petrocorp funded different parties to rage war one on another. OBC helped a young leader, Madam Satan, to seize control of the slums, thus starting The Satans corp.
Boa Vista Uprising	Violent uprising takes place near the Boa Vista slums cluster, which the military suppresses with brutal efficiency	Seibutsu had been conducting mind enthrallment experimentation on humans in Boa Vista, but first results turned test subjects into enraged mindless zombies.
The Carnival Parade Reborn	The party in the slums incite Pointers to travel out of the resort, endangering security and leading to illegal activities.	The Satans incited the Carnival Parade as a cover to move huge amounts of illegal cargo across the borders.
Forest Protection Agreement Broken	Paraiso Amazonia officials decide to invade the other countries inside the Amazonia ecoregion and are accused of breaking the Forest Protection agreement.	Petrocorp wants to extend Paraiso Amazonia's borders to include all of the Amazon River.



THE CORPORATIONS

SEIBUTSU TECHNOLOGY

"Designing ideas"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Offer environmental technology for new domes, air filtering, and genetic engineering of both flora and fauna.

SHADOW MANDATE

Use the environment to research and patent new mind-control biotechnology.

CORPORATE AGENT

Ligia Yamada

Role: Tech

Emotion: NEED

 Characteristics: Cold, Analytical

INITIAL PROJECT

Utilize local racers for global campaign to sell newest PTV model

THE SATANS

"Sharing, top to bottom"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Care for the poor population living in the slums. Keep crime on a leash.

SHADOW MANDATE

Take from the rich, give it to the poor.

CORPORATE AGENT

Little Zed

Role: Runner

♦ Emotion: FEAR

Characteristics:
 Ruthless, Committed

INITIAL PROJECT

Expand crime inside Paraiso Amazonia: mainly illegal immigration, drug-dealing, theft, and extortion.





PETROCORP

"Order and Progress"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Keep Paraiso Amazonia running, enforce the law, and keep the borders secure.

SHADOW MANDATE

Control all natural resources in the continent and also conquer other countries' resources.

CORPORATE AGENT

Carlos Rousef

- Role: Infiltrator
- ♦ Emotion: RAGE
- Characteristics:
 Resourceful, Vigilant

INITIAL PROJECT

Develop civilian identification by brain signature, to track immigrants and to identify potential threats.

ORLEANS BRAGANÇA CONSTRUCTION

"A proud Empire for a proud people"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Gain popular appeal to propose the return of the imperial family to power.

SHADOW MANDATE

Control what stories air, in order to manipulate public opinion for profit

CORPORATE AGENT

Monique Tasso de Saxe-Coburgo e Bragança

- Role: Ronin
- Emotion: EGO
- Characteristics: Friendly, Manipulative

INITIAL PROJECT

Create a caste system inside Paraiso Amazonia to ensure areas exclusive to the Pointers and other powerful civilians.











CHAPTER 7 100% PURE

By Hamish Cameron

Location: Aotearoa / New Zealand

Date: 2070

BACKGROUND

They used to say you're always prepared for the last disaster. That's bullshit. When Christchurch got flattened in '11, quakes were on everyone's mind, but the idea of disaster preparation vanished to feed the offshore accounts of the smiling corporate assassins faster than the Civil Defense budget did. Short term profit ruled: buy low, sell the guts, discard the carcass.

The shit really started when the Gene-Plague hit. Of course, that wasn't just down here, in fact, good old Godzone fared pretty well. I guess they didn't cut the funding to MAF and the Customs Service; gotta keep the farmers happy. Well, they were happy, and so were the Kiwi bio-corps who could export locally-developed, plague-resistant genomes to the rest of the world. That's how Always Tikanga made their billions. Even though we weren't directly hit by the Gene-Plague, the global disaster had important knock-on effects down here. The first was a drastic rise in food prices as exporters sold their goods overseas at the expense of the local market. The second was the world-wide preoccupation with managing the Gene-Plague in their own countries which left little attention for disasters elsewhere.

When the Alpine fault cracked in '50 and set off just about every fault in the Shaky Isles, no one was ready. New Zealand is a land of coastal cities, cities that were now devastated by tidal waves and liquefaction. The former capital was hit the worst: large parts of Wellington and the Hutt valley were sunk, shattered, or buried by landslides. Even the areas that weren't affected as badly were cut off for months by slips. Dunedin suffered much the same initial effects as Wellington, but it remained in communication with the surrounding area. Post-2011 earthquake paranoia in Christchurch left that city slightly better prepared. Auckland and Hamilton suffered the least damage. From Kaitaia to Bluff, arterial road and rail routes were cut, leaving smaller communities to fend for themselves. The destruction of the political centre delayed emergency funding to support rescue and recovery efforts. The Civil Defense was

underfunded and the government expected international aid, but the global ecological and political instability inflicted by the Gene-Plague meant that none was forthcoming. We needed help, and the only people offering were the corporations.

After sixty years of corporate globalisation, the political landscape was already weighted towards business interests. Wellington was no longer a viable seat of government, so the government relocated to Auckland.

The corporations acted fast. Led by Always Tikanga, biocorps offered extractions from isolated areas to new "safe" housing in the so-called "Green Zones" of Auckland, Hamilton, Napier, and Christchurch in exchange for bargain-basement deals on land. Construction companies-already fat on government contracts and deeply in bed with politicians for decades-built huge



new earthquake-resistant arcologies to house the influx of refugees. The corps denied any link to the gangs terrorising rural communities in the less-affected areas. The government rubber-stamped laws allowing the deployment of corporate troops to suppress the gangs, laws rezoning land as exclusively agricultural, waivers to circumvent the "red tape" that delayed arcology construction, and a host of other laws transferring sovereignty to the corporations. Corporate troops oversaw the largest internal migration in New Zealand's history; the countryside flowed into the cities and the corps cashed in at every step.

The decade after the quake was a time of turmoil for the corps as well.



The global success of Always Tikanga led to an expansive diversification of their local holdings which put pressure on the survival of other local corporations. A merger of several New Zealand and Australian companies created Clearwater Devel-

opments in 2055, now the leading urban landholder in the Pacific Rim. Staffed by veterans of the East Asian wars, Kaitiakitanga Solutions aggressively expanded their operations. It's hard to know whether they were more active in rural terror ops, in rural defense and relocation, or direct and indirect strikes against their rivals. Even local corporations not implicated in the land grab had to consolidate to weather the storm. Those that survived ultimately benefited from the concentration of labour in the new





arcologies. Matauranga Digital benefited from Auckland's survival and soon exploited the new conditions to dominate the digital sphere throughout the Green Zones.

We didn't all bow down and start licking the boots of our new corporate masters though. Some of us took to the bush and banded together to fight for the New Zealand we loved. The corps don't like that sort of thing. That's why the Red and Orange zones exist. They say it's about infrastructure and security, but its really about military control and the degree of force their operatives are authorised to deploy. We see a lot of strange shit out here. You would literally not believe some of the bleeding-edge tech I've seen. Anyway, it's not as hard to support a kind of civilisation out here with modern tech. We have to keep to small groups to avoid orbital and aerial observation, but the growth of portable solar power generation and anonymous satellite access means we can stay pretty mobile, operate comms, and keep our tech operational. There are plenty of corporate facilities operating out here that we can hit for resupply, and where we can get to the coast, we can link up with offshore shipments. Plus, we have plenty of friends in the cities. Arcologies cast long shadows and oppression breeds resistance. Gangs and ghosts keep us in the loop and feed us anything we can't make ourselves. The corporate newsfeeds call us terrorists, as you'd expect, and they fabricate links to foreign governments to play the patriotism angle to the sheeple in the arcologies. But what's changed, eh? They've been doing that since last century.

It all makes that old advertising slogan from the turn of the century even more ironic than it was then.

100% Pure? Yeah, right.

