

Chasing the Dragon

CYBERPUNK

An Official Game Adventure
by Stephan Michael Sechi



Chasing the Dragon

by Stephan Michael Sechi

CYBERPUNK[®]
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The fixer sits at the far end of the table, his hair shining like an oil slick in the dim light. He smiles, showing four gold teeth with the name "Rico" spelled-out in little diamonds, one letter on each tooth. He reaches under the table and comes up with a chrome attache case.

"It's a sweet job, chico. Nothin' to it. Deliver the case to the man, and get a receipt. No travel time, 'cause the deal goes down right here in the City. In and out, ten grand. You bring the receipt and I give you the money."

"Just one thing. You gotta go into the Combat Zone. Hey, nothin' to it, right?"

Yeah, right. The Combat Zone is only the worst part of the City. Street gangs, drug dealers, rip-off artists. Sounds great.

"Hey, man, it's nothin'", says Rico, with a wave of his hand. "I'm talking 230th Street, on the outskirts of the Zone. Like I said, in and out."

Yeah, maybe. But what about that attache case? The frackin' thing looks like it's made of reinforced steel, and is locked-up like a bank vault. What's that about?

Rico smiles, gold teeth glinting. "Hey, chico, this is the big time, you know what I mean? This ain't no fly-by-night operation we're talking about here. This is the real thing."

You ask Rico to be more specific.

Rico's eyes dart from side to side. "Okay, okay. But be cool. The client is big, man, very big. I'm talking about I-CORP here, chico, you know? Inside information, man. Top secret, you know? You think they're gonna carry this stuff around in a paper bag?"

Yeah, you've heard of I-CORP. Heavy hitters, with lots of cash. Their CEO is R. Maximillian, a high-profile corporate shark who's engineered the hostile takeover of a half-dozen megacorporations in as many months. The Medias are in a feeding frenzy, trying to find out more about Maximillian's private life, what corporation he plans to go after next, his favorite restaurant, his new girlfriend, anything they can get. Just the kind of attention a solo needs...

Rico shakes his head. "Hey, chico. You do your job and nobody has to know nothin', see? In and out, ten grand. Easy money, man. You don't want the job, I'll find somebody who does."

Rico is telling the truth, at least in part. This is a big time job. In fact, Rico could afford to pay twice the fee he's offering the party and still make a healthy profit on the deal. If the characters haggle over the price they can get him up to fifteen grand without much trouble; eighteen or twenty grand if they press the issue.

The truth is, Rico needs this job done right away. He sees I-CORP as a very profitable client, and is especially eager to please R. Maximillian.

OPENING GAMBIT

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If the party agrees to accept the job, Rico says:

"Okay, chico, listen in. The attache case goes to Nanotek Industries, 230th Street between 37th and 36th Avenue. It's a factory, man. Deliveries come in through the alley. Ring twice and tell security you got a package from the main office. Come back with the receipt, and you'll get your money. Do the right thing on this one, and I'll get you something really big. You got it?"

Rico

Rico is a strange one, even as fixers go. He's as sleazy as they get, and yet he has contacts in very high places. It doesn't seem to fit, but that's how it is. The fact of the matter is that Rico is in over his head. He's not sure what he's getting into, though privately, he suspects that I-CORP is somehow involved in the drug trade. Unbeknownst to Rico, I-CORP is only using him because he has contacts in the Combat

Zone. Once they've established their own distribution network, I-CORP intends to get rid of Rico.

Stats

INT 7	REF 5	TECH 2
CL 10	ATT 5	LK 3
MA 6	BODY 6	EMP 5

Cybernetics

Cyberaudio (digital recording link, amplified hearing), Cyberoptic (Lo-Lite, targeting), Smartgun Link

Skills

Awareness/Notice +5, Handgun +4, Melee +3, Persuasion and Fast Talk +6, Pick Pocket +3, Streetdeal +6, Streetwise +7

Equipment

Militech Avenger autopistol, kevlar t-shirt, switchblade



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Combat Scores

Initiative: +5

Stun/Death Save: 6

Body Type Modifier: -2

Militech Avenger Pistol (#Shots 10/ROF 2/DAM 2D6+1/Rel VR) +12

Switchblade (DAM 1D6/2): +8

Armor: Torso 10, others 0

INSIDE INFORMATION

This scenario takes place in the Combat Zone, part of a generic setting (the City) that can be added to any major city that the Referee is using in her Cyberpunk campaign (such as Night City). The Combat Zone can also serve as a setting for other adventures, if the Referee so desires.

The characters have all the information they need to get underway. They have been promised a lucrative fee for this job, which on the surface seems pretty straightforward.

Unbeknownst to the characters, they are about to be thrown into the middle of a dangerous game of corporate intrigue, greed, drug dealing, and inter-gang rivalry. En route to their destination, the party will fall victim to a well-planned ambush, and the attache case will be stolen by an individual known as “the Dragon” — one of the best solos in the biz, who is known to operate out of the Combat Zone.

The players will have to “Chase the Dragon” in order to get the attache case back and earn their money — if such a thing is even possible. The trail will lead them through some of the darkest and most dangerous sectors of the Combat Zone — the worst part of the City.

Getting into the Combat Zone should be easy. Getting out alive may not be quite so simple.

REFEREE NOTES

- The Combat Zone is home turf for three rival street gangs: the Razor Boyz, the Klash, and the Sisters. Two of the three (Boyz and Klash) sell drugs in the Hood in order to raise cash for their activities. The three gangs are currently at war, and anyone who enters their territories should be prepared for trouble.
- The attache case doesn't contain valuable secrets, as Rico believes. Instead, it contains several kilos of pure, uncut “crystal lace” — a designer drug variant of lace, with a street value of 250 million dollars. The intended receivers, Nanotek Industries, have no knowledge of this. They are strictly go-betweens, employed to hold the goods until I-CORP's Asian partners can set up a working distribution network in the Combat Zone.
- I-CORP has secret dealings with an Asian drug cartel that serves as the source of their capital. Any attempt to double-cross I-CORP will result in deadly consequences for the characters.
- I-CORP'S dealings with the Asians have infringed upon the interests of a Jamaican drug cartel, which claims the Combat Zone as its territory. The Jamaicans are stone cold killers, who will do anything they can to maintain control of the lucrative Combat Zone drug market. A team of heavily-armed Jamaican solos will follow the characters as they attempt to track down the Dragon. At least one firefight can be expected.
- The Sisters gang has connections to the Dragon, who supplies them with weapons and cash. The Dragon's reason for this is unknown to most outsiders, but is actually benevolent: The Sisters are trying to get the drug pushers out of their neighborhood, and the Dragon supports this goal.

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- The Dragon is a female, not a male, as is commonly believed.

RUNNING THE CHASE

This adventure could follow any number of scenarios, depending upon how well the characters pick up on the clues and their choice of strategy. In theory, at least, the adventure should run something like this:

1. The party enters the Combat Zone. A drive-by shooting by members of the Klash streetgang should give them an idea of what kind of place this is. Even though the characters are not the intended targets of the shooters, the way they react to the death and injury of innocent passers-by will affect how they are regarded by the inhabitants of the Zone – particularly the Sisters, who are the least belligerent of the street gangs.
2. The ambush in the alley. Though the party won't have a chance to defend themselves on this one, at least one of the characters should get a look at the Dragon, so that the characters have a physical description to go on.
3. The party should listen to the Word on the Street, and look to the street gangs for information on the Dragon. They may run up against a couple of false leads (from the Razor Boyz and the Klash) unless they talk to Oreo of the Sisters. Only through her can they find out that they'll have to go to Tokyo Rose's place to get more information on the Dragon.
4. A visit to Tokyo Rose's brothel yields some interesting, and essential, information. Rose knows that the Dragon is a female, not a male, as most outsiders believe. She can point the characters to an individual who is reputed to be the Dragon's fence, LeFez.
5. A team of Jamaican solos, who have been keeping tabs on the party since the ambush, catches up with the characters. A firefight is the likely result. At this point, it is unlikely that the players will have any idea of what the Jamaicans have to do with any of this, or why they've been targeted for elimination.
6. LeFez tells the characters that "drugs are not my business", implying that the Dragon is now into the drug biz. He explains that he wants nothing to do with the Jamaicans, who control the drug trade in the Combat Zone. While the players try to fit these new pieces into the puzzle, LeFez tells them to go see the Doctor, who is now the Dragon's buyer.
7. The characters receive a "letter from Rico". Inside the envelope are certain of Rico's bodily parts, and a nasty note.
8. A visit to the Doctor's "office". The Doctor may seem odd (that's an understatement), but he knows the ins and outs of all drug dealings in the Combat Zone. He can tell them that I-CORP is involved in the drug trade as a means of raising the capital that it uses to acquire other corporations, and that their interference in the Combat Zone has angered the Jamaicans, who previously controlled all drug traffic in the Zone. He'll tell them that the Dragon is now a revolutionary, who is helping the Sisters drive the drug dealers out of the Hood by selling contraband for cash and weapons (the Doctor himself claims to be a "neutral party").

He'll also tell them that Rico is dead; killed by a corporate assassin hired by I-CORP. The implication: I-CORP has decided to close the deal, and is covering its tracks. The next victims could be the characters.

The party must decide whether they will side with the Dragon, I-CORP and the Asian cartel, or the Jamaicans. If they decide to go with the Dragon, the Doctor will tell them where she is: at Oreo's place, in the Hood.

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9. If the characters return to the Hood, the party will be hit by members of the Klash, who try to take them out in a large scale drive-by shooting. The Klash have heard about what's going on in the streets, and have decided that the characters are the ones who are supplying materials and cash to their rivals, the Sisters.

POSSIBLE CONCLUSIONS

Should the characters follow the clues and make it to Oreo's place again, they'll finally get to meet the Dragon. They will find that she is a slender young female, and that she is a revolutionary of sorts. With the help of the Sisters, she intends to get the drug dealers out of the Hood. If the characters seem sympathetic to her cause, the Dragon will offer to pay them for their trouble (twice the fee promised by Rico), and offer to escort them safely out of the City.

If the characters have handled themselves well in this scenario, the Dragon could offer to hire them to help the Sisters drive the Jamaicans out of the Hood. In this case, the characters and the Dragon could work together to plan a raid on the Jamaicans' base.

If the characters side with the Jamaicans (unlikely), they will find themselves pitted against I-CORP and the Asians, plus the Sisters. If they go with I-CORP, they'll have to reimburse Maximillian for the contents of the attache case. At \$250 million, that's a tall order.

If the characters decide to double-cross I-CORP, they can expect big trouble from I-CORP's corporate assassins (see Appendix: I-CORP on page 61), who will dog them relentlessly after this incident. Yet the characters can get I-CORP off their backs, if they're clever. They could use the Media to expose R. Maximillian as a drug dealer, thereby causing a scandal that would hurt Maximillian's legitimate businesses, and ruin his carefully fabricated image (the Medias would have a field day with this story). Characters of a more

Machiavellian bent may attempt to blackmail Maximillian, threatening to reveal his involvement in the drug cartels unless he pays them a sizeable sum – say, a couple of million dollars.

Whatever the characters decide to do, it is certain that they will make some powerful enemies. And that can also lead to other inter-related scenarios.

IMPORTANT NOTE

This is a potentially deadly scenario. The players should be prepared to encounter the absolute dregs of the Combat Zone: anarchists, punks, drug addicts, prostitutes, rip-off artists, and an assortment of social misfits. Violence is a common occurrence in this sector, where street gangs fight for control of their territories, and drug lords vie for dominance of a lucrative market.

It is unlikely that the player characters will find many friendly faces in the Combat Zone. To the contrary, they should expect to be treated as the outsiders that they are, subjected to indifference, hostility, and perhaps, physical violence.

Here, society's laws give way to the law of the street. In the Combat Zone, only the strong survive. But then, that's the way it goes in 2020, isn't it?

GENERAL NOTES

Chasing the Dragon presents a number of challenges to the Referee, and to the players. To begin with, it should be obvious to any experienced player that this job sounds too good to be true. As a result, the party will probably be on their guard, looking for trouble around every corner.

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That's as it should be. However, in order for the scenario to come off as planned, the Referee has to get the characters into the alley, where they will be ambushed. The challenge to the Referee will be to do this without making the players feel like they're being railroaded into a no-win situation — which, at the start of this adventure, is actually the case.

After this initial bit of manipulation by the Referee, the players will be free to do whatever they want without interference. This is the next challenge, for chasing the Dragon will not be easy.

The Referee may have to help the players get started by providing a hint or two. It is especially important for the players to realize that to find the Dragon, they must begin by questioning the street gangs; specifically, the Sisters, though the Referee can let the characters find this out for themselves. After this, they should be able to pick up the trail, though they may run into a few dead ends and false leads along the way. Only if the characters are really lost should the Referee give any further hints, however.

The players will need an experienced and tough party to handle this challenge. Solos, preferably outfitted to the max, are a must for any party that hopes to survive the Combat Zone. Fixers are also a must, as the party will not get anywhere without information from the street. Rockers may find that they have some fans among the street gangs, which could give them an edge in certain situations. Nomads are accustomed to the hardships of life on the road, and their toughness should also be an asset. Netrunners may feel like fish out of water, but Medias could come in handy as a means of obtaining additional information on street gangs, I-CORP, etc.

SETTING THE MOOD

In our own world, there are all too many urban areas that resemble the Combat Zone. In such places, drugs, poverty, and violence are everyday facts of life,

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and people are forced to live under conditions that can only be described as inhumane.

The Combat Zone is a lot like this, but even worse. Every other building appears to be abandoned, bombed-out, or on the verge of collapse. Piles of garbage line the streets and alleyways, left there to rot by sanitation workers who refuse to enter the Combat Zone for fear of their lives. Homeless people huddle in alleyways, scouring overflowing dumpsters for food.

Drug dealers brazenly sell their wares on the corners, knowing full well that the police rarely venture into the Zone unless they have no other choice. Passers-by move quickly, and keep their eyes open: the gangs rule the streets, and episodes of violence can break out without warning.

Most of the permanent residents of this sector live in abject squalor, making their homes in the shabby tenements that pass for apartment complexes in the Zone. These buildings suffer from numerous structural defects, including broken windows, unsafe staircases, and crumbling walls. The halls are littered with refuse, debris, and graffiti. It is not uncommon to find addicts passed out in the hallways, and little children playing with empty drug vials, syringes, shell casings — and sometimes, loaded guns.

Most of the tenements lack heat or running water, and are infested with various forms of vermin. The worst of these are the so-called “killer rats”, which are said to measure over three feet in length, and are so named because they occasionally kill and eat human babies as they sleep in their cribs. They are vicious creatures, who have little fear of human beings, are resistant to poisons of all sorts, and are carriers of filth and disease. Groups of adolescent youths sometimes hunt killer rats for fun. The homeless sometimes have no recourse but to hunt them for food, though sometimes it is the rats that do the hunting.

WORD ON THE STREET

Outside of the Combat Zone, information about the Hood is spotty at best. Everyone knows it's a bad place, thanks mainly to the constant barrage of Media reports of gang killings, drug wars, and so forth. Few have heard of the Dragon, however, and those who have probably know nothing more than that he is a criminal. Most city dwellers avoid the Zone at all costs, for they are well aware of how dangerous this sector is.

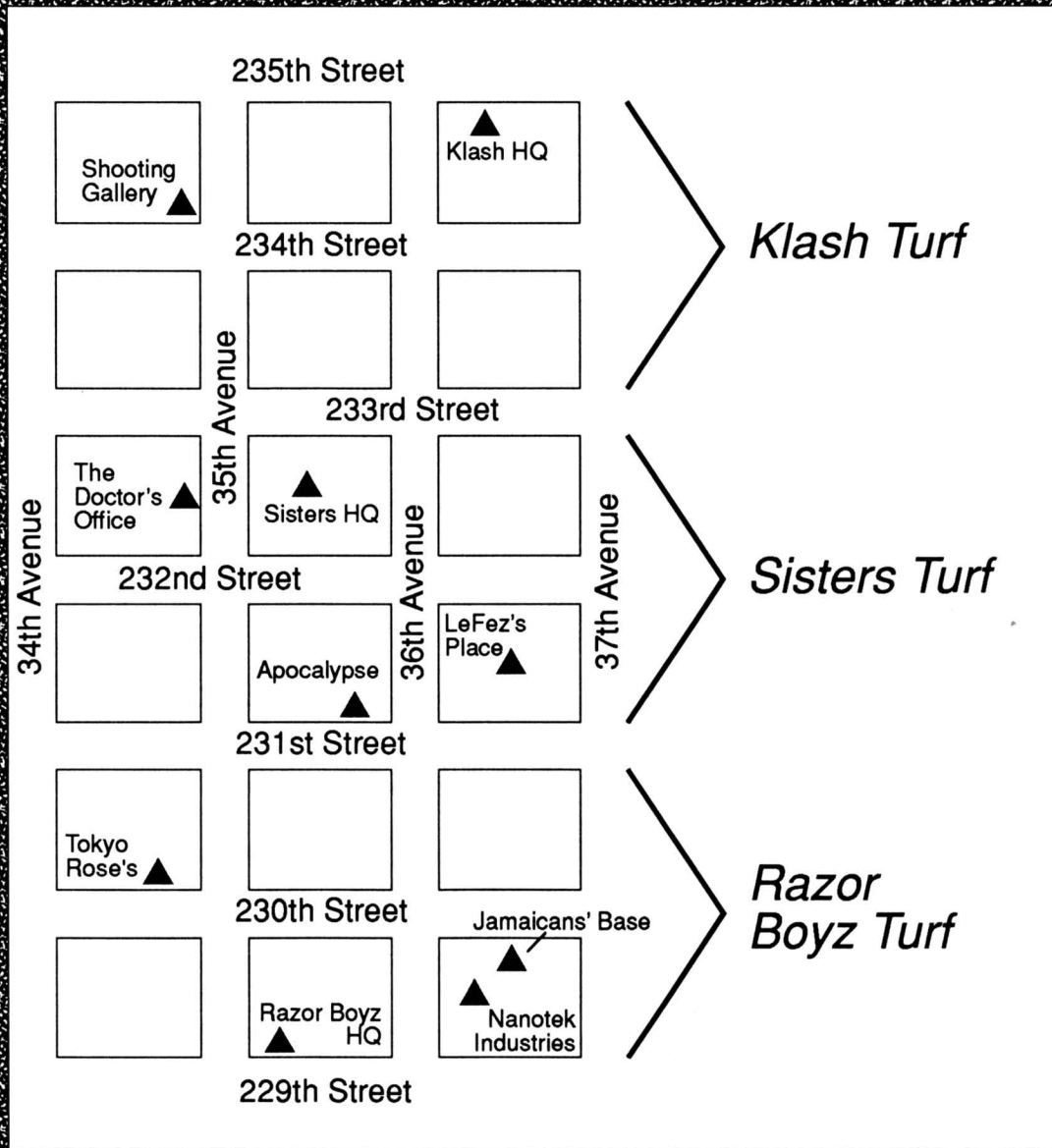
In corporate circles, R. Maximillian has earned a wide reputation as a shark — one who feeds on others weaker than himself. He is a master of the hostile takeover, and seems to have limitless sources of capital. The mere mention of R. Maximillian's name is enough to send shivers up the spine of any corporate exec. Even so, corporate types like to gossip as much as anyone else. At least one will speculate that Maximillian has connections to known criminals, and that his money comes from illegal sources — insider trading is their best guess.

If the players have many corporate connections or put a lot of effort into digging for information in this area, the Referee can reward them with this rumor: “Maximillian's main source of capital is drug money.” This rumor cannot be substantiated, and some will think it is ridiculous. However, it is true.

WORD IN THE HOOD

The Hood (a.k.a. the Combat Zone) is the best place to get information. If the party goes looking for information about the Dragon here, they'll find no lack of rumors. Most of the local rumor mongers are woefully misinformed, though some have a basis in fact. A sampling:

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The Hood

Scale 1 inch = X? yards



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- Most folks in the Hood will say that they've heard of the Dragon, who is a well known figure here. To some, he is a hero, who has gotten the best of "the Man" time and time again. To others, the Dragon is just another criminal, no better or worse than the hundreds of hoodlums who comprise the Zone's three street gangs.

- If residents are asked general information about the Hood, they all say about the same thing: "If you want to know what's going on in the Hood, talk to the street gangs." Everyone knows that the least belligerent of the street gangs is the Sisters.

***Note:** it is very important that the players hear this rumor, as it will help set them on the trail of the Dragon.*

- If the party asks residents of the Hood about *criminal activities* in the area, they will hear the same response: nobody has seen anything. Nobody has heard anything. Nobody knows anything. The message should be clear: No one wants to get involved.
- About the Fixer, Rico: some folks remember Rico as a pimp — his former occupation (that was over five years ago). Most think he's an okay guy, and have heard that he's doing well for himself "now that he's hooked-up with the Man".
- The drug scene: practically everyone in the Hood knows that a group of Jamaican drug dealers runs the drug trade in the Combat Zone. Few are willing to say more than this, for it is widely known that the Jamaicans are "bad news". Individuals who are directly involved in the drug trade will know more than this (see below).
- Anyone who is into drugs (dealing or using) will have heard the rumor that another cartel is trying to break the Jamaicans' monopoly on drug traffick in the Zone (true; I-CORP and the Asian cartel have precisely this in mind). Some say that these newcomers are selling their stuff for cost, just so they can undercut the Jamaicans. The very idea of

being able to buy cut-rate drugs has all the junkies excited, despite the fact that no one has actually scored any of the bargain stuff yet (that's because this part of the rumor is false; a junky's pipe dream).

- The clubs are another source of rumors. The drug-using patrons of the Shooting Gallery are aware of the rumors about a new cartel invading the Jamaicans' territory (see preceeding text), but most are too sophisticated to buy the bit about the cut-rate drugs. Apocalypse's clientele includes young punks from other districts than the Combat Zone, who come here to live dangerously and party hard. Rumors from "Word on the Street" (see following text) may be heard from these patrons, as well as the usual rumors from the Hood. Club-goers also go by the maxim: "If you want to know what's going on in the Hood, talk to the streetgangs."

