

STREETS TELL STORIES

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BEWARE THE CULT OF LIES

THE TERRORISTS
ARE AMONG YOU.
DO YOUR PATRIOTIC
DUTY. REPORT
THOSE YOU FEAR.

HAVE YOU SEEN THESE SUSPECTS?



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* A SPECIAL THANKS TO GREG GORDEN FOR HELPING ME GET INTO THE CLUBHOUSE.

WAITING FOR THE BOMB AT TWO HUNDRED FEET

Was there a car bomb somewhere in the traffic jam?

Lacerator's fingertips slid up and down the warm, black steering wheel, waiting for the cars to start up again. His lips mouthed the words, "Come on, come on," soundless. Behind and ahead of him other commuters honked their horns, the nasal beeps growing greater in number and longer in duration, rising to the crescendo wail of an air raid siren.

He wanted to do something, anything, to participate in the useless orgy of noise, to feel he was a valued part of the traffic jam's frustration, to feel a part of the crowd. But since getting back from central Africa, he'd learned not to call attention to himself. His razors were tucked into his flesh. He'd spent months building a new identity for himself, and with luck it would stick. He'd dump what they had made him. Leave his life as a soldier behind.

But boosted vets had problems fitting back in no matter how much effort they took to hide themselves. Drawing any attention to himself risked some civvy taking too close a look. They said boosted vets had a look to them—a tell in their eyes. So he sat silently, sweat forming on his back, pressing sticky against the cheap impleather.

He glanced to the car to his left. A white Tehran Jihad. The woman was young, a blonde, no tattoos. No insignia. The car, beat up, but without graffiti or slogans, seemed neutral. Who'd want to hurt her?

But he knew better. The silent ones were the dangerous ones. All the puffed-out-chest gang members with their autoguns and brick piercers meant nothing.

civvy: slang for civilians. It refers not only to those outside of a military organization, but those citizens not committed to an armed faction of some kind. Often refers to those who are innocent.

ing compared to the silent ones, who set up bombings and assassinations and their kidnappings. They attracted bombs in turn.

Did someone want to do her in?

Of course, sometimes someone just put a bomb under a car just because. No logic, just waiting for the explosion. The bomber could claim a cause later on—if he decided to take the trouble.

Lacerator looked at her again. If she was a faction agent, she could get bombed. If she were innocent she could get bombed. And parked next to her, he'd go up as well. He imagined his car lifted up by the blast, flipped up over the rail, dropped down all the way to the Hollywood sub-sprawl. He'd worked three years to get out of that hell hole, and now he was certain he'd return within minutes, dropped down, death upon impact.

He snapped on the radio. A song blared out, thick with beat. Hatred in the voice. And beneath that, pain.

Not at all what he was looking for. He jammed the tuner button and it switched to a news station. "The Santa Monica Freeway," an announcer was saying, "is baking with bullets, with a gun fight by the Pacific Palisades turn off."

Come on, thought Lacerator, the Odds Game buzzing in his head. Let's get the car bomb somewhere else. "The car bombing at Normandie and Florence is already cleared—apparently The Atomizer came down and moved the debris out of the way. Twenty-seven dead on that one. Reprisal threats are flaring—The Ten Censars promising to do in the Primitive clan who claimed responsibility. Seemed the blast inadvertently killed the screenwriter the Ten Censars were working with on their breakout movie."

Odds Game: Popular urban mind game; particularly helpful in Los Angeles. Players enable themselves to leave the safety of their homes by calculating the arbitrary odds of their not dying by random violence.

OK, OK, Lacerator thought. There's usually one blast each morning. So he should be safe. All he had to do was wait out the jam.

A tug of confusion pulled at his mind.

He wondered why he didn't do something about the car bombs. He was more than human, after all. Super-strength. He could withstand third-degree burns, with only a bit of discomfort. And, of course, his hooks...

Why didn't he do something?

What was he supposed to do? Make a personal search of every car in every jam? He didn't want to be a hero. He just wanted to get to work. To be like everybody else.

To his right, the Upper 101 gave way to a drop hundreds of feet down just over a thick concrete wall, aluminum guard rail. LA's subsprawl rolled out forever, miniature buildings and streets. The crawl of cars like ants, the sunlight glinting off their shiny backs.

Upper 101: Along with LA's floating cities, there is an extensive network of freeways that run hundreds of feet above the ground. Like the floating cities, they are identified with the word "upper." Thus, there is the 101 (on the ground), and the Upper 101 in the air.

had been made.

Why the Hell wasn't the traffic moving? Why the hell was he stuck in place? If anything happened, anything, he was a sitting duck!

Ahead floated New Hollywood, lingering towers of emerald glass rising from the antigrav platform. So beautiful, so delicate. Lacerator loved the city, loved it as no home he'd ever loved, but at the same time,

The relief Lacerator had felt began to melt under well-supported paranoia. Had somebody mined the antigrav pillars? No one had yet pulled it off, but attempts

Subsprawl: The vast majority of LA country; the old sections of the city built on the ground. The subsprawl is the opposite of the upper cities.

antigrav pillars: the technology from the downed alien spacecraft allowed the development of antigrav field generators. The power required for the devices, as well as the size of the antigrav feild generators, makes them inpractical for vehicles. However, they can be mounted under LA's floating cities and upper freeways. Even with the technology, they cannot actually make an item float. The term "floating " city is a misnomer. Both the cities and the highways depend on massive pillars to help keep them up. The ontigrav technology also helps LA's skyscrapers to stay up despite the earthquakes that often rock the county.

found it a completely insipid place. Who, in the land of earthquakes and fly-by-shootings, would make anything so fragile. Beauty had no business in so harsh a place as Los Angeles. In the United States. In the World.

The cars crawled forward a few feet, then stopped once more. He looked at the woman again, and she turned to look at him at the same instant. She held his gaze. Did she recognize him?

No. She smiled. Strangers actually making contact from behind layers of glass.

He spotted the shifting of the shadows at the last moment, out of the corner of his eye. The adrenaline started to flow, the twitch of metal, itching to pierce his flesh. He swallowed. The intensity of the war coming back in a flash. He fought it back down. He'd gotten a job, finally. He'd kicked his habit, finally. Jenny seemed like a nice girl, finally...

All of that in a moment. A flash of light. The rocket's flare. A trail of smoke. Oh, God, Oh, God, Oh, God, Oh, God, Oh, God, Oh, God, Oh, God, Oh, God, Oh, God...

The woman only caught the odd look on Lacerator's face at that last moment, turned her head to the right as the rocket smashed through her windshield.

A shattering of glass, a scream not heard. A sudden rush of fire billowed out of the car's interior like a toilet backed up with blood.

His own windows shattered in toward him, raindrops of dull safety glass raining against his face. The flames next, sweeping over him, the smell of singed flesh in his nostrils.

The car rocked back, rising. He slammed into the passenger door, the grinding sound of the aluminum tearing as the car ripped through the rail.

His eyes, black, with dilated pupils, held no sense of place or time anymore. The micro-stare.

micro-stare: an odd inappropriate gaze tagged to boosted vets. The vet's eyes focus on a point only a few inches away, staring at nothing. This is the result of too much time spent looking into computer-linked goggles that process targetting information in combat situations.



The steel hooks, thick, strong, like the fingers of a well-skilled mortician, ripped through his flesh, shredded his clothes. The car flipped over, sending him into the ceiling. He twisted and punched his right fist through the driver's door. The hooks jabbed into the freeway's concrete containment wall, lining it with cracks, like the dried out dirt of the Congo desert.

The car continued its fall, but the hooks held firm. The door slid down his arm and slammed into his head and torso, bending his neck to the right. For a moment the weight of the car rested on his body, straining his muscles so that he thought his neck might snap. Then the door's hinges unraveled with a grinding scream. The car plunged down toward the subsprawl, leaving Lacerator hanging from the wall, the door on his arm like a massive bracelet. With his free hand he shredded the door and climbed up the cement wall back to the highway, one hand thrown over the other, piercing the searant.

Heat from the explosion washed over him as he topped the wall. Before him rested the remains of three cars, all destroyed in the blast. Flames billowed up, consuming the air, dying and rising up again. Thick smoke snaked across the jammed freeway, the inky black of toxin clouds in summer. Screams and ears scraped against Lacerator's thoughts. A child in the Congo, cut in half by shrapnel, still confused by life, even more dumbfounded by dying.

Gunshots too, the staccato thuk, thuk, thuk, of automatic weapons. Smoked blurred the sources of the shots.

Six guns. Two 20mm GCS DW 770/g's, three 9mm M-21's, and something... Something new. There were always new guns. One hundred to one hundred ten meters separated the shooters on either side of him. They were closing on each other.

Lacerator stood up on the cement wall, his flesh black and bubbling from the flames that had washed over him. A stinging cut across all of his body, but he could live with the pain. The hooks, tinted shiny red with his own blood, arced out a good foot or more from his body. He looked like a man tortured to the point of death.

But in his eyes the truth rested. Bright, alert.

Scan the situation. Look for prey. The winds of the high freeway tangle the strips of my tattered clothes; a flag too long on an active front.

He jumped down on the pavement, skirted the edges of the flames. The screams were pleas for help now, civvies caught up in the cross-fire.

Endless cross-fires. Junior G-Men against The Forgotten Seventy-Five. A radical faction of Wet Weapons firing on Dark Hope dope dealers. Media Giant Amalgamated raiders trying to rip off a new hot shot programmer from Axis Entertainment. It didn't matter to the folks in the middle.

Slumberland, rushed into his head; too much booze on a Saturday night. Some men in dark bars flashed back to daydreams lost decades earlier—dreams of wives that looked like models, millions of dollars in the bank so they'd never have to work again. Lacerator remembered the details of a four-color fantasy.

The red of the flames, monochromatic, lined with dark lines of smoke. The bodies of the wounded and dying, frozen in haphazard tableau, the muscles jangled one way or another; thick lines forming arms and legs, filled in with never-existed pink flesh composed of red and yellow dots. Six panels to a page, maybe a full splash page. A KA-BOOM as the a keg of gunpowder in the trunk of a car blew up.

He smiled, then suppressed it. Heroes didn't smile. That was a rule. They were above emotions. But in his heart...

Joy. The excitement of the coming combat. Fighting mattered. It was exciting. It was better than the humdrum activity of daily life. Loss of love, worrying about money. Care and concern cost too much.

Dr. Eberhart's words echoed in his thoughts. "You've been propped up as a combat puppet all of your life. It's time for you to build something—a life for yourself. Stop confusing emotionless acts of violence with life itself."

Two years of therapy. Lacerator felt them burping out of his brain as he lunged forward, on the prowl now. Thinking was hard. Feeling was hard.

Killing is easy.

The incidents around him now—the loose tire, on fire, rolling down the sloped freeway; the woman ducking for cover behind her car, caught by bullets at the last moment—were framed by white borders. Around the smoke of the cars, careful, don't step out into a spray of bullets—ahead.

gang members, four of them. Brown, Geordani suits of the Ten Ceasers gang, Two out the back of a van with a microwave targeting system mounted on top. The other two had ducked behind a sub-sport. Inside the little red car a mother clutched her baby. Too terrified to exit the car, or even duck, she stared forward, her face expressionless. Bullets from the gangsters' opposition slammed into her car frame, shattered windows. She didn't respond.

She hadn't been hit yet, but there was only so much luck.

Lacerator jumped forward, up onto a car. The hooks at the bottom of his feet punctured the car's metal roof. Then onto another car, then another, closer and closer to the gang hangers.

As if cataracts slipped from his eyes, the world once more became clear.

I don't need a job. Things can be simple. The black and white morality of the four color comic books. Yes!

Without smiling his heart beat faster, his breathing lighter. His muscles relaxed. The fifteen year old gangsters ahead of him were simply a corruption of the human soul that had to be excised.

The two by the sub-sport spotted him, turned their 770/g's toward him, and ripped off fifty rounds even as he twisted his body and dove for cover behind a microvan—

No. No cover, too many civvies were hiding in their cars.

He was up again, jumping onto the hood of a car and leaping off without pause. He zig zagged toward them, their guns swinging left, then right, bullets whizzing by. Two slugs slammed into his arm, splitting against his hooks. The impact knocked him back for a moment, but he forged on.

Heroes didn't die. He knew that too.

They retreated into their van with their companions. They closed up the doors, opened small slits for their guns.

He dropped to the ground, rolled toward them, chewing up black asphalt with his hooks. The hot surface of the road stuck to his flesh and he remembered the Congo.

Then he was on them...

Through the wall of the van, ripping the metal with his hooks. A few bullets shredded against his hooks. The kids were panicked now, the shots wide. Their faces, young, smooth, without wrinkles.

It took no more than thirty seconds to dispatch the gang hangers.

A touch of red, a suggestion of bloody carnage. The inference of shredding. But nothing to state clearly what happened when human flesh was raked with sharp edged metal.

He punched a hole through the roof of the van and climbed up. Back down the freeway burned the cars from the missile. Beyond that, five primitives, wearing feathers and hand grenades on bandoliers, ran away from him.

The jam? Had I worried about a traffic jam?

I am the Lacerator. My job doesn't matter. My true identity doesn't matter. I'm larger than all of that. I am a HERO.

He jumped off the roof of the van, hit the ground running. Blood dripped off his hooks. He cut up his face with his claws as he ran, so no one would recognize him. His flesh would regenerate soon enough. He would get a helmet later that night.

They tried to make me normal. Had tried to make me afraid of traffic jams. After I finish the primitives, duck out of sight. I'll get my uniform together. Yes.

I ran by the civvies. All of them cheering, clapping their hands for me. They are usually so usually so frightened by the boasts, but now I am their hero.

Yes. Hero. I won't try to bury myself again.

The Lacerator will remain.

The

intro

THEY MADE
this city a HELL-HOLE
now
WE'VE got to CHANGE IT!
-the Underground

Members of the Boosted Community! Los Angeles wants to eat you up and spit you out. This place might as well be alive. Can you survive on the streets? Back from the war and dumped out onto home turf you might think you're safe. You are not. The Feds have given you a room, not a home; they've given you coupons, not a livelihood; they've given you treatments, not a life.

You are not welcome. The citizens of the city fear you. The crime lords want to master you. The corporate suits want to market you. You are not what you were when you left to fight the war—A Hero. Now you are extraneous. An embarrassment to some. A monster to others.

You might think you are different. Other vets might be miserable, you think, but you will forge a new path. Yours is a life that will turn out well.

Perhaps. But not without a fight.

The war in Africa, or Asia, or Europe has ended for you, and a new war begun. Listen to us. We are the Underground, and we have all arrived back in the states with hopes and dreams, and we have watched them shattered one time after another. Learn from us. We have much to teach you. And you have much to teach us. Unlike the fearful civvies who retreat in fear from you, we need you. Value you.

Your home is not where the Feds send you paltry medication vouchers. Your *home* is the Underground.

AN INVITATION

We need you. Los Angeles needs you. This city is the fulcrum of the American Dream. Balanced on one side are the hopes and ideals you risked death for. On the other side is the fear and greed that has ripped through this nation, turning our citizens into prisoners of their own consumption. Here, where 5,000 boosted vets make their home, we are strong enough to make a difference. But only if we work together.

Our efforts are disorganized. Some of us are committed to the prospect of a better tomorrow, but some are in the back pockets of corporations, while others are no better than hoodlums. All of these choices—and more—wait for the new citizen of Los Angeles. You may think that to survive you need to become the monster the civvies fear, or the criminal the government blames all of the nation's troubles on. THIS IS NOT THE CASE! By working together we can make out nation whole once more.

We will start with Los Angeles.



PUIROSE OF THE
BOOK

The purpose of this book is to aquatint the new veteran to this city—so beautiful in its aspirations, so run down in its reality. It is our hope this book will aid the survival of any boosted vet in Los Angeles. But more to the point, to make clear why the vet reading this book should add his enhancements to the Underground. We are the new Heroes of the United States. We can add to our nation's ruin, or forge a new future with the past's promise.

floating cities: there are a few cities in Los Angeles that rise above the rest of the city, using massive pillars and antigrav generator fields to support themselves. Unlike the layered city blocks that make up most urban environments, these cities are only connected to the rest of the urban landscape via freeways. No multi-layered skyscrapers connect the floating cities with the rest of LA county. They are essentially fiefdoms that use their distance from the rest of the population as a moat.

original racial composition: of Los Angeles's original 44 founders, 26 were black, the rest of Indian blood.

AN OVERVIEW

Los Angeles: The City of Cities

First thing you need to know: Los Angeles is BIG. Los Angeles as we discuss it here, is made up of over seventy incorporated cities. Although there is a city called Los Angeles buried in Los Angeles County (and the seat of the county's government), when one speaks of Los Angeles, one is invariably speaking of the county as whole. The county's ground area and the county's **floating cities**, when totaled up, sprawl for over 6,000 square miles.

Next, the city is DENSE. No other city in the United States contains as many people. (The 2010 Census placed Los Angeles's population at 14, 504, 987, New York's at 14, 089, 467, and Chicago's at 11, 992, 444.) This creates a population density of about three thousand people per square mile. Even with the addition of the city's upper levels the average population density is horribly thick. (2,416 people per square mile.) Of course, portions of Los Angeles are more densely populated, while others (especially the floating cities) are more lightly populated.

Los Angeles, as well as southern California, has changed its racial composition radically in the past few decades (though many would be quick to point out that the city's racial composition is closer to its **original racial composition**). Whereas Caucasians once dominated the area through the end of the twentieth century, they now make up only 21 percent of the city's population. The largest group are the African-Americans, with 29% of the population. Hispanics make up 26% of the city's population, and Orientals the last 24%.

Caucasians lost the majority of the city's population in 2001, and since then a white flight has continued to stream out of the metropolis. Only those Caucasians with enough money to afford "safe" housing or who have strong business ties in the city have stayed. Most of these work in the massive entertainment and aerospace industries that fueled the Los Angeles community since the early part of the twentieth century. A third, new, major corporate component is the LA munitions industry. Although Caucasians make up less than a quarter of the city's population, they still control most of the power-base businesses in the city.

The significance of Los Angeles to the rest of the world cannot be underestimated. The politicians can argue about trade and treaty, but Hollywood narratives slip through import quotas like a Stealth Eagle through Neo-Deutschland radar systems. Los Angeles pumps out the pictures, styles, and ideals that kids and adults eagerly wolf down. It may not

CITY VS. COUNTY

POPULATION
DENSITY

RACIAL
COMPOSITION OF
LA COUNTY

MAJOR LA
INDUSTRIES

IMBALANCE
OF RACIAL
ECONOMIC
POWER BASES

IMPORTANCE OF
HOLLYWOOD TO
THE WORLD

PARTICIPATORY
CONSUMERISM

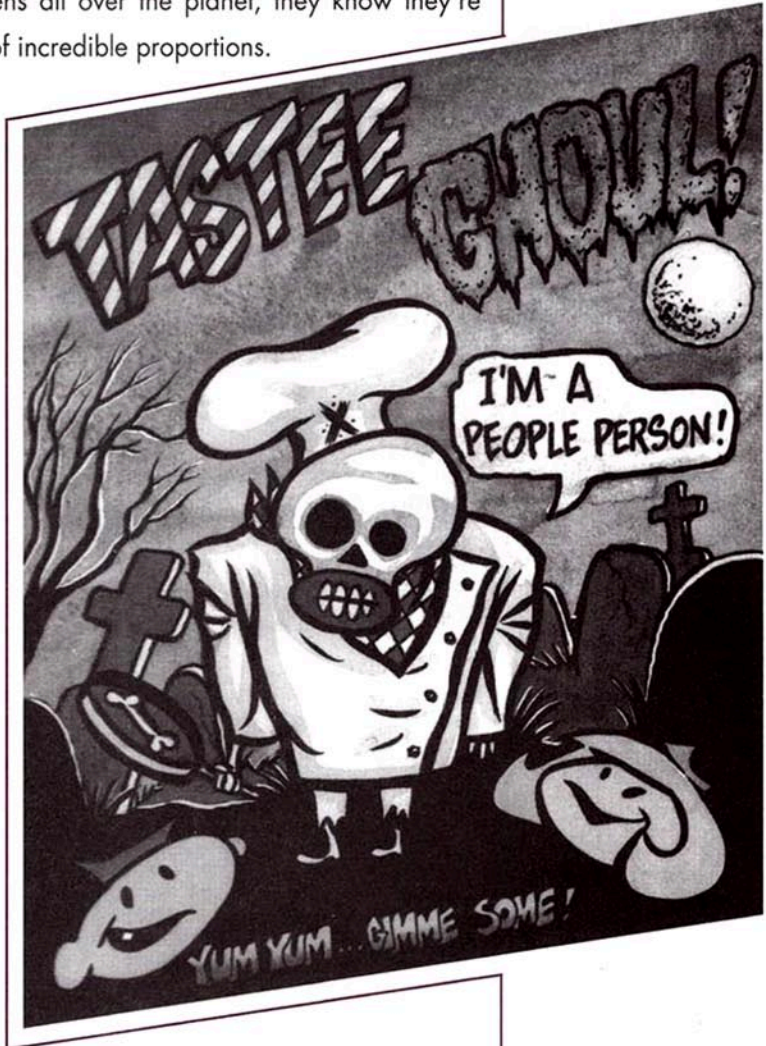
make any sense (it doesn't), but the crap people suck into their brains is viewed, whether people know it or not, as valuable. Entertainment execs claim they're just rushing out entertainment. But when the viewer knows this stuff is being watched on screens all over the planet, they know they're participating in a shared event of incredible proportions.

And when Captain Mayhem tells you to buy his gun to be safe—well, what are you going to do? Just Say No? You know everybody else is going out to buy his Captain Mayhem Blood Belcher the next day. Are you going to be unarmed while everybody else can slam a slug through the wall of your living room? Pictures and products are given credence simply because they are on the screens, vids, in the vid games and plastered on billboards. Los Angeles wraps up all this in HDTV, with clean, sharp red explosions, stereo screams and fast pumped music.

If the American dream is to live again, we've got to respect the power this city has. We've got to wrest control of the media mongers. But since they've got reasons to cling to what they havet (a love of cocaine and barely human party dolls) they're going to fight to keep what they've got. Since they've got the firepower and bucks to back their fight up, we're going to have to be clever.

GOVERNMENT

The government of Los Angeles County buckled after the Los Angeles Police Strike of 2017. For the last four years the county has fragmented, with basic services such as repairs for sewers systems, electrical repairs, schools, fire departments, and so on vanishing. Only police pro-



LA COUNTY
POWER BASE

tection, in the form of the Los Angeles Peace Force, Inc., continues. The LAPF, however, only truly offers help for those in a few cities—those cities with a tax base that can afford protection. As Tanis Morgan, division head of the LAPF says, “Those who can afford the LAPF probably are worth protecting.”

In the face of this breakdown of the old social order, a new one has grown up to replace it. It grew up very quickly, and many of the kinks have yet to be worked out. The key is this, though: decentralization. The county government is gone, and federal tax dollars that used to help against the “urban crisis” of years past are in short supply.

So, as the cities of LA Country learn how to run all by themselves, it is up to smaller neighborhoods to manage the task of getting itself through the day. Throughout the county, people in neighborhoods are working together on a scale not seen for nearly a century. They are slapping together their own generators, taking care of sewage problems, patrolling the streets as best they can. Stores, when not the centerpiece of a street fight, remain open. Goods are brought into neighborhoods by dealers who pick them up at outlet stores in the wealthier neighborhoods. LA county is a mess, but even in the worst neighborhoods (even in downtown LA, nicknamed Hell’s Forest), a semblance of life continues. It isn’t ideal, but the struggle to stay alive continues.

Despite the weakened authority, the county government still exists, run out of the recently completed Halls of Order in Upper Santa Monica. The ten member board of supervisors battle an insurmountable tide of complaints and try to distribute precious tax dollars where they are most needed—which is invariably everywhere. Along with the government, the Halls of Order house the LAPF. From their view high above the garbage filled beaches of Santa Monica, the leaders of Los Angeles look out over the jangled home and wonder what the hell to do next.

Los Angeles County had a long standing tradition of overlapping its city governments with its county government. Ivariably, Angelenos paid taxes to both. Only ten years ago citizens supported two crime labs (one for their city, one for the county) two fire departments, two police forces and so on. In 2017, this overlapping stopped—with the county and the city scrambling to keep whatever operations they could under their own control. It was the hope of some city mayors that the County board of supervisors would disband, leaving each community free to distribute resources to its own citizens. But the board set up the LAPF contract, and only the county as a whole can provide the massive tax base to keep the LAPF running.

NEIGHBORHOOD
MANAGEMENT

HALLS OF ORDER

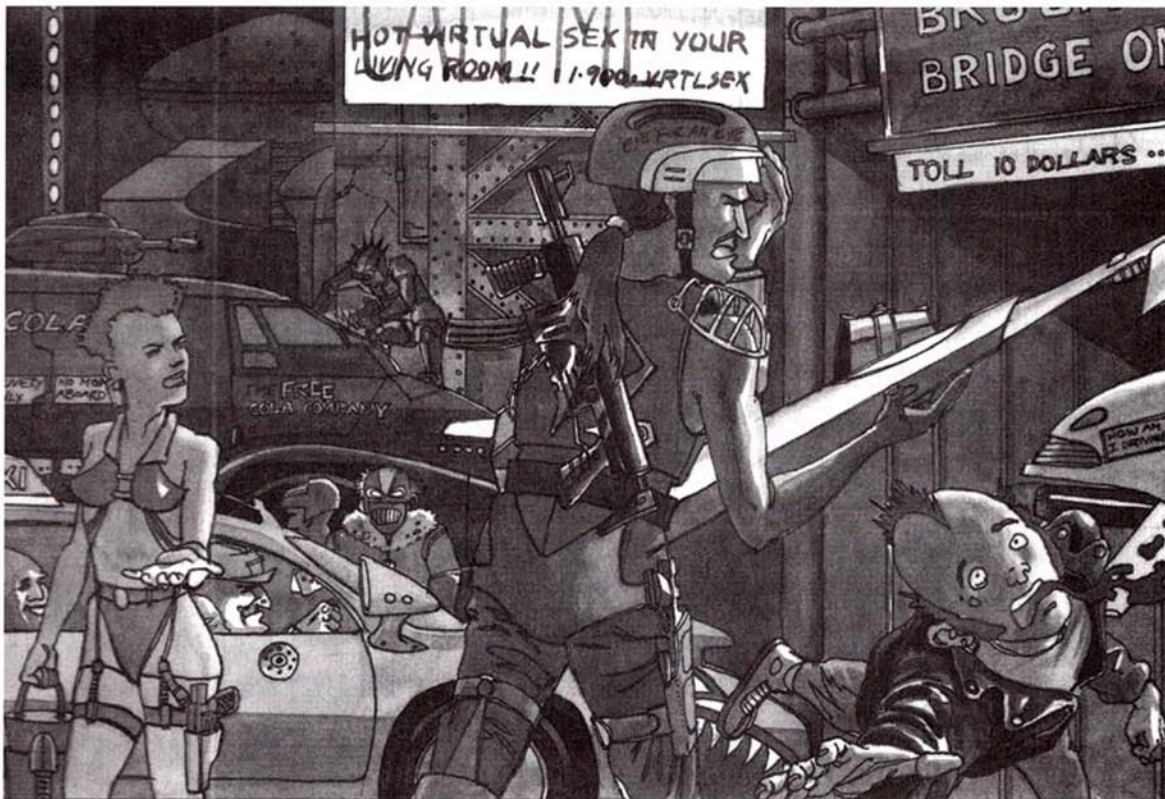
CHAIRMAN OF
THE BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS

Board of supervisors Chairman John Sitwell was pushed into office with little effort on his part. Seen by many as the only **"compromise" candidate** capable of being elected, he had no desire himself to hold the office. He ran (or was run by others) on a platform best described as innocuous. "I am anti-crime, anti-drugs, anti-violence, anti-poverty, pro-jobs, pro-a better economy, pro-better things in general." His election was anything but a landslide, but with the vote split among a half-dozen extremists, he slipped into the role with ease. He now conducts business with the same haze that carried him into office. Many people move the true politics and budgets around him, shoving contracts for him to sign, letting him glance at resumes before hiring their family members. For more information about John Sitwell, see the Notebook pages.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Chief of Police Alphonse Moscoso is the one civil servant left on the county's arm of law enforcement. For more information on him, see the Notebook pages.

"compromise" candidate: a politician so devoid of any beliefs and spine that he hasn't done anything or said anything offensive to either conservative or liberal voters. The key to a "compromise" candidate is that by saying nothing, voters can project whatever beliefs they hold onto the candidate. "He thinks just like me," is the naive belief of the candidate's supporters. Ross Perot was the first candidate to gain national stature while saying nothing of value.



DART: Distributed Automated Rapid Transit is a really lousy attempt at providing Los Angeles with rapid transit. Like so many efforts in the US, it fails miserably. They system is basically a lot of little buses, each with its own autopilot, navigating with its own on-board collision-avoidance system and locators installed in most intersections.

PUBLIC TRANS-
PORTATION

GETTING AROUND LOS ANGELES

Traveling around Los Angeles can be a nightmare or a dream, depending on how much money you've got to offer to the task. The **DART** system moves people around as best it can, but it often breaks down and is

go-cart: vehicles cobbled together from old cars, bicycles, carts and so on, usually powered by peddling or pulling.

colorful world: slang for war zones, comparable to the intensity of four color comic books.

black and whites: the "real world," or the United States. Where things are supposed to be less colorful, but a home for rational living. Right.

vandalized by gang bangers. This means average guy hoofs it or uses a bicycle to get around. There's a thriving **go-cart** industry. Most of the people who work these are reputable, but be careful. More than one tourist has ended a ride in a back alley with his skull split open.

The wealthy have automobiles, that move them from one floating city to the next, via the highways supported by antigrav pillars. Helicopters are also very popular for the very wealthy. Fermi AreaSpace Amalgamated owns a profitable helicopter taxi service used by wealthy executives and wealthy drug lords alike. (For more information on Fermi AreaSpace Amalgamated, see the Organizations chapter.)

HAZARDS OF LIFE

Los Angeles is a very dangerous place. Acts of random violence spring up all the time. Trying to cope with the bizarre nature of the place is a full time job unto itself—one described in greater detail in the last section of this booklet. For now, let's just review some of the problems you can expect while going out for some groceries.

Car bombs are very popular. They go boom really big, and that's what many folks in the city are looking for. They're angry about something (anything) and want the world to know. Often the bombs are targeted for specific individuals. More often they are not. Imagine screaming in the night—so long and so hard your throats tears itself numb. You don't care who hears your scream. You just need to scream. The assholes who blow up cars in the middle of a crowded street are like that. They just want the effect. They want the world to take notice of something they've done. And if the shrapnel should split through thirty people who have nothing to do with their pain—well, the more people who die, the louder the scream.

We're all familiar with sniper fire from the **colorful world**. But who would have expected it in the **black and whites**? You don't know who you're fighting, or why. Like the car bombings, sniper fire is often indiscriminate. It may be a test for a gang banger membership (pop someone to prove you're tough enough), a bankrupt attempt at political activism, or simply a release from frustration. The greatest problem with sniper fire is that guns are so powerful and accurate. The sniper is so far away from the victim it's so easy for him to escape.

Anything can set off a firefight. A gang member walking onto somebody else's turf. A car bomb. Sniper fire. An angry comment. A botched drug deal. A clerk giving attitude to an armed customer. A customer giving attitude to an armed clerk. Like a thousands of mousetraps

HELICOPTER
TAXI SERVICES

CAR BOMBS

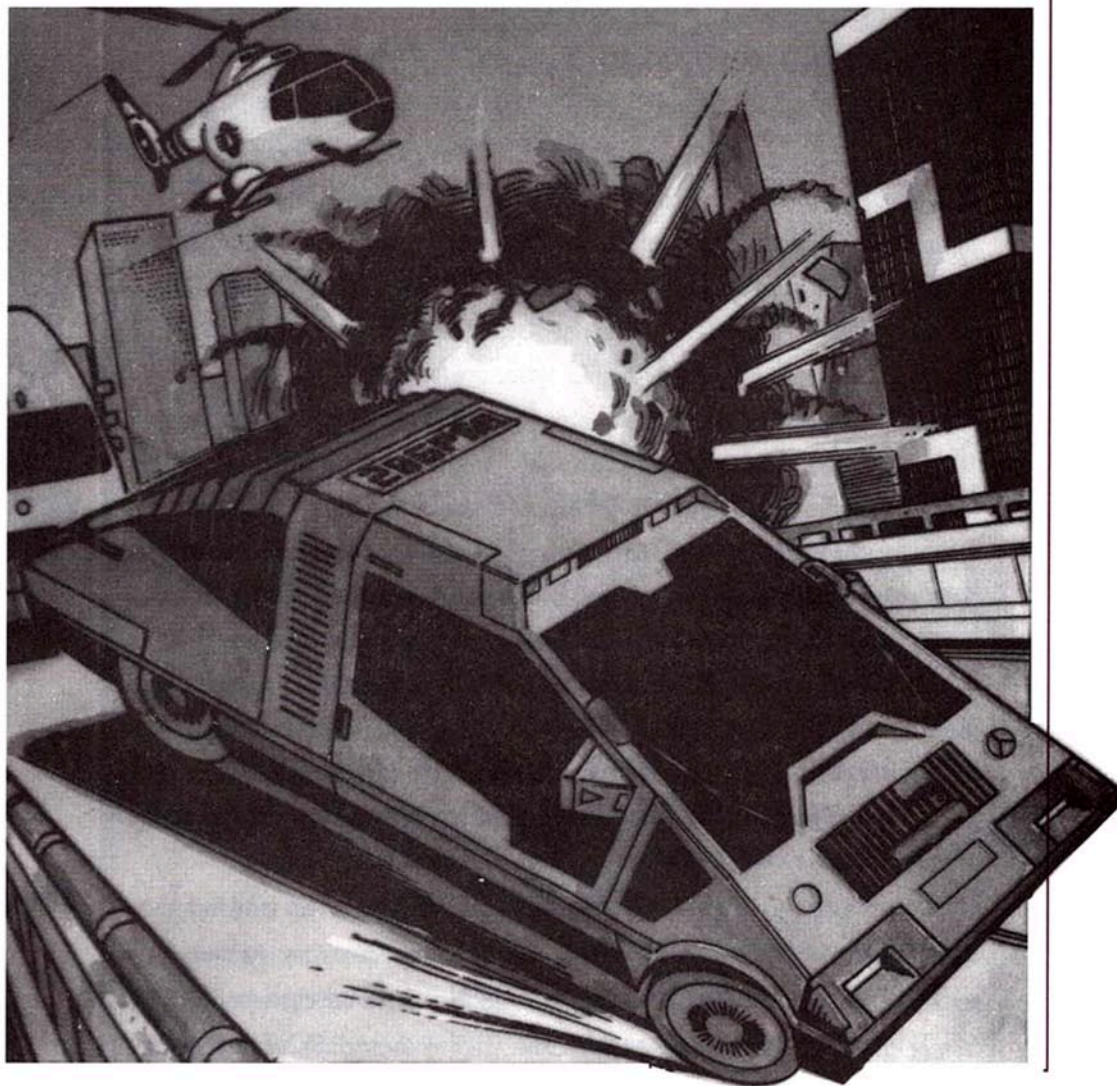
SNIPER FIRE

FIREFIGHT

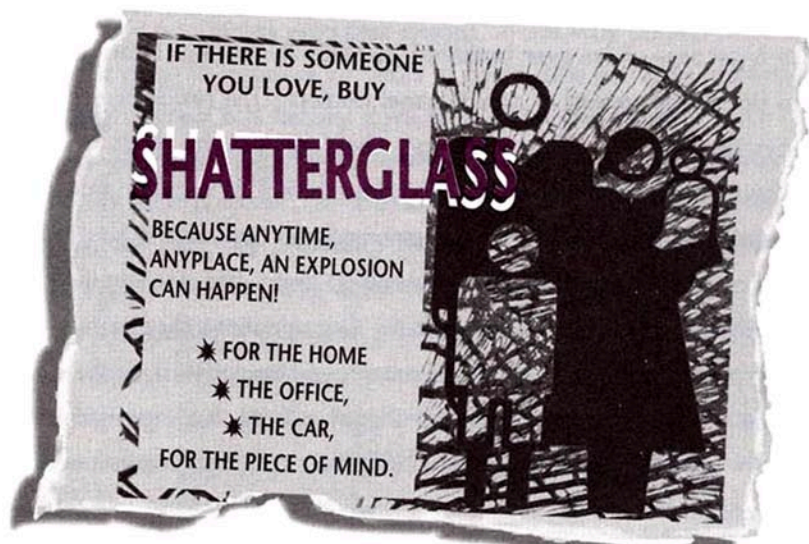
set near each other, going off in succession after the first is triggered, the moment one gun is fired, the air is filled dozens of blasts. Sometimes the conflicts are between two organized groups. Other times it is a random melee, with citizens pulling out guns, firing indiscriminately at anyone in the area.

ARMED SQUATTERS

One of the groups most responsible for fire fights are packs of squatters who roam the poorer sections of LA looking for a place to call home. Guns are frequently used to pressure one group or another clear out of a choice piece of property. If the scare tactics don't work, actual gunplay is ensues. If this doesn't work, explosives are employed, usually with the result that the disputed property is completely destroyed. However, the victors—those who did the blowing up—usually feel better because they made the most noise and left the opposition is buried under a ton of rubble.



Chapter **one**



There are divisions within divisions within Los Angeles county. The county is larger than three states in the US. There is no way to take it in at a glance. What follows is a series of divisions to give the newcomer a sense of how LA has divided itself up. Some of these areas will get written up in more detail later, but space prevents us from giving a guided tour to every hot spot in the city.

The first way to divide LA is the subsprawl and the floating cities.

The Subsprawl

The urban centers on the ground are called collectively the subsprawl. Like most cities, Los Angeles built up when anti-grav technology became available. Most of these "upper levels" are stacked two to four layers thick. For those of you new to a major metropolitan area, think of the levels as parking garages crammed with people.

Access between these levels is available through elevators, walkways, and skyscrapers that rise up through each level. Ambitious landlords and gun toting squatters have divided apartment complexes, houses, and burned out buildings into smaller and smaller units to provide room for all the people now crammed into the city. Most of these people work for sub-standard living wages. They are for the most part the non-Caucasian majority mentioned earlier.

Coincidence...?

SUBSPRAWL

ACCESS
BETWEEN
SUBSPRAWL
LEVELS

LIQUOR STORES

DRUG DEALERS

THE DOLE

ERVICE SECTOR

SURVEILLANCE
PROCESSING

Liquor stores are prominent throughout subsprawl; on some streets you can see six or seven from any sidewalk.

Drugs are also for sale, often openly. When the authorities arrive, the dealers are already gone. (Hey! The dealers know how to use communications gear to warn each other just like cops! We know that would surprise Moscoso—if he ever bothered to listen to the few beat cops who were actually interested in nailing street dealers.) The residents are almost always aware of what's happening—they can see the deals from their windows on a regular basis. Getting them to talk is another matter. The police almost never take tips from unnamed sources—and if you're identified as a squealer you almost always end up dead. For more on the matter of drugs, see the section on Gangs in the Organizations chapter.

Over twenty percent of the subsprawl population is on the dole at anytime—offering plenty of time for illegal activity, the ingestion of narcotics, or just plain old getting drunk. (Still the most popular pastime for the desperate and bored.)

Those with jobs work in the service sector, usually within one of two broad types of work. Surveillance Processing and Sales/Marketing.

Surveillance Processing involves all the work entailed in keeping tabs on everyone around you. Some operatives are hired on a part-time basis, like census takers, and simply wander their neighborhood for a week or so, keeping an eye out for any suspicious activity. Employees are paid on tidbit by tidbit basis. This encourages people to keep digging when they've gotten a sniff of something strange. It also leads people to make up clues and false accusations—or to at least stretch the truth. Other operatives are hired full time, and may spy on their neighbors for years.

Many positions in Surveillance Processing entail managing the flow of data coming in from operatives, processing said data, collating said data to compile suspicious activity profiles for people and neighborhoods, and fact checking the reports. The locust swarm of data that flies **upstairs** is so thick that it is nearly impossible to sort out what claims are true and which are false. This leads to one of three possible results:

- a) the data is correctly compiled, and acts of sedition are discovered and the authorities arrest or kill someone
- b) the data is incorrectly compiled, and the acts of sedition are missed completely
- c) the data is incorrectly compiled, and false acts of sedition lead to the arrest or death of innocent people

liquor stores: despite the prominence that drugs receive in conservative diatribes against the ills of society, alcohol is more of a problem on the streets of Los Angeles than any drug, and almost all drugs combined. Although liquor does not generate "economic violence" (ie: gunplay over turf, the import of contraband), its abundance across the county litters the streets with alcoholics and drinkers easily agitated to violence. Because countless liquor stores line every street, the down trodden are encouraged to spend their money on this legal and heavily advertised depressant. (By the way, that's heavily advertised in poor neighborhoods; you won't see many billboards for Uncle Ice Cube's Jism Enhancer Beer in Upper Beverly Hills.)

upstairs: specifically, slang for the floating cities; in general any offices of the rich and powerful

Note that in two out of the three of the results the data is incorrectly compiled, and that in two out of three of the results someone is killed or arrested. With everyone spying on everyone else, things keep hopping in LA. The city is rife with suspicion (not paranoia, because everyone *is* watching you). Most people feel completely justified in taking money to spy on their neighbors, because they've got every reason to think their neighbors are spying on them. "If I don't do it, someone else will," is the work ethic of the 21st century.

Sales/Marketing covers all the testing, sampling, and pre-packaging that takes place to move goods—vids, movies, guns, toys (toy guns), liquor, porn queens, and so forth out into the stores of LA, and then the world. Like Surveillance Processing, it involves a lot of wandering around by foot grunts, and a lot of number crunching once the data is collected. The difference is, everybody is up front about this kind of surveillance.

Surveys, focus groups, sample screenings/tastings/touchings are all part of the daily life of Los Angeles. (For you kids under twenty five, once upon a time you didn't see a movie three times before it was "released.") On a given day in Los Angeles you can see armies of survey takers wandering the streets, moving from door to door, nodding hello as they pass one another in the street. They might be working on products totally unconnected with each other, competing products, or the same product.

Sampler vid screens or taste tests line the sidewalks of streets and fill the corridors of malls. Often there will be Sales/Marketing surveyors surveying the Sales/Marketing techniques. Behind them, surveyors surveying the surveyors surveying the surveys. Competitors will slip their own people in survey areas as well, gleaning information from their opposition.

Moreover, sabotage is not unheard of. Competitors often send in "false" focus group testers to lie about their responses in an attempt to throw the surveys.

All in all, in a crowd of thirty people standing around an Uncle Ice-T's Jism Enhancement Beer, only two might actually be tasting the beer.

No neighborhood is overlooked. Everybody is a potential customer. Often a producer of a vid, or a new beer doesn't know if anyone is interested in their new product. They will find a market. As Mortie Rax of Media Giant International says, "If it's made, it's got to be sold."

SALES/
MARKETING

FOCUS GROUPS



floating cities: A misnomer. The cities do not actually float. The rest on thick pillars that support the cities in combination with massive antigrav generators.

Floating Cities

The cities that rise above the subspawl are called **floating cities**. Each floating city is anywhere from 50 to 300 square miles in size. Most are divided along grid street patterns, and have fantastic, elaborate skyscrapers built upon them. The most incredible of these is the Upper Hollywood platform. (Described in more detail later.) Most of the floating city's are named after the city beneath them in the subspawl, with the name Upper added before it. Therefore, one finds names like Upper Hollywood, Upper Beverly Hills, Upper Santa Monica and so on.

never receive direct sunlight:

Patches of sunlight might reach these shadow-ridden neighborhoods in the morning or late evening.

However even this meager window of opportunity is usually ruined by the subsprawl platforms and the skyscrapers that fill the subsprawl.

BreathLite™: A chemical pumped into the atmosphere that drives pollutants toward the ground. It was originally developed to enhance the effects of chemical warfare weapons, but urban planners saw the potential of the chemical when combined with floating cities.

As can be imagined, these huge platforms cast massive shadows over the subsprawl. There are a great many neighborhoods in subsprawl Los Angeles which **never receive direct sunlight**. The few palm trees that once lined the sidewalks are now dead. The lack of direct sunlight has a subtler effect on people who live in areas of nearly perpetual shadow. Humans need sunlight for their mental health, and knowing that thousands of rich bastards are living above you, robbing you of your sunlight, tends to make people testy. More than one attempt has been made to shut down the generators keeping a floating city's antigrav units working. None of the attempts have succeeded—yet.

The problem of blocked sunlight is compounded by the use of **BreathLife** sprinkled liberally through Los Angeles's air. The stuff keeps the floating cities free of the county's remaining pollution, while aggravating the problem for the inhabitants of the subsprawl. The net effect of all this, is that the floating city's have all the sunshine and beauty of the county's early days, by the subsprawl is kept in a nearly constant state of twilight.

Life at the top is sunny. Life at the bottom gray.

Got it?

THE L.A. GANG SCENE

Los Angeles has been a hotbed of street gang-related crimes since the Reagan Administration of the 1980s. At present, it is estimated that there are more than 100,000 gang-bangers in and around Los Angeles County. Each year, the LAPF logs close to 1,000 gang-related homicides.

First off, only the police refer to the gangs as "gangs." To the gangsters themselves, they're known as "sets," "crews," or "things" (as in, "man, when you gonna join our thing?"). The typical set consists of between four and four hundred youths and holds dominion over a piece of "turf" that ranges in size from a single city block to four or five square miles. In addition to the core membership, most sets have strong ties to another 4-400 "near-members," most of whom are younger relatives (as young as eleven or twelve, perhaps) or close associates of core members. Although the near-members often participate in the set's criminal activities, they do not enjoy the "honor bond" (see below) associated with formal membership. New recruits are always drawn from among the near-members, with invitations to formally join the set normally following an exemplary service performed on behalf of the gang (such as killing an enemy or

LACK OF
SUNLIGHT

POLLUTION

ORGANIZATION

NEW RECRUITS

SIGNS AND SIGNATURES

devising a new crime scheme). Actually joining a set is as simple as undergoing a formal initiation ritual designed to demonstrate the candidate's guts and grit (taking a beating from the other members of the set and pulling off a random killing are common).

Each set has its own specialized hand signals and mode of dress (known as a "signature") that allow its members to recognize each other. Most signatures consist of a gang color that is displayed on a pocket handkerchief, bandana, or pair of shoe laces, though other signatures are quite outré (alternating gold tooth caps, unusual hairstyles, etc). Entering set turf while accidentally wearing the signature of a rival gang is a constant danger in Los Angeles. Each year, dozens are shot simply for sporting a gold tooth cap or wearing the wrong color sneakers.



ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

Most sets make their money through a wide variety of criminal schemes ranging from selling narcotics (particularly "juice," see Chapter One of the *Underground Notebook*), to simple theft, to "brainjacking" (forcefully stealing the brain of an innocent bystander and selling it to an unscrupulous computer company for use as a bio-drive). Some sets make extra cash by performing special "errands" for shady corporate execs and government agents. Usually, membership in a set does not automatically

Gang Slang - A Partial Listing

Baller — a dope dealer.

Base — crack cocaine.

Basehead, Cluckhead — crack addict.

Bones—dominoes (surprisingly, a popular game among gang-bangers); dollars.

Break 'em off somethin' — hurt them.

Buddha — marijuana.

Chronic — a type of marijuana.

Clock—earn or acquire.

Cold — very; ie. "cold fresh" is "very sporty."

Ducat — money; cash.

Dis — disrespect, insult.

Down — loyal or friendly with (ie. "I'm down with the F-HOGs).

Fifteen — a 15mm pistol.

Finger — lieutenant

Fly — sporty or expensive.

Fresh — new or sporty.

G — gangster or gang-banger; alternately, guy or girl.

Gat — gun, usually a pistol.

Gauge — shotgun

Gear — clothes.

Get Busy — do something; alternately, cause violence

Grip — "seed money" for a criminal operation

Ivories — dice.

Jack — steal or rob.

Juice — powerful narcotic substances;

alternately, respect

Lampin — relaxing

Loc — crazy or violent ;

alternately, sun glasses.

the Man — police officer or government agent.

New Jack — new gang-banger or set.

Nine — a 9mm pistol.
Off-the-Rack — non-boosted human
 OG — original gangsters; old-time gang-bangers or sets.
Packed — armed with firearms.
Pointer Finger — most trusted lieutenant
Rock — crack cocaine.
Shank (or Shiv) — a knife; to stab.
Steel Deep — members of the same gang, as in "Me and Julio, we're steel deep."
Strapped — armed with firearms.
Stupid — very; ie. "stupid fresh" is "very sporty."
Tripping — acting irrationally.
Twenty — a 20mm pistol.
Wet Up — to kill.
Word — I swear; that's the truth.
Yay-o — cocaine.

entitle a gangster to a share of the profits earned by the set's criminal activities. Many gang-bangers are expected to organize their own crimes and provide for themselves. Although some sets run intricate and cooperative organized crime rackets, most are simply a loose collection of independent operators. The only economic benefit to joining a set is the protection of the so-called "honor bond"—if you mess with a gang-banger, all of his fellow set members are honor bound to stand by his side and help him mess with you. If you kill a gang-banger, his fellow set members are honor bound to kill you or another member of your own set. Because of this "eye for an eye" mechanism, a mistimed insult or accidental killing can easily escalate into a decade-long gang rivalry.

Most of the sets in LA belong to one of two loosely organized factions, the "People" and the "Folks." The members of the People all wear grey flannel as part of their signatures, and the members of the Folks all wear tweed (although no longer popular throughout most of polite society, three-piece suits are almost *de rigeur* for gangsters). The People and the Folks are such violent rivals, that the members of a set affiliated with one faction are usually automatically hostile to the members of a set affiliated with the other. The conflict between the two factions is so old that no one remembers how it started. You should note that not all gang rivalries exist between sets of opposing factions; in other words, it's not uncommon to find two Folks sets at odds.

Although most gang-bangers are "off-the-rack," some sets attract one or two boosts, and a few consist entirely of boosts.

GANG WARFARE

FOLKS VS.
PEOPLEBOOSTED GANG
MEMBERS

Although it is impossible to compile a complete list of Los Angeles gangs (police estimate that there are more than 10,00 gangs in the city), some of the most prominent sets are listed below:

Set	Turf	Members
Ten Ceasars†	Hollywood	500
F-HOGs (Figueroa Hustlers-OG)†	S. Figueroa St.	475
Tommy-G Club†	Hollywood	400
Rollin' 50s	Alameda	350
Diablos Rojos	Monterey Park	220
Funky Hill Mob†	Cypress St.	110
LBNJs (Long Beach New Jacks)	Long Beach	90
Blood Bastards†	Inglewood	90
Pueblo Crew	San Gabriel	75

Sets marked (†) are affiliated with the People, all others are affiliated with the Folks.

Why Join a Gang?

Because every gang member is the potential victim of a fly-by shooting or other act of random violence, most outsiders don't understand how the gangs continue to attract new members.

The obvious answer, of course, is that joining a gang provides a youngster with immediate access to the criminal big leagues. With a whole gang behind him for protection, a young criminal can commit ambitious and lucrative crimes that are generally beyond the purview of independent operators (in LA, for example, don't even think about selling narcotics without plenty of backup).

Less obvious is the fact that the gangs provide their recruits with senses of identity, family, and purpose that were always lacking from their impoverished lives. Every gang-banger in LA knows that it's just as likely as not that he'll wind up a fly-by victim. The gangsters simply don't care. To them, a few years of big money, power, and companionship are preferable to a long lifetime of poverty and hiding.



Chapter

TWO

Society Parameters: the seven parameters are as follows—

Wealth
Safety
Government Purity
Quality of Life
Education
Necessities
Take Home Pay

VID-MIX DONAHUE
TRANSCRIPT F521/EPISODE 4032
AIR DATE 2/16/2021

PHIL: I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

TOM CRUISE: BY WEARING THESE JEWEL-ENCRUSTED SHELL-CASINGS, WE'RE SAYING WE ARE TIED TO THE CHILDREN WHO DIE EVERY DAY ON THE STREETS.

PHIL: BUT THESE COST HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS. IT SEEMS AN AWFULLY EXPENSIVE PIECE OF JEWELRY—MAYBE THE MONEY COULD BE BETTER USED BY TRYING TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS IN THE SUBSPRAWL.

[APPLAUSE]

CRUISE: PHIL, IF THERE'S ONE THING WE'VE LEARNED, IT'S THAT MONEY DOESN'T SOLVE ANYTHING. IF ANYTHING, IT'S THE CAUSE OF ALL THE STRIFE BELOW US.

[APPLAUSE]

PHIL: SO WHAT DOES WEARING THE PIN DO?

CRUISE: WELL, I CAN'T SPEAK FOR ANYONE ELSE, BUT IT MAKES ME FEEL GREAT!

[APPLAUSE]

Listed Below are the cities of Los Angeles County. (Some of the listings are distinct areas of the city of Los Angeles, such as Watts.) Note that some of the cities are called Upper. These are the floating cities. Floating cities, although connected by roadway to the rest of the city, are distinct entities. The roads leading into them are well guarded, and they can be thought of as the walled city's of medieval Europe.

Meanwhile, the cities of the subspawl also have elevated sections. Their skyscrapers really do scrape the sky. Most also have massive platforms, sometimes layered three or four deep in a single community, provide space for more buildings and more people, all piling up higher and higher. In the land of earthquakes, it is only antigrav technology that allows these ridiculous structures to stand intact year after year.

After each city's listing are the seven **Society Parameters** from the US Census Bureau. Each rating is separated by a slash.

Remember that within each city, conditions in a particular neighborhood may be worse or better for any of the seven Society Parameters.

For example, a certain city block might be the innermost circle of Hell, while a few blocks away, things might be more like the third circle. Only a few of the city's are given a write up; most are simply abysmal places in need of help.

BELLGARDENS

5/6/6/8/9/4/11

Bell Gardens is struggling valiantly against hijacking of goods into the city. The Go-Boys and the Abolitionists are both striking truck shipments into Bell Gardens, wrecking an already fragile economy. The city is trying to hire boosted vets to act as security for the shipments (which come in from LAX and San Bernadino). But both Chief of Police Moscoso and LAPF division head Morgan refuse to allow it. Rumor is Moscoso is passing the **trucking routes** onto the gangsters for a cut of the action, but the man is as slippery as the Human Eel.

BEVERLY HILLS

17/14/3/19/12/18/19

This once posh home to movie stars and overpaid studio executives is now the posh home to drug dealers. Living out their fantasy along the lines of their favorite ancient vid hero (Al Pacino as Scarface) they while away the hours in their massive mansions, destroying and buying expensive furniture, and laughing with wild amusement as they imitate lines from famous gangster movies.

The dealers in the Beverly Hills are very wealthy, but the fact that they still live in the subsprawl should makes it clear they don't have the status they're mimicking. They're playing out fantasies handed to them from the folks with the real power, and playing them out in homes handed to them from people who deserted Sunset Boulevard as soon as the floating cities went up. They've got money, but who cares?

The dealers in the mansions are not the flare ups who are really at the cutting edge of the drug trade, out on the streets every day, listening to the stories of the streets. They've made enough money to separate themselves from the streets and live in a vid fantasy life. This means they've got to surround themselves with layers of cronies to keep their once street level operation running. This means they often make mistakes, because they really don't have a pulse on the traffic anymore.

BEVERLY HILLS,

UPPER

16/16/6/19/14/16/11

Upper Beverly Hills is where the real money lives today—real money backed with real power. The inhabitants are primarily Caucasian, working at the tops of the entertainment, biotech, munitions, and aero-

trucking routes: most cities and neighborhoods are cut off from major trucking distribution, because the insurance on such routes is so high. These communities are dependent on freelance truckers and boosted to get food into the stores. Such shipments are always at risk of hijackers.

Ronald Cox:
INT: 5, AURA 5
Business: 8, Charm 8

cosoperation: Extensive
cosmetic and physiological
surgery.

Cure Group: A fanciful
group, promoting the long
dismissed concept of 'social-
Darwinism.' The Cure
Group believes in the survival
of the economic fittest. More
than that, they believe that
society is injuring itself by
supporting people who can't
support themselves. They
advocate the extermination of
all people beneath the
poverty line.

space industries. Upper Beverly Hills is the most effective city in keeping out violent crime—at least crimes committed by gang members and minorities. It is, however, the home of slick serial killers and perverse cannibals. Each time strange murders begin taking place, everyone assumes an intruder has worked his way into their fortress-like city. Then, when some white, pent up freak who respectably owned a mansion down the street turns out to be the psycho, everyone exclaims, "Things like that don't happen around here." Go figure.

The mayor of Upper Beverly Hills is **Ronald Cox**, a die hard plutocrat with strong ties to the biotech industry. Now in his early fifties, he's a rebuilt **cosoperation** veteran with massive pecks and biceps. His hair is styled with gray on the sides. When he speaks his designer teeth flash pleasant white against his false tan. It is rumored that he's been the hand behind driving down research funds for the **Cure Group**. Nothing, however, has been proved. He's trying to put through a proposal to bring in more boosted vets as security guards for the city, but so far the council hasn't gone for it. There are three on the force now, and for most people, three muscle-bound potential loony-tunes armed to the teeth with guns is more than enough.



Squatter wars are ripping Chino to shreds. After a nerve gas spill last year, when authorities failed to evacuate the population because of a fund raiser all the top brass were attending, nearly a third of the residents died. Homeless from all over the county arrived, trying to claim a space for themselves. The city has tried to coordinate the new arrivals, but the squatters all have their own ideas about where they want to live. Fire fights between the squatters and the LAPF are frequent.

CHINO
5/5/5/4/6/6/10

chapter two

THE COAST
MANHATTAN
BEACH
4/5/5/4/3/6/10
REDONDO
BEACH
6/5/5/4/6/6/10
EL SEGUNDO
3/5/5/4/5/6/10
HERMOSA
BEACH
5/5/5/4/6/6/10
RANCHO
PALOS VERDES
7/7/5/4/6/8/10
ROLLING HILLS
ESTATES
5/5/5/4/6/6/10

THE CORNER
ALHAMBRA
5/7/8/4/6/4/14
ARCADIA
7/7/5/4/6/7/10
AZUSA
8/7/8/4/8/7/10
BALDWIN PARK
7/7/5/4/8/10/10
EL MONTE
8/7/5/4/9/6/10
GLENORA
6/7/9/4/8/7/10
MONROVIA
5/7/8/4/8/9/11
SAN GABRIEL
6/8/6/4/8/6/9
SOUTH
PASADENA
3/7/7/4/5/9/10
TEMPLE CITY
6/7/7/4/6/5/11
WEST COVINA
5/8/5/4/6/6/12

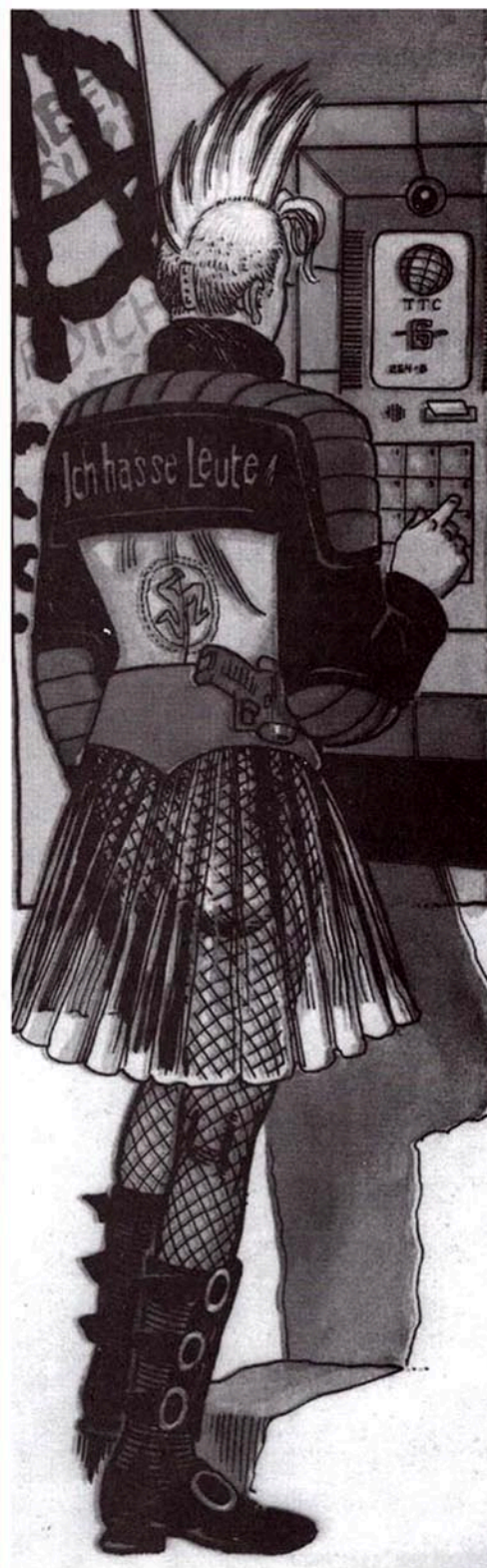
"The Coast" is comprised of the cities listed, plus smaller Los Angeles communities, such as Venice. The coast line is now garbage strewn, with industrial waste, oil spills, and dead fish piles so thick on the beach that often no sand is visible. The water simply laps up against the garbage. Most of the money in these communities is part of the drug trade; ships carrying drugs arrive somewhere along the coast hourly.

Rancho Palos Verdes is the wealthiest of the Coast cities. The gangbangers try to emulate the wealth and opulence of their Hollywood cousins, but have yet to pull it off.

Collectively known as "The Corner" these cities are found north of the San Bernardino Freeway, and west of Hell's Jungle. Rigid law enforcement conducted by boosted mercenaries have allowed the crime situation to stabilize. However, since hiring boosted breaks the county's contract with LAPF, all transactions of this sort take place under the table.

Many citizens of these cities have discussed separating themselves from LA county and forming their own county. Certainly their tax dollars would be poured more directly into their own communities. However, because they do have good set of wealth parameters, it is doubtful the county would give the cities up without a fight. The threat of a civil war is not what anyone is looking for, and yet that seems to be where the Corner is headed.

In particular, Alhambra is building a strong sense of community. The above-average LA Government Purity rating reflects a lack of corruption among city officials in regard to the city itself. In their dealings with country, state, and federal officials, they're like black market dealers behind enemy lines. Axis Electronics is the backbone of the city's economy, and



the new work they're doing with 3D entertainment might shoot the city up to the top of the subsprawl economies. Right now Axis is paying almost nothing to its employees, but promises that when profits and timing hit stride, everyone in the city will share in the benefits.

Corona manufactures black market Axis Electronics 3D entertainment clones. It is suspected that the People's Front for the Obliteration of Three-Dimensional Entertainment, which recently claimed credit for several attacks on Alhambra and Irvine Axis Electronics facilities, is actually a Corona based citizens action committee out to give Axis a tough time of it. Axis has yet to send agents into Corona for payback, but if the suspicions keep growing, it's only a matter of time before guns are pulled openly on both sides.

CORONA
7/5/5/4/6/6/10

The cities of Claremont and Pomona pulled their resources two years and incorporated as the Corridor Cities. They are the gateway into Los Angeles along routes 10 and 15. Through clever marketing and graft ploys, they have made it easy to get both contraband and legal goods into the city. By investing a great deal of thought into computer linking, they know where any truckers goods will get the price anywhere in the county. Thus, they help direct traffic of most land shipments into the county. The rest of the county has noticed this, and many cities and neighborhoods try to stay on good terms with the Corridors Cities, even going so far as to send "emissaries" and tithe's to the leaders.