GEOGRAPHY -

The primary geographical classification of New Zealand is the Zone system established by the Infrastructure Recovery Act of 2056. This act mandates that all land be classified into one of several coloured "Zones", Green, Orange, and Red, depending on the degree of essential infrastructure present. Areas which have all necessary infrastructure for public habitation and employment are classified as Green Zones. Areas which have sufficient infrastructure for non-corporate employment but which are not sufficiently robust for habitation are classified as Orange Zones. Areas which are lacking sufficient infrastructure for non-corporate employment or habitation, or areas which pose significant danger to non-corporate personnel, or areas which require secure corporate clearance to enter, are classified as Red Zones. The major urban centres are generally Green Zones (unofficially called Hab-Zones). These are often surrounded by a large industrial or rural Orange Zone. Most isolated or difficult to access areas are Red Zones.

Administratively, New Zealand is divided into eleven provinces which more or less correspond to the geographical divisions which have existed since the late 19th century. Seven of these are in the North Island: Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Waikato, Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, Horowhenua, and Wairarapa. Four are in the South Island: Nelson, Marlborough, Canterbury, Otago.

The province of Auckland, which contains the city of the same name, stretches from the North Cape down to the mouth of the Waikato River. The city of Auckland is the largest Green Zone by area and population, and now sprawls much further than original city around the Waitemata and Manukau Harbours. It is a major shipping centre and site of corporate headquarters for the South Pacific and the seat of New Zealand's government. Those who joke that the government only controls what they can see from the Sky Tower are not far wrong. An Orange Zone surrounds the city, a spreading halo of industrial wasteland that reaches as far as Kaipara Harbour in the north. Beyond that is a Red Zone hotly contested between corporate interests and "independent" groups which more often than not are deniable proxies. To the south, an Orange Zone extends to the borders of Waikato and the Bay of Plenty.

Except for the arcologies of the Hamilton Green Zone, Waikato on the west coast of the North Island is a fertile Orange Zone dominated by biocorps. Much of the province is farmland and production facilities owned by Always Tikanga. To the south of Waikato is Taranaki, a mix of Orange Zone corporate farmland and contested Red Zones. Clearwater Developments ensures that the infrastructure connecting Auckland, Waikato, and Taranaki is excellent and secure. South and east of these Orange Zones, the centre of the North Island is mountainous bush country fractured by the earthquake and left largely alone since. Kaitiakitanga Solutions maintain several hover-truck convoy routes along the lines of the old state highways and are actively engaged in reclamation operations around Mt Taranaki and between Taranaki and Horowhenua.

The province of Bay of Plenty extends far beyond the Bay itself and now includes the Coromandel, the central volcanic areas around Lakes Taupo and Rotorua as far as East Cape. The Orange Zone designation of the Coromandel Peninsula reflects no lack of infrastructure, but rather intensive occupation by high ranking corporate employees. Most of the upper management of Matauranga Digital telework from here, with occasional helicopter commutes to the high-rises of central Auckland. The zoning of Tauranga and Gisbourne also reflect corporate interests rather than habitability. Gisborne is an Orange Zone dominated by the fisheries wing of Clearwater Developments, while Tauranga is the militarised headquarters of Kaitiakitanga Solutions. From Tauranga and a number of forward



operations bases throughout the province, Kaitiakitanga Solutions and several other security corporations engage in "restructuring" operations over Central Red Zone which stretches from the mouth of the Wanganui River on the west coast all the way to East Cape. South of this band lies Horowhenua to the west and Hawke's Bay to the east.

The core of Horowhenua is a fertile coastal plain dominated by biocorps. Always Tikanga has a relatively minor share there... for now. The mountains and bush around the agricultural area are part of the Central and Wellington Red Zones giving the corporate employees of Horowhenua something of a siege mentality. This isolation also gives the province two further characteristics: a large number of experimental corporate facilities, and many non-voluntary internal reassignments. This heady mix makes Horowhenua a hotbed for intrigue and a prime target for Always Tikanga's expansion.

Hawke's Bay also comprises an agricultural Orange Zone bordered by the Central Red Zone, but this plain is centred on the Napier Green Zone. The zoning of Napier is a contentious issue. Always Tikanga would



dearly love to Orange Zone the location of their corporate headquarters and their experimental heartland, but Clearwater Developments and Matauranga Digital aggressively block any such moves in parliament. As a result, the relative freedom of movement of Napier makes it another city that seethes with corporate intrigue, although more subtly than in Horowhenua.

The southern tip of the North Island is administered as the Wairarapa province. In the east, the province is an agricultural Orange Zone contiguous with that of Hawke's Bay to the north, but to the west lies the bush of the Tararua and Rimutaka mountains and the ruins of Wellington, the Hutt Valley, and Porirua, all of which comprise the Wellington Red Zone. These three urban areas are Red Zones in the legal, infrastructural sense. They're all sites of unsanctioned occupation and corporate resistance, too. The populations of Porirua and the Hutt Valley mostly comprise recent refugees from the urban areas of the North Island who have repopulated the area since the evacuations of the early 2050s. Wellington itself is home to natives who never left in the first place and who have stubbornly dedicated themselves to rebuilding their homes and lives as best they can. As the former capital, Wellington holds a powerful symbolism, and for now it suits corporate interests to allow its inhabitants to rebuild with token corporate aid. When newsfeed shots of the crumbled Beehive cease to become politically useful, well, all bets are off.

In the South Island, things are much simpler, but no better. The Alpine Red Zone stretches along the entire west coast from Farewell Spit to Foveaux Straight and inland as far as the eastern foothills of the Southern Alps. In the north, the province of Nelson is an Orange Zone corporate enclave for privileged teleworkers and cutting-edge tech firms. Matauranga Digital has a major presence here. In the northeast, the rolling hills that make up the wine-growing province of Marlborough are an agricultural Orange Zone largely under the control of more specialised second-tier corporations. At the south end of the island, the newly re-zoned Dunedin Green Zone is the administrative centre for the province of Otago (including Southland and Stewart Island). Otago is a complicated patchwork of Red and Orange Zones reflecting the various agricultural areas, high security corporate facilities, uncontrolled areas scheduled for reclamation or restructuring, and the general lack of a unified corporate plan for the province. The political situation has provided fertile opportunity for anti-corporate interests to infiltrate and sabotage the local corporate organisations.

Between Marlborough and Otago on the east coast of the South Island is the largest of New Zealand's provinces, now a strictly controlled agricul-

tural Orange Zone. The lack of widespread tree cover on the Canterbury plains and hills make enforcing corporate control relatively easy, through satellite detection of non-corporate activity and rapid deployment of response teams. From the middle of the east coast of the plain, the arcology towers of Christchurch cover half of the old city and look out towards the Southern Alps over the industrial sprawl that covers much of the rest. As the largest city in the South Island, and until recently the only Green Zone, Christchurch houses numerous important corporate branch offices and administrative centres for the biocorps that dominate the plains. Here Always Tikanga is fighting tooth-and-nail for land against foreign corporate interests, both sides often in uneasy alliances with other local corporations. The shadows of the arcologies also act as important sites for corporate resistance. Activist groups, gangs, and corporate fixers all ghost corporate money to resistance groups in the Alpine Red Zone, often in exchange for specific anti-corporate action. Money tests the line between corporate resistor and corporate tool.

The Alpine Red Zone is the largest in New Zealand. The Alps have always acted to separate the two coasts, and the well-armed and organised resistance groups based in the rain-battered West Coast make it something akin to an independent province. They are certainly able to make corporate use of the few passes through the Alps a currently uneconomical prospect. As reclamation heats up in the North Island, it is only a matter of time before the full brunt of Kaitiakitanga Solutions' attentions bring the cluster bombs and chemical agents further south.