MEDIA SOURCES

The following information may be of use to the players. The information should be available to a character who engages in research into Media "dead files" (archives), or is a present or former member of the working media. To find a specific article, ask the player to make an Easy **Library Search** roll for his character.

All About Town

BY JUDITH M. WHITSWORTH, OF THE *NEW CITY SOCIAL REGISTER*

It is possible that no single individual has ever received more publicity in the screamsheets than R. Maximillian, handsome CEO of the rapidly expanding conglomerate known as I-CORP, and perhaps the city's most eligible bachelor. The media follow him around like a pack of basset hounds, sniffing for the latest gossip: who is Maximillian's latest love inter-

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est? What socialites have invited him to attend their exclusive function this week? It's hard to keep tabs on Maximillian, as he does not normally allow interviews, claiming as his excuse a busy schedule. Sounds to me like a good enough excuse — in addition to his corporate dealings, he is also active as a philanthropist. It is said that he recently donated a half billion dollars to a variety of charitable causes. If only he gave interviews...ah well, one can still dream.

Blood, Guts, and I-CORP

BY W.L. ALLEN, OF *WORLD BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL*

One of the top-performing companies in the marketplace appears to be I-CORP, a conglomerate of corporate interests that has posted profits in excess of 5 billion dollars over the last two quarters. Individuals in the know credit I-CORP CEO R. Maximillian for the company's phenomenal growth. One of the new breed of corporate stars, Maximillian has engineered the rapid takeover of a half-dozen corporations, diversified his company's holdings, and tripled its operating capital — all within a period of six months. This unprecedented success story is the talk of the business world. Some financial experts are already calling him a genius. Others refer to him as the 2020 equivalent of Ivan Boesky, Donald Trump, and Blackbeard the Pirate, all wrapped into one. Unfortunately, Maximillian himself was not available for an interview. Yet however you call it, as long as Maximillian is at the helm, I-CORP looks like a solid place to invest your money. And that's the bottom line.

R. Maximillian: Corporate Shadow

AN INVESTIGATIVE ARTICLE BY ROBIN HALL, APPEARING ON PAGE 78 (HARDCOPY) OF THE *CITY GAZETTE*

R. Maximillian, CEO of I-CORP, rarely appears in public. In fact, he is a noted recluse, who lives in luxury on his own private island (location unknown). On the very rare occasions that Maximillian emerges

into the limelight, he is always treated like a VIP, and never goes anywhere without a cadre of bodyguards. The popular view states that Maximillian needs protection from his many admirers. More likely, he needs protection from his enemies, of which he has many. Among them is an employee of I-CORP, who agreed to an interview only after this reporter promised not to reveal her name. According to this source, Maximillian regularly manipulates the media for his own purposes, while threatening his employees with termination if they so much as speak to a reporter. The source implied that much of what is written about Maximillian is sanitized, in order to enhance his image with the general public. Unfortunately, soon after speaking with this reporter, the employee was reassigned to a position in the Far East.

Referee's Note: It should be apparent from these reports that Maximillian is one of the elite: well protected, and beyond the reach of the characters (at least at this stage in their careers). To the gossip columnists in the screamsheets, Maximillian is a godsend; any story about Maximillian's private life is sure to sell. Most of these stories are trumped-up, and some are outright fabrications. Anyone looking to contact investigative reporter Robin Hall will be disappointed. He died in a traffic accident three days after this last story was published.

Blood in the Streets

BY LYDIA JONES, FOR THE *CITY GAZETTE*

The Combat Zone has never been a nice place to live, what with the super rats, drug pushers, and criminals. Now it's gotten worse. Two street gangs, the Razor Boyz and the Klash, have declared war on each other. The neighborhood is their warzone, and the casualties are beginning to mount: Last week, thirteen innocent bystanders were injured in a drive-by shooting, one fatally, along with two members of the Klash. Yesterday the Klash struck back. The result: eight killed, and another dozen bystanders wounded in the crossfire. The local police, hampered by budget and

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manpower limitations, seem unable to put a stop to this new wave of urban violence.

Referee's Note: The Media has done a number of stories about the street gangs. Most cover such topics as the gangs' relationship to crime in the Combat Zone (pretty direct by most counts), who's who in the gangs, and the gangs' territorial claims. The most popular articles cover the latest "box scores": the public loves these daily body counts from the gang wars. "The Homeless Problem" is a big story every winter, after which the subject is usually ignored for the rest of the year.

The Jamaican Connection

FROM AN ARTICLE IN THE *CITY GAZETTE* BY DARREN MANUCCI

Its summertime, and the drug wars are heating up again in the city. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Combat Zone, where a Jamaican cartel has risen to sudden prominence at the expense of the street gangs and the local populace. The Jamaicans are believed to be involved at all levels: manufacturing, sale, and distribution. Their product is cheap, and eminently available. Mr. Ralph "Ace" Goodman, proprietor of a local Combat Zone nightclub known as the Shooting Gallery, said in a recent interview: "The stuff is all over the Hood (neighborhood). Its kinda like the sixties all over again, only they got stuff now that they never had before. The legit dealers have all cleared out. Nobody wants to mess with the Jamaicans. They're serious, you know?"

The Best Little Whorehouse in the Combat Zone

FROM AN ARTICLE IN THE *CITY NEWS* BY MICHAEL AZIMUTH

Looking for a good time? Looking for a little action on the side? Then why not stop in at Tokyo Rose's, the best little whorehouse in the Combat Zone. Check out the picture windows that line the front of this quaint establishment, and you'll get an idea of what's inside. Chances are, whatever you're into can be found at Tokyo Rose's. Walk in the door and you're greeted by Rose herself, a madam with class, looks, and brains. Look around and you'll find patrons from all walks of life: uptown types in three piece suits, blue collar workers with money to burn, college kids looking for a (fairly) cheap thrill. The employees (as Rose calls her girls, and boys for that matter) are clean, attractive, and polite. Mind your manners, though, or you may get to meet Kato — Rose's bouncer, not Inspector Clouseau's companion from the old Peter Sellers movies. He's a former Sumo wrestler, who provides security with a touch of Far Eastern charm.

Referee's Note: See the corresponding text sections to provide additional information for any characters who spend a good deal of time researching Media archives.

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Welcome to the Combat Zone, also known as the Hood — the heart of darkness, in the middle of the City. Ambulances don't respond to calls from this area. Medias rarely cover stories in this district. Even the police prefer to keep a safe distance away.

The Zone is a haven for outcasts from society: addicts, street gangs, and neo-anarchists. Here, the black market flourishes, and contraband of almost any imaginable type can be obtained...at a price.

This adventure begins with a bang, in more ways than one. Let the characters enter the Zone whenever and wherever they want to. When they get into Razor Boyz territory, the party will get its first taste of life in the Combat Zone.

DRIVE-BY SHOOTING

This encounter can take place anywhere in the Zone, but must happen before the party enters the alley that leads to Nanotek Industries, and should happen while the party is on foot; or parked, stopped by the

side of the road, etc., if they've come into the Zone in a vehicle.

The first signal that there is trouble afoot is the sound of squealing tires. Whoever reacts first will see a car headed in the direction of the characters and traveling at an extremely unsafe speed. The vehicle used for the drive-by is an old Yugo-Marakovka sedan, which has been chopped and customized to the max (SDP 100, armored to SP 30, and armed with a mounted Militech Mini-Gat Machine Carbine [see *ChromeBook*; the weapon's stats are SMG 0 L P 1D6 (.22 caseless/5 mm) 120 40 ST]). There are four members of the Klash in the car: a driver and three gunners armed with Uzi Miniauto light submachine guns. As they drive past the characters, the gunners open fire on a group of nearby civilians, then speed away.

The attack is vicious, swift, and almost random in nature; the Klash have heard a rumor that a few of the Razor Boyz are hanging out on this corner, and have decided to "bang" (kill) them. Their information is incorrect, but they don't know this. Nor do they particularly care that innocent victims are involved.

ENTERING THE COMBAT ZONE

Chasing the Dragon

Any characters who are in the vicinity of the shooting risk being hit. The Klash gunners are doing the equivalent of "suppressive fire" (FNFF, p. 96). A whopping 145 rounds are being sprayed across a 6-meter area. To avoid being hit, characters must make a "save" of Athletics + REF + 1D10 of 24 or higher. Failure indicates being struck by 1D6 rounds (28% of the rounds do 1D6 damage; the rest, from the Uzis, do 2D6+1 damage). If the characters have a vehicle of some sort in the firing zone, it may also suffer minor damage (but may serve as cover as well).

At least fifteen bystanders will be hit, mostly homeless people, mothers, and little children. Three are seriously wounded, and will die within twenty minutes if they do not receive immediate medical attention (unless from the PCs, such aid will not be forthcoming; none of these poor people are Trauma Team Cardholders, you understand, and regular ambulances don't come to this neighborhood). A three year old girl and her five-year old brother are dead; their mother has suffered a minor wound to the left leg, and is screaming hysterically. She goes into shock in a moment or two.

The characters may opt to return fire against the Klash vehicle, or may attempt to give pursuit, if desired. The Klash are trying to make a quick getaway, and will head south in the direction of their base. All four of the gang members are hopped-up on Black Lace, and will fight to the death rather than be taken alive.

If the characters somehow succeed in taking any gang member alive and try to question him, they will get little in the way of useful information. These guys are trigger-men, nothing more.

The way the characters react to the civilian casualties could affect how they are regarded by the other inhabitants of the Hood. If they offer aid, they will be regarded favorably, and can expect the local populace to cooperate a bit more than usual should they have any questions to ask.

The Klash Gunners

There are three gunners and a driver in the car, all of them between the ages of 14 and 18. None of them is particularly skilled. All skirt the edge of psychosis from overuse of the favorite trigger man's drug, Black Lace.

Stats

INT 4	REF 7	TECH 6
CL 7	ATT 5	LK 4
MA 7	BODY 10†	EMP 2

†Includes +2 from Black Lace

Cybernetics

Assorted fashionware (light tattoos, shift-tacts, techhair, etc.), Mr. Studd™

Skills

Aware/Notice +2, Brawling +5, Driving +3, Handgun +3, Intimidate +4, Melee +4, Streetwise +3, Submachine gun +3

Equipment

Uzi Miniauto 9 submachine guns, brass knuckles, leather jackets (with sleeves cut off)

Combat Scores

Initiative: +7
Stun/Death Save: 10
Body Type Modifier: -4
Uzi Miniauto 9 (#Shots 40†/ROF 35/DAM 2D6+1/Rel VR) +11

Brass Knuckles (DAM 1D6+2): +11

Armor: Torso 4, all other 0

†The Klash have made their own modified Uzi clips that hold 10 shots more than the usual.

THE ALLEY

Following the drive-by shooting, the characters will eventually head for the alley where Nanotek Industries is located. According to Rico, the contact will accept the case, sign a voucher, and give any further instructions needed to complete the transaction.

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When the characters arrive on the scene, they find that the alley leads directly to a loading dock. There are two garbage dumpsters in the alley, both of which have heavy metal lids. The alley itself appears to be deserted. The fact there aren't any homeless people around digging through the trash may be suggestive, or it may not.

PLAYER PRECAUTIONS

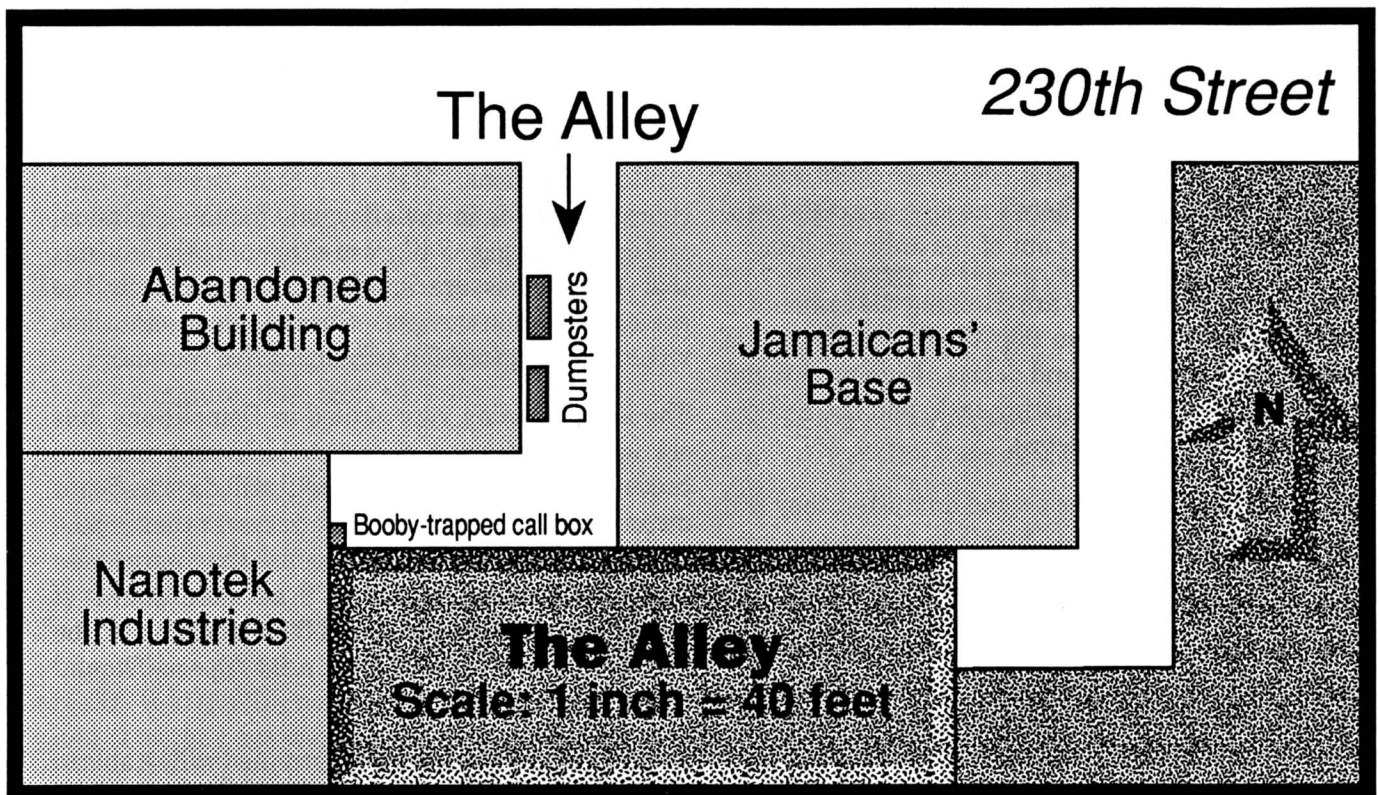
Experienced players, sensing a possible set-up, may want to take some precautions before they enter the alley. Some might leave a lookout at the entrance of the alley, or try to get someone up on the rooftops overlooking the alley.

In the former case, the Referee needn't worry. Anyone stationed at the entrance to the alley will be blown into the street by the explosion that will soon take place (explained further on in the text). By the time anyone gets back into the alley and makes their

way through the smoke and gas, it'll be too late for them to stop what's going to happen.

In the latter case, the characters may try to get up to the roof through one of the two buildings that line either side of the alley. The structure on the right is abandoned, the doors and windows boarded-up. Anyone who goes inside will find that the interior has been gutted by a fire. The halls are clogged with bricks, mortar, and other debris. If the characters dig their way past this stuff they will find a flight of very unsafe iron stairs that will collapse the minute anyone tries to climb them.

The building on the left is also boarded-up. It too is abandoned, or at least it was until a few months ago. It is now occupied by a group of twelve black men and women, wearing dreadlocks decorated with copper wire and electrical cables: members of a group of Jamaican drug dealers, who run the drug trade in the Combat Zone. It will not be easy to break into this building, as there are steel shutters beneath the wooden boards that cover the windows.



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For more information, see "The Jamaicans," on page 29.

Referee's Note: Although it may not be apparent at this time, the proximity of the Jamaicans to Nanotek Industries is the reason why the players were hired to deliver the attache case. The fixer knew that if the Jamaicans got wind of this deal, there would be big trouble.

If any character tries to get to the roof by using a grapnel or by climbing the walls, the Referee may introduce a few minor problems: crumbling mortar, loose stones, a drainpipe that breaks away if anyone tries to climb it, and so forth.

The Referee should not make it impossible to get up on the roof, however, or the players will get suspicious. If a characters are absolutely determined to get up there, let them. The Dragon is well concealed on an adjacent rooftop, and the smoke rising from the explosion that is about to occur will obscure what is about to happen.

EXAMINING THE ALLEY

Should any of the characters decide to check out the alley, let them do so. There's no sign of an ambush, booby traps, or anything out of the ordinary here.

If anyone says that they are checking the contents of the dumpsters, tell them that the first one is full of rotten trash, maggots, and debris. Digging through the dumpsters is a disgusting task, and the Referee should explain this in detail.

If anyone approaches the second dumpster, they will hear a noise from within. Inside is a large and very aggressive "killer rat" that measures almost four feet from its yellow-toothed snout to the tip of its ugly, hairless tail. Well, maybe not quite four feet, but Lord! is it a big rat! If the lid of this dumpster is opened, the rat leaps at the character who opens it, then runs off into the dark corners of the alley.

This encounter is a diversion, intended to inject a little action into this part of the scenario. There is nothing else of interest here.

Once the characters pass the dumpsters, they will be able to see the loading dock for Nanotek Industries. The door is made of heavy corrugated steel, and shows signs of many futile attempts to break in (scratches, dents, etc.).

There is a security device located to the left of the doors: a combination intercom and micro-cam, with a digital box for punching in access codes and a red button marked "CALL". Pushing the call button sets off the plastique charge that the Dragon concealed inside the callbox. A second charge, consisting of a mega-dose of sleep gas, is primed to go off with the plastique.

The explosive charges can also be set-off by remote, if the Dragon sees that anyone is about to tamper with the box.

THE EXPLOSION

A deafening explosion rips through the alley. The concussion slams the characters against the walls of the alley with brutal force, and scatters them in random directions. Make two Stun saves for each character who is in the alley; one for the explosion, and one for the gas. Failure of either or both indicates that the victims are knocked unconscious by the explosion and/or the gas. Success means that the victims are stunned for only about five rounds.

The Dragon, being very skilled in Demolitions, has set up the plastique charge to deliver a massive concussion blast. However, it will still do significant direct damage to a character who presses the "CALL" button. Roll 2D10 damage against the appropriate limb (and remember that if 8 or more points of damage get through armor and BTM, the limb will be literally blown off—see FNFF, p. 93, "Special Wound Cases," for details).

Any characters who have been stunned will be able to see, but they won't be able to move (unless you count

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involuntary twitching as movement). Through the fire and smoke they may get a glimpse of a tall figure wearing what appears to be a modified ninja costume made of black spandex and light mesh armor. Moving quietly and swiftly, the figure takes the attache case and disappears into the smoke (climbs up the wall).

One minute after the explosion, a number of local residents will come to see what happened, attracted by the sound of the blast. None will actually help the characters, as these people learned long ago that it doesn't pay to get involved. If any of the characters mention the Dragon, or describe their assailant, the onlookers nod and mutter among themselves. The consensus seems to be that the Dragon is "a bad dude". Some seem to admire the Dragon, and some don't.

Among those who respond to the explosion will be a blond haired man dressed in a business suit, who identifies himself as Edvard Kurvasier, of Nanotek. He wants to know what happened to the attache case, and will not be pleased when he finds out that the characters have lost it. He will say only this: "You had better get it back, and soon." He then returns to his office in Nanotek Industries (*for more information about Nanotek, see the Appendix located at the end of this book*).

Referee's Note: If the characters made a point of checking out who is in the crowd of onlookers, the Referee can mention that the group includes some homeless people, a few tenement dwellers, some kids, and "a guy in metal dreadlocks; he was there for a minute, then took off."

This was Ras, head of the Jamaican drug cartel. He also heard the explosion and came out to see what happened. He now knows that the Dragon is involved, and wants to know what the characters have to do with all this. From this point on, Ras will be keeping a close eye on the characters through his intermediaries in the Hood. It won't take him long to realize that the characters are looking for the Dragon, and that they are working for whoever it is that is trying to break the Jamaicans' monopoly on the drug

trade. Once this happens, he'll give orders to his solos to kill the characters and the Dragon.

THE DRAGON: FIRST ENCOUNTER

The party has just been ambushed by the Dragon — one of the top solos in the City, and a figure of legendary repute in the Combat Zone. Make an Average difficulty Streetwise roll for each character who has the skill. On a successful roll (15 or higher), the character is aware of the Dragon's reputation, and has some idea of what the group is going to be up against. If not, the locals will identify the Dragon for the characters.

The party's first encounter with the Dragon is not going to be very satisfying, and will probably last no longer than ten or twenty seconds. The Dragon is a real professional; probably tougher and more highly skilled than anyone in the party at this point in their careers. The opening encounter is intended to drive home this point to the players in no uncertain terms.

NOTE TO THE REFEREE

Should any of the players complain that the ambush was "unfair", the Referee should simply reply, "Welcome to life in 2020."

Then add, perhaps in a more encouraging tone, "So what are your characters going to do about it?"

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The Combat Zone (or portion of the Combat Zone, depending on the city you've chosen) is also referred to as the "Hood" — slang for neighborhood. It's a rough place; addicts shoot up in the alleys, drive-by shootings are a common occurrence, and children as young as six or seven years old are known to carry guns.

The Hood is divided into three sectors (see accompanying map). Each of these sectors is claimed as home turf by one of three local gangs: the Razor Boyz, the Klash, and the Sisters. Each gang has its own colors: specifically, black and blue (Razor Boyz), black and gold (Klash), and black and red (Sisters). A gang's colors are usually worn on a jacket, like an emblem. Some gang members also dye their hair, paint their faces, and/or acquire light tattoos to match. No gang member would ever wear another gang's colors.

Referee's Notes: The gangs that patrol the Combat Zone are very protective of their turf. Individuals who venture into these territories do so at their own risk. The Referee should make a point of asking what color clothes the characters are wearing. Characters who are wearing any of the gang colors may be attacked just for this reason alone.