**THE CORRIDOR
CITIES
(CLAREMONT/
POMONA)**
14/5/6/7/8/12/9

Culver City is quickly falling apart after the placement of John Sitwell on the county board. The Culver City board has actually tried to play straight, and that was fine until the County Board lost Mary Bromley in the election against Sitwell. Now, with the incompetent Sitwell running things, the county officers expect Culver City to pay it's share of graft. The Culver City board has refused, and suddenly the LAPF isn't hanging around as much as they used to. Gangs, notably the CBs, have rushed into to fill the vacuum.

CULVER CITY
5/4/12/4/8/6/12

Technically, Downtown LA is the city of Los Angeles, located at the heart of Los Angeles County. Most people call it Downtown, or Hell's Forest.

**DOWNTOWN LA
(HELL'S JUNGLE)**
2/2/4/2/2/2/10

The area was the first in the United States to utilize the antigrav technology in an attempt to open up the space for work and living in an overcrowded city. The result, after much work, was a three dimensional maze of concrete, steel and glass. During the riots of 2017 police strike, the area gutted itself. Bombings of skyscrapers left buildings without power, water supplies, and even weakened structural supports so that huge cracks now run up and down some of the buildings.

It is now a playground for the violent and disenfranchised. Drug deals and gun deals go down on a regular basis, and **death whores** go down frequently as well. Most of the power systems are now off the city grid; they're small, privately owned units controlled by people who own a city block or two, or portions of skyscrapers. The area is the site of LA's most intense gang fighting. Runaways, outlaws, and zipped out vets all gather in this rotted landscape to lay claim to something. Gun fire is used indiscriminately, because the cops seldom patrol the area. Walls are wrecked and streets split open—all testament to advanced fire power and the clash of boosted combatants.

It should be made clear, however, that Hell's Forest is not some sort of sanctioned militarized zone. Many, many people live in the area, most of them the poorest people in LA. As rents are almost non-existent, and illegal goods sold and traded at incredible discounts, the area draws hundreds of thousands of people each year, searching for shelter for themselves and for their families. Although the Los Angeles Peace Force may have forgotten about them, these people are still a major portion of LA's population and it's heartbeat.

East Los Angeles its way toward the bottom of the crime pool. The city's efforts for economic recovery were shattered after several buildings burned to the ground while fireman stood by, watching. The tenants hadn't paid their donation money to the department—a kind of surcharge added onto the firemen's tax-based salary. Riots broke out in response, and—surprise—they destroyed their own community. With the firemen stepping completely out of the picture—they were targets for gunfire—several business strips were lost, killing a small boom cycle before it had reached fruition. Relations between the community and the fire department are still strained, but the practice of donations has been stopped for now.

Located at the edge of the county, these cities are also the cutting edge of new technology. The Edge is home to most of the aerospace and

death whores: sexually transmitted diseases run rampant, and only the high priced call girls of the floating cities can afford the expensive drugs required to stave off the diseases. Sex with prostitutes in the subsprawl is like playing Russian Roulette. However, most gangbangers, sex with such a woman is a test of manliness. A real man, they believe, should be able to stave off any diseases a woman might "try to slip

EAST LOST
ANGELES
4/5/4/4/5/7/9

THE EDGE
BELLFLOWER
8/5/9/6/11/5/9

munitions companies in the county. The Long Beach Naval Shipyard is working at full tilt, producing war vessels for Third World nations who can't afford boosts to defend their shores. The Fermi AeroSpace Amalgamation makes it's home here, as well as Wet Weapons, and

Gimme' Dem Weapons.

Although graft is common in the Edge, most of its citizens don't complain. The graft usually involves greasing the palms of county, state, and federal officials, which allows jobs to continue to grow. The industrial base is actually picking up speed.

Of interest are the laws that encourage the munitions manufacturers to send their product out of the Edge. Selling guns in Norwalk is allowed, but you get a better city tax break if they're shipped to Hell's Jungle. The city of Los Angeles has tried to impose high taxes on guns sold within its borders, but the gun smuggling trade, now a thriving business as the sales taxes have gotten steeper, is thwarting these efforts.

The Blood Bastards turf. Money, but most of it's in the hands of drug dealers and developers playing ridiculous games with federally funded real estate deals. Does Gardena need another community youth center? Not really.

CERRITOS

8/5/4/8/9/5/8

DOWNEY

8/5/6/9/12/5/9

LA MIRADA

7/5/4/4/13/5/9

LAKEWOOD

8/5/4/8/12/5/12

LONG BEACH

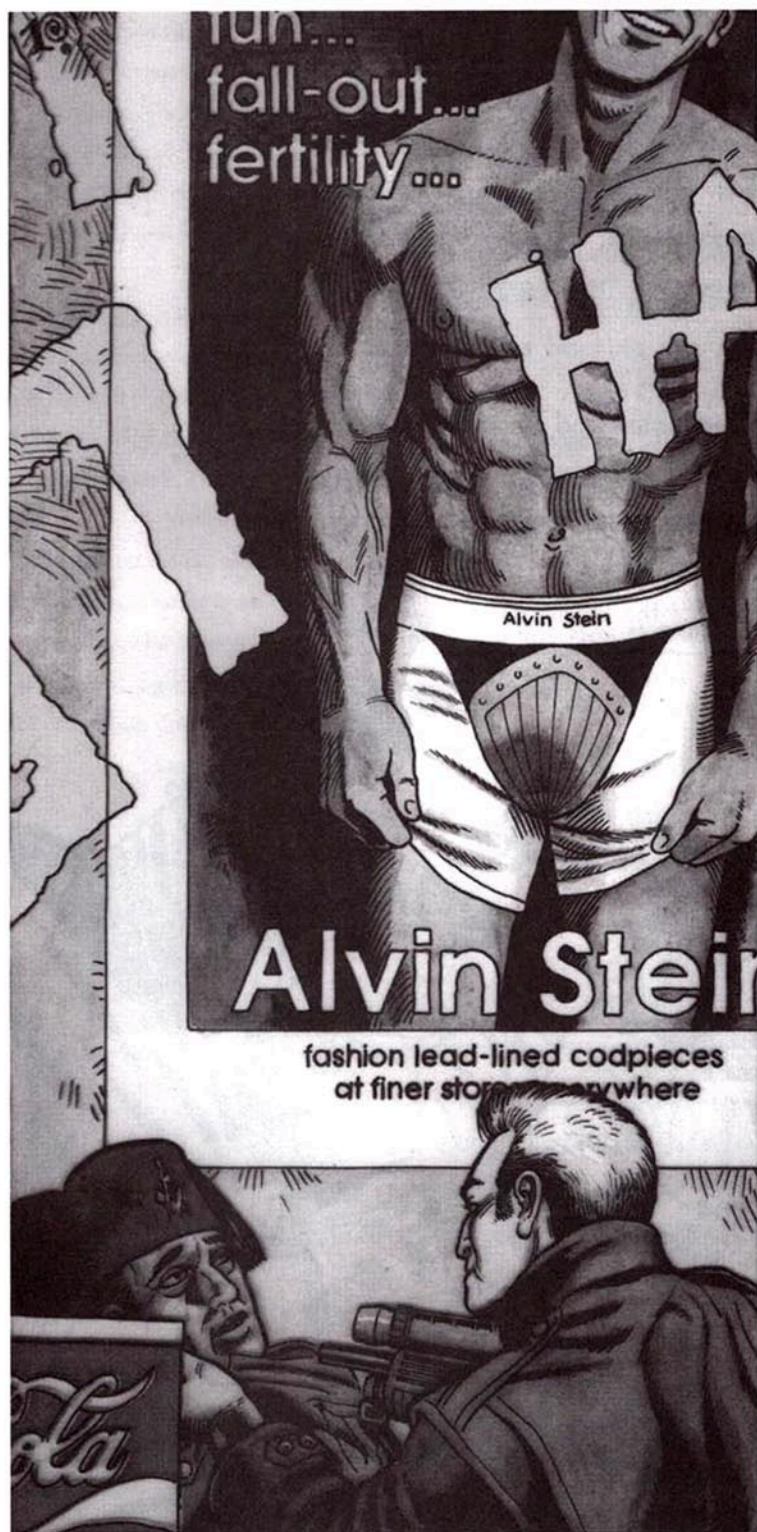
10/5/5/9/13/5/9

NORWALK

8/5/4/8/5/10/11

PARAMOUNT

8/5/4/9/5/10/10



HAWTHORNE
7/5/8/6/7/7/10

They really need to reclaim the three that have been lost to gangbanger in the last ten years.

A community that's doing well by LA standards. However, as the wealth moves up, the gangs move in. After finally putting the last of the Scarface Dogs to rest two years ago, the city has had a chance to get back up on its feet. Unexpected cooperation with the LAPF (from Morgan, not Moscoso) led to a lock down on new gangs entering the area. At the time it wasn't worth the trouble of new gang to come into town, so the LAPF could pat itself on its back for its good work. But now...? Rumor has it the Jim Crows are scouting the area out after their heavy losses to the T-Bones in Burbank.

HOLLYWOOD
3/3/7/4/5/6/13

Hollywood, once home to screenwriters and actors and a major tourist strip, is now run down and home to the desperate. The low bungalows that line the streets are now cut up and crammed with countless poor, most of whom spend their time knocking back beer promoted by vid celebrities and beloved boosted sponsors. The lawns are dead—nothing but dry dirt. The palms, once a major staple of Hollywood landscaping, are dead, having fallen over years ago from the perpetual shadow cast by Upper Hollywood.

During the day young gangs wander the streets rolling easy marks, and even making a **brainjacking** or two. Drug dealing is plentiful, and Hollywood is a major crossroads of traffic in LA. Located at the center of Sunset Boulevard, the city has easy access to the other

brainjacking: forcefully stealing the brain of an innocent bystander and selling it to an unscrupulous computer company for use as a bio-drive.



Agent Cooper:

STR: 4, DEX: 3, SPD: 3,

INT: 3 WILL: 3, AURA: 2

Business: 6, Gun Combat: 7,

Streetwise: 7, Thief: 9,

Vehicles 7

"Yo, yo, yo, stop your tripping. We'll get you all juiced, and then we'll talk a bit about that decat you owe me."

Home Free:

STR: 3, DEX: 3, SPD: 4,

INT: 3 WILL: 4, AURA: 2

Charm 9, Gun Combat: 6,

Streetwise: 7, Thief: 9,

Vehicles: 6

"You can wet me up, sure. But I think you'd rather know what the Emperor Jones has to say about that grip coming down the Ventura tomorrow."

sections of the city. Tuesday mornings dealers from all of the county come to pick up drugs from the Ten Ceasars Gang and the Tommy-G Club. Tasty GhouL restaurants are packed with hustlers and distributors cutting deals. No transactions take place at such public places, of course. Trade for drugs usually takes place in countless homes across the community. Often home owners or renter will "host" the final trade in exchange for a bit of the action.

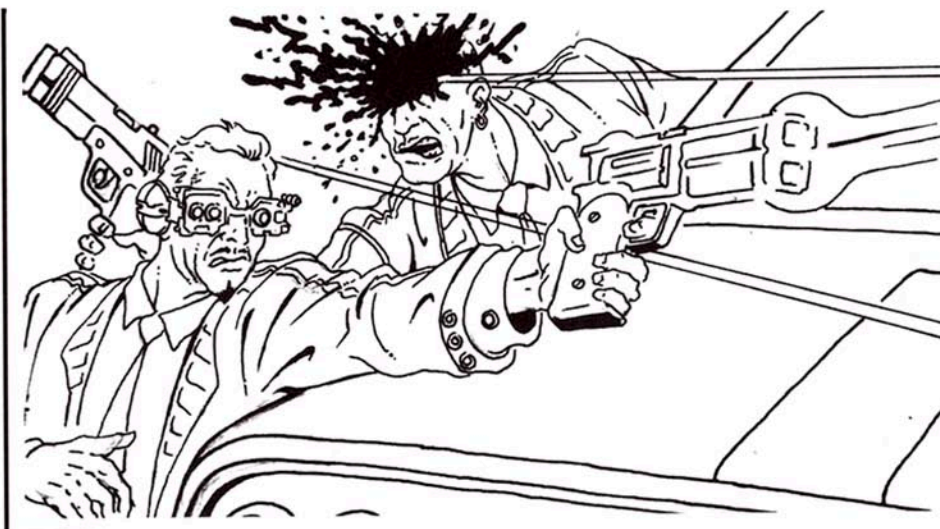
Two Hollywood dealers with intense clout are **Agent Cooper** and **Home Free**. Agent Cooper is a Ten Caesar's dealer, who not only distributes drugs throughout Hollywood, but handles the deals for smaller gangs throughout the county. He dresses in tweed suits, and usually has a couple of thugs backing him up, both pumped up with strength enhancement drugs. Agent Cooper is always ready to deal. He prefers negotiations over violence. There's a chance he has the lowdown on some low-life or high-life, and often turns someone else in rather than take the fall himself.

The tourist industry is not dead in Hollywood. A type of entertainment called safaris started in Hollywood, and have spread out throughout the city. Safaris are now popping up all over the continental US.

Simply put, the levels of violence consumers get via vid whets the appetite, but leaves a deeper hunger. The need for true violence, triggered by the programming, but not satisfied by sitting around as a passive viewer, leads the viewer to want something more. That's where safaris come in.

For the most part the hunters are Caucasians for the floating cities. Their guides are low-lives from the subsprawl. The prey? Other low-lives from the subsprawl. Gang members get paid by bored white-lives to lead them around and help them beat people up. Often the pathetic employers need somebody bloodied before they do any dirty deeds themselves. Thus, the gang beats up some confused crash-head, and when the guy is in a coma, lying paralyzed on the ground, white-life walks over and gives him a few kicks for good measure.

So far safaris have not been broadcast as part of a regular vid series. Their appeal lies in their secretive nature. And no one with a respectable life wants to voluntarily go on the air and commit manslaughter. But a few newsvid crews have caught some of the safaris on camera.



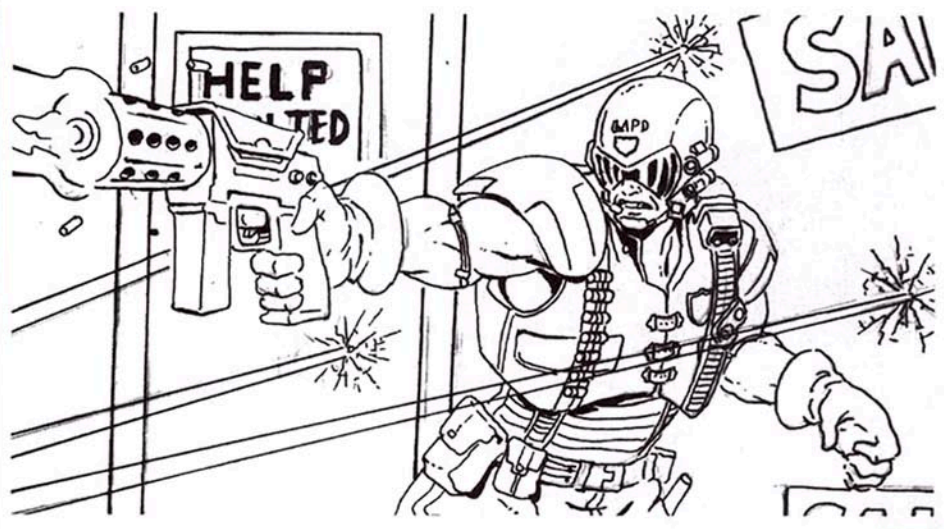
This has sent about a half dozen citizens from upstairs to jail. It has also prompted a new set of legislation in the LA council, at the backing of several citizen action committees, to "protect the rights of common citizens from the intrusive measures of the popular media."

So folks, if you've ever wondered why it's the penniless brain-hack in the subsprawl always gets busted on drug possession charges, while the exec upstairs doing cocaine with his secretary in his chrome office at two in the morning gets nothing from the LAPF but requests for \$8,000 dinner banquets, it's this: The brain-hack is a number for getting funding after a job well done. The exec a pig with enough fat to make him more valuable outside of the cell. You want the law to protect you from the law? Move upstairs.

The buildings of upper Hollywood are all made of green glass. There's an old movie, called the Wizard of Oz, and rumor has it the architects of Upper Hollywood agreed that the Emerald City from that movie would be the model for the dream factory of the world. When they were done, they had a strange sight that glittered green for miles around. When traveling by plane to LA on a clear day, the first thing you'll see, before you can make out anything else, is the green beacon of Upper Hollywood.

Upper Hollywood is the home of the entertainment industry. It's here that the decisions which put street gangs to the tops of the charts are made. From here, within heavily guarded security stations, the vids of LA are broadcast out to the world. Careers are made and shattered. And not just the careers of entertainers and killers. Politics is currently at the peak

HOLLYWOOD,
UPPER
20/16/8/17/17/12



of the Age of Imagery. Talanted vid and film producers can be lured to which campaign may break or make an election. And certainly no politician does anything to garner the wrath of Hollywood after the Arnold Schwarzenegger/Dan Quayle debacle of twenty-fiveyears ago.

The city's biggest problem are media terrorists and media pirates. The terrorists try to disrupt the daily business activities, believing that through violence they can stop Hollywood from showing ridiculous amounts of violence. In fact, the carnage they inflict on office workers and screenwriters is simply shot and added to episodes of ¡Streetfight! and other reality based violence programming. Media pirates spend time breaking into broadcast signals and re-routing optical cable feeds so their political messages are receive by people sitting front of their vids rather than the programming the vid owners expected. The usefulness of this strategy has yet to be determined. Surveys (there are always surveys, even for media pirates) suggest that most people watching the political message simply get very angry.

Bound by the 110 and the 710 on the west and east, and trailing down from Hell's Forest to the coast, this collection of cities is a disaster. The area takes its name from the many gangs that roam the area. Nearly lawless, almost without basic necessities, Home Base is still one of the most densely populated area in the county. Most of the area's city councilmen live in the very pleasant city of Upper Santa Monica. Taxes are low because there's no one making money except drug dealers.

Vigilantes have found the area fertile ground for prowling. On any night casual glances out the window reveals dozens of brooding

HOME BASE
CARSON
3/2/6/3/4/4/12
COMPTON
1/1/6/3/4/3/15
BELL
3/2/6/2/4/3/12
HUNTINGTON
PARK
2/2/4/3/4/3/14
SOUTH GATE
3/2/5/3/4/3/14



LYNWOOD

3/2/6/3/4/3/9

WATTS

2/1/4/4/6/7/15

WILLOW BROOK

3/2/5/3/4/3/11

heroes basking in the smog filtered moonlight, all on the prowl for a kill. The situation is so bad the LAPF let the vigilantes have their way. Innocent people killed by accident receive cursory investigations, but most people consider the deaths of the innocent a worthwhile price to pay for the deaths of criminals. Until, of course, someone they love is popped.

INGLEWOOD

6/4/5/4/6/6/10

Inglewood has good relations with the county government. They're trying desperately to get Sitwell to throw some more LAPF their way, but it won't happen until Chief of Police Moscoso gets some grease.

LAWNDALE

5/4/10/9/4/6/12

A community attempting to funnel tax dollars away from the LAPF and into their schools. It's not easy. Education isn't easy in LA. But they are making progress, getting the educating rating above LA's parameter rating of six. So far the Lawndale council has used only legal means to hang onto the city's taxes—but as the county tries to apply more pressure for more bucks, it's bound to get tense. And in LA, that means guns.

LOS ANGELES

3/5/5/4/4/6/10

The city of Los Angeles lies at the heart of the county. It includes several large communities, some of which are given separate listings here (such as Hollywood, or Hell's Forest). A network of ruined buildings and roadways snake their way across the landscape. Drugs, gangs, liquor stores, and high explosives are all a part of the world that its inhabitant deal with daily.

The real news is that the CBs, who recently had a stranglehold on the loose turf of LA, is now getting heat from the Tommy-G Club. Since

DBs: one of the more militant gangs, formed by a corporate merger between the Crips and the Bloods. Their activities range from typical street rumbles right up to high-level drug, technology, and weapons dealings.

they got their contract with Mortie Rax for ¡Streetsfight!, they've got cash to burn. They're spending it on recruitment and better weapons. A new gang war is about to erupt, and the city is going to catch hell for it.

Monterey Park is currently backed by a group of boosted vets who call themselves the Bitter Tears. Comprised of The Weaponsmith, Fiery June, and Beta Test, the vets have helped kick the gangs out. The community is beginning, slowly to up it's wealth. The next step—The Bitter Tears are trying to root out Monterey Park's graft in the city council.

MONTEREY
PARK
9/5/5/5/6/7/10

Separated by a long range of hills and the Ventura Freeway from the rest of the county, and thus know collectively as the Other Side. These communities are not discussing succession in the manner the Corner cities are. Instead, they are building up the defenses along the hills in an attempt to slow traffic down between LA and the Other Side. Of course, there's still a great deal of crime, and a terrible gang problem. The goal of the Other Side is simply to stop the influx of new criminals into the area.

THE OTHER
SIDE
BURBANK
12/5/4/4/6/5/8
GLENDALE
7/8/4/7/6/6/10
PASADENA
6/9/5/8/6/6/10
THE VALLEY
8/8/7/7/6/8/9

The Valley is technically a part of both Los Angeles, the city, but has done everything it can in recent years to distance itself. Anyone working in the valley must move there, in order to cut down on traffic into the city's heart.

Adjacent to the Hollywood/Burbank airport, this city serves as the entry point for most drugs smuggled in by air to the county. From the airport the drugs are brought to Hollywood, and then distributed to lower dealers throughout LA. Despite the terrible Government purity rating, it's actually very difficult to get the drugs in. Most of the smugglers are trying to bypass both Burbank's and the LAPF's outstretched hands, and getting the drugs in without bribes is not easy. Still, every flight arrives with drugs cleverly disguised in computers and other goods. Boosted with mind altering and animal controlling enhancements aid in the operations, keeping guards and dogs looking the other way.

The DBs own Pico Rivera, and have stabilized it. Things aren't terrific, but the DBs keep most people from drawing guns. The drug traffic is ridiculously heavy. People come from neighboring cities to pick up narcotics. The people in the town are trying to make a choice. Some quiet nights for a while, or send the traffickers packing.

PICO RIVERA
7/5/5/4/6/6/10

chapter two

SANTA MONICA
12/7/8/8/8/10/9

Benefiting from its location beneath Upper Santa Monica, lower Santa Monica is quite comfortable compared to the rest of the city. The rather steady peace, however, is frequently broken by LAPF raids, for the city is a hotbed of political action group, some unregistered, seeking to overthrow the county government and dump the contract with the LAPF. The raids are loud, bloody, and indiscriminate.

SANTA MONICA,
UPPER
15/11/4/14/14/14/7

A chrome-bright floating city, now the seat of both LA County and the city of LA. LAPF protects it very well, and the standard of living, high above the real city of Los Angeles, is one of the best in the county. There is no gang violence to speak of, though terrorist attacks rock the city about three times a week.

TORRANCE
8/5/5/5/6/5/10

Above average wealth in a community that has LA average ratings in the other parameters. This is due mostly to the

brisk drug trade in Bellflower. Most of Bellflower's city council is on the take. The Zorros and the Back Homeboys are running a distribution network that extends through all the surrounding cities. They make a point of hitting the Bellflower community the least in drug sales, so the money they bring in has made them heroes for many people. The truce between the two gangs has been in force for three months now—unprecedented—and we'll see what happens in the future.



Chapter

three

THE BRICK
STR: 9, DEX: 6, SPD:6, RES:
8, INT: 4, WILL: 8
ACROBATICS: 10, GUN
COMBAT: 14, MARTIAL
ARTS: 13.
CHITIN: 6
"I'LL BE BACK."

GANGSTER ETIQUETTE

- 1) Don't squeal. You'll die.
- 2) Don't steal from the gang. You'll die.
- 3) If you're told to pop someone, make sure you do it right. If the pseudo corpse can identify you, you're more than as good as dead. You'll die.

ORGANIZATIONS

Below are some of the groups and people who make LA tick. In a place as large as LA, of course, it'd be impossible to detail all the gangs and flakes making things so interesting around here. But this should give you an idea of what you're in for.

CULT OF ARNIE

(WACKO CULT)

The Brick is a worn out boosted vet with a solid clientele along the southern end of Hollywood. He usually works for the Brat Packs, a gang tied to the Tommy-G Club, but has been known to do odd jobs for gangs throughout LA. The Brick wears a costume made from the colors of the American flag, stripes and all. He's a user himself (though he must ingest large quantities of the drug to overcome him boosted defenses). More notably, he fashions himself a virtual reality prophet. He believes that the future of the world is the world of drug induced hazes and Slumberland dream parks. Reality, he thinks, was just a phase for humanity, one we will leave behind in a few decades. He has written several megabytes on the subject, and will whip out his portable computer and show them to anyone who is interested. Key among his ideas is this one:

"When one considers the goals of every human being who has ever lived, it is clear that the last thing anyone has ever wanted is to be alive. To be alive is to be limited. We always want more, but the finite nature of reality has stopped us every step of the way. The key to happiness is obviously to have everything you want. Only in an imaginary world is this possible. We must focus our energies on bringing all of humanity to

a state where we never have to really be alive. Then we can all be happy. Only then will we be truly alive."

The Brick also gives away drugs to users, cutting into his own profits, because he's so impassioned about this issue. "Escape," he says, "is the imprisonment we all desire."

The Brick has gathered around himself a cult about one hundred strong, with about a half dozen boosted in the membership as well. The

group meets in the remains of the Hollywood Chinese Mann Theater. The cult is called the Cult of Arnie, and their totem is an old stand-up cut-out ad display for the **missing action-adventure hero Arnold Schwarzenegger**. In the lobby of the theater the group has emblazoned the words of Schwarzenegger upon a bronze plaque, as quoted from a June, 1993 article in GQ Magazine.

They gather in the theater every Friday night. The meetings are one part drug den, one part movie nostalgia, one part improvisatory theater. The usually overweight mem-

bers gather and consume mind-numbing, body-debilitating substances. Then, they operate just barely functioning movie projectors, showing the old Schwarzenegger series classics: Rambo, Terminator, Punch & Shoot, as well as other action adventure movies. While most of the group sits in the worn out seats in the house, other members stand up and act out the scenes from the movie at the base of the movie screen.

The performances of the cult members are even more leaden and lacking in interest than the movies themselves (giving a whole new understanding to the word improbable). The re-presentation of the movies are devoid of any sense of character, motivation, drama, hope, or passion. Each action is merely a switch to get out the next kick in the face, bullet through the eyeball, ripping off of the arm, splitting of the chest, blowing up of the helicopter, or whatever. In these movies we see the precursor of ¡STREETFIGHT! and Combat, Combat, Combat!

Yet cult members are fascinated by the spectacle. They delight in commenting on the quality of the kills, jerking themselves off on the

missing action-adventure hero Arnold Schwarzenegger: Schwarzenegger vanished in the jungles of South American in 2002 while promoting the third Punch & Shoot movie. Although it is believed he vanished without a trace, rumors persisted that his body, in a coma was flown back to Los Angeles and put into suspended animation.

CULT'S FETIS
PROPS

RULES FOR BEING A HERO

Never blink your eyes when you shoot—you look weak if the noise makes you blink. § If you want to show power and anger convincingly, never move your head when you say your line. John Wayne never moved his head. You can only move your lips; that shows you are ballsy. § Show no emotions: You're above emotions. § Never skip or hop; you must sprint or take powerful strides. § When you are going up or down the stairs, never look at the stairs. § When you are reloading a gun, do not look at the gun. Look at the victim. Practice a hundred times so you can reload without looking. § Every gesture has to separate you from the rest of the bunch if you want to play a stud.

WORDS OF SCHWARZENEGGER June, 1993

CULT RITUALS

tech-fetish flashes, cheering a well-placed punch as if a punch by itself meant anything.

Although such a group would seem harmless, they are in fact capable of causing trouble throughout LA. Only a unique and special focus could bring these lazy louts off their seats and into action, and their cause is as obscene as their entertainment. It is nothing short of the search for Arnold Schwarzenegger's body. Rumors abound that after his disappearance a film studio found his body (just barely alive), flew it back to LA, and had it frozen.

If there is anyway to confirm this, it would be to fly down to South America and check the story there. That's far too much effort for the Cult of Arnie, however. They look for their hero in Los Angeles, and make no effort greater than that. They are, as a group, responsible for break-ins, theft, assaults, arson and other assorted crimes in their search for Schwarzenegger body.

There is a certain genius to The Brick's plan. The old action-adventure films have stood up very well in the market place, and Schwarzenegger's are among the most popular of these. Boosted heroes utilizing his face and movie-based paraphernalia all are very popular. If Schwarzenegger's body can be found, then a new hero—one capable of mobilizing hundreds of thousands of people, if not more—will be let loose upon the world.

CULT'S MISSION

CRIMINAL
ACTIVITY IN LA

VALUE OF
SCHWARZENEG-
GER'S BODY

FERMI
AEROSPACE
AMALGAMATED

FERMI AEROSPACE AMALGAMATED (Aerospace Tech/Airline Giant)

With its main offices located in Downey, and factories found all over the the Edge, this young company has taken over the aerospace industry. Their new space planes continuously roll out the doors, snapped up by corporations and governments throughout the world. The key to the company's profits is that it does not sell the space planes, it merely rents them out, as it has done with its successful intercontinental airline subsidiary. The company trains the flight staff, steward staff and so on, so that a trip to Luna or back is more luxurious than most hotels in Cairo. Parties, balloons for children, free movies are all a part of the good time. Says maniacally driven co-owner "Mississippi" Sageman, "People pay for what they want, and they pay more for what they really want."

Rumors abound that the company's space planes and airplanes are staffed by spies who work overtime to get as much info from passengers as possible. By coordinating information of flight itineraries, they can track the movers and shakers of the world. Luggage and brief cases are

SPY RING

BATTLE BOTS PROGRAM

supposedly to be glimpsed at whenever possible, if not ransacked. Yet all of this is no more than a rumor, the passengers are kept ridiculously happy, and word of mouth has driven the profits through the roof.

Funds from the success with the space planes have recently been diverted to a new branch of the company headed by laconic co-owner Russ Babrod XII. The company has an obsession with developing giant, robot war machines to replace the boosted warriors now so popular throughout the fronts of the world. Whenever anyone points out that boosted warriors are more economically sound, Babrod replies, "But we like giant robots."

F-HOG Gang

(Gangbanbers)

Led by Trip-Top, the F-HOGs are one of the more infamous street gangs to wander Los Angeles. (See the Notebook for more information on Tri-Top.) They have a large number of boosted in the gang, making them quite powerful. Psychological handicaps, however, impede the gang's ability to keep a powerbase. After losing their Media Giant International contract to the Rollin' 50s gang, they've managed to get coverage on

¡Badguys!, Pop In the Night, and a guest spot on the wildly popular vid show The Tortinis. However, such appearances don't generate either the targeted audiences nor the money that they received as part of the ¡STREETFIGHT! line-up.

Their turf runs down the length of South Figueroa—turf they have only recently returned to. In attempt to build a new powerbase for themselves, the gang tried to crash the Santa Monica. Their theory was to hit a neighbored that wasn't as riddled with crime as



Hammerjack:
 STR: 7, DEX: 6, SPD:4, RES:
 8, INT: 4, WILL: 7
 Acrobatics 12, Gun Combat
 13, Martial Arts 14,
 Streetwise:8.
 Chitin: 4
 "I hope you like getting the
 crap kicked out of you,
 gat bait."

Hell's Forest, thus allowing them more dramatic exposure. But upon arriving they landed in the middle of several fly-by shootings, leaving several of their members dead. The Los Angeles Peace Force at first attributed the shootings to a turf war started by a Santa Monica gang. Later investigation suggested it was an attack made by the Rollin 50s in an attempt to wipe the gang out. This is the theory that holds sway right now. Certainly the F-HOGs quickly returned to Hell's Forest and launched into an intense gang war with the Rollin 50s that is quickly destroying the area.

Key members of the F-HOGs are PC-Mother and Hammerjack. Each has several contacts for getting contracts from major corporations to act as thieves and saboteurs against competing corporations. This is what allows the F-HOGs to call Los Angeles their home, rather than needing to rule one small piece of turf.

For more information on PC-Mother, see the Notebook Section.

Hammerjack makes it his business to be the strongest guy around. Whenever new blood enters Hell's Forest, Hammerjack hunts the person down and fights him or her. He's less interested in winning than in finding someone to give him a good time in a fight. He wears a steel-gray costume with thick protective goggles. His strategies include attacks from the rear, and trying to get debris to rain down upon his opponent. The debris can come from any source, but it's usually chunks of buildings shattered by his AMI Char-Baby.

MUSCLE

GIMME' DEM WEAPONS, INC.

(Munitions Manufacturer)

Headed by Earnest "Let Them Buy Crap" Candle, this Long Beach based company produces guns with an a terrible track record in the field. As a subsidiary of Allied Mayhem, the Senate subcommittee investigating the Sidewinder Scandal has linked several of Gimme' Dem Weapons's assault rifles to a general tone of cynicism prevalent in the munitions industry. Comments from Candle such as, "All anyone cares about is anarchy and violence," and "We didn't make them buy our product," have not endeared his company to Senator Thomas of California.

SIDEWINDER
 SCANDAL

However, no charges have stuck. Tests conducted by the California Consumer Protection Agency have yet to find a statistical correlation in breakdowns of the rifles. Suspicions of pay offs from Candle to the CCPA have of course circulated.

CCPA GRAFT

Said a disgruntled former employee during the hearings, "We'd slap guns together just to generate fast cash for the next gun. Word from on top was we'd finish it later in another edition of the gun." Said employee,

Sandra Holmes, is now dead, killed in the cross-fire of a gang fight.

Coincidence?

Also, the company recently lost a loyal consumer base. Gimme' Dem Weapons had acquired a reputation for it's excellent Sojourn Series guns. The elaborate detail—design lines unheard of in the post-modern age—kept collectors watering for more. When Candle took over, however, he stripped the line down to the bare barrel and trigger. "People just want to shoot things," he said. "I'm giving them the ability to do that."

Rollin' 50s

(Gangbangers)

Bishop, after the South African leader Bishop Tutu, is the self-proclaimed leader of Hell's Forest. His gang, ROLLIN' 50S, is several hundred strong and backed with an exclusive ¡STREETFIGHT! contract from Media Giant International. No other gang has the clout or draw of the ROLLIN' 50S, and most of the gang's cash flow comes from the studio.

Bishop is a thick muscled man who keeps his head kept completely shaved. His yellow eyes seem to pierce anyone whom he confronts. His face is almost always expressionless, except when he thinks something that someone says is funny. Then he barks out a quick laugh. Unfortunately, most people fail to see the humor in what they just said, leaving a horrible and disquieting feeling in their gut. Only Bishop knows if he's leading people on with a bit of a psycho play, or whether he really does have a completely whacked out sense of humor.

Rumor has it that Bishop is looking to expand his power base in Hell's Forest and take over the entire area. Both criminals and criminologists alike believe such a strategy is completely unfeasible. But such dire warnings only seem to spur the gang leader on. If he should pull together the area's ridiculously violent and thickly populated criminal element, he would have a military force on his hands capable of staging a revolution in Los Angeles that could in fact take over the city.

Captain Video, Bishop's pointer finger, is a boosted vet with combat experience down in South America. More information can be found on her in the Notebook pages.

Bean Counter is Bishop's front woman, a self educated street-urchin who has raised herself to be one of the best PR reps any gang in Los Angeles could ask for. She's twenty eight, dresses fabulously, and spends equal time in the floating cities and Bishop's turf. It was her persistent negotiations that got the ROLLIN' 50s its exclusive contract with Media Giant International, knocking both the Ten Ceasars and the

Bishop:

STR: 8, DEX: 5, SPD:6,

RES: 8, INT: 6, WILL: 8,

AURA: 4

Acrobatics: 10, Gun

Combat: 12, Leadership:

10, Martial Arts: 14,

Streetwise: 11.

Control: 8

"Ha, ha, ha."

Bean Counter:

DEX: 3, SPD:3,INT: 4

Business: 10, Gun Combat:

8, Martial Arts: 7,

Streetwise: 9.

"You want blood? We can

get you blood."

GANG LEADER

PLANS FOR
EXPANSION

GANG'S PUBLIC
RELATIONS

Emperor Jones:

STR: 5, DEX: 3, SPD:3, RES:

3, INT: 3, WILL: 3, AURA: 4

Acrobatics: 6, Streetwise: 7,

Gun Combat: 7,

Leadership:8, Military

Science: 11.

"You want some of this!"

Then laughter.

Tommy-G Club down a few notches, and pushing the F-HOGs completely out of the syndicated spotlight.

Her efforts may be drawing in plenty of cash from sponsors, but the ill feelings caused by her negotiations has sent the ROLLIN' 50s into a bloody street war with the F-HOGs. It recently came to light that the series of fly-by-shootings that have rocked LA are the direct result of this war. Both sides are not only trying to wipe the other out, but keep media interest high.

THE TEN CAESARS GANG

(Drug Lords)

A primarily African-American gang consisting of about several hundred regular members, and led by the impressive **Emperor Jones**. Their turf covers ten square blocks in Hollywood. They're one of the wealthiest gangs in LA, and have taken over several ruined mansions in lower Beverly Hills. Of all the gangs in LA, his has jumped through the most hoops to mimic the styles of the nearly antique Warner Brothers gangster movies. Tailors are brought to their homes to get the cut of the suits just right. In the mansion's screening room E. J. and his fingers and hangers on watch the films over and over again. During meetings and deals they try to slip as many lines from the movies into the conversation as possible. While knowledge of the movies doesn't guarantee a secure place in the gang, it will go a long way to gaining E. J.'s trust.

As a leader, Emperor Jones is uniquely terrifying. He might as

GANG'S LEADER

well be Al Pacino doing Scarface at the end of the movie—given to temper tantrums, flinging cocaine about wildly, screaming at a person inches from his face. Although only twenty-two years old, he stands over six feet four inches, lending horrible credibility to his outlandish performances. And, as far as anyone can tell, they are perfor-



ACCOUNTANT

mances. Rumors have floated out of the mansion that after he meets with someone, he and his fingers laugh and laugh—repeating the more intense moments of psychotic behavior over and over the same way some people constantly review lines from a vid. Such an interpretation—that E. J. is faking his behavior—makes sense from a certain standpoint. He has proven himself a mastermind of moving drugs into Los Angeles and out into the streets. However, some empaths who have scanned him claim he really is insane, though such readings are always “soft”. The question comes up then—at what point is the most powerful gangster in Los Angeles lying, and when is he revealing his true nature.

E. J.’s pointer finger is **Hammer Claw**, who despite his formidable name, is only five feet four inches. His shiny black head reflects whatever light is available in the room. He handles the accounts for E. J., and his nick name comes from his ability to rip out a profit from any situation. He’s college educated—a BA from UCLA on a scholarship—and knows the ins and outs of the law from his own studies. Claw is rumored to doctor the books that corrupt LAPF officers examine for a cut of their own action. Thus, he’s got the real books, a set of doctored books for the IRS, and then a final doctored set of the doctored books for the county. No one’s been able to prove it though. However, many a crooked cop is waiting for the gang to screw up its accounting so they can grab a greater share of the profits.

MUSCLE

E. J.’s main enforcer is a boosted named Gingerblack. For more information about him, see the notebook section.

Earnest B is one of E. J.’s best dealers, and is representative of the other top fingers that are part of the Ten Ceasars gang. Well dressed in an antique style suit, Earnest B looks like a fifteen year old

Hammer Claw:

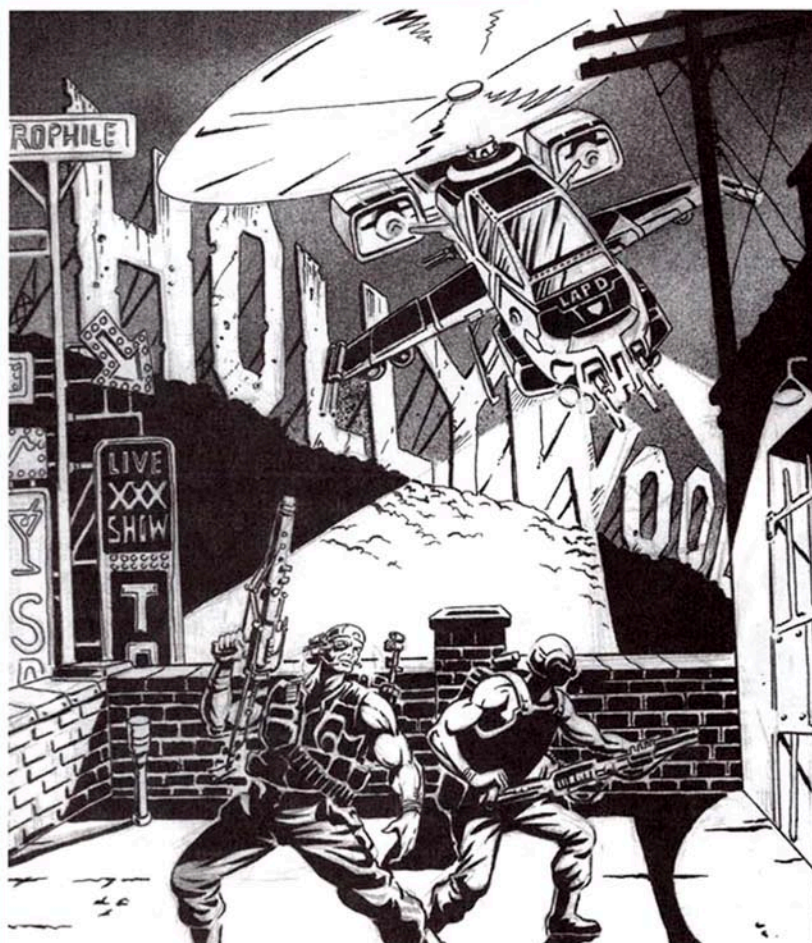
STR: 2, DEX: 3, SPD:3,
RES: 3, INT: 6, WILL: 3
Acrobatics: 5, Business: 11;
Gun Combat: 8, Martial
Arts: 6.

"If we contract them to kill each other, at least we don't have to pay one of them."

Earnest B.:

DEX: 3, SPD:3,INT: 4,
AURA: 6
Business: 6, Charm: 10,
Gun Combat: 6, Martial
Arts: 8, Streetwise: 8.

"Hey, kid, feeling drooped? Come here. I've got something that'll pick you right up."



Firecracker:

DEX: 2, SPD:3,INT: 3

Martial Arts: 7, Streetwise: 6.

"I'll never forget what they
did to my mom...."

bought the national debt:
slang for dying.

street burps: slang for low
lives; the people who live and
vanish without any significance
in the world—like a burp.

unexpectedly ready for his first day at the office. He's got a killer smile, and an easy attitude with the kids. This lets him pass easily through throngs of children on playgrounds and in the streets. There, he seeds future customers by giving out samples, explaining how it's "the Man" who doesn't want you to do drugs, and if you want to be swift, you've got to try the stuff. Kids then pass drugs onto their friends. In this way addicts are born, keeping the gang in business for years to come. Like the other top fingers of the gang, Earnest B is fiercely loyal to E. J. and its members. Each one of them is convinced that they'll never live to be twenty-five anyway, so they're more than prepared for a bloody shoot out rather than surrender. Of course, the LAPF are protecting them from most vigilante assaults, so they don't really have to worry about that much.

Firecracker is a fourteen year old kid, a Hispanic, who is the mansion's houseboy. He joined up with the Ten Ceasars a year ago, acting as an undercover agent for the Rainbow Crustacean. When the Rainbow Crustacean **bought the national debt** in his final battle with Dr. Professor, Firecracker was left without a contact to the outside world. A few of us have tried to make contact with him, but he's terrified of discovery, believing that only the Rainbow Crustacean can help him. He seldom leaves the house, and when he does, it's always in the company of E. J. or a finger.

He's determined to wait for the Rainbow Crustacean to return from the dead. Since in all the vids that's invariably what happens, it's a reasonable assumption. Unfortunately, this ain't no vid, and if someone doesn't make contact with him soon, not only will a valuable contact be lost, but his edginess might betray him to E. J. and his fingers.

THE TOMMY-G CLUB

(Drug Lords)

The turf of the Tommy-G Club is in Hollywood. The gang is primarily Hispanic, but a few Caucasians are allowed to tour the ranks to keep relations up with the LA's white clientele. Although they outnumber the Ten Ceasars, they don't have a boosts backing them up. This keeps their edge sharp, but prevent them from moving into the Ten Ceasars' lucrative territories.

Like the Ten Ceasars, the Tommy-G Club has take over several abandoned Beverly Hills mansions and devour old vid paraphernalia.

The Tommy-G Club's clientele is not limited to the **street burps** of the subsprawl. They've moved a large segment of their business upstairs, catering to work-numbered bureaucrats. The gang also runs several high profile escort services out of Upper Beverly Hills and Upper Hollywood.

RACKETS

GANG LEADER

Ownership is hidden amid several feet of legal paperwork, but the connection could be made with the right work.

Mr. Hits is a fifteen year old drug-dealer wunderkind. Legend has it he started trading narcotics for guns at the age of seven. Since then he collected around himself the best salesman available in LA. The driveway of his mansion is constantly receiving limo of street dealers trying to cut into the big action. Few get the deal they came for, and most give up more for a chance to work for him than they thought they would. He also shuttle upstairs frequently, via his chopper, to deal directly with city officials and particularly wealthy clientele. It is his hope to legalize prostitution within the county limits. So far opposition has been stiff. He's fighting an uphill battle, for few politicians and civic leaders want to acknowledge their ties with Mr. Hits. Fighting for a piece of legislation he drew up would make it impossible to ignore the connection.

MUSCLE

Jaguar is the gang's best hit man. Although not a boosted, street-story has it he might as well be. He's got an intuitive sense about how people live their lives, picking up the patterns of behavior with the slightest clues. A hit depends on information like this. The idea is to look for the proper opportunity to pop the pseudo-corpse where there'll be few witnesses, and at a time where the body can be disposed of easily. (Planning a murder ahead of time is usually a good idea if you don't want to get caught. It's those crimes carried out at the last moment that lead to retaliation—you have to make up lies on the spot, with bit of blood and hair leading a trail right back to you.) All of this is Jaguar's specialty. He can go after the toughest of cases—people who live their lives to be safe from hits, and find the window of opportunity in the pseudo-corpse's schedule. Although a psychopath, some call him an artist of his profession.

Replay is the Tommy-G Club's chief operator on the streets. Each day he heads downtown, dressed in a pinstripe suit and spats, distributing of cocaine and other narcotics to lowlife dealers who then farm out through the streets like old-time newsboys hawking their wares. Replay walks with a sprightly step, usually humming. It's Replay's job to make sure the dealers aren't using the stuff without paying, and paying their full cut of what they sell. Most dealers try to get around this by cutting the drug to increase the amount they have to sell. But as this reduces the buyer's level of addiction, most gangs frown on the practice. Inquiries are never held. The innocent die along with the guilty.

Mr. Hits:

DEX: 3, SPD:3,INT: 4,

AURA: 4

Business: 9, Charm: 9, Gun

Combat: 7, Leadership: 9,

Martial Arts: 6, Streetwise: 9.

"You may *think* that's what you want, but—Here's what I think you want."

Jaguar:

STR: 6, DEX: 6, SPD:6,

RES: 6, INT: 6, WILL: 6,

AURA: 6

Acrobatics: 12, Gun

Combat: 14, Martial Arts:

12, Streetwise: 12.

"He'll be dead tomorrow at 4:35. That's when steps out onto his patio after watching the newsvid."

Replay:

STR: 3, DEX: 2, SPD:3,

RES: 3, INT: 3, WILL: 3,

AURA: 4

Business 4, Gun Combat: 3,

Martial Arts: 2,

Streetwise: 5.

"What you tripping for? I

Replay's here, and the sales can start again!"

CUTTING DRUGS

MEDIA GIANT INTERNATIONAL

The Dark One:
STR: 5, DEX: 4, SPD:5, RES:
8, INT: 5, WILL: 5, AURA: 2
Artist (kineviolence
cammerwork) 10, Gun
Combat: 9, Martial Arts: 9,
Streetwise: 11.
Empathy: 7
"I can't believe what
I do for a living."

MEDIA GIANT INTERNATIONAL (Entertainment Producer/Distributor)

Ruled by the nocturnal Mortie Rax, MGI has built a reputation on presenting hyped-up real-violence shows. Programs such as jSTREET-FIGHT!, Terrorist Counterstrike, and One, Two, Three, Blam! have skyrocketed the station to a top money making enterprise. The programs are marked with plenty of split skulls, walls washed red with blood, deranged, troubled people babbling incoherently about Papal plots, and inordinate amounts of ordinance. When questioned about cramming so many bleak images of the world into a single evening of vid, Rax replies, "Sure there's too much blood and violence. It's cartoonish. By cramming so much violence together, we're pointing up the ridiculousness of violence. It's ironic! We're making a *comment* about violence. Thankfully we're making a profit off that comment as well." Calling yourself ironic may not make it so, but MGI proves its close.

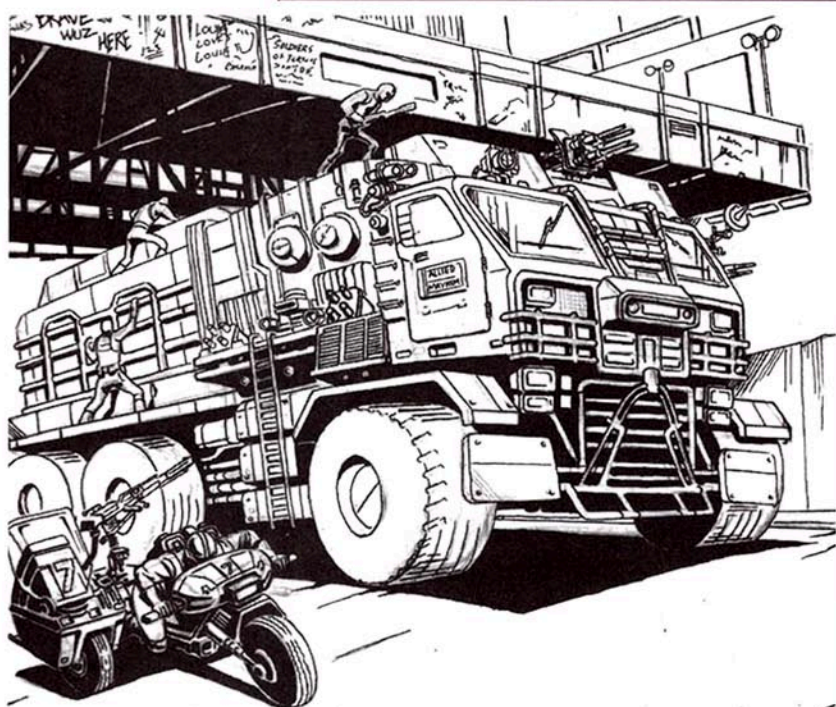
Vid crews follows gang members around when they war with each other, often contacting the crew so they can be taped as a kind of audition for ¡STREETFIGHT! If the gangs do a good job, lucrative contracts are often signed that can generated thick incomes, as well as getting media exposure. The exposure allows the gang members to be hailed as role-models, which gets the dealers in good with community leaders and potential candidates for the gangs. Says a spokesman for the Ten Ceasars Gang, "When we took over ¡STREETFIGHT! our Q-rating went through the

roof. We are cool *because* we're on vid. And if you don't believe me, watch how many young ladies come by and ask me for my autograph while I'm dealing."

Vidmeister Mike **"The Dark One"** Night, is the man with the best odds at making a star out of gangsters, terrorists, and other media-seekers. Says one Hollywood insider, "Don't let the dour face

THE JOKE WINDS
IN ON ITSELF

VID CREWS
TAPING
VIOLENCE



fool you. He knows talent." He's a boosted vet who was assigned on the **mo-pic** division of the Allied Mayhem forces. Dressed in a perpetual black outfit, the Dark One wanders the streets of Los Angeles, seeking out potential mayhem. "There's an art to this," he'll comment wearily to anyone who will listen. "You need a clear conflict model, you need violence. You need something that people who have no lives of their own will want to watch. Apathy and inaction breed anger, and the art is in finding the conflict that lets people identify with the violence, while still, ultimately, doing nothing but sitting around. The trick is to give your audience entry into the show. They want to feel important for watching it."

Adds Rax, "Punch and Shoot. That's how I think of it. Strip it down. It's ready to roll."

Unconfirmed rumors pit Rax and the Dark One against each other, battling over the direction MGI will take. According to Hollywood insiders, the Dark One favors some sort of narrative, involving, if possible, a kind of hero. "Heroes are hard to come by, I know. But people want them. The audience desires to be a cut above the rest, and a moral high ground provided by the viewpoint character offers them that." At hearing such words Rax snorts and says, "We call them heroes. They're heroes. They're all out there shooting. People don't care. Strip it down. It's ready to roll."

Whether this split will ultimately tear the company apart remains to be seen. But it provides a ripe battlefield for those who might want to strike out on their own and grab a valuable media platform.

THE PROCURIA MALL

(Mega-Temple to Shopping)

This Upper Beverly Hills mall is the shining testament to Los Angeles consumerism. Six floor high, covering eight square city blocks, it is a veritable self contained community. Most of the shop keepers and staff have homes within the complex. Playgrounds, gardens, virtual reality units, gun shops, sex clinics, fast food restaurants, and fine dining wind their way through the mall. Some corridors are narrow and tight, others wide and cavernous reaching several stories high. Even the inhabitants of the mall get lost, and new comers invariably have a tough time of it.

Security is tight in the mall, but that doesn't prevent gang warfare and boosted bash-fests from breaking out regularly. (Suspensions constantly surface that many of the fights are sponsored by the Procura's management. Certainly, many people who come to lounge at the mall are eager to see a fight.) Chief of security is **Shriekback**, a boosted with sonic dis-

mo pic: motion picture division of armed forces.

Records events in combat and off for documentation and research. Much of the AM mo pic footage was used to kick off the real violence programming now filling the air waves.

Shriekback:

STR: 6, DEX: 7, SPD 7,
RES: 7, INT: 5, WILL: 6,
AURA: 8

Gun Combat: 9, Martial
Arts: 15, Streetwise: 8.

Sonic Discharge: 8

"Too bad the rest of you is
as soft as your brain, punk."

Mall Squad:
STR: 5, DEX: 4, SPD:3, RES:
5, INT: 3, WILL: 3, AURA: 2
Acrobatics: 10, Gun Combat:
10, Streetwise: 7
standard issue: GCS DW
777/g, Heavykev suit, Heavy
Mondo armor

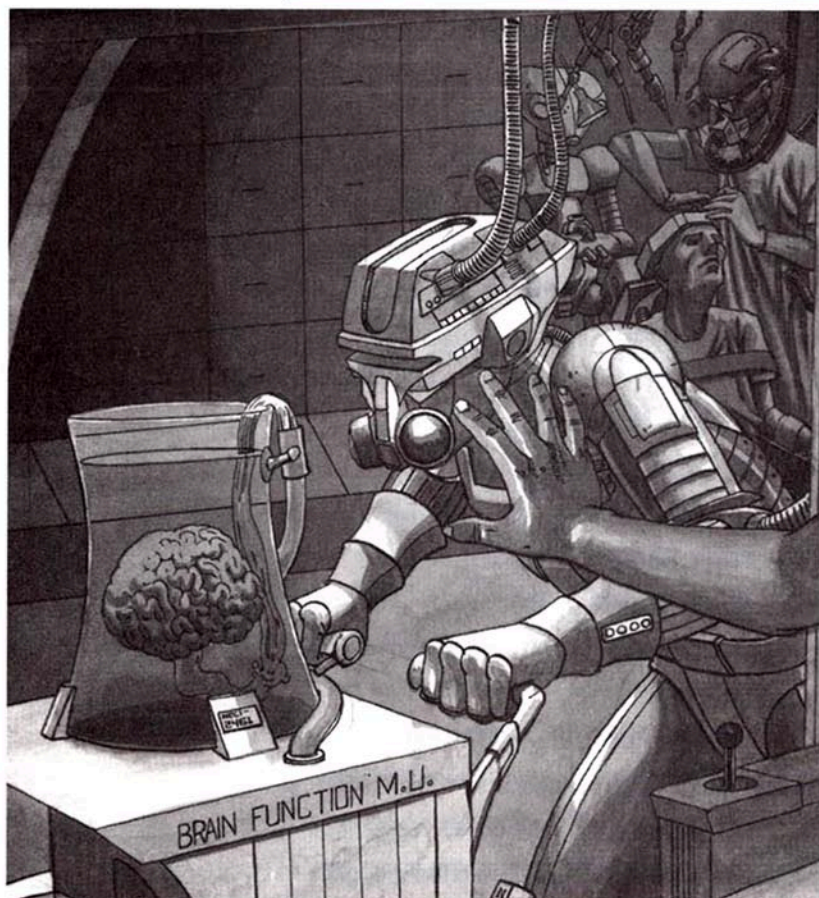
charge. She's called a "hardcase" behind her back, and the name is deserved. She seldom cracks a smile, and speaks with the crisp military rhythm of a military intelligence officer.

Wearing a painted on leotard, she is as much of an attraction in the mall as the stores themselves. Boys often fire off guns in the attempt to get her rough them up. Their efforts are always in vein. Shriekback never shows up unless things are really out of hand. Up until that point the **Mall Squad** takes care of petty matters. Wearing black uniforms and opaque visors, they look as if they'd be more at home in the employ of a right wing dictator than an LA mall. But then, times are strange.

It's well known that the cave-like corridors of the mall serve as the site for many a brainjacking. Shriekback says she's doing all she can on the matter, but efforts to curtail the crimes have been fruitless. Mindless shoppers turn up everywhere one looks. More insidiously, rumors persist that the Procura management is behind the brainjackings. That, in fact, the entire mall is nothing but a front to lure thousands of people under the pretext of blowing off steam by buying items they neither need nor can afford, then popping them for their gray matter. Certainly a brain storage facility could be hidden somewhere in the labyrinth of the mall.

BRAINJACKING
CONSPIRACY

MALL CEO



Elizabeth Turner, CEO of the mall, of course refutes such claims. She also refutes the claims that the mall is far too violent, that theft is on the rise, that no one is really safe in her shopping paradise. "If people were really in danger of losing their lives," she says, "I'm sure they'd stop coming." Mid-forties, always dressed in a sharp-edge business outfit, Turner looks like a barracuda approaching for a quick bite. She has a no non-sense approach toward everything. Her concerns right now are squelching

CITIZEN ACTION GROUP



CCPA GRAFT (YET AGAIN)

LAWSUITS

the chatter about rising crime in the mall. She's put out a call for boosted to apply for security, but everyone who applies must get by Shriekback, who seldom approves of anything or anybody.

Hu Li is the Mercantile Community Leader, representing the interests of the merchants and their families within the mall. Although he owns a gun shop featuring Wet Weapons munitions, his loyalty truly seems to be with the people he represents. It is his contention that Turner and her board are not paying enough attention to the problems of the mall. It is not just the consumers who are killed in the firefights and the brainjackings, but the permanent inhabitants as well. The merchants are very upset and want more done. Whispers of a possible rebellion sometimes reach the Underground. It is clear the Procuria is more than a place of work; it is a home as well. As long as Turner refuses to acknowledge that fact, she risks alienating the very people who make are mall work. They might well take it upon themselves to try to run the mall themselves.

TRI-SYNAPTIC RESEARCH, INC. (Pharmaceutical Research Company)

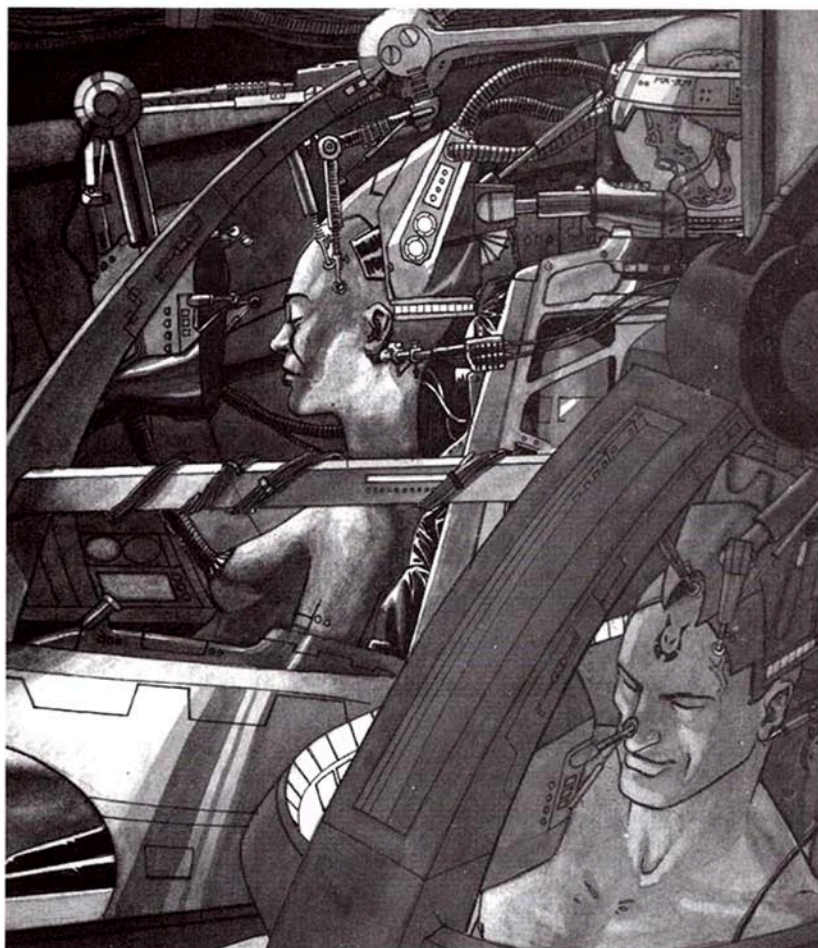
Located in Upper Santa Monica, this pharmaceutical research company has a lock-hold on new Slumberland amusement park pharmaceutical patents. The company is responsible for monitoring the neurological activity of guests of the park, and equalizing the brain patterns with drugs that, supposedly, have no side effect.

They have recently released a series of non-prescription hallucinogens to the general public, known collectively as Advanced Designer Drugs. ADDs are supposedly non-addictive, and the power-fantasies they produce are supposed to relieve the violent tensions of daily life without relying on actual violence. Some critics claim, however, that the ADDs are more lethal than even Slumberland.

Does anyone know for sure? Nope. Why? Could it be because our good friends the CCPA handled the drug testing? The final reports, buried and lost in the CCPA's files, and only recently dug up by the Sterling Streak during a daring break in, revealed that the CCPA's dubious approval of the ADDs rested on this dubious conclusion:

"And so, with testing complete, we cannot find, with certainty, that harmful effects will follow the use of the ADDs."

Tri-Synaptic Research has already started a law-suit against the Sterling Streak, and the AWAKE political activism conclave which sponsors him. The suit rests on the 2019 Allied Mayhem case, where the courts ruled in a narrow majority that, "In cases where the nation's econo-



my may be severely effected to the negative, government agencies have the choice, if not the responsibility, to hide incriminating consumer reports from the consumers."