CORPORATE & AGENT BACKGROUNDS



MATAURANGA DIGITAL

In the wake of the quakes, Matauranga Digital rose from humble beginnings as a mid-sized New Zealand IT firm to dominate digital space through a combination of good products, agile management, available

investment funds, and a fortunate location in New Zealand's most intact city. In 2070, much of their operations are still controlled from Auckland, although they have important facilities in Napier, Nelson, and Christchurch. Matauranga Digital maintains two active security divisions: digital and personal. The former, a major arm of the corporation, focuses on maintaining the security of their own digital systems and those of their customers. The second is a purely internal operation which developed as a consequences of the ubiquity of teleworking in the upper echelons

of the company. Most management staff live and work in small isolated communities in Nelson and the Coromandel peninsula. This structure involves additional costs, but it's responsible for an extremely high level of corporate morale. It also acts as a driver for Matauranga Digital's largest ongoing project, the development of distributed artificial intelligence and expert systems. The Intellectual Property Division keeps a watchful eye on global AI research and ensures any breakthroughs are quickly brought under Matauranga's umbrella, legally or otherwise. Matauranga Digital's research and development efforts are devoted to field-testing new technology among the rebellious factions of the Red Zones. Corporate agents of the Testing Branch are particularly active in Nelson and Christchurch, ghosting bleeding-edge hardware and software, as well as more mundane supplies, to resistance forces in the Alpine Red Zone. The fundamental insecurity of this operation leads to significant internal conflict between the Intellectual Property Division and the Testing Branch.

MATAURANGA DIGITAL CORPORATE AGENT: TAMA HAMILTON

Tama Hamilton has always helped others. He spent the days after Wellington's Central Business District was shattered clearing rubble and pulling first people then bodies out of the wreckage. When the last airlift flew him away from the ruined corpse of his home, he swore to himself that he would devote his life to rebuilding Aotearoa. He put his skills to work running digital security for a Clearwater Developments arcology but in the wake of the falling out between Clearwater and Always Tikanga he grew sickened by corporate culture. When he was headhunted by one of the corporations that would become Matauranga Digital be signed up and quickly became one of Matauranga's best drone operations specialists. He has a single-minded devotion to rebuilding the New Zealand he knew and sees corporations like Clearwater and Always Tikanga as the boots standing on Aotearoa's face. Tama works vigorously to bring about the day when a partnership between Matauranga and the independent

people of New Zealand can restore democracy and egalitarian values to his homeland.

ALWAYS TIKANGA

Taking their name from the Maori word for the right and customary way of doing things, Always Tikanga base their corporate image on a home-grown ethos of local development in tune with New





Zealand's ecological conditions. Always Tikanga was a mid-sized local corporation based in Napier until the Gene-Plague. Thanks to nimble corporate leadership, they were one of a handful of corporations across the globe who quickly responded to the new market conditions by developing new plague-resistant crops for the international market. Inside knowledge of the Gene-Plague helped too, but nobody believes those conspiracy stories. After the earthquakes, Always Tikanga lead efforts to extract people from damaged areas to the new Green Zones. Their arcologies pioneered efficient techniques for operating deep-layered banks of plaque-resistant floral and faunal growth vats; lucrative licensing contracts and an early partnership with the corporations which would become Clearwater Developments saw profits from arcology construction pour in from around the PacRim. Those profits went into an aggressive acquisition campaign, making Always Tikanga the most visible landholder in most of rural New Zealand. They dominate most of the North Island's farmland and are fighting for control of the rest: the resistance of local biocorps to AT's expansionist corporate strategy is the reason that Horowhenua and Napier are hotbeds of homegrown corporate espionage. In the hills of Otago and the plains of Canterbury, AT agents wage a shadow war against foreign interests from China, India, and Canada for control of what head office sees as its home turf.

ALWAYS TIKANGA CORPORATE AGENT: AROHA

Although she didn't know it at the time, the shadows of Christchurch prepared **Aroha** for her career as one of Always Tikanga's premier troubleshooters. The twenty-first century had not been kind to the Garden City. Government and corporate corruption had left swathes of the city as crime-ridden slums after 2011. The accretion of unregulated housing was flattened in 2050: first by the earthquakes, then by corporate bulldozers. The slums taught Aroha how to survive. The quake taught her how to win. When a handler from Always Tikanga offered her a way up and out of the gang life, she took it. Not that what she does for Always Tikanga is very different, but now she wears designer combat weave when she leads helistrike teams on the Matawatu plains, parties at Auckland's best clubs, and when she looks out the floor-to-ceiling windows of her luxe penthouse in Christchurch, she final knows why it's called the Garden City. She ain't losing this.

KAITIAKITANGA SOLUTIONS

Kaitiakitanga Solutions rose to prominence as a private military contractor in the East Asian Wars of the '30s and '40s. The Alpine quake was well-timed for Kaitiakitanga; they were able to transfer their assets from Dadu Plateau and the Shan Hills to the newly-declared disaster zones

of Aotearoa. Business has been good since, with Kaitiakitanga providing most of the boots on the ground for the rural extractions of the 2050s. Four major arms of Kaitiakitanga Solutions operate in New Zealand currently. Kaitiakitanga Security specialises in site security and local policing operations.



In the wake of the disbanding of the New Zealand Police, Kaitiakitanga Security holds the government's default Green Zone contract for law enforcement. They acquired what remained of the New Zealand Corrections Bureau in 2053. Kaitiakitanga Transportation operates interprovincial cargo convoys, especially through the central Red Zones. The public face of Kaitiakitanga Promotions is advertising, but their real contribution is memetic programming. The promotional and law enforcement arms work closely in tandem to suppress dissent before the expenditure of assets is required. Finally, The Spirit of Tawhiri are one of Kaitiakitanga elite military brigades. In the Chinese Confederacies, they are known as Chengdu Lightning and the Butchers of Xiamen. Now they are the sharp edge of Kaitiakitanga operations in Aotearoa's Red Zones.

KAITIAKITANGA SOLUTIONS CORPORATE AGENT: SARAH HUANG

If Sarah Huang has a trademark, it's that she leaves no evidence. A Kaitiakitanga corporate scholarship allowed Sarah to escape a tumultuous and abusive family environment, but she couldn't escape the mental scars and anxiety of her youth until she enlisted in the KS Espionage program. The program gave her the extended periods of isolation she longed for and provided her with opportunities to lose herself in focused physical tasks. She has become Kaitiakitanga's top asset. On the rare occasions she is not conducting missions or debriefing, she is paranoid and prone to social anxiety, but when she's on a mission she is unparalleled in her ability to infiltrate physical and electronic security, conduct her assigned task, and exfiltrate undetected. Her reputation is such that many external security analysts will attribute mysterious operations to her actions, not on the basis of positive evidence, but simply because the operation seems to further Kaitiakitanga aims.

CLEARWATER DEVELOPMENTS

A merger of several New Zealand and Australian companies created Clearwater Developments in 2055, now the leading urban landholder in the PacRim. Before their early





partnership turned sour, the conglomerate that would become Clearwater were deeply involved with Always Tikanga's arcology construction strategy. The shadowy owners of Clearwater were the instigators and main beneficiaries of the New Zealand Government's insolvency and land sales. Clearwater's land acquisitions, particularly of areas subject to Treaty of Waitangi claims, made it the focus of public unrest at rampant corporate property ownership and the target of several high-profile attacks by the militant group Taua Toto. Clearwater Developments holds the juiciest infrastructure reconstruction and maintenance contracts. especially the main arterial routes. The "One-Three" highway between Auckland and New Plymouth is their flagship interprovincial project, using state-of-the-art anti-insurgency technology to ensure a smooth flow of corporate traffic. Clearwater's holdings include a significant number of fishery subsidiaries, most of which operate out of Gisborne. Several other subsidiaries take advantage of Clearwater's dominance in that city to save on security costs.