GETTING INFORMATION

The party will have to hang out in the Hood in order to get information about the Dragon. They can start wherever they want, and talk to whomever they choose. Smart characters will listen to the word on the streets and begin by talking to the gangs. Other inhabitants of the Zone may also seem like likely sources of information.

The following is a general guideline of what characters may expect to run up against when looking for information in the Hood.

TALKING TO GANG MEMBERS

As the word on the street says, the gangs know everything that goes on in the Hood, and are the best source of information. Unfortunately, they may also be the least accessible. No gang member worthy of wearing the colors is going to give out information to strangers. To get anything out of the gangs, the party will first have to find a way to connect on some level with lower echelon gang members. Only if this is successful will they get an opportunity to speak with any of the gang leaders — the only individuals who have the authority to dispense gang-related information.

IN THE HOOD

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Characters who can prove some affiliation with the Hood, or the streets in general, receive a +1 bonus when attempting to deal with gang members. Rockers get bonus equal to half their *Charismatic Leadership* skill if their music is of a type that would appeal to gang members (Referee's ruling, based on the Rocker's stated musical preferences). It's possible to add an additional +1 or +2 to the bonus if the Rockers are very well known, or have some specific connection to the gangs (such as being known for a particular song about the Hood, the Combat Zone, gangs in general, etc.).

Bribery, or an exchange of information, can also be used to make a connection. Generally speaking, add a +1 bonus per \$100 worth of drugs, guns, ammo, or hardware offered as a bribe (maximum: +5) to any members of the Razor Boyz or the Klash. The leaders of both of these two rival gangs will also trade information for anything that can be used against their enemies.

The members of the Sisters do not deal in drugs, and do not take kindly to those who do. Add a bonus of +3

when dealing with members of the Sisters gang if any of the characters helped the innocent bystanders who were hurt in the drive-by shooting; conversely, apply a -3 penalty if dealing with the Klash under the same terms.

Note: For specific information on the gang leaders, see page 22, "The Street Gangs".

TALKING TO THE HOMELESS

Homeless people found in the Hood will either be transients or squatters. The former move about frequently, and generally do not know much about the Hood. The latter tend to wander the streets by day, taking shelter in an abandoned building, old subway station, dumpster, or cardboard box by night. Squatters are more aware of the word on the street, but are seldom privy to inside information on gang activities. The honest ones will direct the players to the gangs; individuals looking to make a quick buck might lead the characters on a wild goose chase.

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Among the homeless people in the Zone are a number of mentally unstable individuals, who were released from mental hospitals and “dumped” onto the streets. Some of these individuals may be incoherent, disoriented, or even hostile. One such person whom the characters might meet on the street is an old man called Aqualung. He has a mane of tangled white hair and a long greasy beard, dresses in a ragged long coat, and smells terrible.

If Aqualung sees the characters asking people for information, he tries to get their attention. If he does, he’ll take them aside, mumbling “I have something for you to see.” If the characters accompany him to a nearby alley, he will throw open his ragged coat, exposing himself and grinning a toothless grin. Then he’ll stagger away, giggling to himself.

TALKING TO TENEMENT DWELLERS

Most of the people who live in the Hood’s numerous tenements are too afraid to talk to strangers, especially about the gangs, whom they fear. Those who aren’t afraid of the gangs may know something about their recent activities, but will have little information that would be of use to the party. Most will direct the characters to the gangs; or possibly the clubs, where many of their teenage kids hang out.

THE STREET GANGS

THE RAZOR BOYZ

The Razor Boyz once ruled the Hood, but have fallen on hard times in recent months. Six weeks ago they lost more than half of their total membership in a disastrous “gang-bang” (battle among rival gangs)

with factions of the Klash. This brought their numbers down to about two dozen warriors — not enough to defend their turf against their rivals.

For now, the Razor Boyz are laying low, while they try to regroup and recruit some new blood. Revenge will have to wait...at least for the time being.

Razor Boyz colors are black and blue. Their territory extends from 229th Street to the north side of 231st Street, between 34th and 37th Avenues. The gang’s headquarters is a bombed-out building on 229th Street. It is here that the characters will be taken to meet the Boyz Warlord, Ice.

Meeting with Ice

Ice is the last surviving warlord of the Razor Boyz. He is a marked man, and never goes anywhere without at least three Razor Boyz bodyguards. He’s only sixteen years old, but has already killed a half-dozen members of the Klash; he also killed two Sisters in a recent drive-by shooting.

Ice is bitter; he wants revenge against the Klash, but he knows that his Razor Boyz lack the numbers and firepower. He’s worried about the Sisters, who are now stronger than the Razor Boyz, and are a threat to what’s left of his turf.

Like most of the inhabitants of the Hood, Ice generally doesn’t talk to outsiders. His typical reply to any question is: “I don’t know nothin’.” If pressed or bullied, he will get violent; Ice is not the most stable of individuals, and has been known to kill with little provocation.

On the other hand, Ice can be bribed. His gang needs hardware (weapons) and cash, and he’ll consider giving up information on the Dragon in exchange. Despite being just a young kid, Ice is crafty, and won’t give anything up cheap.

Information from Ice includes:

- Ice will recognize the Dragon by his description. If asked what he knows about the Dragon, he will

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say: "Yeah, the Dragon. My older brother told me about him when I was just a little kid. Used to be one of the Razor Boyz, maybe ten years ago. What about it?"

If given a bribe of at least \$200 he will tell the party where the Dragon can be found. "Try the Shooting Gallery, on 30th. They say that the Dragon goes there to score."

- About Rico: "Yeah, I know him. Used to be a pimp. What about it?"

Referee's Notes: Ice doesn't know as much as he says he does. His information on the Dragon is particularly unreliable; the Dragon is not a drug user, and never goes to the Shooting Gallery.

Ice

Ice's most prized possession is his Beretta M-24 submachine gun (see *Chromebook™*, p. 46; its stats are SMG 2 L P 2D6+1 [9 mm] 50 25 VR), which he reports came off the body of a eurosolo. This implies Ice killed the man, but actually he merely scavenged off the body. Regardless, it's a nice piece, and Ice cradles it like a kid would a teddy bear. It's a smartlinked version, but Ice uses it manually because he can't afford interface plugs (yet).

Stats

INT 7	REF 7	TECH 7
CL 8	ATT 6	LK 4
MA 6	BODY 7	EMP 2

Cybernetics

Cyberaudio (Wearman), Kerenzikov reflex boost (+2), Light Tattoos

Skills

Athletics +2, Awareness/Notice +3, Combat Sense +4, Driving +2, Handgun +6, Interrogation +3, Intimidate +4, Karate +2, Leadership +5, Melee +3, Persuasion & Fast Talk +2, Streetwise +5, Submachine gun +4

Equipment

BudgetArms Auto 3 pistol, Beretta M-24 Advanced Sub-machine gun, heavy leather jacket and pants, kevlar vest

Combat Scores

Initiative: +13

Stun/Death Save: 7

Body Type Modifier: -2

Beretta SMG (#Shots 50/ROF 25/DAM 2D6+1/Rel VR) +13

BudgetArms Auto 3 Pistol (#Shots 8/ROF 2/DAM 3D6/Rel UR) +12

Karate: +9

Armor: Head 0, Torso 14, R.Arm/L.Arm/R.Leg/L.Leg 4

THE Klash

With a membership in excess of sixty warriors, the Klash is currently the biggest and baddest gang in the Hood, and they know it. Their members strut around like roosters, and openly cross into Razor Boyz turf, knowing that there's not much the Boyz can do to stop them.

Klash colors are black and gold. Klash territory extends from 233rd Street to 235th Street, between 34th and 37th Avenues. The gang's headquarters is an abandoned building on 235th Street. It is here that the characters will be taken to meet the Klash Warlord, Chill.

Talking to Chill

Chill is the highest ranking Klash warlord, and is the leader of the largest of the gang's several factions. He is hard to communicate with, as he is usually hyped-up on stimulants like Black Lace and synthcoke. Chill appears nervous and edgy at all times, his eyes darting back and forth, the pupils dilated.

Chill and his gang recognize the Dragon by name or by description. He's heard of the big rip-off that the Dragon reportedly pulled off, and is impressed; he

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and his boys admire the Dragon, whom they regard as a local hero.

Information from Chill:

- About Rico: "Rico, the guy with the teeth? Yeah, he's alright. Used to pimp around here, but I ain't seen him lately. Could be doin' time, I don't know."
- About the Dragon: Chill says that he knows where the Dragon hangs out. He'll give information, but only on one condition: he wants to know where Ice, last of the Razor Boyz warlords, is hiding out, so he can kill him and enhance his reputation. In lieu of this info, he'll accept a heavy bribe (\$500+), afterwhich Chill tells the party:

"Apocalypse. That's where the Dragon hangs out at night. Look for an Oriental guy, maybe six feet, with long black hair and a dragon tattoo on his left hand. That's the Dragon."

Referee's Note: Chill is an habitual liar, who will say anything in order to get what he wants. He wants Ice, and will lie to get information on his whereabouts. In reality, he knows very little about the Dragon, and anything he says in this regard is patently false.

Chill

Stats

INT 5	REF 9	TECH 7
CL 9	ATT 8	LK 5
MA 6	BODY 8	EMP 2

Cybernetics

Kerenzikov (+1), Light Tattoo, Mr. Studd, Neural Processor, Vehicle Link, Wolver

Skills

Awareness/Notice +2, Basic Tech +4, Combat Sense +3, Driving +2, Handgun +4, Interrogation +3, Intimidate +3, Leadership +4, Melee +7, Motorcycle +2, Streetwise +3, Sub-machine gun +5

Equipment

Uzi Miniauto 9, heavy leather jacket, kevlar t-shirt

Combat Scores

Initiative: +13

Stun/Death Save: 8

Body Type Modifier: -3

Uzi Miniauto 9 SMG (#Shots 40/ROF 35/DAM 2D6/Rel VR) +15

Wolvers (DAM 3D6): +16

Armor: Head 0, Torso 14, R.Arm/L.Arm 4, R.Leg/L.Leg 0

THE SISTERS

The Sisters is an all-girl gang with an attitude. They want the same respect that the Klash and the Razor Boyz get from others in the Hood. The gang was originally founded by a group of girls who, at one time or another, dated members of the Razor Boyz and Klash. They got together after losing their boyfriends during a particularly bloody month of gang-banging. The Sisters eventually formed their own gang, and have hung together ever since. Their active membership is believed to exceed fifty, making them the second largest gang in the Hood behind the Klash.

In the past, the Sisters sometimes acted as go-betweens in disputes involving the Razor Boyz and the Klash. But following a recent spate of gang-bangs and drive-by shootings directed at their members, things have changed for the worse. Word in this part of the Zone says that the Sisters are gearing up for an all-out war. Rumor has it that they recently received a shipment of weapons from an unknown source — possibly a gang from outside of the Hood.

While the Sisters are regarded as the least belligerent of the gangs, it is a mistake to think that they are "soft" in comparison to their male counterparts. The members of this gang are better equipped than the Razor Boyz or the Klash, and know how to handle themselves in a firefight.

Sisters colors are black and red. Sisters territory extends from the south side of 231st Street to 233rd

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Street, between 34th and 37th Avenues. The gang's headquarters is the basement of an abandoned building on 233rd Street. It is here that the characters will be taken to meet the Sisters Warlord, Oreo.

One of the first things the characters will notice is that the Sisters are well-equipped. Unlike their rivals, they are packing some very heavy, sophisticated, and expensive hardware. None of the Sisters will say where they got their gear, telling inquisitive characters to "Piss off," "Mind your own frackin' business!" etc.

Talking to Oreo

Oreo is a Sisters warlord who bears a reputation as a chick who won't take any crap from anybody. She is twenty years old, stands six feet tall and weighs over two hundred and fifty pounds. Oreo has an outwardly hostile demeanor, particularly with regard to males. Make a remark about her size and you'd better be ready for a fight.

Oreo is always accompanied by at least a dozen heavily armed female bodyguards, packing some very impressive gear. The atmosphere surrounding the gang's headquarters is one of extreme tension. Characters who are inquisitive about what's going on may get the impression that the Sisters are expecting trouble; everybody seems unnaturally alert, and weapons are being brandished openly.

Referee's Note: The Sisters are vehemently opposed to drug traffickers, whom they regard as leeches that prey upon the poor people in the Hood. This is a controversial stance among some of the inhabitants of the Hood, particularly the drug dealers, who view the Sisters as a threat to their "business." Though they won't admit it at this point, the Sisters have received threats from the Jamaicans, who have told them to lay off the anti-drug message. The Sisters have no intention of doing so, and as such, are prepared for a fight.

Oreo may provide information to the characters, but only on her terms; the Referee should read the following section first before speaking on her behalf.

- About Rico: "That pimp? What's he doing now, working for the Man?" If pressed, Oreo admits that Rico is "alright, compared to other Fixers. At least he's straight."
- About the Dragon: If questioned by a male character, Oreo will admit that she has heard of the Dragon ("Yeah, I know about the Dragon. So what?"). However, she refuses to give any information to any male who tries to bribe her with weapons or cash ("I don't talk to no fools. We got all we need, so get lost."). Offers of drugs will only get her mad ("I said I don't talk to fools."). Any attempt to bully or coerce Oreo will result in violence; the Sisters are ready for a fight, and will prove it, if need be.
- If questioned by a female character (or a male who does not attempt to display his machismo), Oreo is less belligerent, though not much more cooperative ("Go on, girl/boy. That ain't none of your business.").

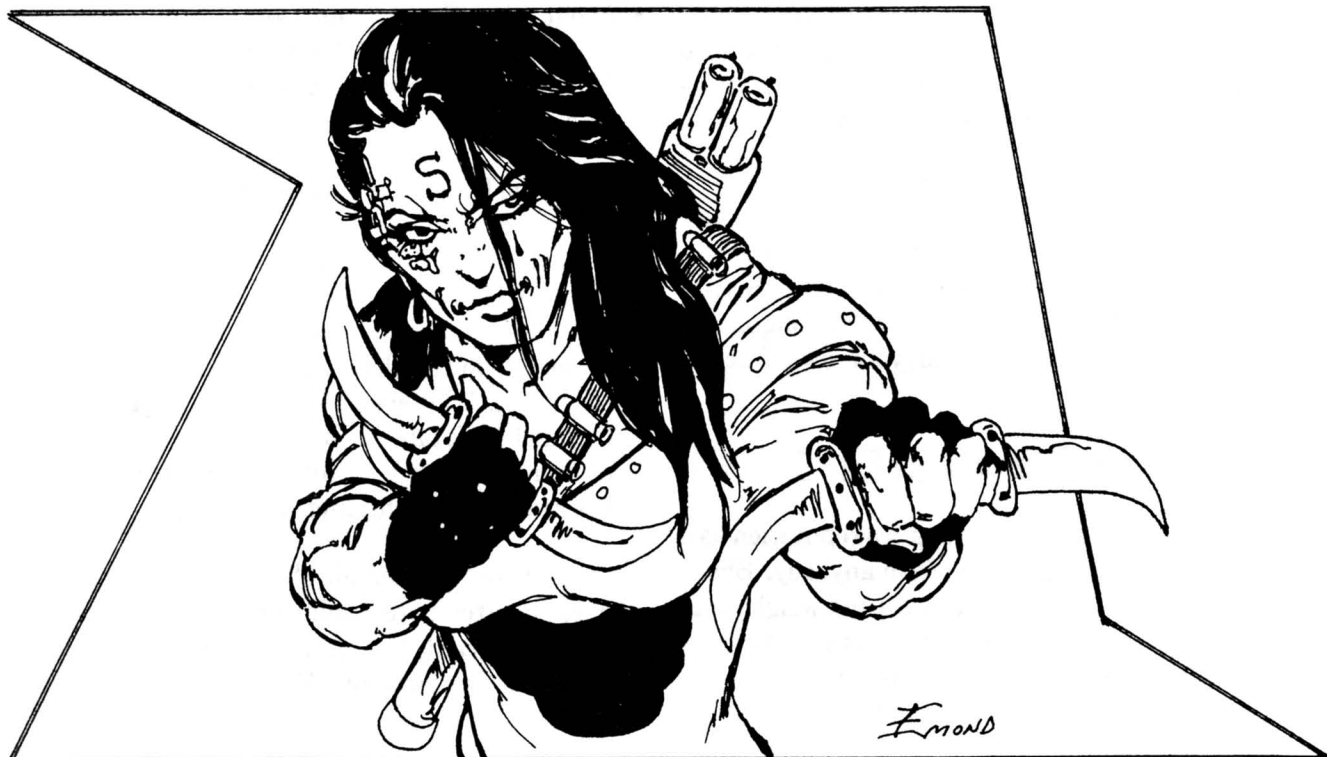
If the questioner can win her trust by making a DIFFICULT Empathy roll, Oreo will say:

"Look, I like you. But I can't say nothing, see? You want to know more, go talk to Rose." Oreo is talking about Tokyo Rose, owner of the Combat Zone brothel by the same name. She will give directions to Rose's place, which is located on 230th Street, near 35th Avenue.

- If trust cannot be established, Oreo sends the questioner away. "I can't say nothin, see? So get lost. Me and the Sisters got work to do."

Referee's Note: Oreo knows a lot about the Dragon, for two reasons. First, the Dragon has been supplying the Sisters with the cash that they've been using to buy weapons (for more info on this, see **The Dragon: Second Encounter**, on page 54). Second, the Dragon is her half-sister.

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Oreo

Oreo is one tough gal. She's packing enough hardware to take out half of the neighborhood, and even has a few cybernetic modifications. Despite her outwardly rough exterior, she has a soft spot for children; she's an unwed mother of three.

Stats

INT 7	REF 8	TECH 7
CL 8	ATT 3	LK 7
MA 4	BODY 14	EMP 8

Cybernetics

Contraceptive Implant (after her third child...she doesn't like children *that* much!), Grafted Muscle, Muscle & Bone Lace, Sandevistan Speedware

Skills

Athletics +3, Awareness/Notice +5, Combat Sense +5, Education & General Knowledge +2, Handgun +3, Heavy Weapons +3, Human Perception +3, Judo +3, Leadership +5, Melee +4, Shotgun +6, Stealth +4,

Streetwise +4, Wardrobe & Style +4, Weapons Tech +2

Equipment

Monoknife, Sternmeyer Type 35 Pistol, Arasaka Rapid Assault 12 autoshotgun, light armor jacket, heavy leather pants

Combat Scores

Initiative: 16*
 Stun/Death Save: 14
 Body Type Modifier: -5
 Arasaka Autoshotgun (#Shots 20/ROF 10/DAM 4D6/Rel ST) +14
 Sternmeyer Type 35 (#Shots 8/ROF 2/DAM 3D6/Rel VR) +11
 Monoknife (DAM 2D6+6) +13
 Judo +11
 Armor: Head 0, Torso/R.Arm/L.Arm 14, R.Leg/L.Leg 4

Oreo's Bodyguards

Oreo's bodyguards are not as big as she is, but they're still pretty tough. They too are very well equipped.

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Funds from the Dragon have beefed them up with weapons, armor and chipped skills.

Stats

INT 5	REF 9	TECH 5
CL 6	ATT Var	LK 4
MA 6	BODY 9	EMP 4

Cybernetics

Chipware Socket (holding Demolitions +2, First Aid +2, and Rifle +3), Cyberoptic (Ultraviolet, Low Lite™), Neural Processor

Skills

Athletics +5, Awareness/Notice +4, Basic Tech +2, Brawling +3, Combat Sense +3, Handgun +5, Hide/Evade +2, Intimidate +3, Melee +4, Motorcycle or Driving +3, Savate +3, Streetwise +4, Wardrobe & Style +2

Equipment

Federated Arms X-9mm medium autopistol, Militech Ronin light assault rifle, knife, light armor jacket, heavy leather pants, kevlar t-shirt, nylon helmet, 1 tear gas grenade

Combat Scores

Initiative: +12

Stun/Death Save: 9

Body Type Modifier: -3

Militech Ronin Rifle (#Shots 35/ROF 30/DAM 5D6/Rel VR) +13

Federated Arms X-9mm Pistol (#Shots 12/ROF 2/DAM 2D6+1/Rel ST) +14

Knife (DAM 1D6+1): +13

Savate: +12

Armor: Head 20, Torso/R.Arm/L.Arm 24, R.Leg/L.Leg 4

OTHER ENCOUNTERS IN THE HOOD

GANG-BANGING

When inter-gang rivalries come to a head, they often climax in brief but extremely violent firefights. Engaging in battles of this sort is called gang-banging. Get stuck in the middle of a situation like this, and you could be dead meat real quick.

A gang-bang could start in any number of ways. If a group of gang members is looking to avenge a hit on some of their home boyz, they might bang the first rivals that they run into. A group might also be attacked while crossing over into a rival gang's turf for otherwise innocent reasons (a drug buy, cruising for chicks, etc.). A gang-bang could also start over a girlfriend. This is particularly common with the Sisters, who sometimes date guys from rival gangs.

The Referee should feel free to add wandering groups of gang members to the scenario anytime there is a dull moment. Incidents of this sort need not always result in violence. The mere presence of two rival groups of gang members in close proximity to one another should be sufficient to sustain a measure of tension.

DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS

This scenario begins with a drive-by shooting, an event intended to give the players a sample of life in the Hood. It would be a mistake for the players to assume that just because this happened to them once, it won't happen again. In fact, a second drive-by shooting may occur later in this scenario.

Most drive-by shootings come about when one gang attempts to hit a member of a rival gang; usually

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someone who has been marked for such a hit due to his or her actions (as revenge for a previous gang-bang, for instance), though the target may also be chosen at random. The big problem with drive-by shootings is that the intended victim is seldom the only one to get hit. Usually, the real victims are innocent bystanders.

While not necessarily innocent, the player characters may find themselves in the middle of a firefight at anytime. Another way to sustain some tension is to introduce one or two "spurious" drive-by shootings that turn out to be false alarms. Just tell the characters that they hear the sound of squealing tires and watch them dive for cover. It's just the thing to enliven a dull moment.