This lawsuit is just one of a series of lawsuits started by the company. The most infamous of these is trademark infringement suit with Genesis, Inc, another pharmaceutical company based in Dallas Texas. The two companies are suing each other over the use of the word "Drug" in their products. Said a Tri-

Synaptic Research spokesman, "If you think about it, when people think of drugs, they think of our company. We were the first to push through the legalization of fantasy drugs. Our company is drugs. All we're asking is that Genesis simply stop using the word. They can call their product something else. We've offered a list of alternatives—substances, powders, pills—and they simply refuse to budge on the matter."

While some experts wonder whether words that have been in common use for centuries can in fact be owned by a single company, Judge Harold Biteman, sitting on the case, quipped, "Hell, they're rich enough to own anything they want. Why not a word?"

The companies have recently hired boosted mercenaries to attack each other. Several dozen innocent bystanders have been wounded in the attacks. Moreover, medical supplies produced by the two companies have been destroyed, leaving countless people in need of medication without their regular drugs for short periods of time.

Heading up the company's R&D is Doctor Professor, a boosted genius. For more information on him, see the Notebook section.

ADVANCED DESIGNER DRUGS

His two pet projects are the aforementioned Advanced Designer Drugs and the Slowburn Prerogative.

The ADDs are designed to fire certain responses within the neurological patterns of the brain. Most kick off aggression and lust thought patterns, alternated with fear-retreat responses and anxiety responses to liven things up. Each of these patterns are fired through a pre-determined sequence contained within the coated layers of the pill itself. Thus, as a pill dissolves, the user might first feel anxiety, lust, fear-retreat, aggression, aggression, aggression, anxiety, lust, lust, lust.

PASSIVE ADVENTURE

Throughout the fantasy sequence an "overlay" drug keeps the person sedated, so that he does not actually act out physically the neurochemical commands from his brain. While sedated, the consumer of the drug dreams consistent with the responses the drug is firing in his head. Thus, when lust responses kick in, he creates a sexual fantasy to "explain" the firing of those neurons. The same is true of the aggression responses and so on. Thus, the dreamer dreams an enforced fantasy which is more dramatic and "real" than real dreams. The images of the fantasy are driven by the dreamer's imagination. Medieval Fantasy. Near Future More Grimness. Feudal Japan. Whatever. These elements almost don't matter in the face of the chemical stimuli—fear and aggressions, fear and aggression, fear and aggression, fear and aggression, with a little sex thrown in for good measure.

Of course, his body is going insane during the fantasy, thinking it should be running or jumping or kissing or touching—really thinking it should be doing these things—while instead the body is just sitting there, doing nothing but thinking it's doing these things. Is this good? No one will know until the market itself becomes the test sample for side-effects.

The Afterburner Prerogative is a very-secret-project, which, by all reports, involves some sort of psychic enhancements. We've been unable to get anything specific, however.

LEGAL THREAT

Head of the company's security is Matt Johnson, aka **The Gavel**, a boosted vet with a keen legal mind. He wears a costume of deep, courtroom brown. His chief boosted enhancement is bomb, and he uses it to trash opponents, and then, when applicable, he drags them into court for a lawsuit. The Gavel often attends banquets and public events in costume, preferring to keep the fear of the courtroom closely associated with the company. He has a jovial sense of humor, and combined with his good looks and silver streaked hair, he's a popular speaker—especially at schools. The company also hires him out to other companies for a substantial fee. Few corporate-whores cause as much trouble for members of the Underground as The Gavel.

The Gavel:

STR: 9, DEX: 6, SPD:7,
RES: 8, INT: 9, WILL: 6,
AURA: 7

Administration:14, Business
15, Charm: 12, Gun
Combat: 12, Martial Arts:
13, Streetwise: 12
Bomb: 7

Leaping: 6

"Kids, you can break the
law. Just don't mess with a
wealthy corporation."

Cooing Crow

STR: 8, DEX: 8, SPD: 5, RES:

6, INT: 5, WILL: 7, AURA: 9

Charm: 14, Gun Combat: 14,

Leadership: 13, Martial Arts:

11, Social Science (Mexican,

Plain Indians, Northwest

Indian): 6, Streetwise: 9

Claws: 8

Leaping: 6

"When the red fires of man
bake the earth, then the pure
shall live and carry on the
true traditions of life."

UBANGIS

The Ubangis is a primitive tribe in direct conflict with the Yanomamos primitive tribe. Both live in the sublevels of Hell's Jungle, and each is trying to eradicate the other before they move on with their plans to put the world right again. The Ubangis are led by **Cooing Crow**, who believes that the world will end in a fiery, atomic-holocaust within the next ten years. He is over seventy years old, and of the last generation who has the memories of the threat of nuclear holocaust buried near his nightmares. (Not the threat doesn't exist anymore, but it's just not on everyone's mind.) For an old man, he is exceptionally agile, giving credence to his claim that living as a primitive insures a long life.

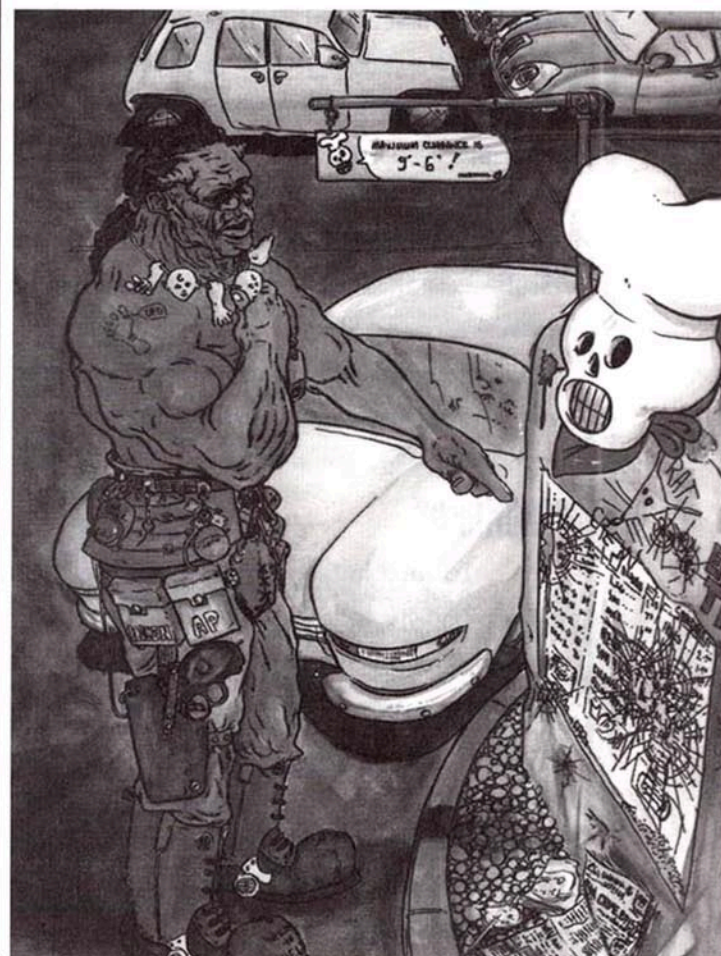
He has no plans to encourage a holocaust. Humanity's foolishness, he believes, will take care of the matter. His efforts are directed toward getting his people to a place of safety for the upcoming holocaust. He and his tribe of one hundred men, woman, and children are constantly scouting out new underground shelters and stocking them with supplies. So far they have seven well fortified bunkers capable of supporting the entire tribe for four months.

They want more, however, because the Yanomamos tribe is constantly seeking out their shelters and trying to destroy them. Their actions are response to the Ubangis attempts to thwart Clay Feet's biological holocaust. Cooing Crow has his heart set on a fiery, purging blast of atomic weaponry, and Clay Feet's plot doesn't provide for this. More important, Clay Feet's plan would circumvent the Ubangis shelters.

(Primitivist Tribe)

TRIBAL LEADER

TRIBE'S PLAN



WET WEAPONS, INC.**(Nouveau-Hip Munitions Manufacturer)**

The bad boys of the munitions industry, with corporate headquarters recently moved to Lakewood. Although new to the scene, they have taken the streets by storm. "Guns make us make responsible choices," says co-owner "Bullseye" Puck•Meister. "When we put a gun in the hand of a twelve year old, that child has to confront the fact that he can take another person's life. We see guns not as a means of killing, but as a chance to explore the inner workings of the soul." Co-owner Stuart Candle often adds, "Though, and lets not forget this, our guns do kill people very well."

In order to get their guns out on the street, Wet Weapons spends a great deal of time on promotions—mall opening, liquor store openings, drug cartel meetings. They are a primary sponsor of ¡STREET-FIGHT! They make it a point to investigate crime scenes and determine if their guns were used on the winning side. If they were, they hype the fight to high heaven. Some folks consider the use of murder scenes as a promotional tool rather crass, but the folks at WW see it as all part of the cut-throat reality of munitions. Says promotional director Travelin' Willy, "Blood sells, yo! So drown your neg feedback, cuz we're the best ever was!" In exchange for the "free" weapons the company is pouring into LA's gangs, the company is rumored to receive a cut of the drug trade, protection for arms deals throughout the city, and help smashing down it's munitions competitors.

The fact that Wet Weapons is arming drug dealers and other rif-raff—though always through the guise of promotional gimmicks—has not escaped the notice of the LAPF. Officially the LAPF trying to stop the flood of free weapons. Privately, they are trying to cut a deal with WW themselves.

YANOMAMOS**(Primitivist Tribe)**

Located in the Primitive ghetto of Hell's Forest, the Yanomamos are a primitivist tribe that worships earth itself. They have, as a group, cracked through the walls of many of the lower basements of central LA's basements and parking garages and allowed tons of dirt to spill through. They collect the dirt, allowing it to fill the cellars and parking garages, spreading it out evenly, creating a landscape of infertile earth. Upon these landscapes they build their homes, creating crafts out of cement and salvaged earthenware (the gifts of the Mother) and fortifying their positions.

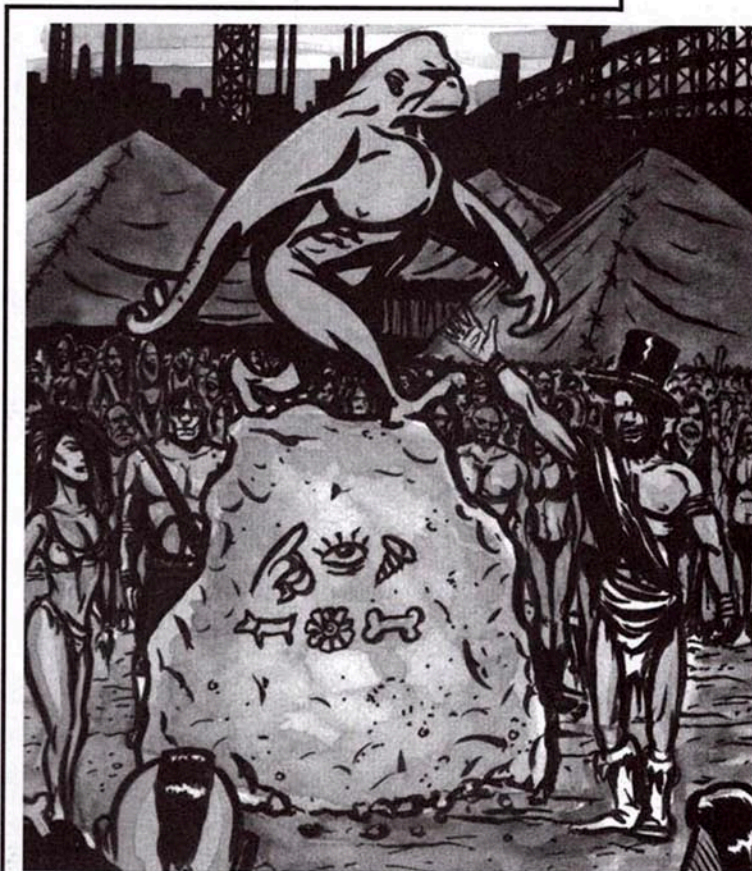
Riverbed:
STR: 6, DEX: 6, SPD: 6, RES:
6, INT: 4, WILL: 7, AURA: 3
Gun Combat: 12, Leadership:
7, Martial Arts: 12, Social
Science (Sp. Pueblo): 5
Streetwise: 8
Claws: 8
Leaping: 6
"I wait for Mother Earth to
claim me."

Silk Talk:
INT: 3, AURA 6
Business: 7, Charm: 12
"Well, I'm so glad you gentle-
men could stop by for lunch."

The tribe, about fifty strong, is led by Clay Feet (formerly, while serving in North Africa, the Viper). For more information about Clay Feet, see the Notebook.

Clay Feet has a rival in the tribe, **Riverbed**, a boosted vet who served under him during the North African campaign. He wears a costume of brick red on the limbs, and light blue on the midsection. Although they are bonded by their Yanomamos primitive ideals, they have a different idea of how to proceed with plans for the future. Riverbed finds Clay Feet's plans for a biological holocaust abhorrent, and subtly tries to turn the tribe against him.

TRIBAL LEADER



90210

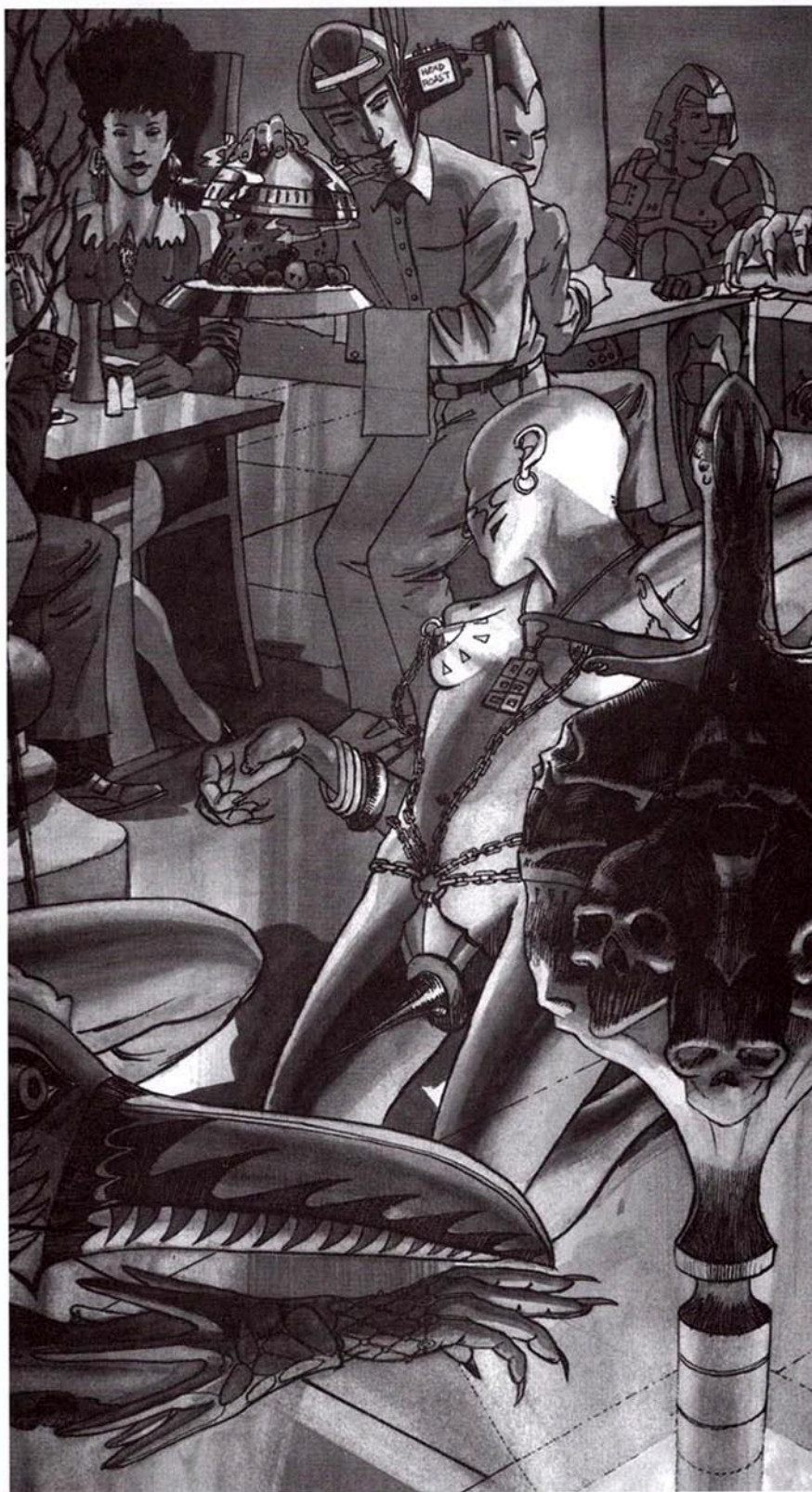
(Brothel)

Mr. Hits owns several prostitution rings throughout the county. 90210, located in Upper Beverly Hills, is the most important. The building is only two years old, made of grey stone and greenish, tinted glass. It looks like it might house executive suites, but has no signs on it. Anyone passing it might be curious as to what is contained within. But only people who are brought with a friend who is already a client get to enter.

Silk Talk is 90210 Madame. The building, named after the old Beverly Hills zip code, is several stories high, made of white marble with green veins running through it. Though in her late forties, innumerable cosuperations have left her with the looks of a hungry seventeen year old. She never leaves 90210 and only presents herself to visitors in certain rooms with controlled lighting that keeps the grayish tint of her dubious

flesh from their sight. She usually wears enticing lingerie. Her ambition is to take control of the business from Mr. Hits, but she knows she does not have the clout to pull that off. She is trying to elicit the support of some of 90210's more important clients. So far, however, none have decided it in their interest to either buy the brothel for Silk Talk, nor bring legal action against Mr. Hits that would separate him from the brothel.

Steppin' High is 90210's best most infamous prostitute. She is rumored to be the daughter of a high ranking LA official. Whether her mother or father is aware of her daughter's profession is unknown. She is rumored to be just eighteen, a buxom brunette with lovely, green eyes. Unlike Silk Talk she spends a fair amount of time outside the brothel. When she goes out she usually wears a wig of some kind to keep her identity a secret from people she might meet on the street. All of this adds to the mystery she has cultivated around her past—and her true identity



Chapter

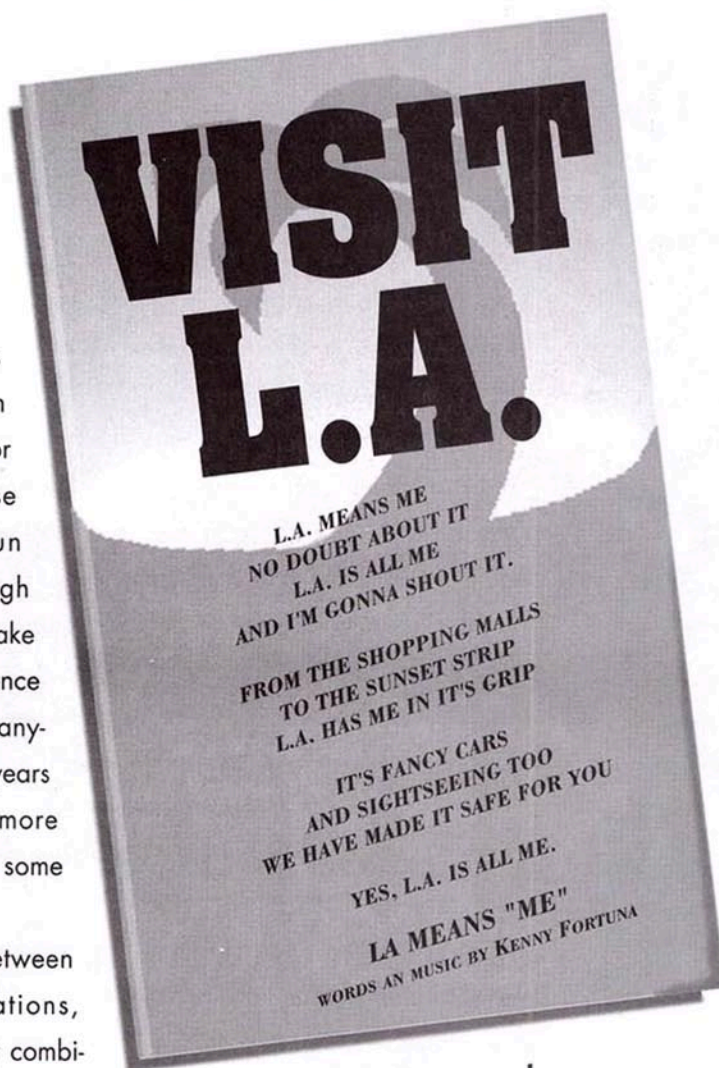
four

SURVIVING IN LOS ANGELES

Surviving in Los Angeles requires a certain kind of thinking. The need for this comes from the intense levels of violence that run throughout the city. Although the worst levels of violence take place in the sprawl, violence is an everyday occurrence anywhere in LA. In the last six years the county has expended more ammunition than is used in some national wars.

Fights break out between gangs, munitions corporations, media corporations, and any combinations of the three, for they're all tied into each other. For the corps, most of the violence is committed by small factions desperate to make their mark before their division is dismantled. Acts of violence are also committed by citizens who find themselves in possession of weapons they want to try out, or frustrated citizens who think that by shelling an area with a portable howitzer they'll be making a point about the terrible conditions in LA.

The exchange of information and ideas is intense world wide. As the US moved further and further into a service economy, the moving around of ideas, images and countless entertainment became all anyone



NOISE WITHOUT
COMPRE-HENSION

SQUATTER
VIOLENCE

NUMBERS, NOT
NAMES

EVERYONE
KNOWS DEATH

could really do—either producing them for a job, or consuming them after work (or while unemployed). This wash of data has created a “White Noise of Information.” No one really listens to anyone anymore, but everyone is still talking. Acts of terrible violence give the impression to those who want to make a point that now they will be heard. In fact, their violence only adds to the wash of sound and confusion.

Car bombs, gang warfare, fly by shooting, robberies, drug deals gone bad, brain jackings—the list of acts of violence are nearly endless. The violent element of LA thinks that real power is tabulated with body counts and the size of an explosion. Violence is used for the smallest of matters. It is a means to settle any dispute, no matter how insignificant. For example, two groups of squatters were fighting over an apart in a run down section of lower Compton. One was allied with the AWAKE political activism conclave, the other with the Brady Foundation. The AWAKE people were so disgruntled when they lost the apartment that they went back to the headquarters, grabbed some explosives, came back, warned their friends, and blew up the building. Twenty two people died in the explosion, their bodies crushed between the walls as the explosion ripped through the building from the inside out. The pile of rubble was so heavy, that the bodies buried underneath the ruins had to wait for Captain Vengeance to come along and dig them out.

Speaking of body counts, after a building collapses or whatever, news programs no longer read lists of the dead—just the tally. It’s a practice spreading faster and faster across the country. If anyone wants to know if a loved one died in an a bombing or fire fight, he’s got to go down to the morgue and check for himself. No one will contact him. There are crews, sometimes comprised of boosted vets, who do nothing but dig bodies out of rubble.

THE VIOLENCE WON’T JUST KILL YOU...

Although most people in Los Angeles don’t die from violence, most people are affected by it, and you better be prepared for this.

The primary way violence touches people without drawing blood is that it kills those close to you. Everyone in Los Angeles knows someone who has died in a senseless act of violence. Everyone has seen a car blow up unexpectedly in the middle of traffic, a building explode outward from the force of plastic explosives, a person just two feet away drop to the

pavement, blood flowing freely from a shattered face, the victim of a random sniper shot.

People live with this violence every day. How?

You've probably already figured out that the circumstances here are different from those of a war. Wars usually have terms of duration. You've got your rotation, and all you have to do is survive to the end of tour. You've got battles, where you pump up, go out, hit the enemy, and then, if you survive, cool down.

Los Angeles doesn't stop. This is home. There are no starting and stopping signals. In fact, the violence usually comes up randomly, and then ends as soon as it began. It is to live in a world of jack-in-the-box explosions.

How to get through it?

You start playing mind games. Everyone does it. It might not make sense, it may seem embarrassing, but you might as well get used to it. Everyone does. The city has been under ridiculous stress for years. The human body and mind has never had to endure such constant stress except in a few isolated cases. Of course, it's spreading. "As Los Angeles, so goes the world."

NEVER-ENDING
STRESS



THE ODDS GAME

Some people play the odds game. The Silver Dagger once said, "Well, I think of how many people there are in Los Angeles—millions of us—and then I think of how many people are in my immediate social circle. How many people I know who I don't want to die. Fifty or so. And I think, so what—really—are the odds of someone I know dying. And then, if someone I know does die, then—it's terrible, I know—but I think, all right then. That's it for a while. I can relax for a little while, because the odds owe me that. It's like the joke about the man who carries a bomb around under the hood of his car, because he knows the odds against there being two bombs in a car are much higher."

RATIONAL-
ZATIONS

Another game is played for why the other guy bought the debt, and you didn't. It is nearly impossible for people to accept that these acts of violence are completely random—which is the truth—because that means you could die for capricious reasons as well. So, like blackjack players who invest mental energy in identifying lucky chairs, people in LA spend a great deal of time inventing excuses for death. "He lived on the south side of the street. That's a much more exposed area than my side." Or, "He shouldn't have gone out fifteen minutes after ¡STREETFIGHT! ended. Everyone knows that." But the truth is, there are no rules for the violence, no way to survive. There is only morning and night, and the people who accidentally make it to the end of the day.

SELECTIVE
SENSORY INPUT

Finally, people in Los Angeles learn to view their environment selectively. In Paraguay, if you heard a shape charge explode down the street, you reacted—grabbed your gun, got ready for a fight. Here, it's your choice. For most of the people in Los Angeles, a car bomb or a gang fight is a traffic delay, something to be circumvented by traveling a few blocks out of your way, but nothing to panic about. You don't go home and hide because of the violence.

Why? Because the people of Los Angeles need to know they can get through the day. It's called danger-stacking. The citizens of LA keep prioritizing the dangers around them, deciding which are real threats, and which can be safely ignored. They don't walk through a gun fight between the CBs and a swarm of cyberpunks. But they do ignore fights until they come right up to them. There's nothing to be done about it anyway. That's the key. The test questions for danger are, "Does it affect me?" and "Is there anything I can do about it?" If the answer is no to these questions the person goes about their business.

WHERE'S THE APOCALYPTIC BEHAVIOR?

It surprises some people, but Los Angeles hasn't descended into a final Hell-hole of anarchy, with everyone killing every neighbor, robbing at every opportunity.

Why?

That's a matter for philosophers. Certainly LA's got enough terrible violence and hatred and theft to prove that humans can be just horrible to humans. But on the other side of the terror is hope. As has been demonstrated throughout history, when things become terrible, humans tap a reservoir of strength and cooperation usually hidden. As soon as the shooting stops in a neighborhood, the stores open, the people come out, and businesses roll product out the door. (In fact, most stores no longer have regular business hours. They simply open when possible, and

WITH THE
TERRIBLE, GOOD



shoppers arrive when possible.) Neighborhoods in Los Angeles are now more linked than they were at the end of the twentieth century. People know their neighbors—once an odd occurrence in urban sprawls—and check up on them. People are essentially social creatures with a need for hope. Only by turning to others can any sense of truly being alive as a human being seep into the desperate environment of LA.

Volunteer services, help with repairs, aid to those in need are all a part of the social landscape of LA. If such behavior did not exist, the city

STRONG
COMMUNITY TIES

would certainly collapse. With the lack of a strong, centralized county government to handle what used to be daily events of power outages and sewer screw-ups, only the immediate communities can insure sanitary conditions, that the power keeps running, that food gets into the neighborhood. This has led to a conflict between some of the cities within the county, but it has brought out the best in some of the citizens.

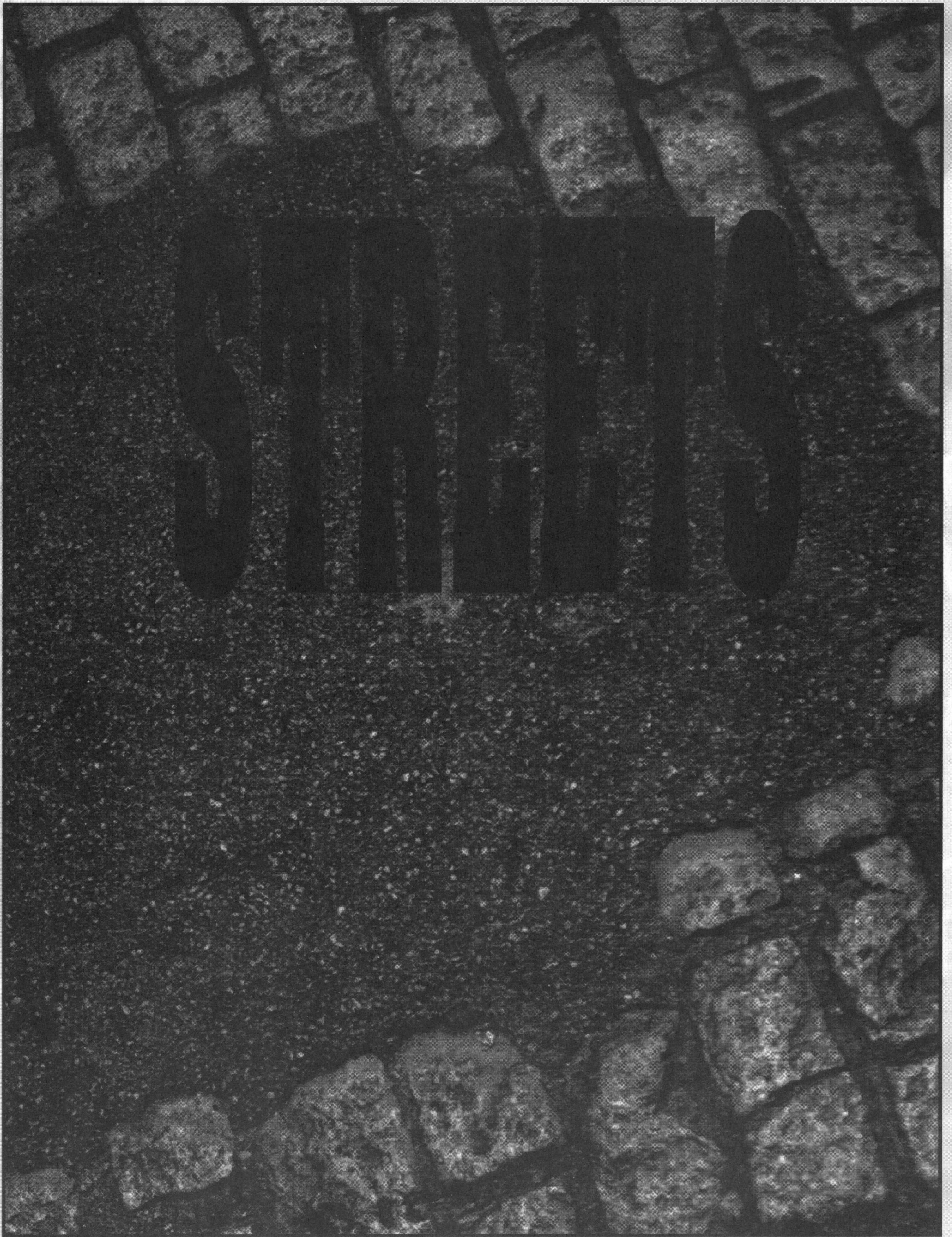
From this we should draw hope. If there is anything to be done to bring about the return of the American dream, it will not be done by the hand of the Underground alone. We can only inspire, provide the means and the direction. It will be the citizens of the US behind us, backing our actions, and eventually taking over, that will allow for true change.

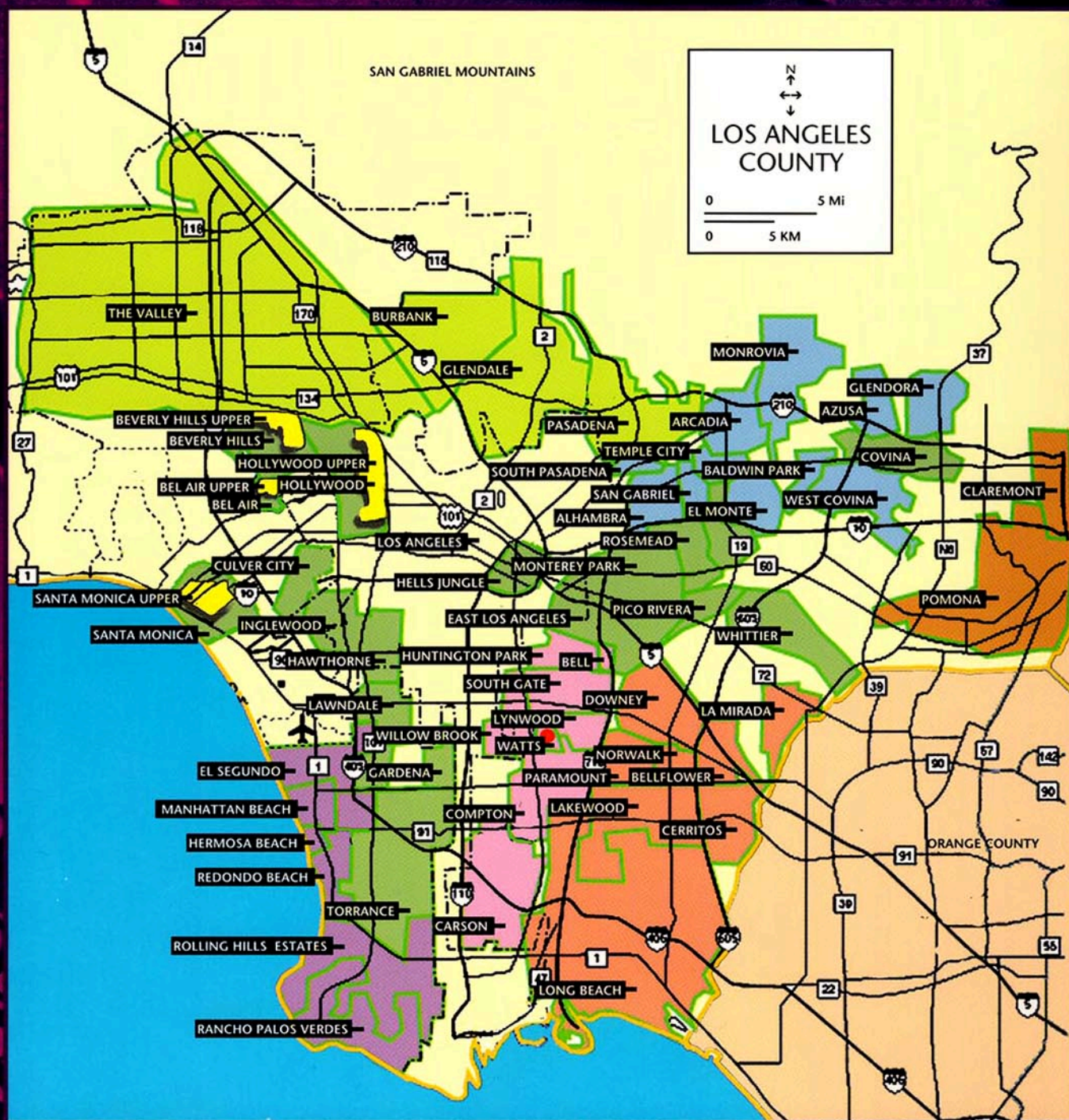
Things are bad, but they could be worse.

Things could be worse, but they could be better.

Pick a path. Make it happen.







THE COAST	MANHATTAN BEACH, REDONDO BEACH, EL SEGUNDO,, HERMOSA BEACH, RANCHO PALOS VERDES, ROLLING HILLS ESTATES	HOME BASE	CARSON, COMPTON, BELL, HUNTINGTON PARK, SOUTH GATE, LYNWOOD, WATTS, WILLOW BROOK
THE CORNER	ALHAMBRA, ARCADIA, AZUSA, BALDWIN PARK, EL MONTE, GLENDORA MONROVIA, SAN GABRIEL, SOUTH PASADENA, TEMPLE CITY, WEST COVINA	THE OTHER SIDE	BURBANK, GLENDALE, PASADENA, THE VALLEY
THE CORRIDOR CITIES	CLAREMONT, POMONA	JESSEP HILL	SEE POSTER MAP
THE EDGE	BELLFLOWER, CERRITOS, DOWNEY, LA MIRADA, LAKEWOOD, LONG BEACH, NORWALK, PARAMOUNT	FLOATING CITIES	BEL AIR UPPER, BEVERLY HILLS UPPER, HOLLYWOOD UPPER, SANTA MONICA UPPER



STORIES

STC

"How does tyranny arise? That it comes out of democracy is fairly clear. Does the change take place in the same sort of way as the change from oligarchy to democracy? Oligarchy was established by men with a certain aim in life: the good they sought was wealth, and it was the insatiable appetite for money-making that the neglect of everything else that proved its undoing. Is democracy likewise ruined by greed for what it conceives to be the supreme good?"

—Plato, *The Republic*

STREETS TELL STORIES

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Special Apology to Mike Nystul for the omission of his name from the Underground Rulebook

Shouts out to the White Wolf Tribe—Mark, Stewart, Travis, Josh, Keith, Steve, Richard, Chris, William Bill, Ben, Ken, Rene, Rob, Prahl—Thanks for the kind words and the hospitality down in Dixie! (As a true master of the Underground once said, "We've got 'em afraid of the funky \$#%@!). Y'all keep buyin' games!

A Word From the Underground
This is the first of many *Underground* support products. In the months ahead we'll keep you both informed and entertained. In October, look for the *Underground Notebook*. It's a three ring binder full of new information on the world of 2021. Then, in November, it's *Fully Strapped, Always Packed!* — the complete guide to the *Underground* arsenal. Check 'em both out. They're indispensable.

More news: We're welcoming Atlas Games aboard. Atlas has licensed *Underground* and plans to produce a series of adventures. Their first product, *Hell Bent*, is available now. If you can't find it, ask your retailer to order it.

Current Government Scandals: Rosty's postal vouchers, the William Sessions fiasco, and the infamous backroom budget.

Underground Bookshelf (check 'em out!)
Apocalypse Culture, edited by Adam Parfrey, available from Feral House
Can I Borrow a Dollar?, LP by Common Sense
Sex and Violence, LP by Boogie Down Productions

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Chapter one

Speed Zero: This quote comes from the spoken introduction to "Mackz and Hoz and Trickz," the second cut on the group's *Sip This!* LP.

earthward and skyward streets: Throughout the early part of the 21st century, most of America's major urban centers expanded upward as well as outward. Streets that run along the ground are known as "earthward streets," while streets that criss-cross the huge suspended platform villages that sit atop most major cities are known as "skyward streets." Street slang also accords the names subsprawl streets to ground level streets, and floating streets to the elevated streets.



According to Systematic Overthrow lead singer **Speed Zero**, Los Angeles is home to three types of people: hoes—the people who are selling it; tricks—the people who are buying it; and macks—the people who are making all the money. Whether or not you're a fan of Zero's lyrical terrorism, there's no denying that LA-2021 is the bleakest rat hole in the land of the thief and the home of the slave. Its **earthward streets** are dominated by thugs, pimps, and hustlers. Its **skyward streets** are home to corporate savages, porn queens, and cynical entertainment industry execs.

This product gives you everything you need to run exciting *Underground* campaigns set in the City of Angels. Inside, you'll find:

- a 64 page "Streets" book
- a 64 page "Stories" book (you're reading it now)
- 16 pages of full-color props (take a few moments to cut the props apart)
- 8 loose-leaf sheets describing some of LA's important characters and locations
- a full-color map of the Jessep Hill neighborhood in Watts
- and a copy of *USA ALIVE*

CONTENTS

THIS BOX IS FOR
GM EYES ONLY

First off, we should note that most of the material in this sourcebox is for the Gamemaster's eyes only. Allowing the players to read the material might spoil some of the GM's surprises and ruin some of his stories.

GMs examining the package should start by reading the *Streets* booklet. Within its pages, you'll find a complete description of the Los Angeles of 2021. Before you go any further, you should take some time to familiarize yourself with this information. Doing so will make it easier to create story outlines and respond to the veterans' actions during play.

Once you are familiar with the contents of *Streets*, you should return to this booklet. In the chapters that follow, you'll find some detailed instructions for setting up your LA campaign, as well as some story outlines set in Los Angeles. These outlines are divided into two types: *independent storylines* and *reaction storylines*. Independent storylines are designed to take place **regardless of the veterans' actions**. They can be incorporated into the campaign and mixed with stories relating to the veterans' Campaign Goal at any time. Reaction storylines, on the other hand, are designed to take place in response to the alteration of a **Parameter**. For instance, once the veterans' increase the setting's Wealth Parameter, you can turn to the Reactive Storylines chapter to find a couple of story outlines you can run in response. Independent storylines are covered in Chapter Three, and reactive storylines are covered in Chapter Four. Running all the story outlines you find in this package should keep you going for several months of play. During this time, you will learn enough about the Los Angeles of 2021 to begin inventing detailed outlines of your own.

The Props

The sixteen pages of full-color props are designed to help you bring the world of 2021 to life. They depict some of the scenes and documents the veterans are likely to encounter in LA. Instead of attempting to describe these situations to the players, you simply pass out the appropriate props and allow the players to examine them for themselves. Although most of the props can be used over and over again, some of them are tied to the specific storylines described in Chapters Three and Four. Following is a complete listing of all the included props and some guidelines for using some of them.

regardless of the veterans' actions: ie. independent storylines are stories that "just happen," regardless of the veterans' past activities or the setting's changing Parameters.

Parameter: Parameters and how they function are explained in Chapter Twelve of the *Underground Rulebook*. As GM, you may wish to review this chapter to help refresh your memory.

THIS BOOK
DESCRIBES
TWO TYPES OF
ADVENTURES:
INDEPENDENT
STORYLINES AND
REACTION
STORYLINES

THE SIXTEEN
FULL-COLOR
PROPS WERE
DESIGNED
TO HELP YOU
BRING THE LA OF
2021 TO LIFE

intimidate: The Peace Force has a fearsome reputation among LA's lower echelon criminals.

The Golemite: You'll read more about the Golemite in the next chapter.

1. The LA Peace Force Badges: Cut out the badges and fill in the appropriate information. If you are playing a Peace Force campaign (see "Campaign Frameworks" later in this chapter), issue each player with a badge. If not, save the badges for the NPC Peace Force officers the players will encounter during play. At appropriate moments, Peace Force officers can flash their badges to identify themselves and **intimidate** criminals. In fact, flashing a PF Badge lowers the Difficulty Number of an Interrogation Challenge by one.

2. The Golemite Dossier: **The Golemite** is a small-time criminal who prowls the Jessep Hill neighborhood of Watts. Hand the players this dossier if they use Pablo's SNITCH™ to identify the Golemite any time they encounter him. Pablo's SNITCH™ is a new computer program that is described in the sidebar below. Note that the prop assumes the players are using a pair of combat goggles to display the program's output.

PABLOS SNITCH
IS A NEW
COMPUTER
PROGRAM
AVAILABLE IN LA

PABLO'S SNITCH! version 1.1

Availability: E
Cost \$ 20,000
Memory: 2

SNITCH! is black market software designed to act as a library of facts and near facts regarding boosted veterans in the Los Angeles area. The packaging closely resembles that of the Pueblo™ products, but SNITCH has not yet appeared on retail shelves. An ingenious piece of programming, SNITCH! is a "card catalog" of boosted veterans' current code-names, vital statistics, and enhancements, along with rumors and limited military history.

If these were the program's only features, it might be worth some cash, but SNITCH! goes one better. It contains the restricted military identification photos of many boosts mustering out through the Los Angeles area. These photos can then be compared (using two full Turns) to individuals targeted using either Pueblo's™ SNIPER! or FIREFIGHT! programs, allowing the firer to identify those targets.

To operate SNITCH, the user simply targets the subject on her visor (this can be done without alerting the target, who must make a Difficult P/F INT challenge to notice). The target's image is then frozen and moved to the upper left corner of the user's heads-up display. The computer then attempts to match the image with the identification photos in its database. These ID photos are shown in the upper right hand corner of the heads-up display. Once the program discovers a possible match, it digitizes and superimposes the two images to determine the match. Upon matching positively, the program displays the subject's codename at the time of the photo and prompts the user if more information is available. New information is easily downloaded by the user and added to the database.

Not much is known about how Pablo acquires the restricted photos and information, but the general feeling on the street is that Pablo is either a recruiter or pencil pusher for AMI or TWD. People who shouldn't talk too much for fear of car bombs say that he's actually a VA psychiatrist who sells unpatriotic patients' secrets to fund an Underground cell. So far, the information database is limited to Los Angeles boosts, and covers only 25% of the veterans in the city.

MORE PROP DESCRIPTIONS

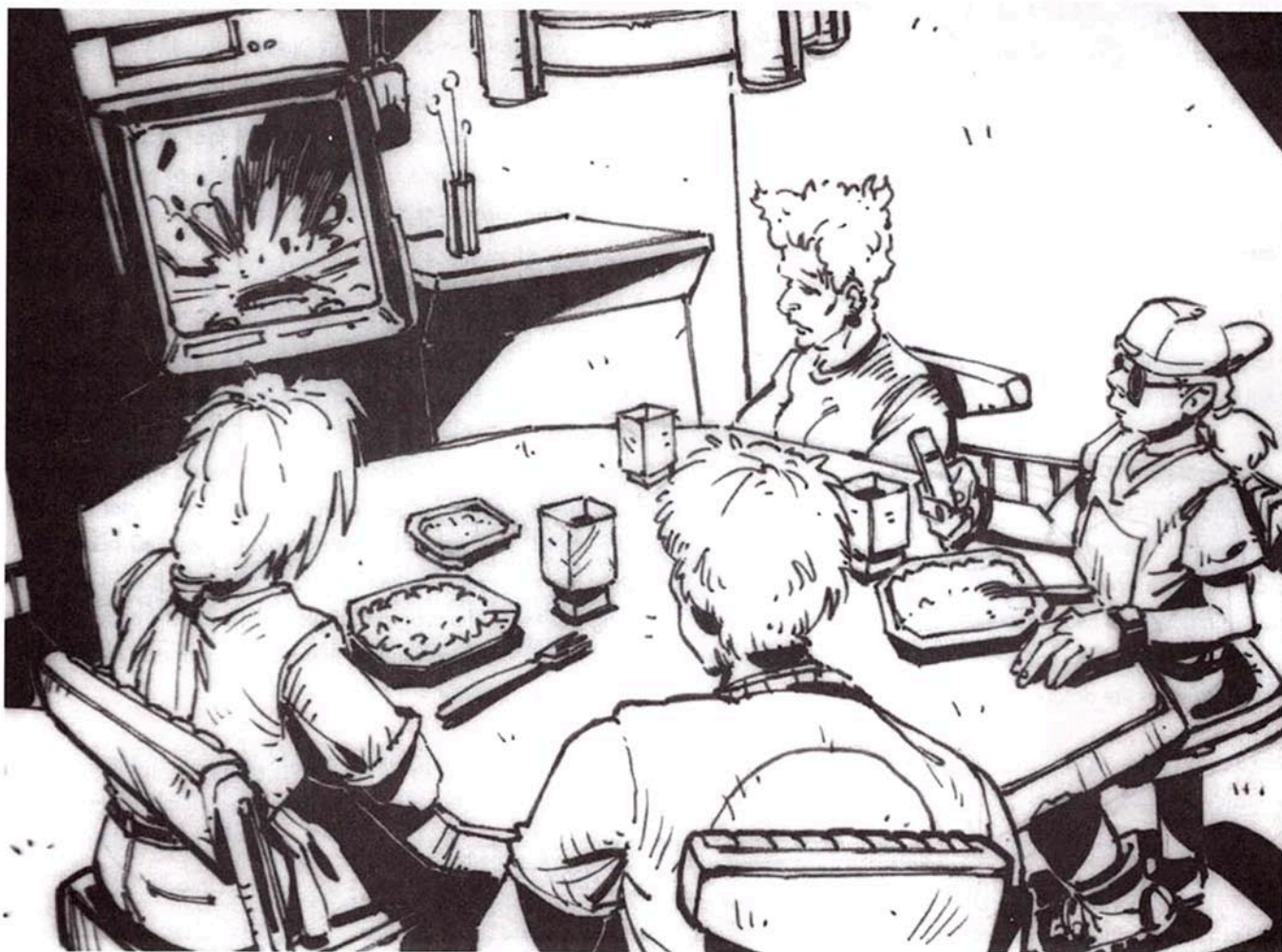
3. Blake Hotel Brochure: **The Blake** is an ideal place for characters to rest and recuperate between stories. Since it is the only truly "safe" locale in LA and it's visited by all classes of people, the Blake is also an ideal setting for espionage and intrigue storylines.

Make sure the players receive the hotel brochure and discover the Blake shortly after the campaign begins. The vets might receive the brochure from a VA guidance counselor recommended a good venue for "R&R." or they might simply stumble across it during their adventures.

4 and 5. Gang Signs: These pages illustrate the hand signals used by the major LA street gangs. The gangs are described in the *Streets* booklet.

6. Terrorist Handbill: In 2021, terrorism is so common that large stationary stores sell blank "generic" handbills (like this one) that activists can use to

The Blake is described in detail on one of the loose-leaf *Underground* Notebook sheets.



inflation: Also available in the USA of 2021 are \$500 bills (featuring the likeness of a MacRaney's cheeseburger; MacRaney's paid for this privilege in much the same way modern corporations buy advertisements in Constitutional Amendments), \$1000 bills (featuring the likeness of Colin Powell), and \$5000 bills (featuring the likeness of Ed Meese).

create and post propaganda handbills with a minimal effort. If you are running a terrorist campaign (see "Campaign Frameworks" later in this chapter). Make sure the players get plenty of copies of this form and encourage them to scrawl appropriate propaganda sayings on the copies so you can post them around the play area to establish the proper "feel." If you are not running a terrorist campaign, you can make use of the handbill whenever you run a storyline involving NPC terrorists.

7 and 8. Photos: These props are used in the "Bel Aire Blackout" storyline found in Chapter Three.

9 and 10. Floorplans of Club Phobia: Club Phobia is a prominent nightclub in the Jessep Hill neighborhood of Watts. You can use these floorplans whenever the vets visit the club during their adventures.

11. DART Map of LA: This is a tourist map of LA's DART rapid transit system. Using the map, the vets should be able to figure out how to get around LA. Give the players the map when you begin the campaign. It is part of the materials they receive from their demobilization counselor when they reach LA.

12. Medical Form: Although handy and reliable, VA hospitals are known for their oppressive paperwork. To establish this sort of bureaucratic tone in your game, you might require the players to fill out a copy of this form every time one of their vets requires attention at the hospital.

13 and 14. Figures, Article, and Postcard: The figures and article are used in the "Armchair Murder Club" storyline found in Chapter Three. You can use the postcard whenever one of the vets wants to write a letter

15. Money. Remember, by 2021 the dollar has undergone 1400% **inflation** since the 1990s. This play money should prove a useful prop in countless storylines.

16. Check and Financial Records: These props are used in one of the reaction storylines described in Chapter Four.

STILL
MORE PROP
DESCRIPTIONS



The Loose-Leaf Pages

The eight loose-leaf sheets included in the package describe important people and places related to Los Angeles. The sheets have been designed to fit into ***The Underground Notebook***

The Underground Notebook (slated for release in October of 1993): is a giant reference volume detailing the world of 2021. Its loose-leaf format allows new pages to be added into the *Notebook* at any time, permitting readers to keep all the most important *Underground* source material in a single location. Most *Underground* releases will include new *Notebook* pages.

before they create their veterans: In this way, the players can make sure that they create veterans appropriate to the Framework.

rank: The rank structure in the LAPF runs Officer, OverOfficer, Lieutenant, OverLieutenant, Major.

Campaign Frameworks

Before beginning play, you should take a few moments to sit down with the players to determine how their characters are bonded to each other and how they came to meet. Together, this information is known as the *Campaign Framework*. Setting down a solid, plausible Campaign Framework before play begins makes it much easier for the GM to generate storylines and helps give the players the sense that they are contribut-

ing to those storylines. Ideally, you want the players to decide upon a Framework **before they create their veterans** and before they decide upon their first Campaign Goal.

Four Campaign Frameworks that are particularly appropriate to a campaign based in LA are described below:

1. LA Peace Force Officers:

The vets are all members of the LA Peace Force's special Boosted Operatives Organization (BOO). They serve on the same squad and begin with a **rank** of Officer. In this case, assign the officers a "beat" (unless you feel like creating your own environment, use the Jesse Hill neighborhood described in the next chapter), and create one or two NPC officers for the vets to work and interact with. Remember that as members of

THE CAMPAIGN
FRAMEWORK
DETERMINES
HOW THE PLAY-
ER VETS ARE
BONDED TO
EACH OTHER

THE LA PEACE
OFFICER
CAMPAIGN



the LAPF, the vets have a great deal of special authority (the right to make arrests, etc.), but they are also subject to special restrictions (they must follow the orders of superiors, for instance).

Any LAPF officer who spends an appropriate total of Reward Points at the conclusion of a successful story, can attempt a P/F AURA Challenge against a Difficulty of 9 (Impressive task) to attract the attention of her superiors. If this Challenge is successful, the officer earns a promotion.

Rank	Reward Points that must be spent
OverOfficer	15
Lieutenant	20
OverLieutenant	25
Major	30



special task forces: For example, most Districts maintain Special Investigation Task Forces that handle unusually difficult cases involving violent boosted perpetrators. Task Forces specializing in organized crime, anti-American activities, high-profile homicide, and street gangs have also been created.

exact capabilities and loyalties: Generally, recruited members are loyal, but not too competent. Don't give the players access to NPC gangsters capable of handling important missions on their own.

ideology: In the world of 2021, terrorists are common. Their ideologies range from the absurd (the People's Front for the Obliteration of Three-Dimensional Entertainment) to the sublime (the complete overthrow of the US Government). Allow the players to decide where their veterans fit along this spectrum.

OverOfficers: command Patrols, consisting of 2-3 Squads (each squad is comprised of approximately 407 Officers). Each Patrol is responsible for approximately one-half of a small town or large neighborhood (ie. one-half of Watts or Compton).

Lieutenants: command Sections consisting of 2-3 Patrols.

OverLieutenants: command Precincts consisting of 3-5 Sections. Each OverLieutenant is in charge of her own station house.

Majors: command Districts consisting of 3-5 Precincts.

Note that not all ranked officers fall into the normal chain of command. Some **special task forces** are comprised entirely of high-ranking LAPF officers. Whether or not the vets move through the normal command chain or fall into a task force as they are promoted is up to the GM and players.

2. Street Gangsters: The vets are members of a street gang. Note that this doesn't necessarily mean they are evil, just that they have decided that they must work outside the law to get what they want. Ask the players to decide how their gang fits into the People/Folks conflict described in *Streets* and assign them a small neighborhood as a "turf" (again, Jessep Hill is perfect).

As play begins, the gang is wholly comprised of the player veterans. As time goes on, the players can attempt to expand the size of the gang and the size of their turf. Spending 20 Reward Points allows one member of the gang to attempt a P/F AURA Challenge against a Difficulty of 9 (Impressive task). If this Challenge succeeds, the gang manages to recruit a new member. The **exact capabilities and loyalties** of this member must be determined by the Gamemaster. Similarly, spending 15 Reward Points allows the gang an opportunity to expand its turf by another city block or two. Usually, such an expansion brings the gang into conflict with a rival, probably inspiring a workable story outline.

3. Terrorists: The vets are a group of political activists (known as "terrorists" if they use violence to further their political aims). First, ask the players to spell out the political **ideology** they endorse and decide whether or not

THE STREET
GANGSTER
CAMPAIGN

THE TERRORIST
CAMPAIGN

THE CORPORATE RAIDER CAMPAIGN

they have a **license** to practice terrorism. You should then assign the vets a stomping ground (again, Jessep Hill is perfect) and ask them to figure out where and how often they meet, etc.

As play begins, the terrorist group consists only of the player vets themselves. Spending 18 Reward Points after successfully completing a story allows one of the terrorists an opportunity to recruit a **new member** for the organization (P/F AURA Challenge vs. a Difficulty of 9 to succeed). Furthermore, spending 20 Reward Points allows one of the terrorists an opportunity to obtain a special or restricted weapon through black market contacts (ie. a weapon with an Availability of E). To succeed, the terrorist must pass a P/F INT (or Streetwise; terrorist's choice) Challenge against a Difficulty of 9 (Impressive Task).

4. Corporate Raiders: The vets are "corporate raiders." They use their special capabilities to perform interesting "errands" for one or more large corporations. Ask the players to figure out what corporation they work for, and spend some time inventing details about that corporation and the vets contacts within it.

The vets chief advantage under this scheme is their access to large amounts of money. Corporate raiders are traditionally well paid for their services. In addition to drawing a regular monthly salary (usually equal to \$30,000 plus the character's starting salary based upon her chosen character archetype), the vets are entitled to a "bonus" whenever they complete an "assignment." This bonus ranges from \$7000 to \$300,000 depending upon the assignment's complexity.

5. Government Agents: The vets are agents of the federal government. Ask them to decide which agency they represent. Possibilities range from the FBI to the Anti-Sedition Squad to the NSA's Bravo Anti-Terrorist Squad (BATS). Since the United States of 2021 is a multi-headed bureaucracy gone out of control, the players should feel free to invent their own government agency if none of these options suits them. Before play begins, work with the players to decide whether or not they are the only representatives of their agency within the campaign area and create a few **details** about the agency and its structure.

license: Terrorism licenses are granted to political action groups that tend to target sovereign corporations and their assets (see Chapter One of the *Underground Rulebook*). A license exempts many of the group's activities from police and government interference, but licensed groups are frequently manipulated and coerced by federal authorities into carrying out the government's own agenda.

new member: When assigning new members to the terrorist group, follow the guidelines on adding new gang members to a street gang (ie. don't give the players access to NPCs capable of completing important missions on their own).

details: ie. What sort of duties do the vets perform? Do the vets have a headquarters or office? Are there any special regulations the vets must follow "in the field?" etc.

THE GOVERNMENT AGENT CAMPAIGN

isn't always true: In fact, higher ranking agents don't necessarily have the authority to issue orders to lower ranking agents. Whether or not they have this ability depends upon the exact duties performed by the agents in question. For instance, the a Special Agent in the Anti-Sedition Squad's slander division has no authority over a mere Agent in the Squad's Libel division.

Like LAPD officers, government agents receive all sorts of special perks (access to restricted areas, the right to requisition equipment or assistance, etc.), but are also subject to special restrictions (the chain of command, department regulations, etc). As play begins, each of the vets begins with the rank of Agent. Any agent who spends an appropriate total of Reward Points at the conclusion of a successful story, can attempt a P/F AURA Challenge against a Difficulty of 9 (Impressive task) to attract the attention of her superiors. If this Challenge is successful, the agent earns a promotion.

Rank	Reward Points that must be spent
OverAgent	15
Special Agent	20
Supervisor	25
Administrator	30

The rank structure within most government agencies is much more difficult to codify than the rank structure within the LAPF. Although higher ranking agents tend to command more personnel than lower ranking agents, this **isn't always true**. In any case, higher ranking agents always have greater access to government secrets and resources than their inferiors.



SOME SAMPLE CAMPAIGN GOALS

OverAgents have access only to rudimentary secrets kept by their own agency, while Administrators can frequently gain access to important secrets kept by almost any government agency.

Campaign Goals

Of course, one of the first steps in organizing an *Underground* campaign is to help the players select their first **Campaign Goal**. If the players are having difficulty selecting an appropriate goal, some suggestions are presented below. You'll find the Parameter changes necessary to complete each of these goals listed at the end of its description. Note that each goal also lists a suggested *final story* that can be run just prior to the vets' completion of the goal.

Although most of these goals are keyed to Watts and the **Jesse Hill neighborhood**, most of them can easily be transplanted to other neighborhoods of your own creation. These four ideas should also assist you and the players in creating similar goals of your own.

1. Take Down the Corrupt OverLieutenant:

18th Precinct
OverLieutenant Howe is on the take and everybody knows it. All of Watts would benefit from his removal.

Final Adventure: Every time the vets get close to exposing Howe, Major Marsha Sloane, his equally corrupt District Commander steps in to protect him.

Campaign Goals: are discussed in Chapter Twelve of the *Underground* rulebook.

Jesse Hill neighborhood: You'll read about Jesse Hill in the next chapter. When the players are selecting their first Campaign Goal, you should encourage them to stick to a small scale environment (ie. a neighborhood or small city, rather than an entire large city or nation).



do not dip below: The Parameters can temporarily dip below their starting ratings during the campaign, but the goal is not achieved until Wealth, Government Purity, and Education are boosted to the listed levels and Necessities and Take Home Pay are returned to their beginning levels.

Ultimately, the vets get enough dirt on Sloane to black mail her into allowing them to expose Howe. Taking down Sloane is an obvious follow-up goal.

Parameters: Start with the Watts Parameters; to succeed the players must boost Safety to 3, Government Purity to 6, and Quality of Life to 5.

2. Expose Tres Equis: The Tres Equis Malt Liquor Corporation is exploiting Watts with a systematic campaign aimed at spreading alcoholism through the ghetto so Tres X can boost its profits by selling more liquor. Shutting the campaign down would be a good first step toward stabilizing the whole area.

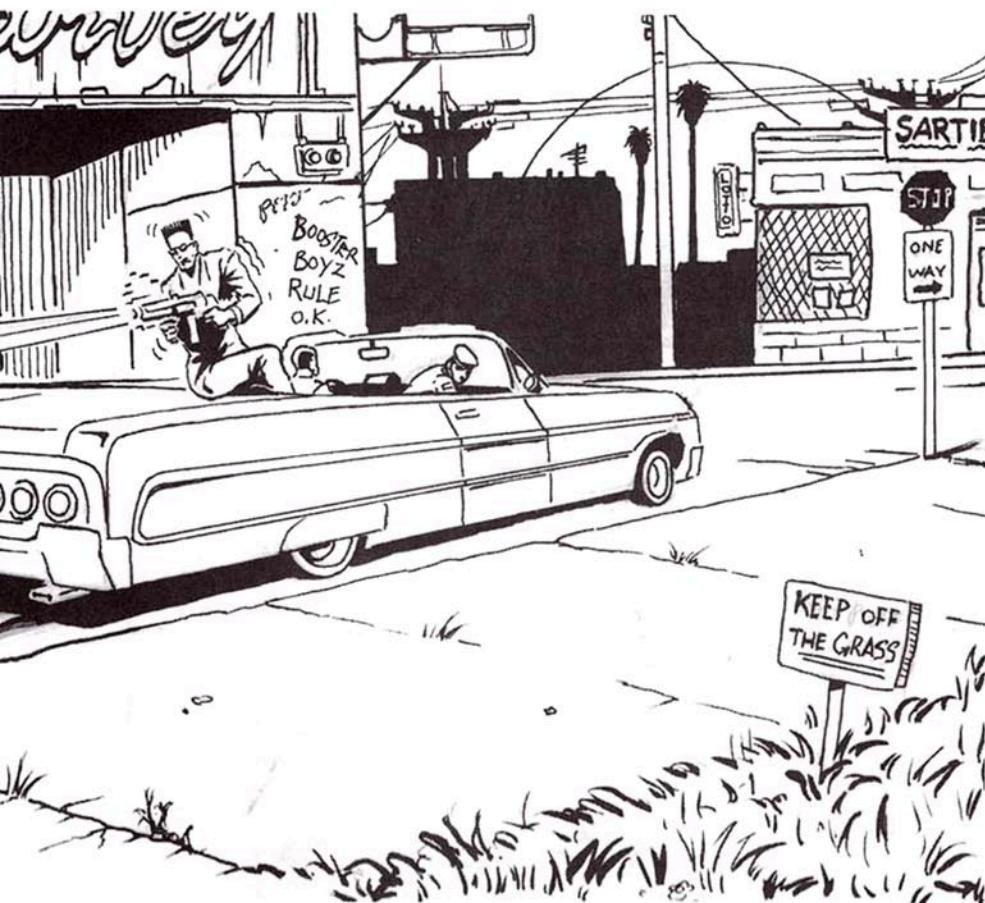
Final Adventure: The vets actually retrieve Tres Equis marketing materials that prove the existence of an exploitative conspiracy. In the aftermath, the entire board of directors is forced to resign before the company re-evaluates its operations from top-to-bottom.