CLEARWATER DEVELOPMENTS CORPORATE AGENT: TERRY GLOVER

Terry Glover was working security in a Green Zone arcology when he lost his arm. The frustrating weeks Terry spent in cybernetic therapy learning to control his new arm drove him to study the official reports of the infamous Taua Toto arcology raid. In the years that followed, he worked his way up the corporate ladder by a combination of sharp political manoeuvres and sheer ruthlessness to become the head of Clearwater's Auckland arcology security division. Under his autocratic and hands-on leadership, arcology security disturbances have reached a record low, thanks in part to his aggressive use of intelligence assets and pre-emptive strikes. His results keep the funds and approvals flowing from his superiors, while his methods aggravate his corporate security counterparts and keep Clearwater's PR and inter-corporate relations teams frantically busy managing the fallout.

EVENTS, ISSUES, AND SECRETS

EVENTS	ISSUES	SECRETS
The Alpine 'Quake of 2050	Widespread destruction of urban areas and long-distance infrastructure	The owners of Clearwater Developments blocked Civil Defense funding which would have allowed the New Zealand Government to remain solvent in the wake of the earthquakes.
Government Sell-off	Popular disenfranchisement	Kaitiakitanga Solutions deploys memetic weapons to pacify the population of the Green Zones.
Limited Infrastructure	Most provincial locations only have access to small portable solar power generation	Matauranga Digital is funding and supplying independent provincials and bush dissidents to test distributed Al systems.
Provincial Rebellions	Brutal military repressions and counter-insurgency warfare outside Green Zones	Kaitiakitanga Solutions uses their operations against bush dissidents to conceal research and espionage operations in Orange and Red Zones.
GMO Gene- Plague	Global food shortage	Always Tikanga was part of a consortium of minor corporations responsible for the Gene-Plague.

THE CORPORATIONS

MATAURANGA DIGITAL

"Knowing Networks"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Provide fast and secure telecommunications network infrastructure to the South Pacific.

SHADOW MANDATE

Develop a fully-functional Al before anyone else can.

CORPORATE AGENT

Tama Hamilton

- Role: Tech
- ♦ Emotion: Ego
- Characteristics: Idealistic, resourceful

INITIAL PROJECT

Recover test data from a torched resistance cell near Rotorua.

ALWAYS TIKANGA

"Understanding our Past; Engineering our Future"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Develop cutting-edge agricultural biotechnology research and applications

SHADOW MANDATE

Ensure exclusive use of the islands of New Zealand as contained test environments for experimental biotechnology.

CORPORATE AGENT

Aroha

- Role: Ronin
- ♦ Emotion: Pride
- Characteristics:
 Determined, ruthless

INITIAL PROJECT

Stop Clearwater meddling in Horowhenua to ensure the MasseyCorp buyout happens.





KAITIAKITANGA SOLUTIONS

"Protecting your future"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Defend New Zealand's terrestrial, marine, atmospheric, and orbital resources from external and internal threats.

SHADOW MANDATE

Maintain the state of provincial unrest a monopoly on force and sovereignty in the country is secured.

CORPORATE AGENT

Sarah Huang

- Role: Infiltrator
- ♦ Emotion: Need
- Characteristics: Isolated, perfectionist

INITIAL PROJECT

Uncover the ghosting network supplying the Alpine Red Zone from Christchurch.

CLEARWATER DEVELOPMENTS

"From Dream to Design to You"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Deploy and manage stateof-the-art infrastructure throughout New Zealand.

SHADOW MANDATE

Gain control over the Red Zones by any means necessary.

CORPORATE AGENT

Terry Glover

- Role: Handler
- Emotion: Rage
- Characteristics: Focused, violent

INITIAL PROJECT

Locate all the leaders of Taua Toto in preparation for a simultaneous strike.



DYSTOPIAN DREAMS





CHAPTER 8 CARTELES UNIDOS

By Jesse Scoble

Location: Mexico (US border)

Date: Year is 2076

BACKGROUND

The fall of the Mexican government can be traced, in part, to one Hollywood star, one telenovela actress, and one drug lord, in the late 2010s. Current day politicos will claim it's more complicated than that, of course, but that's where it began. The head of the Sinaloa Cartel, after making a daring escape from a Mexican prison and being on the lam for six months, was recaptured after he reached out to a Hollywood actor to star in a bio-pic he intended to finance. The actress (one of the drug lord's mistresses) had contacted the star, and the authorities tracked the drug lord through them. The drug lord was supposed to be extradited to the United States to serve a life sentence in a supermax prison, but he was assassinated when corrupt members of the Mexican military blew the transport plane out of the sky. Those soldiers were loyal only to their superior officer, Captain Hector Hinojosa Blancas.

Cartel violence had increased in volume and brutality all through the end of the 20th Century and into the 21st, but Hector Hinojosa Blancas raised the bar to a whole new level. Blancas, a captain in Mexico's elite airborne unit, decided if his country was going to be corrupt and violent, he'd ensure that he was the top of the pyramid. He would control the corruption and violence. Blancas had trained at the U.S. Army School of the Americas, specifically in counter-terrorism and in anti-cartel operations. He turned those techniques to his own agenda, creating a militarized super-cartel: Las Calaveras Blancas.

He used his military might to take over a small cartel, and once he had confiscated their resources, he used *cañonazos de dólares* (cannonballs of cash) to buy hundreds of soldiers, state-of-the-art military equipment, and the loyalty of politicians at every level.

Blancas would buy up all the law enforcement and military in a region and use them as pincers to crush any other cartels in whatever territory he set his eyes on. Once the leadership of a cartel was destroyed, he would allow any remaining lower-rank members to join his organization.

P

Indoctrination and training took place in any of a dozen ranches spread out across the countryside, imposing the culture of an elite military force, observing a strict protocol for ranks, respect, and chain-of-command. Further, Blancas attempted to instill in its members a sense of loyalty and camaraderie: no man would be left behind. Bring everyone home, dead or alive; the wounded would be treated by highly-trained doctors with the best facilities. Those who were killed would know their families would be taken care of, and the injustice avenged.



Over several decades, Las Calaveras became the dominant cartel in Mexico and arguably the second most powerful organization after the government itself. The government struggled to contain this narcotics empire, walking a line between maintaining autonomy and asking for aid from the United States. The conflicting political agendas unfortunately gave the cartel more room to develop and expand.

Las Calaveras Blancas didn't contain themselves to Mexico, either. They took over the main smuggling routes along Interstate 10, "Cocaine Alley," which ran from State Route 1 in Santa Monica, California, to



I-95 in Jacksonville, Florida, and led to several other arterial routes, like I-35 and I-40. Backpack-toting smugglers hiked the desert gullies and ravines, hiding in the creosote and brush, to sneak across the border and meet their contacts in antique, biodiesel pick-ups, who then transported the drugs all across North America. Remote-piloted drones navigated low to the ground, just barely cresting the sensor-studded border wall, and tiny, high-flying, private aircraft winged through the clouds to remote airstrips, carrying small but valuable loads. Meanwhile, self-driving transport trucks weighed down with product would cross from Mexicali into Calexico, from Nuevo Laredo into Laredo, from Matamoros into Brownsville, and from Tijuana into San Diego. But the jewel in the crown was the trade that went from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico into El Paso, Texas, so Las Calaveras Blancas set up their "central command" deep in the city. The border towns became riddled with tunnels—dug, engineered, or crafted—to shift shocking volumes of product across the border, into eager hands and hungry markets.

And what product! Las Calaveras Blancas had their roots in classic "old school" drugs: cocaine, heroin (laced with fentanyl), and marijuana (finally legal in *El Norte*, but there is a thriving black market in China and Eastern Europe). However, over the decades, they diversified their portfolio across the whole gamut of synthetic drugs—amphetamines, methamphetamines (crystal meth), MDMA, spice, bath salts—and in recent years, have been on the bleeding edge of biotechs and gene hacks: smart drugs, brain drugs, genetic boosters, synthetic hormones, neuro transmitters, brainwave boosters, bio-cosmetics, bio-erotics, bio-naturals, etc.