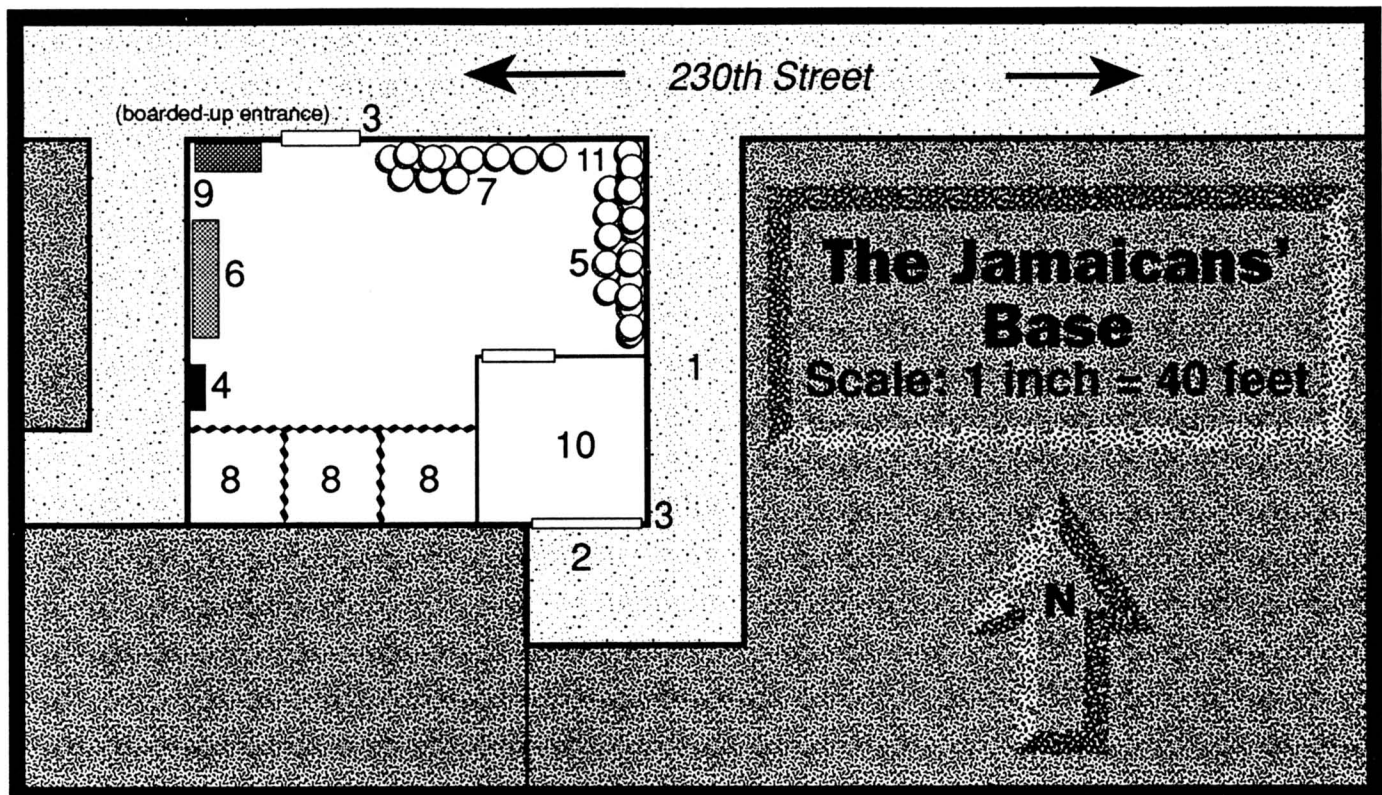
RIP-OFFS

If the players are naive enough to leave any of their possessions unattended they can expect to lose them.

This includes vehicles, gear, or just about anything else; rip-off artists aren't particular about what they take, as long as it could conceivably be construed to have some sort of value to someone.

Rip-off artists could be young kids looking to make a fast buck, addicts looking for an easy score, or homeless people who are just stealing to stay alive. It is rare that a professional will get involved in this type of random theft, except as pertains to vehicles. Car thieves are real pros, who can spot an easy mark a mile away, and can break into a vehicle in a matter of a few seconds — a bit longer, if the vehicle has been equipped with security devices and/or booby-traps. Once inside, it's a quick hot-wire job, and you can kiss that baby goodbye. Total elapsed time for a professional job: fifteen to twenty seconds.

It's also possible that a vehicle might be stripped rather than stolen. These scavengers are quick, too. Figure to lose a part (tire, wheel, battery, radio, electronics, etc.) every minute that the characters



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leave a vehicle unattended. Bulky stuff like engines and transmissions could take 10-30 minutes. Amateurish car strippers sometimes set a vehicle on fire in order to erase evidence of the crime. Vehicle security devices and/or booby-traps will usually stop amateur rip-off artists.

THE JAMAICANS

The Jamaicans are drug dealers who operate out of the Combat Zone. They control the lucrative local drug trade in the Hood, and have connections to other Jamaican dealers operating throughout the City. They are very dangerous people, who will do anything to protect their interests in the area. The Jamaicans are very likely to see the PCs as dangerous to their interests.

There are two possible types of encounters with the Jamaicans. The first will take place only if the party stumbles upon (or decides to raid) the Jamaicans' base of operations near the corner of 230th Street and 36th Avenue. The second is a planned hit by a team of Jamaican solos (see page 45), that will take place later on in this scenario.

The Jamaicans' base of operations is an abandoned building that was once used as a warehouse (mentioned previously in the first encounter with the Dragon; see pg. 17). Like all the structures in the Combat Zone, it is in a sad state of disrepair. The windows were boarded-up long ago, and are littered with graffiti; beneath the boards are steel shutters, designed to keep out indigents and nosy kids. The doorway is also boarded-up, and behind the boards is a steel reinforced door. This entrance is no longer used by the current inhabitants, who enter and exit through the loading dock located at the rear of the building.

MAP KEY: THE JAMAICANS' BASE

1. **Alley:** This is the only way into the loading dock. It is wide enough to accomodate a medium-sized truck.
2. **Loading Dock:** There is a steel reinforced automatic garage door here, through which the Jamaicans enter and exit the building. It is tall enough and wide enough to allow access to vehicles, including small-medium sized trucks. There is an electronic code box located to the right of the door. To open the door, you have to punch in the correct access code (this can also be done by a remote-controlled radio device).
3. **Security System:** A sophisticated electronic security system prevents unauthorized entrance. Sensors located on the windows and doors activate a silent alarm if tampered with. One micro-cam scans the alley, and another keeps watch over the front of the building. Both are mounted on the roof (front and rear) and concealed from view by a pair of false cornice stones.
4. **Security Station:** The code box that controls the electronic security system is located on the west wall, near the work bench. The two video monitors for the micro-cams are built into the wall just above the box.
5. **Empty Drums:** Forty empty metal drums, stacked ten across and four high, line the east wall. These once contained chemicals used to synthesize various types of designer drugs.
6. **Workbench:** Against the west wall is a long metal workbench, upon which are arranged the following: scales for weighing ingredients, glass retorts and alembics, two gas burners to heat ingredients, and various tools and mixing implements. The Jamaicans' two "cookers" (see #12) use these facilities to make and process contraband drugs.
7. **Chemical Drums:** Along the north wall are a dozen metal drums, each containing a quantity of

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chemicals. The chemicals contained within are extremely volatile, and will explode if subjected to heat or fire.

8. Living Quarters: This section of the warehouse has been partitioned off from the work area, using blankets and curtains as makeshift walls. There are a half dozen mattresses on the floor, and the floor is littered with clothes, shoes, and debris from meals. There is a small refrigerator in the corner, and a couple of odd pieces of furniture that look like they were rescued from a junkyard. Several empty steel drums are being utilized as tables, and over-sized ash trays. In one corner of the room is a makeshift altar decorated with images of saints, a rooster claw, and assorted ritual paraphernalia — trappings of the Santaria religion, which has its roots in Christianity and African voodoo.

9. Armory: This metal cabinet contains a cache of weapons and ammo. When full, this arsenal includes a pair of Arasaka Assault Shot 12's, three FN-RAL Heavy Assault rifles, four heavy submachineguns (Ingrams and one H&K), six heavy autopistols (four BudgetArms, two Sternmeyers), and over 2000 rounds of ammunition (various types).

10. Garage: This is where the Jamaicans keep their vehicles. There is an armored truck used to transport chemicals, a modified BMW sedan, and three cyberbikes.

11. Safe: This heavy steel safe is built into the far end of the east wall. The door is concealed behind a row of empty steel drums (#5). The Jamaicans stash their valuables inside this vault, which at any time may contain as much as \$1,500,000 in designer drugs and half as much in cash.

THE JAMAICANS

The base of operations is manned by twelve Jamaican drug dealers; six males and six females, all between the ages of 20 and 35. Both the males and females wear their hair in long dreadlocks, and are armed with heavy automatic weapons.

Three of the Jamaicans are Fixers: a male named Ras handles all the financial arrangements for the group. He has connections throughout the City, and is well known by the local pushers and users. The other two (Viva and Electra) are females, who serve as contacts to lower level dealers in the area.

There are two "cookers" in the group, a male named Morley and his girlfriend, Zap. They are freelance chemists, who manufacture designer drugs from raw materials. The cooks are very valuable to the group, for they are their primary source of income. They never leave the warehouse, and regularly work eighteen hour days.

One of the Jamaicans, a female named Shiva, is a Techie, who maintains the security system, truck, and other equipment used by the group.

The remaining six (two females and four males) Jamaicans are Solos, whose main job is to provide security for the group. They are heavily armed, and work six hour shifts: three Solos are on duty and three are off duty at any given time.

Ras (fixer)

Ras is the brains of this outfit. He is well connected uptown, where he has begun to develop a thriving trade in contraband narcotics. He plans to go straight to the top, and will kill anyone who gets in his way. Ras also dabbles in Santaria (a form of religion that combines aspects of Christianity and voodoo), and is regarded as a sort of "spiritual advisor" by the others in the group. Ras himself does not do hard drugs, but always has a spliff (Jamaican for marijuana joint) or two handy. He has several expensive cybernetic modifications, including Kerenzikov Boosterware at +2 and cyberoptic targeting scope, and is a crack shot with a heavy autopistol.

Stats

INT 8	REF 8	TECH 7
CL 10	ATT 6	LK 5
MA 5	BODY 8	EMP 3

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Cybernetics

Cyberoptic (Targeting, Infrared), Kerenzikov
Boosterware (+2), Neural Processor, Skinweave,
Smartgun Link

Skills

Awareness/Notice +4, Brawling +3, Forgery +3,
Handgun +9, Intimidate +7, Melee +2, Persuasion +4,
Pick Lock +3, Pick Pockets +2, Streetdeal +7

Equipment

Sternmeyer Type 35 (smartlinked) with gold stock,
Monoknife, Light Armor Jacket, gri-gri (voodoo charm)

Combat Scores

Initiative: +10

Stun/Death Save: 8

Body Type Modifier: -3

Sternmeyer Pistol (#Shots 8/ROF 2/DAM 3D6/Rel
VR) +20

Monoknife (DAM 2D6+1): +11

Armor: Head 12, Torso/R.Arm/L.Arm 26, R.Leg/L.Leg
12

Viva & Electra (Fixers)

Viva and Electra are mid-level drug dealers who work
as Ras' assistants. They are both Ras' girlfriends, and
share a bed with him. Like Ras, they prefer smoking
pot to using harder drugs. Viva is a natural beauty;
Electra has had extensive facial modifications to
improve her looks. Both are tall, slim, and quite
stunning. Neither has any qualms about killing.

Stats

INT 8	REF 7	TECH 7
CL 7	ATT 9	LK 6
MA 6	BODY 7	EMP 3

Cybernetics

Cyberaudio (Amplified Hearing, Bug Detector, Phone
Splice), Cyberoptic (Low Lite™, Microvideo), Neural
Processor, Speedware

Skills

Athletics +2, Awareness/Notice +4, Brawling +3,
Forgery +2, Handgun +7, Intimidate +4, Melee +4,



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Persuasion +5, Pick Lock +3, Pick Pockets +3, Streetdeal +5

Equipment

Sternmeyer Type 35 pistol, 1 dazzle grenade, 1 sleep gas grenade, light armor jacket, kevlar t-shirt

Combat Scores

Initiative: 10*

Stun/Death Save: 7

Body Type Modifier: -2

Sternmeyer Pistol (#Shots 8/ROF 2/DAM 3D6/Rel VR) +14

Armor: Head 0, Torso 24, R.Arm/L.Arm 14, R.Leg/L.Leg 0

Morley & Zap (cookers)

Morley and Zap work as the group's cooks. The two have been lovers for several months, and are always seen together. They are skilled in the making of designer drugs of all sorts. When Ras is not looking, they like to sample their own wares.

Stats

INT 7	REF 7	TECH 9
CL 6	ATT 7	LK 6
MA 5	BODY 8	EMP 5

Cybernetics

Chemical Analyzer, Interface Plugs, Machine/Tech Link, Nasal Filters, Neural Processor, Olfactory Boost

Skills

Awareness/Notice +3, Basic Tech +4, Botany +3, Chemistry +10, Cryotank Operation +1, Diagnose +1, Education +1, Handgun +2, Human Perception +2, Library Search +2, Medical Tech +6, Melee +1, Pharmaceuticals +10, Zoology +1

Equipment

BudgetArms Auto 3, knife, airhypo, Drug Analyzer, an assortment of drug slap patches, tear gas grenade

Combat Scores

Initiative: +7

Stun/Death Save: 8

Body Type Modifier: -3

BudgetArms Auto 3 Pistol (#Shots 8/ROF 2/DAM 3D6/Rel UR) +8

Knife (DAM 1D6+1): +8

Armor: None

Shiva (techie)

Shiva is dour and untalkative by nature, the result of a mild case of cyberpsychosis. She can jury-rig any type of mechanical device, and is particularly adept at customizing vehicles.

Stats

INT 8	REF 9	TECH 10
CL 7	ATT 7	LK 4
MA 5	BODY 6	EMP 1

Cybernetics

Adrenal booster, Biomonitor, Chipware Socket (Capeoira +3, plus see Equipment, below), Cyberaudio (Phone Splice, wide band radio scanner), Cyberoptic (Micro-optics, Targeting, Thermograph Sensor), Kerenzikov Boosterware (+2), Neural Processor, Skinwatch, Skinweave, Smartgun Link, Tactile Boost, Toxin Binders, Vehicle Link

Skills

Awareness/Notice +3, Basic Tech +7, Cyber Tech +4, Driving +3, Education & General Knowledge +2, Electronic Security +5, Electronics +6, Handgun +3, Heavy Weapons +4, Jury Rig +8, Melee +4, Pharmaceuticals +2, Teaching +1, Weaponsmith +2

Equipment

Techscanner, mirrorshades, K-A F-253 Flamethrower (smartlinked), 1 kg of C-6 (with detonator), Sternmeyer Type 35 (smartlinked), Monoknife, Techscanner, Kevlar vest; plus a slew of handy MRAM chips, which she plugs in when they're needed (Aero Tech +3, AV Tech +2, Demolitions +2, Gyro Tech +2, Physics +3, Chemistry +3, Cyberdeck Design +1, Mathematics +2)

Combat Scores

Initiative: +11

Stun/Death Save: 6

Body Type Modifier: -2

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Flamethrower (#Shots 10/ROF 1/DAM 2D10/Rel ST)
+14

Sternmeyer Pistol (#Shots 8/ROF 2/DAM 3D6/Rel
VR) +15

Monoknife (DAM 2D6): +14

Capeoira: +12

Armor: Head 12, Torso 22, R.Arm/L.Arm/R.Leg/L.Leg
12

Kalishnikov Rifle (#Shots 35/ROF 25/DAM 6D6+2/
Rel ST) +18

Sternmeyer Pistol (#Shots 8/ROF 2/DAM 3D6/Rel
VR) +15

Machete (DAM 2D6+6): +12

Capeoira: +15

Armor: Head 12, Torso/R.Arm/L.Arm 26, R.Leg/L.Leg
16

The Jamaican Solos

Ras' solos are highly skilled, but are heavy pot smokers; figure that they will consequently have -1 Reflexes about 75% of the time. They are stone killers, interested only in making a profit.

Combat scores below do not include the reflex penalty for when these solos are high, nor does it include the bonus for when the adrenal boosters are kicked in.

Stats

INT 6	REF 9	TECH 7
CL 8	ATT 7	LK 6
MA 8	BODY 11	EMP 3

Cybernetics

Adrenal Booster, Muscle & Bone Lace, Nanosurgeons, Neural Processor, Skinweave, Smartgun Link, Speedware, Vehicle Link

Skills

Athletics +5, Awareness/Notice +3, Capeoira +6, Combat Sense +6, Driving +4, Electronic Security +3, Handgun +3, Melee +3, Rifle +7, Stealth +2, Sub-machine gun +3, Weapons Tech +2

Equipment

Light Armor Jacket, heavy leather pants, Kalishnikov A-80 heavy assault rifle (smartlinked; 3 extra ammo clips), Sternmeyer Type 35 pistol (smartlinked, armor piercing rounds), Machete (treat as sword), fragmentation grenade, incendiary grenade, dazzle grenade

Combat Scores

Initiative: +18*

Stun/Death Save: 11

Body Type Modifier: -5

ENCOUNTERING THE JAMAICANS IN THE WAREHOUSE

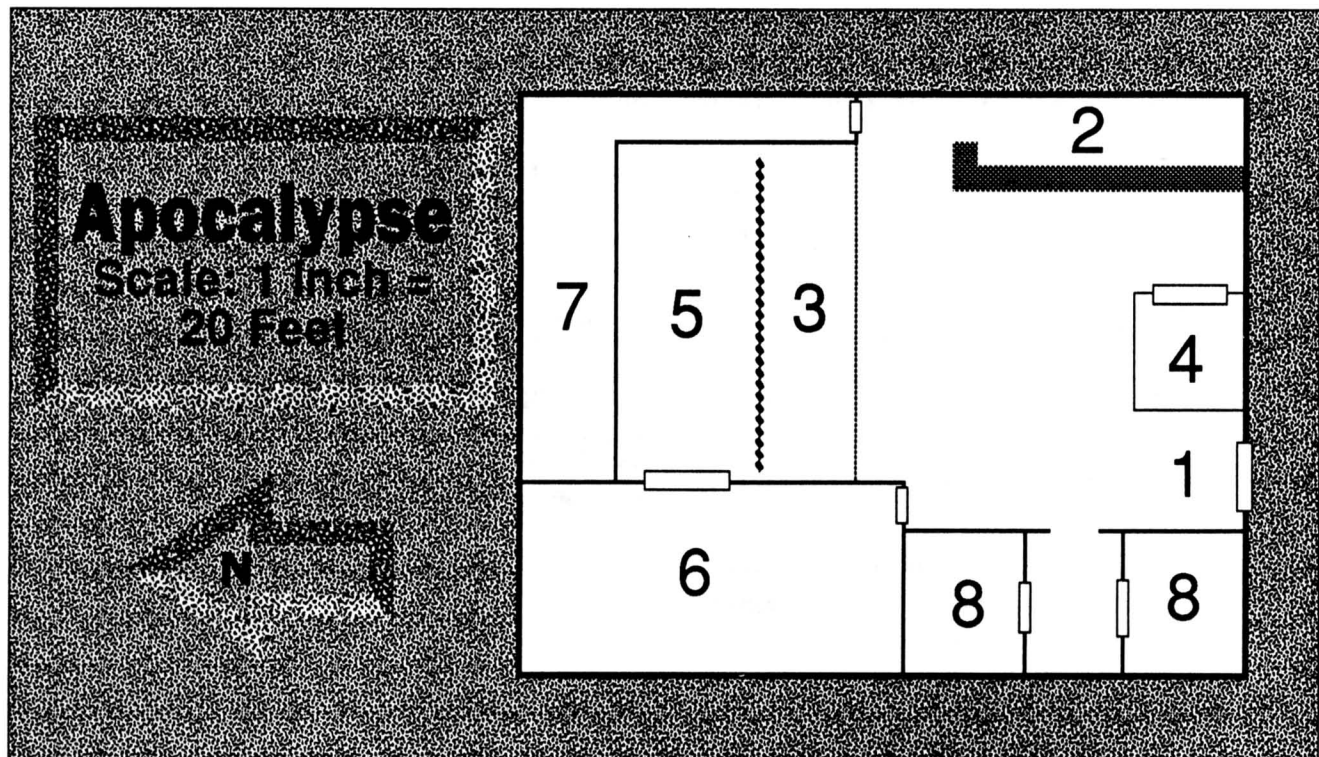
If the characters try to infiltrate or crash the Jamaicans' base, they can expect some real trouble. The Jamaicans will put up a fierce fight if encountered in their home base. Everyone present will grab a weapon and start blasting, even the Cookers. None of them will surrender.

If this firefight takes place, it will probably be a wild affair, with bullets flying all over the place. Unless the characters have joined forces with the Sisters streetgang (see pg. 24) or some other group, they will be outnumbered by the Jamaicans, and may not make it out alive unless they are very good or very lucky.

The Referee should also be aware of the potential for disaster posed by the proximity of the chemical drums, which will explode if hit by stray bullets. If this happens, the ensuing blast will knock everyone in the place off their feet. The warehouse will go up in flames, with another drum exploding every few minutes (there are twelve full drums in all). The Jamaicans' arsenal is also a source of concern; when the flames reach the armory cabinet, the room will be sprayed with about 2000 rounds of live ammo. Should this occur, anyone in the room must roll their Luck score or less on 1D10 to avoid being hit by 1D10 bullets (11 mm, DAM 3D6) during each round spent in the room.

In the event of a fire, the characters will have 2-5 minutes to get out of the warehouse alive. After this,

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the flames, smoke, and heat will be so intense that no one will be able to survive.

ENCOUNTERING THE JAMAICAN SOLOS

Later in this scenario, there is a planned encounter with the Jamaicans that should take place outside of their base (see page 45). In this case, only the six Jamaican Solos will be encountered; Ras, his Fixers, his Cookers, and the Techie do not leave the base unless they are forced to flee.