Parameters: Start with the Watts Parameters; to succeed the players must boost Wealth to 4, Government Purity to 7, Education to 9, while

guaranteeing that Necessities and Take Home Pay **do not dip below** their starting levels.

3. Secure a Social Assistance Package for Jesse Hill: Jesse Hill is a poor community with few economic opportunities. A good federal assistance program might go a long way toward getting the neighborhood back on its feet again.

Final Adventure: The vets help Senate Finance Committee Chairman



Ross McDonough destroy a corrupt political rival. In return, McDonough pushes the Jessep Hill package through Congress.

Parameters: Start with the Jessep Hill Parameters; to succeed the players must increase Wealth to 4, Government Purity to 9, and Quality of Life to 5. They must also decrease Take Home Pay to 12 and make sure that all other Parameters maintain at least their beginning values.

4. Stop the War Between the Primitive on the Hill: Much of the violence on Jessep Hill stems from a particularly bloody conflict between the local branches of the Yanomamo and Ubangi tribes of primitivists. Resolving this conflict is a strong first step toward stabilizing the whole region.

Final Adventure: The vets ultimately become honorary respected members of both tribes and lead the local primitives to accept a begrudging peace. Forging peace across the whole of LA is an obvious follow-up goal.

Parameters: Start with the Jessep Hill Parameters; to succeed the players must increase Wealth to 4, Safety to 3, and Quality of Life to 6, while guaranteeing that none of the other Parameters decrease below their initial levels.

Getting to and from Los Angeles

As the largest city on the west coast, Los Angeles is accessible by any imaginable form of transportation. Planes to and from every major city in North America leave every couple of hours from Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), and planes to and from every major city in the world leave every four or five hours. LAX is also a fully-equipped spaceport. Flights to and from Luna leave every twelve hours.

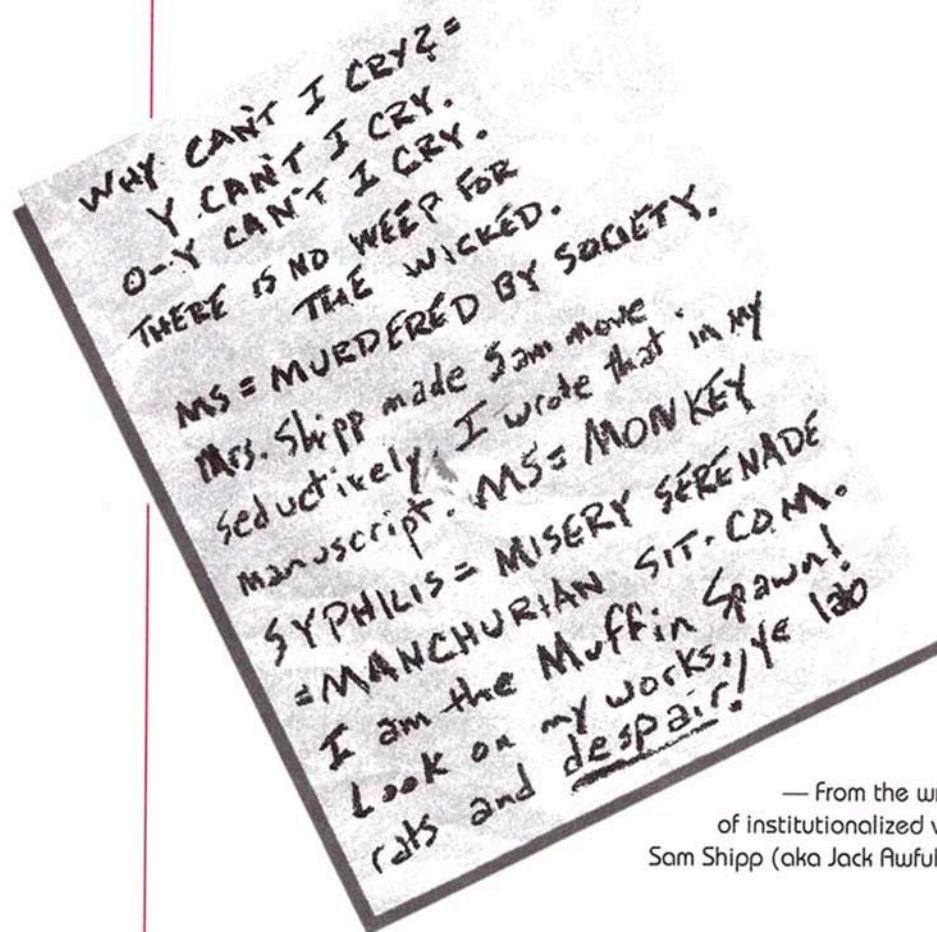
Those with a fear of flying can visit Los Angeles via NAMRA. Trains connecting LA with most major cities in North America arrive and depart every three-four hours.

As for getting around within Los Angeles, the DART system is both convenient and highly accessible. One of the props depicts a map of all scheduled DART stops. Dart fares run \$10 to the mile.



Chapter

two



— From the writings
of institutionalized vet
Sam Shipp (aka Jack Awful).

Before you start your campaign you should give some thought to the vets' base of operations. Where do the vets live? Who are their friends? What are their surroundings like? You'd be surprised by the number of workable story ideas that can stem from this sort of background information. Also, a well-detailed setting is an important key to making your stories more interesting and plausible—an important skill to master. One of the most fundamental rules of roleplaying games holds that "the more plausible the illusion, the more entertaining the experience."

chapter two

AN INTRODUCTION TO JESSEP HILL

To help you out, this chapter contains a completely detailed campaign setting, a small neighborhood in Watts known as Jessep Hill, that you can use as your starting point. Read the description carefully, take a little time to figure out the role your particular group of vets might play on the Hill, and begin play. Of course, Jessep Hill is only one of thousands of viable campaign settings in and around Los Angeles. If it doesn't appeal to you, feel free to create your own, using the material in this chapter and the accompanying "Streets" booklet for guidance.

The Basics/Parameters

JESSEP HILL IS LOCATED IN WATTS

Jessep Hill is a small, multi-ethnic neighborhood located in the heart of the Watts district in south-central Los Angeles. The Hill gets its name from the fact that the entire neighborhood **extends upward two layers** over street level, giving its upper tier one of the highest vantage points in south-central. Construction of the Hill was authorized back in 2011 by former LA County Commissioner Vincent Jessep.

THE HILL IS COMPOSED OF THREE CULTURALLY DIVERSE LEVELS

As in most of LA's multi-tiered neighborhoods, society on the Hill is geographically split. The lowest level is home to **two tribes** of destitute primitives, the middle level is chiefly inhabited by pre-frontals and veterans on public assistance, and the uppermost level is the domain of small-time businessmen with incomes that barely pass as middle class. These divisions are chiefly enforced through a variety of means: property values (only the businessmen can afford the housing on the upper level), religion (the primitives like to remain as close to the earth as possible), and even simple fear (all three classes are somewhat afraid of violating the "territory" of the others).

JESSEP HILL PARAMETERS

The Parameters for Jessep Hill are as follows:

Wealth: 4

Safety: 2

Government Purity: 5

Quality of Life: 4

Education: 3

Necessities: 5

Take Home Pay: 10

Jessep Hill: is depicted on the full-color poster map included with *Streets Tell Stories*. Its location in Los Angeles County is depicted on the map found on the back of the *Streets* booklet.

extends upward two layers: Los Angeles is dotted with dozens of similar structures. Such miniature "floating cities" are usually constructed around the tall cell-com towers that are found every few miles along the LA landscape.

two tribes: off-shoots of the Ubangis and the Yanomamos

short term sentence:

Generally, prisoners who serve sentences of less than six months spend their entire sentence in the lock-up.

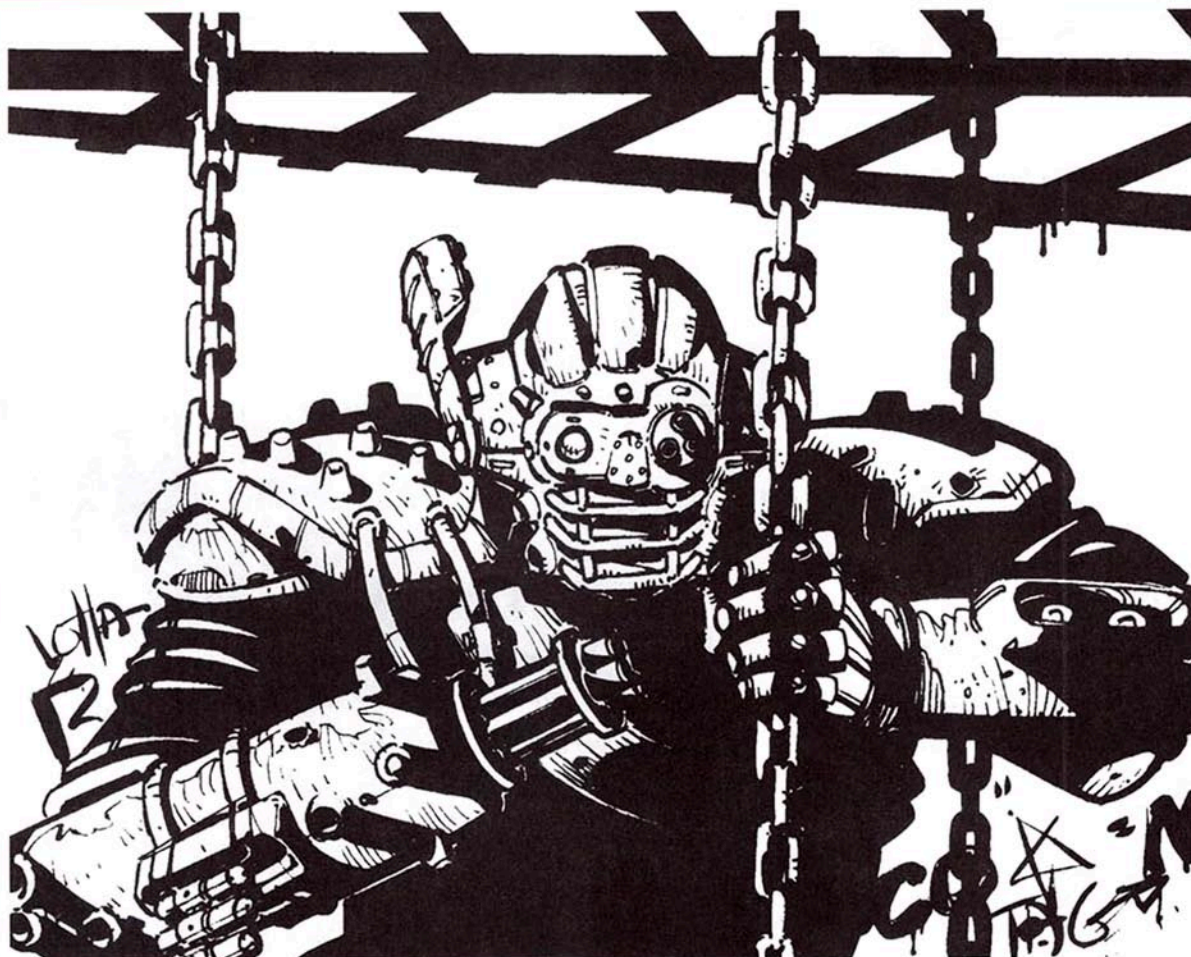
County Lock-Up

In and around south-central, the Hill is best known as the home of County Lock-Up Number Three, a small temporary prison that was built as an adjunct to the LAPF's 88th Precinct headquarters (#10, below). Four similar facilities are scattered across Los Angeles County. The lock-ups are used as holding pens for prisoners who are on trial, waiting for a trial, waiting for a cell at a larger facility, or serving a **short-term sentence**. In all, more than six hundred prisoners are incarcerated at CLUN3.

Recently, as the over-crowding problems at nearby Pelican's Bay penitentiary became critical, the county started housing some of the spillover at the county lock-ups. As a result, CLUN3 is now home to more than six dozen dangerous felons. Although special security measures were implemented when the felons were transferred, the lock-up is still woefully unprepared

THE HILL IS
HOME TO COUN-
TY LOCK-UP
NUMBER 3
(CLUN3)

CLUN3 NOW
HOUSES VERY
DANGEROUS
PRISONERS



CLUN3 IS A
GUIDING FORCE
IN THE ECONOMY
OF THE
NEIGHBORHOOD

for their presence. Minor riots and other "incidents" are now quite common, and a great deal of evidence suggests that some of the tougher cons are masterminding outside gambling, prostitution, and drug rings from their cells. The seasoned cons who were transferred to CLUN3 from the penitentiary are always recognizable among the general population by the homemade **tattoos** they sport on their arms.

The presence of CLUN3 is so important to Jessep Hill that much of the local economy revolves around it. Many of the small-time entrepreneurs who live and operate shops on the Hill's upper tier do much of their **business** with the prison commissary. Similarly, many of the Hill's residents are employed by the lock-up as guards and **COs**. The local economy is also impacted by the low-level organized crime schemes that the tougher cons are running from their cells. Since two or three dozen "runners" and message boys drop by the prison each day to receive instructions from the boss, business is booming for many local restaurants and convenience stores.

tattoos: Penitentiary convicts customarily tattoo an eye on their upper arm shortly after they arrive, and then tattoo a tear falling from that eye at the end of each year they spend in prison.

business: Items sold on the Hill that are in great demand at CLUN3 include cigarettes, portable radios, magazines, and electronic games.

COs: correctional officers. To inmates, prison guards and COs are known as "screws."

boosted inmates: with special disruptive Enhancements are kept in a drugged state while incarcerated.

CLUN3 Statistics

Most of the cell walls at CLUN3 have a RES of 25 (the walls in cells specially designed to hold **boosted inmates** have a RES of 30). Opening a cell door without throwing a special switch located in the prison's heavily guarded control center is a Legendary Thief/Security Challenge (Difficulty of 20, or 24 without special tools).

In all, there are more than sixty guards on duty at CLUN3 at any one time. Twelve of these guards are stationed along the 18 foot curtain wall that surrounds the perimeter of the entire facility. Slipping over the wall without being detected by any of the guards not only requires all the appropriate Climbing Challenges, but an Impressive Thief/Stealth Challenge as well.

Typical Guard

STR: 3, DEX: 3, SPD: 3, RES: 3

Gun Combat: 5, Military Science: 3

Armed w/Turbo Tazer (inside), or

ZW 385i (on the wall)

Typical InmateCLUN3 Statistics

STR: 3, DEX: 3, SPD: 3, RES: 3

Gun Combat: 5, Thief: 5, Weaponry: 5

Armed w/homemade shank

(Pen: 4, LW/LW/MW/HW)

OGs: "original gangsters," a term of respect bestowed upon older and more experienced gang members. In essence, the OGs are gang-banging's "all-stars."

narcotics: The 83s sell mostly crack cocaine and juice. They receive their supply from big time organized criminals, who are in turn supplied by conspiracies headed up by Floridian drug lords and US Senators.

high schools: In 2021, most of LA is served by only five high schools, each with 50,000 to 100,000 students who are bussed in from as far as twelve miles away. Since kids from so many different neighborhoods are thrust together in the schools, they are a hotbed of gang activity. In fact, many youngsters are forced to join sets for protection from all the other gangs.

robbery: The one exception to this rule is the expensive automobile. If he likes what you are driving, just about any one of the 83s will jack you for your ride.

The Gang

Like all of LA's lower-income neighborhoods, Jessep Hill is a hotbed of gang activity. The Hill is the domain of the Eight-Tray Gangsters, a small-time set affiliated with the Folks. In all, the Eight-Trays boast fifteen regular members, 4 **OGs** among them. They make their money through a variety of schemes, including prostitution, numbers, and the sale of **narcotics**

The Eight-Trays recruit most of their members from local **high schools** and tenements. At present, the gang's leadership has made recruiting the boosted veterans in the VA housing blocks a top priority. By attracting this sort of muscle, the gang hopes to earn itself a reputation. Although the 83s are certainly not one of the largest (or "deepest," in street terms) sets on the streets, they are one of the fastest growing. As more and more people move into the public assistance enements and fall on hard times, the gang's ranks are beginning to swell considerably.

On the streets, the Eight Trays are easily recognized by their expensive, well-tailored suits. They spend a great deal of their time loitering outside the housing blocks and drinking 40 oz. bottles of Tres Equis (XXX) malt liquor, the gangster's beverage of choice. Every time an 83 opens a new bottle of XXX, he pours a bit of its contents on the street as part of a ritual that honors the Eight-Trays who died "defending the neighborhood." Most of the gang-bangers spend the balance of their time running messages to and from the convicts in CLUN3 (a service for which other sets pay them handsomely), selling narcotics to the residents of the housing blocks and tenements, and dodging the occasional LAPF sweep.

Although the Eight-Trays are certainly ruthless, most members of Jessep Hill society have little to fear from them. To the gang-banger, everyone on the Hill is a potential narcotics customer, and roughing up the customers is not good for business. Furthermore, most of the gang-bangers make enough money from their various criminal enterprises to make muggings and **robbery** a waste of time. In fact, every once in a while, the 83s themselves take down one or two of the small-time thieves and street criminals who are always operating in the area as a matter of neighborhood

THE HILL IS THE
TURF OF THE
EIGHTTRAY
GANGSTER
FOLKS

THE EIGHTTRAYS
ARE A SMALL,
BUT FAST GROW-
ING SET

HOW THE
EIGHT-TRAYS
SPEND THEIR
TIME

THE NARCOTICS
TRADE ON THE
HILL



pride. The real danger the gang poses to innocent bystanders is the threat of being caught in a crossfire. **Wars** between the 83s and neighboring sets affiliated with the People are not uncommon, and any time the rival gangs square off, the bullets fly with reckless abandon.

Campaign Frameworks and the Hill

THE HILL AND
CAMPAIGN
FRAMEWORKS

If your players chose the Street Gangster Campaign Framework, you should eliminate the 83s and replace them with the players' own organization. This advice also holds true for the LAPF forces described below (Location #10). If your players have chosen the LAPF Campaign Framework, eliminate or replace all the necessary parts of the LAPF 88th Precinct headquarters description to allow for the smooth integration of the player characters.

wars: Lately, the sets in south-central have started a new practice. Instead of assassinating rivals, they now sometimes simply kidnap and torture them. Kidnap victims are later returned to their gangs in exchange for enormous ransoms (sometimes as much as \$3,000,000).

poverty line: an annual income of \$140,000 or less for a family of four in 2021.

\$6,000: Only half of this payment is actually provided by the government. The other half is comprised of dollar-for-dollar matching funds provided by corporate sponsors. At present, the sponsors who contribute most to the welfare fund are the Tres Equis Malt Liquor Corporation, Urban Nightmare Munitions, and the Roebock Athletic Shoe Corporation.

simple down-and-outers: homeless or unemployed citizens lucky enough to secure a position in government-subsidized housing.

Locations

1. Tenements

Jesse Hill is home to several large public assistance tenement domes. All the domes were built by the federal government between 2011 and 2013. Today, roughly 75% of the domes are operated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, while the remaining 25% are operated by the Veterans' Administration.

To qualify for housing in a HUD dome, a candidate must demonstrate an income that falls below the official **poverty line**, and either present proof of employment or file a sworn statement establishing a willingness to participate in government-funded work-relief programs. This last requirement is a good illustration of the lunacy of 21st century bureaucracy since neither the federal or state governments have actually funded a work-relief program in almost half a century. In addition to free housing in one of the tenements, unemployed HUD domers receive a monthly welfare stipend of **\$6,000**. On the Hill, most of the occupants of the HUD domes are either **simple down-and-outers** or pre-frontals who are bussed out daily to work in the microprocessor factories on the fringe of LA County.

The Veterans Administration domes on the Hill are operated in accordance with the Veterans' Fair Housing Act described on page 90 of the *Underground* rulebook. Many demobilized veterans spend their first three stateside years in these tenements trying to get their lives back in order.

Accommodations in the tenements are squalid and spartan. Individual apartments are little more than 10' by 18' cubicles, while families of four are issued two adjoining cubicles. Adding to the misery is the fact that the tenements are choice targets for vandals. Most of the halls and stairwells in the buildings are covered in graffiti from ceiling to floor, and the elevators and public vid-phones are in a constant state of disrepair. Although each tenement has its own security node boasting between three and five private officers on duty at any time of the day or night, most of the security officers fail to confront the vandals and other thugs who frequent the tenements out of a combination of lethargy and fear. Some even serve the gang-bangers and dope dealers as look-out men or mules.

THE TENEMENT
DOMES

HUD DOMES

VA DOMES

ACCOMMODA-
TIONS WITHIN
THE DOMES

THE SWAP MEET
PAVILIONS

2. Swap Meet Grounds

Three times each week, dozens of small-time entrepreneurs and hustlers set up stalls in these two huge pavilions to sell goods ranging from brand-name designer fashions (usually imitations) to jewelry to consumer electronics equipment. The attraction of the swap meet is that it gives the residents of south-central an opportunity to buy name-brand expensive merchandise (or at least, reasonable bootleg copies of name-brand expensive merchandise) at low, low prices. Although most of the non-bootleg items that occasionally turn up at the swap meet are overstock that was legitimately passed from hustler to hustler until it finally made its way into the ghetto, it is certainly not uncommon to find stolen goods for sale.

Because the swap meet is so popular and visited by such a large percentage of the local populace whenever it is in session, it can be quite a dangerous place. Pick-pockets and muggers commonly prowl the area, and rival gangs looking for the Eight-Trays are assured of finding at least some of them here in the pavilions. So far, in 2021 alone, the swap meet grounds have been struck by three fly-by shootings that have left four Eight-Trays and six innocent bystanders dead.

COLONEL KURTZ

One of the most curious individuals frequenting the swap meets is the infamous **Colonel Kurtz**, a boosted veteran of the AMI Flying Deuces. Kurtz

Colonel Kurtz: makes an appearance in the "Lovely Kafka Comes Home" short story that opens the *Underground* rulebook.



Golemite: Both the Golemite and Claws are boosted veterans of TWD's 11th Airmobile (see the *Underground* rulebook, page 84).

likes to sit in one of the pavilion stalls and ramble on and on about the nature of mankind, the meaning of warfare, his struggles against the Nietzschean void, and a wide variety of similar topics. Sometimes Kurtz becomes so entwined in his ramblings that he doesn't seem to notice the presence of passersby. Other times, he is alert and communicative. Whether Kurtz is a genius or a lunatic is matter of heated debate. In any case, the residents of the Hill have obviously grown to appreciate him; as best as anyone knows, Kurtz survives entirely off the bits of spare change that onlookers leave in the bowl he places in front of his stall in the swap meet. Kurtz is particularly close to the primitives who lived on the Hill's lowest level. An astute observer might get the impression he shares a sort of rare and frightening secret with them.

Colonel Kurtz (aka Conrad Kurtz)

STR: 3, DEK: 3, SPD: 3, RES: 6, INT: 7, WILL: 6, AURA: 6 Tolerance: 7

Acrobatics/Dodge: 8, Charm: 7, Gun Combat: 5, Leadership: 8, Military Science: 8,

Medicine/First Aid: 8, Psychology: 8

Empathy: 9 (Stress: 2)

Armed with an Urban Nightmare EP450

"In Paraguay, the veil was lifted and I first saw the cold, hard stone that sits at the heart of man. For \$14, I'll show it to you."

3. Dayton and 88

This street corner, located on the Hill's middle level, is a notorious hotbed of prostitution. Approximately forty-fifty streetwalkers can be found on and around this corner at any time of the day or night. Most of them work for the **Golemite**, a notorious pimp and confidante of Santa Claws. Occasionally, a rival pimp or independent operator moves into the area, forcing the Golemite to deal with him/her.

DAYTON AND 88
IS A HAVEN FOR
PROSTITUTES

THE GOLEMITE

The Golemite (real name unknown)

STR: 9, DEK: 6, SPD: 6, RES: 9, INT: 2, WILL: 6, AURA: 7

Tolerance: 6

Acrobatics/Dodge: 11, Gun Combat: 9, Intimidation/Interrogation: 9, Leadership: 8,

Military Science: 6, Thief: 7

Blubber: 3

Armed with a GCS DW770g, Heavy Mondo and Heavykev

"C'mon baby, give up the money!"

THE HILL WAS
HIT HARD DUR-
ING THE RIOTS
OF 2020

Although he is a fearsome criminal, who runs **small-time operations** all over the Hill, the Golemite is also a popular entertainer. Occasionally, he stops on a street corner to regail passersby with his mastery of **signifying**

One of the latest recruits to the Golemite's stable is Christine, a runaway from a wealthy family. Until recently, Christine worked at 90210 (Silk Talk ejected her for stealing from the till). She is one of the few people in all of Los Angeles who is aware of Stepping High's true identity (see *Streets*).

4. Burned-Out Warehouses

The Hill was hard hit by the **Compton Riots of 2020**. Although much of the damage inflicted by the riots has been repaired over the last eleven months, the entire Hill is still littered with structures that stand in charred ruins. Particularly hard hit were several large warehouses used by a wide variety of large corporations to store everything from golf clubs to pornographic magazines (in 2017, the Hill was zoned as an urban free enterprise zone by the Gates Administration, encouraging several conglomerates to buy up real estate for warehousing space). It seems unlikely that any of these warehouses will be rebuilt.

At present, the warehouses tend to serve as homes for derelicts and meeting places for the Eight-Trays and other thugs.

5. Club Angst

Club Angst is the closest thing on the Hill to a real night life. Although not nearly as glitzy or comfortable as the posh clubs downtown, Angst is nice enough to stand out as an anomaly in its surroundings. The secret to the club's success is the flood of rich kids from the County fringes who started to venture into the inner city to catch the latest **scratch-pop** groups in the wake of Systematic Overthrow's unprecedented commercial success.

In addition, to its entertainment value, Angst is a vast repository of information and street connections. Because the club is frequented by all the best players, hustlers, and pimps working the Hill, the answer to just about any question can be found here by an inquisitor with enough cash, street smarts, or ammunition.

small-time operations:

The Golemite is a notorious fence, drug dealer, con man, and general hustler. If they live in or around the Hill, it won't be long before the player characters run into him.

signifying: a humorous and boasting form of improvised poetry.

CLUB ANGST

ANGST IS A
REOSITORY OF
INFORMATION
AND STREET
CONNECTIONS

Club Angst is also rumored to be the secret stomping ground of Blue Lou Prospero, a "special operative" for Fermi AeroSpace Amalgamated, who is believed to visit the club in order to recruit teams of boosted veterans for "special errands."

Lou Prospero

INT: 3, WILL: 3, AURA: 5

Charm: 6, Thief: 4

Armed with a 9mm Walther antique

"Hey GI, clock some ducat?"

BLUE LOU
PROSPERO

6. Liquor Stores

Like most of Los Angeles, Jessep Hill is choked with liquor stores. On parts of the Hill, you can find one on every other block.

Liquors stores on Jessep Hill are distinguished from their counterparts elsewhere in LA in two ways. First, they stock Estro-Gin and Tres Equis malt liquor almost exclusively. With their high alcohol content, these two beverages are all but tailor-made for the alcoholics who prowl the ghetto. In

LIQUOR STORES
ON THE HILL SELL
XXX AND ESTRO-
GIN ALMOST
EXCLUSIVELY



THE NUMBERS
GAME RUNS OUT
OF THE LIQUOR
STORES

GOD INC. HAS
RECENTLY
MOVED INTO
THE HILL

THE TOWSON
MALL

short, the corporations that manufacture both products are reaping enormous profits by providing the alcoholics with exactly what they need—cheap liquor with a strong punch. In fact, the Tres Equis Corporation has gone one step further by traveling from ghetto to ghetto offering liquor store owners secret incentives based upon the amount of Tres Equis they can sell. So lucrative are some of these incentives that a few of the more dishonest liquor store owners have started hiring boosted vets and street thugs to interfere with competing owners.

Second, every liquor store on the Hill is also a terminal for a vast **numbers** operation run by the Eight Trays. **Placing a bet** is as simple as traveling to the local liquor store and passing your money off to the Eight Tray runner. The daily number is drawn in one of the abandoned warehouses at 6:00 PM each night. Winnings are collected by returning to the liquor store.

7. Churches

Recently, **God Inc.** has invaded the Hill in force. Although there is certainly something rather cynical about the firm's operating procedures (known in the tabloid press as "pay for pray"), there's no denying the fact that its presence has brought peace and tranquility to certain parts of the neighborhood. Like Tres Equis and Urban Nightmare Munitions, God Inc. is now investigating the possibility of becoming a matching sponsor of government welfare.

8. Towson Mall

Essentially, Towson is a twisted mockery of the posh malls that dot LA's well-to-do communities. All the same sorts of stores can be found here—clothing, consumer electronics, home appliances—but the merchandise exhibits a price tag and a certain tackiness that clearly identifies it as having been bought on the Hill. Despite the fact that the merchandise sold in Towson is distinctly second class, there are still few citizens living on the Hill who can afford it. Consequently, the mall is seldom crowded.

The most popular stores in Towson are the three gun shops. Catering to this interest, mall officials recently opened a vast wing of ammunition vending machines through which every consumer who enters the mall must pass on his or her way to the storefronts.

numbers: an illegal, underground lottery.

Placing a bet: Should the players wish to try their luck, you can simulate the numbers game as follows. Ask the player how much she wants to bet (the Eight Trays will cover all bets up to \$10,000), ask her to pick a number between 1 and 100, and roll 2D10. Form a two-digit number by reading the results of the first D10 as the tens digit and the results of the second D10 as the units digit (ie. a roll of 5 and 7 becomes '57'). If the number selected by the player comes up, she is paid off at a rate of \$50 for each dollar bet.

God Inc.: a nationwide corporation that provides its customers with spiritual services.

persecution: Many police officers still hate the primitives because seven members of the LAPF were sent to Pelican's Bay in 2017 for illegally beating a confession out of a primitive.

9. Primitive Ghettos

The Hill's lowest levels are occupied by two tribes of Primitives, Yanomamo and Ubangi, who set up small shanty towns in the area shortly before the Compton Riots of 2020. Visitors to these parts of the lower levels are rare since years of **persecution** by police and government agents have made the primitives surly and unfriendly to intruders. Many of those with the courage to visit the primitives, however, swear that there is something distinctly "otherworldly" about their domain. Fearsome spirits capable of peeling away life's illusions and guiding each visitor back to a simpler, more natural state of mind seem to hang in the air.

The homes of the Primitives are made up of countless tunnels and deserted basements. The Primitives alone can navigate their way through the maze-like corridors—and even they get lost on occasion. Most of the corridors have been picked dry, though, one may find weapons caches left behind from the riots of '17, carefully hidden by people who knew that survival depended on knowing where to get easy access to firepower. Of course, it seems that none of these people survived.

There are some people wandering the old tunnels, scavengers and lonely and insane men and women seeking shelter against a world of gunshots and explosions. Some of these people are seeking the primitive tribes out in order to join them. Most of them are simply seeking quiet. Both are out of luck. The tribes, in the paranoid state, kill everyone on sight. Memberships comes only with invitation.

The Yanomamos and Ubangis are in a state of near constant war. Each tribe has their own ideas about how the end of the world should come about. For more information on this conflict, see the entries in the Streets book, and the Underground Notebook sheets, both part of the Streets Tell Stories boxed set.

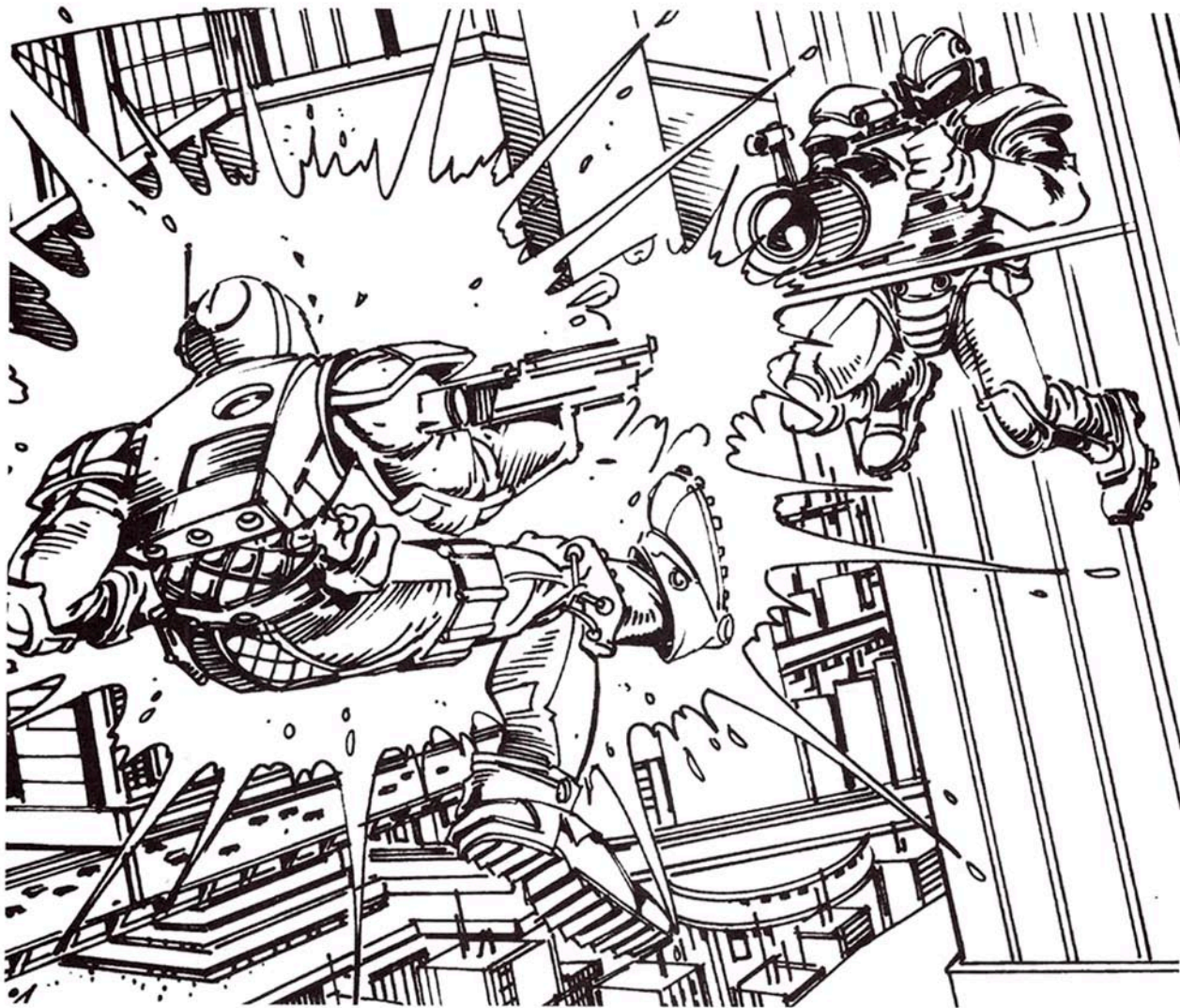
10. LAPF 18th Precinct HQ

Crime prevention on the Hill falls under the legal jurisdiction of the LAPF's 18th Precinct. The Precinct commander, OverLieutenant Jason Howe is notoriously and flagrantly corrupt. Just about everyone on the Hill knows that Howe accepts kickbacks from the Eight Trays and other organized

THE HILL IS
HOME TO
UBANGIS AND
YANOMAMOS

THE UBANGIS
AND
YANOMAMOS
ARE IN A STATE
OF WAR

THE 18TH
PRECINCT HQ



JASON HOWE,
CORRUPT
COMMANDER
OF THE 18TH

crime elements at work within the city. Rumors have even linked Howe to a set of recent disappearances within the Hill's boosted community. Widespread speculation accuses Howe of using LAPF troopers to capture the vets, who are then sold to big-time pharmaceutical corporations as guinea pigs for scientific experiments. Howe can afford to be so cavalier in his activities because he has a video tape of his equally corrupt District Commander, Marsha Sloane, personally executing an aide to 16th District Congressman **Gus Havadtoy**. Every time anyone gets near Howe, he simply blackmails Sloane into using her influence to turn down the heat. Although he's quite crafty, however, Howe is no match for Sloane. It's likely that sooner or later, she'll grow weary of the annoyance and crush him.

Another rumor has it that Howe has recently become addicted to juice, a situation made far worse by his existing pre-disposition for Estro-Gin.™

Gus Havadtoy: A member of the Republicratic party, Havadtoy is best known for his addiction to high stakes gambling and his role as line producer on the Atomic Kennedy's vid-net program Camelot: The Next Generation.

Veteran's Administration hospitals: are described in Chapters Four and Five of the *Underground* rulebook.

Eugenix: was founded by members of the DHI Pathfinders' RDF, as described on page 85 of the *Underground* rulebook.

OverLieutenant Jason Howe

STR: 3, DEX: 3, SPD: 3, INT: 2, WILL: 5, AURA: 4

Acrobatics/Dodge: 7, Gun Combat: 6, Interrogation/Intimidation: 5, Military Science: 5, Thief: 5

Armed with a 9mm Walther antique, Mondo armor, and Heavykev

"If you don't start resisting arrest in thirty seconds, I'm really gonna kick your ass!"

11. Brass Recycle Center

Centers like these can be found in just about every one of LA's poorer neighborhoods. Kids who live in the tenements collect the brass shell casings left at the scene of gang-murders and brain-jackings and bring them here for cash. The recycled brass is then sold back to the munitions companies, starting the whole cycle over again.

THE BRASS RECYCLING CENTER

12. Theater Complex

Because vid-net reception is so bad on the Hill, motion pictures are more popular here than almost anywhere else in Los Angeles. Adjacent to the Towson mall is a squat sixty-plex that runs all the latest movies 24 hours a day. Among the most popular attractions now playing: *Let Me Tell Ya About Super-Chicks*, *Beauty and the Beast 2021*, and *Nano-Seconds to Midnight*.

THE THEATER COMPLEX

13. VA Hospital/Govt Offices

The Hill is home to the Saint Samson **Veterans' Administration hospital**, an attraction that guarantees a steady flow of boosted vets in and out of the neighborhood. Adjacent to the hospital is a four-story US Government office complex that houses local Veterans' Administration and Anti-Sedition Squad officials as well as dozens of less prominent bureaucrats.

THE VA HOSPITAL

14. Eugenix HQ

The **Eugenix** boosted supremacy movement maintains a secret headquarters on the Hill in a basement beneath a disheveled laundromat. This particular Eugenix node is more violent and secretive than most. Although its seven members tape up the usual propaganda posters and leave leaflets in the Veterans' Fair Housing Act tenements, they don't make media appear-

EUGENIX HQ

KIRBY FRAMPTON,
EUGENIX LEADER

ances or grant interviews like their brethren across the country. This is perhaps due to the fact that this particular Eugenix node functions almost like a terrorist group, occasionally launching systematic attacks against nearby government offices, police stations, or just about anyone else they peg as "enemies of the genetically elevated."

The leader of the Eugenix node, Kirby Frampton (aka Gestapope) works as a mail clerk in Long Beach and hides the fact that he is a veteran from all but his fellow Eugenix members, his only real friends. Frampton spends a great deal of his off time haunting veterans' hang outs in and around the Fair Housing Act domes looking for potential recruits for his organization.

Gestapope (aka Kirby Frampton)

STR: 6, DEK: 6, SPD: 6, RES: 7, INT: 1, WILL: 3, AURA: 0

Tolerance: 6

Acrobatics/Dodge: 8, Gun Combat: 8, Leadership: 3, Military Science: 3, Thief: 7

Electric Discharge: 7

Armed with a GCS DW770g, Mondo, and Heavykev

"It's going to hurt us a lot more than it's going to hurt you. Honest."

15. Underground Wall

UNDER-
GROUNDERS
CODE MESSAGES
INTO GRAFFITI

Standing at the bottom of the access ramp between the Hill's middle and upper platforms is a long wall that is a favorite target for graffiti artists all over Watts. Slogans painted by various members of the Underground are frequently found here, and in accordance with the Underground's operating procedures, the color and position of these slogans is a code that sends a message to every Undergrounder who glimpses the wall. Whether or not the Underground has actually infiltrated the Hill remains unknown.

16. Cell-Com Towers

THE CELL-COM
TOWERS

These large towers that provide the Hill's structural framework are important nodes in LA's cellular communications network. Because the destruction of the towers would knock out communications across the entire county, they are frequently targeted for destruction by the hundreds of terrorist groups that are active in the area. For this reason, the towers are frequently guarded by **swarms** of Peace Force officers.

swarms: Generally, between twenty and twenty-five heavily armed LAPF officers can be found at the access points to both towers at any time of the day or night.

Chapter

three

Simmons: Hey man, what's up? We've been looking for you, G!

Murphy: What? Who the freak are you?

Simmons: We're the lottery, man! Your number came up!

Murphy: What? What number?

Simmons: NUMBER ONE-EIGHTY-SEVEN, PUNK!

[FOLLOWED BY TWO LOUD GUNSHOTS.]

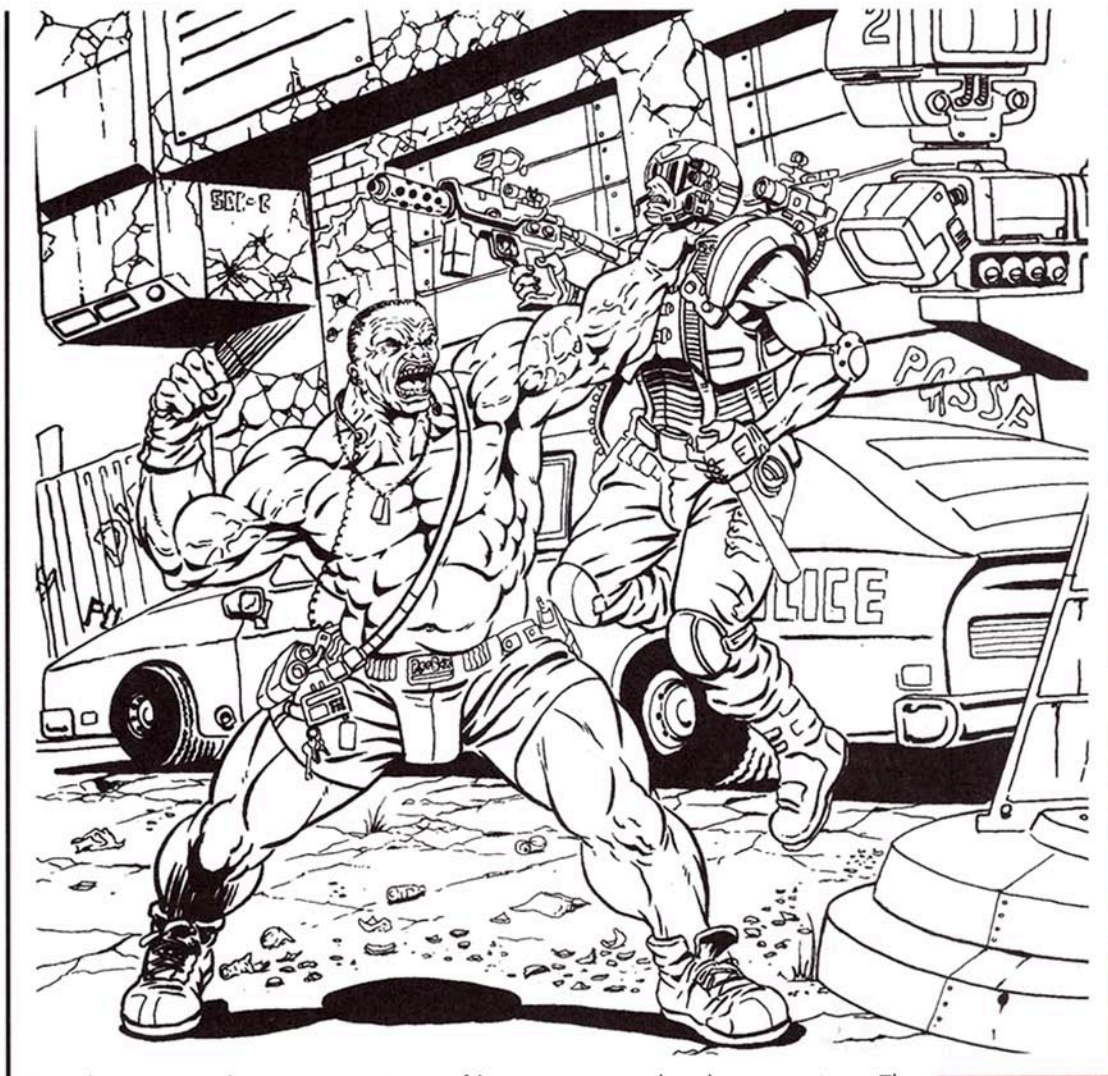
— Transcript of a gang homicide
captured on a convenience store security camera and
broadcast on Combat! Combat! Combat!

In this section you'll find three adventures that can be introduced into a campaign at any time. They don't depend on pro-active choices made by the player characters, and are for those times when the group needs a new direction for a while.

As these adventures are played out, you should think about how the group's previous exploits are effecting the community of Jesse Hill, Los Angeles County, and perhaps even the world. Are their good deeds rolling forward now, with other people picking up the cause they set in motion? Or are old villains and secret organizations drawing strength once more and undoing the work the vets sweat out a few weeks earlier? Possibly a new gangster or government official or drug dealer arrives, threatening the group's goals in a new, unexpected way. Running the adventure below, and others like them, allows breathing time for the effects of the group's Campaign Goal to reach fruition.

By interspersing these adventures in-between those of the group's Campaign Goal every adventure won't depend on desires of the player

THE VETS
EFFECT THE
WORLD



characters. This creates a sense of larger scope within the campaign. The world is a big, big place, with lots and lots of people all with their own goals and plots. By bumping into these other people every once in a while, the characters are made aware of the fact that no matter how hard they work at their goals, there are others who just don't give a darn about their desires. It may not be heroic, but it's true.

ADVENTURE FORMAT

Each of the three adventures below is presented in the same format. First, a summary of the adventure. Second, a summary of how the characters could become involved in the adventure, utilizing each of the five Campaign Frameworks in Chapter One as a starting point. This is followed by a listing of all the props contained in the Streets Tell Stories cam-

paign pack that are intended for the adventure. (You can cut the props out and give them to the players, or make photocopies of them first.)

Characters for each adventure can be based on Underground NPC archetypes, and created by you to match the power levels and personalities of the vets.

The adventure format is very loose for two reasons. First, we've written them this way to encourage the pro-active spirit of Underground. By pro-active we meant that the players should not wait around for your characters to give them clues. They should be moving forward with their own plans and goals. In most adventures, the characters are either led by the nose through a series of fights and clues, or, worse, are simply props for the purposes of the story the gamemaster wants to tell. In such circumstances the players could almost simply listen to the gamemaster tell them the story, rather than pretend that their characters are having any effect on the narrative. In Underground we encourage the gamemaster to set up the circumstances of a story or the environment, and let the players make their own way through the adventure. While this keeps you on your toes all the time, we assure you it's an exciting way to gamemaster.

For example, the players might have the vets go to an abandoned warehouse thinking it contains a clue they need to find the secret ledger of the corrupt County Clerk. You might not have considered that an option. Do you simply tell them not to go there? Not at all. You might decide that the ledger is there. After all, they had reason to think it is there; they might be right. Or it might be the source of another clue that leads to where the ledger really is. And, of course, it might be a completely false lead. There's nothing wrong with allowing the vets to encounter some tough security guards who try to stop them from entering the warehouse because it's their job, not because they're on the payroll of an evil cabal. By allowing the characters to pick the path of the adventure, and sprinkling it with a mix of success and failure, you allow the story to be richer in texture and scope than if they'd simply gone from one clue to the next.

The second reason the story formats below are loose is because Underground is so open-ended in terms of the roles the vets can play.

PRO-ACTIVE
ADVENTURES

THE PLAYERS
LEAD THE
ADVENTURE

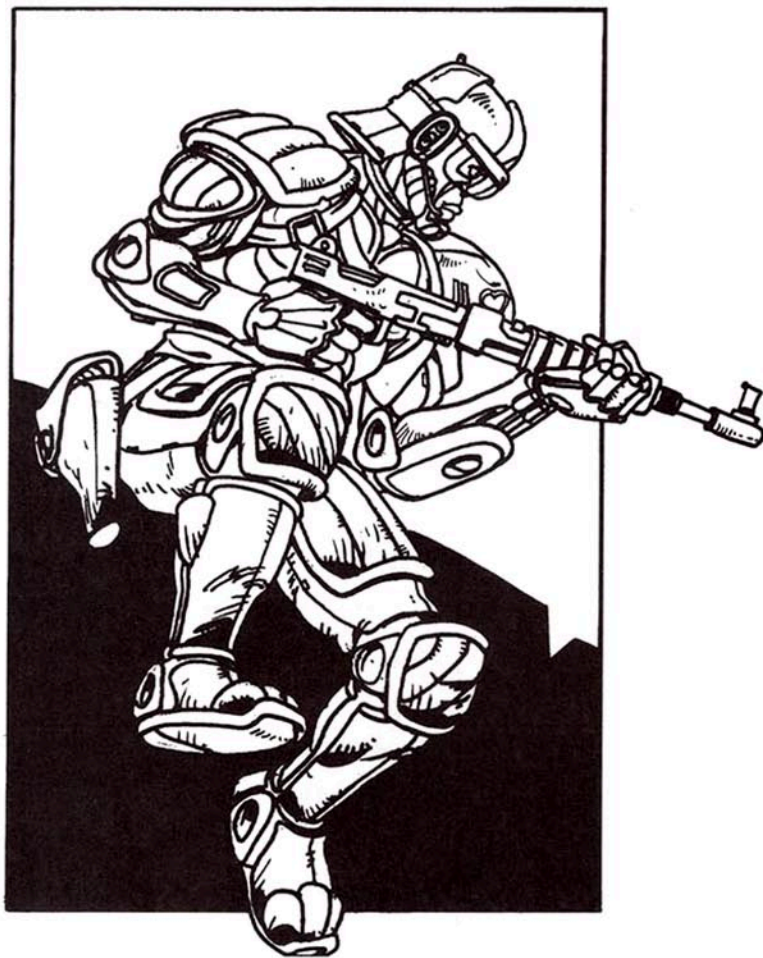
There is really no way to outline all of the possible routes the characters might choose. If the characters are members of the LAPF, for example, they will approach an investigation of a missing Congresswoman's daughter very differently than if they are terrorists who are searching for the same girl.

Parameter Goals

Following the Underground adventure style, the players should probably decide what sort of change in the Parameters they are trying to bring about. It is then up to them to make those changes occur by their actions during the adventure.

On the other hand, because the three adventures below are very specific and short term in nature, it is possible that the vets could run through them, and then you could determine the results after the fact. This takes some of the pressure off the players to set strong goals for themselves all the time, and provides some random elements to flow their way. Life, after all, doesn't always give to us what we think we're going to get.

Depending on how the vets conduct themselves, the adventure could have minimal effects on the Social Parameters. The group might end up with no more than cash, and perhaps some new, powerful contacts or enemies. On the other hand, if the vets make sure to talk up the scenarios, things could change drastically within the Parameters. Like so much in Underground, the results are often far reaching and subtle. You'll just have to wing it as best you can.



ADVENTURE:A THOUSAND WORDS

The veterans become involved with a kidnapping—with layers of deceit involved.

Summary

Angie Pressman, the daughter of ultra-conservative, anti-rock-and-roll Congresswoman Shiela Pressman has faked her own kidnapping so she can run away with Powder Power, a rap-glitz rock star.

THE SET-UP

Three days after Angie “vanishes,” she and Powder send a ransom note demanding the release of some 889 terrorists currently locked up across the United States. (The couple did some research and culled the names from the 2021 U. S. Government Abstract.) The note says that the prisoners must be released in two days, or Angie will be killed. At this point the vets are brought into the situation, and are given the mission of tracking Angie down within three days.

THE BACK-
GROUND

Several key points for the investigation are as follows:

THE BITS

- No one, not even terrorist groups, knows who grabbed Angie.
- The terrorists on the list are from 239 different terrorist groups that frequently fight each other. The notion that any one group could somehow represent all of them seems highly improbable to most government crime fighting sources. To most of the terrorist groups, it’s ridiculous.
- Not only are several government agencies trying to track down Angie, but several terrorist groups are trying to find out who is trying to free their members. Depending on the Campaign Framework, the player character may find allies and enemies within these groups amid the rush to get the girl.
- Angie vanished after school one day. Her classmates can reveal, if asked, that she was in the PROCURIA Mall, and went off to use the washroom and never came back. If pressed, they remember they did think it strange at the time she went off alone—almost insisted—for she and her friends almost always go to the restroom together.
- Her friends know about Angie dating Powder. They guard this secret carefully. None give it willingly, and they will nearly have to be threatened with death before they reveal it.

- A red-herring: Research reveals that a former band member of Powder's first band is one of the names on the list. After hanging up his guitar, Uberdog joined up with the People's Liberation Front for the Advancement of Holistic thinking. The group blows up hospitals in an attempt to weaken "the stranglehold of western thinking upon the healing arts." The vets may well end up thinking that Powder's interest in Angie came only from his desire to free his friend. The long list of names might have been his attempt at a smoke screen to hide his true intent and keep himself safe from being linked to kidnapping.
- Uberdog and Powder, mutual friends can explain, kept in touch up until about a year ago, when Uberdog was arrested. Contact with prisoners is severely curtailed in Uberdog's prison, and Powder's career took off at around the same time. It was easy for them to lose track of one another. (In fact, Powder got tired of hearing about Uberdog complaining about linear thinking all the time.)
- Angie and Powder are not very good at this whole kidnapping thing, but they had the presence of mind not to hide in Powder's apartment. Instead, Powder has used some of his vast funds as a rock star to rent out a warehouse in Jessep Hill. There they've stocked up on food and vids to last another few days until Powder's band begins it's Clam Bake Vomit Tour in Europe. The young couple has decided they won't be returning to the United States.
- Powder used a layered series of withdrawals to remove the funds for the warehouse from his bank account. By applying themselves to the task, via computer hacking and a good reading of the books, they will be able to determine he's recently dumped a lot of money into a warehouse. According to the records, it's to store backlisted CDs that are his band's personal stock.
- The government has no intention of releasing hundreds of terrorists to save the life of a teenage girl. Even if they wanted to, two days would be too short a time to get all the paperwork cleared. Both Angie and Powder are aware of this. They are counting on the failure of the government to comply with the demands to let them proceed with the second part of their plan.
- The man pictured holding the gun to Angie's head is Tres Desperado, a rent-a-thug from Santa Claws's gang. Some leg work will allow the vets to find this out. Of course, no one in Santa Claws's gang is going to spill the beans on how Tres is involved in the kidnapping, and will deny they even

know the guy. Fights will probably ensue. Depending on how the bullets and role-playing fly, the vets might well discover that Powder Power paid Santa Claws a large sum of cash for the services of his thugs.

Powder hired the muscle for two reasons. One, to appear as muscle in the photograph. (The picture wasn't supposed to show Tres's face, but Powder, with a mixture of nervousness and inexperience with kidnappings, made a big mistake and faxed it out without thinking.) The other is to make sure that he and Angie are bothered by Jesse Hill's uglier elements while they wait out their time in the U. S.

Two days after the ransom note and first photo are sent out, when the 889 terrorists are not released, Angie and Powder send in the second picture, showing Angie's staged murder.

- Observant players will notice two items of interest in the pictures. In the first picture, which shows one of Powder Power's rent-a-thugs holding a gun to Angie's head, there is no clip in the gun. Hardly the tough, frightening situation one would expect to find from kidnappers in league with terrorist.



- Second, in the picture showing the murdered Angie, there is a bit of breath vapor on the mirror next to Angie's face. Again, subtle, but it gives away the fact she's still alive.
- Combined with the absurdity of the demands, the vets should be able to figure out that something strange is going on with this kidnapping business.
- If the players don't pick up on the clues, you can have them make Intellect rolls against a difficult challenge. Success means the characters pick up on the clues.
- If the vets still don't realize that Angie is still alive, then they should continue on the case if only to nail her murderers.

Just before the vets raid the warehouse, one of the terrorist factions looked for Angie. They've found her, and have decided to use their "rescue" of her to their own ends. They will kidnap her and take her back to their base, returning her after Congresswoman Pressman votes on a few upcoming bills along the way they want the votes to go. As their demands are much more reasonable, there's every reason to believe they'll get what they want.

- When the vets arrive, have them encounter the terrorists. The situation can explode into a gun fight, but might also become a tense period of negotiations.
- During all of this the terrorists will attempt to stall the vets as they hustle Angie and Powder out of the warehouse through a back exit. The odds should be stacked against the vet group so the terrorists probably pull this off. If the vets manage to buck down the terrorists, they rescue Angie, and the adventure is over.
- If the terrorists get away with Angie and Powder, they have to track them down to their base for the big, final climactic combat.

Campaign Frameworks

- If the vets are BOOs, they are sent out to find Angie by the LAPF. Simple.
- If the vets are street gangsters, they are approached by representatives of Congresswoman Pressman, who believes that elements of the street will better be able to find her daughter.
- If the vets are part of a terrorist group, they search out the kidnappers because someone is trying to get five of their imprisoned members

released, and they don't know why. In this case, they'll have to do a bit of a work to get hold of the pictures. You should make sure, however, they manage to get the photos.

- Corporate raiders could be lent to Pressman by a grateful company who had received favorable treatment in several votes in the past few years.
- Government agents could easily be sent out on the case.

Props

For this adventure, use the USA Alive paper (there's an article in it about Pressman), the picture of Tres putting the gun to Angie's head, and the picture of the "dead" Angie.

ADVENTURE TWO: THE BIG NUMBERS

The veterans get involved with an elaborate game that is throwing the streets of Jessep Hill into an even bloodier war zone than usual.



Summary

In the past few months the turf wars in and around Jessep Hill have gotten completely out of control. Whenever it seems that a turf war is about to finally settle, the guns blaze again, and the death toll rises once more.

THE SET-UP

Gang bangers and civvies are dropping all over the place, the cement sidewalks spattered with blood. The situation is out of control.

What makes all this so strange, and why something has to be done about it, is that no one knows why all the fighting is taking place. Gang negotiators, beat cops, and liquor store owners are all at a loss to explain the never stopping violence. Even the gang members seem confused—though no one can say for sure if the gang bangers are really confused, or if they're hiding some elaborate new scheme.

All of this should be set up before the adventure is actually run. During other adventures you should mention in passing the rising intensity of the gang violence, with the wars reaching a strange, almost eerie quality. If the players have the vets look into the matter, the vets get no information. No one really knows what's going on.

THE BACKGROUND

A few months ago a group of munitions industry executives began playing a game of "roisserie league gang-banging." At the beginning of the game they all drafted local street gangs and for a period of several weeks they tallied up the body counts in the paper. The executive who's gang scores the biggest body count in a ratio calculated against the gang's own losses. Each week massive amounts of dollars change hands between the executives—sums of money large enough to make it worth taking elaborate means to cheat.

In fact, only one of the gangs knows what's going on—the F-HOGs. They're the gang picked by "Target" Puck•Meister, the co-owner of Wet Weapons, to represent him in the gang-banging roisserie league. In the original plan for the roisserie league, the executives weren't supposed to contact the gangs. Obviously any contact meant that the "real" death totals might end up becoming skewed as the gangs try to win the weeks totals for their "corporate sponsor."

This is exactly what's happened. Once the game caught on and the stakes ramped up, "Target" decided to move the game into his pocket. He contacted Tri-Top and informed him of the games, and offered him a cut of every weeks profits. All he had to do was arrange for a certain number of

deaths in each gang each week. This bit of chicanery is actually quite complicated. Because each week's totals are set by a ratio between the deaths within a gang and the killed attributed to the gang, the victory conditions are quite variable. To insure victory, the F-HOGs must not only make sure to kill enough members of other gangs to get their own totals up—whether or not there's a good reason for the deaths—but they've got to gun down gangsters and frame other gangs for the deaths. This keeps the death tolls spinning wildly upward. This also means that calls for revenge are made constantly—which only sends the F-HOGs back out into the streets as they try to keep up with the reprisals their own actions have set in motion.

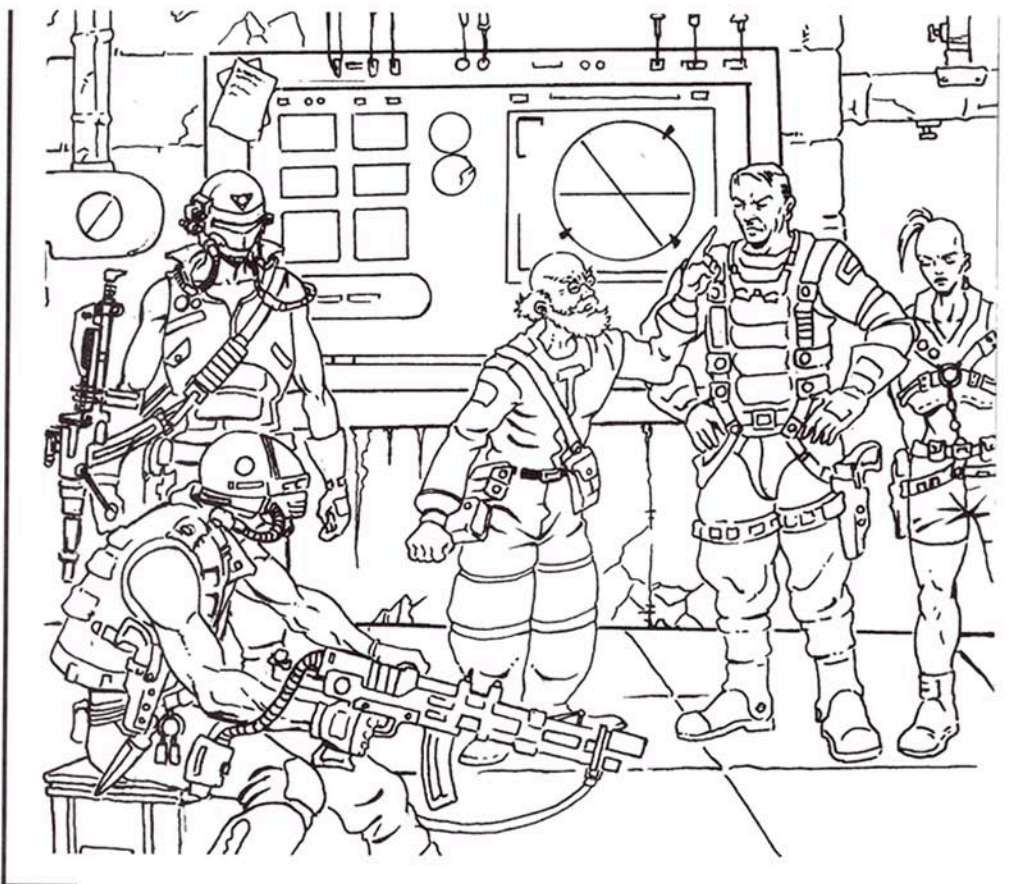
Guns, guns, guns. Blood, blood, blood.