The forces arrayed against the cartel are still fractious and inelegant. The current US government administration has stayed the course from previous ones, throwing more money and more weapons into the War on Drugs (it's half-joked that the War on Drugs is the new "Hundred Year War," but the real joke is that nothing ever seems to improve). The government has continued militarizing the border agency with ruthless efficiency and aggressively enforcing their territoriality with "the Gold-

en Wall." The Golden Wall began construction in the 2020s and is an elaborate, sensor-studded barrier that is guarded by super-predator drones, heavily armed and armored BORTAC (Border Patrol Tactical Units) operators, high-tech surveillance sweeps, and more. But it's not enough, never enough, to stop the flow of product and people.



The last twenty years have been a crucible, forcing immense pressure on an already unstable region. In the late 2050s and 2060s, there was massive flooding along the coastal regions of the Pacific southwest coast, and to a lesser degree in the Gulf of Mexico. This caused tremendous destruction in the coastal and lowland regions in the US—from Florida, through Louisiana, into Texas, and in Southern California—and caused a great displacement of people from the Mexican coastal regions (Tijuana, Tampico, Merida, Cancun, and more). Some migrated inland in Mexico, while others tried to stream north in a desperate attempt to find sanctuary in the United States when gaps appeared (or were forced open) in the border security.

Las Calaveras Blancas took this period of upheaval to move aggressively against some of the less corruptible politicians in government and had them removed brutally. In response, the government tried to assemble a top secret assassination unit, leading to open war between the cartel and the government.

This caused a full-on collapse of the Mexican government, and Hector Hinojosa Blancas moved his pawns into positions of power, effectively staging a coup d'état. He went from being simply a narco kingpin in the region to becoming the de facto ruler of the country. However, Blancas' "rule" is completely unsympathetic to the citizens of his country. In the last three years, droughts and the "corn blight" led to spikes in corn prices and food shortages, triggering two years of violent Tortilla Riots. With the death (and rumored assassination) of the last American president and a sharp swing to xenophobic, hard-line policies, Blancas has



his hands full dealing with anti-drug forces (they result in record profits, as long as one survives predator drone strikes to enjoy them). Further, there appears to be new force operating in small, clandestine cells in the interior of Mexico, wreaking havoc in his organization. These las sombras—shadows—may not be real, but the panic and fear that is spreading is something Blancas must deal with if he is to preserve his empire.

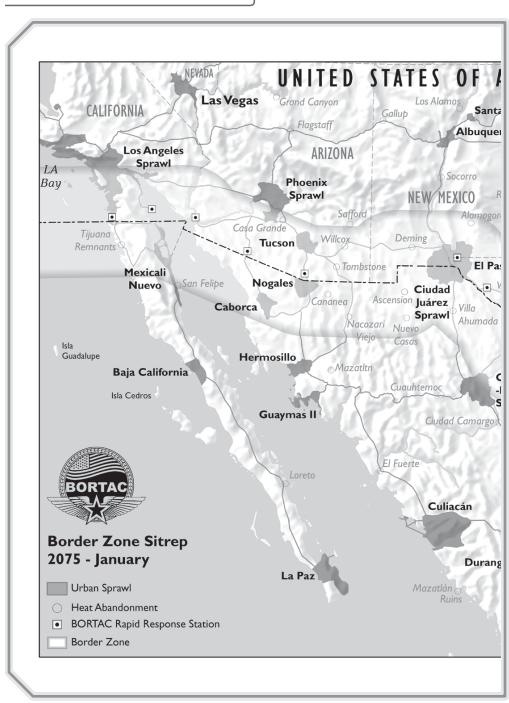
GEOGRAPHY

The heart of the drug trade is literally and figuratively on the border with the United States, centered in the city of Ciudad Juárez, the beating, pumping organ that drives the flow of drugs, money, and violence throughout the Western hemisphere. Ciudad Juárez, once known as the *Paso del Norte* (Pass of the North), is the largest city in the state of Chihuahua, flowing seamlessly over the border and entwined inexorably with its sister city, El Paso, on the Texas side.

Ciudad Juárez is a city of many faces; it is the super-rich neighborhood of Campestre, the slums of Anapra, and the no man's land of the *dompe* (or dump), where the poorest of the poor scrap and scavenge for survival. Juárez is a transit point into the United States, but it is also a closed barrier, a half-built wall that runs partway along the Rio Bravo and is still unpaid for by either country. Juárez-El Paso is the city and the border, a teeming mass of 5 million binational, bilateral, bilingual people, despite periods of mass exodus that have left whole neighborhoods empty and gutted.

The "ghost town" barrios blend the city's borders into the merciless desert that spreads north over hills, through canyons, and down arroyos. When the sun burns down each day, the night comes alive with red shadows and black pools that swallow people up whole. Some folks call the road that leads from poverty and fear and violence to the promised land of the north the "Devil's Highway," a tricksy freeway that loops back and forth across the dunes, that bends past the spiny ocotillo and winds beneath the wicked barbs of the cholla cactus. A road plaqued by pandilleros (gang members), rateros (ratmen, or thieves), and los tecatos (shambling, zombie-like junkies). This "highway" can only be navigated with a guide called a coyote, clever enough to avoid the human dangers, wise enough to navigate the hostile territory, and savvy enough to defeat the technological sentries. It's often too hot to travel in the daytime (and of course, the authorities can spot you better). So the coyotes lead their packs of fearful travelers through the dark hours (also favored by the criminals and the junkies), while all around them the night hums with white noise of the motion sensors and night-vision cameras, and then explodes with the thunder of black helicopters swooping through the sky, or giant armored SUVs roaring across the dunes.

The border is a barrier only to the poor and desperate, because one can draw a direct line from the gleaming black monolith of the Wells Fargo building at the center of El Paso, to the ultra-rich, *narquitectura* mansions—lavishly decorated and heavily fortified estates—that dot the wide, tree-lined boulevards of Campestre, Ciudad Juárez. These walled and gated compounds act as the command centers for the cartel, from which the narcos are able to monitor and direct their entire operation. Inside the golden gates, the cartel leaders are functionally untouchable, completely connected to the outside world, and with enough wealth to have anything they desire brought to them. All the advancements and developments in the world have made the buyers in the US – in *los Yuanites Estaites* – even hungrier for the blissful escape the cartels promise.



CORPORATE & AGENT BACKGROUNDS



LAS CALAVERAS BLANCAS

Las Calaveras Blancas—the White Skulls—are the dominant drug lords operating throughout the Americas today. They wiped out any significant rival organizations in Mexico and absorbed smaller street gangs into their hierarchy. They de facto control the Mexican government and the Mexican military, and any opposition is ruthlessly crushed. They don't just kill people who oppose them, but they savagely go after immediate families, extended families, even businesses and corporations, that are aligned with those who they've marked for extermination. Fear, corruption, and bloodletting are their tools, and they've carved out a major empire in the span of three decades.

The head of Las Calaveras Blancas is believed to be Hector Hinojosa Blancas, a ninety-year-old viper who was called friend and confidant to the leaders of the top cartels. Blancas, the son of a top military general, went to military college, became a commander in the paratrooper brigade, and attended the US Army School of the Americas to study psychological warfare. He achieved the rank of captain, commanding a tactical unit in Mexico's elite airborne special forces unit.

Blancas has several *aportos* (nicknames): El Botas Blancas (the White Boots), Hun-Came (One Death), and Xibalba (Lord of Fear). He has a mystique and mythology surrounding him, partly because Blancas hasn't been seen by any of his enemies—the US government, the remains of the Mexican government, the few rivals left alive—for roughly five years. Some believe he's died. Others suspect he's invested heavily into the science of longevity, and that he's the benefactor of numerous experimental procedures designed to prolong his lifespan.

Las Calaveras Blancas have taken control over all of the border crossings—and plazas—into the United States. More frightening, perhaps, they've expanded deeply into South America, establishing firm footholds in Colombia and Peru, taking an enormous percentage of the cocaine market.