The six Solos are pros, and should be tough for the party to handle. If the characters mess up, there will almost certainly be casualties. This is not a bunch of semi-skilled gang-bangers; the Jamaicans are the real thing.

After the planned firefight, any surviving Jamaicans will return to the warehouse to report to Ras. If the Solos fared much worse than the characters, Ras may

decide to call in reinforcements; the Referee can add up to another ten Solos to the Jamaicans, if another firefight is desirable. Reinforcements take a minimum of one hour to arrive after Ras puts out the call to arms.

If the party captures or kills all of the solos, Ras will not know that anything is wrong for about an hour. After this time he begins to get concerned; should another half hour pass without word from the Solos, Ras will assume the worst, and will order the others in his group to pack everything up and abandon the warehouse. It will take the Jamaicans about a half hour to load the cash, drugs, and munitions into their truck (the chemical drums will be left behind, as they are too heavy to move quickly). They will then leave the warehouse: Ras drives the truck, with the two Cookers and one of the cyberbikes in the back; Viva and Electra on cyberbikes, and Shiva in the BMW. They will leave the Combat Zone for a safe house located elsewhere in the City.

If the solos got the best of the first firefight, or if the characters are forced to flee from the Jamaicans, Ras

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will figure that everything is fine, and continue with business as usual. He'll assume that there is no need for reinforcements or other drastic alterations of the group's schedule.

APOCALYPSE

Referee's Note: The next two entries, Apocalypse and the Shooting Gallery, are not essential to this scenario *per se*. The characters might visit one or both of these places as a result of false leads, or on their own initiative. If they come up with a way to find useful clues here, so much the better.

Apocalypse is a rock club situated in the heart of the Combat Zone. The decor is reminiscent of a battleground, with shattered windows, charred furnishings, and barbed wire; illumination is provided by search lights that play across the black ceiling.

Apocalypse is frequented by punks, headbangers, and neuvo-anarchists; a real wild crowd. Tonight's main attraction is a band called the Living Dead, a local group of no great renown. The opening act is a punk conceptual artist named C.C. Gash.

MAP KEY: APOCALYPSE

1. **Front Door:** A pair of bouncers with spiked hair and some obvious cyber-prosthetics serve as security. These guys are big, ugly, and armed with electric prods, which they use to stun unruly customers — or individuals whom they just don't like. A cover charge of 10 eurobucks is collected at the door.

Frak and K-Rom (Bouncers)

Stats

INT 5	REF 9	TECH 6
CL 7	ATT 7	LK 6
MA 9	BODY 10	EMP 5

Cybernetics

Chemskins, Cyberoptics (Teleoptics, Low Lite™, DigiCam), Nasal Filters, Skinwatch, Techhair, Cyberarm

Skills

Athletics +5, Brawling +6, Human Perception +2, Interrogation +2, Intimidate +4, Melee +3, Persuasion & Fast Talk +2, Social +2, Streetwise +3, Taser +6

Equipment

Militech Electronics Taser, Switchblade, kevlar t-shirt

Combat Scores

Initiative: +9

Stun/Death Save: 10

Body Type Modifier: -4

Taser (#Shots 10/ROF 1/DAM Stun/Rel ST) +14

Switchblade (DAM 1D6/2+1) +12

Armor: Head 0, Torso 10, R.Arm/L.Arm/R.Leg/L.Leg 0

2. **Bar:** Three bartenders, two females and one male, are working the bar, which is very crowded. In the event of trouble, the two girls grab electric prods and join the fray. The male bartender is somewhat effete, and prefers to hide beneath the bar. The drinks served here are strong and cheap.

3. **Stage:** The Living Dead's equipment takes up most of the stage. C.C. Gash opens the show before they go on. You can tell if he's on by the sound of the crowd; if they're booing, cursing, and throwing bottles, C.C. is on.

4. **Sound Booth:** This enclosed booth is located on the wall opposite the stage. It is occupied by the soundman, a skinny punk with green hair, and his girlfriend, who does the lights. The club's sound system is controlled from here. There is also a microphone that the soundman can use to speak to the crew backstage, or whoever is onstage (through the monitors).

5. **Backstage:** A trio of roadies occupies the area immediately behind the stage. They are all quite

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drunk; having finished setting-up the band's equipment, they won't have much to do until its time to break down at the end of the night. On the west wall is the door that leads to the dressing room.

Roadies (Techies)

Stats

INT 9	REF 7	TECH 10
CL 6	ATT 5	LK 7
MA 3	BODY 5	EMP 6

Cybernetics

Light Tattoos, Skinwatch, Techhair

Skills

Awareness/Notice +3, Basic Tech +7, Brawling +1, Cyber Tech +2, Driving +3, Education & General Knowledge +1, Electronic Security +2, Electronics +6, Handgun +2, Jury Rig +3, Melee +2

Equipment

Tech Scanner, Switchblade, BudgetArms C-13 pistol

Combat Scores

Initiative: 7
 Stun/Death Save: 5
 Body Type Modifier: -2
 BudgetArms C-13 (#Shots 8/ROF 2/DAM 1D6/Rel ST) +8
 Switchblade (DAM 1D6/2) +9
 Armor: None

6. **Dressing Room:** Four heavy-set cyber-bikers (Nomads) act as security for the Living Dead. Anyone who wants to get by to see the band has to pay these guys: a \$100 bribe or the equivalent in drugs will do for male visitors, unless the bikers don't like their looks. Female visitors who are unwilling to bestow sexual favors on the bikers are told to get lost.

Cyber-Bikers (Nomads)

Stats

INT 6	REF 9	TECH 7
CL 9	ATT 4	LK 6
MA 5	BODY 12	EMP 3

Cybernetics

Grafted Muscle, Cyberarm, Neural Processor, Vehicle Link

Skills

Athletics +3, Awareness/Notice +3, Basic Tech +2, Brawling +6, Drive +4, Endurance +3, Family +2, Handgun +3, Melee +7, Motorcycle +6, Rifle +2

Equipment

Knife, Armalite 44

Combat Scores

Initiative: +9
 Stun/Death Save: 12
 Body Type Modifier: -5
 Armalite Pistol (#Shots 8/ROF 1/DAM 4D6+1/Rel ST) +12
 Knife (DAM 1D6+4) +16
 Armor: None

7. **Storage Room:** The basement of the club is used to store liquor and other supplies. The liquor is kept in a chicken wire cage, with a makeshift wooden door, which is locked (padlock).

8. **Rest Rooms:** A door on the east wall leads to the club's two rest rooms. Both are filthy, the floors flooded with water and sewage from the backed-up commodes. There's plenty of action going on in these places, including drug deals, fights, gossip, and the occasional impromptu romantic entanglement.

ACTION IN APOCALYPSE

If the characters have come here looking for the Dragon, they will be disappointed; the Dragon never comes here. The only "action" they're likely to find is a few barfights, some minor drug deals, and lots of loud music, slam-dancing, and drinking.

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INFORMATION SOURCES

Except for the rumors mentioned on pages 10-12, there's not much to be gained by talking to the majority of the people who come to Apocalypse. The club-goers are either here to dance or to find someone to take home with them. The employees are too busy working to stop and talk for more than a minute or two.

The four members of the Living Dead (a male guitarist, bassist, and drummer, and a female singer) are all very high, and are laying around the dressing room waiting to go on. They are talking about a new drug called "crystal lace," a vial of which the bass player bought on the street earlier in the day. He doesn't remember any details about the transaction: "I been high ever since, man," he says, laughing.

If there are any Rockers in the group, some members of the Living Dead may recognize them. They are too high to make much sense, but will say: "I definitely recommend the crystal lace, man."

The one person who will talk for any extended amount of time is C.C. Gash. Unfortunately, his idea of "talk" is to hurl the foulest insults that he can think of at anyone who will listen to him. He will continue to insult the characters until someone smacks him, which in fact is what he is really looking for. C.C. is not just a performance artist, he is also a masochist who enjoys being hit.

C.C. Gash

A punk "conceptual artist"; an anarchic sociopath, who hates himself, society, and everything else; C. C. Gash's "work" consists of various acts of perversion, performed onstage at some of the seediest Combat Zone clubs. He spits at the audience, urinates on stage, cuts himself with broken bottles, etc.

C.C. recalls with fondness the evening he was attacked, beaten, and left for dead in an alley ("My

finest performance," he says.). A typical C.C. Gash quote: "Reality sucks."

Stats

INT 10	REF 6	TECH 5
CL 5	ATT 4	LK 8
MA 5	BODY 6	EMP 7

Cybernetics

None

Skills

Brawling +1, Education & General Knowledge +6, Endurance +2, Human Perception +2, Oratory +5, Perform +5, Melee +3, Persuasion/Fast Talk +2, Resist Torture/Drugs +6, Streetwise +4, Wardrobe & Style +2

Equipment

Knife

Combat Scores

Initiative: +6

Stun/Death Save: 6

Body Type Modifier: -2

Knife (DAM 1D6) +9

Armor: None

THE SHOOTING GALLERY

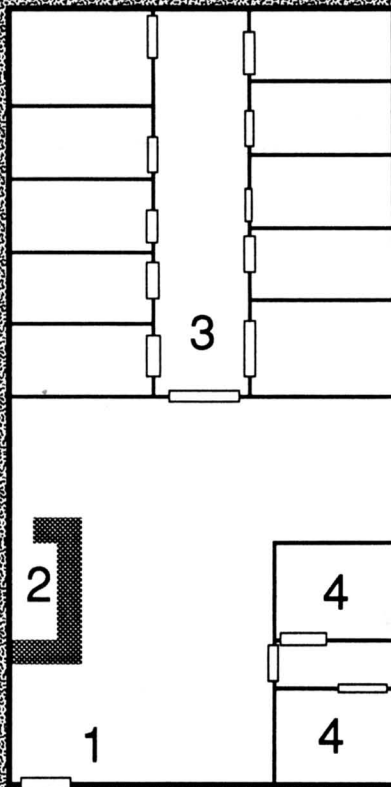
The Shooting Gallery is an abandoned building that has been converted to a club of sorts. It is not a very pleasant place; the renovations consisted primarily of gutting the building, spraying the walls and ceiling flat black, and throwing a bunch of old pillows on the floor. There are a few blacklights on the ceiling, and lots of awful day-glow graffiti on the walls.

The Shooting Gallery is frequented mainly by older (30+) drug users, who come here to score, trade "war stories", and get high. Those who can't wait until they

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The Shooting Gallery

Scale: 1 inch = 20 Feet



get home sometimes shoot-up in one of the back rooms. Judging by the low-key attitude of most of the clientele, synthetic opiates and other depressants seem to be favored over stimulants, such as Rush.

There is no live entertainment at the Shooting Gallery. Instead, canned music is played over a set of old speakers. The choice of tunes often leaves much to be desired. The manager of the club, Ace, is usually too high to remember to change the disk, so the same music plays all night long.

MAP KEY: THE SHOOTING GALLERY

1. **Front Door:** there is a very overweight bouncer named Bobb (the clients call him Blob) seated on a bar stool at the door. He usually nods out by 9:00 PM.

Bobb (aka Blob)

Stats

INT 6	REF 7	TECH 5
CL 5	ATT 5	LK 5
MA 3	BODY 10	EMP 7

Cybernetics

None

Skills

Athletics +1, Awareness/Notice +4, Brawling +5, Handgun +2, Melee +4, Wrestling +6

Equipment

Dai Lung Cybermag 15

Combat Scores

Initiative: +7

Stun/Death Save: 10

Body Type Modifier: -4

Dai Lung Pistol (#Shots 10/ROF 2/DAM 1D6+1/Rel UR) +9

Armor: None

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2. **Bar:** The manager, a middle-aged punk named Ace, tends the bar when he's not occupied with more pressing concerns, such as getting high. The drinks are cheap, and taste like it too; alcohol is not the drug of choice for most patrons of this establishment. Scattered around the bar are several dozen pillows, which the patrons lay on while regaling each other with the tales of their drug exploits — or sleeping, as is more often the case.

3. **Cubicles:** There are ten private cubicles in the back, available for rent at a cost of \$10 per hour. What you do in there is your business. A few drug deals go down here each night, mostly penny ante stuff.

4. **Rest Rooms:** Surprisingly clean, thanks to Blob, who gets around pretty well during the day. There are usually a few people passed-out in here, sometimes in rather compromising positions.

INFORMATION SOURCES

There isn't much going on in this place, a visit to which is not unlike watching a movie run in slow motion. Most of the clientele are either too high to talk, paranoid that the characters might be "the Man", or out cold. Don't even think about waking up Blob, who's out for the night.

There's a 50/50 chance (flip a coin) that Ace, the manager of this fine establishment, is "sober" enough to carry on a semi-intelligent conversation. If this is the case, the characters may expect to be enlightened as follows:

- "There's some really good synth-opium around, man. If you want, I can score some for you. \$20 Euro gets you a nice amp." ("Amp" is short for ampule.)



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- “Screw that syth-coke and stim crap, you know what I mean? Man, that stuff will kill you. Now the opiates, that’s where it’s at. You ever read Thomas DeQuincy? No? You sure?”
- “There’s this new stuff going around, called crystal something or other. Yo, Suze, what’s that stuff called? Crystal lace, yeah that’s it. Designer drug, they say. Could have some in here tomorrow if Blob will just get up off his fat ass and score. Yeah, we’ll see.”
- “Hey man, I hear some new guys are trying to cut into the Jamaicans’ territory. Some guy on 129th Street says they were selling their stuff at cost, just to bug the Jamaicans. Yeah, fat chance. I should live so long . . .”
- “Wow, man. Check out the ceiling. Look at those patterns...Wow.”

Ace

Ace is a junky from way back. He is a libertarian, who believes that all drugs should be legalized. He’s also a bit loopy, the result of a few too many chemical experiments. His reflex score is low on account of drug-fried nerves.

Stats

INT 6	REF 5	TECH 7
CL 8	ATT 5	LK 8
MA 6	BODY 7	EMP 6

Cybernetics

Techhair, several light tattoos

Skills

Accounting +1, Basic Tech +4, Brawling +1, Biology +3, Chemistry +3, First Aid +1, Jury Rig +2, Melee +1, Pharmaceuticals +6, Social +2, Streetwise +1

Equipment

Likes to carry around a glowstik, which is fun to look at. Sometimes Infrared goggles (“Groovy, man, check out the colors!”). A little doctor’s bag full of slap

patches of drugs, needles of drugs, bottles of drugs, and so forth.

Combat Scores

Initiative: +5
Stun/Death Save: 7
Body Type Modifier: -2
Armor: None

TOKYO ROSE’S BROTHEL

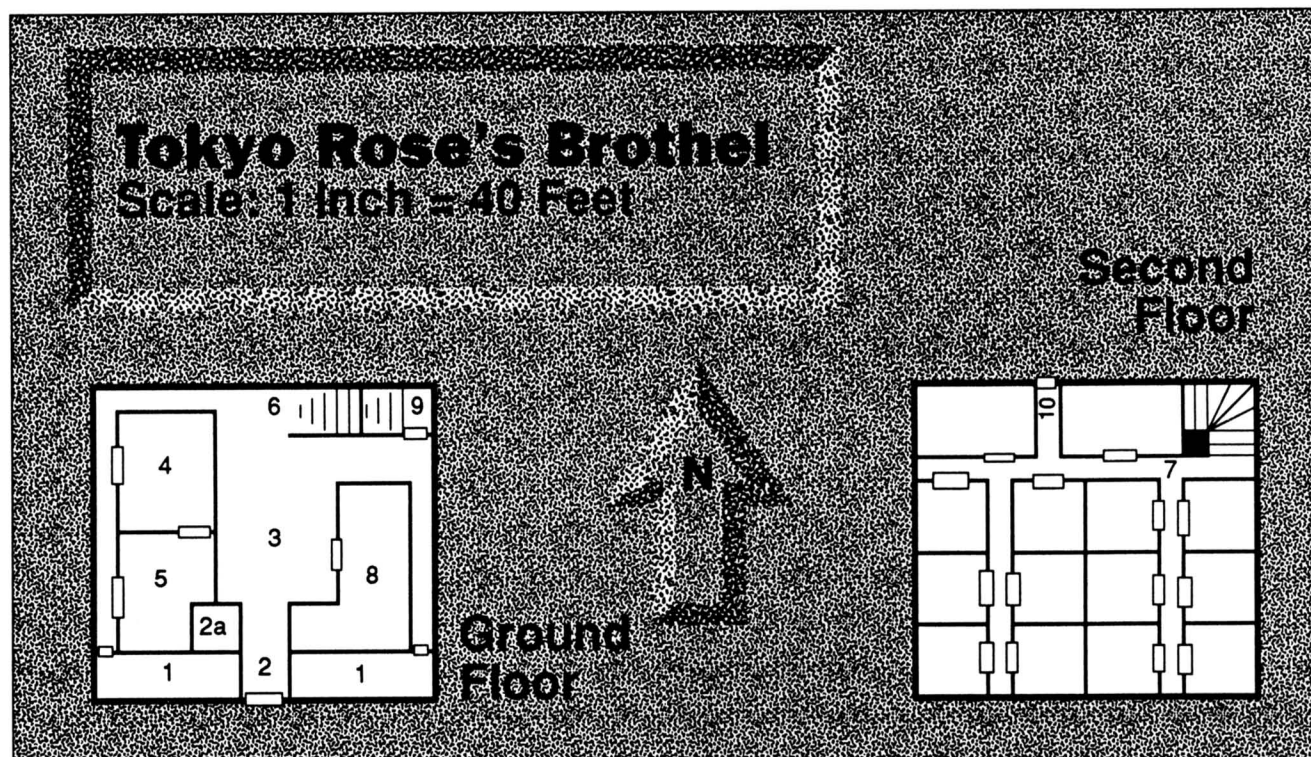
Tokyo Rose’s establishment is the most famous brothel in the Combat Zone, and perhaps the City. It is named for its owner, an oriental madame who is well known throughout the Zone. The exterior of the building features a number of large glass windows, in which are displayed some of the brothel’s most alluring attractions (male, female, and less easily defined). There are always a few odd groups of passers-by gathered around the windows, gawking at the “merchandise,” making rude comments, or worse.

The interior of Tokyo Rose’s brothel is decorated in a confusing mixture of Oriental and South Pacific motifs, with furnishings made of synthetic bamboo, beaded curtains hanging in the doorways, colored lanterns, and sliding doors in the Japanese style. Security is provided by a former Sumo wrestler whom the regulars refer to as Kato, who is always seen sitting in the main foyer, sipping a cup of sake.

VISITING TOKYO ROSE

Rose’s establishment is open 24 hours a day, and is frequented by clients from many walks of life; the location is close enough to the “safer” parts of the City to make the risk worthwhile to the most adventurous pleasure seekers. As is usual with brothels, the clientele is almost exclusively male. In fact, female

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characters who enter Tokyo Rose's may be mistaken for "working girls," possibly with embarrassing results.

There is no difficulty entailed in gaining access to Rose's brothel; all you have to do is walk right in. Rose greets all visitors in courteous fashion, and is eager to please. If the characters say that they want to speak privately with her, she will assume that the topic will be business related, and ask them to follow her — after first requesting that they leave their weapons with Kato, who locks them in in a cabinet for safe keeping.

Characters who do not comply with Rose's request will be told that they will have to leave. If they refuse, Kato attempts to escort them to the door. In the event that real trouble breaks out, Rose will sound a silent alarm by activating a touch-sensitive implant in her wrist.

In a matter of a minute or so reinforcements will arrive on the scene — three male Orientals, armed with heavy auto pistols. Rose then draws her trump card — a cybersnake, implanted in her left arm

(optionally, the Referee seeking a more graphic effect may change the location of the cybersnake as desired; the author will refrain from doing so, in the interest of good taste). Rose and her bodyguards aren't looking to cause bloodshed, but will not back down from a fight, either, in defending their establishment and its reputation.

MAP KEY: THE BROTHEL

1. **Windows:** Several of the working girls and boys of Rose's place are on display behind these large glass partitions; which by the way are bullet-proof, a concession to the local ambience. Prospective customers gather around these windows in order to choose who they would like to spend their money on. The locals call this particular activity "window shopping".

2. **Entranceway:** The doors to Tokyo Rose's are always open, night or day. They open into a small anteroom, illuminated by the soft glow of hanging lanterns. There is a coat room situated to the left

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(area 2a), attended by a rather buxom young female wearing bright blue hair, silver eye-shadow, and not much else.

3. Main Foyer: This room is furnished with padded sofas, pillows, and ornate lanterns. Kato sits off to the right, his great bulk covered for the most part by a green silk kimono with a dragon embroidered on the front (mere coincidence). There are several prospective customers seated here, waiting their turn (probably no one of interest to the characters, unless the Referee decides otherwise).

4. Rose's Office: This room is located past a short hallway that opens off of the west wall of the main foyer. It is furnished like a French boudoir, though it too shows odd touches of Oriental and South Pacific decor (beaded curtains, Chinese lanterns, etc.). There is a desk that Rose sits at when she is in here, the drawers of which contain a light autopistol (Federated Arms X-22) and a diary (Rose prefers to write in longhand). Several comfortable chairs are arrayed about the room.

5. Bedroom: This bedroom is located off an adjoining corridor on the west wall of the Office. The decor is similar to that of the Office, though even more unusual, if that is possible. Rose sometimes sleeps here when she is working late. Otherwise, the room is used only to entertain guests; Rose is a madame, and no longer turns tricks for money.

6. Stairway: An elegant staircase that leads to the second floor. It is sometimes referred to by the clientele as the "Stairway to Heaven."

7. Private Rooms: There are twelve single bedrooms on this floor, and two larger rooms used for "group activities." All are currently operating at full capacity.

8. Security: This room is located off the east wall of the Main Foyer. It is furnished to spartan tastes, with a large wooden table at the center of the room, and four reinforced chairs arranged around it. There is a linen closet on the north wall that contains back-up munitions for Rose's security staff: four heavy sub-

machineguns and several dozen clips of ammo. An array of monitor screens, built into the east wall, provides a view of what is going on in every room of the house, plus the front and rear door. Three bodyguards are stationed here.