The vets are involved with the situation in a variety of ways, depending on their campaign framework.

While they try to unravel the mystery of the gang wars and get the irrational killings to stop, here are some things to keep in mind:

- Tri-Top has also been quiet about why he's sending out his people for apparently random murders. Although everyone in the gang has been getting bonuses for the mysterious network, people in his ranks are getting either curious or testy. Keep in mind that Tri-Top is an off-the-rack gangster ruling a predominantly boosted gang. There's already tension within his ranks. Although most of the F-HOGs know better than to spill anything about the gang's operations to outsiders, several of them see Tri-Top's strange commands as a weak point they can exploit. If they can get the goods on Tri-Top they can get him out of the gang and seize the reigns of power for themselves.
- Rather than put themselves on the spot, however, they call in the vets to find out what's up for them. This way they stay out of trouble with Tri-Top, and don't end up as red paint on a wall if things go down the wrong way. Everyone knows you never, ever, end up on Tri-Top's bad side.
- The only clue the vets have to start off with is one of Target's calculation pages, which he gave to Target so the leader of the F-HOGs could work out how many other gangsters had to die. The renegade F-HOG gangsters stole the page from Tri-Top's desk, realized it was tied somehow to the gangs, and passed it onto their dupes.

THE BITS



- The sheet will probably remain a mystery until two days later when a newspaper article reveals that the calculations match the actual death totals for that week. Because the page and the newspaper are dated, it should be clear that Tri-Top has a vested interest in arranging for a certain number of deaths from the different gangs.
- Tracking the connection from the sheet, through Tri-Top, and back to Target will be tricky. The executive's instructions are communicated to Tri-Top within the packing crates of each week's shipment of sample guns from Wet Weapons. They are very well hidden, and most likely only someone on the inside will be able to find them. Thus, unless the players come up with a viable alternative (which is more than possible), they'll have to somehow get into the F-HOGs and pose as loyal members. By hanging around the gang for a while, they should be able to spot the importance of the packing crates to Tri-Top.
- After they make the connection with Wet Weapons, they'll have to then sneak into the weapons manufacturing company and look around for the next part of the mystery.
- Target Puck•Miester has told no one of his schemes. He's that canny. However, he's also a bit of a gloater. He's saved up every one of the

sheets he's used for his calculations, and has several weeks worth of material in his files linking him to not only the rotisserie game, but his attempts to influence the outcome of the game. These records are in a wall safe. It is very difficult to break through and loaded with alarms. The vets will have to figure out a means of getting the combination from Target without his knowing it. (That is, if they want to be subtle. They might choose to blow the safe and make a run for it.)

- Wet Weapons is obviously bristling with guards and big ol' weapons.

Campaign Frameworks

No matter what the Campaign Framework, the vets are contacted anonymously by the renegade elements in the F-HOGs and given the mysterious piece of paper detailing the deaths of other gang members. The renegades don't know what the paper means, and leave it up to the vets to figure out.

If the vets are gangsters themselves, they might well have a personal stake in the mystery of the gang wars. They might recently have lost several gang members to the mysterious wars, and might be itching to find out who's responsible.

The difference in the framework may not matter for kicking the adventure off, but the undercover work will certainly be different for each of the Campaign Frameworks. For example, vets who are part of the BOOs might be already part of an undercover squad, and thus have access to false credentials and might well be able to fake their way with some ease into the F-HOGs. On the other hand, vets who are members of a rival gang will have to prove that they are no longer loyal to their old gang and can be trusted by Tri-Top. The outcome of attempts in matters such as these should be determined by the cleverness of the planning on the part of the vets, and the role-playing of the group.

Props

For this adventure, use the sheet of figures and the article about the gang death totals.

ADVENTURE THREE: THE SLOWBURN PREROGATIVE

The vets are drawn into a dangerous web of intrigue involving virtual reality, mad scientists, and Frederick Nietzsche.

Summary

THE SET-UP

As mentioned in his *The Notebook* entry, Dr. Professor is using the Slumberland Dream Park as secret testing ground for his latest and most ambitious experiment in psychological reconditioning. Code named the Slowburn Prerogative, its purpose is to destroy the moral inhibitors within a person, and release the "overman" waiting in each one of us.

THE BACKGROUND

After countless delays and problems (some of them involving the deaths of consumers in the park when the virtual reality machinery fried out), Slumberland tried to open up once again. This time, however, a new problem arose, a problem linked to Slumberland, but in such a subtle way, it will take some work on the part of the vets to figure it out.

- Dr. Professor's theories and experiments are beginning to pay off. After spending a day in Slumberland, four of the guests begin to show signs of having their moral inhibitors removed. These four people are:
 - Jennifer Tomaz, a nurse at an LA hospital, who, within 24 hours of her Slumberland experience, leaves her abusive husband and begins hunting down a better job for herself. When her husband charges into her new apartment to "get her back," she gives him a few warnings, then blows his head off. She is arrested.
 - Bill Slavass, an engineer with a good job at Wet Weapons, begins a series of Tasty Ghoul robberies to live on. He's not very concerned about getting caught. Not only does he believe he's completely justified in stealing from those who are too weak to stop him, but he's just not very worried



about the authorities. Within four days after his trip to Slumberland, he'll be gunned down by the LAPD.

— Mary Sanders, a philosophy graduate student, slaughters the pompous professors in her department, then locks herself up in a campus clock tower with a high powered rifle. While sealed in the tower she scribbles out a philosophy of life very reminiscent of Nietzsche's work—though it doesn't have the emphasis on being polite that Nietzsche demanded of people who read his work.

— Jefferson Redux, a gang banger from Jessep Hill. Although a tough guy before, his trip to Slumberland sends him over the edge. For a few days before his untimely end, he suddenly took up an interest in political history and philosophy, ransacking books at the local library. His death comes about when he needlessly gets himself shot up while arguing philosophy at a Neo-Aristotelian Rally in Upper Beverly Hills.

- Depending on the Campaign Framework of the vets, they'll be introduced into the strangeness of Slumberland via one of the above characters—invariably after the character has been killed or arrested.
- While looking into the first character, they'll learn that the person changed drastically in just the past few days.
- The other characters will be introduced as the newspapers report their strange behavior. They too changed drastically, abruptly. It will be up to the vets to collate all the data they can about the four characters. Eventually they'll be able to find out three key points.

— Each of them had recently spent some time at South Central Memorial Hospital (Tomez worked there, the rest of the characters were admitted as patients).

— Each of them spent time as children at the Lower Santa Monica Children's Shelter.

— Each of them went to Slumberland within days of the change of their behavior.

The vets may or may not investigate all of these connections. The first two are red-herrings. The last one, of course, leads them toward the truth of the matter.

- Once they get to Slumberland they can most quickly get to the bottom of the situation. The key is to examine the Slumberland programming codes. To do this they'll have to get by both physical security, alarms, and computer security. If they do, they'll then have to make Computer Science rolls against an Impressive challenge. If they pull this off, they discover strange

THE BITS

codes buried within the main codes. Only by putting this strange code together can they discover that it has nothing at all to do with “ride” of Slumberland. It’s got something to do with sending strange impulses to the brain, but no one can understand. (Only Dr. Professor can understand, and he’s really strange.)

- If the vets are sloppy in any way, Dr. Professor gets wind of their research (he is a criminal mastermind), and sends some boosted thugs to take care of the group. Bring your gats if you got ‘em.
- If the vets confront Tri-Synaptic Research, they are genuinely surprised. The vets may not believe this, and might choose to investigate the company themselves. After getting by more guards and more alarms, they discover that really, no one at the company seems to know anything about the matter. Only Dr. Professor has any records of the matter, and his stuff is completely inaccessible. (Though they might find computer security locks that need to be beaten with superhuman challenges. That’s it, a dead end.)
- If Tri-Synaptic Research is informed of the situation they purge the strange code, and the park finally opens for business. Yeah!

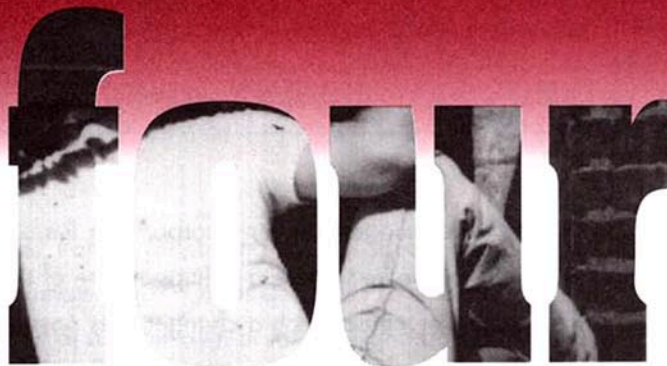
Campaign Frameworks

- If the vets are BOOs, they are sent out to investigate any of the crimes. Investigation reveals the strange change in the character’s behavior. What happened to the character becomes the central mystery.
- If the vets are street gangsters, the gangbanger who goes over the edge is a friend of theirs who they care about—maybe even a member of the gang.
- If the vets are part of a terrorist group, the philosophy major was a contact who fed them political and philosophical grist for their pamphlet mill. At least one of the vets should have known her well and care deeply about her.
- Corporate raiders could be sent out by corp who looks at all four cases, smells an experiment in the air—something big and dangerous—and sends the vets out to find out what’s going on..
- Government agents could easily be sent out on the case, for the same reasons as the BOOs. Just change the circumstances slight so the stakes would make sense for the agency the vet’s work for.

Props

For this adventure, use the USA Alive paper describing all the problems Slumberland has had getting open.

Chapter



PICKUP CORPORATION

MR. TREVOR ALMOZ
COMMUNITY SERVICES
1453 BARRIS STREET
LOS ANGELES, CA

DEAR MR. ALMOZ,

IT HAS COME TO OUR ATTENTION THAT THE COMMUNITY OF **JESSEP HILL** HAS FAILED TO MAKE PAYMENT FOR OUR SERVICES FOR THE LAST **THREE** MONTHS. AS YOU ARE THE COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE AREA, WE ARE ADVISING YOU THAT IF PAYMENT IS NOT RECIEVED PROMPTLY, WITH A 30% SERVICE CHARGE, COLLECTION OF GARBAGE WILL BE TERMINATED IN JESSEP HILL.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT MONEY IS TIGHT FOR ALL COMMUNITIES THIS YEAR, AND IT WOULD BE A SHAME FOR THE THREAT OF DISEASE TO HANG OVER JESSEP HILL. YET,

REACTIVE ADVENTURES

The world of Underground is bleak and relentless. No change, even one made for a good cause, can be made without a detrimental side-effect. While take home pay may go up, the use of alcohol and drugs will go up with it. While the number of educated people may rise, there will not be enough jobs to match their expectations of professional fulfillment and salary. And, of course, drops in safety and government purity carry their own obvious problems.

As the vets change the world, altering the Social Parameters by design and accident, their actions create new problems for them to deal with. Like life, things never really get finished in Underground. Problems just get shoved over to someplace else, the happy are made unhappy, visions of optimism are clouded with the true clarity of nihilistic-futility.

Life sucks.

SOLUTIONS AND
PROBLEMS LEAD
TO PROBLEMS

This chapter gives suggestions for incorporating these concepts into game play. Whenever the vets cause a change in one of the Social Parameters (or if someone else causes such a change), it is possible that a new problem may arise. Such adventures are called Reactive Adventures. They take place in response to changes in the Social Parameters.

Below are fourteen adventure ideas, two for each of Underground's seven Social Parameters, one for a rise in the parameter, and one for a drop in the Parameter. The adventure ideas are all centered around Jessep Hill. Whenever a Social Parameter changes, you can introduce one of the appropriate adventures below. These adventures are no more than outlines to suggest what kinds of Reactive Adventures are appropriate for changes in the Social Parameters. You can flesh them out, or use them as inspiration for Reactive Adventures of your own design.

WEALTH

Wealth measures the amount of money available to the average citizen. As Jessep Hill's Wealth Parameter is only 4, a drop will dip it perilously close to utter economic destitution. On the other side of the \$10,000 bill, a rise in wealth this far down on the Parameter scale will make an incredibly noticeable impact upon the community.

The Wealth Parameter Goes Up

More money is pouring into Jessep Hill now. That's good. But it's a tricky situation. The area is run down, filled with liquor stores. Not only is there little in the community to spend money on other than gambling, drugs, alcohol, and prostitution, no one is spending the money on anything else. Numbing oneself to the pain of life is a deep habit that is not lost simply because more money has arrived. The citizens of Jessep Hill have no reason to believe that the money will stay. They're going to blow it the same way they've been blowing their money for years—for all of their lives.

Many people will want to take advantage of this. One of these people is Hank Boles, the director of Down 'N Out liquor outlets. Down 'N Out is a

The slang terms listed in the Streets of this boxed sets are several decades old, and used primarily by old-timers who picked them up in their youth. Oddly, as most gangbangers don't live to be past their mid-twenties, those who use those slang words are older law-enforcement officers, or white, middle aged men who once wanted to sound in the know.

The list below is current slang actively used by the gangbangers on the streets of LA.

By the way, using New Jack or Word in a rough neighborhood is a sure way of getting your cork popped. The new BoBos hate those words.

BoBo—crazy and/or violent; Man, that guy is BoBo!

Bucket—head (or body); I'll kick your bucket for ya!

Bust out—to do something or cause violence; I'm figuring to bust out. You strapped?

Buttons—money (coin), change; He aint got enough buttons to close his shirt!

BAD HABITS DIE
HARD

Cash slang. Slang for money—clams, bones, gelt, brasso. When vast quantities of money are discussed, money is often given a prefix, ranging from Giga- (the highest), down through Mega-, to Kilo at the bottom. The actual value of the cash discussed with these prefixes are of no concern—they are relative terms. The word modified by the prefixes don't matter, as long as they mean money. For example, gigabucks, megabones, and kiloclams.

Chunky—cool; Your new ride is chunky!

Class—very!!; I was over at Rico's pad, and it was class chunky!!!

Cork—head; Someone popped the Lacerator's cork!

Crazy—very!!; That jacket is crazy chunky!!

Hotoplasm—homosuperior derogatory term for non-boasts (also, sissypiasm); Hey! Hotoplasm, I think you're in the wrong part of town!

Mook—a chump or jerk (or ugly); If I wasn't so mookie lookin', I'd come out there an' help you.

national chain of liquor stores that has yet to make major inroads into LA. In point of fact, there are laws written into the county zoning code to keep mega-liquor stores like Down 'N Out out of the area. The stores are sprawling affairs, with racks and shelves stocked with liquor standing in the midst of chairs and couches. It's the massive mix of a grocery store and bar.

However, the chain has been slowly eroding the zoning laws with carefully placed bribes throughout the county. When Jessep Hill, a perfect test market for LA county, suddenly gets an infusion of cash, Down 'N Out decides to push for the neighborhood to open the store. With the promise of construction jobs (it is a big place), and a brisk turn around of goods, the company is courting Jessep Hill to fight the county board of advisors on their behalf and get permission to start the foundations.

The PR presentation is that of a massive company coming to a struggling neighborhood with the American cure-all, capitalism, to increase the recently surging wealth. Numbers and charts are trotted out showing how a mega-liquor store like Down 'N Out will help a community like Jessep Hill, as opposed to all the smaller, seedy liquor stores.

In fact, the studies that Down 'N Out has locked up in their vault show just the opposite. There, spelled out in six color, glossy, corporate portfolios, one can see clearly that the stores have projected life spans of ten years. After that, most of the communities they've been in are so depressed that the stores are sold off.

The vets get wind of the pay-offs, have to find out who is trying to bribe the neighborhood leaders, and get the goods on Down 'N Out before the waiver is sent through the board of supervisors.

(This adventure is similar, but not the same, as the Expose Tres Equis adventure from Chapter One. Two adventures about liquor companies taking advantage of a run down central LA community actually does not really yet represent the true problem and manipulative nature of alcohol in such places. We've given you two. Make more.)

DOWN 'N OUT
GOES FOR BROKE

THE PRETTY
PICTURE

THE UGLY
PICTURE

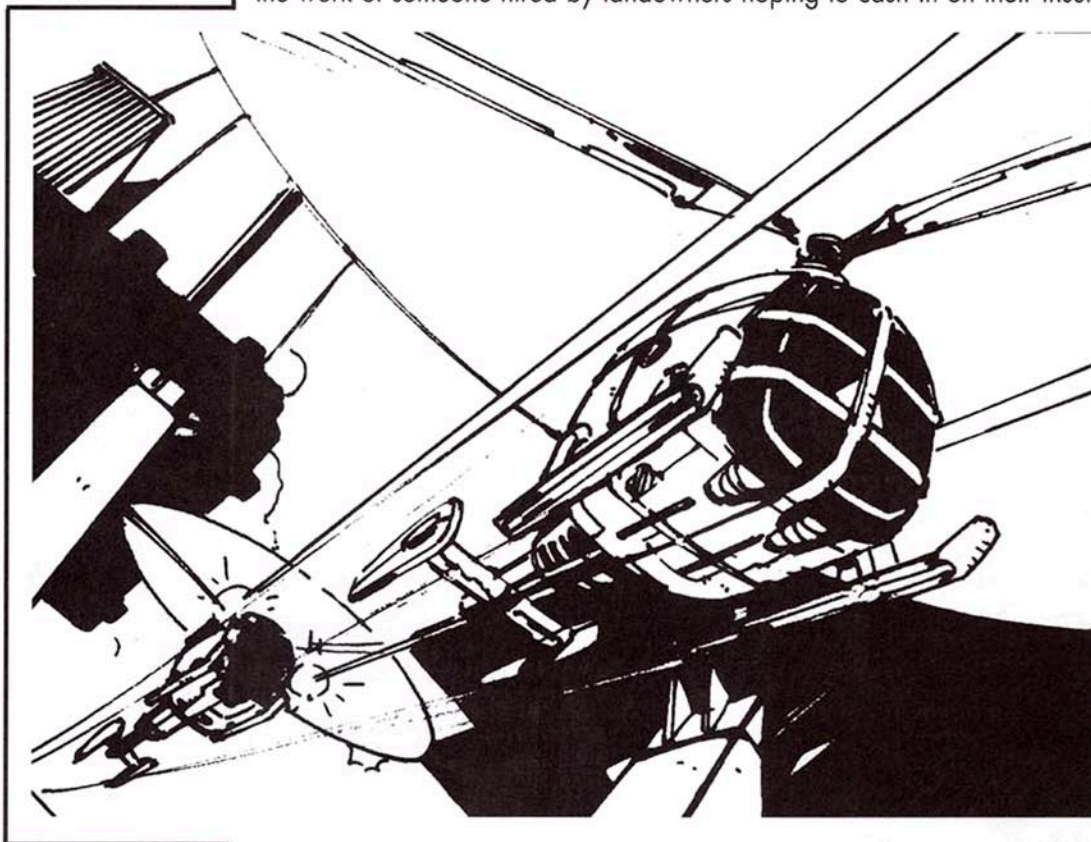
LIQUOR, LIQUOR,
LIQUOR

The Wealth Parameter Goes Down

Businesses start closing. A terrible downward spiral begins. Those that have money—landowners with capital invested in the area—begin to leave. Those that want to leave try to take as much as they can out of the area. And that means fire sales—and fires.

FIRES ACROSS
JESSEP HILL

An arsonist is stalking the streets of Jessep Hill. The authorities believe it's the work of someone hired by landowners hoping to cash in on their insur-



FIRESALE COMES
TO TOWN

ance. But none of the work has the earmark of an inside job. Moreover, many of the buildings set on fire are owned by people who have given no indication that they were planning on leaving. What's going on?

The authorities are correct. There is an arsonist. He has been hired by several landlords to dump both apartment buildings and businesses. His name is Firesale, and he's a boosted with tremendous pyrotechnic abilities. He's also very clever. He's made it clear to his employees that he doesn't want any help from them. The guards and alarms are all still in place. It's his job to burn down the buildings despite the best efforts of the security

Nails—bullets; I'm gonna drive a nail through your cork!

O. P.—new slang for African Americans (Original People); The Man better back down or the O.P.'s gonna bust out!

Pail—head; I'll knock the sponge out your pail!

Patang—used as an exclamation; Did you hear what happend to Lovely Kafka? Patang!

Pull—respect; Patang! The Golemite gets a lot of pull on the street.

Rocks—bullets; Here's a few rocks for your bucket!

Rook—to rob or steal; Yo' man! I got rooked!

Shine—expensive, sporty; Yo! Spleen got a shine new car!

Slide—to relax; Everyone was sldin' on the beach.

Splash—money (or to spend money); I'm gonna go splash around.

Squack—to hurt or kill; Yo! I just heard EgoPunk just got squacked!

Strapped—carrying
(cash/drugs/weapons); Yeah,
I'm strapped for that!

Stub—to show disrespect or
insult; Yo! You stubbin' me,
punk?!

Swoop—to earn, steal, or
acquire wealth; Dead Hand is
swooping megabucks!

Togs—clothes; Do I look
chunky in these new clothes
or what?

measures to keep him out. This confounds the investigations of the fire department, because self-serving landlords are seldom so industrious in their efforts to burn down their own property. Moreover, Firesale has taken to burning down buildings that's he's not getting paid for. This further confounds the investigation.

Of course, with so many fires burning in the area, they sometimes spread further than Firesale planned, and many, many people are dying.

The adventure is broken down into two parts. The first part involves tracking Firesale down. The second is finding connections between Firesale and the guilty landlords—so that the innocent landlords won't be implicated in the arson cases.

SAFETY

Safety measures the lack of violence and criminals in society. With it's safety of 2, Jessep Hill ranked as one of the more dangerous place in the world. A drop in the Safety Parameter will make it literally a living Hell. A rise will ease tension somewhat, but gives rise to a police department more concerned with potential profit than survival.

The Safety Parameter Goes Up

As the need for watching your back drops throughout Jessep Hill, some of the police in the area begin to feel more comfortable. They feel that their hard efforts have finally paid off, and they alone are fully responsible for the relative peace that has fallen over the area. They believe that their efforts should have a greater rewarded than their salaries provide, and begin taking cash from merchants along the street as payment, suggesting, if not stating, that the days of terror will return if they're not rewarded well.

Like a stone thrown into a scum covered pond, the impact sends ripples out in ever-widening circles. Police in other precincts hear word of the new prosperity and relative safety of Jessip Hill—there are places more dangerous than the Hill in LA now—and bribe their superiors for transfers. So, although there is less gun play, there is an influx of cops into the area demanding money from the neighborhood's citizens.

DEATH

CONTENTMENT
BREEDS COR-
RUPTION

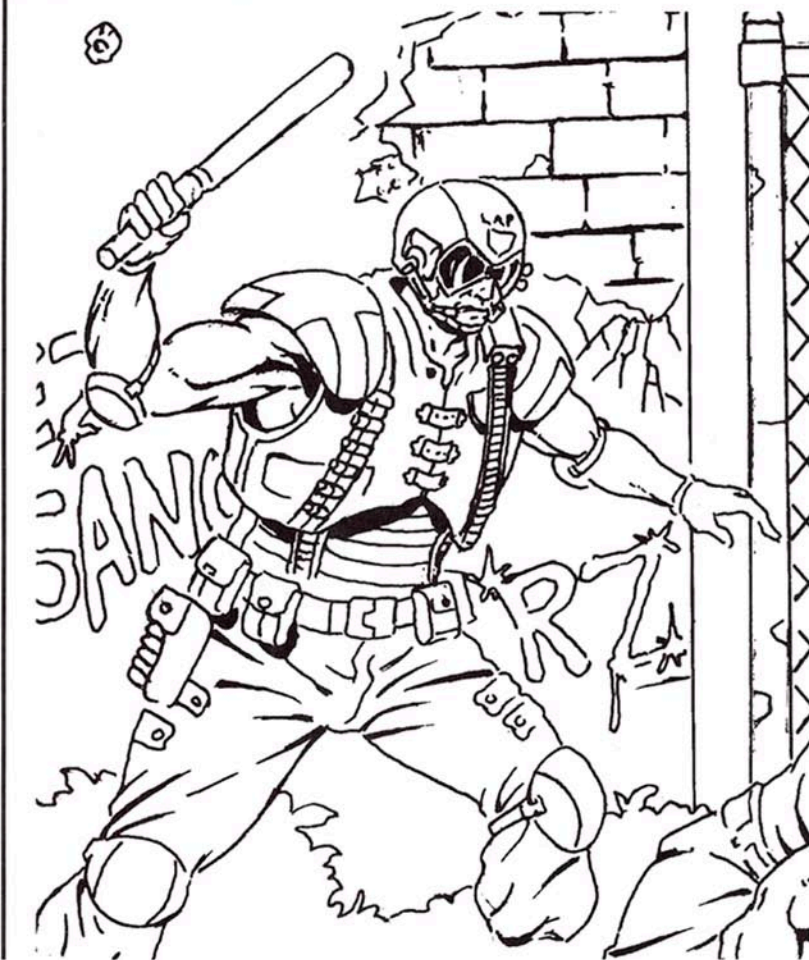
chapter four

CORRUPTION
FROM THE TOP
DOWN

Heading the corruption is the 18th precinct's OverLieutenant. This may be OverLieutenant Howe from Chapter One, or another, new OverLieutenant. Remember, most of the people who rise through the ranks in the LAPF are on the take.

The adventure revolves around getting the goods on the OverLieutenant. Although the vets could probably nail a few cops who actually took the protection money from a store owner, they won't really be changing anything. If the evidence of the beat cop's crime is brought to light, the OverLieutenant will bemoan the "bad apple" in the bunch and have the beat cop summarily fired. The real trick is to follow the pyramid of pay-offs up to the OverLieutenant, or even up to the District Commander. Only then will people realize that the corruption is institutionalized.

To turn this into a major campaign, the vets must hand pick the OverLieutenant's replacement, finding someone worthy of the badge of a policeman.



The Safety Parameter Goes Down

All Hell breaks lose. A war zone. What more need be said. The sound of gun fire never stops. People die daily. This is the bottom of the barrel. The place is chock full of violence and criminals.

The adventure is about getting two of the major gangs to forge a cease-fire, perhaps coordinating an effort between the two to drive the smaller gangs out of Jessep Hill.

If the Campaign Framework has the player vets as members of a gang, they might be one of the major gangs in their neighborhood, and have to approach another gang to try to cut a deal for peace.

The adventure would first contain a great deal of role-playing: establishing contact with the gang, finding out who to talk to, having the "big meeting in the abandoned warehouse," and finally, if the negotiations are successful, working together to drive the other gangs out of the area.

GOVERNMENT PURITY

Government Purity measures the lack of corruption among police officers and government officials. When it goes up, the pure in government become a threat to those who want corruption to reign; assassins walk the streets looking for honest politicians to pop. When it goes down, buildings become unsafe, and the quality of life can become imperiled.

The Government Purity Parameter Goes Up

After the Government Purity rating rises, Chester Jefferson, a street kid made good, becomes the head of the Jessep Hill Zoning Commission. He's from Jessep Hill, and wants to see the community rise up out of its own bilge. He knows that a large part of the area's problems revolve around what types of real estate get developed in the area. This is both a matter of commercial development (too many damned liquor stores), and residential development (Jessep Hill is the site of one too many crappy, government subsidized, rat-infested, hell-holes that no resident would ever really bother think was worth keeping up). Jefferson is ramming through a bunch of reforms through the zoning commission that will considerably alter the future of the area's construction.

It will also considerably alter the income of commercial interests who have been whoring off of the community, erecting shoddy buildings for huge government contracts and building stores that encourage the desperate to become more desperate with gambling, liquor, and Advanced Designer Drugs™.

GANGLAND
NEGOTIATIONS

ONLY THE GOOD
DIE YOUNG

CHANGING THE
FACE OF JESSEP
HILL

Some of Jefferson's opponents are so concerned about the man's popularity and successful reforms that they've decided he has to be killed. They've hired a hit man—or several—to remove him.

The vets get wind of the assassination plot and have to stop it.

The Government Purity Parameter Goes Down

THE FUNDS GET
STUCK AT THE
TOP

As the Government Purity Parameter goes down, the wheels of government grind slower and slower. In Jesse Hill, the limited, remaining funds set aside for public education nearly dry up to nothing. It's not that there isn't money being taxed for the kids; it's just not getting to the kids. The School Superintendent and other school board officials take supplies like new tiles for bathrooms, and cold cash, and siphon it off to their own offices and salaries.

TEACHERS
LOOKING FOR
CASH

Caught in the middle are the teachers, assured for years that there is no money, but that something will be done, are caught up in the middle. A strike is immanent, as the teachers are asked to live on half a standard teaching salary and IOU vouchers. Last year's strike cut the kids a half a year of school. This year could be even worse.

In order to stave off the strike and keep hundreds of thousands of kids off the streets with nothing better to do than kill each other (not to mention getting them into the classroom where some of them will have a chance to learn how to count their change after picking up a bottle of Uncle Ice Cube's Jism Enhancer Beer™), someone's got to get to the bottom of the missing funds.

SCHOOL BOARD
RIOT

The school's true books are held at the City of Los Angeles School Board building. It's protected by several off-the-rack guards and a couple of boosts. The vets have to get into the building (through combat or cleverness), get the books, and decipher them. Only then can they free up the cash meant for the kids.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of Life measures the happiness of the people in the society. As the happiness goes up, liquor sales go up, and acts of violence break out. As the happiness goes down, liquor sales go up, and acts of violence break out.

The Quality of Life Parameter Goes Up or Down

Alcoholism is a fact of life in run down communities like Jessep Hill. It is more than a standard response to new situations, both joyous and maudlin; it is a constant process. Life is drinking.

Changes in the quality of life in Jessep Hill are going to jolt the citizens of the area out of the habit—into a period of more intense drinking. The rhythm of drinking will be changed as people either try to drown their sorrows, or sustain the happiness suddenly springing up around them.

Riots and large scale fight will flare up on occasion during these periods. These acts of violence won't be sponsored by gangs, or evil corporations, or anybody who can be shut down. It's just a matter of crowds of people, many of them drunk, with out a present or a future, with pasts they'd rather forget.

The vets can choose to patrol the area, quelling these outbursts of fury before they get out of hand and lead to the torching of major sections of the neighborhood. Such acts of violence might well be accompanied with hallow phrases relating to "justice" or "revenge." But really, its a bunch of louts burning down their own homes, ruining what few businesses might be in the area, and sending the community down a deeper spiral.

LIQUOR,
LIQUOR, LIQUOR

BRUTISH ANGER
POSING AS
SOCIAL ACTION



To turn the situation around completely, it's necessary to remove some of the liquor stores from the area. Rehab clinics would probably help as well.

EDUCATION

Education measures the education of the people in the society. As the citizens of Jessep Hill actually learn more, their sense of self-worth and comprehension of the world rises as well. However, a rise in an interest in education always draws the attention of people with goods to sell—valueless goods that draw precious cash away from a poor area like Jessep Hill. On the other hand, a drop in Education means that the area has no possibility of tapping into information the community needs to connect to the rest of the world. Survival skills and street smarts are there in abundance; but they just get you through the day. There is no chance of building or improving the area.

The Education Parameter Goes Up

The educational, electronic-publishing giant, WENOALL Inc., based in Dallas, Texas, is always looking for school districts who've managed to get a spark of reform going. These schools, pleased with their fledgling efforts, but still confused about which direction to take, are easy marks for companies promising educational miracles.

THE SELL JOB

Shortly after the Educational parameter goes up, representatives from WENOALL arrive in Jessep Hill with glossy catalogues, wall charts, and cute gizmos for the kids. They do a swell job of selling the teachers and the administrators on the material that WENOALL produces.

BILLBOARD SCHOOLS

The problem is, the stuff is garbage. WENOALL has a very limited view of what children should learn. It's xenophobic, conservative, and somewhat medieval in its view of science and history. More importantly, all of the electronic media support elements are interrupted constantly with advertisements for guns and liquor. The WENOALL sales reps make it clear that the ads help keep the costs of the cool technology down. And they do. But the kickbacks from the munitions and alcohol companies help WENOALL a great deal more than they help the schools. And, of course, there's the problem of turning the schools into a long commercial that eats into educational time.

The vets have to help the schools get the materials they need—without depending on stifling, insulting, anti-intellectual companies like WENOALL. Not only do they have to get WENOALL out of the area, but they've got to come up with a solution to the situation. A huge sum of money (about \$14,000,000) is needed to bring the materials needed to Jessep Hill. If the money can be rounded up, the schools can buy the materials they need, and not depend on the cheaper, but bad, materials WENOALL has to sell.

The Education Parameter Goes Down

The further erosion of commitment to education sends thousands of kids out onto the streets. School becomes boring even for the people who want to learn. The students realize that school isn't a place of education; it's a nicely labeled jail, holding them until they're old enough to go to a real jail.

Kids on the streets without anything to do means more crime. This crime is in turn increased by the influx of new levels of drug traffic in the area. The vets have to take out this gang before the excessive levels of drug sales get almost everybody in the area hooked by the age of twelve.

WHAT ARE KIDS
FOR?

NECESSITIES

Necessities measures the society's access to food, medicine, and other basics of life and survival. When necessities are in place, or at least improve, the government is all too willing to slough off all responsibility it can—even if it means dumping people into a situation worse than before. And when necessities dry up.... Well....

The Necessities Parameter Goes Up

Once the numbers are analyzed at the State and Federal level, government officials realize Jessep Hill is now above poverty standards. Subsidies that had been previously pumped into the area are now about to be cut. Unfortunately, this will mean that while food and medicine are available in the area, few people will be able to afford them. In fact, the situation will be worse than it was before the Necessities Parameter went up.

WELFARE
CHEATES RUN IN
FEAR

THE
NEIGHBORHOOD
IS DYING

To stave off this bureaucratic wet dream, the vets have to either falsify the numbers going to the State and Federal agencies, or hasten the economic recover of the area to allow the people to truly support themselves. The first solution depends on subtlety and deceit. The second depends on fast-talking and a really good idea for several investors.

The Necessities Parameter Goes Down

The area is hit with contagious disease (typhoid, or something along those lines). People are dying daily. There aren't supplies to stave off the medical disaster, and no one has any to spare. The vets have to arrange for medical supplies and staff to arrive and help the dying, and prevent the spread of the disease.

TAKE HOME PAY

Take Home Pay measures the amount of the average citizen's income that is not swallowed up by the government. An increase in take home pay means that the government has gotten less money to keep community services running—not always a good thing. Less take home pay means that the citizens of Jessep Hill have less to spend on consumer goods—hurting business in the area.

The Take Home Pay Parameter Goes Up

Garbage collection is cut back as taxes dry up in and around Jessep Hill. Rats begin breeding at a frightening rate. Diseases are on the rise. There simply is no money.

GARBAGE IN THE
STREETS

Two solutions come to mind. The vets use their enhancements to somehow clean the mess up. Or, they organize the community of Jessep Hill to clean up their own garbage. There is resistance to this idea, of course. People aren't used to cleaning up after themselves in the United States. But with some good speeches they might be able to build community spirit, get teams of unemployed people to gather the garbage and get it off to the landfill.

O. P.—new slang for African Americans (Original People)

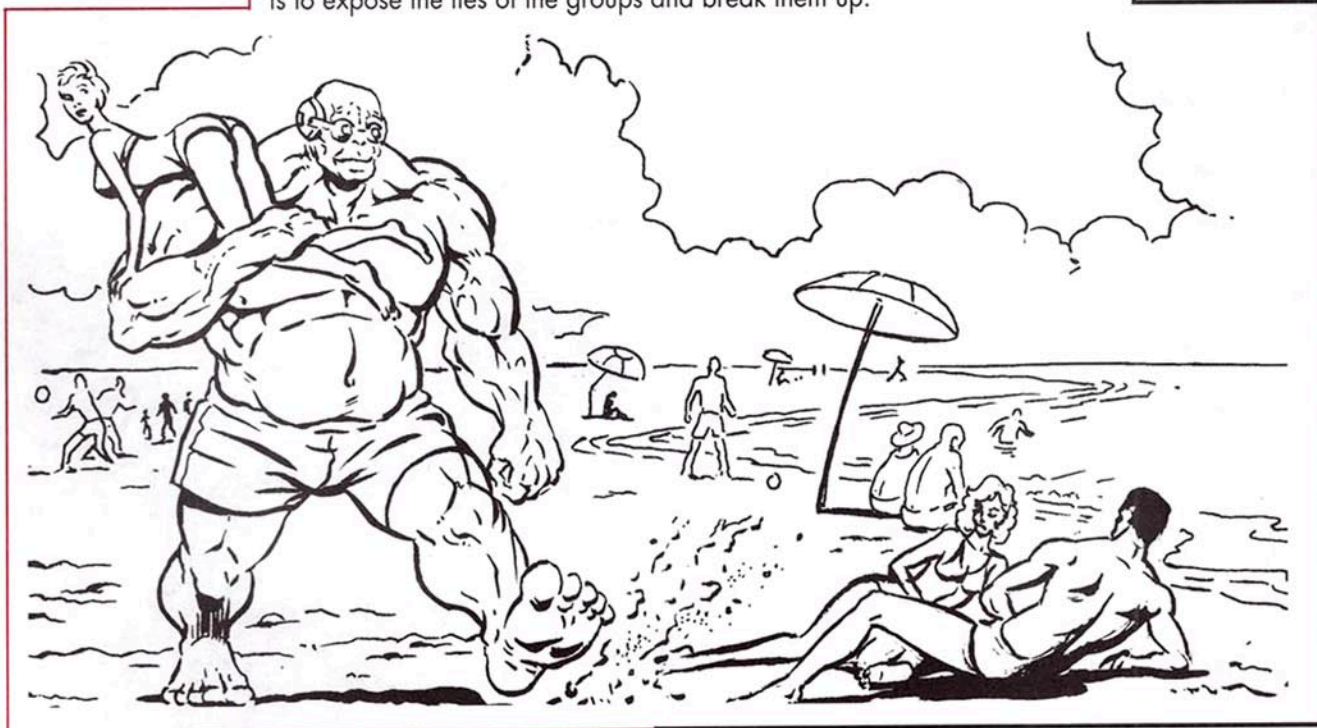
There will be resistance, probably violent resistance, from Pickup Co., the contractor who used to collect garbage for the Hill. Although they aren't collecting garbage now, they're waiting for people to come to their senses, raise taxes, and pay the money needed for tax collection. Having the people of Jesse Hill start collecting their own garbage is not the solution they'd been counting on. They'll get mad.

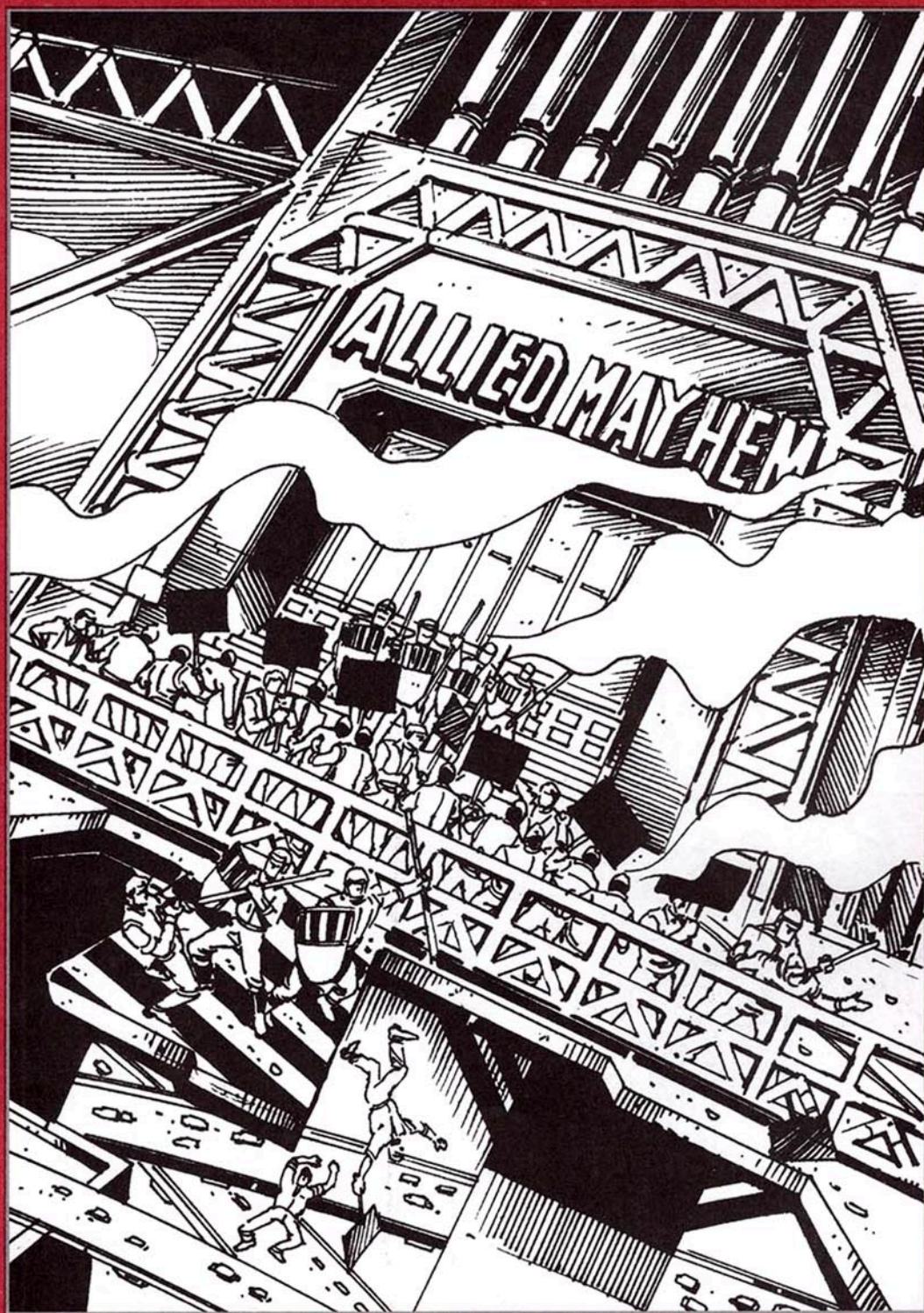
The Take Home Pay Parameter Goes Down

Less money for food and luxuries. Those who are determined to maintain their standard of living will attempt to get second jobs. But jobs are scarce. Fighting breaks out over racial lines within the job market. In Jesse Hill, **O.P.s** and Hispanics accuse each other of being outsiders. (They've both been in the country for generations, but who's counting?) The tensions explode into intensified gang warfare along racial lines, and stores are burned.

There are two groups, the Pan-Black Merchant League, and the Hispanic Home Front which, despite their high-minded names, are the brainchild's of bigots. Both of them use scare tactics and lies to promote racial tension. Both have boosted members. The first step in reducing the racial tensions is to expose the lies of the groups and break them up.

RACIAL SCARE
TACTICS





BLAKE HOTEL

FACTS AT A GLANCE

Location: Downtown LA (Hell's Jungle), Ground Level
Size: Five stories tall, covering four square blocks
Staff: 700 employees, including highly efficient security staff
Annual Income: \$1,000,000,000

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Built by Machino Durez (q.v.), the Blake Hotel is a significant structure in LA's political scene. At any one time it hosts leaders of gangs, munitions manufacturers, politicians, drug lords and so on. By a policy set by Durez, and by tacit agreement of the guests, weapons are not carried by anyone other than the hotel's staff. By the same token, enhancements are not used by boosts. Because of the general appeal of a safe house for both business and pleasure, these rules are never seen as excessive. People who go to the Blake go precisely because they want to forget about violence for awhile. Anyone who tries to get around the rules not only risks the wrath of hotel security, but of the other guests as well.

The rooms at the Blake come in a variety of sizes. Within the massive landscape of corridors and meeting rooms, one can find singles no larger than a closet, and suites with a dozen rooms situated around a central gathering area. Some rooms have bars, some small pools. The hotel is constructed using movable walls, so Durez can arrange accommodations of nearly any specification.

SECURITY

Because peace and quiet is paramount at the Blake, the security staff (known as the Crew) is top notch. Headed up by the ever good-natured Skippy (q.v.), the

Crew wanders the halls and public areas of the hotel, always vigilant for troublemakers and weapons.

Crew members wear bulky, blue, armored uniforms. They patrol individually, but five back up guards will arrive within two minutes of a call put out by any of them. After that, an additional four will arrive in four minutes.

Members of the Crew typically have these stats:

STR: 5 DEX: 4 SPD: 3 RES: 5
INT: 3 WILL: 3 AURA: 2

Acrobatics: 4, Detective: 5, Gun Combat: 4

GCS DW 770/g, Heavykev suit, Heavy Mondo armor

*One in four Crew members is boosted. Boosted Crew members are hired specifically to sniff out trouble before it happens. The enhancements of these boosted security agents will be Mind Probe at 7, or Empathy at 7. Such members of the crew will also have STR: 6, DEX: 5, and SPD: 5.

Quote: "Enjoy your stay—and, excuse me, what is that bulge under your jacket?"

A sophisticated audio/visual monitoring system is also in place. In general, anyone wishing to commit activities that the staff is specifically on the watch for will have to make an appropriate skill challenge against a difficulty of 2 through 9. The Gamemaster should set the difficulty according to the specific activity and the care the characters take in committing it.

The walls inside the hotel, even the movable walls, require STR challenges against a difficulty of 2. The hotel's exterior walls require a STR challenge against a difficulty of 9. In both cases a result of Heavy Wound must be reached to breach the wall. Thus, it may take a few good blows to crack open a wall.

Gun nests are mounted on the outside of the hotel, at the corners of the building, the roof, and at several points along the





The Blake Hotel

Accommodations (cost per night):

- Single (standard): \$4,000
- Single (xtra luxury): \$10,000
- Double (standard): \$9,000
- Double (xtra luxury): \$18,000
- Suite: base of \$15,000, + \$8,000 per bedroom
- Pool in room: + \$8,000

Meals

- Simple Meal, per Person: \$250
- Standard Meal, per Person: \$400
- Great Meal, per Person: \$800
- Good Lord, So This Is What Food Used To Taste Like, per person: \$1,000

Misc.

- The Frank Sinatra Theater Tickets: \$200
- Drinks throughout the Hotel: \$12-20
- Meeting Room (per day): \$2,000
- Crew Member as Personal Security: \$5,000*
(*the Crew insures safety of the guests continuously, but some guests want to have someone looking out "just for them.")

During meetings, Crew members can be assigned to act as protection against outside attacks, and to keep relations pleasant between meeting participants who might otherwise commit acts of violence.

FEATURES

Besides meeting rooms and luxury accommodations, the Blake provides a great many services for its guests, and contains a great many treasures. Among these are:

• **Wayne Newton Casino**—Though not as large as the Las Vegas casinos, the Newton still provides ample opportunity for guests to play blackjack, roulette, poker, and slot machines. Durez runs his casino like most casinos. That is, he encourages people to bet and bet and bet, whether or not they can afford it. Credit stalls allow people to borrow money from the hotel in order to "win back" losses they've already incurred. This invariably means people get further and further into debt.

Durez has two ways of dealing with people who owe the hotel a great deal of money. The first is to farm the matter out to underworld contacts. For a cut of the cash, these people "encourage" the debtor to find the money somehow. Or else.

The second method is to let the debtor off on the condition he can be called in for favors later on. This is how Durez is able to produce almost anything at a moment's notice for any of his guests. He can call in a favor from almost anywhere in LA, from any field or profession.

• **Frank Sinatra Theater**—Again, not as big as the Las Vegas shows, but just as gaudy. Simple minded dance numbers strung out along simple minded stories. Tigers appear during magic shows, scenes of the LA riots of 2017 are re-enacted, and self-mutilations are either mimed or actually committed, depending on the show's headliner.

• **Room Service**—Anything from any of the hotel's five restaurants are available from room service. Under the table drugs, as well as prostitutes, can also be rung up.

COSTS

Guests at the Blake are not only paying for protection. The service is impeccable, the food and accommodations tremendous. Within this luxury, however, there are several scales of service. How much one can afford determines how much one gets.

STRESS RECOVERY

Characters who spend time in the Blake Hotel receive a bonus on their Stress Recovery roll. If the last 24 hours were spent in the hotel, a -2 bonus modifier is applied to the Stress Recovery Modifier.

walls. Any approach to the building is visible to 1-3 of these nests (as determined by the Gamemaster or rolled randomly). Each nest is armed with two Crew members and two 40mm GCS M87/g assault rifles.

CAPTAIN VIDEO

STR: 4 (6*) DEX: 5 SPD: 4 RES: 5 (8*)
INT: 5 WILL: 5 AURA: 5

Acrobatics: 7, Gun Combat: 8, Intimidation/Interrogation: 9, Invention/Repair: 11, Streetwise: 7, Thief: 6, Vehicles: 8, Weaponry: 11

Telepathic Blast: 7

Telekinesis: 8

Stress Tolerance: 10

Psychosis: Schizophrenia

Equipment:

20mm GCS DW 770/g, Customized Battle Armor (*the armor increases Lilly's STR by +2, and increases her RES by +3 Computer and weapon targeting systems are built into the armor), Chaff (3 charges), Average Computer Pack (RES of 8 because it's built into the armor), all the software available, combat goggles*, cellular phone*, Punkbuster™ Radar Detector*, Punkbuster™ Signal Jammer*

BACKGROUND

Captain Video began her career as boosted shortly after being sent to an asylum by her parents. She was known as Lilly Helmsman then, and her life has always been a little strange.

From the time she was a small girl, she insisted she could see strange creatures all over the place. At first her parents thought this was the typical situation of a child afraid of monsters under the bed. They thought it was a phase, and that it would pass.

It did not. With each passing year Lilly became more and more resolute in her belief that all sorts of creatures existed around her. She would describe them leaning over her father's shoulder as he watched the comp-net news summaries, or following her mother while she went out to go shopping. She described the monsters as varied in shape and form, sometimes with scales, sometimes with feathers, some with many colors, drool dripping from their teeth. Although the monsters themselves were inconsistent, her descriptions always remained absolutely precise.

When doctors were brought in to examine her, she could keep track of up to a dozen of the monsters at a time, telling her examiners where they were in the room and what they looked like from different angles, all without contradicting her previous statements. That anyone could keep track of so many details without actually seeing the creatures seemed impossible.

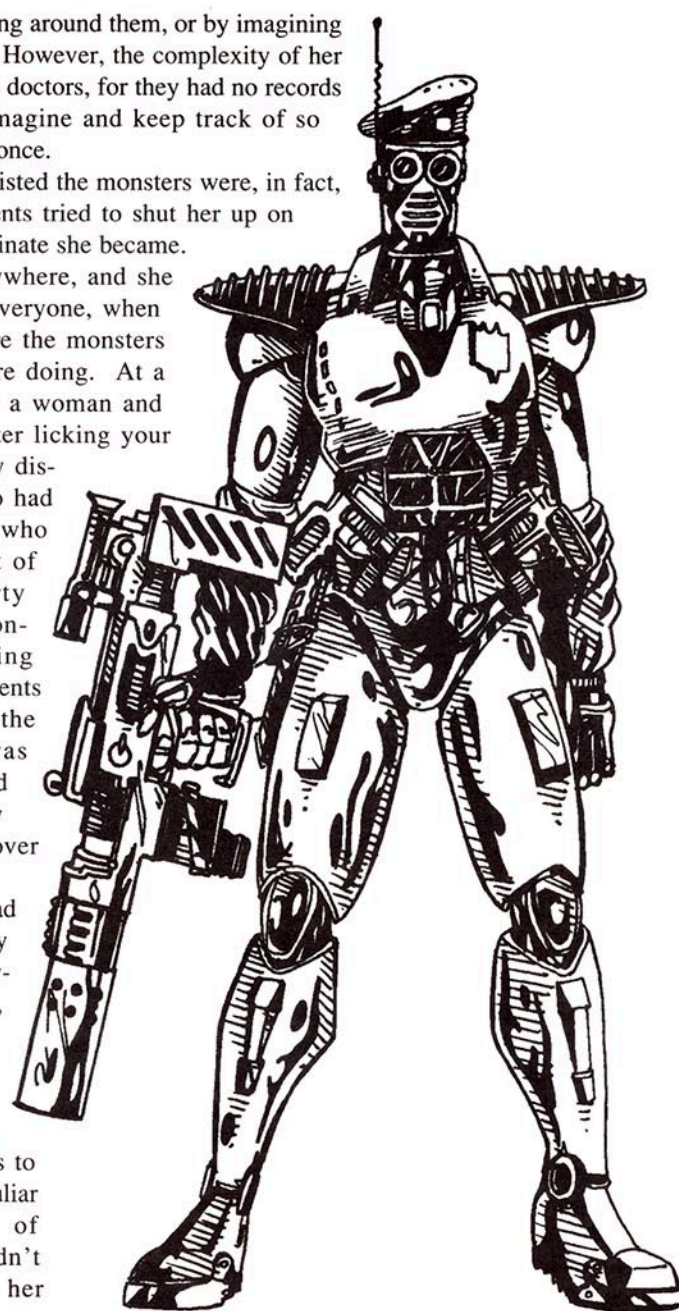
Eventually she was diagnosed as possessing eidetic imagery—the ability to see mental images as if suspended outside the head. She could inspect these images from

different angles, by walking around them, or by imagining they walked around her. However, the complexity of her imagination staggered the doctors, for they had no records of anyone who could imagine and keep track of so many different images at once.

For her part Lilly insisted the monsters were, in fact, real. The more her parents tried to shut her up on the matter, the more obstinate she became. She saw monsters everywhere, and she took to announcing to everyone, when she was in public, where the monsters were and what they were doing. At a mall she might point at a woman and shout, "There's a monster licking your hat." All of this greatly distressed her parents, who had planned on a little girl who might, at most, get out of hand during a tea party with her dolls. Her constant, attention grabbing outbursts caused her parents continuous stress. By the age of fourteen she was becoming quite wild, and screamed insistently about the monsters all over the world.

When her parents had enough of all of it, they shipped her off to an asylum. There she remained, working on poetry and watercolor paintings.

However, AMI scientists heard about Lilly and were very curious as to what a person of her peculiar talents would make of Slumberland. They didn't exactly buy Lilly from her



DEPT. OF ADMISSIONS

Date: August 15, 2015

Conrad Helmsman

Released by

When she came out of Slumberland she was shipped down to South America and the monsters followed. She fought in several campaigns over a period of four years. During the whole time the monsters were everywhere. By the time she mustered out she believed the creatures were coming to get her. It was during this time, with her

Her ambition is to build some sort of video processing unit that will block the monsters completely from sight. She has kept this project a secret, and thus no one has been able to explain to her why this is an impossible goal.

These days she practically lives inside of her armor, seeking shelter against all the monsters. She only takes it off at her home in lower Beverly Hills, a large crumbling mansion filled with strange electronics and countless video tapes of old programs.

"You probably don't want to know about this, but there's a yellow monster with red spots sitting on your chair."

CLAY FEET

STR: 8 DEX: 9 SPD: 7 RES: 5
INT: 5 WILL: 5 AURA: 6

Acrobatics: 15, Artist (storyteller): 11, Charm: 12, Gun Combat: 14, Intimidation/Interrogation: 10, Leadership: 10, Martial Arts: 13, Medicine: 8, Military Science: 9, Psychology: 7, Social Sciences (N. African tribal cultures): 7, Streetwise: 9, Weaponry: 11

Acid: 11

Adrenal Surge: 7

Stress Tolerance: 10

Psychosis: Panic Disorder

Equipment:

Survival Knife, 30mm Silver Bullet SSF 2/30, 30mm ZAG, Mondo Armor, Average Home Model Computer, Pueblo Firefight, Pueblo MapIt!, combat goggles

BACKGROUND

Clay Feet, code named The Viper in North Africa, became boosted during a period of personal destitution. As an avid body builder, he had attempted to make a career of molding is physique on the competition circuit. But he lacked the nightmarish discipline required for a perfect body. After nearly killing himself on appetite suppressants and steroids, he was sent to the hospital for recuperation. While there, he considered the possible benefits of Slumberland. He knew it would not only build up his muscle mass, but give him a solid job. He'd been looking for a focused purpose in life for years, and he believed he might have found it in becoming a boosted soldier.

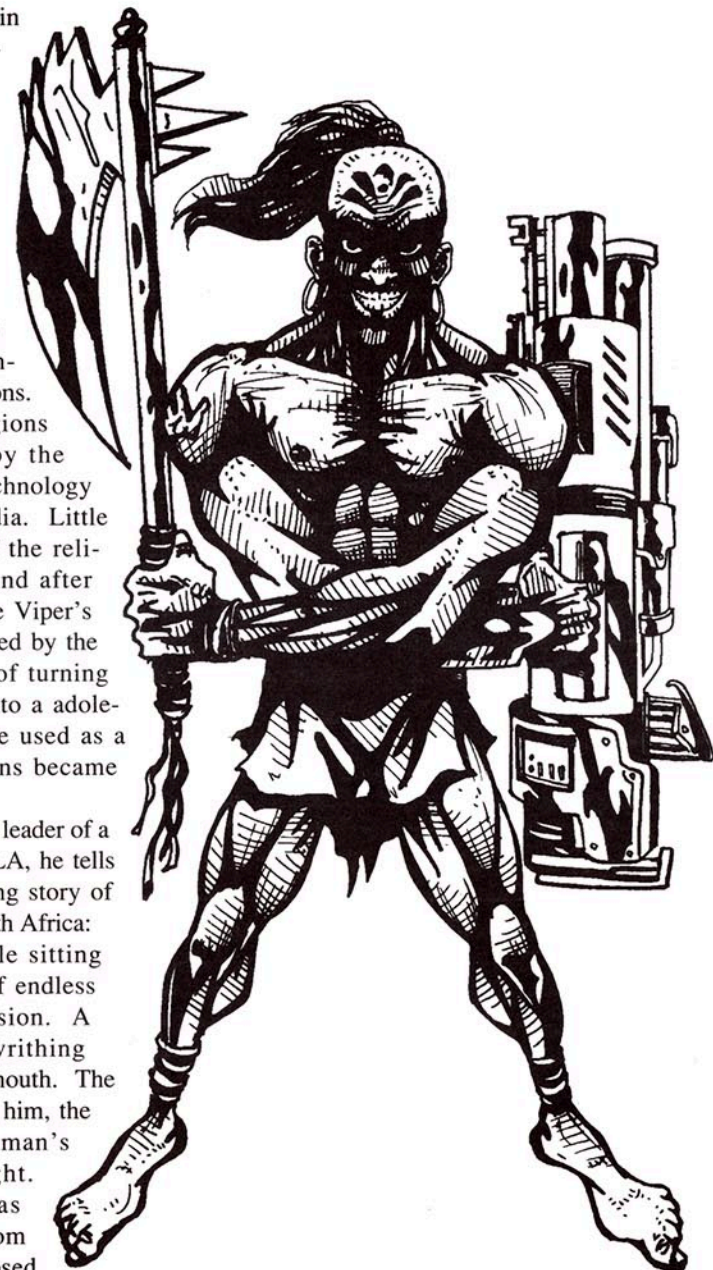
He went off to Slumberland, and for fourteen months imagined himself a four-color comic book hero called The Viper. Dressed in black, with muscle tone rippling under his skin tight outfit, The Viper wandered the back alleys of a dark city looking for trouble. He'd learned the secrets of overpowering martial arts (according to his Slumberland background) in a deeply secretive primitive tribe, hidden away in the remaining jungles of Northern Africa.

By the time he finally got out of Slumberland, he had trouble separating the mystical movements in the real world from those of Slumberland. Since, according to the logic of Slumberland, the more powerful a mystical group was, the less was publicly known about it. It stood to reason that the lack of evidence of a mystical movement meant it was, in fact, real. Therefore, when he left Slumberland, he knew that the world was rife with magical, mystical movements, for not a word of true proof was available about any of them.

It was with this in mind that he travelled to North Africa to combat terrorists, attacking their camps in late night raids. While there, he tracked down all sorts of primitive religions, meeting with the few remaining practitioners of ancient religions. Of course, the religions had been altered by the encroachment of technology and Hollywood media. Little of the true spirit of the religions remained. And after grinding through The Viper's mind, a mind confused by the Slumberland habit of turning anything of value into a adolescent powertrip to be used as a weapon, the religions became even more debased.

As Clay Feet, the leader of a Primitivism tribe in LA, he tells his tribe the following story of his experience in North Africa:

One night, while sitting alone in a stretch of endless desert, he had a vision. A man approached, writhing and foaming at the mouth. The man staggered up to him, the stars outlining the man's body with pale light. When the man was about two yards from The Viper he collapsed





to the ground. From his flesh erupted a strange, black cloud. As the cloud dissipated, thousands of small, small people emerged from the dead man's flesh, running in panic across the desert sand. They were so small that the grains of sand tripped them and they fell to the ground and choked on the poisonous black fumes. From that moment on The Viper knew that he was tied to the Apocalypse. He knew that the end of the world would come through poison gases, that humanity deserved nothing less than death, and that he would be its instrument.

In fact, no such vision ever occurred. (However, he is so confused about truth and reality, that it would be harsh to call him a liar.) He heard enough stories from the storytellers in Africa about the end of the world that he took it into his head that this was in fact a truth. These stories got mixed up with his own concerns about the nerve

gas that always waited for him and his teammates as they approached terrorist compounds. In his own self-aggrandized, apocalyptic vision, he saw his own struggle connected to the struggle of all humanity. What he feared, the world feared. What would kill him, would kill the world.

His talks of gloom and doom around his fellow soldiers, sprinkled with apocalyptic rantings, soon reached a pitch that freaked out his peers. The AMI handlers decided that The Viper's tour of duty would wrap early, and he was sent back to the states.

He bummed around New York for a while, preaching his end of the world vision on street corners to anyone who would listen. The local police got so tired of hearing complaints about him that they shackled him and sent him out to LA where he was dumped into the vet system.

There he hooked up with one primitivism group after another, for in their passion for mystical narratives, he finally found people who could relate to him. Due to his immense strength and his incredibly intense narratives of his experiences in North Africa, he soon won a place as a leader of the Yanomamoses tribe. He incorporated his visions of the apocalypse into the tribe's history, and now has his people working diligently to steal as much poison gas as they can. They also keep tabs on new versions of poison gases being developed around the world.

PERSONALITY

Clay Feet, as he became known after his entry into the primitivism sub-culture, is wild eyed and intense. He does not speak, he holds forth. He does not gesture, he gesticulates. He never looks directly at the person he is addressing, but through them and beyond them.

of his followers seem as if they are inhabiting the world they live in. The effect is incredibly disorienting for anyone listening to the group ramble on.

Although he speaks constantly about the coming end of the world, Clay Feet does it with intense passion and energy. In fact, he seems like one of the happiest, most alive people around. His zest for mass death is reminiscent of a young boy's excitement at completing a run of a comic book line for his collection.

QUOTES

"But wait'll you see the Apocalypse!"

"What is there to see but death!"

"By our own hands, death!"