LAS CALAVERAS BLANCAS CORPORATE AGENT: LA LLORONA

La Llorona is one of Hector Hinojosa Blancas' most trusted sicarios—or sicaria, in this case—an assassin. Many organizations from Interpol to

the United States DEA and Homeland Security have thick files on her. Unfortunately, most of those files are blank. La Llorna never uses her real name, so Death can never find her. Other than Blancas, the only ones who can confirm they have actually met La Llorona are dead. There are many stories about La Llorona's origins. Some claim she was an upper-class child whose mother pushed her into beauty pageants or singing or acting from as early as age five, and that by sixteen she had attracted the eyes of rich drug lords. Others say she was the niece of a well-established trafficker, who funded her artistic pursuits. Another story says she was nothing more than a pretty peasant girl who was picked up by an up-and-coming narco. In any event, almost all the stories say she alone survived a brutal hit that wiped out her connection to the drug world. She decided she could live in fear or take control of it and learn how to survive and excel in a hyper-violent world.

BORTAC

The heavily militarized arm of the United States Border Patrol (an agency of Customs and Border Protection, under the umbrella of the US Department of Homeland Security) is known as BORTAC: the Border Patrol Tactical Unit. Since it was created (in the mid 1980s), BORTAC has slowly expanded its scope and mission



from its beginnings dealing with riots and incidents of violence within immigration detention facilities. It's now an aggressive force whose aim is to patrol, monitor, and secure the border from external and internal threats. They have the ability to deploy rapidly not just along the border, but to any country on Earth where they believe they will encounter active threats to border security.

The list of BORTAC's top priorities include the War on Drugs, illegal entry into (or out of) the homeland, counter-terrorism operations, and border surveillance. BORTAC is headquartered at the Biggs Army Airfield in El Paso, Texas, on the Rio Grande—right across the border from Ciudad Juárez. Their operatives, under cooperative agreements with the Department of State and Department of Justice, provide training to Federal and local law enforcement agencies, d occasionally taking part in operations with foreign law enforcement agencies, foreign militaries, or paramilitaries and private military contractors.

BORTAC agents have all had a minimum of three years of Border Patrol service and must be in excellent physical form and be excellent marksmen (passing both the fitness test and the firearms qualification courses with a 90% or better). Most speak at least two languages (English and Spanish, though many agents also speak of any of the following: French, Arabic, Portuguese, Pashto, or Mandarin). The selection and training courses mirror those of US Special Operations Forces, with a grueling, five-week basic training program. BORTAC agents are trained in strategic operations planning, land navigation, tactical tracking, air assault, close quarters combat, riot control, and tactical surveillance.

BORTAC CORPORATE AGENT: LUIS ALBERTO "BORDER LORD" WINSLOW

Luis Alberto Winslow was born in Los Angeles to an American father and a Mexican mother. He lived much of his early life along the border before attending the University of California at San Diego to study criminal justice, with summers as a relief worker in Tijuana. After he graduated, he enrolled in the US Naval Academy at Annapolis and earned a commission in the Marines. He served in Syria and Yemen before leaving the Marines as a captain to join the DEA. He spent 5 years in the DEA, alternating between Calexico, California, and Guadalajara, Mexico, before he was recruited into Homeland Security to head up the BORTAC unit out of El Paso. Winslow lost good agents in his efforts to take down Las Calaveras Blancas, and ultimately his passion and drive for the job caused his wife to leave him, taking their son with her to a remote town in New England. Winslow is known—and feared—as the "Border Lord." He thinks of himself as on a simple mission: to stop Hector Hinojosa Blancas, at any cost. Winslow desires peace, but he's capable of great acts of violence. He's a moral man, guided by his religion, but capable of betraying those who trust him. He's also a loner who cares too much about the good people who pass through his life. And life on the border is never simple, and almost always more complicated than one can ever prepare for.



HARD LIGHT

"Hard Light" is an umbrella group that loosely unites several dozen citizen-militias who have taken it upon themselves to defend the border and their country from external and internal threats. Hard Light is primarily focused on the southern US/Mexico border, with a heavy concentration in the southwest states: California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. Hard Light's leadership

consists of three grizzled frontiersmen who claim to be brothers, who only identify themselves as Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie.

Well-armed members drive heavily customized SUVs across the unforgiving terrain, bringing them into direct conflict with the cartel smugglers, coyotes and their desperate packs of migrants, local residents, and government officials trying to do their job. Despite the militarization of the border, the leaders of Hard Light see the border patrol as ineffective and corrupt puppets of the Capitol, who are more concerned with keeping their paymasters in power than in doing something for the real, hardscrabble folk who make up the country. They cling to a narrow vision of what America should be, and thus have come in conflict with local and federal agencies. Sometimes these are due to accidents and honest misunderstandings, but oftentimes Hard Light takes a forceful stance when they suspect government drones are actively harming the country solely for the careers of their politico puppetmasters.

Hard Light is a very welcoming organization; they care more about someone's ideology and determination than their background, criminal history, or mental or emotional health. So their ranks swell. Their mandate appeals to those who self-identify as rugged patriots who are fed up with the nation's leaders, and who are equally paranoid about foreign threats. On the other hand, they're also quick to disavow members who are caught committing violent or extreme acts as "rogue agents" and rabid dogs, claiming no responsibility in the matter.

HARD LIGHT CORPORATE AGENT: MARIANNE TOOLE

Marianne Toole was born in East Texas and graduated top-of-her-class at the University of Texas in Austin, getting a law degree. She enlisted in the Texas Army National Guard, where she served for ten years in the Army Reserve. She married an Army Ranger who was killed in the line of duty fifteen years ago by agents of the Blancas Cartel down in Colombia. It embittered her, and she entered politics to run for Texas governor on a virulent anti-drug, anti-immigration platform and to fight against the federal government, which she felt was nearly as bad as foreign interests. She won, but only served half a term, as her campaign was investigated for misuse of funds and for political malfeasance. Although she resigned in disgrace, nothing was proven in a court of law, and she maintained many strong political ties. The brothers of Hard Light sought her out for her connections. How better to operate under the nose of the government than by having a former insider in league with them?



LAS SOMBRAS DE LA SERPIENTE



Five years ago, an ultra-elite Mexican special forces unit (las Fuerzas Especiales), a rarefied group of only 100 members, were killed when they refused to serve Las Calaveras Blancas. The cartel annihilated their training center with military-grade munitions in response. Or so most people, the Blancas included, believed. In truth, they staged their own deaths in order to go off the books.

They scattered into the night and retreated into the wilderness, vanishing into the steamy Yucatán, the chill heights of Sierra Madre, the

dust storms of Laguna Salada, and the peaks of the somewhat dormant volcano Pico de Orizaba. Wherever they could hide and train and harden themselves, they did.

Now, they operate from the deepest shadows, working covertly to disrupt the cartel's supply chain. To destroy their depots. To assassinate their leaders. All Las Sombras cells act independently, but conduct their attacks following a similar methodology and philosophy, thus seem to coordinate in parallel. Their collective goal is to destroy the cartel utterly and reduce its power base to ash. One day, they'll reclaim and restore the government of the people.

Although they have no official name, and there is no hard evidence they even exist, rumors swirl in the underground cultures and in the most remote villages about them, calling them "Las Sombras de La Serpiente," or the Shadows of the Snake. They are said to be directed by a phenomenal military tactician, operating from the ruins of an ancient Maya temple, lost in the thickest jungle.

LAS SOMBRAS DE LA SERPIENTE CORPORATE AGENT: JERONIMO

Jeronimo is the codename of a reported agent of Las Sombras de la Serpiente who operates in and around Ciudad Juárez. None know for certain what their real name is or whom they truly work for. Or honestly, if they even exist. Rumors suggest they're a field operator who is in charge of a small cell of Las Sombras, using hybrid warfare strategies to combat their vastly superior foe.

Jeronimo likely had training in the hardcore Airborne Special Forces Group before being recruited into the elite Fuerzas Especiales, becoming a La Sombra with the rest of their military brethren. Reporting up the Las Sombras chain, they only know how to contact one or two members ranked above them.