9. Basement: Down a flight of cement steps is a large basement area used primarily for storing clean linens, maintenance gear, and various types of supplies related to the oldest profession.

10. Rear Door: Provided for those who, for whatever reason, prefer to make a discreet exit from the premises.

TALKING TO ROSE

If the characters accompany Rose to her office, she will sit at her desk, cross her legs, and ask: "In what way can we be of service to you?" Once she finds out that this is not "business," she becomes suspicious of the characters' intentions: "If you have come to rob me, I must advise you to alter your plans. I am well-protected." Any attempt at strong-arm tactics or intimidation will result in Rose calling her security people.

Rose must be assured that the party's intentions are peaceful before she will cooperate. A friendly attitude, enhanced by a bribe of \$100 or more, should do the trick. Once Rose is satisfied, she will offer the characters a drink, then answer their questions as best she can.

What Rose Knows

- **About the Dragon:** Rose claims to know the Dragon very well. Perhaps her most startling revelation: that the Dragon is a female, not a male, as most people believe. She will not say how she knows this, nor does she claim to know where the Dragon is. However, she will tell the characters that if they want more information about the Dragon, they should visit LeFez — a fence, with

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whom the Dragon has had dealings in the past. Rose will provide directions to LeFez's place, on 234th Street between 34th and 35th Avenues.

- **About I-CORP:** "The value of I-CORP stock has increased by over 500% in the last eighteen months. Let's just say that there was more involved than luck." If asked how she knows so much about corporate dealings, Rose smiles. "Our clients come from all walks of life."
- **About R. Maximillian:** "One of my best customers," she says wistfully. "But that was a long time ago. Let's just say that we don't travel in the same circles anymore." If pressed for more information, she'll say: "I run an honest business here, which is more than I can say for him." Rose will say no more on the subject, except to warn the characters: "If I were you, I'd be careful who I talk to about Maximillian. Things have a way of getting back to him, with unpleasant consequences."

It will be apparent to the characters (EASY Human Perception roll) that Rose seems to be afraid of Maximillian.

- **About the drug trade:** "I run a clean place here," says Rose sternly. "My people aren't into any of that crap."
- **About the Hood, the gangs, etc.:** Rose knows most of the usual rumors, but nothing of great interest. She's preoccupied with her own business.

Tokyo Rose

An aging prostitute (she is in her late fifties), made youthful by extensive plastic surgery and cyberprosthetics (including vibrating genitalia, if the rumors are correct). She once worked uptown, but was forced out of business following a scandal involving an unnamed individual of high status; some say that she passed insider information to R. Maximillian, and got caught. She still has connections with the corporations.

Stats

INT 8	REF 9	TECH 4
CL 9	ATT 7	LK 5
MA 7	BODY 5	EMP 6

Cybernetics

The cyberware taste permits us to mention are her cybernetic left arm (with RealSkinn™), in which there is a Cybersnake; Cyberaudio (enhanced hearing range, micro-recording link), a basic neuralware processor and tactile boost.

Skills

Accounting +4, Awareness/Notice +3, Dance +5, Handgun +3, Human Perception +5, Judo +5, Melee +5, Perform +5, Personal Grooming +6, Persuasion & Fast Talk +4, Seduction +6, Social +4, Stock Market +3, Streetwise +4, Wardrobe & Style +6

Equipment

Apart from her cybersnake, Rose does not carry weapons. Remember that she has a pistol in her office desk drawer, however.

Combat Scores

Initiative: +9
Stun/Death Save: 5
Body Type Modifier: -2
Federated Arms X-22 Pistol (#Shots 10/ROF 2/DAM 1D6+1/Rel ST) +12
Cybersnake (DAM 1D6) +14
Judo: +14
Armor: None

Kato

"Kato" (not his real name) has worked as a bouncer at Tokyo Rose's for the better part of three years. He was once an aspiring sumo champion until he became involved in a drug deal of some sort; Kato declines to discuss the details of his past, and is in fact most emphatic about the subject.

Kato is an absolutely massive man, standing over 6' 4" in height and weighing in excess of 400 pounds. Like all sumo wrestlers, he is surprisingly quick for his size; while he's not much of a runner, Kato's

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reflexes are extremely sharp. If called upon to remove a client who cannot behave himself, Kato will use his tremendous bulk to force the unwanted guest out the door. If attacked, he will respond in kind, body-slaming the luckless victim or hurling him out the door. Otherwise, he prefers to use his physical presence to intimidate, rather than to cause bodily harm.

Stats

INT 6	REF 10	TECH 4
CL 9	ATT 4	LK 6
MA 7	BODY 14	EMP 6

Cybernetics

Muscle Graft, Muscle & Bone Lace

Skills

Athletics +5, Awareness/Notice +5, Combat Sense +5, Fencing +4, Handgun +3, Human Perception +5, Intimidate +8, Streetwise +5, Strength Feat +3, Wrestling +8

Equipment

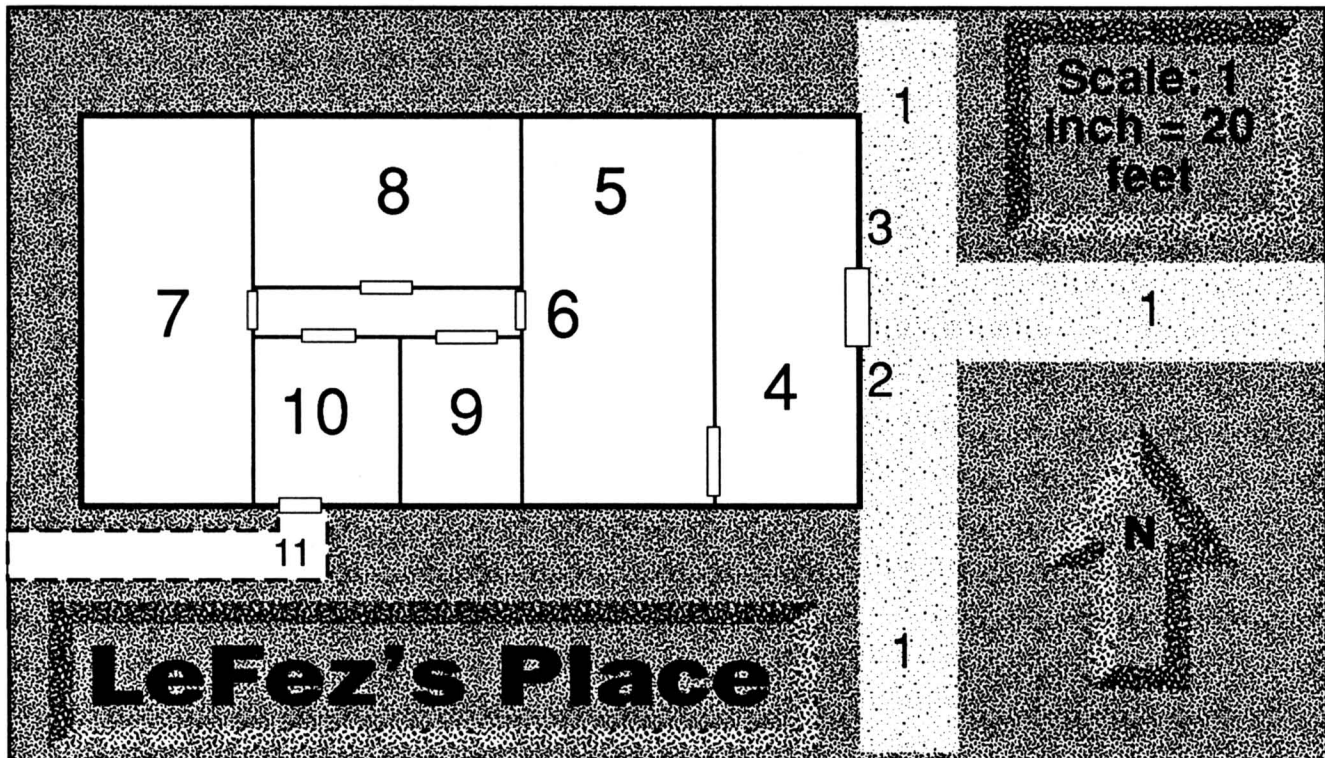
For real emergencies, Kato uses a monokatana stored in the same cabinet where the characters' weapons will be placed.

Combat Scores

Initiative: +15
 Stun/Death Save: 14
 Body Type Modifier: -5
 Wrestling: +18
 Monokatana (DAM 4D6+8) +14
 Armor: None

Security Guards

These three thugs are nowhere near as big as Kato, but are a lot more ornery. Unlike Kato, who shuns physical violence except as a last resort, they are prepared to use lethal force. Rose's place has suffered a number of attempted robberies in the past, and



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these guys are the reason that no previous attempt has ever resulted in success.

Stats

INT 5	REF 9	TECH 5
CL 6	ATT 6	LK 5
MA 7	BODY 8	EMP 4

Cybernetics

Cyberoptics (Low Lite™, Targeting), Kerenzikov boosterware (+1), Neural Processor, Smartgun Link

Skills

Athletics +4, Awareness/Notice +2, Combat Sense +3, Handgun +3, Interrogation +3, Intimidate +5, Judo +4, Melee +4, Streetwise +3, Sub-machine gun +9

Equipment

Ingram MAC 14 sub-machine gun, monoknife, medium armor jacket, kevlar vest, flack pants, nylon helmet

Combat Scores

Initiative: +10

Stun/Death Save: 8

Body Type Modifier: -3

Ingram SMG (#Shots 20/ROF 10/DAM 4D6/Rel ST) +14

Monoknife (DAM 2D6+1) +14

Armor: Head 20, Torso 28, R.Arm/L.Arm 18, R.Leg/L.Leg 20

ENCOUNTER WITH THE JAMAICAN SOLOS

This is a planned encounter with the Solos who work for Ras, leader of the Jamaicans. It should occur after the characters leave Tokyo Rose's brothel, unless conditions persuade the Referee otherwise. Only the six Jamaican Solos will be encountered; Ras, his

Fixers, his Cookers, and the Techie remain at their base of operations.

The details of this encounter are up to the Referee to determine. The Jamaicans could be traveling on the group's three cyberbikes (riding two per bike), or on foot. They will follow the party for a time before striking, possibly arousing the characters' suspicions.

The Jamaican solos will attempt to ambush the characters when they least expect it, and are most vulnerable; possibly, just as they are about to enter the alley that leads to LeFez's place (there are several dumpsters in the alleys, which could provide concealment and cover for the attackers and/or the intended victims).

Remember that your players have been ambushed once before, for good effect. They'll be a lot more wary now. Give them a chance for spotting trouble and maybe setting up cover situations.

All in all, the ambush should not be so well-planned that the characters don't have a chance to survive, or so poorly planned that the Jamaicans come off looking like amateurs.

The Solos shoot to kill. They have no interest in taking prisoners, and will shoot anyone who surrenders. If any of them are taken prisoner, they refuse to talk. The Solos are far more afraid of Ras and his associates than the characters; among his many "talents," Ras dabbles in voodoo, and the Solos are very superstitious.

The Jamaican Solos

The game statistics of the solos were provided earlier (see p. 33).

THE FENCE

LeFez is a fence who is well-connected in the black market. He operates from the basement of an abandoned building, the entrance to which is located at a juncture of three narrow alleys.

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He is short, pudgy, and pale-skinned, with oily brown hair, drooping eyelids, and bad teeth; some may notice that he bears a passing resemblance to the old film actor, Peter Lorre. His usual attire consists of a synthetic silk smoking jacket, an outdated suit of synthetic sharkskin, pointy-toed shoes (polished to a bright sheen) a gold earring in the shape of a pepper, and a red fez with a yellow tassel (his trademark). Everywhere LeFez goes, he leaves the smell of cheap cologne in his wake.

Shifty and unscrupulous by nature, LeFez will do anything for money. He boasts that through his connections, he can obtain anything: LeFez always refers to himself by his first name, and calls everyone else "my friend." Ironically, LeFez has no friends, only customers.

MAP KEY: LEFEZ'S PLACE

1. **Alleys:** These three alleys meet in front of the door to LeFez's place. There are always a few homeless

people in the vicinity, scrounging about for scraps of food in the half-dozen dumpsters that are here. Rip-off artists sometimes hang around here in the hope of making a quick score; if the characters are not careful, they could be targets of these sneak-thieves.

2. **Door:** This door is made of two-inch thick hardened steel, and is almost impossible to break down. A callbox is located on the wall to the right of the door.

3. **Security Camera:** Built into the wall, about six feet above the door. It is electrified to discourage the local rip-off artists. Only the area directly in front of the door (10 foot radius) is under surveillance; LeFez is too cheap to install a more sophisticated system.

4. **Customers' Room:** This is as far as visitors ever get when coming to see LeFez. The far wall is made of heavy, transparent polymer compound, and is bullet-proof. Sliding sections allow for the exchange of goods and cash, and also serve as gunports for Montalvo, if needed.

5. **LeFez's Office:** There is a chair and footstool here for Montalvo, and a padded chair and desk for LeFez.

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The button that unlocks the door is located on the wall next to Montalvo. On top of the desk is a computer that contains records of all LeFez's numerous transactions, contacts, etc. (this information could be very valuable to certain people). An access code is required to gain entrance to these files (various programs might decode it, given enough time).

LeFez's computer is *not* linked into the net. The only way to gain access is at the computer itself in this office.

6. **Door:** Another steel reinforced door. This one opens into a short hallway that leads to the back rooms.

7. **Storeroom:** Yet another steel door bars the way into this room. Inside is a vast collection of stolen goods: cyberware, weapons, ammunition, computers, etc. On the left-hand wall is a safe where LeFez keeps cash and other valuables. At present, there is \$80,000 in cash and another \$15,000 in stolen jewelry on hand.

8. **LeFez's Living Quarters:** This room is furnished with a bed, couch, lamps, wardrobe, and a bookshelf. There is a brass incense censer on a dressing table, and a box of patchoulli incense. LeFez keeps cartons of expensive silk-cut cigarettes and boxes of candy on the shelf, along with several dozen well-worn equipment manuals that list prices for a wide variety of goods. The wardrobe contains a selection of cheap suits and imported shoes, and reeks of LeFez's cologne.

9. **Montalvo's Quarters:** This room is furnished with an oversized bed, a dresser, and a chair. Montalvo keeps a heavy autopistol and 50 rounds of ammo in the dresser, along with his clothes. There is a cheap holo-vid projector and some porn-vids in the bottom drawer.

10. **Kitchen:** This room is furnished with a table, sink, two chairs, cabinets and shelves containing canned goods, a stove, and a refrigerator. The place is filthy, and the sink is filled with dirty dishes.

11. **Hidden Door:** This steel door is located behind a false wall located in one of the kitchen cabinets. It leads to an underground passageway that exits into an alley about three blocks away.

VISITING LEFEZ

If the characters decide to look up LeFez, they will have to locate his place of business. This should not be difficult, as almost everyone in the Combat Zone knows who LeFez is and where he can be found. LeFez's home and work place are one and the same; he rarely leaves for fear of being robbed.

There is only one way to gain access to LeFez's place, and that is through the alley. The steel reinforced door is always locked; to get in, one must ring on the call box located to the left of the door. There will be a delay of a minute or two before the characters will hear a response: the voice is metallic-sounding and hard-edged, and emanates from a small speaker built into the call box:

"Selling or buying?"

This is the voice of Montalvo, LeFez's cyborg bodyguard. He will not let anyone in unless they have something to sell or buy — fortunately for the characters, LeFez will also sell information, not just stolen goods.

As long as the characters have money to spend, Montalvo will let them in. A buzzing noise will be heard from the call box, signifying that the door can be opened.

Inside the door is an unfurnished room that smells of stale air and urine — some of LeFez's cutomers are lacking in manners. The far wall of this room is made of transparent polymer compound, three-inches thick and completely bulletproof. There are several slots built into the glass, each of which has a sliding polymer partition. Some of these slots are large enough to pass items back and forth; others look like gun ports.

Chasing the Dragon

An immense, dark-skinned man sits in a chair behind the partition, his feet propped-up on a stool. He is obviously a cyborg, equipped with a linear frame and extensive body plating. This is Montalvo, LeFez's bodyguard.

Behind him, LeFez sits at his desk, reviewing his ledgers on a computer screen. He smokes expensive silk-cut cigarettes, but otherwise exudes an especially cheap and tacky mien. At the sight of prospective customers, LeFez's eyes light up, and he launches into his introductory spiel.

"Ah, my friend, do you wish to purchase something? You arrive at a most auspicious moment. Just this morning LeFez received a shipment of twelve new MRAM chips; all very clean, all very hot. No one but LeFez has merchandise such as this, my friend!"

TALKING TO LEFEZ

LeFez will sell almost anything to anybody, with no questions asked (the one exception: LeFez no longer deals in drugs, a practice that he considers to be too risky). He will sell such information as he knows about the Dragon, or anyone else for that matter; he is fairly knowledgeable about the gangs and drug dealers, but doesn't get out to the clubs, and so knows nothing of these places.

LeFez will ask for a minimum of \$100 for any piece of information, or as much as \$500, if the characters appear to be desperate (the cooler the characters stay, the less LeFez tries to haggle). Should the characters complain that they are getting ripped off, LeFez merely replies:

"Ah, my friend, what can I say? We live in a capitalist society; wealth is the key to power in our system. LeFez is merely part of the system. Some day, when I have acquired a surplus of money, I will be able to afford to move off-world, and live in luxury. Until then, LeFez must make do with things as they are. Now, my friend, do we have a deal or not?"

Information possessed by LeFez:

- If the party asks LeFez whether he has fenced anything from the Dragon recently, he will reply: "Ah, my friends, LeFez does not deal in drugs. I am afraid that I cannot help you." The implication here should be obvious: according to LeFez, the Dragon deals in drugs.
- If asked why he doesn't deal in drugs, LeFez explains that he wants nothing to do with the Jamaicans, who control the drug trade in the Combat Zone. "A very dirty business, my friends. Not LeFez's style."
- If the characters ask who the Dragon might go to in order to sell drugs, LeFez will try to get them to pay for this information as well. He is quite patient, and knows that he has the upper hand in negotiations of this sort. When the party meets his price, LeFez will then reply:

"For this information you must go to see the Doctor, who is now the Dragon's buyer." He will give the characters directions to the Doctor's office, for which he will only charge \$50 — "as a favor to you, my friends."

The characters can also get this information on the street, though they will probably have to pay for it there, too.

- About the Fixer, Rico: "Ah, Rico! A good man, my friends. Rico will not steer you wrong."

LeFez

LeFez used to be a drug dealer, but has since "cleaned-up his act" — he now deals only in stolen merchandise. His droopy eyelids and bulging eyes give him an odd, "fish-eyed" look. He exudes a combination of odors: sen-sen (a type of breath freshener), cigarette smoke, cologne, and incense.

Stats

INT 9	REF 4	TECH 8
CL 7	ATT 4	LK 6

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MA 5

BODY 5

EMP 5

Cybernetics

None

Skills

Accounting +3, Awareness/Notice +5, Electronic Security +2, Electronics +2, Forgery +4, Handgun +2, Hide/Evade +3, Human Perception +4, Melee +2, Persuasion & Fast Talk +9, Pharmaceuticals +2, Programming +2, Streetdeal +7, Streetwise +3, Wardrobe & Style +1

Equipment

Switchblade

Combat Scores

Initiative: +4

Stun/Death Save: 5

Body Type Modifier: -2

Switchblade (DAM 1D6/2): +6

Armor: None

Montalvo

Montalvo was once a corporate cop until he came out on the losing end of a firefight with a gang of local drug dealers. He is now a cyborg who suffers from an intermittent case of cyberpsychosis. He has numerous cybernetic modifications, mainly personal weaponry and other items useful to his chosen trade. Montalvo goes into a berserk rage in any combat situation, firing until he has emptied his heavy submachinegun, then howling like a wolf.

Stats

INT 4

REF 8

TECH 5

CL 6

ATT 4

LK 6

MA 7

BODY 12

EMP 1

Cybernetics

Cowl, Cyberarms (both; left: hydraulic rams, Superchrome®, micro-missile launcher, armor; right: spike hand, Superchrome®, armor), Cyberleg (right; equipped with armor, hidden holster), Linear Frame (Beta), Muscle & Bone Lace, Neural Processor, Smartgun Link, Torso Plate

Skills

Authority +4, Awareness/Notice +3, Brawling +6, Electronic Security +2, Endurance +3, Handgun +8, Intimidate +6, Melee +6, Resist Torture/Drugs +4, Strength Feat +4, Sub-machine gun +7

Equipment

H&K MPK-11 sub-machine gun (smartlinked), Colt AMT 2000 (in cyberleg holster, smartlinked), light armor jacket, monoknife

Combat Scores

Initiative: +8

Stun/Death Save: 12

Body Type Modifier: -5

H&K SMG (#Shots 30/ROF 20/DAM 4D6/Rel ST) +17

Colt Pistol (#Shots 8/ROF 1/DAM 4D6+1/Rel VR) +18

Monoknife (DAM 2D6 +10): +15

Armor: Head 25, Torso 39, R.Arm/L.Arm 34, R.Leg/L.Leg 20

GOODBYE, RICO

En route to the Doctor's Office, the characters will be approached by a young girl from the neighborhood. She is barely six years old, yet has the look of one who is much older. She hands the characters an envelope and says: "A man in a suit asked me to give you this." She knows nothing more about the transaction except that the man was white, and arrived in a chauffeur-driven limousine.

The envelope is light, and seems to contain a few small items of some sort. If it is opened, the characters find a note and four yellowish human teeth, each inlaid with tiny diamond chips in the shape of letters. The letters are R, I, C, O. The note simply says:

"Rico's contract cancelled. You're next, unless the attache case is delivered to Nanotek by midnight tonight."