DEATH'S KNOCK

STR: 9 DEX: 6 SPD: 5 RES: 8
INT: 3 WILL: 6 AURA: 7

Acrobatics: 8, Detective: 6, Gun Combat: 12, Intimidation/Interrogation: 13, Invention/Repair: 4, Streetwise: 8, Weaponry: 8

Life Sense: 8

Adrenal Surge: 7

Stress Tolerance: 8

Psychosis: Multiple Personalities

Equipment:

30mm Silver Bullet SSF 2/30, 30mm ZAG, 40mm GCS M87/g, Mondo Armor, Average Home Model Computer, Chaff (2 charges), Pueblo Sniper!, Pueblo Firefight!, combat goggles, Punkbuster™ Radar Detector

BACKGROUND

Norman Bates grew up in a gun shop owned by his mother in Dallas. Their home was a large house on a hill overlooking the store. There they sold weapons to whomever wanted to buy them. What their customers did with their guns and bullets was none of their business — as God meant it. The only concerns the two of them shared was for each other. Norman's mother loved her son very much, and wanted to protect him from the evils of the world. That's why she kept a loaded gun in every cupboard and every drawer. Norman had his own guns too, many of them. At night, after they'd closed up shop they'd pull out their guns and clean them together, rubbing the long metal shafts with pure, white washclothes.

One day a young woman came into the store — a beautiful young woman Norman's age— who wanted a Browning automatic. Norman felt something he'd never felt before — well, except for that one time when his old Thompson submachine gun jammed on the shooting range and fired and fired and fired and fired....

The woman paid with a check (which meant she was old fashioned, and he liked that), and Norman took her address down, secretly. Later in the week he went to visit her, not telling his mother, for his mother didn't like him to speak to anyone unless it was to help someone find a gun. He brought flowers. Although the woman seemed a bit surprised, she took the flowers and thanked Norman for them. She said her name was Elaine, and she would give him a call. He was disappointed, for he had hoped to see her that night. But he was happy

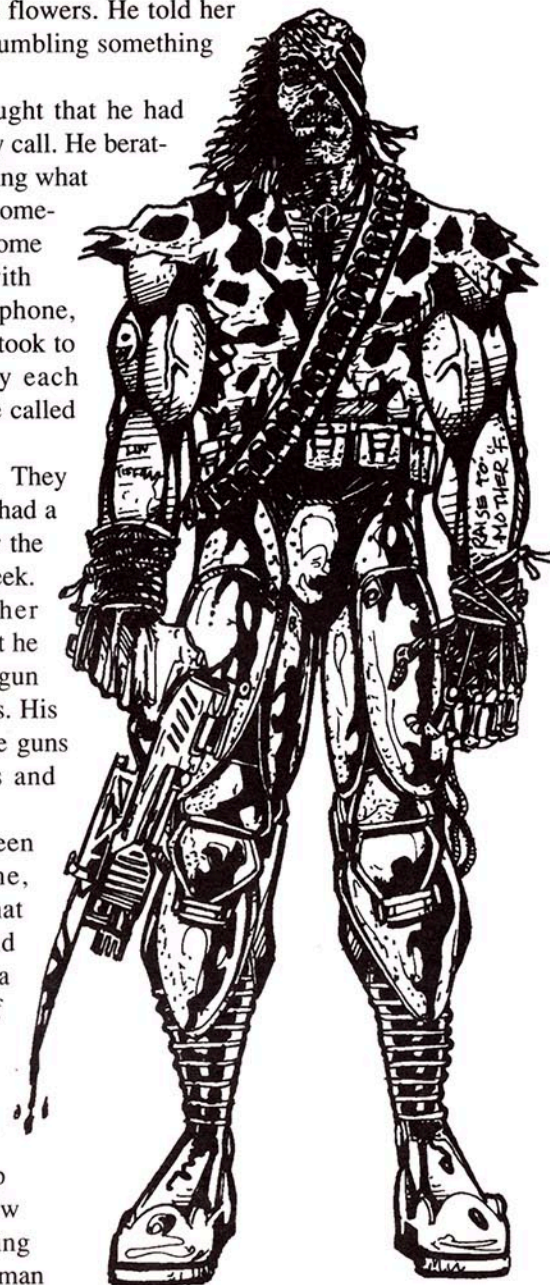
too, because she seemed to like the flowers. He told her to call at work, and not at home, mumbling something about usually being at work.

Days passed, and Norman thought that he had been wrong to think she might really call. He berated himself for his stupidity, wondering what he was thinking when he believed someone as pretty as Elaine might call some guy who worked in a gun store with his mom. Still, he waited by the phone, and jumped for it when it rang. He took to cleaning up the store thoroughly each night, so he could be there if Elaine called after business hours.

And then one day she did call. They set up a date for that weekend, and had a fine time. Months passed, and over the months they saw each other each week.

Norman never told his mother about Elaine, instead telling her that he was scavenging around late night gun flea markets in search of good deals. His mother, who had a fondness for the guns of simpler days, encouraged this and was pleased.

But one night, after they'd been seeing each other for some time, Norman got careless. He knew that tonight was the night that he and Elaine were going to do IT. He had a hankering to do IT in a shop full of guns, though he was a naive lad in some ways and couldn't exactly figure out why. Elaine, meanwhile, as both an avid collector of guns and a woman who'd been up and down the shooting range a few times, also found the idea appealing and knew exactly why. When Norman



WHITE HAIRED OLD GUN DEALER FOUND DEAD!

I Tried to Stop Her Says Son, But She Wouldn't Listen!

—October 15, 2016

Carol Bates, owner of the Bates Gun Shop, was pronounced dead at 2:34 am, this morning.

Her son, Norman, called the police to report that thieves had entered their shop and his mother had gone to investigate.

"I can't believe, I can't believe I was so close..." Norman mumbled to himself over and over again at the crime scene. When asked what he meant, Norman had no comment.

Police believe the assailants were part of a larger organization, perhaps

"She was going to kill me! What are you talking about, 'Mom!'? She was obviously deranged. Let's go."

"But she was my mother."

"I'm out of here."

Ruined by the tragedy, Norman volunteered for Slumberland in an attempt to get away from the memories. He was boosted, sent to war, and came back a wreck. But Norman, now code named Death's Knock, is unique in his mental derivation. Whenever he picked up a gun, he heard his mother's voice speaking from it. His mother tells him to track down crime and kill the villains. He is a driven vigilante with a dark past. If he puts the gun down, the voice goes away. But he loves his mom dearly, and if he goes for too long without hearing her, he does everything he can to get a gun back in his hand.

PERSONALITY

Although an imposing figure, and a very violent vigilante crime fighter, there is always a bit

of Death's Knock that is hesitant, frightened. This is because he's always listening to his mother pick him apart for faults, giving commands, and complaining to him about what a weak, useless man he is. In the middle of any fight Death's Knock might stop whatever he's doing to listen to her.

Why is he a vigilante? Why does he kill people? He's convinced that one day he'll have killed enough people to shut his mother up.

QUOTES

"Yes, mom."

"Yes, mom."

"Yes, mom."

suggested it, the thought of all those barrels on the walls danced in her head, and she insisted they do it IT at the shop.

Which was really fun until mom showed up.

She had heard their noise while she sat in the house on the hill, thought some hooligans were torturing a lynx in the shop, and went down to check it out.

Well, she came in, a 12 gauge sawed off in hand, and caught the couple in the act. Norman pulled himself up and tried to equivocate, but mom would have none of it. She raised the gun when Norman had cleared Elaine, ready to splatter Norman's lover across neatly displayed boxes of bullets. But Elaine had already scrambled up, grabbed a .45 off the wall and loaded it. Even as mom screamed, "Die, Defiler!" Elaine pulled the trigger and blew mom's brain out the back of her head.

"Mom!" shouted Norman.

"Come on, Norman," Elaine said. "We can make a run for it. Live life like a never ending episodic vid show, always on the run from the law, always encountering new people and places."

"Mom!" shouted Norman.

DR. PROFESSOR

STR: 6 DEX: 4 SPD: 4 RES: 6
INT: 7 WILL: 5 AURA: 4

Acrobatics: 5, Administration: 9, Computer Science: 12, Genetic Engineering: 11, Gun Combat: 5, Intimidation/Interrogation: 9, Invention/Repair: 13, Psychology: 13, Science: 13
Emotion Control: 15
Adrenal Surge: 8
Stress Tolerance: 10
Psychosis: Multiple Personalities

Equipment:

Dr. Professor only carries 25mm Urban Nightmare EP425. All of his clothes are woven with Heavykev.

BACKGROUND

Dr. Professor was born Alexander Cremshaw in Brooklyn, New York. His father was a librarian, his mother a proud, last-ditch member of the PTA. He was a gangly boy, with glasses (his father always said, "There's nothing wrong with being proud of our imperfections"). Although he did extremely well in school, like most bright boys he found himself a social outcast. He thought of the world as filled with a people he did not belong to. Theories raced through his head when he was young—perhaps he was an alien left by invaders from another planet, or he lacked certain chromosomes to make him truly human. Whatever the theory though, he thought he always lacked something to allow him to be a true member of the human race.

His refuge was the world of adolescent male fantasy power trips found in comic books and adventure vids. He dreamed of one day improving himself so that he might not need to fit in.

When Slumberland opened up and soldiers were boosted with mind-numbing enhancements, Alexander knew what he wanted to do with his life. He volunteered for service, keeping it a secret from his parents. For a week he waited anxiously for a reply. When it came, he was devastated. He was rejected because they did not think he had the physical base needed for the job.

After a few days of despair, he came up with a new plan. He would get as close as he could to the program, slip himself into it, and from there get himself boosted. Over the next eight years he pressed himself mercilessly, studying and studying, until he excelled in both undergraduate and graduate studies in psychology and bioengineering. He was picked up by Allied Mayhem the day he graduated and thought his life was set.

But, of course, he ended up on the R&D staff at AMI, not as A participant in the boosting project. He was a scrawny kid who had a lot of smarts. No one even considered letting him into the program. They wanted him for his mind, not his muscles. But Alexander knew that it was his mind that made him valuable. All he had to do was make his brain so valuable that he could use it as a bargaining chip to get whatever he wanted.

Over the next three years he dug deeper and deeper into the R&D division of AMI. He worked one hundred twenty hour weeks, sleeping at the lab, throwing himself completely into the job. He produced ideas that went far beyond anything generated by his co-workers. Some of them were mad (MAD!) but the study of Slumberland is a strange field, with only a fine line separating the insane stuff from the really good ideas. And even his crazy ideas turned out to have practical applications.

Soon he was the bright boy of the lab. They offered him a corner office. They offered him money. They offered him women and drugs and the com-



-May 3, 2021

MAD! MAD THEY CALL ME! BUT I'LL SHOW THEM -
THE SLOWBURN PREROGATIVE MOVES ALONG SPENDY.
LITTLE DO THEY SUSPECT -

ALL I NEED IS A BIT MORE TIME.
CAN IT REALLY BE DONE? WILL I BE ABLE TO
MAKE NIETZSCHE'S DREAM OF THE ÜBERMENSCHEN POSSIBLE?
HAVE I FOUND THE SEAT OF THE HUMAN CONSCIENCE?
AND CAN I RIP IT FROM ITS THRONE AND SEND IT
INTO THE TRASH HEAP WHERE IT BELONGS?

DUGAN HAS BEEN CHECKING OUT SOME OF THE
INCONSISTENCIES IN THE SLUMBERLAND PARK PROGRAMMING.
I THINK HE KNOWS I'M MIXING THE TWO PROJECTS.
HE MUST DIE.

plete library of Combat, Combat, Combat! He turned it all down. He wanted to be boosted.

They tried to argue him out of it. Too risky. And so on. He insisted. The argument went on for a month. They relented. Alexander went to Slumberland.

It turned out better than anyone could have expected. Not only did he come out of the immersion as a bruiser of a man, but his experiences in Slumberland gave him insights into the process no one else had. (As a matter of practice, no one who created the boosted and Slumberland technology actually uses it. Alexander broke a safe and wise and hypocritical precedent.)

The only problem was that with his boosted abilities he walked the final step into insanity. Working with him became a nightmare. He now had the abilities he so desired, and could dominate everyone around him. At staff meetings he smashed the tables into splinters when angered. When his supervisors disagreed with him, he sent them flying into the wall. After several broken bones and one death, AMI decided they had gotten all they could from him in the labs and shipped him to South America where he worked for six years as their chief field medic. He did a fantastic job, initiating a program that put more boosted medics in the field to help keep the valuable boosted soldiers alive.

However, he also committed a series of secret, horrible experiments on many of the boosts on both sides of the conflict. In Brazil he acquired the nickname Dr.

Professor, for his strange mix of practical medical knowledge and philosophical ranting, and the name was soon known on all fronts throughout the world. Getting fixed up by Dr. Professor meant you'd probably live—but the treatment itself would put you through hell.

By the time he came back from the wars his mind was shot. Though still brilliant, his sadomasochistic tendencies had reached a frightening zenith. He had become indifferent to the pain of others, and capable of anything in the name of scientific research. AMI dropped him immediately after one interview. He was a free agent.

He shopped himself around awhile, finally getting hired by Tri-Synaptic Research, a company offering parallel research to the Slumberland work. Dr. Professor was instrumental in getting the Slumberland theme park up and running, and in Tri-Synaptic's other two projects, Advanced Designer Drugs, and Slowburn Prerogative. The ADDs are public and sold over the counter. The Slowburn Prerogative is not only a top secret project the Feds don't know about, but most of the Tri-Synaptic's staff doesn't know anything about it either. Those who do know about it think it's a project to suppress moral inhibitors in soldiers. Only Dr. Professor knows that the project's goal is to make Nietzsche's theoretical goal of an "overman" a reality.

He is maniacally obsessed with removing fear and morality from society. This last tidbit he has carefully kept to himself. He is biding his time, using the resources of Tri-Synaptic Research to further his work in the Slowburn Prerogative. When he is ready to strike, he will utilize his knowledge and tons of cash and set up his own lab, becoming the ultimate madman with the ultimate play set—the world.

PERSONALITY

Dr. Professor's personality is psychopathic. He sees other boosts as moths to be pinned up against the wall for research. Slowly he is building a cadre of loyal boosts whom he can count on when he makes his break from Tri-Synaptic Research. He's given to staring blindly off into space, and then flipping into speech mode, where he'll ramble off genetic code sequences. When he stares, he stares deep, like a teacher putting down a kid. He means to inspire fear. It usually works.

QUOTES

"All we have separating us from our dreams is fear and pain. Remove those two elements, and heaven is ours."

"The brain is a very delicate portion of the human body. Too delicate. I see it as my role in life to toughen it up."

"HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!"

GINGER BLACK

STR: 7 DEX: 5 SPD: 5 RES: 6
INT: 7 WILL: 6 AURA: 5

Acrobatics: 11, Administration: 8, Business: 9, Gun Combat: 8, Intimidation/Interrogation: 8, Martial Arts: 9, Streetwise: 7, Thief: 8, Weaponry: 8
Radar Sense: 11

Telepathic Blast: 5

Stress Tolerance: 9

Psychosis: Panic Disorder

Equipment:

30mm Silver Bullet SSF 2/30, 20mm GCS DW 770/g, Heavy Mondo, Chaff (3 charges), Average Computer Pack, Pueblo Firefight!, Anti-Radar, combat goggles, cellular phone, Punkbuster™ Radar Detector, Punkbuster™ Signal Jammer

BACKGROUND

Philip Snipes grew up in Winnetka, Illinois, a well-to-do suburb of Chicago. His father was a doctor, his mother a lawyer. Raised in an environment of wealth and education, he breezed by his schoolmates in the public school he attended. (His parents believed in the power of public education, and despite certain fears, kept Philip and his brothers and sisters in the system. Along these lines, they drove their children hard so they wouldn't be dragged back by the terrible violence and lack of funding that plagued the schools.) By the time he reached high school it was clear he was on a scholastic fast track. A path of corporate law stretched out before him, and no one doubted that it would in fact be the path he would walk all of his life.

He ended up at Harvard, again rushing along, pulling off one miracle after another on his tests and essays. His professors spoke glowingly of him. He was set for life.

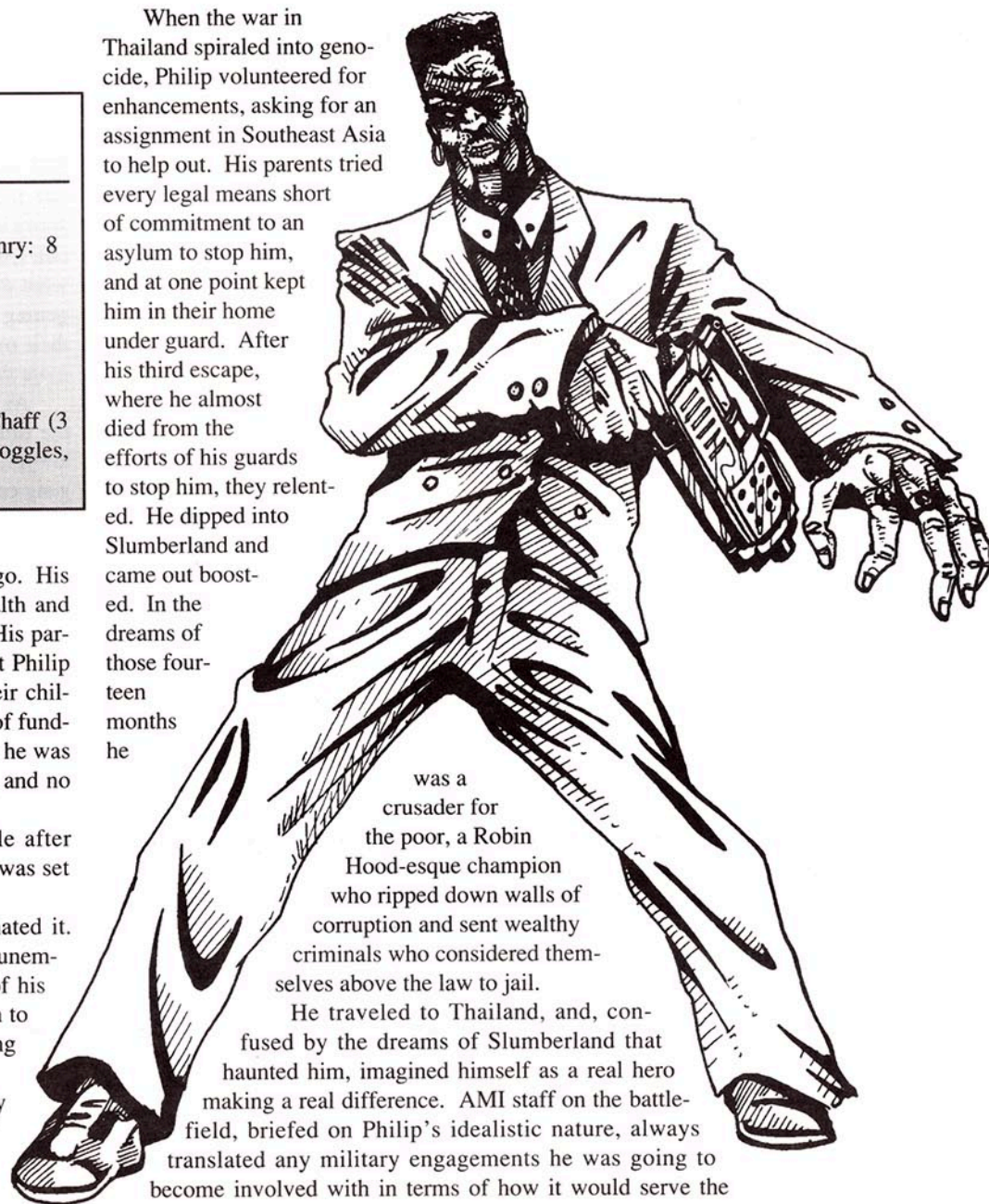
Only one problem. He hated law. The more he did it, the more he hated it. Around him, in the poorer areas of Boston, he saw the terrible poverty of the unemployed. He could not get images of police brutality, committed daily, out of his mind. He saw the golden path he walked, and knew that it had no connection to what he truly cared about. As soon as he got out of Harvard, he began doing volunteer social work, supporting himself with checks from home.

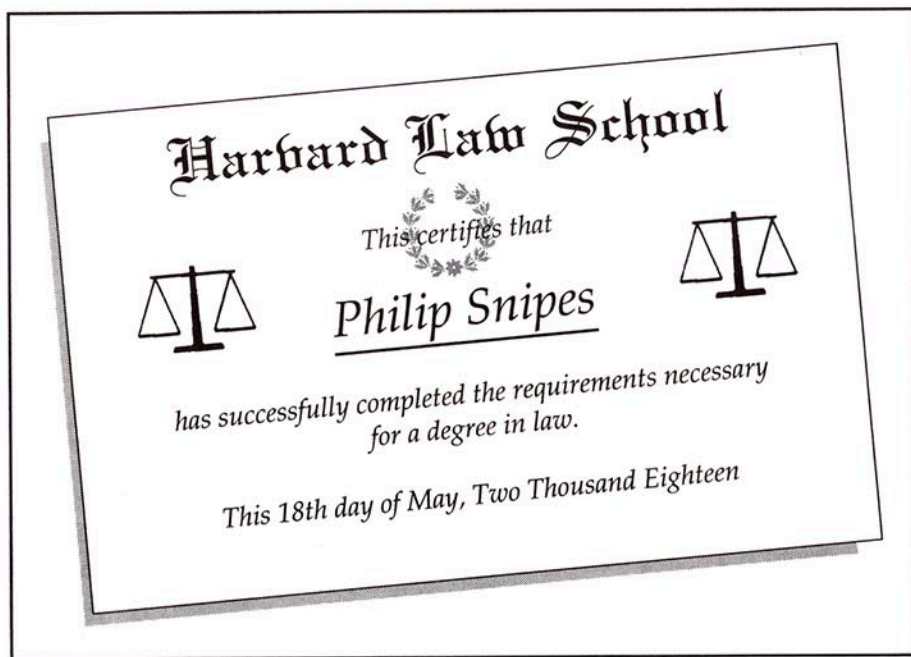
His parents assumed it was a phase that he would grow out of. But they had raised him, inadvertently, with their liberal lessons all to well. Instead of just feeling bad about the poor, he felt obliged to do something about it. Rather than growing out of this phase, he grew deeper into it.

When the war in Thailand spiraled into genocide, Philip volunteered for enhancements, asking for an assignment in Southeast Asia to help out. His parents tried every legal means short of commitment to an asylum to stop him, and at one point kept him in their home under guard. After his third escape, where he almost died from the efforts of his guards to stop him, they relented. He dipped into Slumberland and came out boosted. In the dreams of those fourteen months he

was a crusader for the poor, a Robin Hood-esque champion who ripped down walls of corruption and sent wealthy criminals who considered themselves above the law to jail.

He traveled to Thailand, and, confused by the dreams of Slumberland that haunted him, imagined himself as a real hero making a real difference. AMI staff on the battlefield, briefed on Philip's idealistic nature, always translated any military engagements he was going to become involved with in terms of how it would serve the





downtrodden of Thailand. Month after month he served the interests of a multinational corporation, all the while believing he was doing the right thing for the disenfranchised of the world. He was exhilarated. He loved his work.

When his tour was over, he went back to the states, planning on doing legal defense work for the poor. But unlike his time in Asia, where he had AMI staff members committed to keeping him fantasizing about all the good he was doing, his life in Los Angeles was plagued with doubt and confusion. Conflicts between the rich and the underprivileged couldn't be solved with a punch, and all he had been taught since entering Slumberland was that punches solved everything. The issues were much more complicated than they had been in Thailand, mostly because the AMI staff had explained everything to him in simple terms. Back in the world of black and whites, everything was hard.

Ultimately his once keen mind, altered drastically by the Slumberland programming, could not handle the stress of living by legal, bureaucratic codes in the urban nightmare of Los Angeles. Flashbacks haunted him, both from Slumberland and from Asia, and he began to have trouble keeping track of reality. He began to freak out, sometimes in the office, sometimes in the street, and twice while in court defending a client.

The memories that were the worst were those from Asia. While there he had seen himself as the champion of the poor and downtrodden. His Slumberland-pickled mind

had been able to edit out the inconsistencies of his behavior with this vision of himself. But now, without AMI handling him, the truth rushed back in. His brutal combat, his slaughter of civilians all tore into his memories. Images of torn limbs, and endless streams of blood rushed into his vision, even while he was walking down the street.

One day he found himself defending a young gangbanger called Emperor Jones. E. J. was the leader of a gang of drug lords known as the Ten Caesars. Philip, always one for an ethical debate, asked the man how he could sell drugs to kids. Emperor Jones was more than happy to join the debate. With plenty of phrases sprinkling his talk from old Warner Brothers gangster movies, he explained how his crew members were the new Robin Hoods. They were pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, getting out of the life that The Man had placed them in. Sure, they might have to hurt their own kind—for now. But at least they were taking action. And that was worth more than anything.

As they worked together, Philip was drawn more and more into E. J.'s logic. By the time he had won E. J.'s freedom, he volunteered to serve as the Ten Caesar's lawyer. From there, with his boosted enhancements, it was a quick step to becoming a gang enforcer. He now serves the gang in both capacities.

PERSONALITY

Now running around with the name Ginger Black, Philip is back to the glory days of his victories in Asia. The flashbacks have stopped, for he fills his days with violence and the firm belief he is doing good for the people of Los Angeles.

Unlike the rest of the crew, Ginger Black doesn't participate in the late night gangster movie orgies. Although he wears the obligatory suit, he sees his work as very serious. Although he is disdainful of the rest of the crew's playful nature, he doesn't say anything about it.

He is very intense, but always with a smile. He'll talk late into the night about how the gangs of LA are going to re-shape the city. He believes he is part of a massive revolution—an ideological resolution that will unfold over the next few decades and change the social structure of North America.

He is at once naive and wise, his head crammed with his Harvard education, but his train of thought directed by people who know how to push his idealistic buttons. AMI pushed the buttons years ago, Emperor Jones pushes them now.

QUOTES

"We are the new stormers of the Bastille."

"You can't make an omelet without cracking open a few vials of crack."

"One to three years, tops, as long as the point man is a minor, with time off for good behavior. I think we should try it."

DUREZ, MACHINO

SPD: 1 INT: 3 WILL: 2 AURA: 4

Administration: 8, Business: 5, Charm: 7,
Leadership: 5, Psychology: 6, Thief: 5

Equipment:

9mm Walther antique, Heavykev

BACKGROUND

Born and raised in central Los Angeles, Machino Durez had a dream. He wanted to build a massive financial empire for himself—but using legal means. He scrimped and saved, sent himself through school, got an MBA. Made all the right moves. Met all the right people. He spent an incredible amount of time trying to “improve” himself. He managed to lose his central LA Hispanic accent, trading it in for something more Midwestern. He changed his style of dress. He did everything in his power to dissolve his past to become “White.”

In a way, it all paid off. He made contacts. Found out how to please people with money. He made a deep impression on others: a young man trying to work his way up out of the ghetto. His first big break sent him to Las Vegas to manage a hotel. From there he worked his way into a casino, where he continued to make a good impression. After a decade he finally had enough clout to pull together the funds for his personal dream: a massive hotel located in Downtown LA. Named The Blake, after the architect Durez hired for the project, it would be a luxury fortress, catering to visitors to Los Angeles who wanted to feel safe while vacationing or conducting business in the city.

Construction was started in 2006. Even as the building went up, the Social Parameters in Downtown LA quickly collapsed. Riots, labor problems, theft, and drive-by shootings caused innumerable delays. On several occasions the construction was completely shut down. But Durez persevered. Time and time again he refinanced the project. To keep it going he dipped deeper into the illegal contacts he had made while in Las Vegas. As a well-honed wheeler and dealer, he worked his way into the camps of gangs and crooked politicians alike. With both good will and cash he bought protection from his troubles. In 2012 the hotel opened. (For a full description of the Blake Hotel, see the listing in the Places section of the Notebook.) By this time, however, the floating cities were on their way up. With entire cities raised high above the criminal fray of the subsprawl, there was no need for a hotel

that catered to the needs of frightened tourists. Business slumped quickly.

Ever the entrepreneur, Durez mounted a campaign to save his massive dream. Rather than cater to visitors in the city, the Blake would host the city's natives—people who needed time out from the crime and despair that LA doled out so well. With its thick walls, self-contained power and water systems and so forth, the Blake could guarantee anyone walking in its doors that for awhile, everything would be quiet.

The plan worked. The Blake opened its doors for a second time in 2017, just after the riots. From there on in, it worked at capacity. Durez hosted everyone from families that scraped together their last dollars for a week of peace, to arms and drugs dealers who needed neutral turf to have meetings with rivals. What began as a potential boondoggle ended up a gold mine. Durez is now one of the most beloved men in LA, though he carefully cultivates a sense of neutrality about him. He knows that the Blake's success rests upon the idea that it owes allegiance to no one, that every person is safe.

PERSONALITY

Durez long ago gave up his attempts to fit into the “white” culture. As he hit hard time after hard time, he began to relax more and more into the culture which raised



This is a legal document pursuant to the appropriate state and federal laws

Bill of Ownership

This deed hereby establishes that

Machino Durez

is the legal and rightful owner of

The Blake Hotel

1 Nelson Center

Los Angeles, CA 47709-3449-223

This document is on file with the County Commissioner's Office, the County Assessor's Office, the State's Bureau of Property Taxes, the Federal Troika of Real Estate Arrears and Taxation, and the National Net-Casting Network.

He makes it his business to find out what each powerful guest wants, and then provides it. Always at a cost, of course. But it does arrive. Need a map of LA? It's there. A tub full of champagne? Done. A buffet for 500 guests on half an hour's notice? Yup. In these efforts Durez is tireless. The Blake is his kingdom, and he wants it run well. By providing the impossible to his guests he knows that he can continue to rule his own domain in the middle of a ruined metropolis.

The one true drive in Durez's life is cash. He just loves money. When it comes down to making a choice between pleasing one guest over another (and that does happen, however much Durez regrets it) it is the one with the cash to blow that wins. Durez just can't help himself. He's set his yardstick, and it's his bank account. Although he funnels most of the money back into the hotel, he does know that his life is set up on a razor's edge. There's only so long before he makes a misstep and ends up on the receiving end of a disgruntled guest's boost-enhancement. Until then he lives it up with booze, women, and great food.

QUOTES

"No, no, no. Allow me!"

"You're worrying far too much. Just tell me—how can I help you?"

"For now, there is no world outside."

him. This was in part a shrewd decision to mimic the cultures of the criminal element he found himself dealing with, but also a means of drawing true strength. While the rich whites he had known abandoned him when things got tough, he knew that the rough edged folk of LA would be with him forever.

He has taken to wearing loud shirts, swearing regularly, and basically carrying on wildly. This is not to say he is either a lout or incompetent. In fact, he is incredibly shrewd. His gregarious personality allows him to make all of his guests comfortable. He is the center of a party atmosphere that floats into whatever room he enters. He makes it clear he is there to please his guests, and will be displeased if they are not happy.

SITWELL, MELISSA

aka Steppin High

DEX: 1 SPD: 2 INT: 3 WILL: 2 AURA: 6

Acrobatics: 3, Business: 4, Charm: 9, Detective: 4, Gun Combat: 2, Psychology: 6, Streetwise: 4, Thief: 5

Equipment:

9mm Walther antique, Heavykev duster, Average Pack computer, Eliza, Porta-Term, Pueblo RecordIt!, Vocalizer

BACKGROUND

Daughter of the chairman of the county's board of supervisors, Melissa Sitwell has been listed as missing for some two years now. She currently works as prostitute at the 90210, a brothel in Upper Beverly Hills owned by the Tommy-G Club.

Melissa is not the daughter that John Sitwell thinks her to be. In his memories his child was a lovely girl, spoiled, perhaps, but nothing that could not have been taken care of during a poignant father-daughter reconciliation some time around her 30th birthday.

In truth, she had been selling drugs to her classmates in school from the age of eight. She had arranged to smuggle guns to her gang banger pals. (They could carry the guns in school; they just wanted to avoid the excessive taxes the county put on handgun sales.) At the age of fourteen she began turning tricks. How a father missed these actions will always be a mystery—but not a new mystery. It's happened time and time again.

Melissa began despising her father at a very young age. She believes he forced their mother from the house (not understanding at all her mother was simply a bitter woman; in fact, it was Melissa, with her youth and charm that drove her mother away). As she became older, she came to hate him for his rosy view of the world. On some level the criminal activity she engaged in as a youth was a test against her father. She wanted to know if he would notice all the terrible things happening in his own "perfect" family. He didn't, and she kept raising the stakes. Over time, her behavior became habit, and then the habit a way of life.

By the time her father began running for the board of supervisors, she completely loathed the man. The pain she felt in herself—the mix of drugs, crime, and prostitution created deep shame in her—she blamed on her father. She could see that he was being manipulated by more powerful men. As the campaign progressed, she realized her father might well win the election. She took it upon herself to work against her father. But like so many of her attempts to make her displeasure clear to

him, she kept these attempts secret from him. (Strange, but true.)

She ran away from home, without a plan formed in her head. She simply had to be away. Strangely, her disappearance aided her father's election immensely. This only frustrated her more. She thought for a while of creating some sort of scandal that would ruin his career, but her trafficking in the underworld had thus far dealt on a low level of crime. She had neither the resources nor the contacts to pull off a large scale stunt of county-wide proportions.

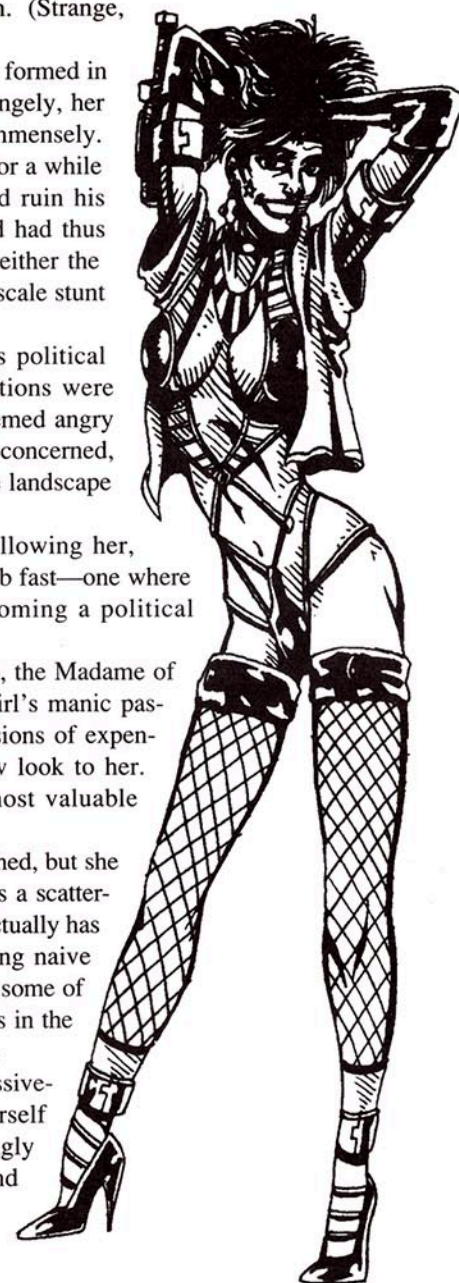
She tried to make contact with various political activist groups across LA county, but relations were strained with all of them. None of them seemed angry enough to her, and as far as the groups were concerned, she was a spoiled brat slumming through the landscape of political turmoil.

With her father's private detectives following her, and her funds running out she had to get a job fast—one where she could still pursue her dreams of becoming a political power-broker.

Eventually she hooked up with Silk Top, the Madame of 90210. Silk Top was impressed with the girl's manic passion. After putting her through several sessions of expensive cosmetic surgery she had a whole new look to her. Within weeks she became the brothel's most valuable prostitute.

Her distaste for her work has not diminished, but she sees hope for herself now. Though she plays a scatter-brain for the johns who come to 90210, she actually has a keen mind for collecting data. By feigning naive interest in them, she gets the men she's with, some of the more powerful media and political figures in the city, to drop whatever she can pull from them.

Through her well honed passion for passive-aggression, Melissa knows how to turn herself into a toy for boys just so. She is amazingly skilled at unplugging her sense of self, and becoming exactly what the man she's with wants to see, hear, touch. This takes its toll in the long run, of course. When



FAX TRANSMISSION #48537-2840G.....08:24PM

MISSING



Melissa Sitwell

If you have any information about this person's whereabouts,
please call 328-87642-98-2

she's done, the energy spent not being a whole person comes crashing back in on her. Her loathing of her father (on whom she continues to blame every aspect of her misery) is matched only by a tightly held loathing of herself. Still she persists with her plans.

She has made contact with Roger-Net, the pirate broadcasting group trying to run its revolution through the media. They are very interested in the information

she gives them. By combining all the clues from her clients, they are able to build patterns of secret political policy and technological advances. This allows them to stay just ahead the officials and media giants, and keep their illegal programming on the air.

So far Melissa has kept her identity from the members of Roger-Net a complete secret (though they would love to meet her to have a more secure working relationship). Like her father, Roger-Net has operatives trying to track her down. She is aware of all of this, and is very careful.

PERSONALITY

Melissa is complicated, with her nature now split into many distinct parts. When working as a prostitute, she is embarrassingly malleable. When gathering information, sharply keen. When making her moves through LA's underworld, confident and arrogant. She is, ultimately, quite confused. She has buried herself deeply into a false life that she expected her father to save her from. Each day that passes moves her deeper into her strange state of mind. The portions of her personality are becoming more and more distinct, so that she is sometimes a completely brazen spy, and sometimes a fearful child.

Although her skills serve her well, there are elements of her psyche that are crumbling. Whether or not this crumbling results in a final, mental crash remains to be seen. More than that, it remains to be seen what sort of crash may result. She might enter a helpless state of schizophrenia, or she might simply slip off to become an assassin or a corporate spy, leaving behind all ties to her past.

Obviously, anyone who depends on her competent information is running a risk, unknowingly or not. As time goes by, the information they come to depend on might in fact lose its accuracy as she loses her grip on life.

QUOTES

"Come here, daddy, come here and tell me about all about your big, bad day."

"Sure, I can find out what's going on at Media Giant. But you have another of your goons try to follow me again, and you'll never hear about what's going on at Media Giant."

"John Sitwell's ruining this city, and the only chance we've got is to bring him down. Kill him if we have to."

MOSCOSO, ALPHONSE

STR: 3 DEX: 2 RES: 2
INT: 1 WILL: 2 AURA: 4

Acrobatics: 3, Administration: 6, Business: 3, Charm: 7, Detective: 7, Gun Combat: 7, Intimidation/Interrogation: 7, Leadership: 8, Military Science: 6, Streetwise: 5, Weaponry: 7

Equipment:

9mm wWalther antique, Heavykev woven into most coats, police issue Heavykev vest

BACKGROUND

Born and raised in Chicago, Alphonse Moscoso had always wanted to be a cop. He loved the idea of helping people and stopping the “bad guys.” He began his career along the police track as an idealist, and although he sensed cynicism within the Police Academy, he was not fully aware of how ingrained deceit was until shortly before he graduated. A lieutenant addressed the class and said, “I don’t tell you to take bribes, but if you’re gonna do this, carry a stamped, self-addressed envelope, and mail the money to yourself the first chance you get.” He added, “Remember moderation. Never go back for more—don’t leave a bad taste.”

It took only a few years for Moscoso to become fully indoctrinated into the policeman’s “code of silence.” It’s a common idea that cops protect each other even when they themselves break the law. Implicit in this philosophy is the idea that if everyone breaks the law, then no cop has to worry about a whistle blower coming along. Thus, whether or not a young policeman means to end up on the receiving end of graft, any crooked cops he works with will pressure him into accepting payoffs, bribes, stealing money out of the wallets of murder victims and so on. The pressure may be silent, as in “Everyone does it,” to brutal, as in, “Do it or you’ll have no one you can count on.”

After his initial shock, Moscoso learned he had a talent for graft. He had an instinct for where loose money could be found at a crime scene, and of who would be willing to pay off rather than going to jail. Rather than resist his abilities, he wallowed in them. It made him more of “one of the boys” and he liked that. He moved quickly up the ranks, paying off his superiors for his promotions. As he rose in rank, however, suspicion followed. Though not clumsy, he was simply living too well for a cop. He eventually got busted during the investiga-

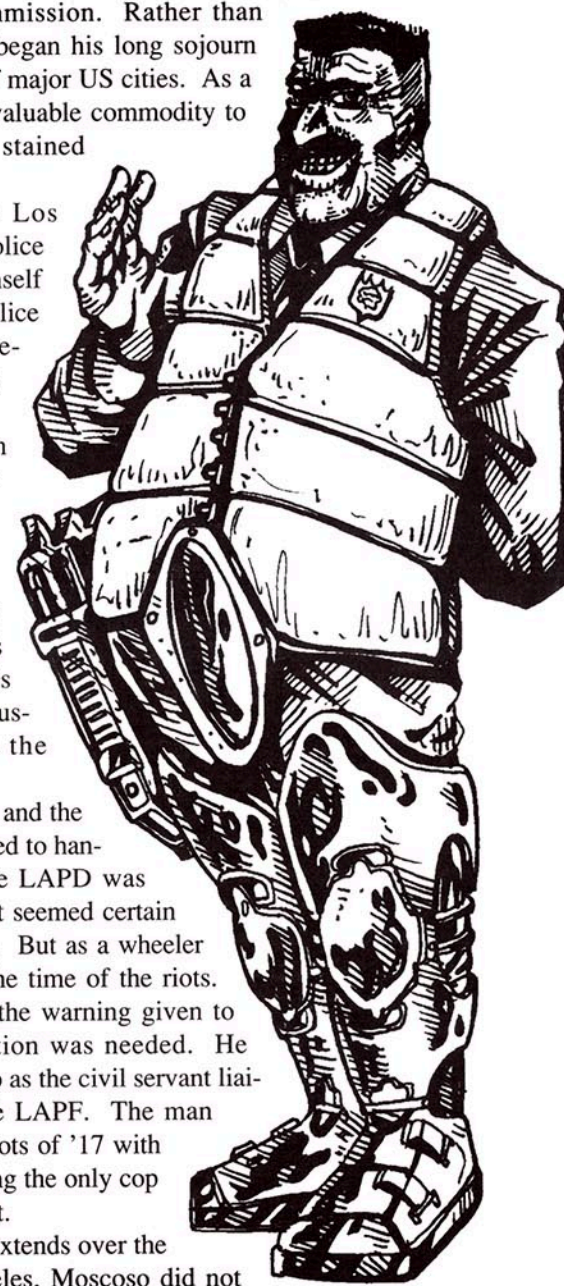
tions launched by the Orr Commission. Rather than being stripped of his badge, he began his long sojourn through the police departments of major US cities. As a “team player” he was seen as a valuable commodity to many departments, despite his stained record.

Eventually he landed in Los Angeles in 2015 as the city’s Police Commissioner. He ingrained himself quickly into the city’s insular police community, championing policemen’s rights and greasing the wheels of graft for easy use.

Ultimately though, he set in motion the wheels for the Redford Investigation, for his department’s corruption was too large to ignore. What followed were the harsh measures meant to put teeth into LA’s Internal Affairs department. This gave rise to tremendous police frustration, which in part led to the LAPD strike of 2017.

After the situation blew over, and the Los Angeles Peace Force was hired to handle crime across the county, the LAPD was disbanded as an institution, and it seemed certain that Moscoso would lose his job. But as a wheeler and dealer, he’d grown during the time of the riots. He saw now the importance of the warning given to him at the Academy. Moderation was needed. He wheeled-and-dealed and ended up as the civil servant liaison between the county and the LAPF. The man who had helped precipitate the riots of ’17 with his unbridled greed ended up being the only cop still on the payroll after the fallout.

Although his authority now extends over the length and breadth of Los Angeles, Moscoso did not



VID SHOW #43297
Oct. 19, 2021

Terry Billings: Do you think you're a good cop?
Alphonse Moscoso: I'm a great cop. The best I can be.
Billings: Is that enough though? The county's a mess...
Moscoso: Let me tell you a little story. There once was this ant. And while all the other ants were working, he'd sit around and worry that they wouldn't have enough food come the winter. And then one day this boot came along and crushed him. Got it?
Billings [startled]: Is that a threat?
Moscoso: No. It's just a story. Here, let me show you some pictures of my nieces and nephews.

take the title of Sheriff. He did this purposely, a false measure of modesty set out to appease his critics. By behaving in a humble manner up front, he has helped make it nearly impossible to define exactly what his job's power and responsibilities are. He is constantly maneuvering against Tanis Morgan, the LAPF's division head, for the hearts and minds of the officers. Although Morgan is technically their boss, Moscoso is softer on worrying about the law, and as an old hand feeds them plenty of tricks of the graft trade. Morgan may send out the memos, but the actions are often carried out according to Moscoso's desires.

His main concern is with protecting his interests. His job is essentially expendable, and he must be careful that John Sitwell never comes to understand this. To this end, he helps foster conflict between the different departments of the LAPF so that it always appears that things are about to fall apart. Because he's managed to become the appealing father figure to most of the department, he then enters any fray as the peacemaker. His press in the county is very good.

Next to keeping his job, Moscoso wants to accumulate wealth. To this end he looks the other way with drug dealers and gun smugglers as long as certain rules

are followed. These rules consist of not pushing drugs and guns in the county's better neighborhoods, and paying off appropriate bribes to match the stakes of the criminal activity. Most importantly, anyone who wants to avoid the hassles of the LAPF better not pop any of its members. Once that happens, all bets are off, and the perps are as good as dead.

PERSONALITY

Moscoso has two personalities, one private, the other public. The public personality is one of a man trying desperately to win an uphill battle. He often appears at press conferences exhausted, but good natured. The excuses made for the terrible criminal mess that is LA are nearly endless, and he makes sure never to mention any of them twice in the same week. Through all of this he is a struggling man, his hands tied by a "Liberal" criminal justice system.

His private personality is a sharp conniver. He manages to get exactly what he wants, when he wants it. By portraying himself as the understanding administrator against Morgan's more business minded methods, he is the guy cops side with. He has a network of informants and weasels willing to feed him dirt and do his bidding. He is ruthless and swift, killing people if he has to in order to protect himself and his people.

QUOTES

"If only they'd cut me loose, but what can I do?"

"I'm not threatening you. I'm saying LA's a big place and there's no way I can guarantee your safety without special care."

"Tanis Morgan is doing the best job she can. You can quote me on that."

PC-MOTHER

STR: 4 DEX: 7 SPD: 6 RES: 3
INT: 4 WILL: 6 AURA: 3

Acrobatics: 11, Gun Combat: 10, Intimidation/Interrogation: 6, Martial Arts: 10, Military Science: 8, Streetwise: 9, Thief: 11, Weaponry: 9
Analytic Smell: 10
Danger Sense: 10
Claws: 8
Stress Tolerance: 10 (unnaturally high innate stress tolerance)
Psychosis: Sociopathy

Equipment:

.50 cal Urban Nightmare EP450, 12.5 ZW 385i, Mondo Armor, Chaff (3 charges), Average Computer Pack, Pueblo Firefight!, Anti-Radar, combat goggles, Punkbuster™ Radar Detector

BACKGROUND

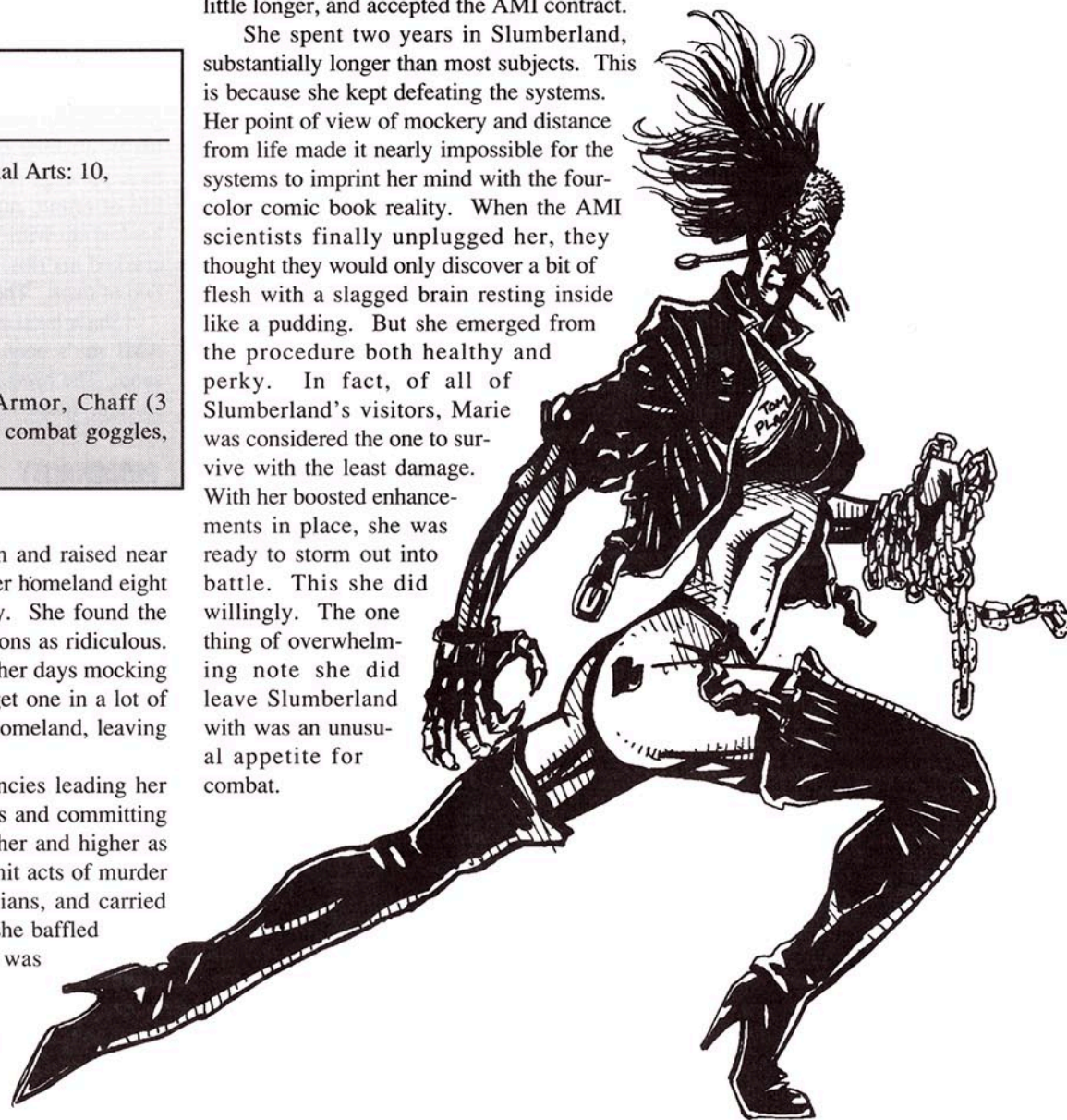
PC-Mother is an émigré from Neo-Deutschland. She was born and raised near Bonn, and in her youth she was known as Marie Krauss. She left her homeland eight years ago, fleeing the Neo-scientology sweeping across the country. She found the strange religion outlandishly ridiculous. In fact, she views all religions as ridiculous. In fact, she views pretty much everything as ridiculous. She spends her days mocking everything under the sun. The problem is that such mockery can get one in a lot of trouble in Neo-Deutschland. So she smuggled herself out of her homeland, leaving behind friends and family.

She wandered around Europe for a while, her nihilistic tendencies leading her through the seedier sides of Paris and England, playing in rap bands and committing acts of petty theft to sustain herself. Eventually the stakes got higher and higher as she tested the bounds of morality. Her nihilism carried her to commit acts of murder as an exercise. She contemplated deaths of self-important politicians, and carried them out, just to see what would happen. For months and months she baffled Scotland Yard. Finally, after the whole force was after her, she was caught and sent off to jail for execution.

However, AMI had heard her story (her arrest made all the papers) and bought off her sentence. They decided someone of her temperament would make an ideal subject for the Slumberland conditioning process. They brought her into their labs and offered a choice: become an AMI soldier, or return to jail for execution.

She decided to stick out life in her mortal coil a little longer, and accepted the AMI contract.

She spent two years in Slumberland, substantially longer than most subjects. This is because she kept defeating the systems. Her point of view of mockery and distance from life made it nearly impossible for the systems to imprint her mind with the four-color comic book reality. When the AMI scientists finally unplugged her, they thought they would only discover a bit of flesh with a slagged brain resting inside like a pudding. But she emerged from the procedure both healthy and perky. In fact, of all of Slumberland's visitors, Marie was considered the one to survive with the least damage. With her boosted enhancements in place, she was ready to storm out into battle. This she did willingly. The one thing of overwhelming note she did leave Slumberland with was an unusual appetite for combat.



AMI/SLUMBERLAND PROJECT

— PROGRESS REPORT —

Subject has thus far defeated our VR simulations. Her sense of irony is so thick that the superheroics remain a farcical joke no matter how deep we drop her into the narrative. Thus far she has turned each of the stories into bitter commentaries on the uselessness of heroes, the absurdity of thinking that anything can be truly done in the world.

This is not all bad, however. This strength might allow her to accept her enhancements without the normal psychological problems. I suggest we boost her without a green clearance from the slumberland simulation. Much might be gained.

— Dr. Professor

She traveled the world, waging war on corporate time, hitting strange bars and low-life dreg spots on her personal time. Her cruelty was renowned through the AMI forces, and more than a few soldiers asked for transfers to avoid working with her. Not a bit of this ever bothered her. She found the fear she inspired in boosted soldiers amusing.

One time she was sent to get some footage of a battle in Tehran filmed by a Combat, Combat, Combat! crew. The distributors had agreed not to air the footage for four months because Hammer of God had used experimental weapons in the battle and wanted to review the battle themselves before the world saw their new line of AP shells. However, a group of terrorists had gotten hold of the footage and were going to broadcast it over the Roger One Network. When PC-Mother went into the town where the terrorists were hiding it had a population of 5,000. By the time she left, the population had dropped to 4,200. PC-Mother, in a fit of nihilism, had killed over eight hundred innocent farmers while tracking down the terrorists.

It took a while for the rumors to float out of the town, but by the time they did, the press was all over it. AMI realized they had PR disaster heading their way, and cut her off the payroll. Publicly they said that a rogue boosted operative committed the massacre. After that they shut up.

PC-Mother didn't mind. She went off to Los Angeles, which seemed an exciting place to her particular and peculiar temperament. She worked in punk bands for a while, trashing the clubs as the band played on. Though the scene was hip, it didn't have the edge she so desperately needed to feel truly alive. She ended up returning a life of crime, running with gangs to pick up her life to the fullest. Eventually she hooked up with Tri-Top. (They were lovers for a while, but after the fifth time she cracked his ribs, he called it quits. There's still a great deal of affection between the two of them. Their respect for each other is complete.)

She's been with the gang a year now—the longest time other than her stint with AMI she's been with any person or organization. She doesn't see herself leaving soon. The mess that is LA is very much her speed. It's a combat zone that still has a culture. Black is popular, the guns are big. She's here to stay.

PERSONALITY

PC-Mother comes off as someone so removed from life you'd wonder how she's still breathing. But within the strange shell of indifference is a passionate woman who simply works at a level of intensity that leaves the rest of humanity behind. Unlike most people who find themselves in these straits, she hasn't become bitter and reclusive. Instead, she's tried to bring her intensity to the world, and she's sought out the energy from people and situations that make her feel comfortable.

The tragedy of all this is that she really just does feel herself separate from the rest of humanity, from the world. Her scornful sighs and laughs at Everything reveals her inability to connect with people. Only Tri-Top, with his murderous intensity mixed with his strange concern for people, came close to letting her connect with someone. But even that fell apart because of her boosted muscles.

No matter what anyone says, no matter what the political, philosophical, or religious stand, she'll mock it. She, however, stands nowhere. She cannot be pinned down to anything. She stands on the outside of everything, commenting and deriding. This often gives people the impression she can't be counted on and really doesn't do much. In fact, it is in action that she bursts out of her cynical veneer.

QUOTES

"I'm just not cynical enough."

"How ridiculously absurd."

"Yeah. Life."

REDCHECK

STR: 3 DEX: 3 SPD: 6 RES: 5
INT: 4 WILL: 6 AURA: 5

Acrobatics: 7, Computer Science: 8, Gun Combat: 6, Intimidation/Interrogation: 6, Invention/Repair: 7, Leadership: 9, Martial Arts: 7, Medicine: 5, Military Science: 6, Streetwise: 7, Thief: 8, Vehicles: 4, Weaponry: 6

Thermal Vision: 24

Heat Immunity: 7

Reduced Fatigue: 6

Stress Tolerance: 6

Psychosis: Melancholia

Equipment:

.50 cal Urban Nightmare EP 450, 12.5mm ZW 385i, AMI Punk-Roaster Napalm Proj., Mondo Armor, Economy Pack Computer, Pueblo Sniper!, combat goggles

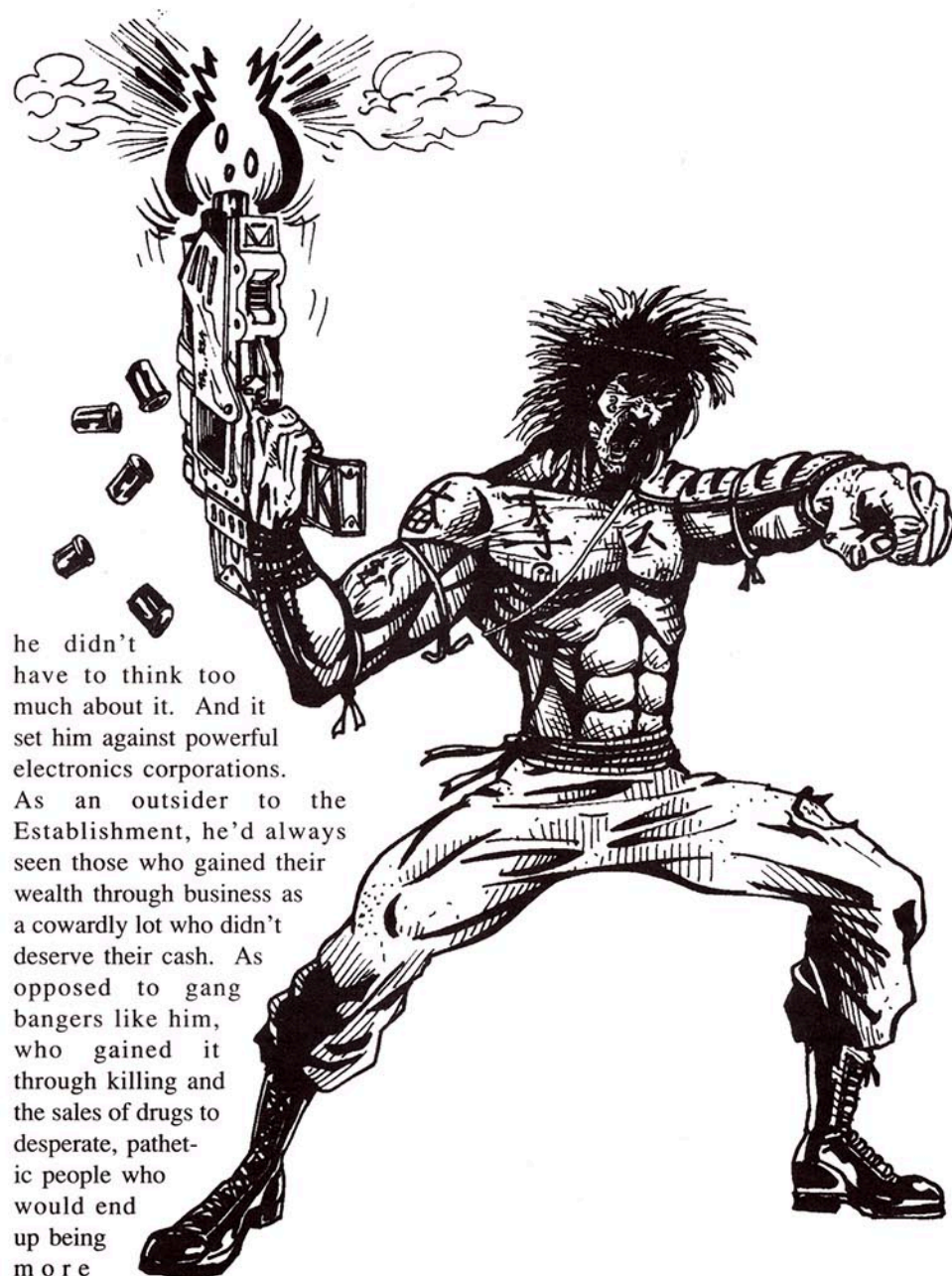
BACKGROUND

Redcheck is the founder and leader of the famed People's Front for the Obliteration of Three-Dimensional Entertainment. He spent his early days in the Columbus 500 gang on the streets of L.A. At that time he was known as Bright Stick. He ran drugs and did drive by shootings. He was content, but not fulfilled.

At the age of fourteen, stirred by political tracts passed out on street corners, he decided to enter the life of a political activist. Like so many people his age, he combined his passion for political change with his passion for munitions.

For several years he ran around disrupting speeches of conservative politicians with gun shots and bombs. Most of these attacks were made without a real political focus. He had a vague idea of who he was against—not what he was for—and he let others dictate where he would devote his energies. In his late teens, however, he began to listen to activists very concerned about the obsessive use of three-dimensional equipment for entertainment. According to these activists, the people could no longer see the true ills of the world, for the world was being overwhelmed with technology that removed them from the world. This technology was three-dimensional entertainment. By creating a new world, "equal to and supposedly better than" the real one, people were tempted to leave the pain of the world behind. Before any changes could be made, the activists claimed, the march of three-dimensional technology had to be stopped.

This was the calling he'd been waiting for. It had a purpose with direct results that involved explosions. The ultimate goal was vague enough in its implications that



he didn't have to think too much about it. And it set him against powerful electronics corporations. As an outsider to the Establishment, he'd always seen those who gained their wealth through business as a cowardly lot who didn't deserve their cash. As opposed to gang bangers like him, who gained it through killing and the sales of drugs to desperate, pathetic people who would end up being more

**PEOPLE OF THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL WORLD
DON'T LET TECHNOLOGY BECOME THE NEW REALITY
STOP THREE DIMENSIONAL ENTERTAINMENT NOW!
JOIN THE PEOPLE'S FRONT FOR THE OBLITERATION OF
THREE DIMENSIONAL ENTERTAINMENT!
STOP THE MARCH OF FALSE REALITY NOW!**

desperate and pathetic through his profit. Now was his chance to target all the stiff he'd hated for so long and to feel as if he was doing everyone a favor at the same time.

He flew into the task at hand like a hawk on the hunt. For a while he focused his energies on hitting stores carrying 3D home entertainment units. He both firebombed them and robbed them. When this became dull he went on to attack shipments of the units and then attacked research facilities that used 3D technology in any form. From there he moved up to assassination, targeting scientists and corporate officers who worked at the companies. Finally he began sneaking into the corporate offices and research centers, and booby trapping the facilities.

While this was really fun, it didn't give him the rush he desperately wanted. He was still a rather weak player in a world full of boosted players. He realized that if he really wanted to hit the big boys hard, and to truly make a name for himself, he'd have to be able to match the power of the people who were protecting the corporations.

Thus began his long and peculiar journey into Slumberland. This was not a simple task, for two very vital reasons. The first was that he had to create layers of dummy ID to pass the Disposable Hero, Inc. security clearance check. This took great deal of work, and he accumulated a great many debts along the way.

The second, and no less daunting obstacle, was for him to get over his fear of going into Slumberland. Over the two years of his terrorist activities, he'd really come to believe the propaganda of the anti-3D entertainment activists. His belief is what gave his actions their edge. He really did believe the machines and software of 3D tech were at the core of all the world's ills, and by entering Slumberland he'd essentially be heading into the heart of the devil himself.

But, for the sake of his cause, he mustered up his courage and went forward with his plan. After getting by Disposable Hero security, he was placed into Slumberland and remained submerged for fourteen months.