EVENTS, ISSUES, AND SECRETS

EVENTS	ISSUES	SECRETS
Coastal Flooding in the '60s.	Widespread destruction of coastal regions in US and Gulf of Mexico.	Las Calaveras Blancas took advantage of the chaos to move their people into power.
Collapse of Mexican Government	Increasing violence, fear, and uncertainty.	Numerous deaths and forced retirements were directly caused by Las Calaveras Blancas.
Death of the US President to illness	Last political moderate killed; government pivoted hard to extreme isolationism.	An agent of Hard Light managed to infect the President with a bioengineered disease.
Tortilla Riots of '73-74	Massive food shortage in Mexico pushing more people to migrate north.	Las Sombras de la Serpiente introduced the corn blight by targeting a narcotics crop, which fueled the famine.
2075, the Hottest Summer on Record	Caused tremendous death and injuries to those trying to cross the border.	The xenophobic and militant philosophy of the new administration has caused BORTAC to let many migrants die in the heat rather than offer aid.

THE CORPORATIONS

LAS CALAVERAS BLANCAS

"The Face of Fear"

PUBLIC MANDATE

Provide whatever product is in demand, to make their customers' lives a little better.

SHADOW MANDATE

To have the power and prestige to dominate the market, locally and globally.

CORPORATE AGENT

La Llorona

- Role: Infiltrator
- ♦ Emotion: FEAR
- Characteristics: Mysterious, Ruthless

INITIAL PROJECT

To keep tight control over sale and distribution of their product. And to expand into new territories.

BORTAC

"America's Frontline"

PUBLIC MANDATE

To keep the border secure.

SHADOW MANDATE

To fuel the War on Drugs, so the political masters in Washington continue to profit financially via militarization and politically via fear.

CORPORATE AGENT

Luis Alberto Winslow

- Role: Handler
- Emotion: GRIEF
- Characteristics:
 Tactical, Moral

INITIAL PROJECT

To increase their presence on the border and to strike across the border at soft targets to destabilize the enemy.





HARD LIGHT

"We Are the Light in the Night"

PUBLIC MANDATE

To protect the border.

SHADOW MANDATE

To remake their country into a land they can be proud of.

CORPORATE AGENT

Marianne Toole

- Role: Insider (this is a new archetype in the expansion)
- ♦ Emotion: NEED
- Characteristics:
 Charismatic, Strategic

INITIAL PROJECT

To strike fear into the hearts of those they catch on the border, in order to scare others away.

LAS SOMBRAS DE LA SERPIENTE

"We Are the Snake of the Road"

PUBLIC MANDATE

To stop the cartel.

SHADOW MANDATE

To retake the heart and soul of their government by any means necessary.

CORPORATE AGENT

Jeronimo

- Role: Ronin
- Emotion: RAGE
- Characteristics:Cautious, Suspicious

INITIAL PROJECT

To cripple Las Calaveras Blancas' operations.





8

CHAPTER 9 THE INSIDER

By Jason Pitre

You were always there, pulling the strings and making the world dance for you. You lived in the corporate shadows, telling the corporations what to say and who to eliminate. You twisted governments to your will and made the politicians beg for your favour. You used the media and the

Inspired by Transmetropolitan by Warren Ellis, stories of industrial espionage, and whistle-blowers.

news like a surgeon does a scalpel, to cut away the lies or truths which displeased you. Now you have a greater purpose. From the shadows, you see the inner workings of corporate arcologies, media bureaus, and tyrannical governments. You know all the darkest secrets, and your whispers can destroy nations. They won't know what hit them.

NAME

Choose one of the following:

Spider, Avinashi, Thoth, Anansi, Baelish, Mimir, Merlin.

Or a divine name, a wise name, or a subtle name.

SKILLS

MEDIA

Skill Question: Whose misdeeds did you cover up?

Information is the greatest weapon in modern life, and you wield it with finesse. You know how to spread an idea, with viral memes, vid feeds, or traditional broadcast news. You can slow or redirect any information that displeases you and control the message. All the journalists, vloggers, and media personalities know to listen to what you have to say, and they'll run with any story you send them. All the censors, pundits, and editorial boards know to kill stories that counteract your narrative. You know the right journalists to contact, the right papers to disrupt, and the right experts to have on your side. The media is the message, and you have the loudest voice.

POLITICS

Skill Question: Who did you harm for political advantage?

Politics is the art of conversation, and you always get the last word. Every word, spoken or written, is a political statement that shapes the attention of the public. Those who stand with us are noble, hard-working, virtuous citizens. Those who oppose our efforts are clearly disreputable parasites on our great society. A political animal, you alone can tell the world who falls in which camp. You wield your connections to special interest groups, political lobbyists, and think-tanks to make the world dance to your tune. Are you with us, or against us?

SECRETS

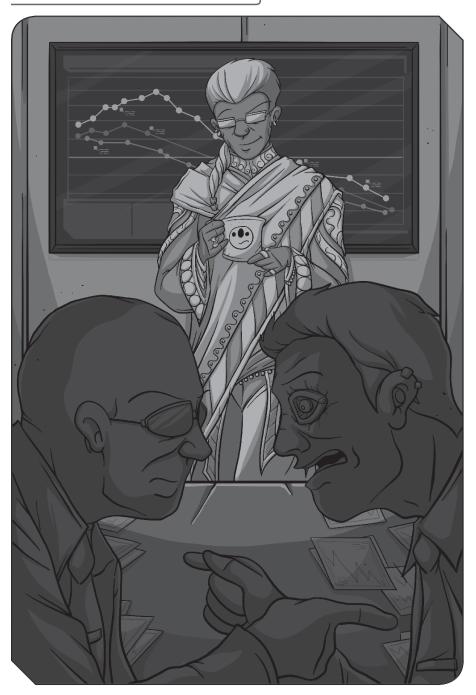
Skill Question: Who knows your family, the one you hide from corporate eyes?

Everyone is hiding something, and you know where the bodies are buried. You know all of the shameful parts of the human condition, from addictions to marital infidelity to industrial espionage. Everyone regrets something, and you are exceptionally good at digging up the dirt. You have amassed a vast personal database of shame that you can pull out to bludgeon your foes. It might be something as simple as a misleading tax-return, or a white lie in a public statement. Perhaps it's the betrayal of a friend, a lover, a professional associate, or a corporation. Odds are they have broken many laws, written or otherwise, through their misdeeds; you're ready to remind them of their past. Isn't blackmail beautiful?

INSIDER EDGES

You start with:

- ♦ Secure Wetspace Implant (+IMPLANT +WETSPACE LINK)
- ♦ Headspace Implant (+Implant +Headspace Link)
- ♦ Stylish Armoured Formal Wear (Armour 1 +Inconspicuous)
- A signet ring, indicating membership in a secret society
- 3 Credits



You know each of the corporate directors of communications on a first name basis; you even let most of them beat you at golf.

DEADMAN SWITCH

You have career-destroying blackmail on one powerful political figure that will be released if anything happens to you. Who are they, and how do they protect you?

INVISIBLE STRINGS

You do not officially exist in any database or registry, and you like it that way. You move in legal shadows, only seen by your actions.

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Your voice resonates in the streets and alleyways, with the wretched rising up to support you when you need them most.

POLITICALLY UNTOUCHABLE

Your integrity is beyond question, and your political power is unassailable. None of your rivals are capable of discrediting you in the eyes of the public.

DRUG PLAN (OR BIG PHARMA)

Like many of the powerful, you have access to the finest pharmaceuticals that modern science can offer. You have access to any drugs, legal or restricted, that you might wish in order to manipulate the stress track.

POINTER

You are wealthy beyond measure, caring only for credits as a way of keeping score in the great game. Where did your wealth come from?