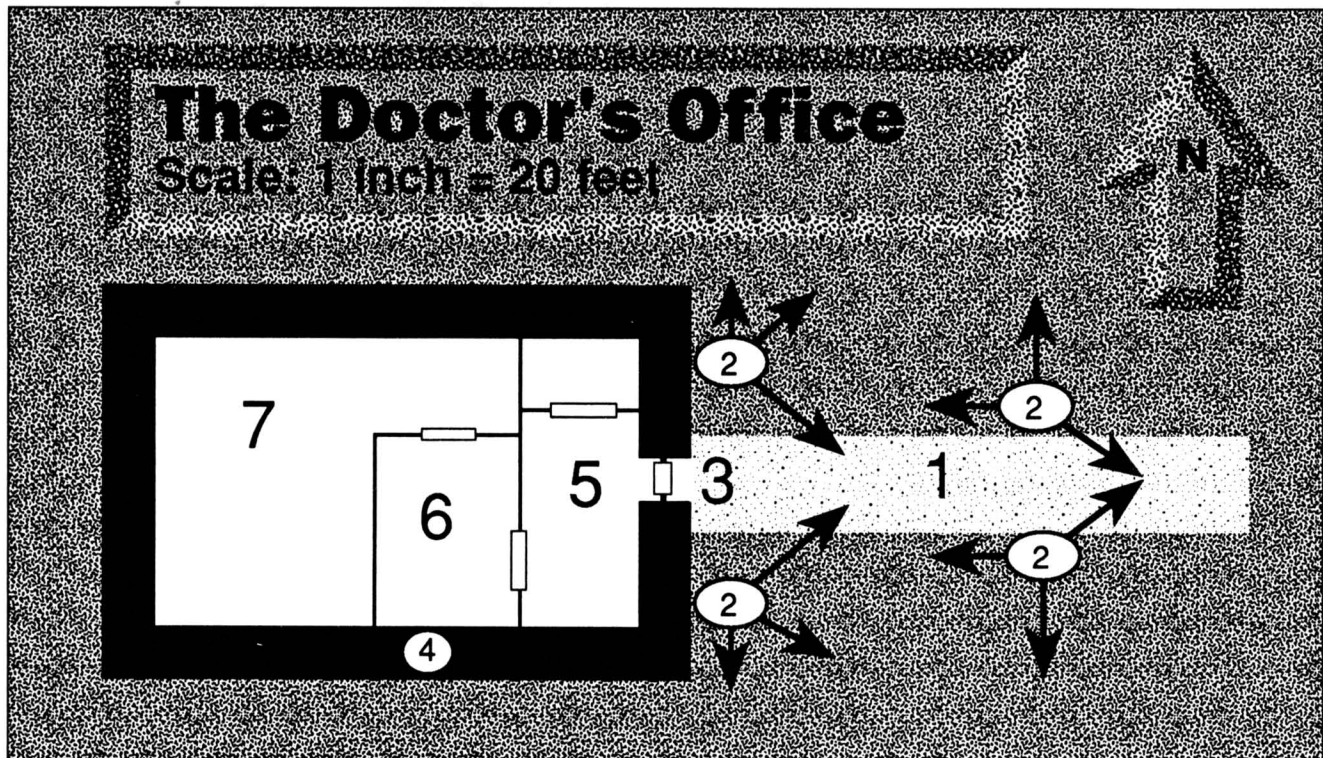
Chasing the Dragon

THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE

The Doctor is a weird character who lives in the cellar of an abandoned building, which he has converted into a bunker. The bunker is accessible from street level via a flight of stairs, the entrance to which can be found at the end of a long and narrow alley. Hidden surveillance cameras afford a clear view of the entranceway from several angles; the Doctor is somewhat paranoid by nature, and doesn't believe in taking chances.

MAP KEY: THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE

1. **Alley:** This long, narrow alley is free of all obstructions, giving the Doctor a clear view of the surroundings.
2. **Surveillance Cameras:** There are no less than eight micro-cams trained on the alley: ground level, rooftops, overhead view of the entranceway, etc. The Doc likes to know what's going on outside of his office, and hates surprises.
3. **Bunker Door:** This door is made of three-inch solid steel, and is equipped with three narrow gun-slots, allowing the Doctor to take pot-shots at unwanted guests. Above the door is an old neon sign with iron bars criss-crossed over its face, which proclaims: The Doctor is In.



Chasing the Dragon

4. **Bunker Exterior:** The walls of the bunker are made of reinforced concrete, and are lined with lead plating. The Doctor doesn't believe in taking chances.

5. **Waiting Room:** This room looks like the standard — albeit dirty — Doctor's waiting room, complete with tacky vinyl upholstered sofas, end tables, and a selection of old screamsheets. The hundred-odd bullet holes that perforate the walls and furnishings are the exception, as is the steel door that separates this room from the Office, and the two micro-cams used to keep visitors under surveillance. There's a bathroom located through a wooden door on the east wall, which is also pock-marked with bullet holes. In case anyone asks, the toilet paper dispenser is empty.

6. **The Doctor's Office:** The interior of this room looks like a standard Doctor's office, with a few notable exceptions. Mounted on the wall is a glass display case that holds a large collection of firearms, including a Sternmeyer heavy sub-machine gun, a pair of old Kalishnikov AK-47 assault rifles, and even an old bazooka. Empty shell casings litter the floor, and an antique German luger sits on the desk. One wall of the room is devoted to monitor screens, each showing a different view of the alley, the waiting room, the office, the operating room, and even the commode.

7. **Operating Room:** This room is cluttered with medical equipment, much of it woefully outdated, in disrepair, or both. Included is an operating table, X-ray machine (unshielded), tanks of anaesthetic gas, stainless steel cabinets displaying scalpels, syringes, ampules containing various drugs, etc. The place is filthy: aside from the usual bullet holes in the walls and ceiling, there are dried blood stains and empty shell casings on the floor.

VISITING THE DOCTOR

At the front door to the Doctor's office the characters will be greeted by an unusual sight: the business end of a somewhat outdated heavy assault rifle, sticking

through a gun slot in the steel door and pointed directly at them. The voice of an old man, speaking slowly with a trace of a drawl, can be heard from behind the door:

"Take another step closer, and you'll be wearing a set of armor piercing buttons on those fancy duds."

The characters will have to identify themselves and explain who sent them before the Doctor will agree to let them in. He'll also want to know who they're working for (specifically, the name of the Fixer who hired them). When this information has been imparted to the Doctor's satisfaction, the characters will hear the sound of several locks and dead-bolts being undone, and the door will open.

Says the Doctor: "Well then, get inside, and be quick about it."

Standing inside the door is the Doctor: an old man in his late seventies, with thinning grey hair and cadaverous features. He is very thin, and slightly hunched over. There is a strange look in his eyes, which the characters may recognize as the glassy-eyed stare of an opiate addict. He wears rubber surgical gloves and a doctor's lab coat flecked with drops of dried blood. Otherwise, he is impeccably clean and neat-looking.

If any of the characters are wounded, the Doctor will offer to take them into his operating room. Otherwise, the characters will be ushered through the waiting room into the Doctor's office. Before talking to them or performing any surgery, he says: "First off, there is the matter of my fee. Let's see...standard office visit, \$100. That's fer each of you, by the way. I don't give group discounts." Double or triple this amount if any surgery is to be performed.

Once he has been paid, the Doctor will settle down to business. While talking to the characters, the Doctor will casually roll-up his sleeve and inject himself with a "Bones McCoy" air-syringe. "Purely for medicinal purposes, you understand," he says, a look of euphoria washing over his sunken features. "Nice."

Chasing the Dragon

The Doctor has a great deal of information that may be of importance to the characters. Among his revelations:

- The stolen attache case: The Doctor reaches into his desk and brings forth a battered metal attache case. "This what yer looking for?"

He explains that the Dragon sold the contents of the case to him for cash. "Tough sun of a gun to open, too. Had to use old faithful here to bust the lock." He pats his trusty assault rifle. "Quite a bonanza inside of that case. Crystal lace, a hopped-up designer variant. Never touch the stuff myself; strictly for squares. Worth about 250 million — street value, that is. Most I could give her for it was two hundred grand."

If the characters demand that the Doctor return the contents of the case, he laughs and replies: "Too late for that. The stuff's long gone; my uptown connections don't waste any time. I've got a little synthetic opium on hand, if you're desperate." He offers them an ampule and says wistfully: "You can't get the real stuff anymore, you know."

The Doctor says that he hasn't been paid yet for his part of the deal ("The check is in the mail, so to speak"), and has little of value in his office ("Look around and see for yourself, if yer so inclined").

If the characters threaten to get violent, the Doctor stays cool. "So you got burnt. So what? There's worse things that can happen — and will, if you don't take my advice."

DOCTOR'S ADVICE

- I-CORP is involved in the drug trade as a means of raising the capital that it uses to acquire other corporations. Their interference in the Combat Zone has angered the Jamaicans, who previously controlled all drug traffic in the Zone. The Jamaicans want both the characters and the Dragon.



Chasing the Dragon

- The fixer, Rico, is dead; killed by a corporate assassin under the employ of I-CORP. The implication: R. Maximillian has decided to close this deal, and is covering his tracks. The characters are next.
- The Dragon is now a revolutionary, who is helping the Sisters drive the drug dealers out of the Hood by selling contraband for cash and weapons. The Doctor himself claims to be a "neutral party", offering his services to the highest bidder.
- The Doctor informs the characters that they've gotten themselves in the middle of a war between the Dragon, the Jamaicans, and I-CORP. The Doctor's advice: "Better figure out whose side yer on, and fast."

If the characters decide to go with the Dragon, the Doctor will tell them where she is: at Ore's place, in the Hood. Otherwise, he bids them goodbye:

"So long, suckers."

The Doctor

Word on the street has it that the Doctor (nobody knows his real name) once had an extremely lucrative practice, specializing in cybernetic modifications and advanced plastic surgical techniques for the super-rich. It's said that he was forced to abandon his practice after a botched operation involving an unnamed VIP; possibly an executive of a major megacorporation. He's kept a low profile ever since, and is rumored to be wanted by the authorities in several locales.

The Doctor now deals in stolen contraband: mainly drugs and cybernetics of all types, which he purchases through black market connections. He still performs surgical operations, though it is said that his work is sometimes less than reliable; he is a junky, addicted to an out-dated form of synthetic heroin ("You can't get the real stuff anymore," he laments). The Doctor insists upon payment in advance, but will accept most types of opiates in lieu of cash.

The Doctor has performed surgery on many of the solos and gang members who frequent the Zone. He is notably unparticular with regard to the type of work that he will consent to take, and is not noticeably affected by the Hippocratic Oath.

Stats

INT 9	REF 7	•	TECH 10
CL 7	ATT 5		LK 5
MA 4	BODY 4		EMP 6

Cybernetics

None

Skills

Awareness/Notice +4, Basic Tech +1, Chemistry +5, Cryotank Operation +2, Diagnose +3, Education +3, Human Perception +3, Library Search +2, Medical Tech +6, Persuasion & Fast Talk +2, Pharmaceuticals +10, Rifle +7, Streetwise +5, Zoology +1

Equipment

AK-47 assault rifle, 2 airhypos (one filled with synthetic heroin, for the doctor himself; the other filled with a soporific drug, to sedate rowdy patients), kevlar vest

Combat Scores

Initiative: +7

Stun/Death Save: 4

Body Type Modifier: -1

AK-47 Rifle (#Shots 30/ROF 20/DAM 5D6/Rel VR)
+14

Armor: Torso 10, other areas 0

Chasing the Dragon

SECOND ENCOUNTER: THE DRAGON

If the party returns to the Hood after seeing the Doctor, they will be met by a group of twelve Sisters, all heavily armed. They are expecting trouble, and are under orders to lead the characters to Oreo's place. Six of the Sisters will drive the characters to Oreo's home — a tenement on 232nd Street, between 36th and 37th Avenues.

As the party is about to depart, they will be attacked by members of the Klash, who try to take them out in a large scale drive-by shooting. The Klash have heard about what's going on in the streets, and have decided that the characters are the ones who are supplying materials and cash to their rivals, the Sisters.

Stats for the Klash gunners are approximately as per the first Drive-by shooting, on page 16. The Referee should make this group as large as it needs to be to make the battle interesting, not overwhelming. The Klash are really not equipped to handle the Sisters and the party, and should be defeated or driven off without a great deal of difficulty.

When the party finally does arrive at Oreo's place, they find that the tenement looks like an armed camp. Oreo welcomes them, and introduces them to a slender Asian female named Naomi Sai. This is the Dragon.

The characters will find that Naomi is a bright young woman with a cause: With the help of the Sisters, she intends to get the drug dealers out of the Hood. She'll tell them that the drugs have been sold to a dealer who operates uptown, far away from the Hood. The drugs were sold for cash, which has been used to purchase munitions and equipment for the Sisters.

Naomi will apologize to the characters, knowing that her actions have placed them in jeopardy. She offers

to discuss the matter, in the hope of arriving at a solution that will be acceptable to all concerned parties.

If the characters lose their cool and get violent, a firefight surely ensues. There are at least twenty heavily armed Sisters on the premises, along with Naomi herself. If they remain calm, turn to the Wrap-Up section to see possible ways to resolve the adventure.

Naomi Sai, the Dragon

Stats

INT 8	REF 10	TECH 8
CL 9	ATT 9	LK 8
MA 8	BODY 10	EMP 6

Cybernetics

Cyberoptic (targeting, Lo-Lite™, Infrared), Enhanced Antibodies, Muscle & Bone Lace, Neural Processor, Skinweave, Smartgun Link, Speedware, Toxin Binders

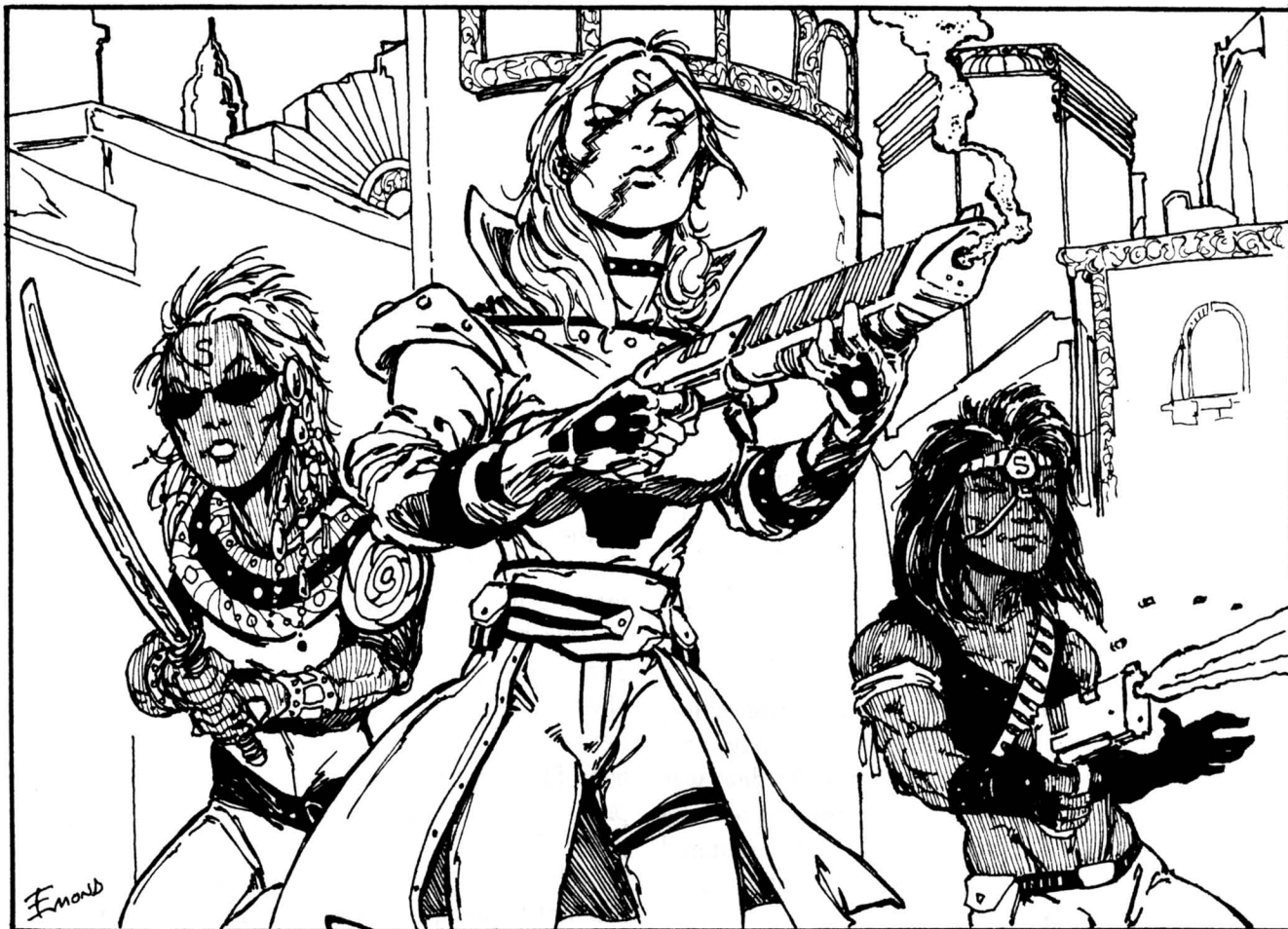
Skills

Aikido +6, Athletics +6, Awareness/Notice +6, Basic Tech +6, Combat Sense +10, Demolitions +7, Disguise +3, Driving +4, Fencing +7, Handgun +5, Human Perception +4, Leadership +4, Melee +3, Pharmaceuticals +2, Rifle +10, Shadow/Track +5, Stealth +8, Streetwise +6, Sub-machine gun +4, Swimming +3, Wardrobe & Style +4, Weapons Tech +5

Equipment

Militech Ronin light assault rifle (smartlinked, clip (plus 2 extras) with alternating standard and armor-piercing rounds), Kendachi "Mono-Two" katana (see *ChromeBook*™; its reliability is VR), six grenades (2 x fragmentation; 1 each: stun, dazzle, sleep gas, incendiary), nylon helmet, light armor jacket, heavy leather pants. This is what the Dragon routinely carries on a mission; for a special operation, she can get just about any imaginable equipment she might need.

Chasing the Dragon



Combat Scores

Initiative: +23*

Stun/Death Save: 10

Body Type Modifier: -4

Militech Ronin Rifle (#Shots 35/ROF 30/DAM 5D6/
Rel VR) +24

Monokatana (DAM 4D6+3) +18

Aikido +16

Armor: Head 32, Torso/R.Arm/L.Arm 26, R.Leg/L.Leg

16

Chasing the Dragon

There are any number of possible conclusions to this scenario, based on what the party decides to do and who they choose to align themselves with (if anyone). Assuming they've followed the clues to the Dragon, here is a brief summary of the various situations that exist at this point, and possible resolutions.

THE DRAGON

Naomi Sai's (alias the Dragon) objective is to drive the drug dealers out of the Hood. The Sisters support her goal, and are willing to back her up all the way, regardless of what it takes. Naomi makes no apologies for her methods: she doesn't think there's anything wrong with robbing drug dealers, even those with executive connections, such as R. Maximillian.

If the characters complain about losing the money promised them by Rico, Naomi will offer to pay them twice their fee (she knows how much the deal was worth through her connections) to compensate them for their trouble. If the party simply wants to cut and run, the Sisters will offer to escort them safely out of the Hood.

If the characters express concern about retaliation from I-CORP and R. Maximillian, Naomi informs them that it's too late to do anything about that now. Because the party already botched this job, Maximillian will have them killed, regardless of what they do or say. That's the way Maximillian works.

However, there is a trump card that they can play to keep Maximillian at bay: I-CORP's connections with the Asian drug cartel (*Note: If the players have al-*

ready broken into Nanotek Industries, they may have discovered these facts for themselves). Naomi will tell them that Maximillian was born and raised in the Hood, a fact that he has taken great pains to conceal (he's ashamed of his "common" background). She'll also tell them that Maximillian covets his privacy, and his carefully constructed image as a "reputable businessman," more than the money that he lost. All the party needs to do is threaten to expose Maximillian's background and drug connections, and he'll call off his corporate assassins. The threat can be delivered electronically, or through an intermediary such as Edvard Kurvasier (see I-CORP and R. Maximillian, in the following text).

If the party is sympathetic to the Dragon's goal, Naomi will offer to hire them to help drive the Jamaicans out of the Hood. She and the Sisters plan to do this by force, mounting an all-out raid on the Jamaicans' headquarters (see pg. 29). Naomi can offer the characters plenty for their services; through her connections she knows that the Jamaicans have over \$2.25 million in cash and valuables on the premises, and might be willing to split it with the party. If the characters see no other way out of their troubles with I-CORP, this money could be used to attempt to placate R. Maximillian (see below).

If the characters agree to take part in the raid, the scenario climaxes in a big firefight. Thanks to the Dragon, the Sisters have the resources necessary to pull off such a job: electronic surveillance gear, two armored vehicles, and enough heavy weapons and ammo to outfit twenty Sisters. An additional 6-10 Sisters can be brought in to help as lookouts, drivers, etc. The job should be carefully planned, and can be played as a separate scenario.

WRAP-UP

Chasing the Dragon

I-CORP AND R. MAXIMILLIAN

As things currently stand, Maximillian is furious at the loss of the attache case and its contents. Yet despite its high street value, the actual value of the stolen drugs represents no great sum of money. Maximillian is more concerned that, as a result of this fiasco, his involvement with the Asian drug cartel might be made public, as will his background. In the first instance, this would cause a scandal that would effectively negate vast sums of money that he has spent attempting to create the image that he is a reputable businessman. The Media would have a field day with a story of this sort, and would hound him relentlessly. In the second case, the "bluebloods" whom Maximillian now prefers to associate with would regard him as a "commoner," or even worse, a petty thief. Naomi is certain that Maximillian would do anything to avoid such an outcome.

If the attache case is not delivered to Edvard Kurvasier by the deadline, Maximillian will order that a team of I-CORP's corporate assassins be sent after the characters. Even if the case is returned, he'll still arrange to have the characters killed as soon as possible, in order to cover the Asian cartel connection. Either way, the party can expect to be hunted down wherever they go; figure that one team of assassins will be assigned to hit the party each week of game time until the job is done. Each of these teams will be progressively tougher to defeat, better equipped, etc. Maximillian has the resources to keep this up indefinitely, until he gets what he wants.