He tore the place up. He could never forget, on some level, where he was; and that place was the Hell of 3D technology. The world itself was evil. With the sweaty rage of a vigilante avenger, he ripped through the VR simulations, killing villains, pedestrians, cops, and politicians. There was no stopping him. Several people on the project wanted to pull his plug, but others wanted to see how it would all come out.

It came out like this: two months ahead of schedule, his enhancements all in place, he came out of Slumberland of his own will, shattered his isolation tank, escaped, ravaged the lab, killed dozens of scientists, and rushed out into the world. He's one of the half dozen Slumberland visitors to have escaped without military service.

From there he gathered up a group of like-minded, disgruntled folks and began working their wicked magic against all sorts of people, places, and things. He took on the name Redcheck, after the name of the superhero he was given in Slumberland, and in time found the People's Front for the Obliteration of Three-Dimensional Entertainment. Their latest targets are, of course, the Slumberland Theme Park.

PERSONALITY

Redcheck is one messed up case, perhaps more so than most vets. By hating the very technology that has given him enhancements (and thus made him valuable), he lives not a single moment without loathing himself. Every one of his blows against 3D tech is undercut by memories of Slumberland—memories which give him pleasure. He never admits either his confusion nor the pleasurable memories to anyone.

His confusion in these matters has revved him up even more than before Slumberland. He is often wildly violent, trying to whip the demons inside of him out by attacking the world around him. He seethes even when sitting quietly, and it's the rare person who is comfortable when sitting near him.

QUOTES

"The fascist dogs who are undermining the superiority of two-dimensional media must pay."

"We fight not for the platform of entertainment, but for the soul of humanity."

"AAAAARRGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGGHHHHHH!"

SITWELL, JOHN

INT: 1 WILL: 1 AURA: 5

Charm: 9, Leadership: 6

BACKGROUND

John Sitwell, the chairman of the LA County board of supervisors, was born in Columbus, Ohio in 1973. His parents died in a car crash when he was eight years old. Rumors abound that his father was an alcoholic, and had been drinking when he drove the car into oncoming traffic. Sitwell, though he would not have been old enough to know what alcoholism is, denies that his father had any drinking problem. Accusations of beatings by his father made by one of the Sitwell's neighbors are also dismissed. "My father struck me maybe twice, as fathers sometimes strike boys who have to learn a bit about life," he replies when asked about the matter. "To term that abuse is to leave reality behind."

After the death of his parents, he moved to his grandmother's home in Orange County. There he lived in what he claimed was bliss. He has countless tales of happy romps around railroad tracks near his home. In his autobiography he describes how he could look back to his home and see his grandmother's face smiling out at him from the kitchen window as she baked pies. Strangely, reporters who visited his childhood home discovered that the view from the train yards did not yield a view of the kitchen window, let alone the house. Such discrepancies between idyllic memories and reality have never seemed to bother Sitwell. "Well, there you go again," is the start of any reply on the matter. "I don't pretend to remember everything correctly, but I do wish you'd allow me a few moments of nostalgia—even if they are slightly exaggerated."

At the age of twenty Sitwell was accepted into the prestigious UCLA film school program. His application was aided immensely by good words from California Senator Jennifer Callihan. Sitwell had worked very hard for her campaign during the two years after his graduation from high school. His success in the film school was limited, however. He lacked the ability to follow through on his projects. A professor remembered him saying, "As long as the movies I want to make are still in my head, they're perfect."

After two years he dropped out of the film program and chose acting as his path into Hollywood. With his good looks and his day-dreamy quality, he made a name for himself at UCLA, and then landed work in several bit parts in major studio features. From there his career began to snowball. In 1997 he landed his first leading role in *Yippee, I Win!*, directed by then fifteen year old Macauley Culkin. Praised by critics for its clever use of bits and ideas from other movies, the film managed to

climb into megastatus, knocking *Jurassic Park III: Another Try* out of the top money making spot of all time. From there he rolled into superstar status, making one or two movies a year, one hit after another.

During this time he met and married Shannon Dougherty, formerly of television fame. Although Dougherty would later claim that her marriage to Sitwell was a hell-hole, Sitwell himself praised the marriage as nearly idyllic.

In 2003 they had a child, Mellisa Hope Sitwell. Shortly after that, Dougherty, claiming her daughter was trying to embarrass her by being so much cuter, was arrested on assault charges and filed for divorce.

Sitwell was devastated. He continued to work, but ultimately could not concentrate at the task at hand. Directors found him moody and impatient. He eventually dropped out of show business, doing good works for the poor of LA. His name and face still carried powerful Q-Ratings, and his presence was a big help to a great many charity causes. He was encouraged to pursue politics because of the success of his endeavors. Not understanding that in LA people will encourage you to do anything, Sitwell took the advice seriously, and after a few years began making bids for city council seats. After a while, he won an election. He was, however, a dreadful politician. Naive, and braced with a rosy view of the world, he saw the job as one of a public service, not one of power-brokering. Eventually some powerful munitions companies saw Sitwell as a potential tool for their own ends and set him up to run for the LA County board of supervisors. With their backing and PR savvy, he won the seat.

He now sits on the board of supervisors, ignored by all but a few lackeys put in place by his handlers to keep him happy. Papers are set before him and he signs, them, often with only cursory glances.

He has the makings of a good worker, but he is truly blind to how little impact he has on the county. If someone could prove to him he's nothing more than a patsy, there might be a big shakedown in LA County.



-John Sitwell's Acceptance Speech 11/22/18

My fellow Los Angelenos, it is with some surprise I find myself speaking to you today. When I was approached to chair the county's board of supervisors, I never thought that I would have the appeal needed to win the support for the job. After all, All In the Family Values is still on the air, but a clumsy husband is not the model anyone normally looks for in a politician. (Polite Laughter). I think I can safely say, though, that I care. I care a great deal. I want things to change. Things must change. The need to change things is so clear to me. And it is my great fervent hope that I will be able to change things.

Now, many of you will want to know how things will change. That's a fair question, and I have to tell you I don't know. There are so many things to change. Change, change, change. I think I can safely say, we all want change, but we all want things to change in different ways. I see my role in politics as one of listening to all these different desires, sifting them. Weighing them, if you will. Finding the balance of change. We want change. I've been told we deserve change. I believe that.

I believe many good things.

I believe that everything can work out. When I tell you that everything will change, that things will be better, that it will come only with effort on the part of all of us, I think you want to believe that. I know I want to believe it. Don't you?

(A pause, the crowd is confused.)

Well, I don't know. Maybe it won't take too much work on your part. Maybe it will just happen. That's something good to believe in, isn't it? Yes, let's just believe that.

My fellow Los Angelenos, let us believe that our future lies not in pain, but in pleasure. This is Los Angeles. Could it be any other way?

PERSONALITY

John Sitwell is a kind, pleasant man who means very well. He listens intensely to almost anyone with a problem, so he's always swamped with work.

The only tragedy in his life is his missing daughter, Melissa. On occasion his eyes are filled with sorrow. He has hired several private investigators, some of them boosts, to track her down. So far the trail has only grown colder and colder as time has passed. Everyone has advised him to assume she is dead, but Sitwell cannot give up hope.

He is filled with hope for the future of LA County, and driven to do the best job he can. He's a passable actor. If he wants his part to come to life though, he's going to need a better script writer and director.

QUOTES

"Life is better viewed with the contact lenses of optimism."

"I know many people don't think much of me, but I will always think much of them."

"What? You need....? Can it wait just a moment...? No? You're sure...? All right then, come in...."

SKIPPY

STR: 6 DEX: 3 SPD: 4 RES: 8
INT: 4 WILL: 5 AURA: 2

Acrobatics: 7, Detective: 6, Gun Combat: 5, Intimidation/Interrogation: 5, Leadership: 7, Martial Arts: 11, Weaponry: 6

Electric Discharge: 15

Mind Probe: 10

Chitin: 5

Stress Tolerance: 9

Psychosis: Homicidal Mania

Equipment:

Katana, Throwing Stars (6), 25mm Urban Nightmare, 20mm GCS DW 770/g, Heavy Mondo Armor, Chaff (3 packs), Average Computer Pack, combat goggles, cellular phone, Punkbuster™ Radar Detector, Punkbuster™ Signal Jammer, Pueblo Sniper, Pueblo Firefight!, Pueblo MapIt!

BACKGROUND

Born Ted Borgund, in Miami, Florida, Skippy spent his early years as a lifeguard/DEA inspector on the beaches of southern Florida. He liked his job—walking along the beach in his bright orange swimsuit and toting his Uzi II. Only in his early twenties, he thought he had found contentment. He liked saving people who were drowning, and believed that by doing his part in the “Never Ending War On Drugs,” he was doing even more to help save people.

But his joy ended when his parents were in an airplane crash days after his twenty-third birthday. Although they survived, both suffered grievous injuries.

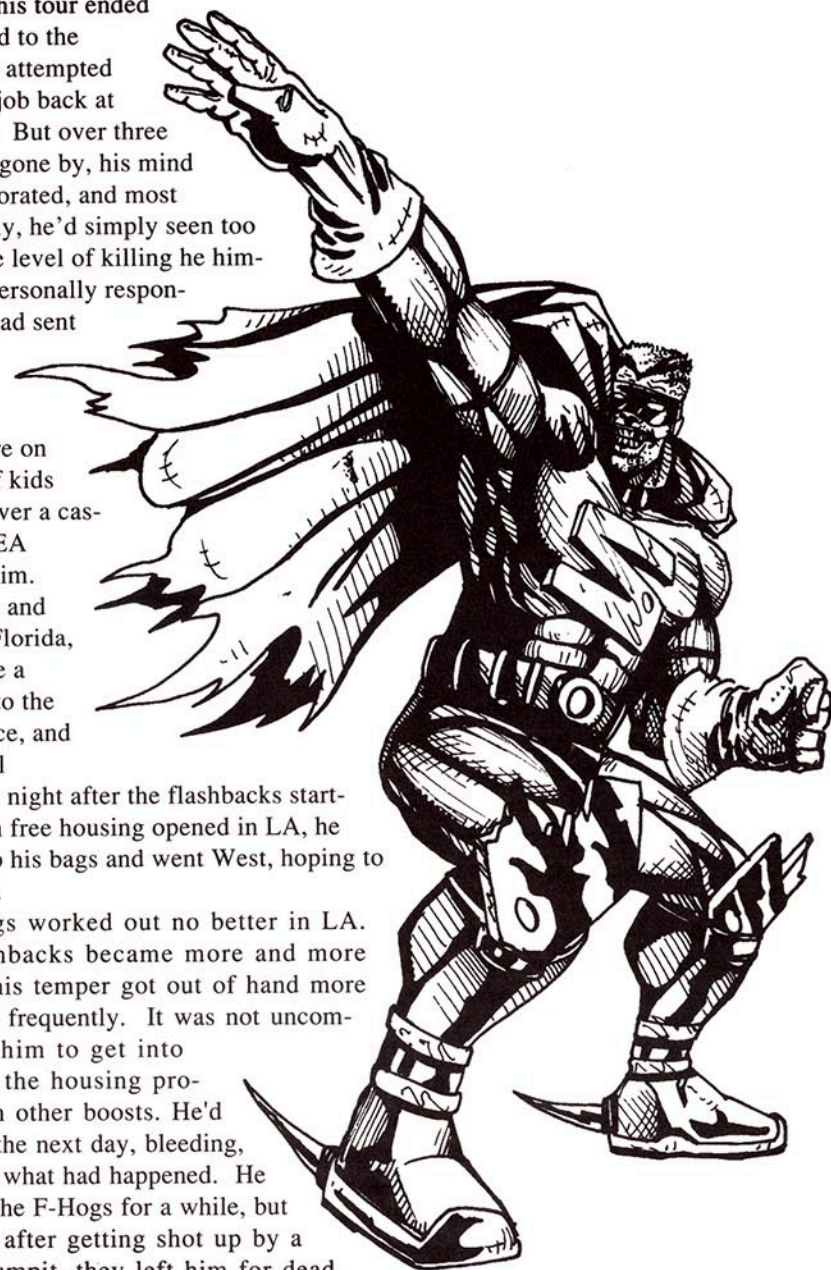
In order to support the health costs for his aging parents, he sought employment at AMI and ended up in the boosted enhancements program. When he came out of Slumberland over a year later, he learned his parents had died. Broken, he wanted to return to his job along the beach, but his contract with AMI would not be over for another four years. With his boosted enhancements and mental instability he was code-named Shatterlad and sent off to war.

His first stop was in India, where he helped put down the Shiva Insurrection. There he helped cut down literally thousands upon thousands of religious rioters who threatened to destroy the crops of food manufacturers in Europe. After that he was sent down to South America to back a radical militia force friendly to the Plutocrats, who were desperate to retain control of mining interests in the area.

After his tour ended he returned to the States and attempted to get his job back at the beach. But over three years had gone by, his mind had deteriorated, and most importantly, he'd simply seen too much. The level of killing he himself was personally responsible for had sent him off balance. After he opened fire on a group of kids fighting over a castle, the DEA dropped him.

Down and broke in Florida, he became a nuisance to the local police, and then a real threat one night after the flashbacks started. When free housing opened in LA, he packed up his bags and went West, hoping to start over.

Things worked out no better in LA. The flashbacks became more and more intense, his temper got out of hand more and more frequently. It was not uncommon for him to get into fights in the housing projects with other boosts. He'd wake up the next day, bleeding, uncertain what had happened. He ran with the F-Hogs for a while, but one day, after getting shot up by a 40mm Pumpit, they left him for dead.





Their retribution for his death continued for days as he lay in an alley, slowly healing.

When he had enough strength to get up, he staggered up and down along the street. But even the few blocks he traveled were enough to knock him out. He collapsed at the delivery entrance of the Blake Hotel. Luckily Machino Durez happened to be waiting for the supply of beef due to arrive. Rather than send Shatterlad back to the projects or to jail, he took the ruined man into the Blake.

(One should not get too sentimental about this; Machino had considered for some time the notion of getting a flashy boosted vet to be a visible presence in the hotel. As usual, the action was both expedient and cheap, so he lunged at it.)

Of course, Shatterlad was in no position to patrol the hotel, nor guard anyone, nor really do much of anything. He needed help, and Durez provided it. Durez hired Kane McGuillicutty, a Zen Master, to come in and cool the young boosted out. They

spent several months together, and slowly Shatterlad came out of his hazy confusion. With results that outstripped anything accomplished by the shrinks at the veteran's administration, McGuillicutty gave his pupil the ability to sustain himself in the world. He combined Shatterlad's need to live the fantasy of a four-color comic book with an Eastern detachment from life.

After a half a year of working together, McGuillicutty gave Shatterlad a new name, Skippy, designed specifically to puncture the self importance most vets carried around. Shatterlad took the name gladly. It relieved him of the responsibility of being a grim superhero tainted by his past. In the name he found all the absurdity of the strange circumstances of his life.

A few months after that, McGuillicutty declared that his work with Skippy was done, and, according to Skippy, vanished from sight. No one knows what to make of this last claim, but he certainly appeared to be right in the head once more. Within a year he was in charge of security at the Blake.

PERSONALITY

Skippy is a strange combination of urban toughness and Zen calmness. He reveals emotions on occasion, but for the most part is detached from the circumstances around him. He quotes strange, obscure texts passed on to him by McGillicutty (and makes a few up himself, as well). He has an intense desire to teach anyone who will listen the lessons he has drawn from life. When he gives into this desire, he becomes absurd. What else could he be, a huge man in a cape spouting wisdom about the transformation of caterpillars into butterflies.

He is fiercely loyal to Durez, though he rarely reveals his affection and gratitude in public. He sees the Blake as his personal responsibility, striding down the corridors like a domo walking his castle's corridors in ancient Japan. When anything goes wrong within the hotel, he immediately attacks the situation. In these moods he is relentless, and a bit of his old, violent, out of control personality can surface.

In truth, Skippy's sanity hangs on a short thread. He never leaves the Blake. Ever. It was in the Blake he found his sanity, his home. He does not believe he could survive outside its walls. That's why he is so determined to keep the Blake safe. If it should fall, he knows he will fall as well.

QUOTES

"Who can truly say that when we open a comic book we do not leave the fiction behind and enter the clear reality of truth?"

"Biceps are not tools; they are flowers waiting to blossom."

"Live not for victory; life is a continuity series, not a graphic novel."

THE PERFORATOR

STR: 3 (6*) DEX: 3 SPD: 4 RES: 5 (8*)
INT: 4 WILL: 6 AURA: 2

Acrobatics: 5, Business: 5, Computer Science: 5, Detective: 9, Gun Combat: 7, Intimidation/Interrogation: 7, Martial Arts: 6, Streetwise: 8, Thief: 5
Acid: 15

Adrenal Surge: 8

Stress Tolerance: 10

Psychosis: Panic Disorder

Equipment:

.50 cal Urban Nightmare, 12.5mm ZW 385i, 20mm GCS DW 7770/g, Customized Battle Armor (*increases STR by +3, and increases RES by +3; Computer and weapon targetting systems are built into the armor), Chaff (3 packs), Average Computer Pack (RES of 8 because it's built into the computer), all the software available, combat goggles*, cellular phone*, Punkbuster™ Radar Detector*, Punkbuster™ Signal Jammer*

BACKGROUND

The Perforator is one of the small number of boosted vets living in LA actually born and raised in the city. Through his youth he lived on the streets, having run away from his abusive step-father. His survival depended on the sale of drugs to kids in elementary school. He wanted a better life for himself, and for the rest of his community, but he didn't see a way out. After the riots in '17, when it seemed the whole county was going to destroy itself, he became even more determined to get the hell off the streets.

He volunteered for AMI and was hired for a three-year contract. Put to sleep and boosted, he woke up from Slumberland and was assigned to a special units division—the Black Jays. He traveled the world conducting anti-terrorist activities. He worked in the unit for three years, working his way up to team leader. He liked the work, though he of course had bouts of mental instability due to the AMI enhancement process. But the pay was all right, the work exciting, and with each mission he felt he was really getting something done.

Then, in 2020, the Black Jays were flown to Neo-Deutschland to handle a hostage situation at the Berlin airport. Authorities told the unit that the terrorists were heavily armed, and keeping ministers of Neo-scientology hostage in

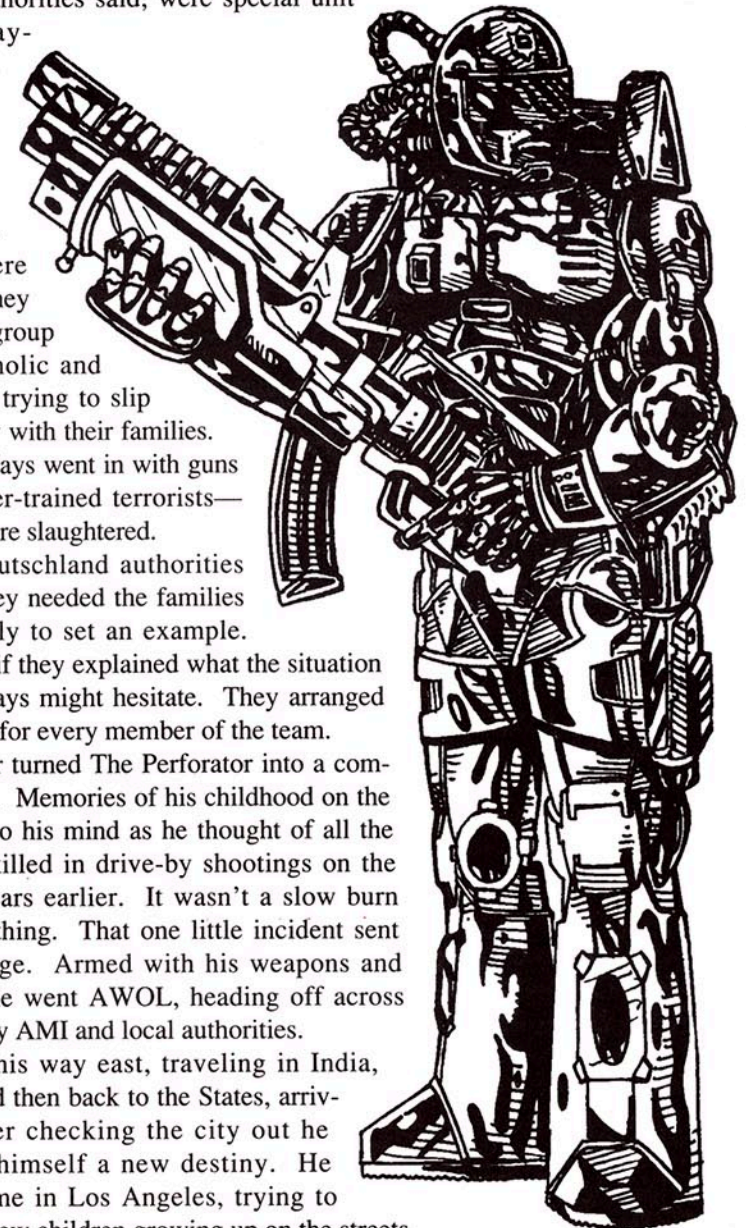
exchange for passage out of the country. Each of the terrorists, the authorities said, were special unit forces gone hay-wire—boosts who would use any means at their disposal to survive.

In fact, while the terrorists were heavily armed, they were actually a group of valuable Catholic and Jewish scientists trying to slip out of the country with their families. When the Black Jays went in with guns blaring, the under-trained terrorists—children, too—were slaughtered.

The Neo-Deutschland authorities explained that they needed the families dealt with harshly to set an example. They feared that if they explained what the situation was, the Black Jays might hesitate. They arranged for a large bonus for every member of the team.

The slaughter turned The Perforator into a complete basket case. Memories of his childhood on the streets rushed into his mind as he thought of all the kids he'd seen killed in drive-by shootings on the streets of LA years earlier. It wasn't a slow burn guilt trip or anything. That one little incident sent him over the edge. Armed with his weapons and enhancements, he went AWOL, heading off across Europe, sought by AMI and local authorities.

He worked his way east, traveling in India, across China, and then back to the States, arriving in LA. After checking the city out he decided to cut himself a new destiny. He would fight crime in Los Angeles, trying to take care of the new children growing up on the streets.



STRANGER STOPS CRIME! LEAVES FAX NUMBER!

Police are investigating the criminal activities of a self-proclaimed vigilante-for-hire.

For the third night in a row, police have been called to a back alley, where gang-bangers, tied-up and helpless, have waited to be picked up.

"This is not what we want to see happen,"

people would do the same thing," said one resident who asked not to be named. "I didn't have anything to do with hiring this man, but if someone had asked me to kick in a few hundred bucks, I sure would have done it."

This sentiment was echoed again and again throughout the day

Sitwell said, "Well, it certainly is a difficult situation. I'm waiting for the Neighborhood Citizen Action committee to put together a report for me. Until then, what can I say? I don't live there. I can only imagine the terrible conditions those people suffer through every day."

When asked about these comments, Moscoso said, "He's a

Sometimes a corporation will try to hire him, but despite the large sums of cash offered, he always refuses. He likes working for the little guy. It's become a major part of his rep, which is why he gets regular work. In a world where everyone is willing to sell themselves out to the highest bidder, a man who puts his ideals before cash is going to stand out.

He now has a secret office located in Hell's Jungle. Most of his requests come in over fax lines. As part of his mystique (and his shy personality) The Perforator doesn't try to build up press releases. He does his job and gets out, leaving only his name and the fax number behind.

PERSONALITY

The Perforator is reclusive, preferring to let

the results of his crime fighting do his handiwork for him. When he must interact with people, he keeps his voice low and does his best to radiate strength. Except when dealing with his clients, he likes to instill fear into people.

In truth, however, The Perforator looks like an average guy (admittedly with above average build). Without his helmet he is revealed to be unshaven, sometimes unshaven. His social skills have completely collapsed. Without the helmet and the "attitude" given to him by being a crime fighter for higher, he really has very little personality. Outside of work he is usually listless and soft-spoken.

QUOTES

"Don't make me kill you."

"I'm sure we can reach a compromise on the price."

"Really, Widow Washington, just the smile on your face is all the payment I require."

So he became a vigilante. But his funds dried up almost immediately. On the run from AMI, he found it impossible to get a job utilizing his status as a boosted vet. He tried to get a day job, but his erratic behavior scared potential employees.

He tried to live by a strict code of honor. He refused to steal from either the victim or the victimizer. Without a corporation backing him up, however, the cost of bullet, new guns, and combat software ate terrible holes in his funds. Soon he wasn't sure if he'd ever be able to proceed.

Then, one day, when he was camped out in a sub-basement, wondering what he should do next, a kid came running in, hiding from some crew members who wanted to brainjack him. The kid ran right into The Perforator, and almost dropped from fright on the spot. When he realized he was dealing with a boosted, the kid exclaimed, "I'll give you \$100.00 to save my brain!"

The Perforator thought about this a moment. He really needed the cash. The kid was afraid for his life. Why not hire himself out for a job?

The drug dealers ran into the sub-basement and never came out again.

From that day on, The Perforator made it a policy to work as a freelance hero. He began spray painting his name and a phone number (a pay phone by a liquor store in central LA) all over the county. Gigs would come up—usually neighborhoods having troubles with gangs or corrupt politicians. He took one job after another, finally getting enough money to eat regularly and upgrade some of his equipment.

TRI-TOP

STR: 2 DEX: 2 SPD: 1 RES: 2
INT: 4 WILL: 5 AURA: 5

Acrobatics: 3, Administration: 6, Business: 7, Charm: 6, Gun Combat: 4, Intimidation/Interrogation: 8, Leadership: 9, Psychology: 6, Streetwise: 8, Thief: 4

Equipment:

9mm Walther antique, Heavykev woven into suits, celular phone

BACKGROUND

Jonathan Ramirez grew up on the streets of LA, and knows it from the inside out. As the leader of the F-HOGs, his position is a precarious one. The bulk of the gang's muscle comes from boosted vets. But he himself is not boosted. New gang members sometimes grumble that he can't possibly understand what they go through; that someone without enhancements shouldn't lead them. Even the gang regulars make such comments when they're in dour moods.

What all of them come to realize is that Jonathan, now Tri-Top, is a born leader. He knows how to pull the sometimes dangerous cluster of vets into one gang and make them work together. He soothes when someone needs to be soothed, and he knows how to attack when someone needs to be attacked. And in the end, he's one of the more ruthless gang members in Los Angeles. The vital difference between him and the other ruthless gang bangers in LA is that Tri-Top knows how to control his ruthlessness, to focus it.

From the age of twelve he was making drug deliveries to dealers. He advanced quickly, became a drug dealer himself, and soon moved up to a distributor, passing the drugs onto other dealers. Over the years people came to him when they were in trouble—users and dealers alike. He earned a reputation as someone who could be trusted. A saying was passed around the streets about him: "In his head he's got these three parts: Warrior, Father, Moneymaker." From that idea he got his handle: Tri-Top, the combination of those three components in his head at once. He was only seventeen.

He carries a dark secret. His father, in an attempt to get him off the streets, tried to turn him into the cops once. He ran away, vowing never to have any dealings with his father again. His father took up the quest of finding Tri-Top. As a repair shop worker, his father had little skills working the back streets of the drug scene. He had always been a quiet man, with careful steps. Yet his passion to

bring his son back home and get him into an honest trade drove him on. For a year he dogged his son's tracks. More and more often, as the weeks passed, Tri-Top had to get his goons to escort his father home.

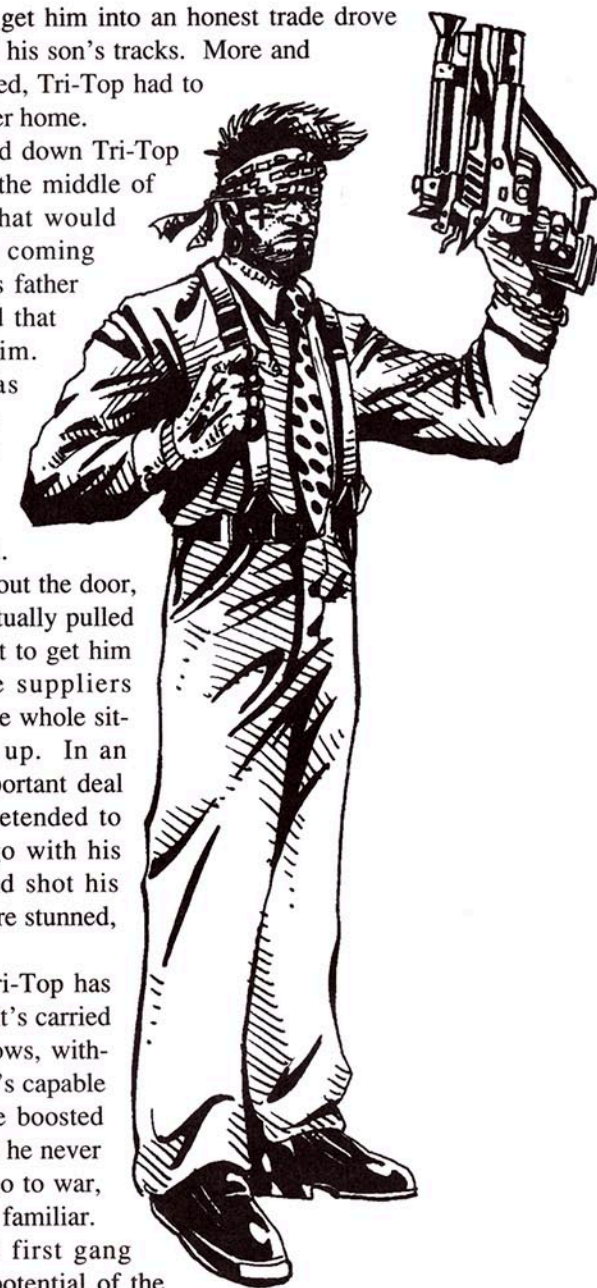
One day, he finally tracked down Tri-Top at a restaurant—who was in the middle of conducting a massive deal that would give him control of cocaine coming into central Los Angeles. His father entered the place and insisted that Tri-Top come home with him.

The suppliers Tri-Top was speaking to were incredulous—they couldn't believe that the man they were about to set the deal up with had his father following him around.

Tri-Top tried to get his father out the door, but refused to leave. He eventually pulled a gun on his son in an attempt to get him to leave the meeting. The suppliers became very edgy, thinking the whole situation was some weird set up. In an attempt to keep the most important deal of his life going, Tri-Top pretended to lower his guard, agreed to go with his father, then pulled a gun and shot his father dead. The suppliers were stunned, but the deal proceeded.

From that moment on, Tri-Top has had a strange inner strength. It's carried in his eyes, and everyone knows, without knowing the story, that he's capable of anything. This is why the boosted vets follow him. Even though he never went to Slumberland, didn't go to war, in his eyes they see something familiar.

Tri-Top was one of the first gang leaders to see the untapped potential of the





TRI-TOP TO HOST *¡STREETFIGHT!* TONIGHT

7:00pm eastern

Ch. 486

Closed Captioned

WNVX

The #1 Gangbanger in America hosts a special edition of *¡STREETFIGHT!* tonight as the show hits the back alleys for drug deals gone bad. Guest gangs include the Rollin' 50s and the Sugaland Express.

PERSONALITY

Tri-Top is one of the most respected gang members in LA. His organization, though often chaotic, is one of the better known in LA. (Any guest spot the F-HOGs make on a real-violence show always boosts ratings for the show.) Much of this is due to Tri-Top's intense personality.

When one first meets him, Tri-Top's attitude is reserved, yet interested. He listens, and this may be his greatest strength. While listening, he sizes a person up, dividing everyone into two groups—those that are useful to him, and those that are not. If you're not useful, he's polite, but ultimately dismissive. If he can use you, he listens more, drawing him into your confidence.

This is the Father side of Tri-Top. There is also the Warrior, who can kill without hesitation. His commands for death are often abrupt, but in every case his decision seems born out. Traitors, undercover agents, and other dangerous elements have been excised quickly and effectively from the gang through his sharp instincts.

QUOTES

"Tell me what you need."

"You want to be able to look at yourself in the mirror? Here's what you should do..."

"I don't care how long you've known him. Kill him."

boosted vets for the gangs and criminal activity. Although many of the vets ended up stealing, unable to get money through a legal job, no one had organized them in anyway. Tri-Top changed that. He made active recruiting runs through the boosted housing projects. He got drugs that the vets wanted. He pulled strings to keep the cops off their backs. He pulled them into gangs so they would have strength and a sense of community.

Although any one of them could have crushed his head like an egg, none of them wanted to. He gave them too much.

As his gang grew, he acquired more and more power. Unfortunately, the muscle of the boosted vets carries with it many mental complications. Although the F-HOGs are strong they are also wild. Tri-Top's work is cut out in keeping the gang focused on it's operations. He spends a great deal of time keeping gang members from fighting each other, and wasting their time engaging in turf wars that waste resources and time.

X-PATRIOT

STR: 6 DEX: 4 SPD: 4 RES: 6
INT: 2 WILL: 2 AURA: 2

Acrobatics: 9, Detective: 6, Gun Combat: 9, Intimidation/Interrogation: 7, Martial Arts: 6, Military Science: 8, Streetwise: 4, Thief: 7, Weaponry: 7

Invisibility: 10

Telepathic Blast: 6

Sense Block: 4

Stress Tolerance: 10

Psychosis: Sociopathy

Equipment:

25mm Urban Nightmare, 20mm GCS DW 770/g, Turbo Tazer, Heavy Mondo, Average Pack Computer, Pueblo Sniper!, Pueblo Firefight!, Anti-Radar, Combat Goggles, Cellular Phone, Punkbuster™ Radar Detector, Punkbuster™ Signal Jammer

BACKGROUND

Johnny Murietta grew up in Dallas, Texas, the son of wealthy computer software magnates. He learned to respect the nation that allowed his parents, both immigrants from Mexico, wealth, status, and power. The ideals of the US Constitution, the passion for resolving international conflict with superior firepower, were all his to inherit.

When he was old enough to volunteer for boosted service, the United States had just entered the fray in Paraguay. Filled with patriotic zeal, he joined up with Disposable Hero, Inc. and shipped off into Slumberland to be boosted.

While in Slumberland he dreamed himself as super hero dressed all in Red, White, and Blue. He spouted patriotic platitudes. He really believed. He had a sidekick, and the young lad ate up Johnny's words and believed everything he said. Everything was great. He fought crime. Bad guys went to jail. Good things got done.

Then he left Slumberland.

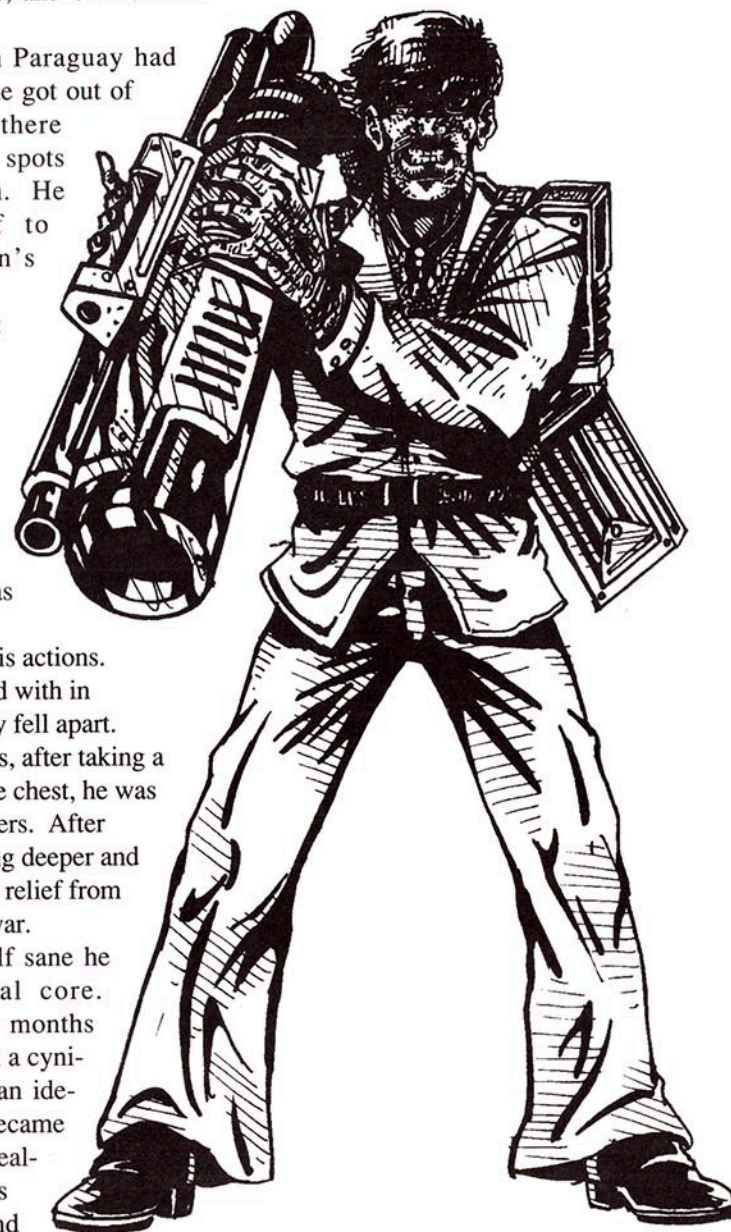
The transition was more difficult for Johnny than for other boosts because he so desperately longed for Slumberland's comforting morality. Even as he stepped out of his isolation tank, eyes blinking in the lab's fluorescent lights, he knew everything had gone flat and dull. The ideals that had guided him for many months would never again be so vivid and clear.

But of course, Disposable Hero had many places for him to go, and Slumberland wasn't one of them.

The conflict in Paraguay had ended by the time he got out of Slumberland, but there were plenty of hot spots continuing to burn. He was shipped off to defend his nation's interests.

A familiar story: War. A village sacked here. New weapons tested there. Unlike his time spent in Slumberland, it was impossible to see where justice was done, who had been helped or freed by his actions. The ideals he'd lived with in Slumberland quickly fell apart. Within a few months, after taking a massive injury to the chest, he was addicted to pain killers. After that he began digging deeper and deeper into drugs as relief from a world of terrible war.

To keep himself sane he adopted a cynical core. Over the next few months he layered that with a cynical veneer. From an idealistic patriot, he became an addicted drug dealer running narcotics throughout Asia and



What My Country Means To Me by Johnny Murietta

The United States is my home. The United States is where I am safe and my mommy and daddy are safe too. It is home of the free and the brave. We have a Statue of Libraty which says to everybody This is Who We Are. Be Like Us. People listen because the U.S. gives hope. People want hope.

My country means to me a place where people come because it is where dreams are made. My parents had a dream. Now they live the dream. I want to have a family and grow up and have a dream. My country will give me my dream.
This is what my country means to me.

India. When he'd gone too far, Disposable Hero dumped him onto the shores of the U. S. An addict without a chance of making sense of the country he'd come back to, he wandered the streets, roughing people up for money. He couldn't go home; while overseas he'd learned that his parents' investments were propped up by slave labor in India. He'd helped keep the family fortune safe, but he'd learned too much in the process.

Eventually arrested and sent to jail several times in a row for petty theft, he found himself on the streets of Miami without a place to call home or a friend to ask for favors. When the Veterans Administration opened up the housing units in LA, he literally walked across the country to get there. He so badly wanted to try

to have a good life he allowed himself to believe (as so many had believed before) that Los Angeles held the answers for him.

Of course, more disappointment awaited. The VA barely helped at all. In the housing units he was shaken down for his medication. He was nearly on the edge of suicide when Tri-Top found him. Like a wise mentor from the pages of a four-color comic book, Tri-Top took him into the F-HOGs gang, sheltered him, got him straight. For four months he went cold turkey, sweating and screaming in a special, sealed iron cell Tri-Top used specifically for the purpose of straightening out user boosts. When it was all done, his blood was clean, but the cynicism, inner and outer was there forever.

Taking the name the X-Patriot, he became a major player in the F-HOG gang. He is fiercely loyal to Tri-Top, and is unofficially the gang leader's body guard.

PERSONALITY

A cynical bastard. He's usually unshaven, swears a lot. Drinks a lot. He has no faith in anything or anybody (except Tri-Top and a couple of the F-HOGs). Anyone who attempts to have faith in something will quickly be cut apart with a few, simple invectives by the X-Patriot. Idealism is simply taboo in his presence. He presents himself as a world-wise rationalist who has seen too much and knows too much. When dealing with people who don't completely match his cynicism, he radiates a thick attitude of: "Where did you come from, you idiot!"

And yet...

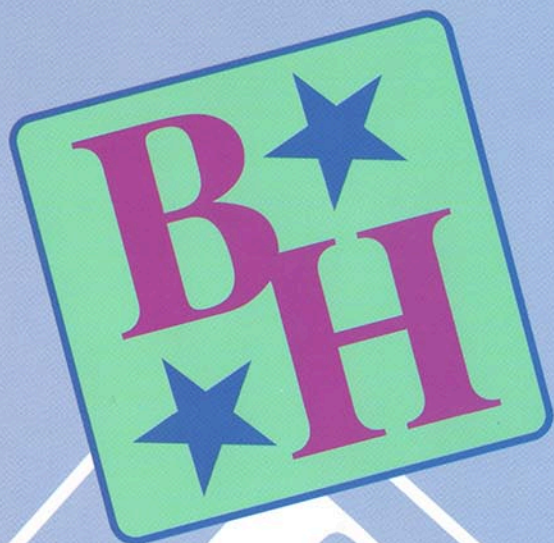
There is a part of him still so, so hungry for the ideals of his youth. In his eyes, sometimes, often when a child is nearby, you can see a bit of a longing for something more. He hadn't meant to be selling drugs to kids on the playground. So much happened that just seemed out of his control. When he can get close to doing something for idealistic reasons, he will often, secretly, do it. He wants to believe in something better than what he has now.

QUOTES

"Life is made up of the burnt-out and the dead."

"What did you think, there was such a thing as kindness?"

"I don't want to hear the words United States. Just don't say them. There are no United States. There's no unity. There's pain and greed."



*The
Blake
Hotel*

• Stay a Day! Stay a Lifetime! •

Come and Relax!
**Live the Myth of
Southern California!**



*The
Blake Hotel*

- Self Contained Electrical, Water, and Refrigeration Units
- Kitchens Always Stocked
- Meeting Rooms
- Pools, Exercise Rooms, Saunas
- A Safe Environment for Children and Turf Negotiations*
- Communication with the outside world via radar, sonar, phone, fax, and telepathy



* Although it may inconvenience some of our guests, all weapons must be checked at the hotel lobby, and the use of enhancements is strictly forbidden at the Blake.

Thank you for your cooperation.



Subject Code Name: Golemite
Known Enhancements: Blubber;
Augmented Strength
and Resilience
Threat Rating: Moderate

Golemite is a mid-level pimp and hustler who works directly beneath the west coast crimelord code-named Santa Claws. He is said to have more than a dozen operatives in his employ and his stomping grounds stretch across south-central Los Angeles. Golemite is known to frequent the Shadows nightclub in El Segundo.

DART

Distributed Automated Rapid Transit

DART is public transportation for the 21st century. At any given time, day or night, the streets of greater Los Angeles are patrolled by more than 90,000 individual DART transport cars that will take you and your party directly to your destination.



HAILING A CAR:

Our computerized cars are programmed to respond to this signal: Stand at a major intersection anywhere within the area serviced and give the signal. Within a few moments, a transport will stop and service you.

SETTING A DESTINATION:

All DART cars are controlled by computerized automatic pilots. To set a destination, simply speak aloud an address. Your computerized driver will accept full street addresses (like 5414 N. Crenshaw, Upper Tier) or intersections (Crenshaw and Simmons, Upper Tier).

FARES:

Fares run \$10 per mile. Place the appropriate currency into the convenient vending slots to release the door locks and continue on your way. DART cars also accept S/C and INTEX credit cards.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY:

Pick up the red phone in the car beside you. An operator will assist you momentarily.

1. TEN CAESARS
2. F-HOGs
3. TOMMY-G CLUB
4. ROLLIN' 50s
5. DIABLOS ROJOS
6. FUNKY HILL MOB



THE U.S....
TOO STRONG TO LIVE
TOO WEAK TO DIE

ICA
FREE THE PASS
NEVER WEAR

\$

1. LBNJs
2. BLOOD BASTARDS
3. PUEBLO CREW
4. EIGHT-TRAY GANGSTERS
5. LOCOS
6. 44 BRIMS



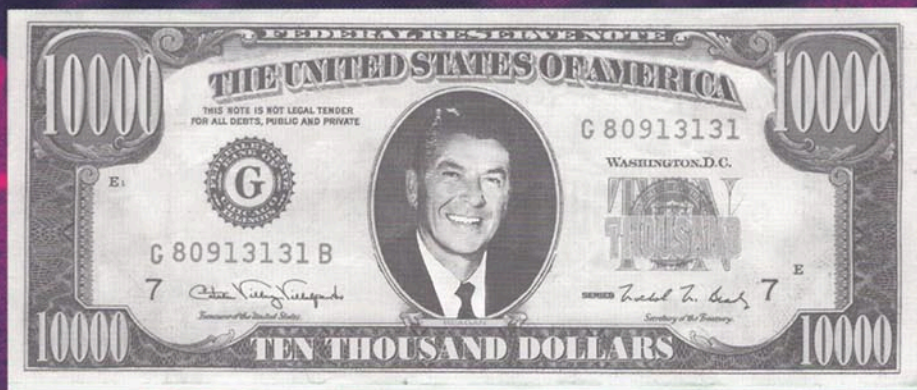
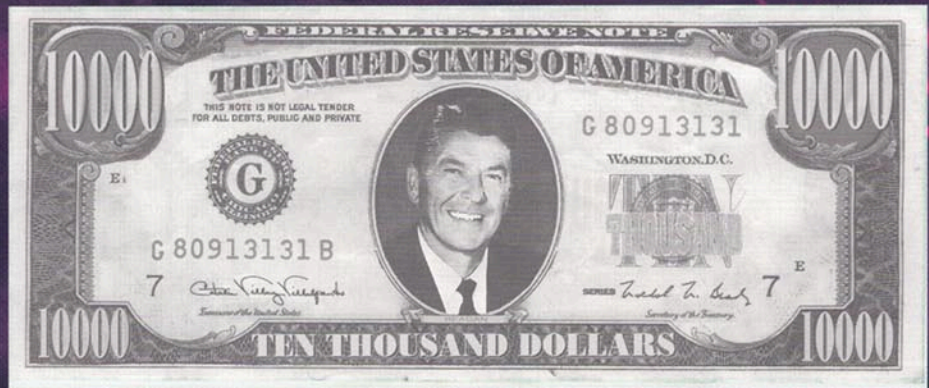
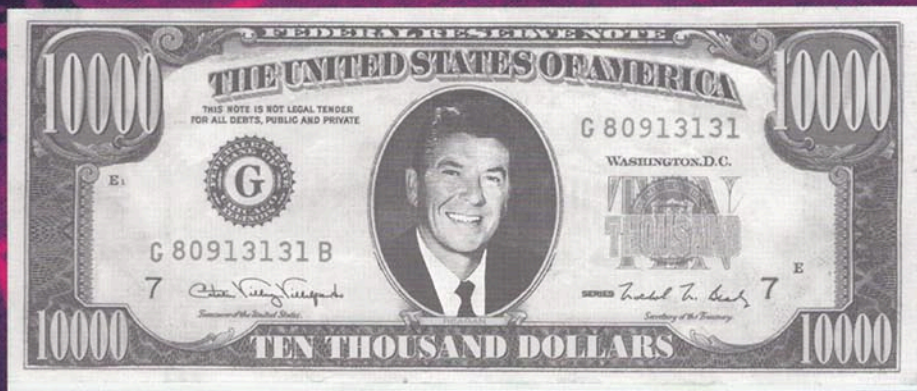
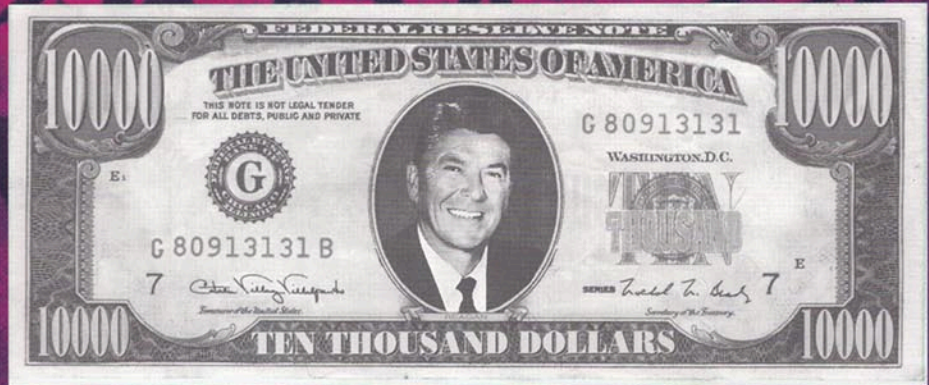
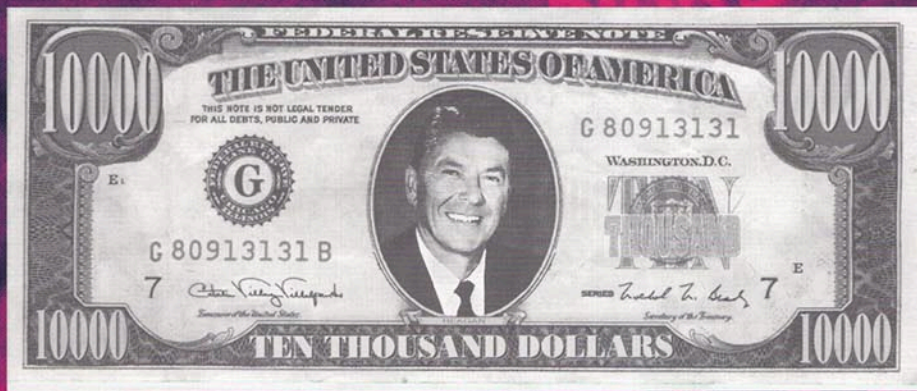
THE U.S....
TOO STRONG TO LIVE
TOO WEAK TO DIE

ICE³
FREE THE PASS
NEVER NEVER





POWER TO THE PEOPLE



Gang-Bangers Claim Seven More Victims

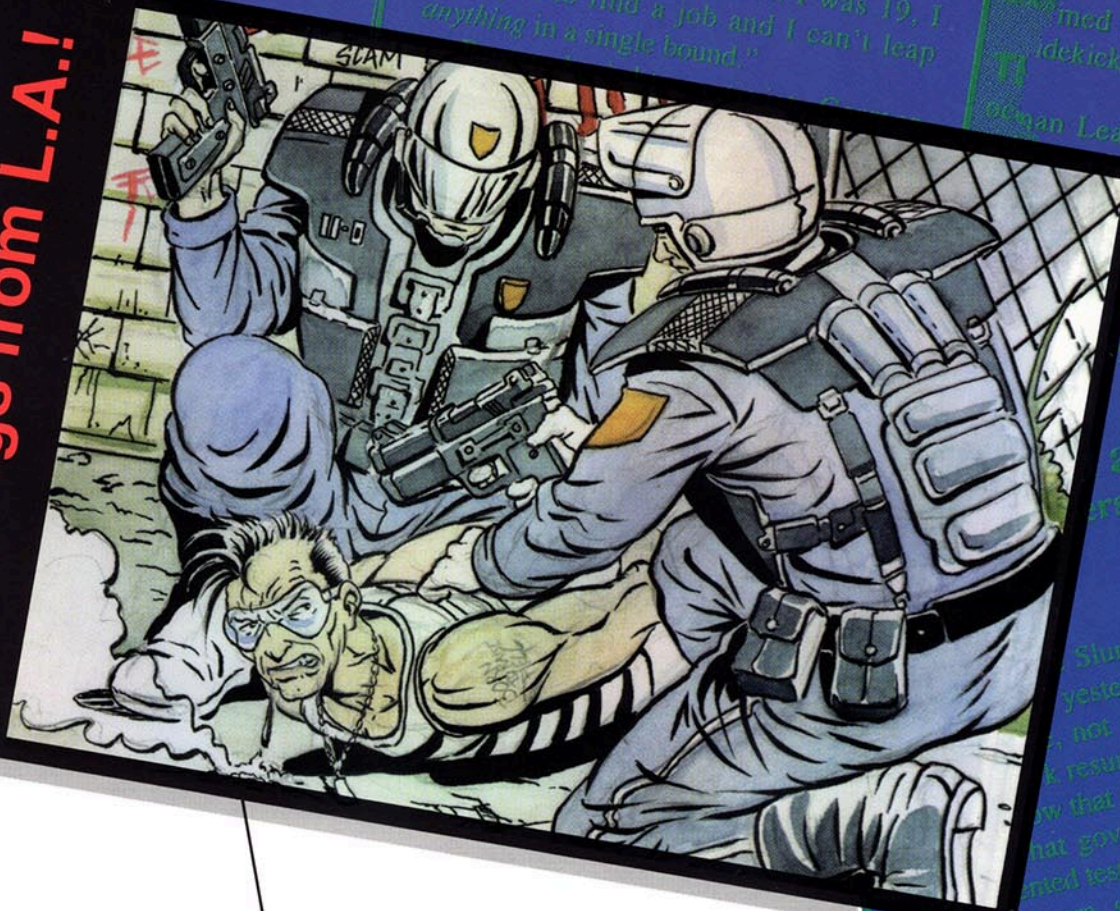
by Melissa Mendez
USA ALIVE

Bell Gardens—

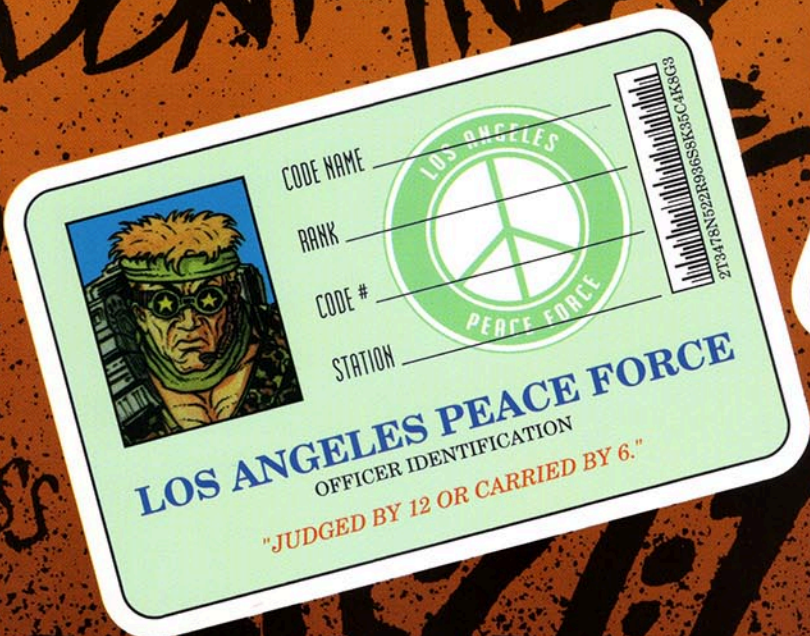
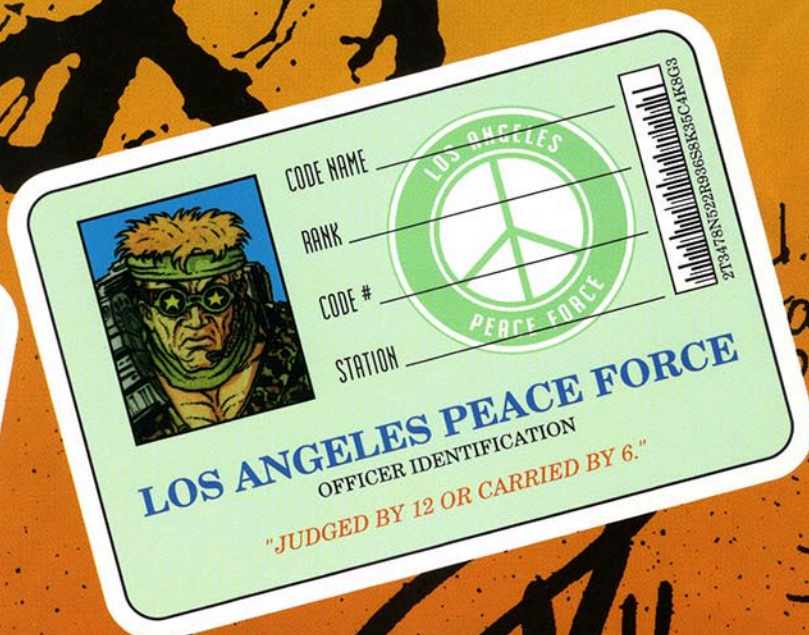
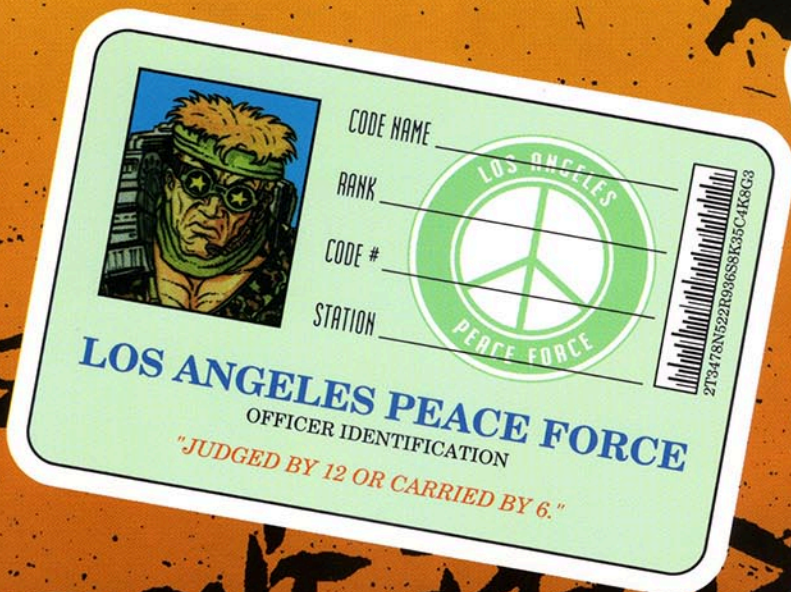
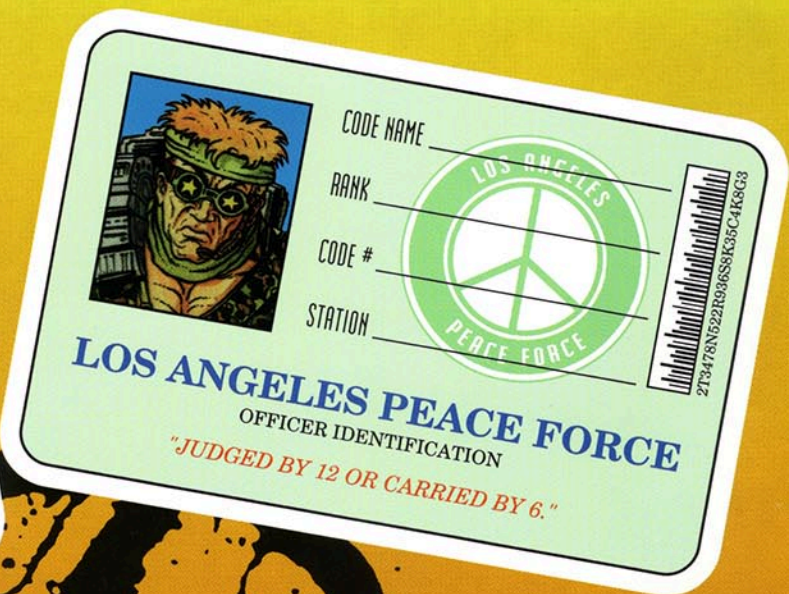
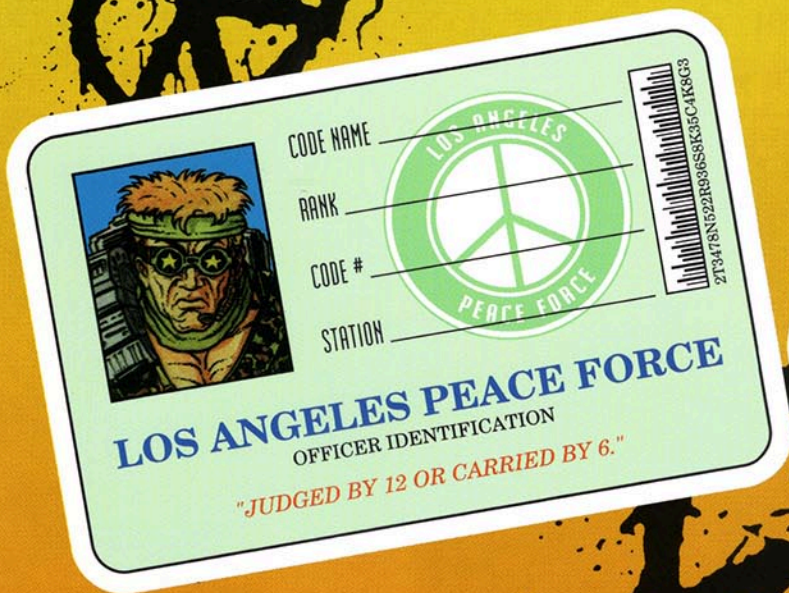
A fly-by killing claimed the lives of seven youths, ages 14-19, late yesterday afternoon. According to witnesses on the scene, the attack was carried out by assailants wearing the colors of the infamous F-HOG street gang. The victims are all believed to be members of a rival gang.

The incident took place in front of a Tastee Ghoul restaurant at approximately 5:00PM. As the victims were leaving the restaurant and approaching their vehicle, three boosted assassins wearing Nowlan's Flying Harnesses and carrying GWCS 770s swooped down and opened fire.

Greetings from L.A.!