UPGRADES

You start with the following:

PHEROMONE GLANDS

+IMPLANT +INCONSPICUOUS

You have dedicated implants that allow you to exude emotion-altering pheromones in your local environment. Once every 8 hours, you may exude pheromones associated with the cell's highest stress track. Everyone else who inhales those pheromones is overcome by that emotional state.



CHAPTER 10 CREDITS AND THANKS

This book is dedicated to all the people who believed in me and what I was doing. I crossed through some difficult personal times in the last few years, a journey that has made the publication of this book much longer than I originally anticipated. I so hope you enjoy this book as much as all the people who worked on it.

STAFF CREDITS

Emily Care Boss of Black & Green Games is an independent role playing game designer, publisher and game theorist from western Massachusetts. She wrote the *Romance Trilogy: Breaking the Ice, Shooting the Moon and Under my Skin*, and has contributed to games and anthologies by Pelgrane Press, Evil Hat Productions, and Ginger Goat. You can find her games and other work at Black and Green Games.

Hamish Cameron has been playing, designing and tweaking role playing games, settings, board games and war games since he discovered Fighting Fantasy game books in the mid-80s. In 2014, he ran a successful kickstarter campaign for *The Sprawl*, his own take on apocalypse-powered cyberpunk, which will be completed later this year. He tweets primarily as @peregrinekiwi and blogs about games at http://www.ardens.org.

Encho Chagas is a game designer from Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Worked for a lot of startups and ad agencies until proudly ending up an independent game writer. Author of the story game *PULSE*, World Champion of Game Chef 2013, founder of the brazilian game writers' collective The Gaming Nation, and currently writing The Analog XP, an online magazine about independent game development in Brazil. Works not only for the passion of creating games but also the passion of spreading meaningful experiences.

Will Hindmarch is a writer and game designer whose works include the cyberpunk-action escapade, *Always/Never/Now*. His writing and designs appear in numerous books, magazines, comics, and games, both analog and digital.

Adam Koebel is the co-author of the award-winning RPG *Dungeon World*, and full-time Twitch streamer - GM of the live RPG shows Roll-Play: Swan Song and RollPlay: Mirrorshades. The last year, he's been GM-in-residence at Roll20.net. He's been called an artiste of the slightly funny deal on more than one occasion. His meat-body is stored in Terminal City, Canada.

Kira Magrann is an artist, game designer, and queer feminist cyborg living in Columbus, Ohio. Her influences include Aubrey Beardsley, Anais Nin, and Masamune Shirow, and she has a particular love of cyberpunk and Victoriana. The roleplaying games she's created are *Crash Into You, Strict Machine*, *Game of Thrones (Play the Cards)*, and *Twilight Dames* (a FATEcore hack). She's also contributed to the Fate Cortex, Game Chef, and *Annalise*. She is a co-organizer of Indie Games on Demand at Origins and Gen Con, and contributor to the Ennie award winning international feminist blog *Gaming as Women*. You can find her jewelry at Anima Metals on Etsy.

Jeremy Morgan is a freelance editor whose most recent work is Bulldogs! Fate Core and Sig: The City Between. Although you can usually find him at his day job or at home with his family, it's probably best to find him on twitter as @TriskalJM, or on his (infrequent) blog at www. stormindacastle.com. The integration of tech into our everyday lives, the very present reality of dystopia, and a stubborn hope for the future are all part of the allure of cyberpunk for him.

Brian Patterson is a cartoonist and graphic designer behind the webcomic d20Monkey, a series following the in-and-out-of-gameplay experiences of lifelong friends and gamers, Sam Tigh and Brett Tucker. Adored by tens of loyal readers, Brian continues to publishes d20Monkey 3-days a week and operates in the gaming industry as a freelance illustrator and cartographer. Brian currently lives in Denver, Colorado, with his two cats (Emma and Gizmo). Brian plays games, draws comics, listens to music, and runs his mouth about all sorts of things on Twitter (comics, gaming, DIO) @d20Monkey. Seriously, he's ridiculous.

Nathan D. Paoletta is a graphic artist, game designer and independent publisher currently hailing from Chicago, IL. You can find him on twitter @ndpaoletta, and discover all of his games, podcasts and other work at ndpdesign.com.

Jason Pitre is a game designer and professional ecologist from the wilds of Canada. As the mind behind Genesis of Legend Publishing, he has designed the Spark Roleplaying Game (2013), Posthuman Pathways (2014), and runs the RPG Design Panelcast. When he isn't working on games or reading up on polar bears, he roasts 'n brews a mean cup of coffee.

Brianna Reed is a freelance designer, illustrator, and WordPress developer based in Nashville, Tennessee. Web design has been an interest of mine since I got a hold of the Internet, and ever since my first HTML project at ten years old, I've been hooked. I'm a code-writing, tweet-slinging,

dice-rolling type of nerd... that is to say, I play a lot of tabletop games. I'm also heavily involved in a whole slew of related hobbies, like D&D, LARP, video games, and designing space colonies. (Seriously, ask me about it sometime. I know a lot about toroidal colony structure!) www.nerdettedesigns.com

Jesse Scoble is a writer, game designer, and story editor in no particular order. He is currently freelancing for Obsidian Entertainment. He was the Creative Design Lead on Wizard101 for *Kingslsle*, and was the main writer on the worlds of *Zafaria*, *Avalon*, *Azteca*, *Khrysalis*, and *Castle Darkmoor*.

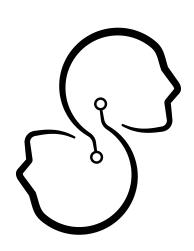
He has lived both north and south of the US/Canadian border, and is based in Montreal. He has won awards, written a Western Horror script, comedic web series *Project23A*, and contributed to more than 30 RPG books and related anthologies. He was Creative Director on *Silver Age Sentinels* and the first *A Game of Thrones d20 RPG (Guardians of Order)*, and also helped out on *A Song of Ice and Fire Roleplaying (Green Ronin)*. His essay on magic in Westeros, "A Sword without a Hilt," appeared in *Beyond the Wall (Smart Pop Books)*.

He worked on NCsoft's City of Heroes, Ganz's Webkinz and Tail Towns, multiple Ubisoft projects, and the Marvel Heroic RPG (Margaret Weis Productions). Find him on Twitter @jscoble

Mark Richardson is the lead designer and writer for *Headspace* and owner of Green Hat Designs. He's been working *Headspace* for the last three years and is looking forward to seeing this game in print. When Mark isn't working on *Headspace*, he works as a Cartographer for the Canadian Government and for RPG's as a freelancer. Mark lives in Ottawa, Canada.

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Mark Diaz Truman is an independent game developer, the co-owner of Magpie Games, and the Editor in Chief for The Fate Codex. He's managed a number of Kickstarter projects, including Wicked Fantasy, World of Dew, Pleasant Dreams, and Urban Shadows. You can find him on Twitter (@trumonz). He's a passionate advocate for a more inclusive gaming community and currently serves Indie+ as a Community Manager for the G+ Community.





Dystopian Dreams is a collection of 7 cyberpunk settings written by game industry luminaries. Explore the digital post-apocalyptic CYBERZONE of Neo-Tokyo, cruise the Rust Belt for trouble in your souped-up Personal Transportation Vehicle, or rescue trapped survivors from a sub-oceanic compound in the Beryl Zone.

This book is a collection of ready-made settings for **Headspace**, but you can also use these settings in other dystopian roleplaying games; this book acts as a resource for you even if you're not playing **Headspace**.

Dystopian Dreams includes:

- Neo-Tokyo Pleasure Dome Ultra 20XX, by Adam Koebel
- Hieroglyph of the Whale, by Emily Care Boss
- Artifice & Ice, by Will Hindmarch
- New Motor City, by Kira Magrann
- Paraiso Amazonia, by Encho Chagas
- 100% Pure, by Hamish Cameron
- Carteles Unidos, by Jesse Scoble
- A brand new Operator type: the Insider, by Jason Pitre