The only way to avoid this situation is to threaten to expose R. Maximillian as a drug dealer, thereby causing a scandal that would ruin Maximillian's carefully fabricated image. A threat of this sort can be delivered through Edvard Kurvasier, or through the Dragon and her connections. Once Maximillian gets wind of this, he will call off the assassins. He'll also

find some way to let the characters know that should they ever talk, the deal is off. The characters will be safe, but will also find that they have made a very powerful enemy.

Characters of a more Machiavellian bent may attempt to blackmail Maximillian, threatening to reveal his involvement in the drug cartels unless he pays them a sizeable sum – say, a couple of million dollars. This could be successful once, but no more; if the characters push too hard, they'll force Maximillian's hand, and he'll come down on them with everything he's got. Not a pretty picture, to say the least...

THE JAMAICANS

Although they don't know it yet, the Jamaicans are caught in between two powerful adversaries: the I-CORP/Asian consortium, which covets their territories, and the Sisters, who want them out of the Hood. In the unlikely event that the characters side with Ras and his Jamaicans, they will find themselves pitted against these two forces. Any character with half an ounce of savvy should see that this is suicide, and make plans accordingly. If not, the Referee should let the chips fall where they may — that's just how it goes in 2020.

RIVAL STREET GANGS

If the party decides to get back at the Dragon for screwing up their job, they could seek assistance from the other two street gangs. It's possible that the characters could get factions of either the Razor Boyz or the Klash to offer support against the Sisters, but not both (they hate each other). Another thing to keep in mind is that the leaders of these two gangs have their own agendas, and are just as likely to turn on the characters as help them.

Chasing the Dragon

NANOTEK INDUSTRIES

Nanotek Industries is a fairly small corporation that was recently acquired as a result of a hostile takeover bid engineered by corporate shark R. Maximillian. The corporation is now a sub-division of I-CORP, a conglomerate that has shown rapid growth during the last eighteen months (see Appendix: I-CORP).

The following information has been supplied in the event that the players decide to break into Nanotek Industries or jack into their computer system.

MAP KEY: NANOTEK INDUSTRIES

1. **Loading Dock:** The loading dock's automatic door is made of corrugated steel. This door is 20 x 20 feet, and weighs over a half-ton.

2. **Security Systems:** To the left of the loading dock door is a combination intercom and micro-cam, with a digital box for punching-in access codes and a red button marked "CALL". The entire mechanism was destroyed by the Dragon's booby trap, but has since been replaced.

There are several ways to get past the door security without a password. Characters may try more than one method; however, with each failure, there is a 50% chance that the security guard (area 9, on duty all the time) will notice the tampering.

- A **CodeDecryptor** and a **Electronic Security** (Diff 15) or **Basic Tech** (Diff 25) roll can be used to decipher the numerical password.
- With an electronic toolkit, and a successful **Basic Tech** (Diff 30), **Electronics** (Difficulty 25) or **Electronic Security** roll (Diff 20), a character can bypass the password.
- A **Netrunner** could break into Nanotek's data fortress, to gain direct access to the computer security system (see Nanotek Netspace, area 14), and bypass the access code. Once inside the system, the hacker can also review the floor plans and security systems for the building.

3. **Shipping Department:** These facilities are intact; the shelves stocked with packing materials, and everything in good working order. A terminal provides access to the Data Fortress (Subgrid area 7), so that shipping staff can record packing invoices, inventory, etc.

4. **Storerooms:** This room contains boxes of computer supplies and packing materials for the shipping department. If the characters say they are checking the contents of each box, the Referee should tell them that they find a steel reinforced crate. Inside are 12 heavy assault rifles and several thousand rounds of ammunition. There is nothing else of interest in here.

5. **Surveillance Cameras:** Located at the ends of each corridor, and controlled by the security system.

6. **Office Facilities:** Several large potted plants decorate the entranceway to this area. Beyond this point are a number of cubicles made of modular partitions. Each of these houses a desk, chair, and

APPENDIX

Chasing the Dragon

computer station. Access to Nanotek's central data system is possible through any of these stations (to Subgrid area 5).

7. Main Office: Nanotek's computer mainframe is located here, as well as a printer. All of Nanotek's files can be accessed from the terminal here (connecting to Net Subgrid area 10). If Edvard Kurvasier is in the building (100% chance, 9 AM - 5 PM weekdays; 33% chance any other hour of the week), he will be in this office.

8. Laboratory: The lab has been stripped of its equipment, and is empty. There are no signs of fire or any other sort of damage.

9. Security: A stout, middle-aged security guard alternates reading the videocam outputs and sports events. Use Basic Goon stats for him, should the need arise (see *Cyberpunk*®, p. 186). He relies on the authority of his uniform (he has an Authority skill of 3) for small trouble, like local kids messing with the call box. If the punks look tough, the guard will avoid a confrontation and instead call in reinforcements

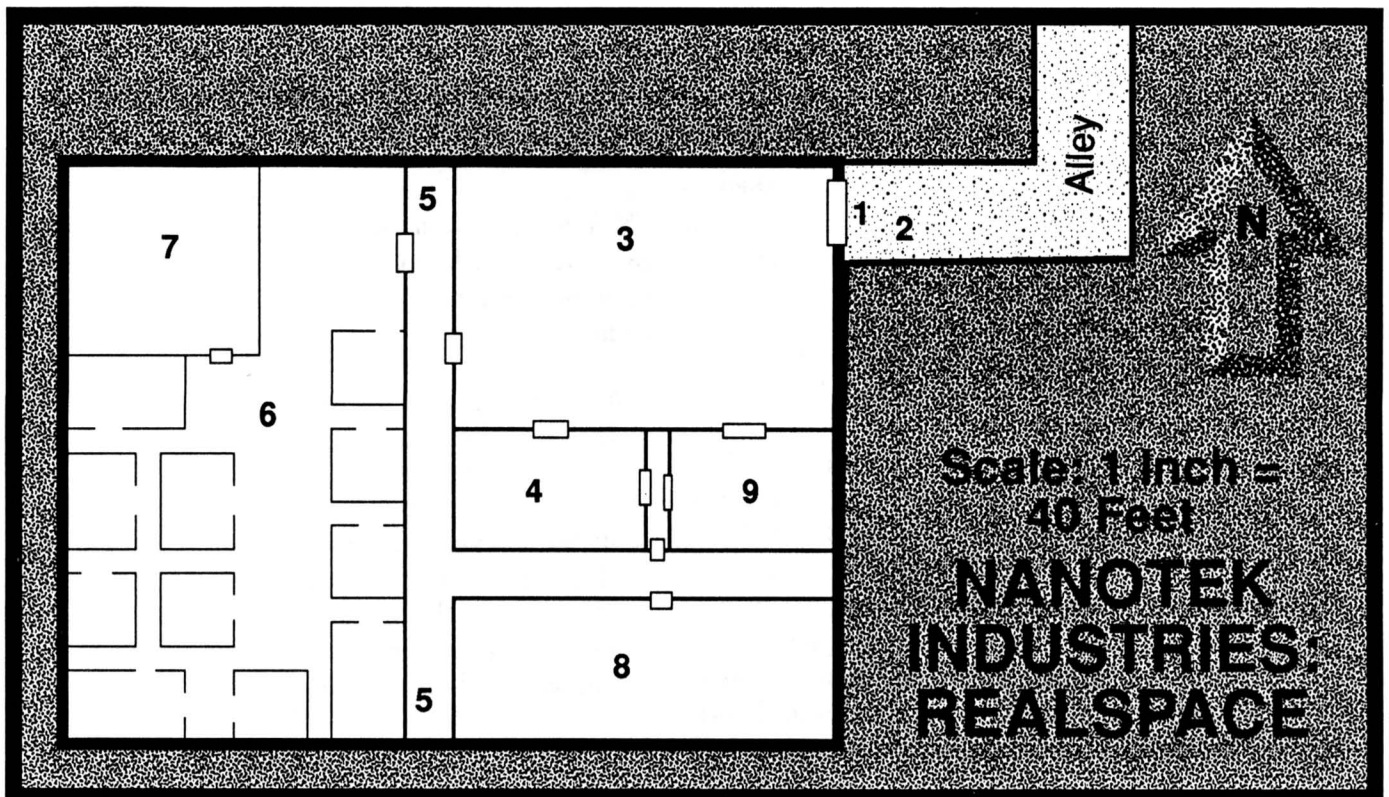
from I-CORP (a half dozen Advanced Goons, *Cyberpunk*, p. 191). The reinforcements arrive by AV in 2D6 minutes.

The terminal in this room connects to area 15 of the Net Subgrid.

NANOTEK NET SUBGRID MAP KEY

The System: Nanotek's computer system is less than up-to-date. It is scheduled to be upgraded by I-CORP soon; modifications planned include better security (programs, data walls, and code gates), at least one more CPU, and a long-distance link to the central I-CORP mainframe.

At present the computer sports an Intelligence of 6, and the following skills: Accounting 4, CyberTech 10, Library Search 4, Mathematics 6, and Physics 6. A



Chasing the Dragon

person who logs in via Kurvasier's terminal (in Room 7) and deciphers the password (treat as a file in the system locked at +2) can make use of the computer (and its skills) himself.

1. Watchdog

2. Printer, located in the Offices (room 6).

3. Memory: Contains Sales Records, Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable and Payroll. Payroll is locked at +1, but none of the others are locked at all.

4. CPU

5. Office Terminals: This is the connection point for the terminals in the office cubicles (room 6).

6. Memory: Contains Customer Database, Inventory, Shipping Invoices, and Communications (memoranda, correspondence, etc.).

7. Shipping Terminal: Located in room 3, this is where the shipping folks keep track of what they receive and send (in Memory 6).

8. Aardvark

9. Memory: Executive Communications (locked at +1), Accounting Records (locked at +1), Design Blueprints (locked at +2), and a nasty program to protect it all: **Firestarter**.

10. Executive Terminal: This terminal connects Kurvasier's office to the data fortress.

11. Memory: This entire memory is locked at +2. It contains a program called **Nanotek CAD™**, two files being created with that program (neuralware designs), and a **Stun** program for protection. Nanotek CAD is a computer-assisted design program that Edvard created to help design products. It utilizes system knowledge and Edvard's input to assess, by simulation, how a product would work, and how best it could be changed. It occupies 5 MU.

A working copy of the program might be worth upwards of 20,000 euro to one of Nanotek's competitors.

12. CPU#2

13. Cameras: This is the controller for the building's security cameras. The visual data is sent automatically to the Security Terminal; it can also be directly accessed by the Executive Terminal.

14. Call Box/Door Control: The controller for the loading dock door. It handles passcodes automatically; or, if toggled directly from the net, it can be simply opened. Mischievous characters may attempt to change the passcode; for this event, suppose the passcode resource file to be locked at +2.

15. Security Terminal, located in Room 9.

16. Memory: Floorplans, Security Log, **Speedtrap** program. None of the files are locked.

17. Printer, located in Kurvasier's office.

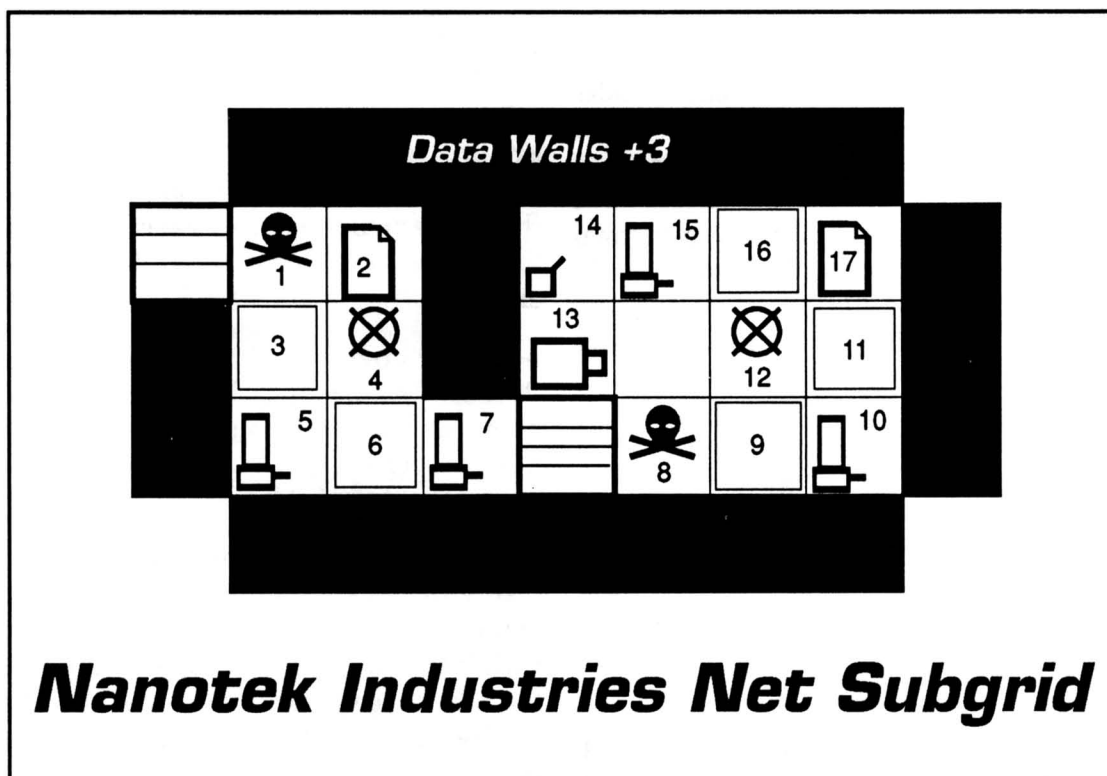
MAKING SENSE OF IT

The following information is available from Nanotek's computer files. Ability checks may be needed to make sense of raw data, much of which is oblique or innuendo.

- **Accounting** (Diff 15 working with the assorted files in Memory 3; diff 10 with the compiled reports in Accounting Records/Memory 9): Nanotek was running at an annual net loss of eleven million dollars the year before it was acquired by I-CORP. Recently, the corporation reported a net profit of 22 million for the first quarter of this year — a very impressive turnaround (and one which market analysts find difficult to explain).

Chasing the Dragon

- **Accounting:** Before I-CORP's involvement, Nanotek was never very prosperous. The corporation's main assets were a bright young nanotechnician named Edvard Kurvasier, and a well established distribution network. (Inferior production capabilities and a lack of capital are the reasons given by most market analysts for the corporation's inability to turn a profit prior to its acquisition by I-CORP.)
- **Education & General Knowledge or CyberTech** (Diff 10 with the Inventory and Communications in Memory 6, the blueprints in Memory 9, or the CAD program and files in Memory 11): Nanotek's speciality is the design and manufacture of basic neural processors and some simple neuralware. Their hallmark is the use of nanotechnology — self-replicating, microscopic machines — to manufacture and install their products.
- **Library Search** (Diff 15 with Executive Communications/Memory 9): Nanotek was acquired by I-CORP primarily for its international distribution network, which R. Maximillian plans to use to smuggle designer drugs and as a means of laundering drug money.
- **Basic Tech** (Diff 20 with Design Blueprints from Memory 9 or Memory 11), **Medical Tech**, **CyberTech**, or **Pharmaceuticals** (Diff 15, same files), or **Library Search** (Diff 25, Executive Communications/Memory 9): Edvard Kurvasier, the promising young technician who was retained by I-CORP, is indeed quite brilliant. Among his many inventions is a new method of synthesizing designer drugs, utilizing nanoids to convey chemicals directly to the brain. The drugs produced by this new method are extremely potent, and addictive. Kurvasier is currently working on ways to mass produce these drugs in the most economical form.
- **Interview** (Diff 15, Executive Communications/Memory 9), **Library Search** (Diff 25, same files): R. Maximillian is working with a major Asian drug cartel to undercut the Jamaican drug ring that



Chasing the Dragon

currently controls much of the drug trade in the City. This operation is referred to in I-CORP's corporate files and memos as "Hostile Takeover of Carribean Corp."

Edvard Kurvasier

Referee's Note: Should the characters go looking for Edvard Kurvasier, they can find him at Nanotek Industries. This is also true if the party decides to break into Nanotek. In the event of a break-in, Kurvasier offers no resistance — Edvard is not the fighting type. He will answer questions if threatened or coerced in any way.

Kurvasier is a young (31) nanotechnician currently in the employ of I-CORP. He specializes in unusual applications of nanotechnology. He is a fine example of what bodysculpting can do for an otherwise average looking person. He is particularly proud of his face.

Edvard works for I-CORP now, and is a loyal employee. Suspecting that R. Maximillian was up to something shady, he peeked into the company's corporate computer records sometime ago. As a result, he knows much of what is going on behind the scenes. Under normal circumstances, the timid Edvard would never dream of revealing what he knows, or informing on his employer. It is safe to assume that staring down the barrel of a heavy auto-pistol is not a "normal circumstance" for Edvard, and will cause him to talk profusely.

Stats

INT 9	REF 6	TECH 10
CL 5	ATT 10	LK 5
MA 5	BODY 5	EMP 5

Cybernetics

Cyberaudio (phone splice, WearMan™), Cyberoptic (Nikkon Optiks, bright lavender irises; micro-optics), Skinwatch

Skills

Awareness/Notice +4, Basic Tech +4, Biology +4, Chemistry +4, Cryotank Operation +3, CyberTech

+3, Education +5, Expert (Nanotechnology) +10, First Aid +1, Human Perception +1, Library Search +6, Medical Tech +10, Pharmaceuticals +2, Physics +4, Programming +3, Stock Market +1, System Knowledge +1

Equipment

Kurvasier is equipped with scientific paraphernalia — tech scanners, etc. — but only a taser for defense.

Combat Scores

Initiative: +6
Stun/Death Save: 5
Body Type Modifier: -2
Taser (#Shots 10/ROF 1/DAM Stun/Rel ST) +5
Armor: None

Kurvasier's combat strategy could be best described by one of two words: escape or surrender. Remember, this is a career scientist, educated and used to working among the best in his field. He's not a street punk or mercenary, or even near to a gritty ripperdoc. The only reason he carries a taser is to give himself a sense of security; he's never actually fired it.

I-CORP

I-CORP is a megacorporation with headquarters located in the uptown sector of the City. The corporation's holdings are said to be substantial, though the nature of its services is unclear; according to the corporate prospectus, I-CORP is in the import-export business. Its CEO is R. Maximillian.

I-CORP has recently engineered hostile takeovers of three rival corporations: Mass Media Associates, an advertising and communications company; Genetech, a biogenetics company, and Nanotek, a company that specializes in the field of computer nanotechnology.

If the characters are interested, information on these takeovers can be obtained through media sources. On paper, the deals appear to be legit; in each case, I-CORP raised enough capital to purchase a majority of the corporation's stock, then fired the original executives and substituted their own people at the top positions.

Chasing the Dragon



The only element of suspicion surrounding these deals pertains to how I-CORP was able to raise the huge sums of money (in excess of one billion dollars) needed to acquire these corporations. In an interview with the media, Edvard Kurvasier, a researcher who works for I-CORP, made an oblique reference to a group of "silent partners." As usual, R. Maximillian had "no comment."

Referee's Notes: I-CORP's source of capital is the drug trade; specifically, an Asian cartel that uses I-CORP's legitimate distribution channels for its own purposes, and as a means of laundering drug money. In return, I-CORP gets a healthy cut of the profits. This information is not entirely essential to the successful completion of this scenario. However, the corporate-drug trade connection can be used to create other inter-related adventures.

R. Maximillian

Referee's Note: R. Maximillian should not appear in this scenario. He is an extremely powerful figure who is currently beyond the reach of any of the characters. His stats are presented here in the event that the Referee wishes to include Maximillian in future scenarios.

CEO of I-CORP, Maximillian is a control addict; unbeknownst to the public, he has secretly acquired considerable holdings in several of the major corporations in the City, as well as a number of shadowy enterprises that operate through the black market. His vice, and his "drug of choice," is control; the more he owns, the more he wants.

Maximillian came from an impoverished background, growing up in the vicinity of the Combat Zone. He began as a common crook, later working his way up to netrunning. By various schemes Maximillian succeeded in making a vast fortune, much of it through illicit means. His combination of street savvy and corporate expertise and resources make him an exceedingly competent and dangerous antagonist. He will stop at nothing to extend the boundaries of his financial empire.

Chasing the Dragon

In order to further his personal goals, Maximillian has attempted to create an image of himself as a reputable businessman — one of the rare few who can be trusted by the populace. He's spent hundreds of millions of dollars on public relations ploys, donations to charities, etc. It's all part of a scam to cover up his background, which he is ashamed of, and to disguise his underworld connections.

Maximillian has perfect features and a perfect smile, all of which are quite artificial. His appearance has been completely altered by cosmetic surgery and body sculpting. He stands 6'4" tall, weighs 210 pounds, and has a lean and muscular physique. He has no cybernetic modifications, for the reason that he refuses to be "controlled by any mindless machine." (Even in his netrunning days, he used 'trodes, rather than the interface plugs which were in those days first hitting the market.)

Stats

INT 10	REF 8	TECH 3
CL 9	ATT 10	LK 7
MA 6	BODY 10	EMP 4

Cybernetics

None

Skills

Awareness/Notice +4, Basic Tech +2, Brawling +3, Education +5, Forgery +4, Handgun +3, Human Perception +4, Intimidate +7, Leadership +3, Library Search +3, Melee +1, Oratory +3, Personal Grooming +5, Persuasion & Fast Talk +6, Programming +5, Resources +12, Social +4, Stock Market +10, Streetwise +4, System Knowledge +3, Wardrobe & Style +4

Equipment

R. Maximillian has the resources to lay his hands on any equipment he wants. He doesn't like to do his own dirty work, though, so don't expect to see him toting around any assault rifles or wearing MetalGear™. That's what bodyguards are for (and Maximilian is *never* without several of *those*).

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Steve Sechi, a noted game designer of many years' experience, is the creator of the popular **Talislanta™** role-playing game.



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