—Los Angeles, California



4/22/21

STEVE

FHOGs
PUEBLOGs

58

AL

Rollin 50s
LBNJs

32

MIKE

DIABLOS ROSOS
FUNKY HILL MOB

21

FRED

BAY STREET TOPSIDE
BLOOD BASTARDS

64

AL - WEEK OF 4/7

MIKE - WEEK OF 4/14

FRED - WEEK OF 4/21

STEVE - WEEK OF 4/28 - 4/28 IS LAST WEEK!

$$64 - 58 = 6 + 1 \text{ TO WIN} = 7$$

PAYABLE

United Lead
AmeriSteel
Argosy Office Supplies
Whitman, Alfred
New Providence Resorts
Sherman, Jennifer
Tyler, M. Martin
Sooter, Thom
F. Marietta Inc.
Sherman and Salsby
Sherman and Salsby
AmeriSteel

AMOUNT

\$432,060
\$2,011,601
\$4411
\$77,644
\$160,021
\$13,567
\$14,000
\$30,000
\$18,661
\$44,055
\$53,881
\$1,889,322

REFERENCE

Test Rounds
Gunmetal 11-17
Supplies
Sales Rep.
Spring Conf.
Consulting
Spokesman
Artwork
Consulting
Legal
Legal
Gunmetal 11-21

DATE

11-15
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11-18
11-19
11-21 11-21



**URBAN
NIGHTMARE
INC.**

#20357

PAY TO THE
ORDER OF:

M. Martin Tyler

November 18, 2021

Three Hundred Fifty Thousand and no/100-----

\$350,000.00

MEMO:

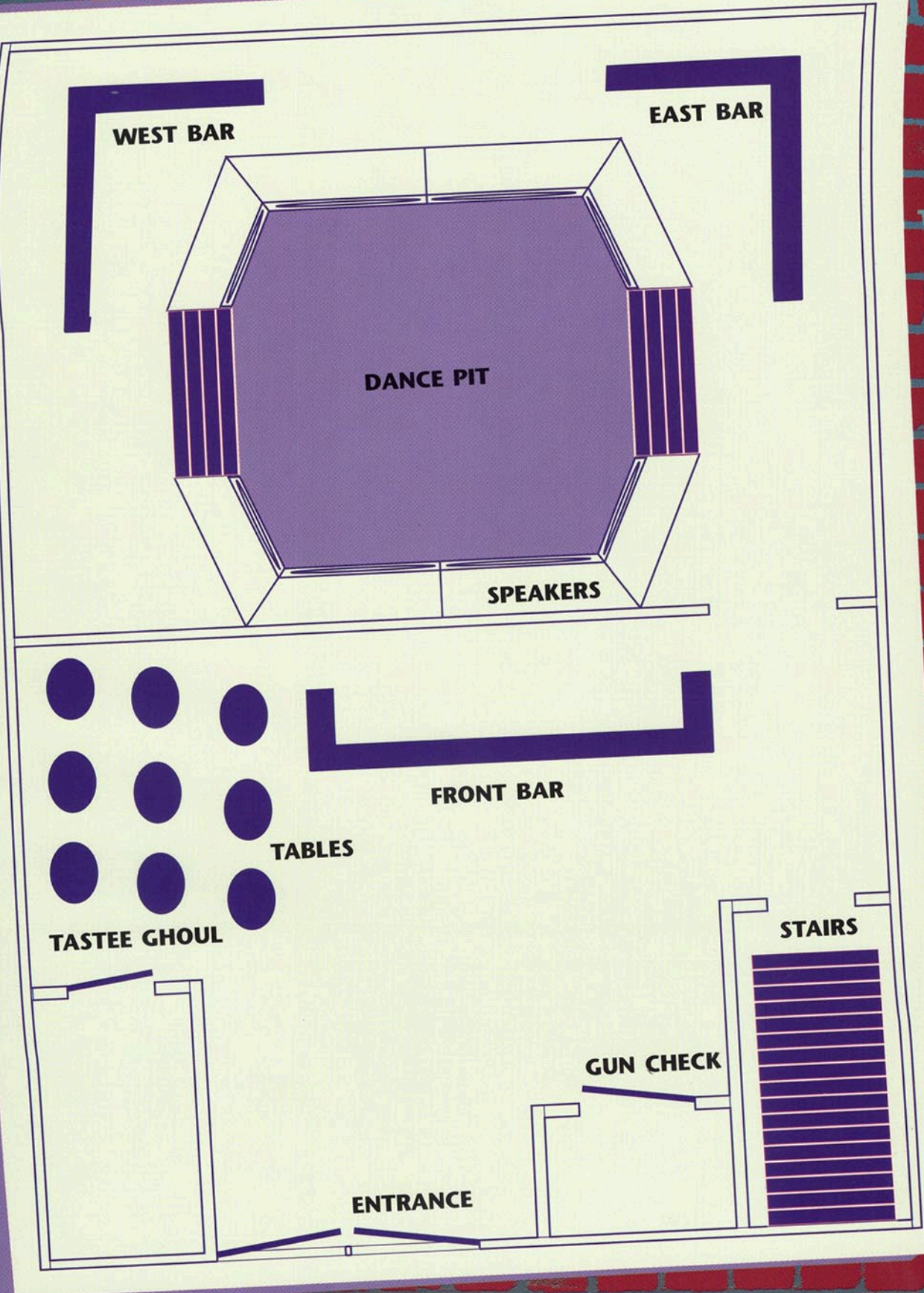
Robert A. McLean

CLUB ANGST

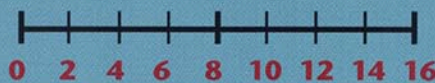
N

W-E

S



SCALE IN FEET



CLUB ANGST UPPER

N

W-E

S

UPPER
WEST
BAR

UPPER
EAST BAR

BALCONY OVERLOOKING DANCE PIT

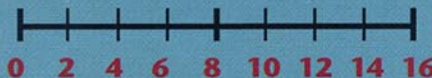
TABLES

BALCONY OVERLOOKING ENTRANCE

STAIRS

VIDEO SCREEN

SCALE IN FEET



VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

Form XFM779453/330-G Rev 21

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Patient's Name: _____ Age: _____
Patient's Code Name: _____ Hair Color: _____
Patient's Firm: _____ Eye Color: _____
Patient's Rank: _____ Height: _____
Patient's Unit: _____ Weight: _____
Date of Birth: _____

Falsifying any of this information is a violation of the MacKinnon Act and punishable by a fine of up to \$1,500,000 and/or three years in federal prison.

MEDICAL HISTORY:

Do you currently take any prescription medications (list medications if applicable)?: _____

Do you have any allergies (list allergies if applicable)?: _____

Have you experienced any traumatic injuries within the last 90 days (list injuries if applicable)?: _____

Is there a history of congenital illness in your family (list illnesses if applicable)?: _____

MEDICAL REPORT:

What is the nature of your ailment?: _____

How and when was the ailment sustained?: _____

Were illegal firearms involved in your injury?: _____

Were illegal narcotics involved in your injury?: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY





SPORTS
FINAL

BAKERSFIELD 500 RESULTS

- Record-setting pace
- Two casualties

BASKETBALL UPSETS

- San Antonio tops Havanna
- Cleveland over Seattle

FRI., MARCH 11, 2021

NEWSZONE

A QUICK LOOK AT THE NEWS

NO MORE BRAIN DRAIN: The Supreme Court upholds the "porpoise brain ban," 3A.

CONFLICT: Martial stocks soar as a new wave of intra-factional rivalry engulfs the globe! 1B.
 ▶Paraguay and Bolivia finally call it quits, 1B.
 ▶Oh Calcutta! Battleground India, 1B.

TODAY'S DEBATE: Did Mac-Raney's implant subliminal urges in the pre-frontals? 2B.

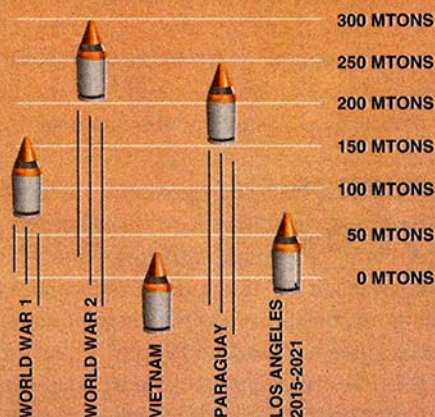
DOWN TO EARTH: The joint Mac-Raney's/Chartbuster Saturn survey team lands at Cape Canaveral. 2B

FUN: New albums from Systematic Overthrow and the Short Controlled Bursts. 1C
 ▶Meet the cast of the *Tortinis*. 1C
 ▶Stone raises controversy. 1C

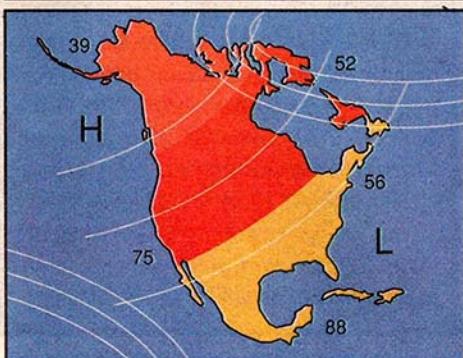
MONEY: The ins and outs of the new martial stocks. 1D

ALIVE TIDBIT®

AMMUNITION EXPENDITURES



TODAY'S WEATHER

ENTERTAINMENT
SECTION:

TELEVISION UPDATE

- Meet the Tortinis
- Hot Chartbuster deals

MUSIC REVIEWS

- Systematic Overthrow says "Sip This!"

Fly-By Killings Rock Los Angeles

No easy answers to gang problem, says mayor

Latest leaves 11 dead

By Jennifer Fortunato
USA ALIVE

East Los Angeles, California—"I didn't even hear them coming!" said local shop owner Todd Bustamonte of the four HS assassins responsible for L.A.'s latest massacre. Now, after the forensics crews have finished their investigation and the street urchins have collected the last of the brass shell casings, the streets are even quieter.

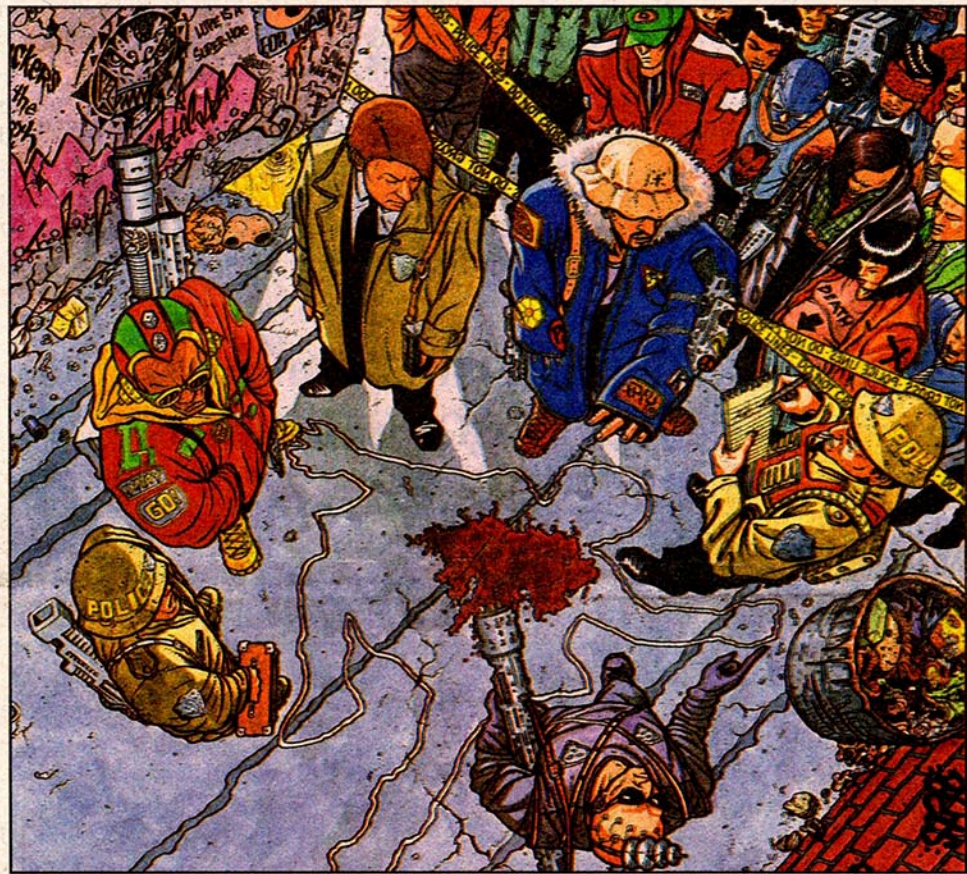
Bustamonte happened to be looking out a stockroom window just as the shooting started.

"I can't describe it," Bustamonte told local authorities. "Every shot shook the whole street so hard I could feel my teeth rattling in my jaw."

By the time the boosted trigger men had completed their pass and streaked up into the stratosphere, eleven victims lay dead in the street.

Police officials on the scene attributed the shooting to gang rivalry. Eight of the eleven victims were notorious homo-superior crashers from L.A.'s infamous F-HOG street gang. The remaining victims—among them a thirteen-year-old girl—are all presumed to be innocent bystanders who found themselves in the line of fire.

▶Life and death on the mean streets, 4A



L.A. homicide total sets new record

By Jamie O'Shaughnessy
USA ALIVE

More homicides were committed in Los Angeles County during the first three months of 2021 than during any other 90

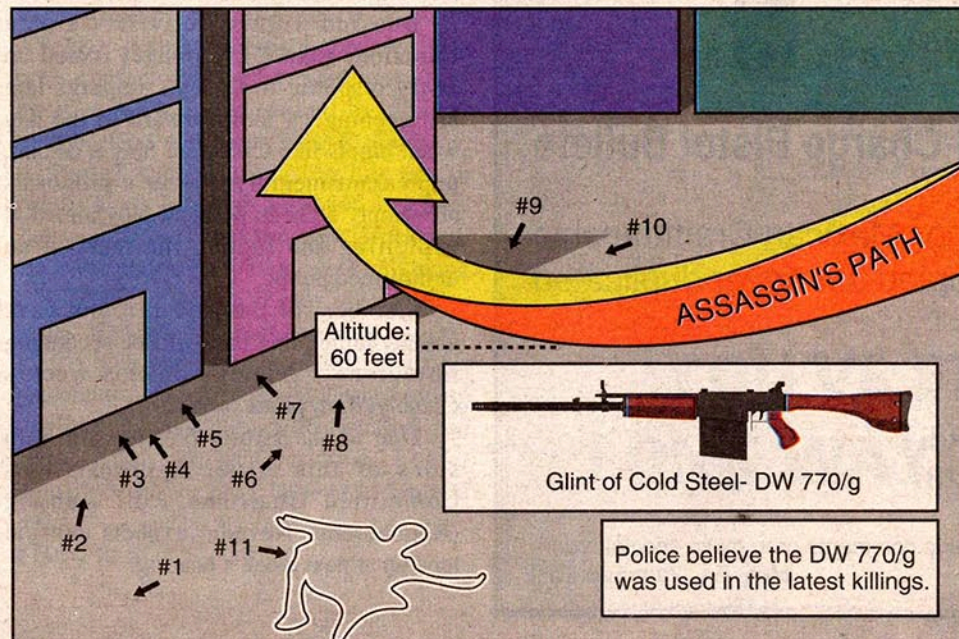
days in history. In fact, Los Angeles saw more murders in the first quarter of this year than during the last five months of 2020.

That's what District Attorney Edward H. Hogarth reported at a national news conference held early yesterday morning.

Although county social scientists have yet to file their final reports on the matter, Hogarth attributes the sharp rise in violent crime to unchecked pre-frontal migration and massive homo superior demobilization in the metropolitan Los Angeles area.

"Until we convince someone in Washington to take a hard look at the federal housing program, we can only expect this sort of increase to continue," Hogarth said.

Since late last year, the U.S. Government has been obligated to provide homo superiors demobilizing from Allied Mayhem's central and eastern expeditionary forces with housing and temporary living expenses. So far, a full 85% of demobilized troops eligible for the program have been settled in the greater Los Angeles area.



Foster tough on Neo-Deutsch

Offers American people evidence of price fixing in the PRQ

By Virginia Melendez
USA ALIVE

"In America, we've always lived by the maxim 'if it doesn't make dollars, it doesn't make sense.' But let me point out, my friends, that there are many ways to make dollars—some obvious, and some not so obvious."

So began the nationally televised speech President Foster delivered early yesterday evening.

Foster went on to accuse Neo-Deutsch officials and capitalists of underselling consumer electronics and software to markets in the People's Republic of Quebec. According to Foster, the Neo-Deutsch are trying to keep the PRQ economy vital in the hope of tying up American resources and interfering with American efforts to exploit third world, Western Hemisphere markets.

To prove his allegations, Foster presented a series of satellite photographs, a stack of invoices, and a sworn affidavit from a Battle Harbour retailer. The photographs depict a cabal of Neo-Deutsch capitalists erecting a bonfire and burning thousands of boxes of paper records, computer diskettes, and bio-drives. The invoices include wholesale price information on hundreds of consumer items manufactured in the European Commonwealth and sold in Quebec. The affidavit reveals alleged 800% markups by government-owned PRQ distribution centers.

In his speech, Foster was careful to point out that any and all of these practices are a clear violation of various International Export and Pricing agreements ratified in both the United Nations and the World Court.

When questioned about American plans for retaliation, Foster outlined several alternatives under consideration, ranging from stepped up military spending against Neo-Deutsch mercenaries and homo superiors in India to providing subsidies encouraging Capital Entertainment to pre-pack *Beauty and the Beast 2021* with rebate coupons redeemable only outside the European Commonwealth.

Congressional reaction to Foster's plans was mixed. Representative Rudolf Cody (Republocrat, Mississippi) found merit in all Foster's proposals, while Senator Ross Munson (Plutocrat, Saskatchewan) pointed out that the *Beauty and the Beast* proposal would be difficult to slip past the Senate.

Minutes after Foster concluded his speech, Neo-Deutsch officials issued a sweeping denial.

"Foster's charges are not only outrageous, they are legally libelous and we will be filing a series of suits in the World Court at once," Friedrich Hummel, Neo-Deutsch Minister of Being was quoted as saying.

Hummel went on to point out how Foster's evidence can lead to many conclusions. "How can one discern what is truly happening in those photos?"

Friz Hoffstedter, Neo-Deutsch Minister of Having, added that the American satellite photos themselves violate World Court guidelines.

Atomic Kennedy made an unannounced appearance yesterday at Chicago's 18th Annual Consumer Capital Show. America's hero paused just long enough to pose for pictures and educate youngsters about the dangers of a low export/import ratio before jetting back to Hollywood to film another episode of his popular television series *Camelot: The Next Generation*.

Allied Mayhem's infamous "Sidewinder Scandal" rages on. Today, UnderLieutenant Marla Matthews (aka The Lady in Red) is scheduled to testify before the Senate subcommittee investigating the scandal. Special Prosecutor Sondra Steinmetz announced late last night that she expects Matthews' testimony to incriminate a whole new level of AM executives.

Congress to review cut in homo superior demobilization bonuses

By Muhammed Taverner
USA ALIVE

Next Wednesday, members of the House Appropriations Committee will begin examining President Foster's proposal to reduce homo superior demobilization benefits by a staggering 12%.

"Of course, we all appreciate the boosted soldiers and what they've done for our country," says White House Chief of Staff Donald Casey. "But we're beyond equitable compensation here. Demobilized superiors already qualify for the public dole and VA medical care. Besides, with their special capabilities, you'd think they should have no problems fitting into the workforce. After all, when I was 19, I managed to find a job and I can't leap anything in a single bound."

Boosted rights activist Carmen Euruzione (aka Dr. Carnage) issued an angry response to Casey's remarks late last evening. "I look forward to the day when bigots like Casey are only a distant, unpleasant memory. Foster's proposals are simply a cheap political ploy aimed at exploiting and fueling the fears of an uninformed public."

Members of the Underground have already hinted that they will be seconding Euruzione's remarks on this week's *Channel Zero* pirate broadcast.

Due to the strong feelings on both sides of this issue, Appropriations Committee Chairman Rolf Ludwig (Republocrat, Nevada) expects unusual tension at next week's hearing.

NATIONWIDE

ECONOMY: Despite a recent popularity surge in Iraqi exports, President Foster has urged Congress not to tamper with automobile import/export quotas. In his written statement, Foster accused American auto manufacturers of blaming the Iraqis for their own lack of judgement and effective marketing. "The Iraqis can produce a reliable mid-sized car for under \$120,000," said Foster. "Why can't we?"

ENVIRONMENT: Cuban governor Edgar Villanuevos refuses to dispatch the National Guard to restore order in the Biosphere XI Back-to-Nature experiment unless Biosphere "Tribal Chieftain" Louis "Running Rock" Alvarez agrees to permit homo superior operatives to take part in the assault. Running Rock's lawyers on the outside have filed suit to force the governor into action, though their case is expected to be dismissed.

LEADERSHIP/VISION: The Atomic Kennedy made an unannounced appearance yesterday at Chicago's 18th Annual Consumer Capital Show. America's hero paused just long enough to pose for pictures and educate youngsters about the dangers of a low export/import ratio before jetting back to Hollywood to film another episode of his popular television series *Camelot: The Next Generation*.

SCANDAL: Allied Mayhem's infamous "Sidewinder Scandal" rages on. Today, UnderLieutenant Marla Matthews (aka The Lady in Red) is scheduled to testify before the Senate subcommittee investigating the scandal. Special Prosecutor Sondra Steinmetz announced late last night that she expects Matthews' testimony to incriminate a whole new level of AM executives.

EDUCATION: Lisa Bradwell, President Foster's Secretary of Education and Motivation announced yesterday that the federal government was suspending its Classroom 2000 virtual reality program. "Quite frankly, it still doesn't work" was her only comment.

TERRORISM: Yesterday, attacks occurred in Chicago, New Orleans, Atlanta, Washington, San Diego, and Kansas City. Among the groups claiming responsibility for the carnage were: the Underground, the Peoples Front for the Promotion of Competence, the Cruelty Brigade, Red Metamorphosis, the Mr. Joneses, and the Liberated Front for the Secession of Missouri.

BANKRUPTCY: The Consumer munitions industry was hit hardest this week. Vanguard Necro-Gas, Philbrick Semi Auto, Glint of Cold Steel, Municipal Camouflage, and Urban Nightmare all filed for Chapter Sixty Seven. A spokesman for the National Pistol Association predicted that more hard times are ahead.

Avant-Garbage Verdict announced

Trans-World Purchase OKed by courts

By Michael Madsen
USA ALIVE

Early yesterday afternoon, US Judge John Marshall Berkowitz dismissed a series of anti-trust suits, clearing the way for Avant-Garbage to enter the conventional conflict business. Almost immediately after the verdict was handed down, AG officials closed a deal with the Pyridine Company and acquired a controlling interest in Trans-World Devastation Inc.

According to Berkowitz, the suits were dismissed "due to irrelevance. The conflict of interest statutes barring media mavens from entering the aggression business don't apply in this case since Avant-Garbage receives less than 25% of its total revenues from programming and publication."

Because less than 25% of Avant-Garbage's revenues are derived from these sources, it does not meet the legal definition of a "media conglomerate."

Lawyers for Allied Mayhem, the plaintiff in the case, have already announced their plans for appeal, alleging that AG's figure of 23% resulted from inappropriate accounting practices.

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CITYDESK

CRIME: Chief of Police Alphonse Moscoso says the fly-by shooting epidemic cannot be curbed until the City Council allocates more funds to public safety. "Within three hours of the latest shootings I had sixteen subcontractors submitting unsolicited bids for crime prevention contracts," Moscoso reported. "But without proper funding, of course, my hands are tied."

DEVASTATION: Last night, crews were busy rebuilding parts of Compton, Riverside, Alhambra, Glendale, and Hollywood. Most of the destruction was due to conflict between rival homo superiors, though a runaway jump-copter was responsible for the Alhambra wreckage. Although most of the repairs were finished early this morning, work slowed down overnight due to a temporary shortage of lime-green L-shaped Brick-Blocks.

WATER: Today's pressure is expected to be above average, though north side communities might encounter some difficulties around midday.

TRAVEL: City officials announced that the recent improvement in overall water pressure might allow the spaceport to reopen as early as next Wednesday, though Transportation Office Spokesman Clint MacElroy refuses to make overly optimistic commitments. "We've seen the water pressure rise and fall rapidly within the last twelve days," said MacElroy. "Another unexpected decrease in pressure could delay the opening of the spaceport by days if not weeks."

CITY COLLEGE: Yesterday afternoon, City College Chancellor Walter Webber announced yet another 12% tuition increase. According to Webber, the latest hike is due to the city's failure to allocate funds promised during fiscal 2020. City College annual tuition now stands at a whopping \$116,000.

ENVIRONMENT: Representatives of the Peoples Liberated Front for the Protection of the Environment and the Ecology (PLFPEE) presented Los Angeles with a special "Clean and Green" award yesterday in recognition of the city-wide effort to recycle brass and aluminum. When reporters pointed out that most of the recycled metals were obtained from spent cartridge casings left at the scene of gang homicides, the PLFPEE representatives had no comment.

CELEBRITY WATCH: Sister Vengeance, noted homo superior heroine and star of the recent documentary *Madame Behind the Mask*, will be fighting crime and shooting scenes for an upcoming film project outside the maxi-mall in Burbank this afternoon. Autographs hounds should arrive early—city officials plan to clear the entire area around the mall shortly before filming begins.

Slumberland Re-opens on schedule

Another accident "inconceivable," says Segar

By Howie Ferguson
USA ALIVE

As newly-appointed park director Herman Elsie Segar took the podium at yesterday's Slumberland press conference, he already knew the one question on the minds of all the reporters assembled to cover the event.

"Let me open with the answer you're all looking for. The new Slumberland is one hundred percent accident proof. Seven separate teams of government inspectors have passed through the park and given it a clean bill of health. There is no way—I repeat, no way—we will see an accident like the unfortunate incident that closed the park last May."

In May of 2020, forty-nine visitors were killed at the amusement park when a computer virus ramped biofeedback limits past lethal levels during the so-called "WDEF Massacre."

According to Segar, dozens of new safeguards were built into the park's controlling hardware, including laser-targeted optic troubleshooters capable of visually recognizing subtle flaws in construct programming and fuzzy logic relays that predict disaster before it strikes and react accordingly.

"With the new safeguards in place," Segar said, "another accident is simply inconceivable."

Hoping to remove the spotlight from the park's troubled history, Segar quickly

changed subjects and began discussing yesterday's grand reopening celebration held along the park's promenade.

Segar went on to repeat the sales pitch first made by Slumberland officials when the park opened last February.

"Slumberland is a whole new concept in family entertainment. Imagine you and your friends alone in an exotic alien world—a world of danger, intrigue and romance. For a mere \$80, you'll experience thrills and adventures so real, you'll swear you've lived them. And with this reopening, the best value in family entertainment is now even better. We've added several new attractions that should please veteran Slumberlanders and first-timers alike."

On hand to help Segar and his colleagues celebrate the reopening were several celebrities, including: pop sensation Mack Burbey, California Senator Freeman Yavidovich, fashion maven Lisa Lobos, and noted vigilante/reformed psychotic One-Eyed Jack and his sidekick, the Raw Nerve.

"We tried the Inhuman League sim early this morning," Jack reported. "It felt just like the real Slumberland, though it's not quite as bloody. In all, it's a great time. The Nerve and I know where we'll be spending our spare time from now on."

Burbey sees merit in Slumberland's "message." "We can learn a lot by watching the way the boosted and the non-boosted can come together in a park like

◆Turn to 4D

Slumberland a menace?

AWAKE members plan protest

By Lonnie Singer
USA ALIVE

Although the Slumberland amusement park re-opened yesterday amid well wishes and fanfare, not everyone was pleased to see the park resume operation.

"We know that Capital Entertainment is claiming that government inspectors ran unprecedented tests on Slumberland's computer hardware, software and bioware and passed the entire system. But given the fact that Capital stock is so popular among US Senators and low level administration officials, an Independent Counsel should be appointed to evaluate the park's safety procedures. No one wants another WDEF."

So said Dorothea Zaharias, a spokesperson for the newly formed AWAKE political activism conclave, at a press conference held late yesterday afternoon. AWAKE was formed to monitor Slumberland and other Prog-R sim-parks. Although the organization has yet to receive its radical activist license, Zaharias claims that the paperwork will clear the courts early next week, allowing AWAKE members to begin organizing a series of planned demonstrations.

To help back up her claims, Zaharias presented a series of documents showing that one hundred eleven US Senators and more than three hundred Foster Administration officials own Capital Stock.

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1960	5,000
1970	20,000
1980	90,000
1990	150,000
2000	200,000
2010	250,000
2020	350,000

PFO3DE slags Axis Electronics

By Alexis MacElroy
USA ALIVE

Late last evening, Axis Electronics' Alhambra R&D facility was struck by a Titan thermomissile and reduced to rubble. The blast killed eleven employees and injured fifty-one more.

In a letter received by the LAPD's Area Six Demolitions Unit, the People's Front for the Obliteration of Three-Dimensional Entertainment claimed responsibility for the missile attack and promised further reprisals against "fascists attempting to subvert the superiority of two-dimensional media."

Radical aesthetes, the PFO3E
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**YOU'VE STILL GOT A
LONG WAY TO GO, BABY.**

Down and out on the mean streets

Life among L.A.'s boosted homeless

By Carlos Martinez
USA ALIVE

"When I'm forced to move, I look for a fire escape behind a fast food restaurant. The police never patrol the alleys around the fast food houses because they don't like the smell. And if you position yourself just right, a good fire escape'll keep the rain off your back."

I've spent the last two days with the Screaming Eagle, an Allied Mayhem veteran of Paraguay and Latvia. Ever since his demobilization benefits ran out last February, the Eagle has been a member of L.A.'s boosted homeless population.

"On the streets, your two biggest enemies are hunger and illness." Obviously in need of psycho-genetic counseling, the

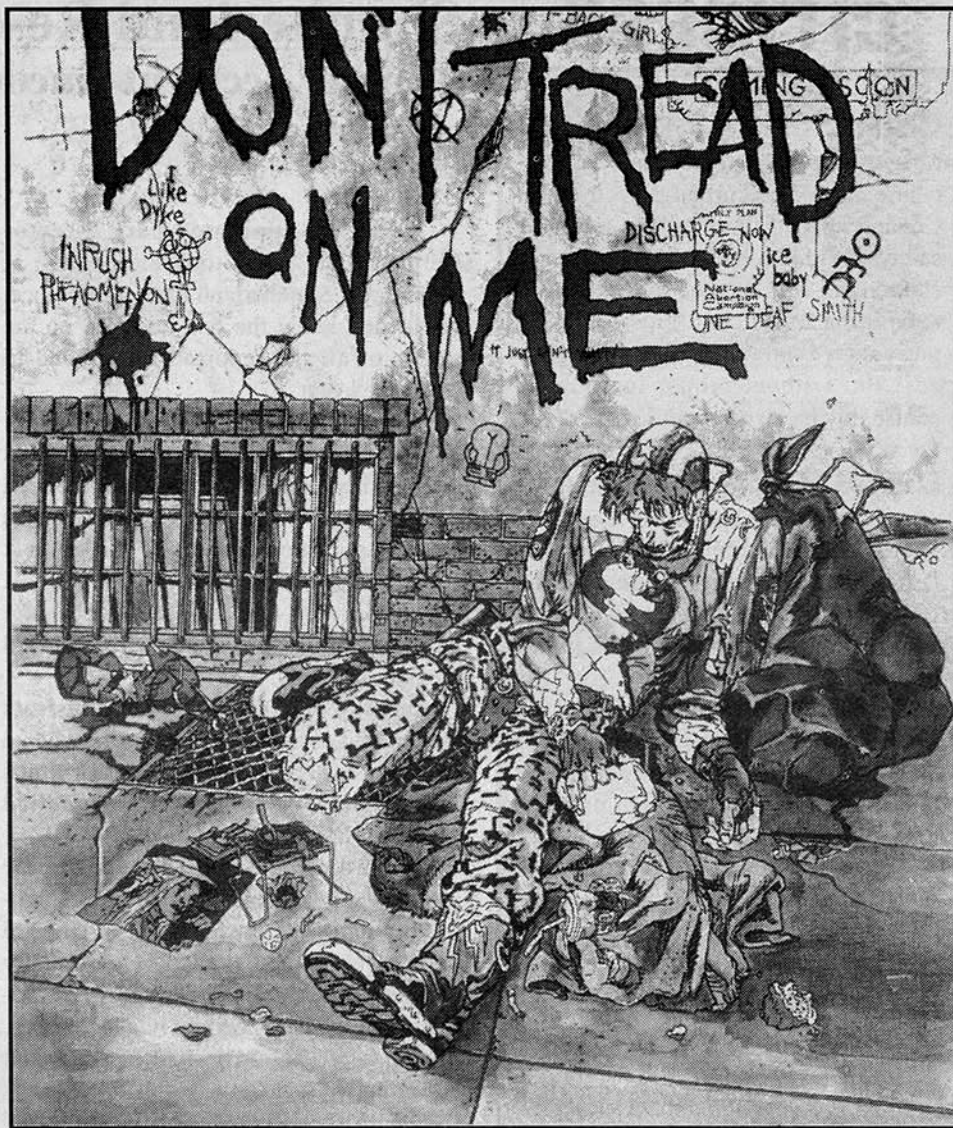
Eagle pauses every few seconds to regain coherence.

According to the Eagle, food dispersment centers and VA hospitals are underutilized by the homeless due to the influence of neighborhood gangs. The gangs often take control of the streets surrounding these vital areas and attempt to extract a "toll" from anyone using them—a simple variation on the old protection racket. Like the Eagle, most of the homeless save what little money they manage to acquire and use it to pay off the gangs when the need for food or medical attention is critical.

Exasperating this problem is the fact that an estimated 71% of the boosted homeless suffer from severe metagenic feedback trauma, a condition better known as "brain-burn." Since the victims are without access to the drugs capable of controlling their condition, their behavior frequently becomes erratic and unpredictable. As the Eagle puts it, "the brain-burn takes away all hope of escaping the trap we're in. Finding work while burned out is simply impossible."

What are the City Council and the Congress doing to help alleviate these problems?

Turn to 4A



The Boosted Homeless population is now growing at a rate of 18% per year



USA ALIVE
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OPINION

DEAR EDITOR

Dear Sirs:

As a former chief of staff for City Councilman Harris, I read your story of March 3 (Los Angeles supplement, "Harris kickbacks unveiled") with interest. In my opinion, your reporter is guilty of distorting the facts, inventing details from whole cloth, and leaping to premature and erroneous conclusions.

By way of example, let me point out that Councilman Harris has never visited Aruba. During the cruise mentioned by your reporter, the Councilman actually toured the Cayman Islands. Furthermore, there was at least one HS woman on the Councilman's staff during the era in question: our cleaning woman, Mrs. Dumfries (aka the Leather Banshee).

When is the republicratic press going to stop inventing the news and start reporting it?

Michael Blaylock
Dept. of English, UCLA

USA ALIVE stands by its story

FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 2021

Media: truth or travesty?

OUR VIEW

By "Don Strichnine"
Los Angeles Supplement Editor

One week ago, New Jersey Congresswoman Sheila Pressman issued yet another call for increased restrictions on print, broadcast, recorded, and telecom media. According to Pressman, "the increased incidence of the depiction of deviation in all its ghastly forms is steering our youth down the path of lawlessness and houliganism."

Uh huh.

Of course, Pressman's attack came as no surprise. Every time the GNP nose-dives, the Plutocrats issue a flurry of public statements blaming their own failures on the "liberal republicratic media." If you believe the Plutocrats, USA ALIVE, the producers of *The Tortinis*, and the members of Systematic Overthrow are all part of some vast conspiracy that aims to seduce your children into accepting the pleasures of Neo-Communism, allowing us to collapse our own free market.

This sort of thinking is absurd on its face and hardly worthy of comment.

What is truly disturbing about Ms. Pressman's speech is that she proposes to selectively portion out the First Amendment right to free speech reinstated more than eleven years ago when the 38th Amendment was repealed.

Ms. Pressman, smell the coffee.

OPPOSING VIEW

By Marcy Matteson
National Coalition of Parents for an
Ideologically Sound America

Congresswoman Sheila Pressman is to be applauded for having the courage to openly advocate the policies set forth in her address of last Wednesday. Undoubtedly, members of the liberal Republicratic media will try their best to destroy her career, using all the power at their disposal to organize an appalling campaign of smear and spear.

Amidst all their rhetoric and blustering, the media mavens who program our vid-nets and tele-grids have failed to answer a few simple questions:

How do the endless depictions of boosted combat serve the public interest?

If the media is all about choice and freedom, why isn't there a single vid-net program that presents a traditional view of the American family?

If "sensitive" liberal programs depicting the "horrors of war" or the "persecution of homo superiors" have a positive impact upon their audiences, why don't the liberals believe that programs depicting violence and cruelty can have a negative impact upon their own audiences?

So gentlemen, again I ask you, are you ready to stop whining and start thinking?



Julian Jackson



USA ALIVE
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MORE SIMS ON THE WAY:

Yesterday, Chartbuster Soma-Vid announced that Chartbuster producers have secured the permission necessary to create computer simulations of 20th Century superstars Marilyn Monroe and Edward G. Robinson. Chartbuster has signed both sims to exclusive four-picture deals. At present, CSV studio execs are reportedly developing a script pairing the Monroe simulation with her 21st century counterpart, Mamie Canyon.

OVER THE TEFLON CURTAIN:

Wagner Brothers recording superstars Sid and Cecil Dessiade are bucking to become the first American entertainers to tour the People's Republic of Quebec. Although plans for the tour haven't been finalized, the Dessiados' manager reports that all the major political hurdles have been cleared. Should everything go according to schedule, the tour should begin in October.

SHE'S IN THE MONEY:

Wall Street Today reports that supermodel Shante is about to sign on as the official spokesperson for Candy Cola. According to sources close to the deal, Shante will earn between 250 and 300 million dollars for two years of service.

WHO'S NEXT : Our correspondents in Washington report that the Atomic Kennedy's string of broken hearts continues. Last night, America's hero failed to show up for a late-night dinner date with MCL recording star Amber Ivory.

COMING SOON: This week, shooting begins on *Don't Let the Time Do You*, a highbrow documentary about the Luna Riots of 2017. Alfred LeMaster is set to lens the pic. Sophie Shockwave stars.

LOVE AND ROCKETS: It's official! In a sub-orbital ceremony held late last evening, Hollywood sensations Christy Zoom and Johnny MacRandolph finally tied the knot. Among those in attendance were: driver Arnold Biggs, Senator Joseph MacCumber, up-and-comer Sylvia Pitt, and most of the members of the Short Controlled Bursts. According to their publicists, the happy couple is now vacationing in New Providence. Zoom is MacRandolph's fourth wife.

TODAY'S TIP



Music Review... The Short Controlled Bursts explode with surprising pleasure.

Beastly... Beauty and the Beast 2021 is far from beautiful. See movie review.

The masked mainstream... Multi-colored head masks hit the big time in spring fashion.

They're laughable, they're lovable — they're the Tortinis!

By Casey Detwiler
USA ALIVE

Angela is an FLNCBA militant activist. Nathan is an Estro-Gin-addled boosted operative just back from Latvia. Their son, Nick, is an ideal student and the president of the local chapter of the Kennedy Youth. Nick's sister, Lucille, spends most of her time in Juvey Reprimand for chronic houliganism. Rounding out this motley cast of characters is Nathan's senile Uncle Whit and his antique, 8-bit artificial brain.

In Hollywood, they call it *high concept*. In the hallowed halls of Neorific

Productions, the geniuses behind the *Tortinis*, they call it a fortune.

"No one was more surprised by our sudden success than ourselves," says Leo Lewis, the rotund actor who created the role of Uncle Whit. "Personally, I never thought we'd last out our first cycle. Originally, I thought I was taking this job as a break between summer stock sessions."

Leo's fellow Tortini, Bunny Boom (Lucille), agrees. "I knew we were breaking ground, but I never thought the audience would respond. After reading the first few scripts, I was sure our show was far too upscale and bourgeois for the mass market. Shows you what I know."

Upscale or not, audiences obviously love the *Tortinis'* quirky mix of situation

comedy and radical activism. Last week's episode, "Bif-Bam-Bomb," was one of the highest rated vid-net programs in history.

But for all its success, the program is not without its detractors. Plutocratic media watchdog organizations cite the *Tortinis*, particularly Ms. Boom's Lucille, as a bad influence on American youth. Just yesterday, Congresswoman Shiela Pressman singled out the *Tortinis* during her call for increased government restrictions on telecom and vid-net programming.

"Yes, the plutocrats are a problem," says producer Quentin Chekov-Spelling. "We've heard that *Tortinis* dashikis

♦Turn to 4D



The Tortinis (l to r): Nick, Angela, Uncle Whit, Nathan, Lucille

Los Masquerados are invading the mainstream

FASHION

By Rosie Setsung
USA ALIVE

By now you've certainly seen them—multi-colored head masks that totally conceal the identity of their wearers.

At first, the masks were a trendy fad—the exclusive purview of hip punks and fashion-conscious art school students. But like many avant-garde trends before them, the masks are now beginning to creep into the mainstream.

Last November, Mamie Canyon wore a mask in the techno-thriller *Nanoseconds to Midnight*, planting the trend's seeds among her army of teenage fans. And just last week, top designer Maria Manhattan announced that she'll be incorporating several colorful variations on the mask

into her highly anticipated 2021 spring collection.

The origins of the fad are almost as colorful as the masks themselves.

Punk fashion proprietess Cindy-Sioux Sunrise reports that, "the masks come from Los Masquerados, 20th century masked wrestlers native to México. We first saw them in Mexican wrestling movies made in the 1950s and 60s." Spanish and Mexican cultural references have been trendy punk staples since 2015 and Los Vatos. "We were into the whole 'no identity' concept. I suppose the masks were also a sort of comment on the homo superior situation."

Until now, trendy Masquerados were forced to venture into underground clothing stores, like Philadelphia's Zipperhead, to buy their headwear. But fashion industry watchdogs are predicting that the

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BIRTHDAYS TODAY

Maria Cabardo, art director 17
Mamie Canyon, actress 21
Duncan Edwards, novelist 45
Michelle Feinstein, model 22
Flaming Terror, HS actor 29
Jack Gordian, senator 54
Iron Nightmare, HS vigilante 33
Sam Stevens, comic 41
Wayne Winters, actor 36

TODAY'S HOROSCOPES

ARIES: Look for romance today, especially with technocratic, "hardwired" types. Avoid making financial choices.

TAURUS: Give yourself a treat! Buy something you don't need. Tonight, the answer to your problems can be found in the mass media.

GEMINI: Today is a good day to visit an old foreman or supervisor. Although things might look bleak, don't give up hope. You never know what might happen.

CANCER: Take some time to discuss your goals with friends. Happiness awaits you.

LEO: Try to learn something new today. The answer to your current problem lies with a mysterious other.

VIRGO: Forget it! You just can't lick this current problem. Make the necessary adjustments to compensate.

LIBRA: One of the topics you've been avoiding will come up tonight. Be prepared!

SCORPIO: Wait until tomorrow to finish your current project. You won't be disappointed.

SAGGITARIUS: Start getting more exercise or expect an illness soon. Take off the pounds you recently added.

MORE INSIDE!

A hilarious case of mistaken identity results after Uncle Whit forgets to detox his brain lubricant. Also, Angela is subjected to electro-shock during a routine radical activist sweep.

Hannigan investigates the disappearance of a boosted heiress and stumbles across a deep, dark secret. Lydia Dumfries guest-stars.

New footage from Peru and Estonia supplements award-winning images from Paraguay, Latvia, Laos, and Liberia. Tonight's installment boasts plenty of boosted operative action! Narrated by Finister 99.

In tonight's special 30th anniversary installment, creator Peter Chung kills his enigmatic heroine six more times. Plus, Zozo succumbs to the decay illness.

Stephanie's doctor realizes that she can cure her bone cancer by enlisting and undergoing genetic enhancement. Edward Oxide guest-stars.

NOW PLAYING

Reviewed this issue.

Carnage Boy and his pals encounter beautiful biker babes and vicious gang leaders after accidentally boarding a freighter bound for Luna. Slow-moving and insipid. Brain models TZ8 and XJG1000 find it hilarious.

Tightly-paced thriller about a Neo-Deutsch corporate spy infiltrating an international conflict firm handling the Latvia account for the United States. Recommended for brain models YF131A, BB8554, and the entire LM series.

Mediocre tear-jerker starring Melanie Monroe and Uri Nguyen. She's a detective; he's an inner-city psychological counselor. Recommended for brain models FM1719, FM4190, and both the YZ and LX series.

Systematic Overthrow
Produced by Angelo Lester
Available on Phuncky Buddha Audio

Okay, I'm a convert. Until now, I've snobbishly tried to dismiss Systematic Overthrow's notorious "scratch rhythms meet Los Vatos on Estro-Gin" sound as uninspired *faux* rabble-rousing. The antics of songwriter Speed-Zero and his sidemen have always struck me as simple anarchy-for-anarchy's-sake posturing that owed more to Madison Avenue than Crenshaw Boulevard.

After spinning *Sip This!*, however, I realised that I was letting the band's post-Spanglish "boost-punk" image blind me to their true virtues. By the end of the album's first cut, "Wet Ya Up," I took my finger off the cue switch. By the time I reached the title track, I was writing a note reminding myself to give the group's earlier efforts another listen.

Although all seventeen tracks are solid, the album's real stunner is the final cut, "LP." Though based around obscure allusions to classical literature—Speed Zero's lyrics compare the group's output ("LPs") to the brutal murder that propels Lynch's 1990 classic *Twin Peaks* (the victim of which bore the initials "LP")—this moody scratch ballad still manages to evince an emotional as well as an intellectual reaction. The song's opening phrases, in which Zero compares the album's shrink-wrap packaging to the plastic wrap that enveloped Lynch's victim while guitarist D-Bite cracks out a series of staccato power-chords, are certainly crude, if not vulgar. But by the time Zero and the band begin to wind down, it's obvious that these early phrases are part of an intricate latticework that ultimately builds toward a powerful portrait of Zero's central conceit—art as blind, brutal homicide.

About the only downside to this entire effort is the expectations it is going to raise. What can Systematic Overthrow possibly produce for an encore?

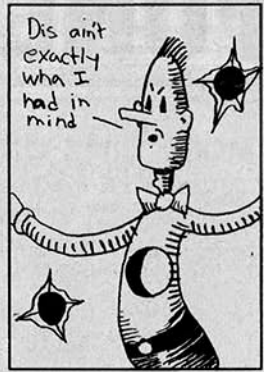
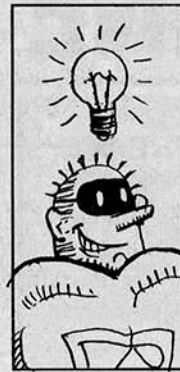
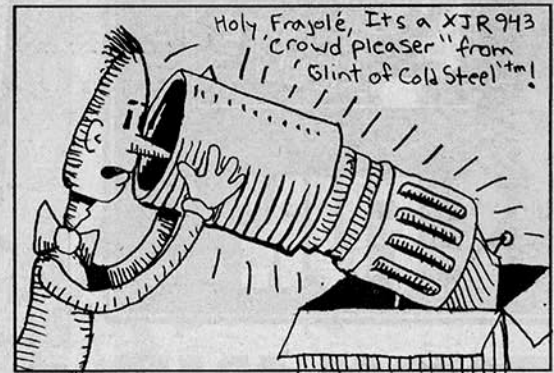
Edmund Mingus

Short Controlled Bursts
Produced by Rod Rueben
Available on Capital Audio

Apparently, SCB lead singer Marky Kegel's been catching up on his reading (yes, Marky can read). Unlike the band's earlier efforts, *Up the Sixth World* is littered with epic similes, colorful metaphors, and even the occasional political diatribe. In fact, in some places, Kegel's lyrics are almost profound—a bold move for a band that built its reputation by howling and cursing at their microphones like 14th century preachers trying to exorcise a particularly stubborn demon.

But make no mistake, the Short Controlled Bursts' trademark synth-buzz is still present in the prodigious quantities burstheads have come to expect. About

▶Turn to 4D



Starring Georges Marauder, Beatrice Hill,
Mackenzie Smirnoff, Joyce Quint
Released by Capital Entertainment
Recommended for brain models XJ1170,
FM4190, TZ8

Simply put, this is an awful film—scores of unattractive people, badly shot, engaging in unattractive, poorly scripted activities.

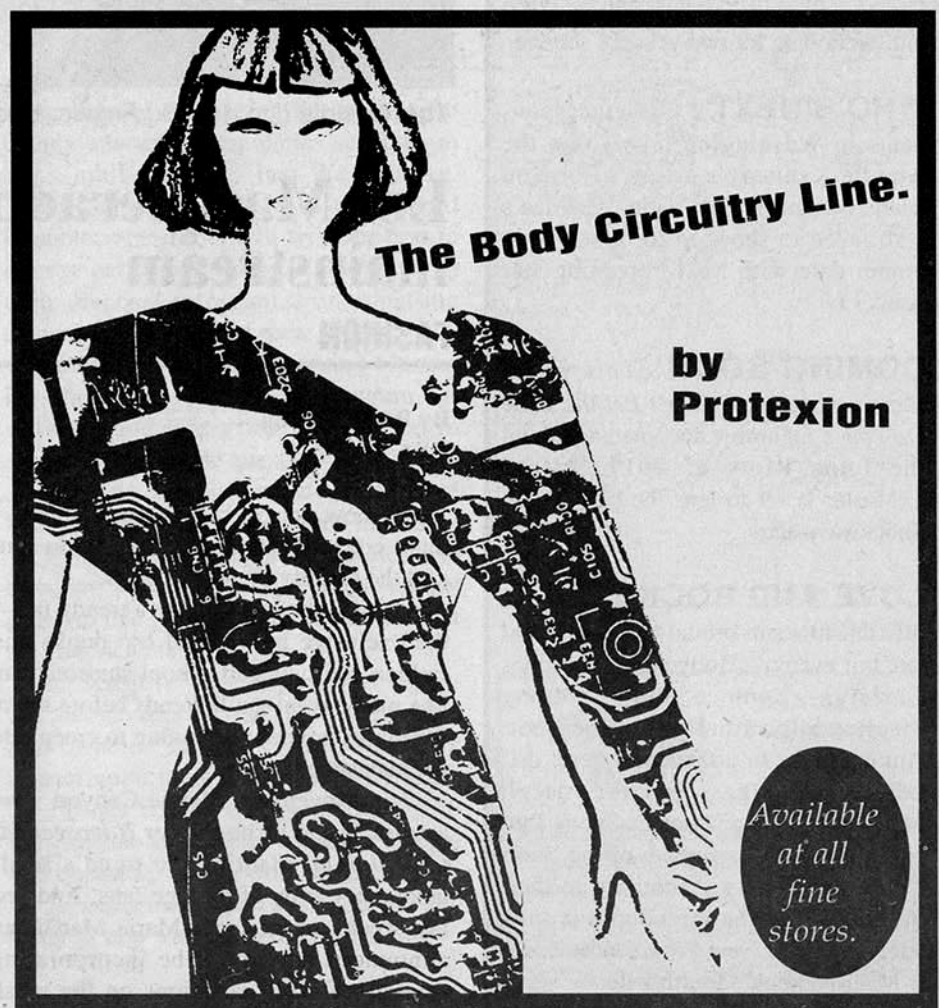
Director Gregory Hippolyte is notorious for his lingering camera and *Beast 2021* is no threat to his reputation. With mind-numbing accuracy, Hippolyte always obscures the action, whether he's

drifting away just as an image becomes interesting or blinding the audience with a nauseating series of cross-cuts.

But Hippolyte can't shoulder all the blame for this fiasco. Screenwriter Fredrick Massey habitually thrusts his characters into ill-conceived scenarios that are somehow simultaneously predictable and implausible. Female lead Beatrice Hill eagerly accepts every opportunity to point her chin skyward and bay at the moon like a pack animal (???). And male lead Georges Marauder looks like he's a pretender to the throne occupied by Bruce Lamont, the current King of Swagger.

Frankly, a film this awful gives the

►Turn to 4D





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IFL MERRY-GO-ROUND I:

Head coach Stan Spiner was fired by Detroit. According to Detroit General Manager Ethan Sachs, Spiner will be succeeded by Mercenaries' Defensive Coordinator Jill DaSilva

IFL MERRY-GO-ROUND II:

Green Bay just axed head coach Geoff Taffin in favor of Murphy Duncan, who was just released from Los Angeles. According to his agent, Taffin will replace George McKinna, who should receive his walking papers from the Houston front office by the end of the week. If McKinna somehow hangs on, IFL insiders are looking for Taffin to take over Ron Samms' position in Cleveland.

IFL MERRY-GO-ROUND III:

Kansas City fired head coach Kip Bradford early yesterday morning. According to insiders, KC management is evaluating the recently deposed Stan Spiner for the Warriors' top spot. Bradford is expected to sign with San Diego or Phoenix.

IFL MERRY-GO-ROUND IV:

And finally, late last night, Buffalo discharged head coach Sven Stevens. Stevens is said to be angling for the Philadelphia job.

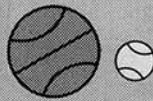
WBL BASKETBALL FACES GENE CONTROVERSY:

At least one source within the WBL front offices claims that last September's league-wide surprise genetic evaluation turned up at least six players who showed evidence of genetic enhancement. According to the source, the league has yet to take action because one of the six players is a highly-paid superstar.

USA NAMES OLYMPIC TEAM CAPTAINS:

Four more captains were named today: Thad Shiffer (Team Brawling), Rex Sharpton (Men's Gymnastics), Sue Sherman (Equestrian), and Hermann Novick (Bungee Jumping).

TODAY'S TIP



Showtime... Tonight's basketball lineup: Vancouver at Boston, Miami at Havanna, and Seattle at Chicago.

Smart move... Cleveland pays an astounding \$98,000,000 for left-hander Lisa Madison.

Twenty Years Ago Today...

On March 11, 2001, the National Hockey League played its final game. More than seventy-five fans traveled to Detroit's Central Stadium to see their home team beat Philadelphia 4-2.

Boyce wins the Bakersfield 5770 in record time.

By Richard Sorensen
USA ALIVE

For Sorenson Boyce, these are dizzying times. In the past four weeks, Boyce has played the lead in *Brainburn Tango*, the new Marvin Semple film; his wife Julia has given birth to her first child; and Boyce has been named captain of the US Olympic Gauss Racing Team.

Yesterday, Boyce's good fortune continued with a record victory at the annual Bakersfield 5770, where he completed the almost 6000-mile run in just over eleven hours.

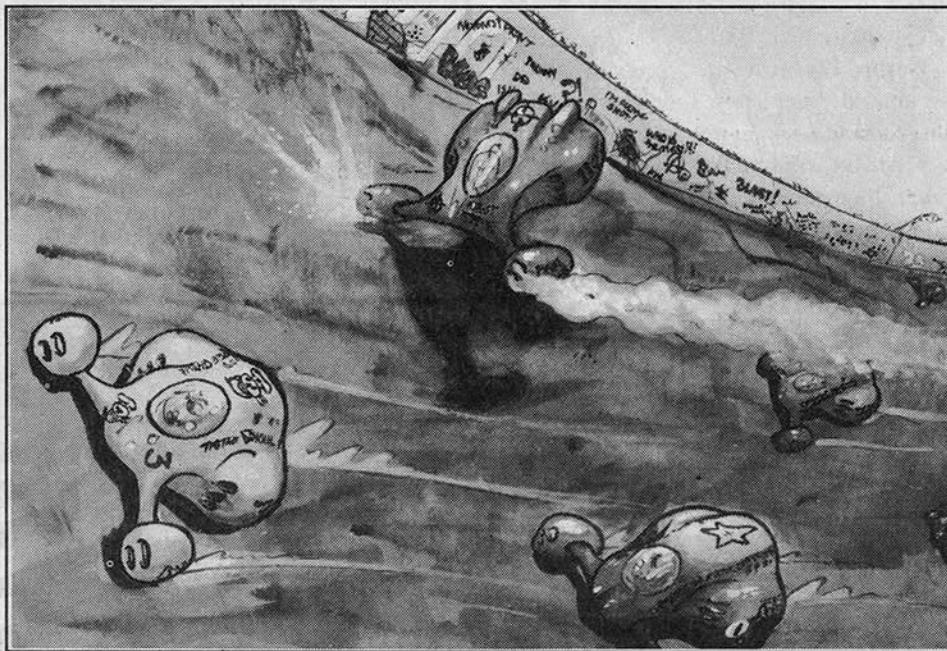
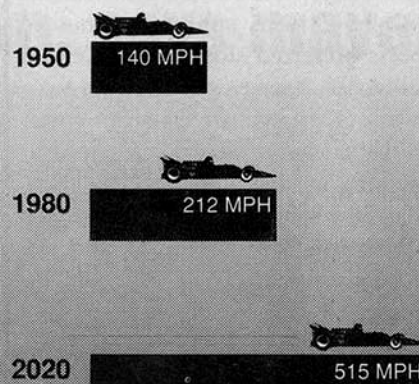
"The fields were alive," Boyce informed reporters during his post-race press conference. "This is probably the fastest tube I've ever run."

USGRF officials confirmed that the Bakersfield tube's electromagnetic output is running unusually high. Boyce's mark of 11:12:17.41 bettered the old track record by more than an hour and topped the world 5770 record by a full forty minutes. Boyce completed the race with an astounding average speed of five hundred fifteen miles per hour.

But in addition to the unusually high speeds, the supernatural field output produced at least two casualties. Going into the six hundred seventh lap, Neo-Deutsch racer Rod Zocchi super-saturated his drive module with negative ions and careened off the ground rail. And later, veteran racer Emily Dinkins spiralled out of the tube entirely when she failed to cancel her

♦Turn to 4E

TOP RACING SPEEDS



Boyce perfectly negated his centripetal momentum

Schaffer sues self

Claims 2019-20 season was a "breach of contract"

By Stephan Saunders
USA ALIVE

Miami Quarterback Sandy Schaffer called a press conference yesterday to announce that he is filing suit against himself in retaliation for his poor performance in the 2019-2020 season.

"My contract with Schaffer Sports—which is owned and operated by myself—stipulates that I must average at least two hundred fifty passing yards per game or I am in breach of contract," Schaffer said.

Sports industry observers believe Schaffer's suit is part of a complex tax

♦Turn to 4E

Yesterday's Basketball Scores

Portland	106	San Antonio	86
Chicago	91	Havanna	81
Cleveland	101	New York	99
Seattle	97	Atlanta	86

Madison signs unprecedented contract

Cleveland hurler to earn a staggering \$98,000,000 per year

By Lola Montoya
USA ALIVE

In public, Cleveland General Manager Nathan Phipps called left-hander Lisa Madison's \$98,000,000 contract "a smart move" and added that "Ms. Madison's skills are more than worth the millions. We expect her to win thirty-five games this season."

In private, however, Cleveland officials are labelling the deal "highway robbery." "With Madison making close to one hundred million," an anonymous source in the Cleveland front office wonders, "how much will Montez and DePeno want when their contracts come due at the end of next season?"

Despite the ill-feelings in Cleveland, Players' Association President Kenneth Strickland views Madison's record-breaking contract as a step forward for the game of baseball.

"The fact that the public resents the high salaries amazes me. If people knew how much money the owners pocket every season, I'm sure they'd see things differently. Now that more and more players are receiving their fair share of the revenues, I'm sure you're going to see a marked improvement in both morale and performance."

Manager Don Travers disagrees.

♦Turn to 4E



MONEY

MONEYLINE

CIA STOCK SPLIT: Yesterday, noted analyst and *Jordan's* consultant F. Roger Phillips announced that he expects preferred stock in the Central Intelligence Agency to undergo a two-for-one split by the end of April. Phillips attributes the expected split to increasing tension along the PRQ border and the spiralling commodities race between the United States and the European collective.

BIO-COMPRESSION INCENTIVES ANNOUNCED: At yesterday's Press Club luncheon, Treasury Secretary Alfred Donovan announced that the long anticipated tax incentives for bio-compression research are a definite part of the administration's third quarter budget proposals. "President Foster believes the only way to slow down the so-called 'brain drain' is to find a way to make more efficient use of the bio-drives we already have," said Donovan. Bio-compression investors can expect 14-16% write-offs.

TODAY'S TIP



Caution... Between February and April, you might consider pulling your money out of communications industry stocks.

For some unknown reason, radical activist attacks on communications centers increase by a staggering 62% over the annual average during these three months.

Militant stocks: how to select the one that's right for you

By Doctor Gregory Frolich
USA ALIVE

If you can afford them, militant stocks are among the easiest investment options to master, right? Just toss your money into Allied Mayhem and wait for those dividends to roll in.

Wrong.

After Congress passed the Kirby-Lawson Act last February, the militant stock market changed forever. Careful analysis shows that Allied Mayhem isn't the steady runner it once was, while hundreds of smaller firms are quietly building solid reputations as safe, steady earners.

So what's a careful investor with an interest in warfare and a pocketful of liquid capital to do?

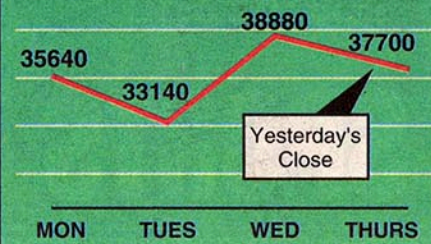
Before investing in a militant stock you should complete a four step evaluation process.

First, try to anticipate the conflicts in which your chosen firm will participate and the governments that will hire it. You

♦Turn to 3F

The Weekly Dow

This week's Dow



CLASSIFIED

Help Wanted

Wanted: boosted veterans willing to participate in a scientific study. Must suffer from metagenic feedback trauma. Dial 513-646-5758-3384 for information.

Major conventional conflict firm seeks experienced military commander. Both strategic and tactical skills a must. Call 414-577-6434-2991.

For Sale

Brand new Shelton CI with virgin 140 IQ biological brain. Capacity estimated at more than 660G. Call 313-452-9373-2290 or fax 313-452-6103-0339

2017 Tehran Jihad with custom put-out, tint wheel, ion injection, climate control, and holographic imager. \$130,000 or best offer. Call 717-823-3894-2344

One laminator—Low miles. \$10,000 or best offer. Call 708-647-9650

Activism

"It wasn't you, but you pledge allegiance to the red, white, and blue suckers that stole the soul!"—Chuck D., 1990

JUSTICE OR JUST US?

Free Texas, NOW!—People's Alliance for Pandemonium and Anarchy

Personal

Single White Male Telepath seeks same for face-to-face and cortex-to-cortex encounters. Must like long hikes, scratch-pop, and Gauss Racing. Fax photo to 1-312-433-2883-9939

Jenna—are you the blond I saw in the wild action section at the Fifth and Western Chartbuster?—Boogy Man

The more that I see, the less that I know for sure—McLaren's Ghost

underground

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this
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- TENAMENTS
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- DAYTON & E
- BURNED-OU
- CLUB ANG
- LIQUOR STO
- CHURCHES
- MALL
- PROMOTIVE
- LAPF PRECI
- BRASS RECY
- THEATER C
- VA HOSPIT
- EUGENIX H
- UNDERGRO
- CELL-COM

1. TENAMENTS
2. SWAP MEET GROUNDS
3. DAYTON & 88TH
4. BURNED-OUT WAREHOUSES
5. CLUB ANGST
6. LIQUOR STORES
7. CHURCHES
8. MALL
9. PROMITIVE GHETTOS
10. LAFP PRECINCT HQ
11. BRASS RECYCLING CENTER
12. THEATER COMPLEX
13. VA HOSPITAL/GOV'T. OFFICES
14. EUGENIX HQ
15. UNDERGROUND WALL
16. CELL-COM TOWERS

underground™

LISTEN UP!

THESE ARE THE RULES. THEY WILL NOT BE REPEATED.



In this

Underground

Sourcepack,

you'll find the

411 on greater

Los Angeles,

from the players

and crews to

the cliques

and the cant.

1. NEVER CHAMBER THE FIRST ROUND.
2. NEVER HIT THE '30S WITHOUT YOUR PUNKBUSTER.
3. 5-0 COME IN PAIRS.
4. SHOOT FIRST— TAKE STATIC LATER.
5. IF THEY DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE.
6. BE AFRAID, BUT DON'T ACT AFRAID.
7. STAY TRUE TO THE GAME.

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY,

8. SHUT UP AND LET THE STREETS TELL THE STORIES.

CONTENTS INCLUDE:

- ▶ A 64-page *setting guide* describing the Los Angeles of 2021.
- ▶ A 64-page *plot guide* containing a series of campaign threads.
- ▶ 16 folio sheets that add the most important people, places and things in Los Angeles to the *Underground notebook*.
- ▶ 16 pages of full-color props and handouts— from police ID cards to graft checks endorsed by crooked politicians.
- ▶ A full-color poster map of South-Central and the East Side.
- ▶ And a complete issue of *USA ALIVE* containing important information for the players.



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